

Hackney Update

WDCO Board Meeting

September 2023

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

1. Vacant Possession Phase 4

As at the end of August 2023 there were 31 secure tenants, 109 temporary tenants and 36 leaseholders. 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'. We have now bought back five properties, and agreed terms on another five, and have made thirteen offers additional to that.

Over the Summer we ran drop-in sessions for resident leaseholders interested in shared equity, with the opportunity for them to choose and reserve a home ahead of Notting Hill's marketing to the public, which will start in the autumn. A few resident leaseholders are exploring this option. Of the 124 Shared Ownership homes under construction, thirteen are eligible to be purchased as Shared Equity.

Private tenants and homeless tenants placed in temporary accommodation

There are currently 109 non secure ('temporary') tenants in Phase 4. Where properties are bought back, and therefore 'void', the team may continue to use the properties to house homeless residents in temporary accommodation. The Downsizing and Rehousing Team has been in touch with all residents in temporary accommodation, to advise about the timescale for rehousing, and to discuss re-housing options/next steps.

Of the leasehold properties, there are 19 remaining which are owned by non-resident leaseholders, and let to private tenants. Within the buy back process it is the responsibility of the landlord to keep their tenants informed, discuss timescales and serve relevant notices. However contact details for the Council's housing team has also been sent directly to private tenants, via the 'request for information' process (see below) and if private tenants have questions or concerns, they are encouraged to make contact with the Council via the Regeneration Team, Housing Options and Advice, (<https://hackney.gov.uk/housing-options> / 020 8356 2929) or the ITLA.

Council Secure Tenants

All of the Phase 4 tenants and most of the Phase 5 tenants have now been pre-allocated new homes in Phase 3. As the re-housing requirements for Phase 4 and Phase 5 tenants have been assessed and largely met, the Decant team are now prioritising pre-allocations of homes in Phase 3 to Phase 6 tenants.

An exhibition is planned for October, to invite all pre-allocated tenants to make their choices on bathroom and kitchen colours, as well as tiles for their new homes on Phase 3.

The numbers of new homes, allocations to date, and homes still to allocate 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	30	32	11
Phase 3B	42	1	18	23
Total/balance	117	0	(13 households yet to allocate)	36

2. CPO Phase 4

As reported to the last WDCO Board, the Council has begun the background work to prepare a CPO. We are aiming to seek Cabinet authority to make a CPO in early 2024.

The Council progresses a CPO as a fall back position, to make sure the regeneration can go ahead. However we would always prefer to agree terms with all residents, supporting residents in finding the best rehousing option for them; active engagement in this way is, in any case, a requirement of a CPO process, to show that the Council has done everything it can to avoid having to rely on use of a CPO. We are keeping in touch with residents to make sure they are aware of what is happening.

3. Local Lettings Policy and Split Households

In Phase 4, a total of nine households have been approved for split households. Six households have moved - five into one bed flats and one to a two bedroom flat.

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

The Local Lettings Policy for Woodberry Down was amended in July 2023 with three minor clarifications. A procedure is being developed for the management and prioritisation of 'out of phase' split households..

4. Block D

The Council is working with Berkeley Homes to establish costs involved in fitting out the space. This will feed into finalising the terms with Mill Co., and seeking authority to draw down the head lease. We are still aiming to achieve this in the Autumn. We have met with both Mill Co. and Berkeley Homes a number of times over the summer to discuss the approach to the fit out, and develop plans.

The Council is also in the process of drafting and discussing the terms with Mill Co., to agree in more detail what the offer to the community will be, and the process for seeking subtenants. As soon as we have a shareable draft of this we look forward to discussing it with the Working Group, and moving forward with local engagement.

5. Library feasibility study

The options for this continue to be reviewed, with work underway to establish options for bringing forward a new space. Next steps are to review the options considering findings from the ground floor strategy research, and mapping of local social and economic projects and activity.

6. 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.

7. District Heat Network (DHN) and Energy

A site visit to the Phase 3 Energy Centre took place in August. Arup is continuing to work with Berkeley Homes and NHG to assess the current performance of the communal CHP heating which will inform their report on alternative energy sources. A draft report has now been shared, and is being reviewed by the Council.

8. Seven Sisters Road

A Steering Group meeting is taking place next week.

9. Planning Update

Update to follow

10. West Reservoir

The public consultation on the proposed improvements for West Reservoir closed on 31st May.

The council is reviewing the consultation responses and working with the design team to respond to some of the feedback. The updated designs will be presented to the Improvement Board for review once developed and costed.

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