

January Board Updates from the working group and other meetings

Hackney Operation Meeting 11th December

Attendees from WDCO: William Sheehy, Phil Cooke and Mina Faragalla

The decant process for Phase 3B is progressing, seventeen tenants have successfully moved into Block B, but around 25 homes remain vacant. Four new split household cases have been submitted since the pause was lifted, but slow applicant responsiveness continues to delay assessments. The possibility of using surplus one-bedroom homes in Block B for split household applicants has been raised, and Francis will explore this with senior officers.

Affordability remains a concern, particularly for new sheltered homes launching in January. These properties will be charged at affordable rent levels, with service charges of approximately £500 per month. This means they will only be suitable for tenants receiving full housing benefit or pension credit, limiting flexibility and potentially affecting uptake.

NHG will provide clearer timelines and information for Phase 4 rent and service charge estimates to avoid previous communication issues.

Accessibility requirements for future phases were highlighted. There is a clear need for more walk-in showers in Phase 6 homes, and early tenant engagement will be prioritised to identify needs in advance.

Hackney officers will now attend the Safer Community meetings more consistently following concerns about their recent absence.

Damp and mould issues continue to be a recurring concern. Surveyor managers have been asked to attend the Ops meeting.

Please see below the tenancy breakdown in each of the Phases.

WD Stock Data	Secure Tenants	Temp Tenants	Studio	1-Bed	2-Bed	3-Bed	4-Bed	5-Bed	Total
Phase 5	32	134	0	36	66	40	24	0	166
Phase 6	48	110	7	18	66	64	3	0	158
Phase 7	53	52	3	26	46	26	0	4	105
Phase 8	93	66	7	33	89	16	14	0	159
Total	226	362	17	113	267	146	41	4	588

Safer Community Meeting 6th January

Attendees from WDCO: William Sheehy and Phil Cooke

The meeting focused on rising crime concerns across Woodberry Down, particularly bike and phone thefts and vandalism around Watersreach. Police confirmed that new tactics have been introduced, including late-shift and plainclothes patrols, which have already reduced incidents since December. However, poor-quality CCTV remains a major barrier to identifying offenders, and NHG noted that quotes for improved cameras and additional stairwell coverage are currently being sought.

A strong emphasis was placed on improving communication and building trust with residents. The police, councillors, and local partners agreed to produce clearer, more frequent updates across multiple channels: WhatsApp, social media, newsletters and posters to counter misinformation and reassure the community. Officers noted that while Metengage membership is slowly rising, fuller resident engagement and more consistent reporting of incidents are essential. Anonymous reporting through Crime Stoppers was encouraged to overcome fears of retaliation.



The meeting also recognised the need for coordinated youth intervention. Recent outreach by Young Hackney has focused on young people at risk of involvement in antisocial behaviour.

The next meeting is scheduled for **5 February**, subject to police shift confirmation.

Split Household Meeting – No further updates, WDCO is awaiting response to Chair’s email

There have been no further meetings since the one held in September. The Chair has written to Cllr Nicholson to follow up on the outstanding actions. There is also a brief update from Hackney in the Board report.

NHG Service charge meeting 13th January :

Attendees from WDCO: William Sheehy, Hilary Britton, Phil Cooke, Oonagh Gormley and Omar Villalba

The meeting centred on the significant service charge increases proposed for 2026/27 and the need for clearer communication to help residents understand the reasons behind them. NHG explained that budgets are still being finalised ahead of their submission deadline, and that the increases largely stem from historical undercharging, rising contractor costs and the need to base future budgets on more accurate data. However, concerns were raised that residents at Woodberry Down are facing increases far above the sector norm which is affecting affordability and trust. The WDCO members and ITLA stressed the importance of providing transparent and explanations so residents can see what is driving the uplifts.

Much of the discussion focused on contract costs and the need for greater clarity around how prices differ across blocks despite centrally procured contracts. NHG explained that variations arise from differences in block size and cleaning schedules, but agreed to provide clearer documentation to help residents understand these discrepancies. Members also questioned whether alternative local contractors could be used to reduce costs, and NHG will explore what flexibility exists within procurement rules.

The Board members and ITLA noted that without actuals to compare the estimates to it was difficult to assess the budget. NHG confirmed that audited accounts should be available later in the year, which will support better transparency going forward.

Overall, the meeting emphasised the need for transparent explanations, better data, and early, consistent communication to prevent repeated large service charge increases in future years. Updated budgets with full annotations will be circulated once finalised.