



WDCO BOARD REPORT



OCTOBER 2021

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1. DEVELOPMENT PROGRESS

1.1. Phase 2 Block D

Block D contains 62 x Shared Ownership homes. As of the 5th October we have sold 47 homes.

1.2. Phase 2 Block B

Block B has progressed well. Inspections of the homes has taken place and the units are of a very good standard. However, there has been a delay to the programme of approximately 5 weeks as window opening need to be fitted. Berkeley's have confirmed that all windows will be replaced by 10th November 2021 therefore we estimate that legal completion will take place on 18th November 2021.

1.3. Phase 3

The Build Agreement was signed on the 11th October 2021. NHG continues to meet with Berkeley regularly to review design information and agree specification principles.

NHG is well progressed with the procurement of its Quality Management Team. Hunters have been appointed as Employer's Agent. We are currently out to tender for Clerk of Works and will be shortly going out to tender for MEP Consultant. PRP will be appointed as Fire Guardian. On the 5th October NHG and Hunters met with WDCO representatives to walk the site and review design and specification issues from earlier phases.

1.4. Phase 4 and Masterplan

NHG continue to be an active in the design meetings and have recently fed into the resident engagement approach and Tree Task Finish Group.

2. SOCIO ECONOMIC UPDATE

Considering the recent external factors that are affecting people's financial wellbeing, the social & economic regeneration team have been looking into our existing projects and how they can support those who have been affected by Universal Credit cuts, rising energy prices and the long-term effects of the pandemic.

Pocket Power

This is our pilot project working with a newly created social enterprise who purpose is to help people save money by switching their utility bills to cheaper tariffs/ rates and/or apply for eligible discounts such as the Warm Homes discounts.

We are working closely with the Housing Officers who are referring residents to the service. We are now looking at a wider promotional campaign, working with our Welfare Benefits advisors and other partners to ensure those who would benefit from this service are aware how they can access.

Hackney Citizen's Advice (CAB)

During quarter 2, 34 clients were seen by the CAB, with 24 of these being NHG residents. The majority of the client's queries were around debt and welfare benefits. Over the quarter the CAB helped residents to manage £25,491 of debt and increased client's income by £54,746. Again, we are working with the CAB to refresh publicity materials and we will look to introduce one day a month for face-to-face appointments, once the office is back in operation.

CAB Case study

Client was 57 years old Turkish male, single and his Universal Credit (UC) claim had been closed. He didn't know why and he made a new claim. He asked for Advance Payment as he didn't have any money and hadn't heard anything from the DWP. Client had contacted DWP numerous times but couldn't get any information as to why his claim was closed or when they will pay him the advance payment. Client also had various illnesses and conditions and was so emotional during appointment and stated how lack of money to even buy food is impacting on his mental and physical well-being.

CAB contacted DWP and found out the reason his claim was closed was because client had failed to attend an appointment at his local Job Centre Plus and failed to cancel appointment. CAB informed DWP it is because client has back and knee pains and struggles to walk and if they are aware of his health conditions and he states although there is information on his health conditions, he has not provided a fit note confirming this. CAB requested a Mandatory Reconsideration of his claim closing and was informed it has been passed on to his case manager and they will contact client on the phone. They asked about his Advance Payment, informed them how client is struggling financially and doesn't have any money for food, and they stated it has been approved and they will pay £800 into his account that day.

CAB advised client to speak with his GP and get a fit note, send it to DWP as soon as possible and they may send him a UC50 form to fill to find out how his conditions are affecting him and to contact us if he needs assistance in filling form. CAB advised client that he can apply for Personal Independence Payment and how much he will receive based on his illnesses and CAB can assist him to make claim.

Client was so grateful after appointment and states he can't believe the amount of information CAB were able to get from DWP and their assistance.

3. OPERATIONAL UPDATES

3.1. Monthly Contract Performance Monitoring Meetings

Monthly virtual BSW (heating and hot water) and Maintenance and Electrical (e.g. intercom, lifts, car park gates) performance meetings continue to be held in partnership with WDCO. The last BSW and M&E meetings were held on 8 and 9 September. The next meetings are taking place on the 14 October 2021. As a result of the continued focus performance and partnership working continues to improve in the key areas. All WDCO Board members are encouraged to attend.

3.2. NHG Operations Meetings with WDCO and Ward Councillors

NHG operations meetings with WDCO and the Ward Councillor are taking place monthly (1st Wednesday of every month). Attendees include WDCO Board members, the Ward Cllr, ILTA and NHG officers. The last meeting was held on 6 October 2021. The next meeting will be held in on 3 November 2021.

3.3. Building Safety intrusive surveys for tall blocks at Woodberry Down

PEWSHAM/ BLOCK E

- BHL's remedial works to replace the High-Pressure Laminate (HPL) panels at Pewsham have now been completed. Favourable EWS1 certificates have now been issued for all NHG buildings at Woodberry Down. The favourable EWS1 certificate will enable leaseholders to sell, re-mortgage and/ or staircase, if they wish to do so, and general needs residents to progress their Right to Acquire (RTA) where they are eligible.

3.4. Estate and Housing Management – Service Improvement

- There are no changes to the housing management team at Woodberry Down. Staff will remain primarily home based, visiting Woodberry Down only to carry out tasks that cannot be undertaken from home. This will be reviewed monthly, in line with NHG and Hackney guidance.
- Estate walkabouts with WDCO and other stakeholders take place on the 1st Tuesday of every month. The next walkabout will take place on 2 November 2021. We have set up a communal repairs tracker which will be monitored and reviewed at monthly operations meetings with WDCO.
- We held a meeting for Ashview residents on 14 September to discuss the findings of the AECOM survey and set out our next steps. Ashview residents, representatives from WDCO and the ITLA and the local councillor attended. Following the meeting attendees were sent an executive summary of the report as well as the meeting presentation, FAQ's and minutes. We will continue to monitor the sewage chambers and pumps to identify any potential blockages before they become a problem. There have not been any overflows for four months.
- NHG and Berkeley met to discuss the repairs carried out by Berkeley on the heating and hot water system at Watersreach & Reservoir. There is no report to pass on to WDCO yet which is why no further meeting was convened. Berkeley are confident that they have dealt with the issues and Clear safety are following up with a site visit with BHL shortly to confirm there are no other issues.
- As noted above, NHG's development and estate teams carried out a successful site visit with WDCO and the new employer's agent for Phase 3 to discuss lessons learnt from previous phases.
- A small number of outstanding issues with gates and lifts across the estate have now been resolved. We are working closely with our M&E team to ensure that, if needed, our contractors can source and fit parts quickly to avoid either a gate or lift being out of action for a prolonged period.
- In the first week of October 2021 housing officers completed 10 annual visits to residents across Woodberry Down.