

# Home & High

The quality paper for Crouch End & Muswell Hill

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## Tributes to fallen heroes

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## Loving the alien

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## Nursery tots head to the open air



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# Leaseholders' £40,000 bills

### Fears over financial burden of repairs work

by Alex Wellman  
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Haringey leaseholders could be hit with whopping bills of up to £40,000 each for work to their homes, it has emerged.

Council papers show that housing bosses rolling out refurbishment programmes believe a number of leaseholders could face huge financial burden from work to blocks and estates.

The news has left many fearing for their future, with some questioning how they will be able to pay.

Lynne Zilkha, a leaseholder of Cranbourne Road, Muswell Hill, said: "We don't know why these colossal bills are coming or what can be done about them."

#### Terrifying

"It is absolutely terrifying because you don't know where you are. It will be a really tough time because there are a lot of leaseholders on the breadline already."

Under the terms of their agreements, leaseholders have to pay towards the cost of major work to the roof, exterior, foundations and common areas of where they live.

The council is currently working on its Decent Homes programme, which is a government project designed to ensure all social housing meets a specific standard.

According to one council paper, "a small number of blocks and estates will require rather more work per dwelling than



■ Cllr Alan Strickland

has been the case to date, resulting in charges to leaseholders in the region of £30,000 - £40,000."

Ms Zilkha said: "Everywhere is leaking; loads of roofs need repairing because the council left them for 30 years without maintenance and now they are leaving it to leaseholders to pick up the tab. It's absolutely dreadful in every sense of the word. There will be people forfeiting their leases and selling them at auction."

Others questioned just how the figure could be so high.

Terry Iland, of Windermere Road, Muswell Hill, said: "The council has to justify this in some sort of way and I'm not sure how they will be able to do that."

News of the potential bills comes after the *Broadway* revealed how repair staff for the



■ Cllr Richard Wilson

council's ALMO Homes for Haringey had received £3.7million of bonuses in just two years.

Cllr Richard Wilson, Lib Dem leader, said: "With the recent scandal where massive bonuses were paid out, and repairs staff suspended, many leaseholders will be questioning whether these bills are value for money."

Cllr Alan Strickland, member for housing and regeneration, assured leaseholders they had "generous payment options" for those unable to fork out the cash immediately, including longer, interest-free periods. "We recognise that for the very small number of leaseholders affected by larger bills, meeting their share of the costs of decent homes improvements will be difficult," he said.



## Ed's backing for candidate

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