

Elba ground rent hike U-turn by Swansea Council

By EvansTheCrime | Posted: September 26, 2014

By Jason Evans / jason.evans@swwmedia.co.uk / @EvansTheCrime

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Residents of Gowerton's Elba estate were facing ground rent hikes of 6,000 per cent

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SWANSEA Council has backed down on controversial plans to slap a group of residents with massive ground rent increases of up to 6,000 per cent.

People living in the Elba housing estate in Gowerton were facing huge increases in bills from around £50 a year to, in some cases, more than £3,000, after a local authority review.

The proposed increase provoked an outcry, and left residents feeling shocked and angry — and promising to fight the hike.

Swansea Council owns the freehold interest in the estate and the houses, and earlier this year announced that, following a review, ground rents were set to soar.

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But now Rob Stewart, Swansea Council leader and cabinet member for finance, has announced a U-turn.

He said that while the council had followed correct procedures in reviewing the ground rents, the local authority had listened to residents.

He said: "We will now be offering an alternative annual amount that's both far more affordable for residents and meets our needs as the owner of the estate's freehold interest.

"We'll also be giving the estate's residents and leaseholders the chance to buy the freehold of their premises based on our revised assessments."

The council has not yet released details of what the "alternative" ground rents will be.

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Read more at <http://www.southwales-eveningpost.co.uk/Elba-ground-rent-hike-U-turn-Swansea-Council/story-23005771-detail/story.html#1c4XXG30WwCUmsII.99>

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