

Local Housing Forum Highlight Reports - North West

March 2021



 @lb_southwark

 facebook.com/southwarkcouncil

Southwark
Council
southwark.gov.uk

New Homes

Planning secured and projects in procurement phase

Fendall Street will provide 16 council homes within a 5 storey building. Fendall Street will provide improvements to the surrounding landscaping of the existing St Saviours Estate and provide communal amenity space for future occupiers and existing residents

Maltby Street scheme will to provide 24 council homes within a 5 storey building. The proposal also seeks to provide landscaping around the building and the re-provision of the existing children's play area.

LeatherMarket (CBS) working in partnership with the council to provide 40 new homes at Joseph Lancaster Estate, which is on site, as well as gaining approval to develop the design proposals for another two sites on the Elim Estate and the Leathermarket Office.

Asset Management

Due to further 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:

PORTER STREET – Complete

Continue:

PARK STREET – Complete
GREEN WALK – Complete
PRIORESS STREET– Complete
REPHIDIM STREET, – Complete
TABARD STREET– Complete
THURNHAM HOUSE, – Complete
ROTHSAY STREET– Complete
POTIER STREET – Complete

QHIP major works schemes are on site at Haddonhall Estate and Rowland Hill House on Nelson Square Gardens Estate, with work due to finish soon.

Heating works at Albert Barnes are due to finish this year.

Work to the underground mains at Setchell Estate is due to begin in the summer. A dozen schemes are now in design and looking to start early in the next financial year. These include Rockingham Street, Applegarth, Helen Gladstone and Vaughan Houses on the Nelson Square Gardens Estate and Redman House, Haddonhall Estate Phase 2, 33-37 Southwark Bridge Road.

Modernise

Connectivity/digital infrastructure

All wards

Approximately, 38,000 homes have been given access to a fibre broadband connection by Community Fibre and Hyperoptic.

60 free lifetime broadband connections given to TRAs and libraries.

To support homeschooling during lockdown, we are working to provided a free broadband connection to the homes of students in need.

Customer Experience Services

MySouthwark Homeowners Service:

We have finalised internally, our cross departmental homeowners' improvement plan to present to the first Home Owners Forum for feedback and input now scheduled for February 2021.

Our My Southwark Home Owners office in the Blue in Market Place Bermondsey remains close due to COVID restrictions but all of our services remain open to our customers on line.

We are experiencing high volumes of requests from leaseholders for permission to alter their property and new right to buy applications.

Housing Solutions:

We will need the Housing Allocations consultation on these meetings agendas in March.

Specialist Services

The service point continues to remain closed in line with government guidelines in relation to Covid-19 however, we have now launched the Service Point Telephone Appointment Service (Interim Service) The Service Point online booking portal (Choose and Book) has been amended to allow customers to request a telephone appointment rather than a face to face appointment.

This is to ensure we support as many vulnerable residents as possible.

Continue:

The first Jury inquest since March 2020 started on 7th September 2020, taking place at Tooley Street due to space restrictions in the coroners court. We were one of only two boroughs able to recommence this service. Inquests have continued until February 2021 however, due to the new strain of the virus “Read Only” inquests will be completed only from March 2021.

Email performance continues well with 95% of customer queries responded to within 24 hours.

The Freedom pass renewal is currently in place, this phase will end by March 2021. Response to date has been very positive (please encourage those who haven't responded to do so)

Upon the Tier 4 restrictions announced on Saturday, 19 December, the team immediately contacted couples with weddings scheduled during January offering them a ceremony for that evening. Staff worked until after midnight with 10 couples getting married that evening.

Resident Services

Resident Services Officers continue to contact all vulnerable residents on our estates for welfare checks. They carry out welfare checks and signpost residents to supporting agencies.

They also conduct weekly estate visual audits and monthly estate inspections to ensure the estate remain a clean and safe place for residents.

We have signs in the lift lobby and communal areas to remind residents to follow government guidelines on social distancing, use of masks, washing of hands etc.

Due to the lockdown, most of our residents are spending more time at home which is generating increased low level nuisance and anti social behaviour complaints on some of the estates . Most of the complaints involve domestic noise nuisance including loud footsteps, people talking etc, we are asking residents to be more considerate of neighbours and keep noise however caused to a minimum.

Continue:

Officers are working with partners including social services, Police, surrounding Schools, Anti-Social Behaviour Unit etc to resolve the issues.

The Police are carrying out robust patrols in the areas identified. There are regular meetings with residents to reassure and update the community.

Cleaning - With Southwark moving in to Tier 4 there is a restriction the cleaning staff shifts to minimise C-19 risks. This is likely to have an impact on estate cleaning while Tier 4 remains in place.

The Resident Services Officers will continue to monitor and pick up any issue during their weekly visual audits and monthly estate inspections and liaise with the cleaning team to resolve.

This cleaning arrangement will remain under review and revert to normal service as the restriction is relaxed.

There has been a reduction in the number of Rough sleepers found on our estates. Residents are encouraged to continue to use STREETLINK to connect people sleeping rough with local services that can support them. Continue:

The outreach team also carry out frequent patrols to provide drug and alcohol support where needed.

Tustin residents have voted a clear preference for demolition of the low rise blocks on their estate. Follow up discussions to be had before future is put to a whole estate ballot.

We have seen an increase in ASB complaints since the lockdown. We are aware of the concerns regarding specific areas and are working proactively with Sasbu and the police to manage these issues

Communities

The Tenant and Homeowner Involvement Team has begun working with a team of Independent Resident Advisors and the elected residents to launch the council's three new strategic bodies for resident participation – the Tenant Forum, the Homeowner Forum, and the Joint Tenant and Homeowner Forum. The Independent Resident Advisors have also commenced a coaching role with the chairs of the five Local Housing Fora, to help them in their chairing role in an online environment.

The council is planning on making the Getting Involved Grants programme more flexible this year, given the current circumstances, with three shorter rounds spread over 9 months so that there are more opportunities for TRAs to apply. The provisional date for launching the first round is April. These grants are aimed at funding projects that bring communities together and strengthen social cohesion. Details of the grant programme, including who can apply and what can be funded (and how much) will be publicised nearer the time. Continue:

The Tenant and Homeowner Involvement Team is about to commence a further round of outreach work with the borough's 130+ tenant and resident associations (TRAs).

This work will take the form of an informal telephone survey of TRA officers, with a view to understanding the well-being of the group, its current level of activity (if any) and the nature of this activity, and any help that any of the groups may need from officers of the council.

Exchequer Services

Estimated service charges for 2021/22 are due to be issued in the middle of February, with payment due to start on 1st April. Homeowners are encouraged to contact their Homeowner Accounts Officer if they need to discuss payments. Any homeowner who is having difficulties due to Covid should fill out our Covid e-form if they have not already done so.

We are in the process of refreshing our service charge loans policy, which is due to go to Cabinet in March. We recently carried out consultation with leaseholders on this via the Residents On-Line panel, and have incorporated the results into the report.

We are in the process of creating a Contact Us page on the website, which will provide a direct link to all of our e-forms for ease of use.

We have just completed the full refurbishment of Sedgmoor underground garages, and will be opening these shortly

Continue:

Estimated service charges for 2021/22 are due to be issued in the middle of February, with payment due to start on 1st April. Homeowners are encouraged to contact their Homeowner Accounts Officer if they need to discuss payments.

Any homeowner who is having difficulties due to Covid should fill out our Covid e-form if they have not already done so.

We are in the process of refreshing our service charge loans policy, which is due to go to Cabinet in March. We recently carried out consultation with leaseholders on this via the Residents On-Line panel, and have incorporated the results into the report.

We are in the process of creating a Contact Us page on the website, which will provide a direct link to all of our e-forms for ease of use.

We have just completed the full refurbishment of Sedgmoor underground garages, and will be opening these shortly.

Anti social behaviour, grounds maintenance

SASBU are working with Police and partners on a number of drug related issues within the wards and this is work that is ongoing. Currently we have secured 3 premises closures for drug related behaviour and are pursuing possession of these tenancies. We also have agreed with another resident to surrender their tenancy as they have found their own accommodation way from the borough.

SASBU also support the closure of three other premises, two of which were large industrial units that had been involved in violence and unauthorised music events. The owners of the units have been fully engaged with in the process and have made modifications to the units to prevent further disorder once the orders have expired.

We are also working with Police on another estate in relation to drugs behaviour and will be seeking to install rapid deployment CCTV to assist with enquiries and resident support.

SASBU sought and were granted a court order against a resident for racial abuse within the community. Currently we are pursuing a potential breaches of this order which, if proven will result in further legal action if appropriate continue:

In March the ground maintenance teams will have resumed grass cutting operations across all estates

The ground maintenance service has an on-going programme in place for replacing all its petrol driven equipment e.g. mowers, strimmer's, hedge cutters etc. with electric items which will significantly reduce the amount CO2 emissions that the service produces on our estates.

It is perhaps worth noting that we will only be replacing the petrol driven equipment when it becomes defective or obsolete so residents will not see these items disappear overnight but more a gradual phasing out

The ground maintenance service is working with Great Estates residents gardening groups on individual maintenance agreements for the adoption of areas/plots for specific gardening projects, the GM service has committed to supporting these gardening groups through a variety of means such as technical advice, altering the frequency of some gm activities, green waste disposal etc.

Thank you