

# WOODBERRY DOWN COMMUNITY ORGANISATION

## Board Meeting

### MINUTES

Thursday 15th January 2026  
7:15pm Redmond Community Centre

**Attendance:** Donna Fakes, Hilary Britton, Oonagh Gormley, Adrian Essex, Ekaterina Andreeva, Phil Cooke, William Sheehy, Ann Hunte, Geoff Baron, Dulce Laluces, Omar Villalba, Gita Sootarsing, Francis McDonagh, Kristina Zagar, Necdet Ozturk

**Partners:** Jada Guest, Julian Rodriguez, Simon Donovan, Cllr Young, Gareth Crawford, Tom Anthony, Phoebe Duverger, Michael Lucid

**Visitors:** Roda Hassan, Ameera Hassan

**Apologies for absence:** Kalu Amogu, Tina Parrott, Barbara Panuzzo, Leonora Williams, Livia-Jeanne Lupumba, Jackie Myers, Cllr Nicholson

#### **Section 0 – Introduction**

**Welcome:** The chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked the partners for attending in the evening. He expressed the wish that the meeting should be both efficient and effective, and pointed out some measures that have already been taken to facilitate this.

#### **1. Acceptance of minutes 11 December 2025**

- 1.1. Julian raised a point of accuracy in 3.5, noting that there are 132 shared ownership homes in Phase 4, however this does not include 3-bed shared ownership.
- 1.2. Elaine raised concerns regarding paragraph 1.1. She asked whether WDCO had accepted Berkeley's explanation in relation to the window report. She also queried why Suzanne's account of how she observed the window falling out was not recorded in the minutes, and requested that this be added as an accurate reflection of the meeting. The Chair responded that the minutes are intended to provide a brief but accurate record of actions agreed or undertaken, and to note key points raised that influenced decisions. The minutes do not include anecdotal accounts. The Chair also confirmed that the Board had accepted Berkeley's explanation.
- 1.3. Hilary enquired who is responsible for convening the District Heat Network (DHN) meeting, noting that it has been two years since a meeting was last arranged. Tom responded that he is responsible for arranging the meeting; however, the information required for the meeting sits across several different organisations. Tom added that he has an internal meeting scheduled for 16 January, at which he will follow up on the timescale for the DHN meeting.

**ACTION:** Tom to confirm the timescale for convening the District Heat Network meeting.

**Update from BH:** BH will be reaching out for DHN Working Group availability w/c 23rd February, with a follow-up meeting likely to be held before end-March.

- 1.4. Gareth updated that the draft for WDCO's questions regarding affordability, equality and accountability is awaiting sign off and will be shared with the Board by the end of January.
- 1.5. Gareth advised that the draft of WDCO's questions on affordability, equality and accountability is awaiting sign-off and will be shared with the Board by the end of January.

**ACTION:** Hackney to circulate the answers to questions on affordability, equality and accountability to the WDCO Board by the end of January.

**Update LBH:** LBH send their respond to the Chair on 29<sup>th</sup> January. This has now also been circulated to the Board.

- 1.6. Simon Donovan reported that MHDT has followed up on the booking request for Friends of Woodberry Down and FoWD have also completed documentation to become a Community Interest Company (CIC). This registration will be submitted to Companies House Incorporation will improve Friends of Woodberry Down's ability to apply for grants.

**ACTION:** WDCO to follow up with Berkeley and NHG on organising a "Meet Your Neighbours" event.

**Update from Chair:** The purpose and leadership are still unclear. Chair will clarify focus and ownership at the February board meeting. Traditionally these events are led by R&R and NHG.

- 1.7. Roda noted that all items listed in the action tracker relate to actions from the previous month and that WDCO has discussed all items in the tracker.

## **2. Social Economic Investment Programme, NHG presentation - Sarah Connolly:**

- 2.1.Sarah Connolly, Head of Regeneration Community Delivery at NHG, delivered a presentation on the Social and Economic Investment (SEI) Programme. She outlined the role of NHG's SEI team, its priorities, highlights of performance in 2025–26, and the proposed priorities for 2026–27.
- 2.1.NHG has a contractual commitment to deliver a programme of activities and projects that support and benefit residents of Woodberry Down. The SEI team has a total funding commitment of £3 million over the lifetime of the regeneration programme and has been delivering this programme for approximately 10–12 years.
- 2.1.All SEI delivery is informed by research and community consultation as part of NHG's Social Impact Framework, with re-consultation undertaken every three years to refresh priorities. The programme focuses on capacity-building by working with voluntary and community sector organisations to deliver initiatives centred on financial inclusion, community engagement, and health and wellbeing.
- 2.1.The SEI team's priorities align with the Social Impact Framework themes: Pride in Place, Empowering Residents, Balanced Communities, Wellbeing, and Prosperity. Key areas of focus include financial inclusion services, volunteering, access to physical, social and mental wellbeing activities, digital inclusion, and engagement with residents and young people.
- 2.1.In 2025–26, the SEI team commissioned advice services delivered three days per week: two days providing direct advice to residents and one day focused on casework and paperwork. Over the past six months, the team has supported residents to reduce or manage debt totalling approximately £200,000. In

addition, the team has supported residents to access benefits , including DWP applications such as Attendance Allowance, Housing Benefit and Council Tax support, securing approximately £570,000 in additional income for Woodberry Down residents.

- 2.1.Through the SEI commissioning programme, the team has delivered 520 fitness and health classes, supported 240 individuals through one-to-one coaching, delivered courses and commissioned services with the London Wildlife Trust, and engaged 482 young people through workshops and projects.
- 2.1.Key highlights included the Pavilion Project for young people, delivered with the London School of Architecture in partnership with Berkeley, Hackney and MHDT. The project focused on architecture, design and build and was launched at the Hidden River Festival.
- 2.1.The SEI team has also provided independent debt advice to 160 residents and worked with Citizens Advice to onboard a specialist debt adviser. The team has continued to increase direct referrals to services across Woodberry Down and Hackney.
- 2.1.For 2026-27, the SEI team is currently refining its financial year budget.
- 2.1.The SEI team has been working with Vitality Matters on a feasibility study to research health-related priorities and challenges, including isolation, loneliness and limited access to support services. Findings were shared with the NHS Partnership Group, with the aim of developing a project proposal and identifying funding to support service delivery.
- 2.1.The SEI team will also support entrepreneurs through a nine-month 'Cook for Good' programme, aimed at helping community leaders develop sustainable community food hubs.
- 2.1.Hilary asked whether the SEI team's work with the NHS included the John Scott Health Centre. Sarah confirmed that the Centre has been consulted as part of the process, and that the SEI team has identifying gaps and funding opportunities to support partnership working and develop a clearer understanding of access to services.
- 2.1.Omar asked whether referrals to Citizens Advice were made for specific residents or for the wider community, including temporary accommodation residents. Sarah confirmed that services are available to all members of the community. Omar requested a redacted summary or breakdown of data on the issues being raised. Sarah explained that this data covers areas such as access to benefits, debt management and support through application processes. Councillor Young added that she has spoken with Shelter, which is working on casework at Woodberry Down, and suggested it would be helpful to request a summary of issues being raised from Shelter.

**ACTION:** Sarah Connolly to provide the data breakdown relating to the role of the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB).

- 2.1.Anne asked whether the SEI team supports entrepreneurs to establish individual food businesses or whether the programme will deliver a food business based at Woodberry Down. Sarah explained that the programme focuses on identifying community leaders within Woodberry Down and supporting them through a nine-month incubation process, with an emphasis on capacity-building and long-term sustainability for existing businesses or community organisations.
- 2.1.The Chair noted that he had spoken with Grace, Lead Programme Manager a NHG, regarding grant opportunities for waste reduction projects, and referenced GLA work on 'blue' and 'green' projects. He also enquired about business mentoring support offered by the SEI team. Sarah explained that Grace's role is to support

voluntary, statutory and community organisations to maximise and promote available opportunities.

### **3. Phase 4 Design Amendments - Berkeley Homes presentation:**

3.1. Tom updated that Berkeley have made a non-material amendment that was approved yesterday, which does not warrant a new planning application. Berkeley had to make this change and will comply with two parts of building regulations which improve the thermal performance of the building, reduce overheating risk and enhance overall energy efficiency (Part O - Overheating and Part L - Conservation of fuel and power).

3.1. The changes have come about to comply with building regulations as Berkeley received incorrect advise from a consultant at the planning stage. Berkeley have been working with the original architects (DPR, Stockwool and LDS) to ensure quality stayed and changes were not too drastic.

3.1. **Window adjustments:** The height and width of some windows have been reduced. Some windows have been removed or repositioned entirely and Berkeley have made sure this does not impact the dual access figures.

3.1. **Shading Enhancements:** Canopies have been introduced above top-floor balconies to improve shading.

3.1. **Removal of Louvres on Block C:** Minor changes have been made to louvres on Block C as they have removed one of the air source heat pumps. Berkeley looked at external shutters but they could not be used here as Regulations require passive cooling.

3.1. These changes have to be made across the entirety of the building from the ground floor-up. Tom noted that, due to building regulations, there is no guarantee that trees will be at the ground floor, so changes are applied from ground floor-up and will affect everyone in all three tenures.

3.1. William asked if all the windows will be openable. Tom responded there are still some openable windows but not all of them.

**ACTION:** Tom to provide details on the number of openable windows for William.

**Update from LBH: Only 33 windows lost their 'openability' as a result of the NMA.**

**None of the affected rooms depend on doors for ventilation, we always have either an openable side panel or another openable window in that room. All rooms have at least one window which isn't a door for ventilation**

3.1. Some windows will be removed and others will have a reduction in glazing. Both south-facing and some north-facing windows are affected.

3.1. The proportion of dual-aspect homes remains at 98.5%. All social rented homes are at least dual aspect, with some remaining triple aspect.

3.1. There have been some changes to internal daylight levels, resulting in an overall reduction of approximately 6%. However, these levels remain compliant in the context of London standards and for a scheme of 511 homes.

3.1. Berkeley has submitted the required applications and received approval to commence construction of Phase 4. Demolition is scheduled to begin on 19 January. The Gateway 2 submission has a 12-week determination period.

3.1. Councillor Sarah asked about hoardings. Tom advised that consent for artwork requires an eight-week determination and advertising period. Hoardings are therefore expected to be installed by late January or early February.

3.1. Elaine (observer) asked how many dwellings are included in Phase 4 and how many are single aspect. Tom confirmed that there are 511 dwellings in total, of which 98.5% are dual aspect and 1.5% are single aspect.

3.1.William asked when a wheel wash would be installed at the demolition site.

Michael Lucid explained that demolition will utilise existing roads and that piling will begin in June. He confirmed that a wheel wash will be installed to ensure roads remain clean.

3.1.Georgie (observer) asked about the management of pigeons during demolition and sought reassurance that any mitigation costs would be borne by the demolition contractor rather than residents. Omar added that a clear strategy should also be in place for rats, mice and other rodents.

**ACTION:** Berkeley to address and respond to queries regarding the management of pigeons and rodents during Phase 4 demolition works.

**Update from BH:** BH have responded directly to residents in KSS1 since the last board meeting. Investigations we have been required to carry out for our Sustainability teams, in advance of the demolition of Phase 4, did not observe any pigeons. As a result, we do not anticipate any increase in pigeon activity during the upcoming demolition works.

3.1.Tom advised that temporary street lighting between Manor House Underground Station and Sainsbury's will be installed by 16 January and will remain in place until June.

3.1.William asked whether a road marshal would be in place near schools. Tom explained that Berkeley is proposing to relocate pedestrian and vehicular access gates from the north to the south, exiting onto Goodchild Road, due to current disruption. If this proposal is not approved, Berkeley will retain a single access and egress point for both vehicles and pedestrians, which will be marshalled.

#### **4.Partner Updates**

4.1.**Berkeley:** Tom reported that Berkeley has undertaken initial consultation for Phase 5 over the Christmas period and will return for further consultation in the spring and summer. Tom advised that Berkeley has reviewed options for relocating the existing olive trees and supporting the commercial units. The trees cannot be located outside Sublime and Drury due to drainage channels that must remain accessible at all times, however they will be able to relate the olive trees to Nar.

4.1.Berkeley will also work with cafés and other commercial operators to encourage the approximately 600 on-site operatives to use local facilities rather than the on-site canteen. Necdet asked whether Berkeley would seek discounts from local cafés and restaurants and raised concerns about competition arising from the canteen provision. Tom confirmed that Berkeley is legally required to provide an on-site canteen. Gita noted that operatives would hold industry cards which may enable access to discounts.

4.1.Tom updated that Berkeley have had initial consultations for Phase 5 before Christmas and will be back again in spring and summer.

4.1.**MHDT:** Simon reported that MHDT staff have reviewed fire risk assessments and completed fire safety training following the incident elsewhere on New Year's Eve.

4.1.NHG will be carrying out works to the boilers next Friday to improve heating efficiency at the centre.

4.1.Classes have resumed following the Christmas break.

4.1.The Christmas meal was well attended, and 150 Christmas presents were donated by Canary Wharf Group.

4.1.Roda asked whether MHDT could consider keeping the Redmond Centre open for one to two days over the Christmas period when everything else is closed for

residents who may be experiencing loneliness. Simon advised that MHDT would look into this.

**ACTION:** Simon to explore the feasibility of keeping the Redmond Centre open for residents over the Christmas period.

4.1.**NHG:** Julian provided an update on homes occupied and sold in Phase 3. Jada confirmed that a written update had also been circulated and that she would respond to any further questions from the Board. Roda to circulate the Board's questions to Jada regarding updates.

4.1.Omar raised concerns regarding CCTV, noting that he first raised the issue in September and that five months have passed without confirmed dates for remedial works. He highlighted that residents are paying a service charge for CCTV that is currently not operational. Jada responded that an asset review is scheduled for 20 January across all NHG managed blocks and estates. This review will identify the number of cameras, their operational status and any remedial works required. Jada added that Watersreach has been fast tracked, with a DVR replacement planned for January. She also confirmed that multiple remedial works, servicing and maintenance have been undertaken and not charged to residents. Jada further noted that NHG has been planning an asset review since October and intends to move to a cloud-based system to improve accessibility and management.

4.1.The Chair noted that workstreams have changed since the previous update, with some now monitored by WDCO and the Partnership Board, and that contractual obligations have also evolved. Jada explained that NHG is unable to progress this work in house and that documents are being reviewed by external solicitors, which has resulted in delays.

4.1.Roda noted that WDCO had hoped for a follow-up meeting with NHG's consultants, as the previous meeting had not concluded, and confirmed that WDCO would be open to meeting again. Jada advised that this could be arranged subject to availability.

**ACTION:** Jada to keep Roda informed regarding arrangements for a follow-up meeting with NHG's consultants.

**Update from NHG (Jada):** As advised previously, I will update on the project when I am provided with one by the wider business.

4.1.**Hackney:** Gareth reported that there had been one further move in Phase 3b. He also confirmed that Hackney's position on split households has been provided in writing. Roda asked whether surplus homes in Phase 3b could be used for split households, as had been the case in previous years.

**ACTION:** Gareth to follow up on the potential use of surplus homes in Phase 3B for the split households to address the issue of meeting demand.

4.1.The Chair noted that the anticipated completion date for the West Reservoir has shifted from early spring to May–June 2026. He asked when the project is expected to be completed, noting that the Leisure, Parks and Green Spaces team had not provided the timelines WDCO requested.

**ACTION:** Gareth to follow up on dates and provide a clear and precise timeline for the West Reservoir works.

4.1.Omar asked for an update on WDCO's questions submitted to Hackney. Gareth advised that a draft response has been prepared and is awaiting sign-off.

4.1.Roda raised queries from leaseholders regarding Phase 5 and the decant strategy and asked when this would be presented to Cabinet and whether there is a timeline. Gareth explained that the PDA process is being used to bring this forward and in phase, with Cabinet meetings scheduled for the end of May or June, when the strategy will be considered. He confirmed that Hackney will present the Phase 5 decant strategy to the WDCO Board in advance of the Cabinet meetings.

**ACTION:** Hackney to present the Phase 5 decant strategy to the WDCO Board ahead of the Cabinet meetings in May/June.

**Board discussion without partners:**

**5. Discussion on the outcome from the Safer Community Meeting:**

The Safer Community meeting was held earlier today. The Chair reported that it was a lively but well-managed meeting, with discussions focusing on crime and anti-social behaviour (ASB).

William suggested that residents could be encouraged to take simple precautions, such as keeping mobile phones out of sight, and proposed distributing flyers to raise awareness. The Chair noted that stop-and-search activity was discussed at the meeting, with approximately one quarter of stops resulting in the recovery of drugs or weapons, and 73 arrests made since October. The meeting also discussed the incident involving a resident from Birchwood and noted that similar incidents have occurred at Watersreach and in other blocks. It was acknowledged that NHG had not been aware that the DVR for CCTV equipment had failed, highlighting shortcomings in CCTV management.

The Chair asked the Board whether there were any actions that could make a meaningful difference. Anne suggested increasing activities, particularly youth-focused provision. The Chair proposed that NHG support the organisation of Residents' Associations (RAs) and noted that a WhatsApp group is now in place for Watersreach residents, helping to organise residents and provide a forum for reporting concerns. William highlighted that activities for young people are already available, including Arsenal football training sessions held twice weekly. The Chair added that the Safer Community meeting had identified a lack of sufficient activities specifically for this building. Hilary noted that existing activities do not operate beyond 9.00pm and that there are no activities running at midnight. She also noted that some suspects may not be residents of the estate.

**The future of WDCO and feedback from the Estate Management Board:**

The Chair reported that there will be a discussion about the future of WDCO once the regeneration is complete. It was suggested that WDCO could take a more proactive role in curating activity on the estate, similar to Gita's involvement with local businesses and the Culture Club. The Chair noted that MHDT should have greater involvement, and that the Board of Trustees will be reviewing the activities of both MHDT and LDT.

The Chair noted that meeting attendance has declined and that there have been some resignations. The recent hybrid meeting format was reported to have worked well. Improved camera and microphone equipment will be in place for the next meeting to better support remote attendance and improve overall participation.

In response to a question about how WDCO should operate going forward, William stated that WDCO was established to drive the regeneration and, while it can be involved in additional activities, its priority should remain the delivery of the regeneration. William also suggested that the ground floor strategy should be a

priority, with a greater emphasis on shops and fewer gyms. The Chair responded that WDCO has already submitted a response to Hackney and its consultants setting out a range of views on the ground floor specification.

The Chair advised that the GLA has made £12 million available for 'blue' and 'green' projects and asked whether WDCO is in a position to apply for grants to support such initiatives.

Francis asked whether WDCO could cease to exist once the regeneration is complete and it has fulfilled its primary function. Oonagh noted that this would be dependent on effective Residents' Associations being established.

Oonagh suggested engaging with Better in relation to 'blue' and 'green' projects and associated funding opportunities.

Hilary stated that the Redmond Centre should function as a genuine community hub and that maximising its use should be a priority.

The Board agreed that it would like WDCO to continue and become more active, including applying for grants and working in partnership with organisations such as the Wildlife Trust and Better.

**ACTION:** Adrian to represent WDCO as a proactive community entity up to and beyond the completion of the regeneration project.

**7. The Public Forum (creating a subgroup):**

7.1. The Chair proposed holding the Public Forum in April and for 3 people to create a subgroup to organise the event. Ekaterina, Kristina Phil and William volunteered. Kristina requested for meetings to be arranged online. William and Phil will send flyers through letterboxes.

**ACTION:** Roda to facilitate meetings of the public forum subgroup.

**Update from ITLA:** Roda arranged a meeting for the Public Forum subgroup.

**8. Blogs/social media:**

8.1 The Chair provided written guidance on how to upload blogs to the WordPress site and suggested potential blog topics, including grant opportunities for WDCO, swimming at the West Reservoir, Hackney Library, and demolition logistics.

8.2 It was agreed that blogs would be promoted across other social media platforms, including Instagram, Facebook and WhatsApp.

**ACTION:** All board members to provide ideas for blogs.

**9.AOB:**

9.1. Ekaterina's asked about discussions held at the NHG meeting regarding the 2026–27 service charge budget for blocks directly managed by NHG. NHG had shared the proposed budget and explained the reasons for increases, including contract changes and previous years' service charge estimates being inaccurate. WDCO representatives felt they lacked sufficient actuals to compare against the proposed budget and were unclear on the extent of overspend in the current financial year. Oonagh added that it was difficult to understand the impact of the proposed changes on individual flats.

9.1. WDCO representatives identified areas where further explanation was required and requested that these be addressed. It was noted that greater clarity on the scale of the increase is expected once Jada provides further information.

**ACTION:** Roda to share the service charge budget spreadsheet for NHG-managed blocks with Ekaterina once it has been finalised by Jada.