

To all leaseholders

LEASEHOLDER CONSULTATION FEEDBACK

You may recall that we wrote you in March 2009 with details about the draft Decent Homes programme. We asked for comments about the programme, sinking funds and insurance arrangements. We had over 300 responses and would like to share this feedback with you.

MAJOR WORKS

Over eighty of the responses included comments about the major work proposals. There were a number of themes which are reflected in the Question and Answers below.

- **Why are the works taking place?**

Sutton Housing Partnership is proposing to invest more than £122.5 million on a Decent Homes programme to improve council housing across the borough. Decent Homes is a government scheme that aims to bring all council homes up to a minimum standard. To meet this standard we must ensure that by 2014 we provide homes that are safe, secure, warm, weather tight and have reasonably modern facilities.

- **Why are leaseholders being charged?**

Part of the programme involves works to the block such as roof renewal and window replacement. Leaseholders have an obligation to contribute towards these types of works under the terms of their individual lease agreement.

- **When will I know how much the works will cost?**

The cost of works will be available once the works have been specified and tendered. We will send you a consultation notice with cost information.

- **How can I get involved?**

We would like as many leaseholders as possible to get involved in the decision making process. This can be at a borough wide level through our Decent Homes Steering Group through local steering groups that help make investment decisions about their estate.

If you would like to get involved then please contact our Resident Liaison officer Lauren Teague on Freephone 0800 195 5552 or 020 8915 2000 or email her at customerservices@suttonhousingpartnership.org.uk.

- **Why are no works planned to my block?**

There are some blocks where we do not need to undertake any Decent Homes work such as roof renewal or window replacement. We may need to undertake other works such as external decorations. If that is the case we consult with you about these proposals. However if there are works that you think should be listed please let us know. We have had contact from leaseholders which has in turn led to their blocks being added to the programme.

- **How will I pay for the works?**

We are very conscious of the potential charges to leaseholders, especially in the current economic climate. We have reviewed the major work payment options with the London Borough of Sutton and introduced changes. This includes extending interest free periods, loan periods and the option of having a charge on the property. The options are contained in the leasehold handbook and though our website at www.suttonhousingpartnership.org.uk

SINKING FUNDS

Sinking funds are accounts that are set to enable leaseholders to pay ongoing amounts towards future major works. The majority of responses, 205, were against us setting up sinking funds. There were 80 in favour. On this basis we do not intend on proceed to set these up.

INSURANCE ARRANGEMENTS

We also asked leaseholders views on the current buildings insurance arrangements. 205 leaseholders stated they were satisfied and 73 were not. On this basis we do not propose to change the insurance arrangements.

On the issue of whether or not we should offer contents insurance, 9 stated yes, and 155 said no. Again we do not now propose to make any changes.

Thank you again for all the feedback that we received. I hope you found the information in this letter useful.

If you want to discuss the Decent Homes programme we will holding a drop in surgery between 6.30pm and 7.15 pm on 7th July 2009 at our offices at Sutton Gate, Carshalton Road, Sutton. This is before the Sutton Leaseholders Association AGM which starts at 7.30pm at the same location.

Yours faithfully

Richard Powell
Leasehold Services
Sutton Housing Partnership

26th June 2009