

# Beefed-up compo for leaseholders?

By Oliver Pugh

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**SOUTHWARK'S LIB Dem opposition has called for leaseholders to be given a beefed-up compensation scheme, to offer rebates if the council services they pay for do not come up to scratch.**

Failures might include lift breakdowns, communal area lights not working or missed cleaning and refuse collections.

The Lib Dem councillors will be tabling a motion on the proposal at the next meeting of the council on November 26.

Southwark Liberal Dem spokesperson for housing, Cllr Hamish McCallum, said: "It's not fair that while the council is quick enough to start legal action against

tenants and leaseholders who fall into rent or service charge arrears, the same standards don't apply when the Housing Department fails to provide the service it should.

"It is clear that there are real problems with the way the council is providing some housing services. Complaints are up, yet proper apologies and giving residents their money back when failures occur are not standard council policy. This needs to change."

The council pointed out that it already had "a clear policy" that says where it fails to carry out our responsibilities residents will be entitled to fair and reasonable compensation.

A spokesperson also questioned how the new compensation scheme might be

funded in the face of a falling council budget. Cabinet member for housing, Cllr Richard Livingstone, said: "There is a clear choice – Labour's view that we should put the money into improving services so that people have good quality homes, or the Lib Dems view that people should live in poorer quality homes and be compensated for it.

"I believe our approach is the right one – we are making Southwark's homes and neighbourhoods great places to live, where good quality services are delivered right first time. When things go wrong we already look at compensation on a case by case basis.

"When the Lib Dems and Tories ran the council they failed to get the basics right."

# Tenants' personal details scrutinised to ID sink estates

EXCLUSIVE

By Amelia Burr

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**THE INCOME, health and education of council housing tenants will form part of an assessment of Southwark estates to decide whether they should be refurbished or knocked down.**

In order to fulfil the Labour-run council's election pledge to build 11,000 new homes over the next 30 years, all of the borough's estates will be reviewed to find out how much it would cost to bring them up to the government's Decent Homes standard.

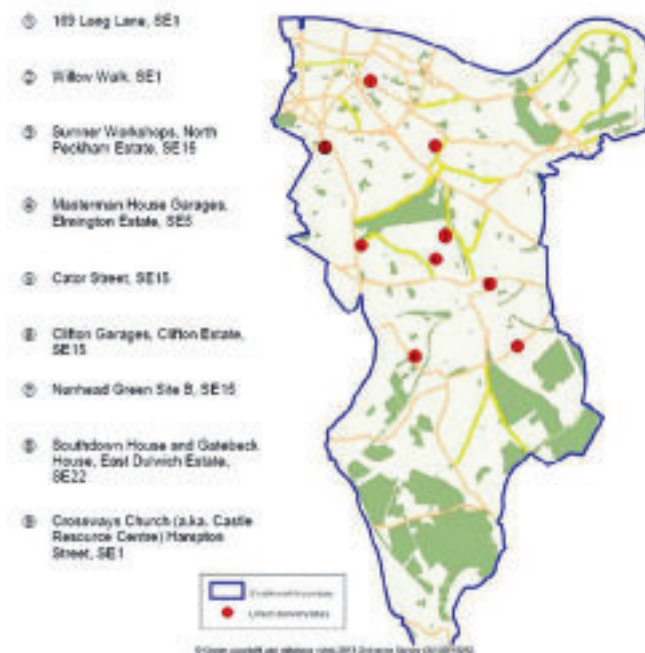
Alongside looking at the state of the buildings, the council will also factoring in 'non financial measures' like the income, employment, health and education of the people living there.

A council document detailing their 'asset performance evaluation tool' says this information is needed in order to "identify those areas where the housing stock prevents the council effectively meeting its social housing objectives..."

Once all the estates have been reviewed, the council will have an "estimate of their worth" so that properties with "poor economic and social performance" can be replaced with homes that are "more fit for purpose."

Southwark's cabinet member for housing, Richard Livingstone, said the review of social measures like income would only form part of the overall assessment and would not determine on their own if estates would stand or fall.

Map showing where first round of new homes will be built



"Rather they are used to establish if the housing itself may be a contributing factor for issues such as the health of tenants, or high levels of crime on an estate," he said. "This combination of financial and non-financial assessments provides the best possible method for ensuring we make the right property investment decisions."

A report detailing the review of Southwark's housing estates will be presented to the council's cabinet in December. In the New Year, this information will then be used to start consulting residents on specific options for their estates, with the first wave of 1,500 new council homes due to be built by 2018.

BERMONDSEY

# Woman plunges from sixth floor



By Oliver Pugh

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**A WOMAN fell to her death from a sixth storey balcony on a Bermondsey estate on Monday morning.**

Paramedics battled in vain to resuscitate the patient after they were called to the scene off Galleywall Road at around 10.20am.

Locals on the Rennie Estate said she had fallen from Landmann House, which is a thirteen-storey building.

A spokesperson for the London Ambulance Service said: "We were called at 10.23 to reports of a fall from height near Galleywall Road.

"We sent a single responder by car, two ambulance crews, an advanced paramedic and a duty officer to the scene.

"Despite extensive efforts to resuscitate the patient, a woman was dead at the scene."

Southwark Police was asked if they were investigating the death, but they did not respond before the News went to press.



# Superstars raise money for Children in Need

**THOR CAME in first, closely followed by Captain America in second and Superman in third as a group of 90 school children tested their superhuman strength at a fundraising sports day.**

The pupils from Charles Dickens School descended on Geraldine Mary Harnsworth Sports Facility dressed up as their favourite comic book heroes last Friday to take part in a one mile country run, a netball tournament and a relay sprint to the finish.

The money raised through sponsorship on the day was donated to Children in Need.