

Hackney Update

WDCO Board Meeting - March 2025

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

1. Vacant Possession

Phase 4

There are now 4 secure tenants, 23 leaseholders, and 9 TA households left in Phase 4.

We continue to aim for vacant possession in late spring, but this timeline may be delayed, based on the progress of the CPO (see below).

Leaseholders

The Council is continuing to buy-back leaseholder properties in Phase 4. Two leaseholders are progressing buying new properties in NHG blocks as shared equity.

There are 23 remaining leasehold properties to buy back with 16 of these are agreed and with solicitors engaged to progress the purchases. 7 properties remain in negotiation.

Some properties have private tenants living in them. It is the landlord's responsibility to inform tenants of their intentions, and serve the correct notices. The Council is providing housing support to some individuals, and all private tenants have been given information independently about how to contact the Council's housing teams if they need to.

Residents in Temporary Accommodation (TA)

There are now 9 remaining residents in TA. The DART team is continuing to work with the remaining households to identify rehousing.

Secure Tenants

4 secure tenants are remaining in Phase 4. Two are allocated to Phase 3A and are due to move. The other two have chosen to not move to Phase 3A - one of these has accepted an alternative offer, and the Council is identifying an offer for the remaining tenant.

CPO

The Council has made a CPO for Phase 4 and served notices on 11 October. The period for objections closed on 11 November. One objection was received, and the objector has now requested a CPO enquiry. The Planning Inspectorate (which oversees such enquiries) has set an inquiry date of 29th April. In the meantime the Council continues to negotiate with the leaseholder in the hope that a deal can be struck and the Inquiry cancelled.

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 and leaseholders. We are continuing to engage with all leaseholders and households affected by the scheme to negotiate on buy backs and ensure that people are able to access advice and support as required.

Phase 5

As the design work is due to commence on Phase 5, the Regeneration Team is currently preparing the programme to bring Phase 5 'into phase'. This will be shared with WDCO, and updates added to the Board papers in due course.

2. Moves to Phase 3

Phase 3A

There are 75 homes for social rent in Phase 3A. The Council has worked with NHG to offer and allocate homes to residents, initially to residents in Phases 4 and 5, as well as extending the offer to residents in Phases 6, 7 and 8.

Moves began in December. 57 of the 75 homes have been successfully allocated, with moves complete or due.

NHG has reviewed both the rents and the service charges, working with the Council, and following discussions with WDCO. The final rents and service charges are being communicated to all tenants involved in Phase 3A by NHG.

For the remaining 18 homes in Phase 3A the Decant Team is reviewing possible allocations from Woodberry Down tenants in future phases, and is speaking directly with tenants. The Council is agreeing the approach to allocating any remaining units.

Phase 3B

There are 42 homes for social rent in Phase 3B, which are due to be completed in June. Further to a handover period to NHG, moves are anticipated to begin in July.

Hackney and NHG are working together to prepare for moves to Phase 3B. Homes have been pre-allocated to tenants and we are planning to begin engaging with tenants about their allocated homes and prospective moves from early April.

Hackney and NHG have worked together to review the allocations and moving process that took place for Phase 3A to inform our approach to Phase 3B. As part of this we are planning to meet with WDCO representatives to discuss both Phase 3A and Phase 3B.

We will discuss and agree with WDCO how to keep the WDCO Board updated.

3. Split Households - Woodberry Down Local Lettings Policy

Hackney's Housing Policy and Strategy team has been leading on a review of the Split Household element of the Woodberry Down Local Lettings Policy. The next step is for officers to meet with WDCO members to outline the challenges and understand residents' concerns. Two dates in March have been offered, but a firm date was not set at the time this report was finalised.

4. Ground Floor Strategy

An update on next steps will be brought to WDCO and the Round Table in April. In the meantime, a number of non-residential ground floor uses are being taken forward on a space by space basis, including Block D and the NHG satellite community space in Phase 3a,

5. Block D

The Council, Berkeley Homes and NHG have now signed and completed the legal agreements underpinning Block D. Fit out works have been instructed and are due to start in April. Our expectation is that the space will be ready for occupation by the end of the summer.

In the meantime Mill Co. has commenced marketing and engagement for the sub-tenant uses in the space. Marketing material has been shared with the Block D Working Group and a meeting is scheduled for 24 March to review this and discuss the approach in greater detail. Each sub tenant will be expected to provide benefit to the local community - the actual activities will vary but commitments would be captured in the tenant (licence) agreements between the subtenant and Mill Co.. The Council will hold an operational agreement with Mill Co. which sets out the community benefit commitments. These elements, and how operations will be monitored going forward, will be discussed with the Working Group.

6. Masterplan Review

Following a period of pre-application engagement, Berkley Homes submitted the Masterplan for Phases 5-8 of Woodberry Down as an outline planning application to the Council. The application has been validated by the Council and is now subject to a period of statutory consultation during which submissions can be made. Following the consultation period, the application will be heard by the Council's Planning sub-committee for determination. We hope that the application can be considered at the May Planning Committee, but this is not yet confirmed.

If residents wish to review the application documents, a paper copy is available at the library in the Redmond Centre or in the Hackney Service Centre at Hackney Central. Alternatively contact a member of the team for help with any questions.

7. Seven Sisters Road

Transport for London continues to work on improvements and reducing severance issues at Seven Sisters Road. TfL has undertaken traffic modelling and assessment to understand what the traffic impacts would be for a scheme that reduces traffic capacity on Seven Sisters Road (SSR). TfL are using their own budget for this initial work.

The modelling outputs on the latest designs from TfL show that Manor House junction is at capacity and further changes at the junction are not possible given current traffic flows. TfL have commissioned their urban design team to look at the section of SSR between Manor House and Amhurst Park Road to address severance issues. Delays to this work are due to the complexity of this work and that other boroughs also have to be consulted. Funding for the SSR Project has been provided through S106 agreements.

A TfL representative attended the WD Round Table meeting in March and provided an update on progress. TfL has focussed on resolving issues around the route of Cycleway 50, and needs to resolve this before progressing the junction and pedestrian movement improvements. It expects to have a proposal ready for consultation in the Summer of 2026

8. The new Children's Centre

The Council has completed the construction of the new Children's Centre and Children's Services will be moving into a brand new building annexed to the St Johns Health Centre. The Council's Education Property and Children's Services teams are working together on decanting arrangements. Once the Lilliput Children's Centre has been demolished, Berkeley Homes will begin work on relocating the football pitch (from Phase 5) and landscaping works in Spring Park.

9. West Reservoir

The West Reservoir Improvement Project secured planning permission in May 2024. Since then the detailed design has been developed further and the works are currently being procured. Procurement is underway and the Council plans to confirm a contractor appointment in March 2025,

The scope of the project includes improved accessibility around the reservoir, the development of the existing building and construction of a new cafe, improved leisure facilities and the enhancement of

habitats for wildlife. The anticipated construction period is approximately nine months, therefore if the contract commences in May 2025 it will be completed by Spring 2026.

10. New Satellite Community Facility

NHG are in discussions with MHDT in respect of the future use of the new unit.

11. Woodberry Down Cultural Development Programme Update - ongoing, no update.

Work has started in initiating and developing a series of socially engaged, participatory **pilot projects** between community groups and artists that explore broad themes of community action and civic society. Groups include London Wildlife Trust (Woodberry Down Wetlands and Woodberry Down Primary School, Famestar Youth, Friends of Woodberry Down, and St Johns Community Deaf Centre).

A project working with MHDT has been initiated, supporting young people in Woodberry Down to design and build a temporary Pavillion structure for the Hidden Rivers Festival. The project will work with Manor House Development Trust, London School of Architecture. An invited cultural producer is being sought by MHDT and the Cultural Development Officer to support the artistic production of the festival.

Next steps for the Cultural Strategy include developing a framework for a **Woodberry Down Culture Steering Group** to guide the future decision-making and planning of the WD Cultural Programme. A draft terms of reference for the Steering Group has been drafted, and will be shared with the aim of initiating the steering group in spring 2025. This Group will be part of the revised Governance Structure for Woodberry Down.

The Cultural Development Officer is also looking into setting up **Woodberry Down Culture Club** - providing a forum and network for a range of people and groups in Woodberry Down to meet regularly, share ideas and opportunities, and develop projects. Discussions are underway with MHDT about hosting a series of initial meetings. The ambition is for these meetings to include time for film screenings or talks from invited guests as part of their offer.