

Tottenham Area Action Plan

Additional statement by Paul Burnham,

Secretary, Haringey Defend Council Housing

MATTER 2 – AREA WIDE ISSUES

9. Can it be demonstrated that the approach to the renewal/regeneration of housing estates, in particular North Tottenham where the largest sites are, would not lead to loss of social housing/floor space and would provide for the range of dwellings necessary to meet need?

The demolition of the council estates at the renewal sites would lead to a reduction in social housing for the following reasons:

1. It has become clear that the Council positively seeks to encourage secure tenants to bid to move away from the renewal estates, prior to demolition, via the bidding system that allows only one move. In other words, tenants moving before the demolition may remain secure tenants, but elsewhere in the borough, while their council homes on the renewal estates would not be reprovided, so that scheme viability and developer profits will be enhanced at the expense of other applicants for council and housing association dwellings in this borough. These applicants would have less access to council housing in the coming years, the more that these bids are encouraged now.

The following link from the Council's Team North Tottenham resident communication site shows this very clearly.

This is council-generated content rather than resident-generated content. The actual advocacy of 'bidding' is very clear here.

<http://teamnorthtottenham.com/high-road-west-bidding-for-a-new-home/>

There are two case studies, which I quote in full below. Both mention tenants moving from a flat or maisonette to a house, which is hardly going to be the majority experience but is nevertheless a real incentive. The first case mentions the early payment of compensation, which is also an incentive to many, especially perhaps the 48% of Haringey households who have no savings or who are in debt.

[Older Turkish couple]

“Our daughter helped us do the bidding on the phone. It was actually the first time we had done the bidding and we’re very pleased with how smoothly it went. We then went to see the house and it looks very nice. We have lived in our maisonette in Love Lane for 18 years so it’s sad to be leaving but we’re happy the house we’re moving to is so close, so we’re still very near to our family, and it’s great we’re in an actual house. We also received compensation from the council which helps. We have been told we can move soon which is great news and the council has been very helpful with the whole process.”

[Female tenant]

“I found it easy to bid online. I was bidding every week since July and just before Christmas I moved from my place in Love Lane to my new home near Seven Sisters tube. Because the houses in Love Lane are a priority the bidding process is in our favour. Along with that Haringey Council has the best staff and they offer lots of support and advice. Before I had a flat but now I have a house which is much better for me and my children. I now have a big kitchen and two toilets and a garden! It’s a good area. The whole experience has been a very good one and I’ve told my friend to bid – everyone should bid! Life is good now.”

2. The term ‘social housing’ needs to be deconstructed, as the Council’s limited promises to reprovide apply to council tenants only, rather than to private registered provider (PRP) assured tenants, who are social tenants, almost all of them with Target rent levels and permanent tenancy agreements similar to existing council tenants.

We think that PRP tenants should have the right to return to renewal estates in new homes with existing tenancy terms.

There is no reference to PRP tenants in the Council’s Estate Renewal and Payments Policy. Our official complaint about this omission was rejected with ‘There are no Housing Association tenants affected by this policy’ (Mustafa Ibrahim, Head of Housing, Commissioning and Sites, in a letter to Paul Burnham, 01/04/2016). The figures in the Northumberland Park Strategic Framework Report (February 2015) for houses to be affected by demolition do not identify PRP tenancies either in freehold PRP estates, PRP owned street properties, or PRP owned Council leaseholds.

From Freedom of Information requests, we have these sample figures for numbers of PRP tenancies in some of the Tottenham renewal sites:

Broadwater Farm/Lido Square/ Moira Close/ Somerset Close (SA62)	275
Northumberland Park (NT3 and NT4)	230
Lemsford and Leabank (SA65)	23
Mary Seacole Court (Apex House SS6)	18

3. The re-provision of new homes to displaced Council tenants by the Haringey Development Vehicle, which is set to own and manage all the council renewal estates except Love Lane (High Road West), would not be acceptable replacement social housing, because these will be private sector tenancies. According to Haringey's Estate renewal re-housing and payments policy (our emphasis):

7.29 If a tenant chooses to return to the estate, then it cannot be guaranteed that the type of tenancy will be a secure tenancy if, the replacement homes are owned by an alternative landlord. This may for example be the Council's own Haringey Development Vehicle (HDV), or a Registered Provider.

7.30 If the tenant moves to an alternative Council tenancy, then this will be a tenancy which matches the security that the tenant currently has, and the rent will be set in line with Government and Haringey policy on rents for all other Council tenants. However, if the alternative homes are provided by a Registered Provider then the type of tenancy and rents will be set by the individual Registered Provider, in line with their policy for all their residential property. Haringey is committed to keeping rents affordable for residents on lower incomes, and will work with the new provider to ensure that rents are set at affordable levels. **If the provider of the replacement homes is the Haringey Development Vehicle (HDV), then the Council will always seek to match the security of tenure and rent level that the tenant currently has, but this is dependent on negotiations with the HDV partner once these are concluded.**

4. Also, the re-provision of new homes to displaced Council tenants by the Haringey Development Vehicle would not provide replacement social housing **in perpetuity**.

We have seen no mention of relets, after the current tenants move on, and no mention of any Council nomination rights to the HDV at any time.

Tenancy matters are not considered at all in the 157-page business case for the HDV proposal (Cabinet papers April 2016).

Conclusion: Council housing and social housing would be lost and not replaced under the Local Plan.