

WDCO Board Meeting

May 2023

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

1. Vacant Possession Phase 4

As at the end of April 2023 there were 31 secure tenants, 105 temporary tenants and 37 leaseholders to be re-housed in Phase 4. Vacant possession is programmed for Spring 2025.

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 another is due to complete in May. Of the remaining 36, thirteen valuations and resulting offers have been made.

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

A drop in session has been arranged for the 24th May to encourage Phase 5 tenants to move into the new homes that will be available on Phase 3. The drop in session will give tenants the opportunity 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, and are set out in the table below.

	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

Land Referencing, which is the first step in making the CPO, has taken place, with letters and a 'request for information' form sent to all residents and leaseholders: this is the first step in making the CPO. They were also asked to complete an Equality Impact Assessment Form. This stage is mostly complete, with follow ups undertaken as needed by the CPO consultant (Arden Management).

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. Two applicants have now been signed up and moved in, a further one is in progress. 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 is reviewing the Local Lettings Policy for Woodberry Down, and will focus on the process for managing and prioritising out of phase split households.

4. Allocations to NHG relets

There was one re-let in April to a tenant from phase 4.

5. Block D

The Council and MillCo have made progress behind the scenes in progressing relevant legal agreements, the Council's Property team is taking detailed advice in relation to fit out and likely business rates, in order to clarify the strategy with MillCo.

MillCo have spoken to some Woodberry Down groups and other local organisations shortlisted through the Block D marketing. This will be followed up, when the various financial issues have been clarified. In general the building is expected to be used for a mix of uses, including some

low cost space available for community focussed activity. In addition to liaising with the Council, the Working Group and WDCO MillCo are keen to engage with work on the Woodberry Down ground floor strategy (led by Berkeley Homes) to make sure that what is delivered is coordinated with other local activities, adding to and complementing existing activity in Woodberry Down.

6. Library feasibility study

The Council has appointed a consultant, Architecture 00, to lead a feasibility study for a new library as part of the proposals for Phase 4. The consultants are considering:

- The local socio-economic context, library need and demand;
- Library proposals - including consideration of additional/‘community hub’ activities and proposals for colocation of services/activities;
- Space requirements and relationship to the public realm and the courtyard garden at podium (first floor) level;
- Financial information, to inform a business case; and,
- A project plan to indicate the next steps should a library be developed.

The consultants have provided a draft report and are working with the Regeneration Team and Library Services to finalise this.

The report proposes different levels of library provision, all based around a community hub model, with flexible space to provide different types of activity, and varying levels of co-location to both add to the mix of uses which could be offered as well as support the delivery of library activities in a business model.

The report sets out the likely space needed for a library to what can deliver on the commitments set out by the Council’s Library Strategy, and Library Services is leading the discussion about what can be delivered in Woodberry Down. One issue is that the total ground floor ‘commercial’ space in Phase 4 is not much more than the size of a smaller library in Hackney (such as Dalston or Clapton libraries) and therefore the extent of what can be delivered must be agreed with Berkeley Homes, as well as discussed with the community in terms of what is right for Woodberry Down. If a library is to come forward a key next step would be to consult and develop priorities for the space in discussion with the community.

The study itself is nearing completion and findings will be discussed with WDCO. We aim to bring a detailed presentation in June. Findings from the library strategy must also be linked to the Groundfloor strategy, which aims to review community and commercial infrastructure across Woodberry Down.

7. Masterplan Review

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

8. District Heat Network (DHN) and Energy

A workshop with the WDCO DHN working group was held and we reviewed the current proposals for the District Heat Network. A further session will be arranged for the beginning of June with four further workshops and a site visit planned. There is also an intention to visit the new Air Source Heat Pumps on Phase 3 in the summer.

Arup is working with Berkeley Homes and NHG to review the current performance of the communal CHP heating which will inform their report on alternative energy sources. We anticipate an initial

draft mid June.

9. Landscaping Task and Finish group

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.

Housing Services are preparing an update on progress made to date on properties that have had damp and mould issues, which can be provided at the Board in May.

11. Seven Sisters Road

Hackney Officers and Hackney's Lead Member for Environment and Transport met with the commissioner from Transport for London (TfL) to discuss next steps for the Seven Sisters project. TfL reiterated the financial constraints that the organisation is facing but they are committed to working with Hackney to identify a scope of work to move forward with on Seven Sisters Road. There was a recognition that the objectives identified by the Seven Sisters Road steering Group would need to be met. Parties recognised that a refresh to the traffic modelling will be required to reflect any changes to transport patterns since it was last undertaken pre-pandemic. Following the meeting, TfL are exploring what internal resource they can provide to support the project, and have undertaken to provide an update in the next 1-2 months.

12. Planning Update

The former Planning Case officer, Catherine Slade, has left the Council and a new one has just started - Louise Prew.

13. West Reservoir

The public consultation has now started on the proposed improvements for West Reservoir. All the background information, proposed designs and feedback questionnaire can be found on our consultation website: hackney.gov.uk/west-reservoir-improvement. Consultation closes on May 31.

14. Thames Water

Thames Water commenced the upgrade works to the New River path on the 1st May, the works should take 7 weeks to complete.

15. Cultural Plan Phase 4

More details of this offer will be shared at a Board meeting in the summer.