

South Local Housing Forum

17 December 2020 Highlights Report



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New Homes

- Bassano Street (Garages), Henslowe Road (Garages) Underhill Road have been tendered delivering a total of 10 new council homes and will start on site in 2021.
- Lordship Lane Estate and Woodland Road Estate schemes are progressing through design development and planning is expected to be submitted in 2021.



Asset Management

Due to the second lockdown, the Repairs Service has moved to offering the following service:



- Emergency and urgent repairs
 - Void property refurbishments
 - Housing adaptations emergency repairs and urgent installations
 - Emergency and urgent fire safety works
 - External communal inspections
 - External communal repairs at a reduced capacity
 - External handyperson works
 - Customers with repairs, works or claims that are unable to continue are being called and updated.
- Communal / Emergency Intelligent Lighting Installations are progressing as follows:

Asset Management



DENESMEAD Complete

- APPLESHAW HOUSE Leaseholder / Freehold Issues Delayed

PLAYFIELD CRESCENT Start date 27.11.20

CRAWTHEW GROVE Complete

YORK HOUSE Start date 27.11.20

Lift refurbishments at Cross Ct, Mayhew Ct and Leconsfield House:

Leconsfield House: Lift works completed and lift returned to service.

Cross Ct: The lift works are due to commence on 7th January 21

Mayhew Ct: The lift works are due to commence on 7th January 21

Asset Management



- QHIP major works schemes at Atwell and Arnold Dobson House are due to finish soon. Half a dozen schemes are in the design phase and due on site early in the next financial year.
- Harfield Gardens QHIP - Still in initial design phase – further consultation will follow.

Asset Management



Regarding Kingswood, designs are now complete and costs for external works to the pitched roof blocks have been agreed and are awaiting issuance of Section 20 notices. Consultation regarding Roof Top Homes (RTH), proposals are ongoing to the 8 flat roof blocks, illustrative drawings have been produced of what the RTH blocks may look like and will be issued within an update newsletter to the RTH blocks. Structural engineers have been appointed to undertake a feasibility on the RTH proposals to determine whether the blocks can structurally accommodate additional floors, feasibility due by end of March 2021. Surveys are currently underway for the internal works to the agreed 20 pilot properties to finalise initial specifications before commencing works to the internal pilot properties.

Resident Services



- Resident Services Officers (RSOs) continue to maintain regular contact with all known 1,061 vulnerable tenants. Some are contacted every week, every fortnight or monthly depending on their vulnerabilities. Where necessary, timely referrals are made to the appropriate support services such as Social Services, Mental Health team and GPs to ensure that residents get the support they need.
- Bonfire night – RSOs patrolled all the estates in Dulwich from 30/10/2020 - 31/10/2020 and 4/11/2020 to 5/11/2020. They made sure that any build-up of combustible items or bulk refuse was urgently removed by colleagues in the Cleaning Team. They also closely worked with the Anti-Social behaviour Team, Fire Brigade and the police to minimise any outbreaks of fire during that period.



- Removal of pirate radio station – this was removed from Countisbury House on the 17/11/2020 and works to prevent re access to the site by the operators were also completed on the same day. Equipment such as transmitters were taken away by Ofcom and the Police for their forensic investigations to try and track down the operators.
- Officers continue to carryout weekly visual inspections to ensure communal areas are clear of combustibles and/or stored items that might hinder evacuations in case of any emergencies. This is in addition to the monthly estate inspections.

- Pest Control issues - Ghost ants have been reported in some of our blocks such as Priory Court. The Pest Control team is currently treating these blocks on a weekly or bi-weekly basis subject to their capacity and work schedules. We urge residents to keep reporting any pests directly to the Pest Control on 0800 952 4444 so that they can be treated as soon as possible.





Communities

- The online panel of residents was launched at an inaugural event on October 13th. The panel consists of over 500 residents who have told us that they are willing to participate in discussions with the council around issues they are specifically interested. The panel is now up and running, with a task and finish group on leaseholder service charge statements its inaugural project.
- The council's new Getting Involved Grants programme (GIG) was re-launched in September 2020. These project-specific grants are for community organisations, aimed at promoting cohesive communities. The council received 20 applications from various groups across the borough, and a total of 17 projects have been awarded funding. The funding awarded covers projects ranging from £450 to £5,000.

Anti social behaviour, grounds maintenance



Reports of antisocial behaviour are still increasing especially about loud music and household noise. This can attributed to the fact that more residents are working and staying at home. However, we continue to work collaboratively with the Noise Team, Southwark Anti-Social Behaviour Unit (SASBU) and other support services to address these concerns.

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Anti social behaviour, grounds maintenance



- In terms of routine maintenance on housing estates the teams are assisting with the remains of leaf clearance and from next week will be concentrating on the winter maintenance of shrubs, roses and hedges.
- We recently completed a major renovation to the grounds of a council property at Bowley Close



Exchequer Services

- There has been some improvement in the COVID-19 related rent arrears position since that reported at AHF in September – and an even bigger improvement in service charge collection among homeowners.
- The impacts of the new COVID restrictions from earlier this month are still unknown but are not expected to be positive. We still expect to see overall collection levels for rent and service charges to be significantly down on last year (2019/20).
- Government imposed restrictions mean that no evictions are likely to take place until next year – the Council will only seek to evict those with persistent arrears that pre-dated the pandemic.

Customer Experience



- All face to face services (Peckham Service Point, Homeowners Service at the Blue and Bournemouth Road), remain closed due to COVID 19 restrictions. This situation will be reviewed following any lifting of lockdown and advice on resuming public services.
- The Contact Centre is presently taking emergency repairs calls only. The service is also running a COVID 19 hotline providing advice and assistance to residents. It is also assisting with the Test, Track and Trace service, calling those who have been identified as coming into contact with someone with COVID 19.



- Registrars service continues to register births and deaths but ceremonies have been suspended due to COVID 19 restrictions. The Coroners service is conducting jury inquests at Tooley Street where safe distancing can take place.
- The Homeowners Service continues to support homeowners and receive RTB applications despite the current closure of the Market Place office.

Modernise



- Over 37, 000 Southwark properties have now been connected to full-fibre broadband as a result of the council's closely working with suppliers Hyperoptic and Community Fibre. Hyperoptic and Community complete their installation programme in Q1 2021/22
- Openreach are due to continue this work in early 2021, once a wayleave agreement has been put in place. The council will look to engage with resident groups in advance of Openreach's programme - to discuss the nature of works, proposed schedule and answer any questions representatives may have. We will also work with Openreach to communicate with residents, as we have done previously, to inform them of the start of infrastructure works on each estate