Golden Lane Estate Wider Estate Residents' Liaison Group (RLG) Meeting

Date: Thursday 22 January 2026, 6pm - 7.30pm

Venue: Sir Ralph Perring Centre

Attendees:

Greg Wade	CoL Head of Major Works Department
Bunmi Ali	CoL Project Manager (ONLINE)
Nick Condon	Consultant Project Manager
Dan Bewley	Concilio (Chair)
Seb Grace	Concilio
Dawn Frampton	Cripplegate Ward Cllr/resident
Ceri Wilkins	Cripplegate Ward Cllr/resident
Sue Pearson	GLERA Chair
Sajeda Youssouf	Hatfield House
Graham Harris	Stanley Cohen House
David Gregory	Cuthbert Harrowing House
David Henderson	Basterfield House

This is the twelfth official meeting of the GLE Wider Estate Residents' Liaison Group.

Apologies:

Kassy Tremountani	Cullum Welch House
Lizette Dodds	Bayer House

Agenda:

1. Welcome and Housekeeping
2. Terms of Reference
3. Wider Estate progress update
    1. Current Work, Design and Surveys
    2. Programme
4. Decanting Strategy
5. Meanwhile Repairs Update
6. Questions
7. Any Other Business
8. Date of Next Wider Estate RLG

Executive meeting summary

Refurbishment and design

Investigations and design work are progressing well across the estate. At Bayer House, being used as a test case for the wider programme, a new roller system has been developed to improve aluminium windows, which have shown widespread issues including condensation, mould and degraded seals. Guillotine window chains are in good condition, but will receive new steel spindle pins. A quiet extract ventilation system is being trialled for kitchens and bathrooms, and faded blue glass panels are being replaced, with asbestos in the external putty safely removed. Drain clearance in Basterfield and Cuthbert Harrowing has now been completed, allowing surveys to proceed. The wider scope also includes new electrical and telecoms supplies, fire door and roof replacement, building fabric repairs, and a review of the fire strategy.

Programme

For Cuthbert Harrowing, a planning application is expected in May 2026, tendering in September 2026, and works on site from Summer/Autumn 2027. Crescent House follows a similar timeline but requires a Gateway 2 application to the Building Safety Regulator, so a contractor will be appointed around a year ahead, both projects could start on site at around the same time. The Great Arthur House design team has been in place since December with surveys underway. Design work for Basterfield, Bayer, Bowater, Stanley Cohen, Cullum Welch and Hatfield Houses is beginning from February. A key cost review is planned for October 2026 before the programme returns to Committee.

Decanting

Decanting will only take place where strictly necessary. The current worst-case assumption is up to six flats at any one time, with around 14 temporary flats available across two blocks. Before work begins, residents will have one-to-one discussions to talk through their needs and the likely impact. Professional removals and secure, insured storage will be provided, and residents will retain access to their belongings throughout. Two Resident Liaison Officers per block will be appointed by the contractor, with two City-appointed Decant RLOs overseeing the whole programme. The estimated decant period is six to eight weeks per flat, a cautious estimate to ensure vulnerable residents are properly supported.

Meanwhile repairs

Urgent safety works are already underway, prioritising the worst window conditions. A tracking system is in place to manage inspections and appointments, and residents will receive written confirmation following any inspection. Funding is available for health and safety window repairs.

Meeting Notes

1. Welcome and Housekeeping

Welcome and introductions were made around the table.

DB outlined the purpose of the Wider Estate RLG, noting that the meetings are intended to provide progress updates across the estate, share information with residents, and gather resident input.

It was confirmed that:

- Draft minutes will be circulated within one week for comment before being finalised and uploaded to the project website, with the online version then shared a week after that.
- Actions arising from meetings will be formally recorded and tracked, with an actions tracker to be introduced for future meetings.
- Questions would be taken at the end of agenda items in order to facilitate effectively functioning meetings.

2. Terms of Reference

DB provided a brief overview of the Terms of Reference for the Wider Estate RLG, including expectations around information sharing, resident participation and accountability.

It was noted that:

- The RLG is intended to share information and enable meaningful resident input.
- Membership and representation will be kept under review to ensure broad coverage across the estate.
- If members are unable to attend meetings regularly, alternative representation may be sought.

DB noted apologies were provided by LD and KT.

3. Wider Estate Progress Update

NC provided a progress update on refurbishment investigations and design development across the estate, with a particular focus on windows, ventilation and building fabric.

Key points included:

- At Bayer House, glass is being installed to replicate the weight and thickness of vacuum glazing to test how existing frames can be adapted.
- Significant issues have been identified with aluminium windows, including condensation, mould, degraded felt seals and difficulty opening and closing.
- A new roller system has been developed within the frames to improve ease of operation; images were shared with the group.
- Guillotine windows have been assessed by a specialist chain consultant. The chains were found to be in good condition and capable of taking additional weight, but the aluminium spindle pin will be replaced with a steel pin.
- The works at 2 Bayer are intended as a test case to demonstrate the proposed approach across the estate, including Crescent House.

NC also confirmed:

- A new kitchen and bathroom extract system is being trialled, designed to deliver the required airflow while remaining quiet.
- Faded blue glass panels around the estate are being removed. Asbestos has been identified within the external putty, which is being safely removed. A replacement supplier has been secured to provide panels matching the original colour.
- Drainage surveys were initially prevented by blockages; drains have now been cleared in Basterfield and Cuthbert Harrowing to enable proper surveys.
- A detailed condition assessment of Cuthbert Harrowing is underway.
- Additional planned works include new low-voltage mains supplies, new telecoms and TV supplies, new lighting and containment in common areas, removal of redundant services, and insulation to lower ground floor soffits.
- Fire compartmentation and the overall fire strategy are under review. The emerging strategy may require additional fire suppression measures.
- Roof replacement and insulation, building fabric repairs, redecoration, and replacement of fire doors and front doors are included within the scope.

Questions at this juncture were as follows:

- Q (DF): Will the felt seals be removed or retained?
    - NC: The felt will be retained and will continue to act as an air stop.
- Q (SP): Will felt need to be renewed periodically?
    - NC: Replacement will need to be considered as part of long-term maintenance.
- Q (DF): Does replacing the felt require removal of the window?
    - NC: Yes. This prototype work primarily relates to maisonettes.

4. Current Work, Design and Surveys

NC provided an update on current surveys and investigations.

- Drain clearance has now been completed in several blocks to allow surveys to proceed.
- Early inspections have identified significant timber decay in some flats, particularly within window frames.
- Works are ongoing in a number of properties to address urgent safety issues, with the most severe cases being prioritised.
- Design development is progressing well, with further surveys planned to inform the detailed scope of works.

5. Programme

GW provided a high-level programme update.

- A planning application for Cuthbert Harrowing is anticipated in May 2026.
- Tendering for works is expected to take place in September 2026, following planning approval.
- Works are currently anticipated to commence in Summer/Autumn 2027, following internal governance processes and Section 20 consultation.
- Crescent House is proceeding on a similar timeline, but with a contractor expected to be appointed approximately one year ahead of works commencing. This is to allow for a Gateway 2 Application to the Building Safety Regulator, which doesn't apply to Cuthbert Harrowing House. Therefore, although Crescent House will be tendered first, both projects could end up starting on site at the same time or Cuthbert Harrowing very slightly ahead.
- Design Team meetings started in December for Great Arthur House and the consultant team is fully in place. Initial surveys and exploratory works are underway.
- Early design team meetings are due to commence for Phase 2C (Basterfield, Bayer, Bowater and Stanley Cohen Houses) and Phase 2D (Cullum Welch and Hatfield Houses) from February.
- Further design development is required to firm up cost certainty, with a key review point in October 2026 prior to returning to the Committee.
- The overall strategy remains to decant no more than two blocks at a time.

6. Decanting Strategy

NC outlined the emerging decanting strategy, emphasising that decanting is recognised as highly disruptive, costly and emotive for residents, and would only be undertaken where absolutely necessary.

Key points included:

- The current worst-case assumption is that up to six flats would be decanted at any one time, with approximately 14 temporary flats available to support this approach across two blocks concurrently (potentially involving two different major works contractors). This assumption is intended to ensure sufficient capacity and flexibility rather than to indicate a preferred outcome.
- Pre-commencement surveys and one-to-one discussions will be undertaken with residents to understand household needs, vulnerabilities and concerns, and to explain the scope, sequence and likely impacts of the works.
- Detailed discussions will take place with residents regarding possessions, including what items would move to temporary accommodation, what would be securely stored, and what may remain within the flat. Secure, insured storage containers will be provided for each flat, and all removals will be undertaken by professional moving companies.
- Residents will be able to access their flats and stored possessions during the works, subject to health and safety requirements.
- Two Resident Liaison Officers (RLOs) per block will be appointed directly by the contractor(s), with additional City oversight in the form of two appointed 'Decant Resident Liaison Officers' for the entire programme, to ensure continuity, accountability and support.
- The anticipated decanting period is six to eight weeks per flat. This is a cautious, worst-case estimate intended to ensure adequate support, particularly for vulnerable residents, and to allow for the specialist nature of the works.

GW added that the decanting and resident engagement approach has been reviewed at the GLE Programme Board. A key focus has been ensuring appropriate resourcing, with the City committed to having sufficient internal capacity to oversee contractors and act as a point of contact for residents. City involvement will focus on oversight and assurance rather than day-to-day delivery.

Discussions were held around flexibility in sequencing, the potential to streamline work where feasible, and lessons learned from previous projects, including Great Arthur House.

It was acknowledged that while efficiencies will be explored, the availability of specialist labour, quality control and safeguarding residents' wellbeing remain key constraints.

7. Meanwhile Repairs Update

NC provided an update on the meanwhile repairs:

- Site inspections have identified a number of urgent safety issues, particularly relating to window conditions.
- Works are currently underway in several flats, with the most severe cases prioritised.
- A tracking spreadsheet is now in place to manage reports, inspections and appointments.
- Residents whose flats have been inspected will receive written confirmation setting out whether further works are required or whether no immediate action is needed.
- Funding remains available for health and safety-related window repairs, with further funding to be sought if required.

8. Questions

Attendees raised a range of questions and comments, including:

- Condensation risk following glazing upgrades, and whether dew point calculations are being undertaken.
- Clarification that asbestos-containing materials are being removed externally only.
- Queries regarding insulation coverage, including soffits beneath bedroom extensions and walkways.
- Drain maintenance methods and limescale build-up.
- The extent and quality of internal redecoration following works.
- Access arrangements during decanting, cleaning standards, insurance, and management of temporary accommodation.
- Electrical capacity and the transition away from gas.

The project team acknowledged these concerns and confirmed that further technical responses would be provided where required.

In addition to the technical questions noted above, the wider discussion covered:

- The importance of learning from past decanting experiences, including where communication breakdowns led to residents incurring costs or disruption due to programme changes.

- The need to appoint contractors with demonstrable experience of complex decanting projects and a strong understanding of resident impact, rather than firms for whom this would be one of many concurrent schemes.
- The importance of flexibility within the decanting strategy, while recognising that specialist labour availability and sequencing may limit how far programmes can be compressed.

The project team acknowledged these points and reiterated that the decanting strategy is being developed conservatively to ensure it is robust, realistic and capable of supporting residents appropriately.

9. Any Other Business

GLERA has formally written to the Corporation asking for the establishment of a technical working group, and as soon as possible a workshop to discuss the programme. The letter was shared with the RLG. This letter can be found here.

Further discussion took place regarding contractor selection and market engagement. GW and NC explained that pre-market engagement had been undertaken during the summer of 2025, involving a presentation to a broad range of contractors, followed by more detailed discussions with a smaller number of firms experienced in major, complex refurbishment projects involving decanting.

It was noted that:

- Some contractors involved in these discussions have direct experience of large-scale decanting and understand the practical and emotional challenges faced by residents.
- The contractors engaged were generally medium-sized firms with sufficient capacity to deliver a project of this scale, while remaining focused, rather than treating it as one of many nationwide programmes.
- Further due diligence will be required, including a detailed assessment of track records and, where appropriate, engagement with residents who have previously experienced decanting under those contractors.

In response to a question, GW confirmed that resident involvement in the tendering process is intended and welcomed, with details to be developed as the procurement strategy progresses.

DB confirmed that the scope of work for Cuthbert Harrowing House will be circulated to RLG members and uploaded to the project website.

10. Date of Next Wider Estate RLG

Future Wider Estate RLG meetings will take place on:

- 19th March 2026
- 21st May 2026
- 17th September 2026
- 19th November 2026

Additional meetings may be arranged if required.

It was explained that dates have been set for the full year to allow residents to plan ahead and improve attendance, with additional meetings to be arranged if specific issues require focused discussion.

The summer holiday period was noted as a reason for the longer gap between May and September.