Great Arthur House Residents' Liaison Group (RLG) Meeting

Date: Monday 8 December, 6.30-7.45pm

Venue: The Classroom, Golden Lane Community Centre

Attendees:

Greg Wade	CoL Head of Major Works Department
Nick Condon	Consultant Project Manager
Salvatore Pagdades	Concilio
Dan Bewley	Concilio *(Chair)*
Dawn Frampton	Cripplegate ward Councillor
Jacqueline Webster	Cripplegate ward Councillor
Alison MacDonald	Tenant
Sue Pearson	GLERA Chair
Pierre Dagonnot	Leaseholder

+ 1 additional Tenant

This is the first official meeting of the Great Arthur House Residents' Liaison Group.

Agenda:

1. Welcome & housekeeping
2. Terms of reference and ground rules
3. Context and background
4. Introduction to the project
5. Next steps and timelines
6. Resident consultation
7. AOB

Meeting Notes

1. Welcome & housekeeping

Welcome and introductions were made. DB explained that the group would meet approximately every two months.

2. Terms of reference and ground rules

DB outlined that the RLG would provide updates on the Major Works programme, enable residents to raise concerns, and allow early identification of issues. He confirmed that constructive, concise contributions would help ensure productive meetings.

Q (SP): How many residents were invited, and how was the selection made?
DB explained that Concilio inherited a list of residents who had previously expressed interest through the previous agency's summer engagement.

Q: A tenant asked Concilio what they will do to boost the numbers?
DB confirmed the approach would be reviewed and reiterated that residents could join at any time.

SP emphasised that the RLG should not be used for housing management matters but solely for issues relating to the Major Works project. The group agreed with this interpretation.

Q (SP): Why isn't David Wong here?
GW noted that DW is not part of the Major Works Team but was supporting the programme temporarily while recruitment was underway for both a Senior Project Manager overseeing the wider Golden Lane programme and a dedicated Project Manager for Great Arthur House. These posts were intended as three-year fixed-term roles to provide continuity
SP: Not having a full team here means that residents can only understand part of the picture.
GW noted and accepted this.

Action: Concilio to re-invite residents to increase participation.
Action: A member of the re-roofing team to attend the next RLG meeting.

3. Context and background

GW explained that when he joined the Corporation, several unconnected historic workstreams were operating simultaneously at Great Arthur House, including compartmentation works, fire-door replacements, early sprinkler considerations, and the kitchen and bathroom window refurbishment. These strands had since been consolidated into a single Major Works programme to provide clarity and coordinated progress, after GW had progressed the necessary approvals reports.

4. Introduction to the project

NC provided an overview of the emerging technical scope of the project. He explained that the kitchen and bathroom windows were proposed to undergo refurbishment and upgrade, including vacuum glazing and renewal of ironmongery and seals. A new stand-alone mechanical ventilation system would be installed in each flat, following the successful installation and independent BRE testing of a similar system at Crescent House.

Heating and gas installations would undergo a full review, noting that the layout in Great Arthur House differed from Crescent House, with most flues exiting through solid panels. A complete gas installation assessment would inform long-term strategy. Electrical systems would also undergo a full condition survey, with early indications suggesting substantial upgrades would be required to landlord-side wiring, containment and equipment. NC confirmed that any rewiring within homes would only be undertaken if later deemed necessary. GW confirmed that there is a commission survey.

Q (DF): Is this because it has not been completed for a while?
NC confirmed that this is possibly the case.

Additional elements of the scope included the installation of fire dampers to the refuse chutes which need to be fired dampered, review of communal fire alarms and lighting, progression of flat-by-flat compartmentation surveys, review and upgrade of access control and CCTV, replacement of BT cabling with fibre, review of lightning protection, removal of existing district heating pipework, and a comprehensive review of fire doors and fire strategy. A fire compartment review has been undertaken, and further fire strategy reviews and reports will be undertaken. NC confirmed that the gas installation will also be assessed and are aware that it is a repairs and maintenance issue. NC confirmed that intrusive survey work would require removal of asbestos and other specialist materials where present. Communal repairs and redecorations had also been added to the scope.

Q (DF): Hasn't there already been a new fire system put in?
NC confirmed yes there has been, so they need to review it for the latest fire strategy requirements.

Q: A tenant asked how persistent fire alarm faults and compartmentation concerns will be addressed?
NC confirmed that these issues would be captured through the fire strategy development and compartmentation surveys.

Q (AM): What is being done about the water pipes, which frequently leak?
NC confirmed that these will be reviewed.

Q (SP): Why are bathroom and kitchen windows being repaired rather than fully replaced, given historic commitments to replacement?
NC noted the current brief was for repair but confirmed that the project team would revisit whether full replacement was more appropriate.

Q (DF): Would it be cheaper to install replacements?
NC said that he did not know.

Q (DF): Will they scaffold the whole building again?
NC confirmed that this would not happen.

Q (Tenant/SP): What is the plan for dealing with ongoing gas outages and pressure failures?
The tenant and SP referenced recent Cadent investigations and the suggestion of installing a new riser or possibly removing gas entirely.
GW reiterated that current outages were repairs and maintenance issues, not part of Major Works, but the forthcoming gas installation assessment within the Major Works programme would clarify long-term direction.

Q (AM): Are gas pressure failures a problem across the building?
NC confirmed that he was not aware of any other gas pressure failures but will review the whole building to create a strategy. GW iterated that the removal of gas across the building is a possibility as part of the works.
AM: Until this starts to happen, most residents in Great Arthur House will not know that this is happening.

NC provided an overview of how the project team for Great Arthur House had been assembled. He explained that a full suite of consultants had been procured to support the development of the Major Works programme and that this process had taken time due to the level of detail required in tender submissions and the need to interview and appoint appropriately qualified specialists. These appointments had now been made, and the team was progressing through early-stage investigations and scope refinement. NC confirmed that reports produced by the design team would feed into both internal approvals and the future planning submission. He stated that assembling a coherent and

coordinated team at this stage was essential to ensure a clear and consistent approach as design work progressed.

NC confirmed that the project team comprised the following disciplines:

- Architect
- Mechanical & Electrical (M&E) consultant
- Structural engineer
- Fire engineer
- Quantity surveyor
- Heritage consultant
- Planning consultant
- Acoustic consultant
- Building fabric and condition surveyor
- Communications consultant

Following this, NC explained that assembling the design team had required progressing a number of procurement exercises over recent months in order to meet internal programme milestones for the broader Golden Lane Estate works. He noted that this activity had formed part of a series of approvals reports presented to Committee and that, in order to maintain momentum across all eight HRBs, the Corporation had been required to tender and appoint consultants in parallel to early strategic planning. NC emphasised that assembling the team at this stage was essential for producing the detailed surveys, reports and design development work necessary for the project to progress to planning and tender.

Q (SP): What is the current budget for the project? Committee papers refer to £205 million across the Estate, and residents would like to understand the allocation for Great Arthur House.

NC clarified that the figure referenced in Committee approvals was a high-level programme allowance for Golden Lane Estate as a whole. He confirmed that the indicative figure currently published was approximately £105 million across the Estate, but explained that the Corporation had not broken this down by block at this stage and was not in a position to publish project-level forecasts because the work had not yet been market-tested. He stressed that current allowances were preliminary and could not be relied upon as project costs until the detailed design and tendering process was complete.

Q (SP): Why are the more detailed figures not being shared if they exist internally?

NC reiterated that, although the project team had had to put forward allowances for internal approvals, these were not firm contract sums and could not be disclosed publicly until the market had been tested. He confirmed that more concrete figures would be provided as part of the statutory Section 20 Stage 2 consultation when tender prices were returned.

Q (SP): Why has there been no Section 20 notice for the consultants who have already been appointed?

GW explained that the Corporation was considering whether to seek dispensation for some early consultant appointments. He acknowledged that, on other projects, Section 20 notices had been issued at an earlier stage but noted that the classification of eight Golden Lane blocks as Higher-Risk Buildings had required the Corporation to accelerate procurement in order to prepare a legally compliant programme within demanding timescales. Had the team paused to run full Section 20 consultation for each appointment, progress would likely have been delayed by up to 12 months, meaning the RLG meetings themselves would not yet be taking place. He confirmed that no final decision had yet been made on dispensation.

GW confirmed that costs will be set out clearly during Section 20 Stage 2, once tenders have been received, assessed, and verified. This would provide residents with robust, market-informed figures, rather than preliminary allowances.

SP expressed concern about a perceived lack of transparency and the difficulty for residents in understanding the scale of financial commitment they may face. She cautioned against bundling costs into different approvals streams. GW acknowledged the concern and reiterated that full financial clarity would form part of the statutory consultation process and that no works could proceed without that stage being completed.

A tenant provided copies of brochures by John Roberton Architects (JRA) about Great Arthur House. The tenant explained that this would help attendees to visualise the scale and aesthetic detail of the project, and asked the Major Works Team if they will liaise with JRA.
NC confirmed he would review the material shared.

Action: Design team to include water service risers and bathroom ducting in condition review.
Action: Project team to reconsider full replacement of kitchen and bathroom windows.
Action: Project team to clarify long-term gas strategy following the installation review.

5. Next steps and timelines

NC and GW presented the anticipated programme for the Major Works, noting that the timeline was dependent on survey results, technical design development, internal approvals and statutory requirements for Higher-Risk Buildings (HRBs). NC explained that the design team was currently undertaking condition surveys, compartmentation assessments, structural investigations and specialist reviews, all of which would be required to inform the planning application.

He confirmed that surveys and design work would continue throughout 2025 and 2026, with the Corporation aiming to submit a planning application for Great Arthur House in October or November 2026. NC emphasised that the planning submission could only occur once the scope had been fixed, surveys had been completed, and the design had been developed sufficiently to satisfy conservation, planning and Building Control requirements.

He reported that tendering was expected to begin in May 2027, with Section 20 Stage 2 consultation taking place once the tender returns were received and validated. He explained that Section 20 notices could not legally include indicative costs; they must include market-tested figures from contractors. GW reiterated that no financial commitments were possible until that stage was complete.

Once a preferred contractor was identified, the Corporation would proceed to the Building Safety Regulator's Gateway 2 application, which was expected to take ten to twelve months depending on the regulator's assessment of the fire strategy, structural reports, compartmentation information and construction management plans. Subject to Gateway 2 approval, works were forecast to begin on site in late 2028, with construction expected to take approximately three to three and a half years.

Q (AM): AM asked what the process would be for tenants during the construction works and how disruption would be managed.
NC confirmed that before any works began, detailed discussions would take place with each household. The contractor would develop an agreed access strategy for each home, and a dedicated Resident Liaison Officer (RLO) would be appointed to support households throughout the works. NC explained that in Crescent House the RLO had been essential in managing expectations and coordinating entry, and a similar approach would be taken at Great Arthur House.

Q: A tenant asked whether staffing would remain stable across such a lengthy design and construction period, given resident concerns about continuity.
GW confirmed that the two new Project Manager roles were intended to provide continuity

through the design stages and that vacancies in the past had been one of the challenges the Corporation was now addressing.

Q (SP): SP asked whether all the void flats had already been surveyed and to what extent the team had access to homes.
NC confirmed that void flats had been used for structural inspections and compartmentation surveys, but additional access to occupied flats would be required in later intrusive investigation phases. He emphasised that these would be carefully coordinated with each household in advance.

A resident asked whether early contractor involvement (ECI) was being considered. NC confirmed that this had not yet been determined but could be reviewed as part of procurement strategy if required for technical resolution.

Action: Project team to ensure that residents receive clear information about sequencing of surveys, access requirements and future construction phases as design progresses.

6. Resident consultation

Residents expressed frustration with previous communications, noting that some earlier materials had been overly technical, insufficiently detailed or difficult to understand. They stressed that information must be clear, visual and accessible, particularly given the complexity of the works. Several residents commented that many tenants remained unaware of the scale of the proposals, and that door-knocking attempts to date had not been consistently undertaken.

DB acknowledged these concerns and confirmed that Concilio would revise the engagement approach. He explained that future communications would include clearer diagrams, simplified explanations of technical issues and regular updates as surveys progressed. SPa emphasised the need to build trust by ensuring residents received timely responses and transparent explanations of key decisions, including those relating to procurement and statutory processes.

Q (JW): PD asked whether future RLG meetings could begin at 6pm rather than 6.30pm. There was general agreement that a 6pm start would be preferable, and Concilio confirmed this would be proposed for future meetings.

Q (SP): SP asked whether RLG meeting dates could be provided further in advance, noting that short notice made it difficult for some residents to attend.
DB agreed and confirmed that an annual calendar of meetings would be prepared.

Several residents asked whether there would be building-wide engagement rather than individual conversations, as some households did not feel sufficiently informed. DB confirmed that broader engagement would be carried out through letters, door-knocking, drop-ins and clearer project materials.

SP asked that the outcome of surveys be shared with residents in an accessible way, rather than simply informing internal reports. NC agreed and confirmed that high-level findings could be shared through RLG updates when appropriate.

Action: Concilio to widen resident engagement.
Action: Concilio to prepare a 12-month programme of RLG meetings with a proposed 6pm start time.
Action: GW to share the outcomes of the aforementioned surveys upon request.

7. AOB

SP requested an update on the roof project, noting that residents had been told previously that this work would progress separately but had received no recent information.
GW confirmed that DW was reviewing the programme, including its dependencies with the Major Works, and that a detailed update would be provided at the next RLG meeting. He noted that sequencing of roof works relative to façade and internal works required careful consideration.

Q (SP): Asked for clarity on progress towards the Building Safety Case and the issuing of the Building Safety Certificate for Great Arthur House.
GW explained that the Building Safety Case Manager, Chris Rutter, was preparing cases for all Golden Lane HRBs and that Great Arthur House was included in that programme. He confirmed that work was underway to complete the required documentation, including fire strategies, compartmentation reports and structural information, and that a timeline would be provided to residents once available.

Residents raised concerns regarding mandatory water-meter installation and the challenges posed by existing pipework and service locations. AM commented that some residents were unaware of the implications and needed clearer information.
NC confirmed that the design team would review this with Thames Water and ensure that any changes required by the water authority could be coordinated with the wider programme.

A tenant raised a concern that the dividing line between Repairs & Maintenance and Major Works was not always clear to residents, citing ongoing gas outages as an example. GW acknowledged this challenge and confirmed that the project team would work closely with repairs colleagues to avoid duplication and ensure residents understood the correct point of contact for each type of issue.

SP asked that digital information also be printed and delivered through letterboxes to ensure accessibility for all households. Concilio confirmed that both digital and paper communication would be used.

A tenant suggested that Concilio tour Great Arthur House.
NC offered to take DB and SPa on a tour of Great Arthur House.

A tenant requested that the next meeting be held in a larger room to accommodate more attendees.
DB confirmed that they would hold the next RLG meeting in a larger room, subject to availability.

Action: Corporation to provide a full update on the roof project at the next RLG.
Action: Corporation to confirm the timeline for completion of the Building Safety Case and certificate.
Action: NC to review implications of water-meter installation and engage with Thames Water.
Action: Concilio to ensure that communication materials are available both digitally and in print, and for materials to clarify the difference between repair, maintenance and major works.
Action: Concilio to tour Great Arthur House with NC.