



LAMBETH NEWS

'Our community is being taken away from us', claim Central Hill Estate residents

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BY LINA KURDI
james@slpmedia.co.uk

Residents on an estate plagued by mice and maintenance issues say they feel 'pushed out' by the council's redevelopment programme.

A petition against the redevelopment of the Central Hill Estate in Bankside Way, Lambeth, has gained more than 1,000 signatures.

The residents are campaigning for refurbishment of the existing flats rather than demolition.

The current flats face issues such as mice infestations, leaks, damp and mould.

In a report, Lambeth council said that demolishing the estate was more cost-effective than refurbishing the existing homes, at £44,000 per flat, when its spend on average for other estates is £16,000.

Lambeth council aims to build hundreds of new homes for existing tenants, as well as those on the waiting list.

The master plan for the Central Hill redevelopment is in the planning stage.

Central Hill resident Sabine Mairey, 52, said: "We are being pushed out for commercial reasons.

"The reasons for demolition Lambeth council are giving just doesn't fit. Where is the rent that residents pay going?

"They have included us in choosing architects for the redevelopment, but they haven't gone with our choice. Lambeth council isn't listening to us.

"They have run down the estate and made it seem far worse than it is.

"Good management and regular maintenance would have avoided mice in flats, leaks and other issues in the first place.

"Yet when residents contacted Lambeth council about these issues over many years, they got ignored.

"The buildings are structurally sound. There is no need for demolition."

Pete Elliott, 53, said: "They are more than just physical buildings. It is a community that they are taking away from us, and they have denied us our community space, so we can't meet up any more.

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"They have ~~not allowed us to have anything that the community can use to look after itself.~~

"Financially it doesn't make sense to demolish. They will need to get hold of more taxpayers' money for this redevelopment and it will take years, and no one wants to live on a construction site for that long.

"The buy-backs Lambeth council have done for leaseholders doesn't allow them to stay in the area. It is utterly destroying the community."

Lambeth council claims cuts in Government funding and enforced rent reductions have reduced the amount the council is able to borrow to fund refurbishment or retrofit.

A Lambeth council spokesman said: "This shortage of funding was the key reason for Lambeth launching an estate regeneration programme – so that we could build better homes for our tenants.

"Through consultation and master planning, we are determined to deliver high-quality, affordable and council-level rent homes based on what the tenants of Central Hill and those from across the borough have told us they want."

Central Hill Estate resident Pete Elliot, 53, accused the council of "destroying the community" Picture: Pete Elliot

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