

Hackney Update

WDCO Board Meeting

April 2023

This paper provides an update on projects and work streams within Woodberry Down.

1. Vacant Possession Phase 4

As at the end of March 2023 there were 32 secure tenants, 106 temporary tenants and 37 leaseholders to be re-housed in Phase 4. Vacant possession is programmed for the end of December 2024.

Leaseholder buy backs

There were 41 leaseholder owned properties at the point of making Phase 4 'in Phase', of which around half are landlord leaseholders with private tenants, and half resident leaseholders..

Four properties have now been bought back, and of the remaining 37, eight offers have been made and a further 6 offers have been prepared.

The Regeneration team is also working with Notting Hill Genesis to prepare a brochure for the Shared Equity offer to resident leaseholders. There are still some flats on Phase 2 available the main focus is on the Shared QEquity flats being developed on Phase 3.

Private tenants and homeless tenants placed in temporary accommodation

All non secure tenants (107) in Phase 4, have now received a letter from the Downsizing and rehousing team advising them that they will be rehoused. The team are currently carrying out checks e.g. any changes to household composition, confirmation that the household has been accepted as homeless, medical requirements etc. Once this is complete they will be discussing re-housing options and the next steps.

Council Secure Tenants

As the table below illustrates, the Phase 4 secure tenants have all been pre-allocated to new homes in Phase 3. Of these secure tenants, there are a few households who would rather remain with Hackney Council as landlord. The Decant team are working to identify suitable re-housing either off the estate or in a future phase on the estate.

As the re-housing requirements for Phase 4 tenants has been assessed and largely met the Decant team are prioritising pre-allocations of homes in Phase 3 to Phase 5 tenants. Once this exercise is complete the Decant Team will assess the housing needs of tenants in phases 6, 7 & 8 as there may be opportunities for tenants from these phases to move into Phase 3.

Preparations are ongoing for a further drop-in session for tenants in Phases 5-8 in May to view the Phase 3 proposals, with a follow-up session later in the summer for pre-allocated tenants to make their choices around tiles, and bathroom and kitchen colours for Phase 3B.

Numbers of new homes, allocations to date, and homes still to allocate remain the same as last month

	New Units in Phase 3	Phase 4 tenants allocated	Phase 5 tenants allocated	Homes still to allocate in Phase 3
Phase 3A	75	32	29	14
Phase 3B	42	0	13	29
Total/balance	117	0	(22 households yet to allocate)	45

2. CPO Phase 4

Last month we updated members on the Land Referencing process which is the first step in making the CPO. Letters were sent out to all residents in Phase 4 (175) asking them to return a form confirming the status of their residency on the estate; A Request for Information (RFI), they were also asked to complete an Equality Impact Assessment Form. To date we have received fifty nine RFI's and forty six completed EQIA forms. Together with Ardent, the CPO consultants, we will be trying to encourage a wider response over the next few weeks.

Although the CPO will be progressed, we would always prefer to buy back homes by negotiation and will do everything we can to agree sales, and offer support to leaseholders in identifying the best re-housing option for them.

3. Local Lettings Policy and Split Households

In Phase 4 a total of nine households have been approved for split households, and the Downsizing and Rehousing Team (DART) have made 3 offers of one bed flats. There are a number of voids in the pipeline so we are confident that all 9 new households will be offered before the end of the summer.

In Phase 5, twelve new households have been approved for split households. Once Phase 4 split households have been allocated their new homes, the DART team will start the process of re-housing these applicants.

In terms of out of phase split household requests we are reviewing these and will be contacting applicants shortly.

The Housing Strategy & Policy Team are looking to commence a review of Woodberry Down's local lettings policy in the Spring.

4. Allocations to NHG relets

There were two re-lets in March to tenants from phases 4 & 5.

5. Block D

The Council and MillCo have agreed an approach to developing the strategy and are working through the relevant agreements (advised by Strategic Property Services and Area Regeneration). Property Services team are liaising with MillCo to clarify the possible business

rates for Block D. We expect there to be a mix of uses, including some low cost space available for community focussed activity and will continue to discuss the approach with the Working Group and WDCO.

6. Library feasibility study

The consultants, Architecture 00, have provided a draft feasibility report and are working with the Woodberry Down Regeneration Team and Library Services to finalise this. The findings will be shared as soon as the review is complete.

7. Masterplan Review

The Delivery Partners and the Design Committee are working on the the Masterplan Review. A more detailed update will be provided by Berkeley Homes.

8. District Heat Network (DHN) and Energy

A meeting of the strategic DHN group with the partners and Expedition was held at the end of March. The current proposals for the DHN were reviewed and it was agreed that the partners will work collaboratively to ensure that it supplies affordable, reliable and clean heat to all Woodberry Down residents. A schedule of further meetings are to be agreed.

Arup the consultant undertaking a feasibility study into alternative energy sources will be visiting the existing CHP plant rooms and the new Energy Centre over the next couple of weeks so they can review their performance.

Workshops with the stakeholders and WDCO are being arranged to consider the current and future proposals to ensure that whichever ownership model and energy source is chosen will provide affordable, reliable and low carbon heat to all residents. A programme of meetings will be agreed with the group starting in April.

9. Landscaping Task and Finish group

Three WDCO reps were elected at February's WDCO Board.

Berkeley Homes will be arranging the initial meeting for the group with the landscape architects and officers from the Council's Parks team.

10. Damp and mould on Woodberry Down Estate

Berkeley and Hackney Council are working closely together to identify and gain access to properties for survey work to be undertaken, to both inform the Masterplan review and assess the condition of the properties in terms of damp and mould. Survey work started in February and will continue through to the summer.

A verbal update will be given at the board meeting on numbers surveyed and the extent of the damp and mould problems.

11. Seven Sisters Road

No further update since the steering group meeting held in March.

12. Planning Update

The Planning Case officer has left the Council and a new one has just started. We will update this section next month when the planning officer has settled in.

13. West Reservoir

The public consultation has now started on the proposed improvements for West Reservoir. These include a number of changes to the green space surrounding the reservoir:

- a new accessible green space for local residents and visitors allowing people to circulate around the eastern bank
- an accessible bridge across the New River (the current bridge has steps)
- enhanced habitats for wildlife
- improved landscaping
- a more accessible path network (better linking West Reservoir to Woodberry Down estate, Woodberry Wetlands and Green Lanes)
- new reed beds in the Reservoir
- stabilisation of the New River banks

And improvements to the West Reservoir Centre, with the aims of updating the facilities, making them more accessible and inclusive, to encourage a broader range of users:

- a new introduction to open water swimming area for beginner swimmers and other groups
- new indoor 'village changing' facilities with showers and additional toilets
- relocation of the cafe with new outdoor seating area, to maximise the space inside the building
- upgraded conference spaces
- upgraded boat workshop and learning spaces

There will be a programme of public drop-in events and stakeholder engagement planned for the coming weeks, and we are keen to encourage as broad a range of feedback as possible.

All the background information, proposed designs and feedback questionnaire can be found on our consultation website: hackney.gov.uk/west-reservoir-improvement

14. Thames Water

Thames Water are hoping to start the upgrade works to the New River path on the 1st May. We are awaiting confirmation

15. Cultural Plan Phase 4

We have been developing a cultural strategy and implementation plan with D-P-Q; cultural consultants involving workshops and events such as the lantern parade and the heritage workshop. The Woodberry Down Regeneration Partnership is committed to including culture as part of the development of the area and recognises the role culture and creativity plays in helping places to feel rooted in their history and identity and enabling communities to create, access and participate in cultural experiences that support wellbeing and encourage social connection and cohesion. To this end we have secured funds to enable the recruitment of a part time Cultural Lead officer role to co-design and shape an inclusive culture-led offer. More

details of this offer will be shared at the next board meeting.