Golden Lane Harvest Fun Day - 26 September 2026

Frequently Asked Questions

Golden Lane Estate Major Works Renewal Programme

This page answers the questions residents ask us most often. It covers the Major Works Renewal Programme across the whole estate.

Some questions don't have a settled answer yet. Where that's the case, we've said so and explained when we expect to know more. We'd rather tell you what we don't know than leave a gap.

*If your question isn't here, email **info@goldenlaneprojects.co.uk** and we'll answer it and add it to this page if others are likely to be asking the same thing.*

Last updated: 25 September 2026

General Questions

Question	Answer
What is the Major Works Renewal Programme?	The City of London Corporation is investing £105 million in repairing and upgrading the Golden Lane Estate. The programme covers windows, roofing, insulation, ventilation, heating, fire safety, electrical systems and redecoration across all blocks. The estate was built in the 1950s to a design by Chamberlin, Powell & Bon and every block is listed. Much of the original building fabric, particularly the windows and roofs, is now at the end of its serviceable life. The programme is designed to bring the buildings up to modern standards of safety, warmth and weathertightness while protecting what makes them architecturally significant.
Why are these works needed now?	There are three main reasons why the programme is needed now: • **Building condition.** Roofs, windows, and electrical distribution systems across the estate are old and in many cases failing. Cyclical electrical inspections have found the main distribution in every block is out of date and, in some places, not working. • **Fire safety regulation.** The Building Safety Act 2022 introduced new duties for buildings over 18 metres, and fire risk assessments have flagged issues on the estate that need resolving. • **Energy performance.** The buildings are expensive to heat and the City Corporation has committed to reducing carbon emissions across its housing stock.

Which blocks are included?	All blocks are included in the major works programme. The scope and timing differ block by block because the buildings have different window types, roof construction, and fire safety issues.
Who is doing the work?	The programme is led by the City of London Corporation's Major Works team. The project team includes: • **Studio Partington:** architects and Principal Designer • **BB7:** fire engineers • **Kanda**: resident communications and engagement Construction contractors have not yet been appointed for any block. That happens through a competitive tender process, block by block.

Timings

Question	Answer
When will work start on my block?	The programme runs from now until the mid-2030s. Current indicative dates are: Crescent House - Spring/Summer 2028 Cuthbert Harrowing House - Spring/Summer 2028 Great Arthur House – May 2029 Basterfield, Bayer, Bowater and Stanley Cohen Houses – February 2032 Hatfield House and Cullum Welch House – May 2032 Full year-by-year tables for each block are on the Programme Proposals page. These dates are indicative and will move as the programme develops. We update them when they change.
Why does this process take so long?	Every block needs planning permission and listed building consent, which takes months. Most blocks are classified as Higher Risk Buildings under the Building Safety Act, which means the works also need approval from the Building Safety Regulator through a process called Gateway 2. The Regulator currently has a significant backlog and its review typically takes around eight to nine months, sometimes longer. Only then can a contractor start. On top of that, contractors have to be procured through a formal competitive tender, and leaseholders have to be formally consulted about costs under Section 20 of the Landlord and Tenant Act. Neither can be short-circuited.
Why can't the whole estate be done at once?	Practically, it can't be. Decanting residents, managing site logistics and running contracts on nine listed buildings simultaneously isn't deliverable. The current assumption is that two blocks can be

	decanted at a time, using separate contracts and different contractors.
What is Gateway 2 and why does it matter to me?	Gateway 2 is the stage of the Building Safety Act process where the Building Safety Regulator has to approve the design of works to a Higher Risk Building before construction can begin. It's more rigorous and less flexible than standard building control. It matters to residents for two reasons. First, it adds close to a year to the programme for every impacted block. Second, the Regulator have the final say on some design decisions.

Windows

Question	Answer
What is happening to my windows?	In most cases, refurbishment rather than replacement. The original single glazing is being replaced with vacuum glazing, a very thin double-glazed unit that fits within the existing frames, and the frames themselves are being repaired and cleaned. This approach has already received listed building consent at Crescent House and has been trialled in empty flats across the different block types.
Why refurbish rather than replace with modern double glazing?	The main reasons are: • **Heritage.** The windows are a significant part of why the estate is listed. The aluminium frames were an innovative feature of the original design and their sight lines and proportions are part of the buildings' character. • **Disruption.** Replacement would require additional structural steel inside flats and significant alteration to the building fabric. It is more invasive than refurbishment, not less.
What is vacuum glazing and does it actually work?	Vacuum glazing is a glass unit with a vacuum between two panes rather than a gas fill. Because the vacuum is a very effective insulator, the unit can be much thinner than conventional double glazing, thin enough to fit into the original frames with only a small insert.

	Thermal modelling suggests the window works, combined with roof insulation, will reduce the energy needed to heat a home by roughly: • Maisonette blocks: around 44%, rising to around 47% if spandrel panels can also be insulated • Stanley Cohen House: around 33%, or 36% with spandrel insulation • Cullum Welch House: around 45% • Crescent House: around 60% Crescent House performs best because glazing makes up a much higher proportion of its facade.
I have heard there is asbestos in the windows. Should I be worried?	Asbestos has been found in the putty used in some window frames, and in some spandrel panels (the opaque infill panels between windows). This is not unusual in buildings of this age. Asbestos in this form is not a risk to you while it is undisturbed. The risk arises when it is cut or broken up, which is why the proposal is **not** to work on frames inside your home. Instead, frames would be removed and taken to purpose-built workshops on site: a controlled area where glass, seals and putty are stripped out, and a separate clean area where the new glazing is fitted and the frames reassembled. This keeps the asbestos work out of residents' homes entirely. All asbestos work is carried out by licensed contractors under strict Health and Safety Executive regulations.
Will my windows look different afterwards?	Retaining the appearance and sight lines is one of the main reasons for the conservation-led approach, and it is a condition of listed building consent. Some small changes are unavoidable. For example, the cover cap on the hardwood living room windows in the maisonettes needs slight adaptation to take the thicker glass, and the aluminium pull handle on the frameless sliders will be replaced with a new extrusion.
Will the guillotine windows in the maisonettes still slide properly?	The aim is to keep the vertical sliding operation and counterbalancing effect exactly as it works now, so the lower window opens easily. An example of how this work looks can be seen at 2 Bayer House.
How are damaged timber frames repaired?	There are four grades of repair, used according to the level of damage:

	• **Resin repairs** for minor defects up to around 50mm, using flexible resins that are stronger than traditional fillers and carry a ten-year warranty. • **Splice repairs**, where a damaged section is cut out and a new piece of timber jointed in. • **Full section replacement**, where a structural part of the frame is beyond repair. New timber is always hardwood, even where the original was softwood. • **Full replacement of the opening casement**, only where all four corners are damaged beyond repair. This has not been needed in any work carried out so far.

Warmth, insulation and ventilation

Question	Answer
Will my home be warmer and cheaper to heat?	This is the intention. The modelled reductions in heating demand are set out in the windows section above.
If you make my flat more airtight, will I get condensation and mould?	Two things reduce the risk. First, testing at 2 Bayer House with the Building Research Establishment shows that even the maximum improvement in airtightness from the window works would leave the building relatively leaky. The change is less dramatic than at Crescent House, where airtightness roughly halved. Second, and more importantly, every flat is getting a new ventilation system specifically designed to manage moisture. A specific condensation risk analysis is also being carried out.
How does the new ventilation system work?	It is a demand-controlled mechanical extract system, the same approach as Crescent House. In plain terms: • A small, continuously running fan sits in the hot water cylinder cupboard and extracts air from the kitchen and bathroom through small ducts. • Fresh air comes in through vents: a trickle vent in the living room window head, and vents through the side walls in bedrooms. • The vents contain a material that responds to moisture in the air. When the air is dry, the vents sit mostly closed and the fan ticks over at a low rate. When you cook or shower, the vents open, the fan senses the change and boosts. When the moisture clears, everything settles back down. • Air moves between rooms through the normal gaps under doors. No modification to your doors is needed.

	You do not have to operate it. It runs quietly in the background and responds automatically.

Fire safety

Question	Answer
What is a Higher Risk Building, and is mine one?	A Higher Risk Building is one over 18 metres or seven storeys, as defined by the Building Safety Act 2022. Works to these buildings need approval from the Building Safety Regulator rather than ordinary building control. All blocks in the programme are Higher Risk Buildings **except Cuthbert Harrowing House**, which is smaller and goes through the standard local authority route.
Why do the maisonettes need a suppression system?	Each maisonette has two floors linked by an open internal staircase. Under the original 1950s design, the second escape route from the upper floor was out onto the balcony, across a metal grille, through a small glass panel into the neighbouring flat, and out through your neighbour's front door. That is no longer acceptable under current regulations, for two reasons: it depends on escaping through someone else's home, and it leaves an unprotected internal stair in a two-storey dwelling. Fire risk assessments have flagged it for a number of years. Installing a suppression system inside each maisonette means any fire is controlled quickly, giving you time to escape down your own stair and out of your own front door without relying on the balcony route.
What is mist suppression and how is it different from sprinklers?	Both are automatic fire suppression systems. The difference is scale. **Sprinklers** need a large water tank, a backup pump and substantial pipework. Installing them is very disruptive. **Mist suppression** uses a small pump set and tank in the basement feeding much smaller pipework to compact heads in each room. It discharges a fine mist rather than a spray, using far less water if it ever activates. The proposal is mist suppression, on the basis that it does the job with much less impact on your home.

Is my front door being replaced with a fire door?	For most residents, no. In most blocks the communal escape route is well designed, with two staircases and escape possible in both directions along the access corridors, so flat entrance doors do not need upgrading. Where an upgrade is needed, the door will be replaced.

Electrical works, heating and gas

Question	Answer
Why is the whole electrical system being replaced?	Inspections have found the main electrical distribution in every block is old, does not comply with current standards, and in places is not working. Because replacing one major component of an old system requires the whole system to be brought up to standard, the scope covers full replacement of the incoming mains to every flat and all associated systems.
What does the electrical work involve?	• New main cables running along the soffit of each access corridor, in new metal ceiling trunking that also carries the suppression pipework, new lighting and telecoms. • New communal lighting, designed to replicate the original single recessed fitting per pair of front doors, using LED with dimming and presence detection. • New access control systems.
Is my gas being removed?	**At Crescent House, yes. A safety assessment found that gas pipes and meters in communal areas pose a fire risk, so the gas supply will be removed and homes will switch to electric heating and hot water. At Basterfield, Bayer, Bowater, Stanley Cohen, Hatfield and Cullum Welch Houses, no. Gas boilers and their flues will be kept. At Great Arthur House, a full survey of the gas system is under way and a decision will be made once it is complete. For Cuthbert Harrowing House, we will confirm the approach as the design is finalised.**

Moving out during the works

Question	Answer
Will I have to move out of my home?	The programme is currently planned on a worst-case assumption that decanting will be required for each block. But the team is actively working to reduce or avoid it.
If I do have to move, where would I go and for how long?	The current planning assumption is a rolling programme of around six flats or maisonettes at a time, for six to eight weeks each.

	Residents would be moved to a similar property either on the estate, or nearby. Two dedicated Resident Decant Officers are being recruited by the City Corporation specifically to support residents through this.

Costs and leaseholders

Question	Answer
I am a leaseholder. How much will this cost me?	We do not yet know the cost, and we do not want to give an estimate that may later prove inaccurate. Costs will be confirmed once contractors have returned their tender prices. Leaseholders will be formally notified through the Section 20 consultation process. Stage 1 confirms that works are proposed. Stage 2, once tenders have been received and reviewed, will include the relevant cost information.
What is Section 20 and where are we in the process?	Section 20 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 requires landlords to consult leaseholders before carrying out major works. **Stage 1** is a statutory notice of intention. It is not required to include costs, specifications or drawings. That is standard practice across local authorities and housing associations, though we understand it is frustrating to receive a notice without numbers. **Stage 2** is issued after tenders are returned. It includes the financial information and evidence of market testing, and leaseholders can view the relevant technical and pricing documents under supervised conditions. For **Crescent House**, Stage 1 consultation has closed and responses are being worked through. Stage 2 is expected early in 2027, having been moved from autumn 2026 to avoid the process falling over the Christmas period. For other blocks, Section 20 consultation happens during each block's tender period. See the Programme Proposals page for indicative timings.

Living with the works

Question	Answer

How disruptive will this be day to day?	A major works programme on a listed 1950s estate is disruptive, we are designing to minimise it where we can. Working hours, noise management, dust control and access arrangements will be set out in the contractor's method statements once appointed, and shared with residents before work starts.
Can I see the works before they happen to my home?	Yes. Trial works have been carried out in empty flats across the different block types. Open days are being arranged so residents can see the refurbished windows and the ventilation installation in context. Dates will be published on the Latest News page and circulated by email.

Heritage and planning

Question	Answer
The estate is listed. How does that affect the works?	Significantly. Every block is individually listed, Crescent House at Grade II* and the others at Grade II, which means most external changes need listed building consent as well as planning permission. That is the main reason the approach is conservation-led. Retaining and repairing original fabric is a principle supported by Historic England, and any proposal to replace rather than repair has to be robustly justified in the listed building application.
Can I object to or comment on a planning application?	Yes. Once an application is submitted it is published by the City of London Corporation's planning service and anyone can comment during the consultation period. We will flag submission dates on this website and by email.

Getting involved and staying informed

Question	Answer
How do I find out what is happening?	• **This website.** Programme proposals for each block, meeting notes and news. • **Email updates.** Sign up on the home page. • **Drop-in sessions.** Informal, no appointment needed. Sessions have been trialled at different times of day and are moving to an evening slot to make them easier to attend after work. Dates are published on Latest News.

	• **Resident Liaison Groups.** See below. • **WhatsApp**: Join our broadcast group
What are the Resident Liaison Groups and can I join?	There are three Resident Liaison Groups: Crescent House, Great Arthur House, and the Wider Estate. They meet regularly with the project team, and minutes are published on the Working Groups page. We are keen to strengthen attendance, particularly from leaseholders. If you would like to join, please email info@goldenlaneprojects.co.uk.
I have a question that is not answered here.	Please email info@goldenlaneprojects.co.uk. We answer questions in writing and add common ones to this page. If you have asked something and have not had a reply, please chase us. We would rather know.