

Lifts at Maplewood & Birchwood – Update

We've now received a formal update from our internal Lift Team at NHG regarding the ongoing lift issues affecting residents at Maplewood and Birchwood Apartments.

We fully recognise how disruptive and frustrating these issues have been, and we want to reassure you that addressing them remains a top priority. Please see below for the detailed information provided by the Lift Team.

Survey Findings

- Recent condition surveys have confirmed the need to fully replace Lifts 1 and 2 at Maplewood (Woodberry Grove) and Lifts 1 and 2 at Birchwood.
- The recommendation to replace the lifts is based on their current age and findings from the TUV SÜD condition survey.
- A full replacement has been chosen over partial modernisation (e.g. control system upgrades) due to the following key concern: *"The equipment is of lightweight design and would not be considered sufficiently robust for medium to heavy-duty use or in environments where the equipment could be susceptible to misuse or vandalism."*
- Several maintenance issues were also identified and passed to our contractor, We Maintain.
- While most have been resolved, a few remain outstanding due to the closed protocol nature of the systems, which require a specialist external contractor.
- We expect an update on their availability this Friday 31 October, though progress has been delayed due to leave.

Next Steps

- The NHG lift team are working with consultants to develop the technical specification for the new lift installations.
- Once finalised, we will move to tender. The appointed contractor will be responsible for producing the detailed designs and documentation required for the Building Safety Regulator (BSR) application.

Building Safety Regulator (BSR) Application

- As both buildings are classified as Higher Risk Buildings (HRBs), a formal application to the BSR is required.
- This includes submission of extensive building data.
- 3D scanning and building drawings have been completed to support the application.

- These lifts will be among the first HRB lift replacement applications submitted by NHG.
- Current BSR review times are estimated at approximately 18 months.

Additional Inclusion – Maplewood Lifts 3 & 4 (Katherine Close)

- To streamline the process, NHG have commissioned TUV SÜD to survey Maplewood Lifts 3 & 4 (KC), with the intention of including them in the same BSR application.
- To confirm, we've not yet received the reports with recommendations for Maplewood Lifts 3 & 4 (KC).
- However, given they are of the same manufacture and age as the others, we do not expect the recommendation to differ significantly.

Timelines

- Our current aim is to appoint a contractor by March 2026.
- Actual works are unlikely to commence until after BSR approval.
- We recognise this is a long lead-in period, but it reflects the complexity of the regulatory process and the scale of the works involved.
- As you may be aware from recent media coverage, the current BSR process is causing significant delays. Response times for Gateway 2 approvals are now averaging 22–36 weeks, with some applications taking up to 18 months or more to progress.
- Many housing associations and local authorities are still awaiting outcomes from applications submitted since the new regulations came into effect in October 2023. It's therefore essential to manage expectations.
- We ask that WDCO and other Woodberry Down partners support us in communicating this message with residents to ensure they understand that delays and long lead times are expected.
- We will continue to provide updates as milestones are reached and will work to minimise disruption wherever possible.

Cost

- To give you indicative figures, lift replacement costs (not including any additional work which may be required) are on average costing circa £200,000–£300,000 + VAT.
- These costs could be more or less than this, but we thought it appropriate to give indicative figures at this stage. We ask that you manage this information appropriately.

Keeping Lifts Operational Until Replacement

We understand that reliability during this extended lead time is a key concern for residents. To address this:

Maintenance and Repairs

- Our existing maintenance schedule will remain in place.
- We will continue to address outstanding repairs and respond to new faults as they arise, although these are often unpredictable.

Audit of Power Supply/ Transfer Switches

- We've seen multiple breakdowns linked to interruptions in the power supply to some lifts. To move things forward, we've now instructed Fixatec to audit all automatic transfer switches, which we are advised may be intermittently failing.
- The M&E team is currently awaiting a programme outlining when each block can be inspected. We will provide an update progress update on this by 28 November.