

# YOUR HOME

*Your Future, Your Say*



**H&F RESIDENTS'  
COMMISSION ON  
COUNCIL HOUSING**



**We want to give  
you more control  
over your home**



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FOR DETAILS >>

# Why we want to put residents in charge



We've started to consult tenants and leaseholders on transferring the ownership and management of council homes. We're sending you this newsletter to keep you updated and we will continue to ask you for your thoughts as we progress

## Welcome to this new-look issue!

This new-look newsletter brings you up-to-date with plans for the future of your housing. It has been produced by H&F Council in partnership with the H&F Residents Housing Advisory Group. It explains how the council is moving ahead with the recommendations made by the Residents' Commission on Council Housing.



## Advisors to help council consult

The council has asked the people who worked on the Residents' Commission to form an advisory group.

Their knowledge and skills will help in setting up a new resident-led housing organisation. Together, we will consult with residents across the borough on how a new 'community gateway' organisation could be set up.

## What is a transfer and why is this happening?

We set up a Residents' Commission last year to look at ways to protect the future of people living in council housing.

This is to give you – the residents – more say and control over your homes. The commission held open meetings, public hearings, coffee mornings, estate walkabouts and telephone surveys across the borough to talk about possible options and discuss what's worked well elsewhere.

## "Housing we live in is under threat"

Last November, the Residents' Commission recommended setting up a new resident-led housing organisation in Hammersmith & Fulham.

They think the ownership and the management of council homes should be transferred to this new organisation.



Shirley Cupit  
tenant member  
of the commission  
on council housing

Shirley Cupit, tenant member of the commission, said:

**“The housing we live in is under threat** – from government policy, from under-investment and from the pressure of high land values in this part of London.

“The future of our homes should be in our hands.

“I firmly believe residents should be the guardians of our community. Setting up our own organisation will **give residents the final say** on how our homes are run.

“But it will only happen if residents realise what is at stake and give it their support.”

## **The best way to fund repairs and build new affordable homes**

The council asked the Residents’ Commission to look at how it could:

- Maximise investment in homes and estates in the future
- Give residents local control over their homes
- Protect tenants’ rights and keep rents and service charges at levels residents can afford
- Fund improvements to homes and housing services.

The commission concluded that residents’ homes could only be safeguarded with a transfer.



Cllr Lisa Homan,  
H&F Cabinet Member  
for Housing

After a cabinet meeting in December, H&F councillors agreed to back the plan.

Cllr Lisa Homan, H&F Cabinet Member for Housing, explained why: “We agree with the Residents’ Commission that a transfer is the best way to protect your homes in the future.

“We also think it’s the best way to make sure there is enough **money to fund the repairs and improvements** that you quite rightly expect, and to build new affordable homes that will benefit our children in years to come.

“But we need to get this right and want you to decide whether to go ahead.”

We will need the government to agree our plan and approve financial arrangements with the council.

**We will also keep you informed and ask you what you think about our proposals over the summer.**

## **Council begins funding talks with government**

H&F Council has opened discussions with the government about its business case for a transfer of homes.

We need the government to agree a financial plan to tackle our historic housing debt as they have done in every other stock transfer that’s taken place in the UK.

We believe that the government and the council have a duty to give residents more control of their homes and their neighbourhoods.



# Transfer is a b



## **What kind of organisation would we transfer homes to?**

The recommendation from the Residents' Commission was to set up a 'community gateway' housing association, owned by resident members

The new organisation would have a Board with residents forming the majority

It would be able to borrow money to pay for repairs and improvements

It would become the council's partner in providing new social housing



## **What would a new resident-controlled housing association mean for me?**

Peace of mind and longer-term security

Transferring homes to a resident-led housing organisation is to protect your rights and your future

Nothing can happen without a vote in favour of it

You would not have to move home



# Big step



We've been speaking to residents across the borough about how we can safeguard their homes for the future



The pioneering Phoenix Community Housing was set up by Lewisham Council as a 'community gateway'

## Community Gateway: Putting residents at the heart of decision making

A 'community gateway' is a resident-led housing association. There are already four community gateways in the country – in Watford, Baintree, Preston and Lewisham.

A 'community gateway' is a not-for-profit housing association that is 'owned' by its residents.

A community gateway association also puts residents at the heart of decisions, making people the guardians of their own communities.

Residents can become shareholding members and play a safeguarding role, specifically with the right to approve changes to the rules.

This would help keep the association working for residents and their interests.

There would also be a majority of residents on the Board.

## WHAT IT MEANS FOR YOU...



- ✔ **FACT 1** Your key rights would be protected. You are secure in your home if transfer goes ahead.

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- ✔ **FACT 2** The Board of the resident-led organisation would be answerable to residents for its performance

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- ✔ **FACT 3** Transfer does not mean you would have to move home.

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- ✔ **FACT 4** The Board would be able to decide on regeneration and building new affordable homes in the borough if transfer goes ahead.

# What is next?

**There will be much more consultation with residents over the summer. And then you can make your decision**

**B**efore any ballot can take place, there's a lot to do.

The council needs to get this right for residents.

This means **protecting tenants' key rights and keeping rents and service charges at affordable levels.**

We also need to ensure that we can build new homes to address the chronic shortage of affordable homes in the borough, as well as improving the housing service.

Over the coming months we will involve residents in developing a detailed plan for a transfer.



Residents meet to discuss what happens next

Only then will we be ready to put it to a vote.

Most importantly, **you would not be alone!**

Thousands of council homes across the country have transferred to new housing associations, including the community gateway schemes in Lewisham and Watford.

The new housing association would have a board appointed by and answerable to residents. It would be

registered and regulated as a charitable, not-for-profit housing association for the borough.

It would agree to provide tenants with the same **key rights including security of tenure** that they have now.

And it would work as the council's partner to provide new homes in the borough.



Tom Hopkins can provide free independent advice on the housing transfer

# Want some independent advice?

## Want to know more?

If you would like to speak an independent tenant and leaseholder advisor from TPAS about the council's plans, please call **FREEPHONE 0800 731 1619** or email **lbhfita@tpas.org.uk**. We want as many people as possible to be involved in shaping these plans. Contact our resident involvement team on **020 8753 6652** or email us at **getinvolved@lbhf.gov.uk**

If you would like a translation of one of our documents, please ask an English speaker to contact TPAS on freephone 0800 731 1619.

على رقم TPAS اذا رغبت الحصول على ترجمة احدى وثائقنا، يرجى الطلب من متحدث باللغة الانكليزية الاتصال بـ الهاتف المجاني 0800 731 1619

Jeżeli potrzebują Państwo tłumaczenia któregoś z naszych dokumentów, prosimy osobę mówiącą po angielsku o kontakt z TPAS pod bezpłatnym numerem telefonu 0800 731 1619.

Haddii sad rabto in Laguu tarjumo mid ka mida waraaqahayaga, raglan ka dalbo inuu qof ingiriisida ku hadlaa uu TPAS ka soo waco khadka lacag la'aanta ah ee ah 0800 731 1619.

Si quiere una traducción de alguno de nuestros documentos, por favor pidale a una persona que hable inglés que contacte TPAS al número de telefono gratis 0800 731 1619.



## KEEP US UPDATED & WIN £50 VOUCHERS

We want to make sure our details about you and your home are up-to-date, so you will be able to have your say about transfer. Please send your name, address, telephone number and email address to: **Lbhfita@tpas.org.uk**. Your details will then be entered in a draw for a chance to win £50 worth of shop vouchers.

**SAVE THE DATE!**

# RESIDENTS' CONFERENCE

**Saturday 18 June 2016**

Novotel Hotel London West  
1 Shortlands, Hammersmith  
International Centre,  
London W6 8DR



» Following the success of last year's tenant and leaseholder conferences, the Resident Conference Working Group bring you the Hammersmith & Fulham Residents' Conference 2016

More information to follow...

## Resident Involvement Meet the team!

We want to get as many council residents as possible involved in the housing services that we provide to you. We work with residents from council housing estates, gap sites and street properties.

## GET INVOLVED

Have your say!



Have your say!

For more information on how you can get involved, please call the team on 020 8753 6652 or email [GetInvolved@lbhf.gov.uk](mailto:GetInvolved@lbhf.gov.uk)