

Hackney Update

WDCO Board Meeting

July 2023

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

1. Vacant Possession Phase 4

As at the end of June 2023 there were 31 secure tenants, 107 temporary tenants and 36 leaseholders to be re-housed in Phase 4. Vacant possession is programmed for Spring/Summer 2025.

Leaseholder buy backs

There were 41 leaseholder owned properties at the point of making Phase 4 'in Phase'. We have now bought back five properties, and agreed terms on another four. Thirteen more offers have been made.

The Regeneration team is working with Notting Hill Genesis to prepare information for the Shared Equity offer for resident leaseholders with marketing sessions in July to September. There is a priority period for current Woodberry Down leaseholders to reserve a Shared Equity property in Phase 3, if they wish. Of the 124 Shared Ownership homes under construction, thirteen are eligible to be purchased as Shared Equity.

Private tenants and homeless tenants placed in temporary accommodation

There are currently 107 non secure ('temporary') tenants in Phase 4. Where properties are bought back, and therefore 'void', the team may continue to use the properties to house homeless residents in temporary accommodation. The Downsizing and Rehousing Team has been in touch with all residents in temporary accommodation, to advise about the timescale for rehousing, and to discuss re-housing options/next steps.

Of the leasehold properties, there are 22 remaining which are owned by non-resident leaseholders, and let to private tenants. Within the buy back process it is the responsibility of the landlord to keep their tenants informed, discuss timescales and serve relevant notices. However contact details for the Council's housing team has also been sent directly to private tenants, via the 'request for information' process (see below) and if private tenants have questions or concerns, they are encouraged to make contact with the Council via the Regeneration Team, Housing Options and Advice, (<https://hackney.gov.uk/housing-options> / 020 8356 2929) or the ITLA.

Council Secure Tenants

All of the Phase 4 tenants and most of the Phase 5 tenants have now been pre-allocated new homes in Phase 3. As the re-housing requirements for Phase 4 and Phase 5 tenants have been assessed and largely met, the Decant team are now prioritising pre-allocations of homes in Phase 3 to Phase 6 tenants.

An exhibition is planned for September, to invite all pre-allocated tenants to make their choices on bathroom and kitchen colours, as well as tiles for their new homes on Phase 3.

The numbers of new homes, allocations to date, and homes still to allocate and are set out in the table below.

	New Units in Phase 3	Phase 4 tenants allocated	Phase 5 tenants allocated	Homes still to allocate in Phase 3
Phase 3A	75	30	33	12
Phase 3B	42	1	16	25
Total/balance	117	0	(14 households yet to allocate)	37

2. CPO Phase 4

As reported to the last WDCO Board, the Council has begun the background work to prepare a CPO. As part of the Land Referencing process, a 'request for information' form was sent to all residents and leaseholders together with an Equality Impact Assessment Form. This feeds into the reports needed as part of making a CPO, to ensure that the Council has up to date information about who lives in the blocks and would be affected. In due course the Council will seek Cabinet authority to make a CPO - currently we expect this to be in early 2024.

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, supporting residents in finding the best rehousing option for them - active engagement in this way is a key requirement of making a CPO.

3. Local Lettings Policy and Split Households

In Phase 4, a total of nine households have been approved for split households. Six households have moved - five into one bed flats and one to a two bedroom flat. There are a number of voids in the pipeline so we are confident that all split households from Phase 4 will be made offers before the end of the summer.

In Phase 5, twelve new households have been approved for split households. Once Phase 4 split households have been allocated their new homes, the Downsizing and Rehousing Team will start the process of re-housing these applicants.

The Housing Strategy & Policy team is reviewing the Local Lettings Policy for Woodberry Down, and will focus on the process for managing and prioritising 'out of phase' split households. A procedure for the allocation of split households is being prepared and should be included in the review by the end of the month.

4. Allocations to NHG relets

Two NHG properties were relet this month. These were allocated to residents from phases 5 and 7.

5. Block D

Separate update to follow.

6. Library feasibility study

The study itself has been completed. The study reviewed the priorities of the library services, drawing on the recent library strategy, to understand how a library at Woodberry Down would sit within this. The study also considered the feasibility of delivering a library both in spatial terms, but also in the context of the wider objectives and priorities for Woodberry Down.

The study identified a number of options for providing a library, including co-location with other uses such as study space, a community living room, bookable workspace, a cafe offer, and potentially fully sublet parts to local organisations/business. This could either be done by completely separating part of the library, so that the income from the sublet helps to support the library, or having a more 'blended' space where the sublet organisations use the library flexibly - e.g. if there is space that could be used for meetings or workshops.

The next step is now to feed into the wider work looking at the socio-economic strategy across Woodberry Down. The library is being considered as one potential option for a civic use in Phase 4, however any proposals will need to be carefully considered to ensure coordination with the wider community and ground floor offer. It would also need to be financially sustainable in the long-term, therefore a business case would need to be developed for any options that are taken forward.

Next steps:

- Working with Berkeley Homes and partners to position a potential library (and review the options) in the context of both the ground floor strategy findings, and work underway with Notting Hill Genesis, MHDT, Hackney Works and the Council to map local social and economic projects and activity.
- Work with Library Services to review the options presented in the feasibility report
- Stakeholder workshop in the autumn (run by Social Life) to review the findings of the ground floor strategy, including library proposals

7. Masterplan Review

The Delivery Partners and the Design Committee are working on the Masterplan Review. A more detailed update will be provided by Berkeley Homes.

8. District Heat Network (DHN) and Energy

A follow up workshop with the DHN working group was held and a site visit is planned for the end of the summer. There is also an intention to visit the new Air Source Heat Pumps and the energy centre on Phase 3 over the summer.

Arup is working with Berkeley Homes and NHG to assess the current performance of the communal CHP heating which will inform their report on alternative energy sources. The completion of this report has been delayed to the end of July.

9. Damp and mould on Woodberry Down Estate

Berkeley and Hackney Council are working closely together to identify and gain access to properties for survey work to be undertaken, to both inform the Masterplan review and assess the condition of the properties in terms of damp and mould. Survey work started in February and will continue through to the summer.

Housing Services provided an update on progress at the June Board. The Housing Manager also attended the Operational meeting on 29 June to provide a further update on the Council's processes. Information on the damp & mould on a block by block basis will be provided at the Board in July.

10. Seven Sisters Road

A Steering Group meeting has been set up.

11. Planning Update

The new case officer Louise Prew is now in place.

2020/4129 Finsbury Park Public House, 336 Green Lanes, Hackney, London, N4 1BY

Erection of ground, first and second floor extensions to the rear and a roof extension to extend the existing public house facilities, extend 5 x existing residential dwellings and to provide 4 new dwellings with associated refuse and cycle provision.

Approved

2021/3094 72 Woodberry Grove, Hackney, London, N4 1SN

Demolition of existing House of Multiple Occupation (HMO) building and the erection of a part 4, part 5 and part 6 storey building plus basement to provide 41 new HMO rooms and ancillary accommodation, plant, cycle store and landscaping works.

Amendments awaited

2022/0184 Woodberry Down Primary School Woodberry Grove, Hackney, London, N4 1SY

Replacement of existing boundary treatments, provision of new pathways and paved areas including access ramp, outdoor atrium and classroom, playhouse installations, play areas and equipment, recycling facilities, seating, bug hotels and pond to provide outdoor nature learning facilities

Approved subject to conditions

2022/0796 52 Woodberry Grove, Hackney, London, N4 1SN

Erection of a single storey ground floor rear extension and conversion of single dwelling house into 5 residential units

Approved

2021/3426 325 Lordship Road, N16 5HG

Erection of a 10-storey building (plus basement) to provide 45 residential units with associated landscaping and playspace, car and cycle parking, and other works associated with the development.

Currently under consideration

These can all be viewed on the planning portal.

12. West Reservoir

The public consultation on the proposed improvements for West Reservoir closed on 31st May.

The council is reviewing the consultation responses and working with the design team to respond to some of the feedback. The updated designs will be presented to the Improvement Board for review once developed and costed. We anticipate this will be in August

All the background information and proposed designs can be found on our consultation website: hackney.gov.uk/west-reservoir-improvement.

13. Thames Water

The path is nearly complete however Thames Water have hit an issue in terms of materials. The granite fines that are required to finish the wearing course on the last 150 meters are currently unavailable. And as such Thames Water are unable to continue with the final stretch. Their contractors are working behind the scenes to see if they can source it from elsewhere, but with Tarmac being the main supplier in these parts they are finding it tricky.

The site has been left neat and tidy, closed off and the compound secure, waiting for Thames Water to remobilise as soon as materials are available.

14. Cultural Plan Phase 4

A Cultural Strategy and an Implementation plan (Cultural Plan) for Phase 4 has been prepared by D-P-Q consultants who are also designing wider community engagement workshops to inform the Masterplan review. This plan will form part of the Design and Access Statement which will accompany the planning application for Phase 4.

The Cultural Plan sets out a number of cultural opportunities for Phase 4 building on the workshops and creative engagement activities, such as the successful lantern project, which were held with residents on the estate to capture their ideas and experiences of living in Woodberry Down, past and present. These opportunities will both bring the community together in terms of co-designing the art works and embedding the rich heritage of Woodberry Down into the built environment. The exact features are to be developed but might include bespoke benches, a focal space within the square or a mural, etc. Going forward the cultural plan will identify events which will animate the Central Square.

The Council has successfully secured UK Shared Prosperity Funds (UKSPF): government funding from their 'Levelling Up' programme and will use S106 funds to support the Cultural strategy for Phase 4. It is the intention to appoint a Cultural Lead Officer who will take forward the oversight and responsibility for the delivery of the Cultural plan working with residents and local artists.

Once the Cultural lead has been appointed they will be working with residents to develop the opportunities identified in the Cultural plan.