



The Owner  
(insert address)

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Woking  
Surrey GU21 6YL

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**If you occupy this property as a tenant please ensure this letter is given to the owner.**

16 October 2017

Dear Owner,

### **Sheerwater Regeneration Scheme: Voluntary Purchase of Properties**

On the 27 July 2017, I wrote to you advising that with effect from 1 August the Council and Thamesway had opened the opportunity for those owners that wished to agree terms to sell through a voluntary purchase agreement to be able to do so.

I am pleased to say that twenty nine property owners have already engaged with Frazers, nine have agreed terms with eight currently going through legal processes and one has completed. Of these one has taken advantage of assisted purchase arrangement of up to 33% or £100,000, whichever is the lesser, of equity in a new property and one is taking advantage of Mortgage support.

During the initial engagements with owners we consider that some further clarification may be helpful to assist those of you who have not yet decided to engage with us on a voluntary basis.

#### Role of Frazers

Frazers have been appointed to value properties within the Sheerwater Regeneration Scheme area on a Red Book, no redevelopment scheme, basis. This valuation is made upon the assumption that the scheme isn't taking place and therefore the value is intended to reflect what a seller could have reasonably secured from a willing buyer if the Council was not progressing the regeneration scheme.

By voluntarily purchasing properties within the regeneration development area the Council, through Thamesway, provides access to the enhanced compensation payments of 17.5% of market value, with no requirement for the owner to demonstrate any loss. In addition, an owner-occupier will be able to seek assistance with purchasing a new property for personal occupation. This assistance provides up to 33% of the value of the new property or £100,000 whichever is the lesser as a cost-free equity investment by the Council/Thamesway. In exceptional cases, the Council will provide a Mortgage of last resort.



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Until 2019

In some cases owners may wish to agree to sell but want to defer the completion date, again these arrangements can be made to meet the needs of the owner provided the Council/Thamesway can have certainty of securing vacant possession of the property when needed for the development.

Access to these enhanced arrangements can be requested when confirming your acceptance of the valuation from Frazers. Frazers is not authorised to negotiate with you about your request but simply to obtain details from you of what assistance you would like and pass them on to the Council/Thamesway. The details of implementing such arrangements will be managed by the Council's lawyer when dealing with your lawyer on an individual basis, as all personal circumstances vary and it is the Council/Thamesway intention to help people move and to meet their respective needs.

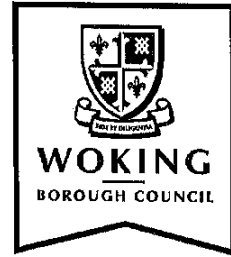
I would encourage you to consider selling your property to the Council/Thamesway in advance of the redevelopment and the Council making a Compulsory Purchase Order, which it has not done, as a voluntary sale will give you the maximum amount of assistance and access to help to move. I therefore suggest you contact Naomi Gould, Matthew Lewis, or Anthony Manser at Frazers on 01483 730909, or email [naomi@frazers.co.uk](mailto:naomi@frazers.co.uk) at the earliest opportunity.

Finally, Sawyer Fielding has made further representations to the Council and I attach a copy of my letter to Dan Knowles explaining the Council's position.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Bittleston', written over a horizontal line.

**Cllr David Bittleston**  
Portfolio Holder for Strategic Housing Development



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Your ref: 11 August

12 October 2017

Dear Dan

### **Regeneration of Sheerwater – Voluntary buy back programme**

I refer to your letter of 11 August.

I note, as we have previously, your contention that you are a specialist compulsory purchase surveyor. In that context you seek to challenge the basis upon which the Council is offering to buy properties within the Sheerwater Regeneration area on a voluntary basis prior to the Making of a Compulsory Purchase Order.

Frazers are correctly instructed to make a valuation of a property on a no scheme basis where the owner is willing to sell. Your allegation about the "threat of demolition" reduces the value that Frasers would apply is totally rejected. I do not accept your argument that a Statutory Valuation would be more appropriate. We have not made the CPO nor had it confirmed; in such circumstance the Statutory Valuation basis will apply and only the minimum statutory compensation will be available, not the enhanced 17.5% nor the access to assisted purchase. It is our view that the Council's offer of 17.5% above Market Price and access to assisted purchase which could be up to £100,000 is greater than the owners will be able to secure under the normal process of evidencing and claiming losses etc.

You are correct that owners may appoint their own surveyor in determining whether or not to accept the "Frazer Offer" from the Council, through Thameswey, to voluntarily acquire their property. Frasers are not appointed to negotiate on price, they are appointed to assess a fair market price. If the owner decides to appoint a surveyor to advise them on the acquisition price they must do so at their own expense which will be covered within the 17.5% if they proceed to sell the property on a voluntary basis. You state that 69 of the property owners have appointed you to represent them and I can only assume that they have agreed to pay you for your advice as we have made clear to you on previous occasions that the Council will not pay you. In the interests of your clients you need to advise them to ask Frasers for a valuation which they can then compare to the valuation you have given them; there will be no negotiation. The owner can accept the valuation and proceed with the sale or request that the matter be referred to the District Valuer by the Council for determination; the Council and Thameswey will accept that the decision of the District Valuer will be binding.



2005-2006  
*Sustainable Energy*  
2007-2008  
*Promoting Sustainable  
Communities Through  
the Planning Process*  
2008-2009  
*Tackling Climate Change*



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You ask for an opportunity to discuss deferred sales. No one has yet indicated they want a deferred sale. The arrangements for both assisted purchase and deferred sale will be dealt with by the Council's appointed solicitor. The approach for Assisted Purchase is already set and being used. The approach for Deferred Sale will be simple and requires no discussion as it seeks to fairly reflect changes in value relevant to the area. When the price is agreed and contracts exchanged on a conditional basis reference will be made to the Nationwide House Price Monthly Index for the Outer South East (Index) applicable at that date and the latest value of the Index will be used to adjust the agreed price at the point of completion. The contract will oblige the owner to complete when the property is required for the scheme subject to an agreed notice period. The owner will require legal advice in this matter and will be requested to appoint a Solicitor at the time of agreeing the voluntary sale.

I do not accept that engagement with you is "key" to success. I welcome you seeking a non adversarial approach and suggest that you advise your clients that are willing sellers to engage with Frasers and obtain a valuation. If, as you contend, Frasers Valuation understates the value of your clients' property, which we do not accept, then we are willing to test the position by reference to the District Valuer, at the Council's expense, and be bound by his decision.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Bittleston', with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Councillor David Bittleston  
Leader of the Council

Email [cllr david.bittleston@woking.gov.uk](mailto:cllr david.bittleston@woking.gov.uk)  
Response to Sawyer Fielding