

WHAT IS
THE FUTURE
OF HIGH-RISE
HOUSING?
EXAMINING THE
LONG TERM
SOCIAL AND
FINANCIAL
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Allies and Morrison

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People.Design

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Edwards**



WHAT IS THE FUTURE OF HIGH-RISE HOUSING? EXAMINING THE LONG-TERM SOCIAL AND FINANCIAL IMPACTS OF RESIDENTIAL TOWERS

Kath Scanlon - Chair

Distinguished Policy Fellow and Deputy Director at LSE London. Since 2015 she has focused on ways of accelerating new housing development in London with a focus on high density housing.

- WELCOME**
- STRUCTURE OF THE EVENING**
- HOW THIS BOOK CAME ABOUT**

WELLBEING IN HIGH RISE HOUSING

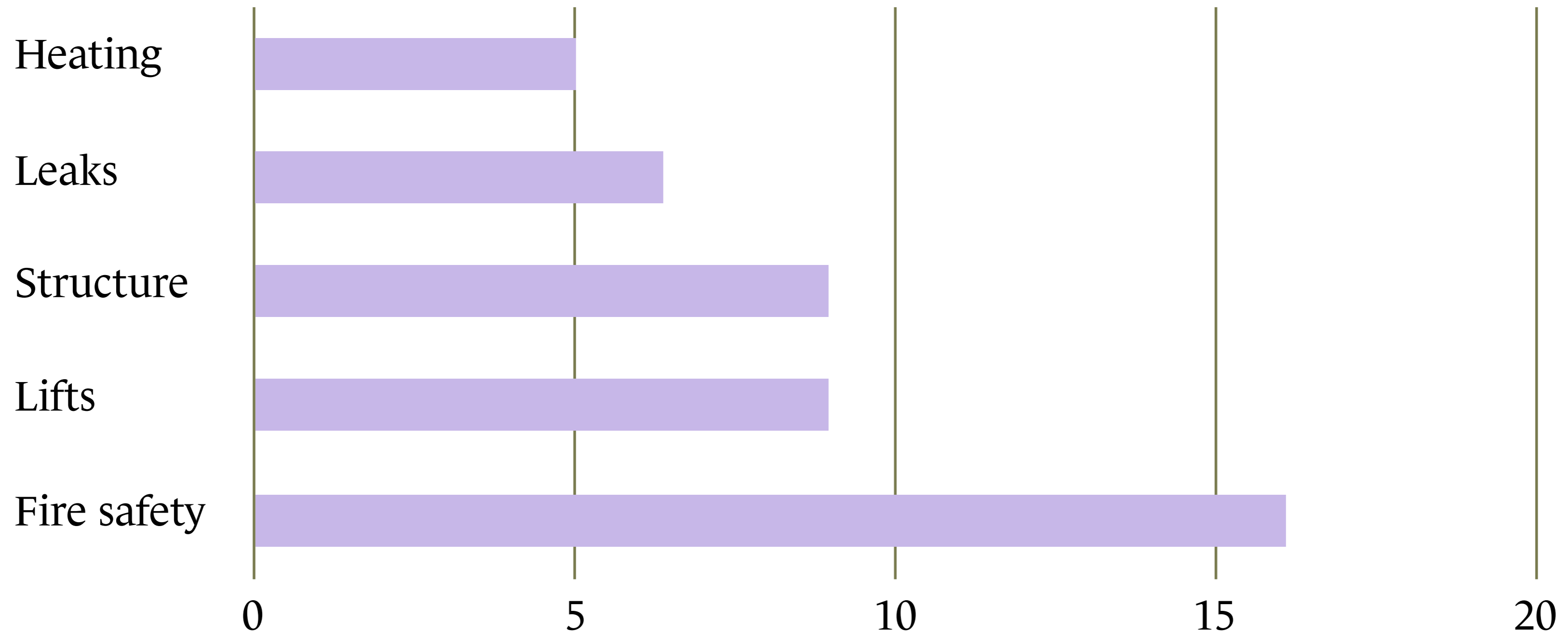
- UK high-rises historically were mainly social housing—change in last 30 years
- Social scientists' research into residents' experience has found some positive effects
 - More space (potentially) for green areas, good views, central locations, less maintenance work for residents, lower fear of crime
- ...and some negative ones including
 - Fear, stress, behaviour problems, low levels of interaction with neighbours
- Strong theme: high rises inappropriate for small children
- Much of this research done decades ago. Are findings applicable to today's buildings? Are there design solutions?

SERVICE CHARGES AND MANAGEMENT: FINDINGS FROM OUR SURVEY OF LEASEHOLDERS

- Currently no source of systematic evidence about leaseholder charges and what they cover
- Online survey carried out summer 2022. Respondents from 50 schemes, mostly London. High-density, not exclusively high rise
- Indicative picture:
 - Median service charge £208/month; range £80 - £750 (with one outlier of £3,000+)
 - 68% quite or very unhappy with scheme management. Main complaints: lack of responsiveness, little information about expenditure, poor workmanship

MAJOR ISSUES

Long-term plans: >75% hoped to be living in a house in five years' time



HIGH-RISE HOUSING - COSTS TO LEASEHOLDERS

Dickon Robinson

Architect and previously Assistant Director of Housing at the London Borough of Camden and Director of Development for the Peabody Trust.

COST AND COMPLEXITY OF THE DESIGN, CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE OF HIGH-RISE HOUSING

Roger Holdsworth

Architect and Partner at Pollard Thomas Edwards, leading PTE's Knowledge Hub, which advises clients and colleagues on compliance and buildability.

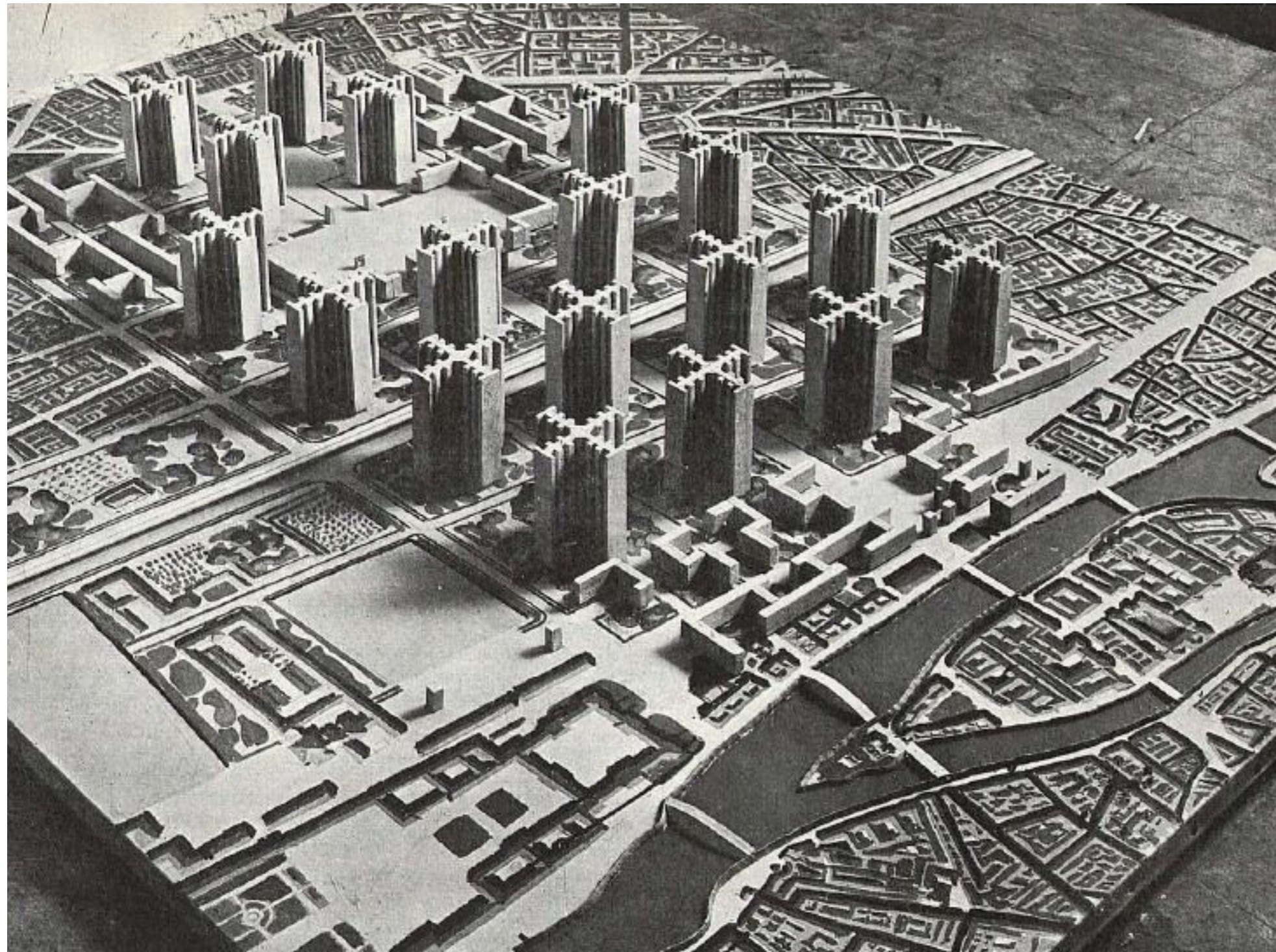
IN SEARCH OF THE RADIANT CITY – TALL BUILDINGS AND PUBLIC OPEN SPACE IN LONDON

Andrew Beharrell

Senior Advisor and former Senior Partner at Pollard Thomas Edwards. Co-author of a series of reports on topical housing and planning issues.



RADIANT CITY



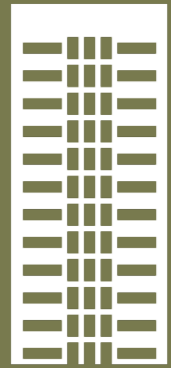
<https://www.archdaily.com/411878/ad-classics-ville-radieuse-le-corbusier>



Alton West Estate, Roehampton © Alan Murray-Rust

POPULATION SPIKE

551*
residential towers



88,000*
flats



160
flats average per
tower



300-500
people per tower



5,000
people in larger
clusters



* NLA London Tall Buildings Survey 2022

ACCESS TO PUBLIC OPEN SPACE AS A BASIS FOR HEALTHY URBAN LIVING

“Adequate open space for both recreation and rest is a vital factor in maintaining and improving the health of the people”

Patrick Abercrombie - The County of London Plan 1943-44

“Brockwell Park in Lambeth will be closed to the public on Sunday, April 5 to comply with the national guidelines on social distancing needed fight Covid-19.”

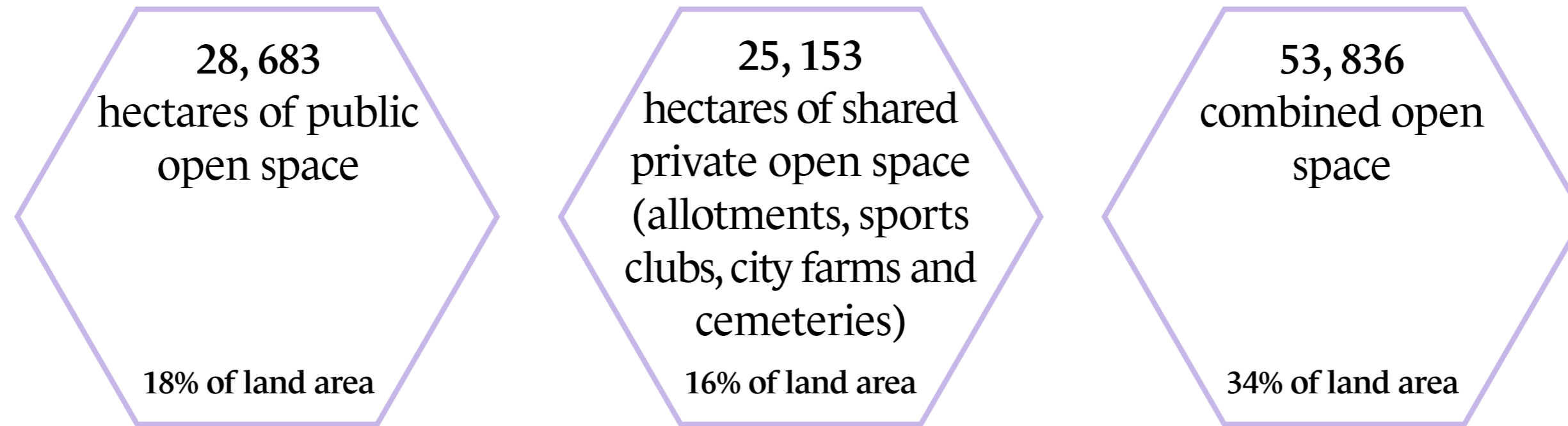
Love Lambeth



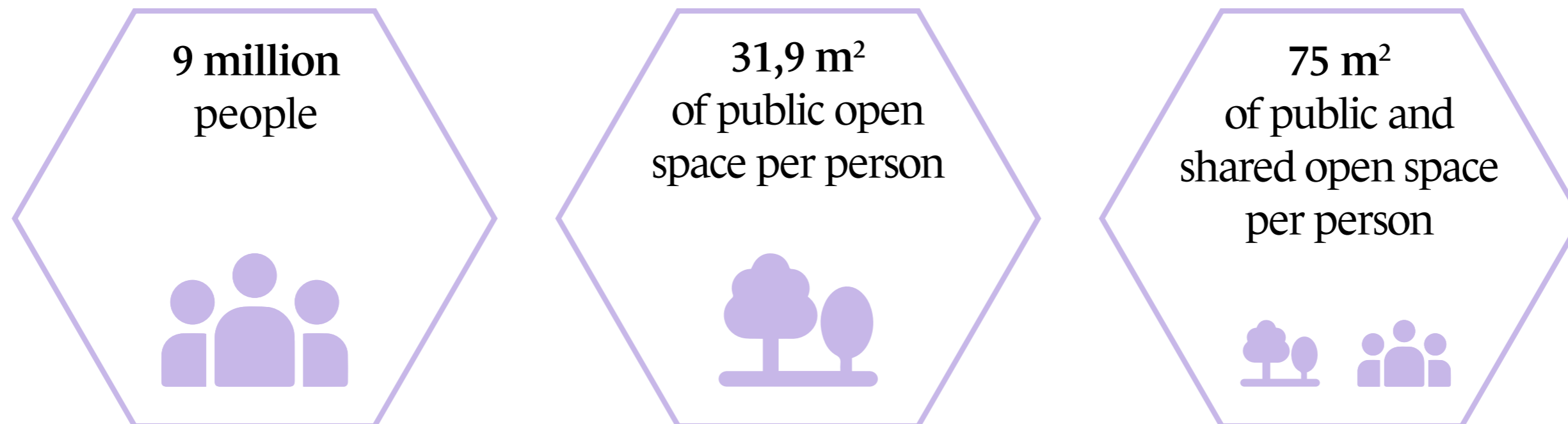
Brockwell Park - <https://www.landscapeinstitute.org/p1080200/>

QUANTIFYING OPEN SPACE

How much open space does London have?



How much open space per person?



HOW IS LONDON'S OPEN SPACE DISTRIBUTED?

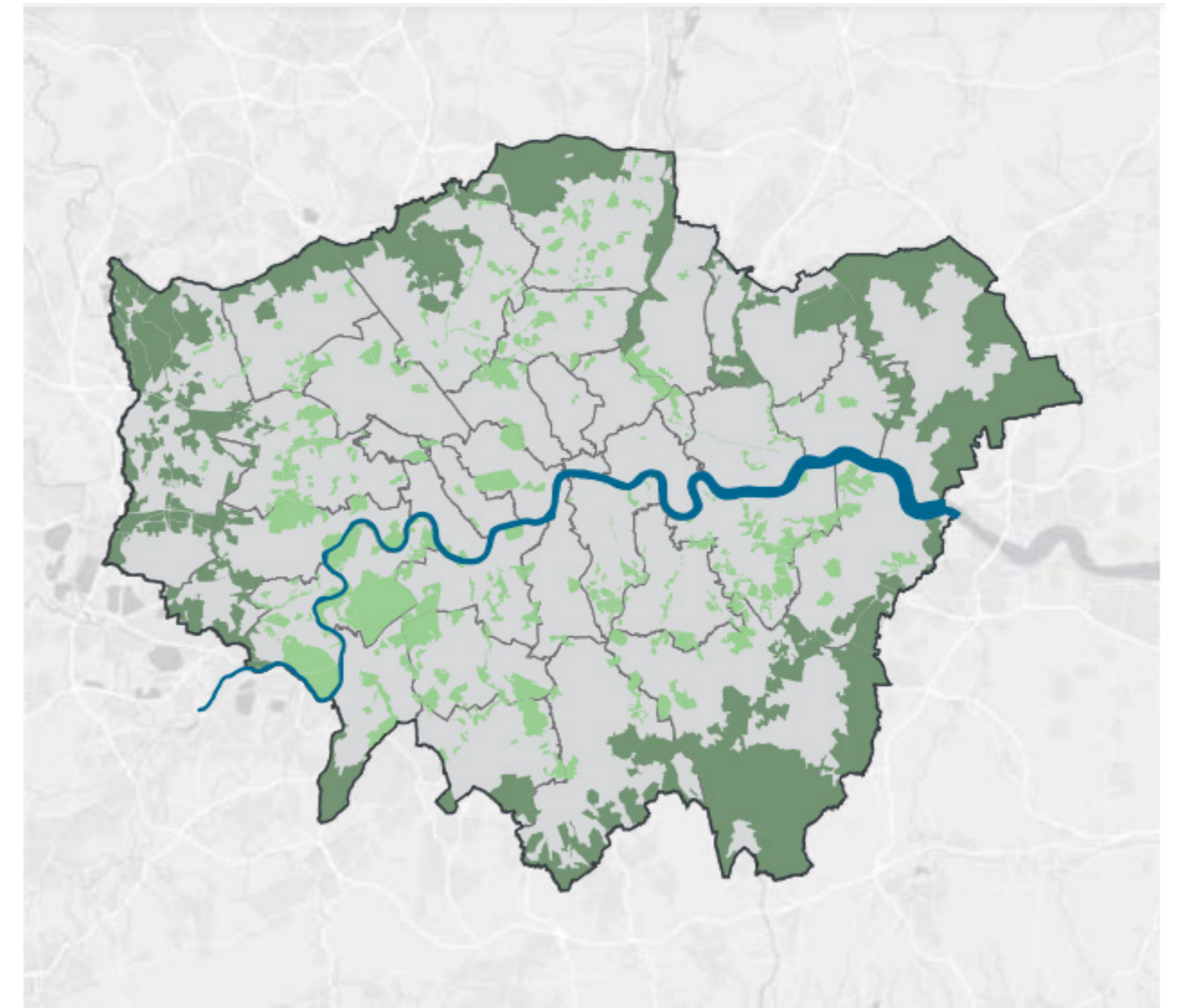
Borough	% of people in poverty	Open Space/ person	Average m ² / person
Tower Hamlets	39	17	
Newham	36	31	22
Hackney	29	17	
Bromley	17	259	
Richmond upon Thames	19	169	229
Havering	17	259	

Tower Hamlets has the greatest number of tall buildings in London's pipeline and Newham the fourth highest. Bexley, Bromley and Richmond have none.

HOW MUCH OPEN SPACE DOES LONDON NEED? London Plan 2021 – a raft of policies covering open space

“Open spaces are... a vital component of London’s infrastructure”

- Policy S4 Play and informal recreation – developments to meet specific targets
- Policy S5 Sports and recreation – assess, protect and enhance
- Policy G1 Green infrastructure – assess, protect and enhance
- Policy G4 Open space – protect and expand “where possible”
- Policy G5 Urban greening – major developments to meet specific targets
- Policy G6 Biodiversity and access to nature – aim for net biodiversity gain
- Housing SPG Policy 3.5
- Neighbourhood scale – enhance provision of green infrastructure in the public realm
- Communal and public open space – provide new public open space to address deficiency
- Private open space – all developments to meet specific targets



Green Belt and Metropolitan Open Land

- Green Belt
- Metropolitan Open Land

Source: Borough Local Plans

Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right (2018)

HOW MUCH OPEN SPACE DOES LONDON NEED? County of London Plan 1943-44

Patrick Abercrombie
recommended minimum
4 acres per 1,000 people
(16.2 sqm per person)
within half-mile (800m)
walk from every home



HOW MUCH OPEN SPACE ARE TALL DEVELOPMENTS PROVIDING?

PTE's densest projects

- 15 projects
- 10-18 storeys
- 500-1150 habitable rooms per hectare
- 18 sqm public and shared open space per household (approx. 8.0 sqm per person)

Motion



Waltham Forest
18 storeys

Lea Bridge Gas Works



Waltham Forest
18 storeys

City Park West



Chelmsford
14 storeys

Coronation Square



Waltham Forest
18 storeys

HOW MUCH OPEN SPACE ARE TALL DEVELOPMENTS PROVIDING?

Public open space per person in square metres

Queen Elizabeth
Olympic Park



*Newham, Tower Hamlets, Hackney and
Waltham Forest*

18 m²

King's Cross



Camden

2.57 m²

Vauxhall Nine Elms
Battersea



Wandsworth

0.78 m²

North Acton



Ealing

0.31 m²

HOW MUCH OPEN SPACE ARE TALL DEVELOPMENTS PROVIDING?

Stand-alone towers – review of NLA Tall Buildings Survey 2021

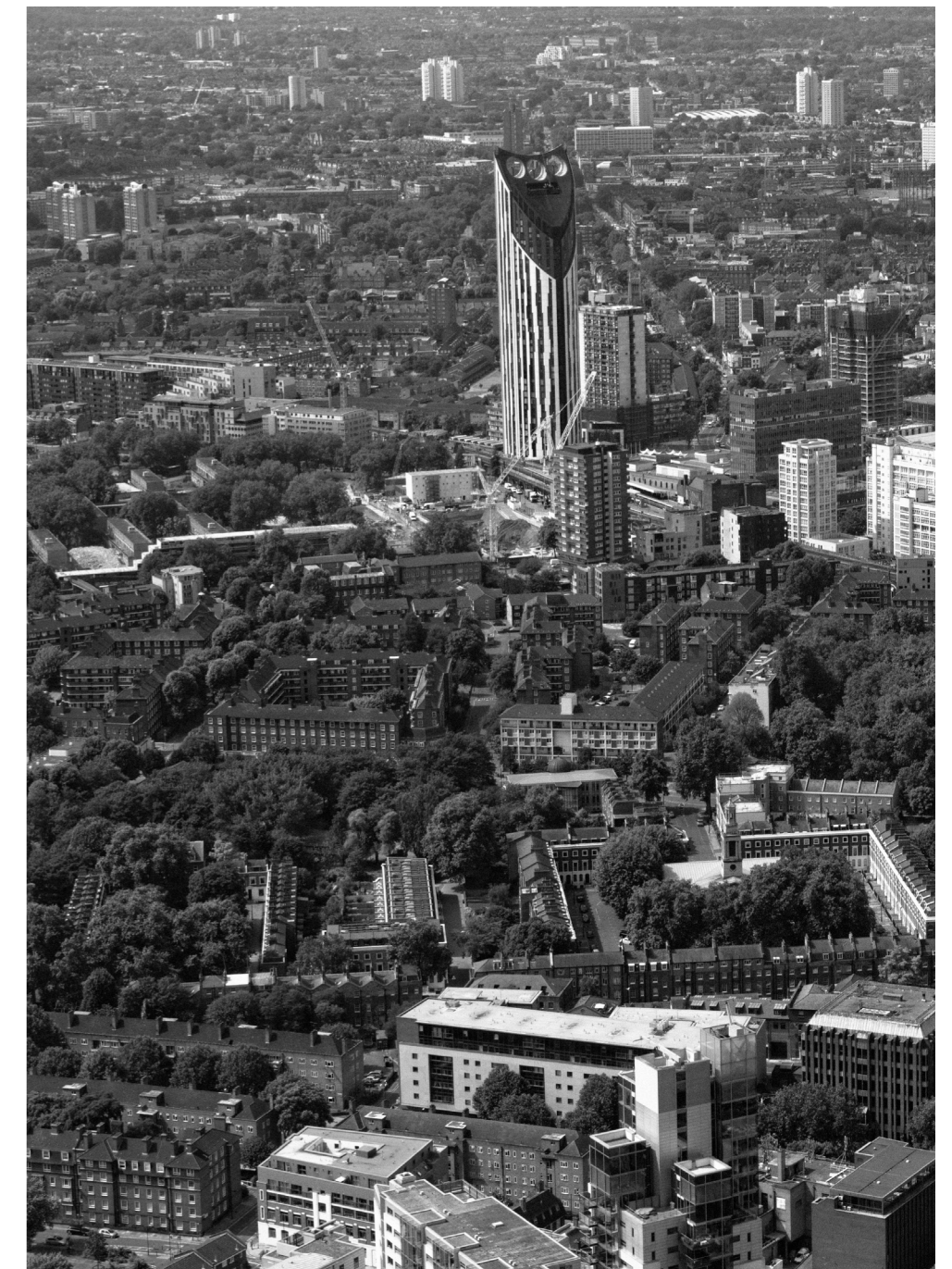
**USING DATA
FROM NLA TALL
BUILDINGS
SURVEY:**

528 residential towers in pipeline

43 residential towers featured

16 of these are stand-alone or 'footprint' developments with little or no public open space at ground level

195 stand-alone towers in pipeline if extrapolated



WHAT NEXT?

- Expand this study and consult on it
- London-wide mapping of open space provision and deficiency
- Comprehensive database of the open space delivered by recent and current high-density development
- Post-occupancy evaluation of completed high-density developments and their impact on open space
- Consider the case for a minimum target amount of nearby public open space for every resident (and potentially every worker)
- Understand better the contribution of tall buildings towards meeting London's housing need

KEY CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

June Barnes

Previously Chief Executive of Housing Association, East Thames Group and a Non-Executive Director of Urban and Civic plc.

MAIN THEMES TO CONCLUSIONS

- No regulation on how service charges and sinking funds are set
- Inadequate framework to ensure leaseholders understand their rights and obligations
- No obligations on developers to provide information on lifetime costs
- Lack of understanding of the long term resilience of the new towers
- Building regulations and planning regulations out of step with rapidly changing construction options
- Issues about suitability of high rise housing for people on moderate and modest incomes
- The need for more research on all aspects of high rise housing

RECOMMENDATIONS TO PROTECT LEASEHOLDERS

- Regulate the way service charges and sinking funds are set
- Require developers to provide a full lifecycle cost plan for high-rise housing schemes for planning authorities and purchasers
- Require freeholders to maintain the lifecycle cost plan provided by the developer
- Require the legal profession to establish best practice guidance for those acting as conveyancers to prospective purchasers

RECOMMENDATIONS TO IMPROVE THE DEVELOPMENT OF HIGH RISE HOUSING

- Review Building Regulations and align Building Regulations and Planning Policies for buildings above ten storeys
- Support research and development on high rise construction to be undertaken by an independent testing organisation.
- Require planning authorities to draw up and enforce open space provision for new development of high rise

RECOMMENDATIONS AROUND TENURE IN HIGH RISE HOUSING

- Review the use of incentives that encourage marginal home owners to purchase high rise housing
- Review whether development grant should be provided for family housing for affordable rent in high rise housing
- Discourage high-rise development for affordable housing and buyers on moderate incomes

RECOMMENDATIONS ON FUTURE RESEARCH

Government at all levels to promote and fund independent research to better understand:

- the satisfaction of residents in existing high-rise buildings and how it varies by tenure, household type and income
- the real costs of living in high rise housing for leaseholders and how these are recovered
- options for building high-rise housing which reduce life time costs and carbon take

PANEL DISCUSSION

Paul Eaton

Partner of Allies and Morrison. He led the planning stages of 251, one of the practice's tallest residential buildings and is currently leading housing projects across London.

Douglas Rhodes

Partner in the property litigation team at Trowers & Hamlins LLP specialising in service charges and leasehold management.

Q&A

