Golden Lane Estate: Wider Estate Residents' Meeting
Thursday 1 May 2025

Meeting Notes

Greg Wade (City of London Corporation Head of Major Works department) and Nick Condon (Consultant Project Manager) shared a presentation with residents of Golden Lane Estate with the content including:

- Apologies to residents
- The current project team
- Background to the project
- What is a Higher Risk Building ('HRB')
- How this affects the programme
- Window works and Temporary Relocation
- Proposed Delivery Programme
- Next Steps

The presentation was followed by a Q&A session. An overview of questions asked and answered can be found below.

<u>GLERA questions:</u>

Could you please give us a statement outlining the objectives of the Golden Lane Investment Programme (as opposed to the scope of the work)?
The objectives of the Golden Lane Investment Programme are to ensure the following:

- That all buildings are wind, weathertight and maintained to a good standard in terms of building fabric condition
- That the thermal efficiency of all buildings is optimised through improved glazing and upgraded roof insulation (in line with current Building Regulations), which will in turn help to reduce residents' heating costs
- That upgraded ventilation will help to combat future damp and mould within individual properties, to the benefit of residents
- That the Corporation fulfils its landlord obligations in terms of cyclical decorations and also health and safety with regard to electrical compliance.

The aluminium frames in the maisonette blocks and Cullum Welch are not wide enough to accommodate the new vacuum glazing. The Architects have proposed options and we understand that the option to create an adaptor will be trialled in Bayer House. Will residents be able to see the impact of adding additional framing before any decisions are made on how to proceed?

Trials are continuing to help the project team understand how best to fit vacuum glazing into frames, including extensive testing in the Cullum Welch pilot flat. Residents will have an opportunity to see the pilot works in Bayer House, prior to the reinstatement of the original installation. This will be managed through the Resident Liaison Groups and GLERA, as access will be limited due to resource availability.

Has the replacement of aluminium windows been considered? The refurbishment approach came about because of Crescent House residents understandable desire to retain the hardwood window frames, but is there scope to consider the different types of windows separately, particularly the aluminium framed?
Possible replacement of the aluminium windows was previously considered during the early design stages, but significant challenges in respect of obtaining Planning approvals and Listed Building Consent were anticipated. This was emphasised during early discussions with relevant statutory bodies. Furthermore, initial cost estimates indicated a significant increase compared to the refurbishment option.

Has replacement of bathroom and kitchen windows been considered (not hard wood as in Crescent House)? If replaced would these windows need scaffolding access (ie can they accessed from balcony and walkway. If not could the programming of the work be speeded up?
Possible replacement of the softwood kitchen and bathroom windows in Great Arthur House was also considered during the early design stages, but again, significant challenges in respect of obtaining Planning approvals and Listed Building Consent were anticipated. Now that the scope of works for Great Arthur House will be expanded, it is not seen as practical or cost efficient to consider replacement of the windows at this stage.

What is the status of the proposed sprinkler system for Great Arthur House as the planning application was withdrawn?
Great Arthur House was previously the subject of three separate projects relating to a) sprinkler installation, b) fire doors and fire compartmentation and c) kitchen and bathroom window refurbishment. A report has been approved by Committee to combine these into a single project and the intention is to revisit the sprinkler element of the works, but with full resident engagement and consultation.

Re: Fire safety in the walkways – is the glazing to doors and kitchen window to be fire glass? If so, can kitchen window open? Also, there is a legal duty to prevent fire transmission from common areas.
This will be identified in the Fire Strategies which have been commissioned by the Corporation and the appropriate remedial works will be incorporated into the design. We will take specific guidance from our appointed Fire Engineer.

General queries on the proposed programme of works

It's not just the glass that need repair; they are badly fitted within the frames.
The frames will be taken apart, refurbished and put back together

In Cullum Welch there are gaps in windows, where they have been insulated with felt that is 40 years old and has deteriorated. Will we have to wait until 2032 to replace this?
Greg Wade (GW) explained that this could be looked at as part of the meanwhile repairs to see if there is an interim solution and/or simple repair. Nick Condon (NC) explained that it had been investigated and carried out in the pilot flat. Residents asked if they could escalate this and find out whether a 'quick fix' was possible, noting that a resident had had similar repairs carried out in Basterfield 8 years ago via repairs and maintenance.

Peta Caine (PC) explained that the team will look at a Winter measures package alongside meanwhile works. This will be taken to Committee asap to try and mitigate the impact of further delays on the ability of windows to weather the winter.

The ventilation insulation seemed quite destructive (from architect's exhibition boards at a previous consultation event).
NC explained that trial work for the proposed ventilation will be carried out at 2 Bayer House, but this has not been installed yet due to the delay in obtaining planning permission. Once the trial has been undertaken, further details will be available.

Has a Heat recovery system been considered?
This has been considered but will not be included for reasons of practicality, cost and programme management.

Is there a less risk to the programme if replacement instead of refurbishment was carried out?
This was explored early in the design process and initial estimates indicated a significant cost difference between refurbishment and replacement. This will be revisited as an exercise and consequently shared with the RLGs/GLERA, but with due consideration of the ambitious programme which the project team is already pursuing. The overall timeline would be the same, although the design development process would be extended. The result would be further delay to starting on site, but a shorter delivery programme – although it is expected that residents would still have to be temporarily relocated as part of the works.

Why is the timeline the same?
NC explained that the guillotine window is the main issue, and that planning and listed building consent needs to be considered.

Will Cuthbert Harrowing actually happen in 2027?
Work has commenced behind the scenes to meet this timeline. Although the design for Cuthbert Harrowing is not as advanced as Crescent House, it is the only block on the estate which is not classed as an HRB (Higher Risk Building). This means that following successful tender and contract award, there will be no need to go through the lengthy Gateway 2 Application process to the Building Safety Regulator and works will be able to start on site once the contractor has appropriately mobilised. We feel confident at this stage that 2027 is achievable. However, the revised scheme will first need approval at Committee in relation to the increased cost. We expect the report to be ready for presentation at Committee by late Autumn 2025.

How has the City of London Corporation fulfilled its responsibilities under the Building Safety Act?
PC explained that all relevant buildings have been registered but not accepted yet. PC has already admitted in letters to residents that an error was made by the Corporation by not registering the buildings as HRBs in September 2023, and once this was discovered at the end of last year, a late registration was submitted.

Will there be scaffolding? For a long time?
Yes. This will be worked through with the appointed contractor and it is envisaged that the scaffolding will be erected in sections. Further details will be provided further down the line.

<u>Queries on temporary relocation</u>

Will we be compensated for temporary relocation?
The Corporation will bear the full costs of residents' relocation (including Corporation tenants, Leaseholders and private tenants of Leaseholders) but nothing further has yet been discussed in respect of compensation.

When we have to leave our flats, where will we be relocated?
The preference will be for relocation to flats on the Golden Lane Estate, but it may be difficult to find 12-14 available flats. Flats that are used for the pilot schemes could be held back, and the project team will work with the allocations team to look at other City Corporation stock that may be available.

Will residents still be able to use Crescent House guest flats during the works?
This is something that the project team will need to look into and confirm with Housing Management as to whether this is appropriate.

What about our furniture?
Items will be moved and protected in ways which residents are happy with.
Typically, there would be 3 areas of storage – a safe area for valuables which will be insured by the contractors; personal items you would take with you; then furniture which can't be removed from the property, will be moved within the property, covered and protected. Flexibility is built in – each home will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis and a dedicated Senior Decant Officer (employed directly by the Corporation) will be the primary point of contact for residents. A large part of their role will be to work closely with the Contractor's Resident Liaison Officer (RLO) and ensure that compassion for every resident is paramount.

Will temporary relocation be for all residents?
There are potentially some areas where residents might not need to be relocated – for example Stanley Cohen or the top-level flats of the maisonettes – but this decision can't be made until the Corporation has a contractor on board. At this stage, it's sensible to assume that every flat will need to be decanted.

<u>Leaseholder/Cost queries</u>

Resident asked about cost efficiency for work over the next 10 years - why is CCUK employed to do comms, why not have any in-house resource?
GW explained that there is currently no in-house resource and this programme needs better resourcing, but this is already under review. GW further explained that CCUK are fulfilling a critical function that the major works team needs, ensuring that it is supported adequately to progress the various projects on the estate (which now make up the Investment Programme).

Residents highlighted that a lot of work has been carried out that will need to be duplicated as well as the effect on the programme – will leaseholders end up paying for City of London mistakes?
PC explained that this will be looked into and that members are aware. Not all work will need to be duplicated. When the reports go to Committee, they will include the whole scope of works; what exactly is recharged to leaseholders will be high on the agenda and this will inevitably result in a proposal being made, but unfortunately specific answers aren't available now as it's too early in the process.

You have already sent your legal opinion.
The purpose of PC's letter in February 2025 was to clarify the Corporation's position in respect of the matter of 'repair versus improvement' (along with what are considered rechargeable items). However, the letter was intended to clearly set out a starting point for further discussion, which will result in some form of proposal.

A resident asked about the landlord responsibility over the fabric of the building and pointed out that the lease from the 1970s was a very opaque document which essentially says we will do whatever we want whenever we want.
PC explained that it is not the Corporation's intention to adopt an unreasonable approach and will instead look to be reasonable and proportionate. Previously works have been done in waves and the intention now is to carry out the works holistically and in the most effective way.

A leaseholder asked if it was possible to opt out of the window replacement as their windows are fine and money spent would not be recovered even if the windows were very efficient.
GW answered that it is unlikely for residents to be able to 'opt out' given that the works will be carried out on a property-by-property basis, with the entire block to be completed as part of the project. Every window will be assessed, and it is expected that they will at least need decoration. If the windows have already been repaired/replaced and the appropriate statutory permissions have been successfully obtained, then there may be the possibility to omit this element of work for the property. However, what this would mean in terms of Leaseholder billing would have to be addressed separately and with the direct input of Homeownership Services. GW pointed out that the window refurbishment element would now be part of a larger package of work. Also, GW pointed out that as per the terms of the lease generally, Leaseholder contributions will be based on the floor area of their property, not necessarily on the number of windows or the extent of repairs needed to them.

<u>Other</u>

Residents would like to see milestones and deadlines issued - the programme provided is a dense document and it shouldn't be up to residents to check.
The team will be able to break down the activity timelines and share the critical path, but confirmed dates won't be available until after the relevant committees.

ENDS