



# Southwark Homes

Spring 2024

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Your magazine from Southwark Council

Southwark  
Council



# Hakeem Osinake joins us as new Strategic Housing Director

We are pleased to announce that we have appointed Hakeem Osinake as our new Strategic Director of Housing. Hakeem joins us from Brent Council where he was Director of Housing since 2017.

Passionate about social housing, gaining insight to people's needs and exploring innovative ways to deliver services, Hakeem has a Master's degree in Housing and an MPA from the University of Birmingham. He is also a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Housing.

Hakeem said, "I am absolutely delighted to take on the role of Strategic Director of Housing for London's biggest council landlord. Southwark's incredible energy and ambition to improve the lives of its residents is clear, whether that's through building thousands of council homes, working to tackle the scourge of homelessness, or driving up standards in its existing homes.

"I'm looking forward to working with Southwark's hard-working housing teams to build on what they've achieved, and ensure we channel compassion and empathy into everything we do. Housing is about so much more than bricks and mortar. Putting a roof over someone's head transforms lives and families, and I can't wait to start working with Southwark's communities, members and staff to deliver what local people need."



Hakeem will join Southwark Council on 1 March 2024.



Cllr Sarah King, Cabinet Member for Council Homes

Dear Resident,

I'm delighted to introduce myself as the new Cabinet Member for Council Homes. Overseeing Southwark's 55,000 council and leaseholder homes is one of the most important things we do for our residents. I'm proud to continue building on Cllr Merrill's excellent work to improve our homes and make our communities safe, stable, rewarding places to live.

Since 2016, we have invested more than £300 million into our council homes through our Quality Homes Investment Programme. This has funded new kitchens and bathrooms in over 6,000 homes across the borough. We have also repaired doors, windows, roofs, electrics, brickwork and carried out important fire safety improvements.

We are continuing to build new council homes at pace and helping to tackle the housing crisis locally in our borough. Over the last five years, we have built over 800 new affordable

## Welcome...

homes and we have over 2,500 more in our future pipeline.

We know how important each and every home is and the difference they will make to our residents' lives.

We also know that the climate crisis is on many people's minds and we have made enormous progress in transitioning to greener energy systems and investing in our homes to make them more energy efficient.

We always put our residents at the heart of what we do, and we are always grateful to members of our community who volunteer their time to improve their surroundings and make our estates better places to live. In this magazine you can find information about the different ways you can share your views, get involved and access any support you or your family may need.

As always, we will keep you updated on all our work to protect, improve and enhance your homes, services and the local area. Thank you for everything you do to make Southwark, your home and your community a great place to live.

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### Keep in touch

You can contact the magazine at [southwark.life@southwark.gov.uk](mailto:southwark.life@southwark.gov.uk) and include *housing magazine* in the subject heading, for more regular updates on council news and events, follow us on social media at

- [facebook.com/southwarkcouncil](https://www.facebook.com/southwarkcouncil)
- [@lb\\_southwark](https://twitter.com/lb_southwark)
- [Instagram.com/southwarkcouncil](https://www.instagram.com/southwarkcouncil)

### Contact us

Have you enjoyed reading this magazine? We'd love to hear your comments and feedback. If there are any specific topics you would like us to cover, or you have any staff or Southwark residents in mind you would like us to feature, please get in touch by emailing [southwark.life@southwark.gov.uk](mailto:southwark.life@southwark.gov.uk) and include **Southwark Homes** in the subject heading.

### The Southwark Homes team

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# How we invest in improving your homes

Since 2016, we have invested more than £300m into our council homes through the Quality Homes Investment Programme (QHIP). This money has funded the installation of new kitchens and/or bathrooms into more than 6,000 homes. We have also repaired or renewed doors, windows, roofs, electrics, brickwork and carried out fire safety work across the borough.

Looking ahead, our priorities are an even greater focus on our residents' safety, ensuring that we meet all our responsibilities under the new Building Safety and Fire Safety legislation. We are also committed to supporting our communities' health and wellbeing, paying particular attention to carrying out works to eradicate damp and mould.

One example of this work has been on the Kingswood Estate in Dulwich, one of our biggest ever investment projects. We worked with specialists, piloted new technologies and carried out wide-ranging consultation with residents and councillors to design solutions that are making a real difference to our residents' health and wellbeing.

As well as ventilation systems, we have installed new front entrance doors, modern LED lighting systems (which will reduce carbon emissions) as well as smoke, heat detection and carbon monoxide alarms across the estate.

We will implement this holistic approach to major works over the coming years to ensure that our residents live in safe, good quality, sustainable housing. Our goal is to provide homes that our residents are proud to live in, set within thriving and healthy communities, where tenants and homeowners feel they have a genuine stake in the present and future of their homes and estates.

**£300m**  
invested into our council homes

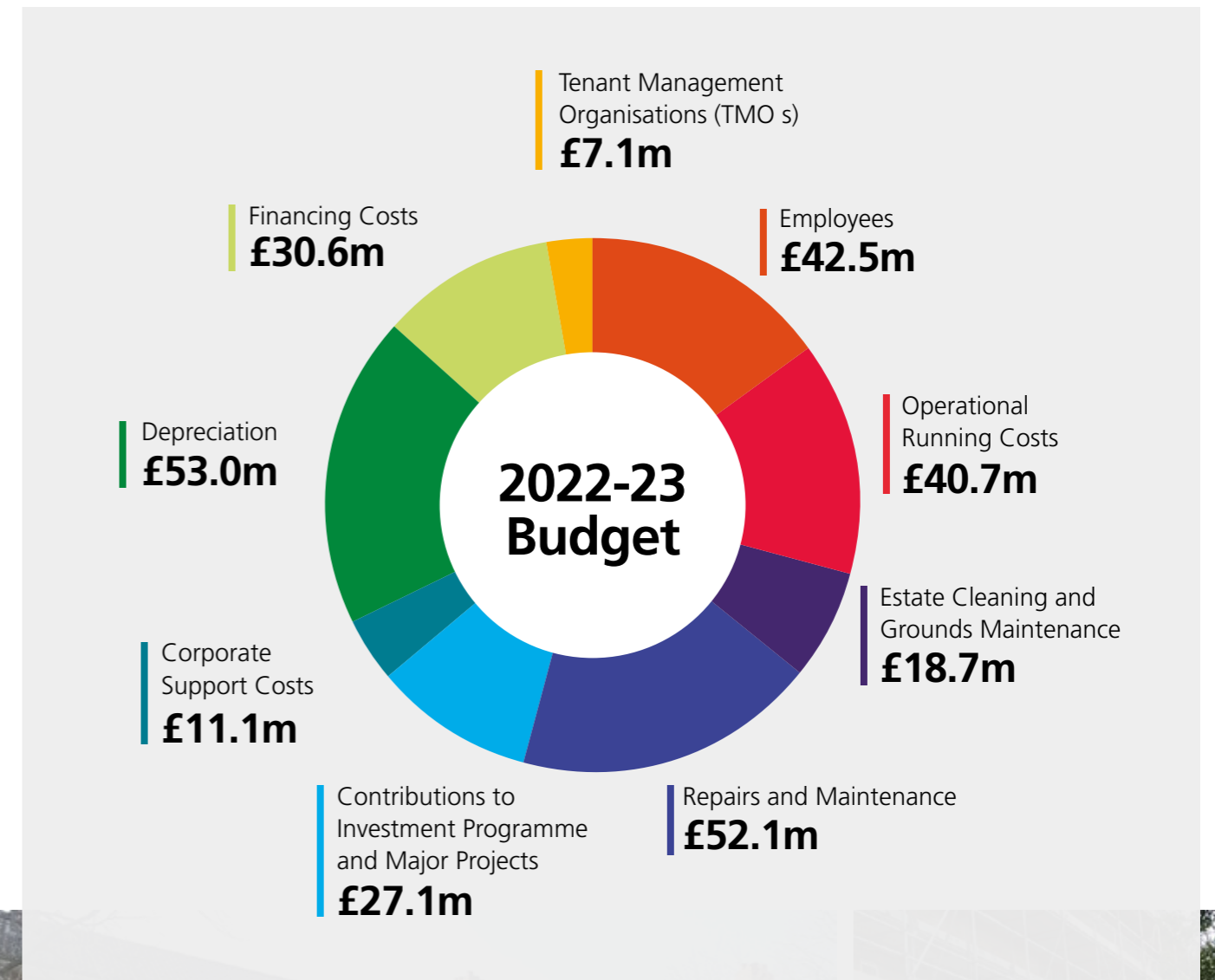
It funded new kitchens and/or bathrooms into more than **6,000 homes**

# How your rent is spent

The rental income we collect from our properties goes into a single pot of money called the Housing Revenue Account (HRA).

The HRA also receives income from tenants and leaseholder service charges, commercial property rents, and any interest on the funds in the account.

This what we spent from the HRA in the financial year 2022-23:



#ChargeSafe



## IS YOUR E-BIKE OR E-SCOOTER A FIRE RISK?

- Never leave your device charging unattended or when you're asleep.
- Do not attempt to modify or tamper with your battery. Always follow the manufacturer's instructions.
- Converting pedal bikes into e-bikes using DIY kits bought online can be very dangerous and poses a higher risk of fire.
- Never block your escape routes with your e-bike or e-scooter.
- Ensure you have a working smoke alarm.



Scan this QR code for more information or visit:  
[london-fire.gov.uk/chargesafe](https://london-fire.gov.uk/chargesafe)



## HEAT METERS

# What is a heat meter?



A heat meter is a device that measures the amount of energy used to heat your home and provide hot water to your property. This allows us to charge you accurately for your usage.

## Why do I have a heat meter?

*The Heat Networks (Metering and Billing) Regulations* require us to install heat meters in individual properties on certain estates served by district heating. The Heat Network Regulations aim to improve energy efficiency in rented homes. All of our new build properties will have heat meters installed and we are also installing heat meters in the following estates:

- Downtown Estate (North and South)
- Osprey Estate
- Cossall Estate
- Sceaux Gardens Estate
- Crane House (Pelican estate)

For any heat meter related queries please contact [heatmetering@southwark.gov.uk](mailto:heatmetering@southwark.gov.uk)

## How will I pay for my heating and hot water?

If you are a council tenant, you will have a weekly charge for heating and hot water services applied to your rent account. This charge will be specific to your home and based on your use. We update the charges every year based on the previous year's consumption.

If you are a homeowner, you will continue to be billed via your annual service charge, which is based on an estimated consumption. The actual bills will be amended to reflect your usage.

The average user can expect to make savings of approximately **20%**

## Benefits of a heat meter

- Greater controls over the heating in your property.
- Reduced energy usage. The average user can expect to make savings of around 20%.
- Improved heat network efficiency. Heat meters allow us to see how heat is flowing through our networks, meaning we can make better decisions and improvements.
- Improved response time when dealing with heating issues and/or outages.
- Reduced carbon emissions.

## How do I report issues with my heat meter or heating?

If you do experience problems with your heating or hot water there are several ways that you can report it:

- Via your **MySouthwark** account, or
- Via our 24 hour call centre

**0800 952 4444 or 020 7525 2600**

# Working to represent residents' views

We spoke to Andrew Eke, Chair of the Tustin Estate TRA, to learn about the work he does with his community.

The Tustin Estate is located to the north of Old Kent Road and west of Ilderton Road. It's made up of three towers and six low-rise blocks, Pilgrims Way Primary School and a number of businesses fronting onto Old Kent Road.

Andrew has lived on Tustin Estate and been on the TRA for 30 years, and over that time he has seen the community go through many changes. Andrew's previous role as a housing officer working at Southwark Council meant he had a wealth of knowledge and experience to draw on and led him to taking up a role as Chair of the TRA.

Tustin Estate is going through a major redevelopment and Andrew has played a pivotal role in steering the residents through the consultation encouraged them to share their views on the designs and future ideas for their estate.

In March 2021, residents voted in favour of demolishing and rebuilding the low-rise buildings on a residents' ballot. This will include replacement council homes, additional council homes and key worker housing, shared equity homes and homes for private sale.

There will also be a replacement school building, new commercial spaces and a new park. All existing residents will be able to move to a new council home in the first phase of the redevelopment.



The resident engagement and consultation work is very much still ongoing and Andrew regularly leads resident drop-ins in the community hall to share updates with the residents and allow them to share their views.

Andrew said, "The estate is much more diverse now than when I first moved here. We have people here from all backgrounds, all ethnicities, it's very refreshing.

"When I'm chairing TRA meetings I make sure to carefully manage the agenda so that everyone who wants to speak has a chance to speak. I always make sure not to let any one person dominate a meeting, so that everyone has a chance to be involved.

"The thing I'm most proud of working on the TRA is putting our residents back on the map and giving them a voice. I can't do it without the input and enthusiasm from the community members, it takes everyone to work together as a whole to improve their estate."

The Tustin redevelopment will provide  
**355 new council homes,**  
**115 shared ownership** and key  
 worker homes, and  
**220 homes for private sale.**

Construction works started in autumn 2022 and the entire redevelopment is expected to be finished in 2030.



# Residents enjoying new homes at Commercial Way in Peckham



Obed Doe

One of our newest housing developments in Peckham has opened its doors to residents, who are enjoying their new homes.

The Commercial Way development is made up of 109 new homes, including 74 council homes, eight of which are specialised wheelchair adapted properties, and 35 shared ownership homes.

We also created outside communal areas, courtyards, and play spaces as well as 10 parking spaces, eight of which are designated for wheelchair users and two of which are for car pool cars.

One of our new residents, Obed Doe, moved into the new development in January 2024.



Obed said, "Everything has been going well for me since I moved into my new home. I was already familiar with the area so it feels like home to me and the location is excellent, close to shopping and transport."

"I was living in temporary accommodation for two and a half years before this so living in a spacious new flat is an enormous improvement for me. The flat is nice and I really like the space."

"I live by myself so it's important for me to have my own space and somewhere to call home."

My favourite thing about my new home is the big balcony – it's my favourite place in the flat. In the summertime I'll be able to open up the doors and enjoy the sunshine – I can't wait."

The development in Commercial Way is one of many of our new homes sites we are working on across the borough to provide desperately-needed homes for our residents.

We have over 3,000 brand new council homes either built or on site across Southwark, more than any other council in the country, and we will work hard to keep providing more truly affordable homes to support our communities to thrive."





# Working together to support our residents through the cost of living crisis

Share The Cost Global is a pioneering social enterprise committed to restoring dignity to giving and receiving. Using technology, inclusivity, and individual-centered care, the organisation connects those in need with compassionate individuals and organisations.

Share The Cost Global delivered the Cost of Living Fund on behalf of Southwark Council. The relief and benefits provided to residents during times of real hardship reinforces the importance of such initiatives.

STCG disseminated vouchers to provide financial and practical support to our residents. Their tailored approach includes conversations with residents to understand their needs and offer the right support.

Doloresz, a young mother, urgently needed food and milk for her two-year-old daughter. Through the cost of living application process with STCG, she received support the same

day, alleviating her stress and ensuring her child's well-being.

Doloresz said, 'I found out about the charity via a friend. I applied for the £100 fund but then I reached out to ask if there is any support available for my baby more urgently as we ran out of milk and food for the week.

"Nobody is comfortable asking for help I suppose, however I encourage you, please do! You will not be judged or ignored by this organisation, and you will be led to the right direction if need be. I received help the same exact day, my baby is fully set for the week! This took the stress and worry off my already stressful mum shoulders. Thank you."



We offer a range of support to help our residents through the cost of living crisis. To find out what you can access, visit our web pages here [southwark.gov.uk/benefits-and-support/cost-of-living-support](https://southwark.gov.uk/benefits-and-support/cost-of-living-support)



# Water beneath our feet is keeping our homes warm

Over the past year, 2,175 homes across Consort, Wyndham and Newington Estates have been benefiting from a ground breaking renewable energy scheme that installed new water-source heat pumps as the lead heat source.

This removed reliance on gas boilers, which are now only used for top-up and back-up heating. The project was the first of its kind for London, by retro-fitting the eco-friendly heat pumps into the existing plant rooms on the estates. The new system works by:

- Taking naturally occurring ground water from 120-metre deep boreholes.
- Then, using the heat pumps to extract thermal energy from the ground water to provide residents with reliable low-carbon heating and hot water.
- And finally, returning the ground water back into the boreholes at a cooler temperature.

The new system has been a win-win for residents, by helping to keep homes warm while saving thousands of tonnes of carbon dioxide and improving air quality. The new heat-pumps have also improved resilience in the heating networks.

Projects like this are crucial to our ambition to make Southwark carbon neutral, as homes in Southwark are responsible for 36% of the borough's total carbon emissions. In total, each year this project is estimated to achieve about 3,848 tonnes of carbon savings – which is about the same as taking 149 diesel cars off the road every year.

Thanks to a low-interest loan from the Mayor of London's Energy Efficiency Fund, and a grant from the Government, we were also able to make this major project cost-neutral so residents on estates did not have to pay for the work. This meant at a time of increasing energy prices, decarbonising the heat networks did not increase the cost of heating for people.



# Resident-focused repairs making a big impact

**Our Repairs Action Days have continued at pace. So far we have visited 19 estates, 16 sheltered housing units, meet with hundreds of residents, handled over 1,000 repairs enquiries and completed over 600 repairs.**

We spend a day on an estate carrying out smaller repairs and talking to you about a range of topics including damp and mould, how to look after your home, the best way to decorate and electrical safety advice.

By bringing our repairs service to you, you can access our repairs teams at a local level, and share your views and experiences with us directly. You can show our teams first hand if you are having issues in your homes instead of explaining over the phone. We're really pleased with the feedback we've had so far and we will be continuing the action days throughout 2024.

We're also working on other ways to make our repairs service easier to access. We're updating our website, creating how to videos to make it easier to do small repairs at home, and this year you'll notice our web chat feature going live for all repairs teams. We now offer virtual inspections of damp and mould, meaning an issue can be identified more quickly by a trained expert at your convenience. We aim to increase virtual repair inspections for more repairs calls.

Over the last year, we have seen an increase in the number of residents saying they are satisfied with their repair. We now send a text survey immediately after a repair has been completed, which allows us to address any issues or concerns raised at the earliest possible opportunity, usually, the same day.

We're always keen to hear from you and for residents to get involved with us. If you're interested in joining an estate communal inspection or any to know more about when we'll be in your area for our action days you can always email us at [repairs@southwark.gov.uk](mailto:repairs@southwark.gov.uk)



## Latest news from Aylesbury Estate

### Aylesbury Estate redevelopment

Did you know we are building over 580 new council homes on Aylesbury Estate? This is the largest single council house build project in the country, and will mean all residents whose homes are being redeveloped can stay on the estate in a high quality, efficient new home.

The First Development Site A is already finished, and residents are enjoying 229 brand new council homes, a new community centre, a landscaped central park and playground on the estate. Building works are underway on the First Development Site B, which will provide another 352 more homes for social rent, which are expected to be ready in spring 2024.

Notting Hill Genesis has also moved residents into the area called Plot 18, which was created for the over-55 community on the estate. Building works recently started on the First Development Site C, which will provide over 300 more new homes.

### Una Marson Library opened

We proudly opened the doors to the new Una Marson library at the end of November 2023, marking a key milestone in the redevelopment of the Aylesbury Estate area.

Named after Una Marson, a treasured Southwark heroine hailed for her contributions to the literary world and as the first Black woman programme maker at the BBC, the library's name was selected by the local community to honour Southwark's rich cultural heritage.

The new library will provide traditional services such as book and DVD loans, newspapers and periodicals, public access PCs, printing and copying facilities, bookable meeting rooms, study spaces, free Wi-Fi and a self-service health kiosk. In addition, a full programme of engaging events will offered throughout the year. The library also includes an innovation space, which provides the opportunity to trial new programmes and services.

### Investing in libraries across the borough

We have a network of 12 public libraries across the borough, as well as a heritage centre, local archive and home library service. We have continued to support and invest in libraries at a time when most councils have substantially reduced these services.

We have invested £10m in new libraries since the end of 2018, opening Grove Vale in 2018, Southwark Heritage Centre & Walworth library in 2021, Kingswood in 2023 and Una Marson in 2023.

Libraries such as John Harvard and Peckham have also benefited from large scale refurbishments in recent years to improve their heating and lighting and help meet our carbon reduction commitments. We are also planning to refurbish our Dulwich library later in 2024.

You can find out more about our libraries and access online services at [southwark.gov.uk/libraries](https://southwark.gov.uk/libraries)



# Repairs

To report a repair in your home, or a communal repair in your building, login to your **My Southwark** account and select the repairs tab. Visit **[southwark.gov.uk/repairs](https://southwark.gov.uk/repairs)** to find out more.

## Emergency contacts

If people are injured or if there is a threat to life you should call **999**. Please only use the following numbers in a genuine emergency, where there is an immediate threat to health or safety.

### Emergency housing repairs

An emergency repair is when there's immediate danger to you or the structure of the building. In an emergency we'll make the situation safe; we may need to return another day to complete the full repair.

All emergency repairs need to be reported by phone by calling **0800 952 4444** or **020 7525 2600**.

### Other useful numbers

If you have a gas / carbon monoxide leak, call the National grid **0800 111 999**.

If you have lost your gas or electricity supply, you should contact your individual supplier to determine if the issue with your meter or account.

If you are experiencing a power cut in your area, call UK Power networks **0800 316 3105**.

If you have no drinking water in your area, call Thames water **0800 714 614**.

### Homelessness

If you are worried about becoming homeless or you are homeless already please get in touch with Southwark council's housing Solutions service, as soon as possible by calling **020 7525 4140** or visiting the **Southwark Homesearch Centre, 25-27 Bournemouth Road, Peckham, SE15 4UJ**.

If you require emergency homelessness advice, assistance and support before 9am and after 5pm Monday to Friday or during the weekends, please telephone **020 7525 5000** and choose **option 3**.

### For any other out of hours emergency

Call our switchboard number **020 7525 5000 option 2** for environmental services and **option 3** for other services.