



WDCO REPORT



15th December 2022

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1. DEVELOPMENT PROGRESS

1.1 Phase 2 Block D & B

Phase 2 (Blocks D and B) have 134 Shared Ownership homes. To date 108 have been sold.

1.2 Phase 3

Phase 3 is on programme and some blocks in Phase 3b are 16 weeks ahead of programme. There are ongoing meetings between NHG, Berkeley Homes and NHG's Quality Management Team to review the M&E Equipment and Fire Strategy. The final pieces of information for the Phase 3a tenant's choice (those homes completing earliest) are being communicated to Berkeley and cross checks have been completed. We are also working with LBH and BH's re tenant choices for Phase 3b which will take place early in the new year.

1.3 Phase 4 and Masterplan

NHG continue to be active in the Design Committee meetings and commenting on planning proposals presented by Berkeley for Phase 4 – specifically working with Berkeley to provide the service charge information.

2. SOCIO ECONOMIC UPDATE

2.1 Case Study from Hackney Citizen Advice

This is a case study provided by Hackney CA, the example below is in regards to one specific resident and demonstrates the type of interventions and support they are providing for residents to help maximise their income and manage debts during the cost-of-living crisis:

- *Client was referred by their housing officer as they were in arrears with council tax and gas bill. Client received a letter from benefits office that they were not entitled to council tax reduction. There was no change in circumstances and client is receiving State Pension, but less than the weekly amount of Pension Credit, and didn't know they were entitled to claim Pension Credit.*
- *Client had gas arrears of over £800, which they were struggling to pay and had a letter from supplier about installing a prepayment meter. Client has multiple health conditions and wasn't receiving any disability benefits.*
- *CA contacted the benefits office, and their claim was reassessed and received £739.48 Council tax reduction with weekly entitled as £28.30, making their council tax account in credit of £347. CA then filled an online form to request a refund of amount in credit for client.*
- *CA contacted the gas supplier and informed them the client has mobility issues and they can't put in a prepayment meter as they will not be able to top up.*
- *CA advised client about Warm Home Discount and applications are open in November*

2022 for 2022/2023.

- CA made a grant application to British Gas and are waiting for decision.
- CA applied for Waterhelp from Thames Water for the client, although they didn't have arrears, their bill was halved.

Client was amazed by the CA's assistance and states they are glad the project is here and that their housing officer referred them and doesn't have to struggle to get through to us.

3. OPERATIONAL UPDATES

3.1 Mechanical and Electrical - Ashview:

D&L continue to undertake their investigation and works to the Ashview drainage system that were identified in previous surveys. These works encompass full site high pressure water jetting of the underground car park, surface and foul, and stack pipes to remove any encrustation build up and ensure all drainage is flowing freely. Any defects found will be addressed at the beginning of the new year. This includes identifying any mixed connections (where foul water and surface water pipework has been crossed) which will be addressed with Berkeley.

As per last month's report, the existing sewage pump and macerator will be replaced at the beginning of January following the jetting works with a combined macerator and pump unit. This has been ordered and is expected to be delivered to the contractor New Haden Pumps before Christmas. The new pump will be an upgrade in terms of durability. Until the new macerator is installed then the additional checks to the system will continue.

Aecom continue to oversee D&L's works. Upon the works completion they will be putting together an O+M manual which will fully detail the drainage system design and its maintenance regime. The maintenance of the foul and surface water systems will be conducted at a high frequency in 2023 so that performance of the systems can be monitored. Following this, the maintenance intervals will be adjusted accordingly and completed based upon the site's specific requirements. As previously noted, NHG will share the outcome of these works with residents and details of the future maintenance regime.

Works completed to date:

- 8th November - Site inductions & mobilisation.
- 9th – 19th November – Clearing, jetting, and surveying of all pipework and chambers.
- 24th – 25th November - Dye test of a number of properties (residents affected will be communicated with directly). Properties will be picked at random but will cover the whole system.
- 21st – 2nd December - High pressure water jetting and CCTV survey.

The remaining programme is as follows:

- 5th – 9th December – Attenuation tank and pipework pumping out, along with any required manhole repairs. CCTV survey of rising main and pipework into the foul water storage tank.
- 12th – 16th December - Contingency week for any unforeseen issues
- Jan/Feb 2023? – repair any pipework defects identified and upgrade the macerator.

Update on works to date:

Week 1.

D&L gained access to the roof levels at Birchwood, Maplewood and Ashview. They surveyed foul water stacks and found encrustation blocking between 20%-40% of the pipework. This has been cleared. They also found the cast iron leaf guards had corroded and fallen into some of the pipes. These were not so far into the pipes that they affected the flow of water.

Week 2.

D7L continued to work on Birchwood, Maplewood and Ashview. They used a chain cleaning machine to remove encrustation and debris.

Week 3.

D&L fitted the plastic leaf guards to the stacks where cast iron ones had corroded. A total of 15 appointments were held with residents across the three blocks so D&L could dye test the drainage, and ensure that the dye travelled from properties into the correct pipework. All three blocks have commenced the jetting of the surface water drainage system as well as the foul water system.

Week 4

Ashwood, Maplewood and Birchwood: completion of the jetting of the Surface Water and foul water drainage systems. All drainage has been CCTV surveyed and a large amount of debris removed from the pipework. Debris listed by the jetting teams as Scale, fat, building material, wet wipes, cat litter and general waste.

Between the 5th-9th December, D&L made some small excavations in areas where the ground is uneven in the park to assist an investigation of this area to identify the cause of any issues. Aecom and Berkeley will assess the findings with a view to recommending resolutions. Residents will be informed in advance of these works taking place and any future works required in the area.

While the works will not complete until after Christmas, we do not envisage any issues over the Christmas period due to the system being cleared in the preceding weeks. We will ensure that should an issue occur that there is a planned response in place, and we will communicate with residents who to contact over this period.

As noted before, residents will not be charged for these additional works where above standard maintenance costs.

Action from November WDCO meeting

Samuel Betts took away the action to see if lessons could be learned from R&R's recent drainage jetting which preceded rodent infestation issues. R+R have responded to say they are unfamiliar with the link but if more details can be provided regarding when this occurred and any particular addresses this relates to then they can investigate further.

3.2 Heating Tariffs and Metering Update

We have sent residents information on how to contact Insite to report any issues with their heat meter or bills, as well as how to take and submit meter readings.

Housing officers have assisted Insite in arranging access to properties where meters need to be repaired, visits to a number of properties have been arranged by NHG and will continue to

arrange further visits, as and when required.

Should any residents have queries about heating tariffs then they should call 0203 815 1205 or email Energy.Provision@nhg.org.uk.

To report a faulty meter, please email nhgmaintenance@insite-energy.co.uk or for billing related queries either email customerservice@insite-energy.co.uk or call 0345987966.

Following the tariff and metering meeting on 7th November 2022, there were some actions for NHG. These actions and updates are within appendix 1 of this report.

3.3 Sustainability Education Workshop

In response to the Cost-of-Living Crisis, the NHG team partnered with Axis, (the repair and maintenance company who provides services across England and work mainly with social housing) to provide a workshop detailing tips and support to residents around energy efficiency, how to reduce their energy bills and provide financial advice. Representatives from NHG's tenancy support team, SEI team and Assets team also attended on the day along with Insite Energy and CAB. The day was informative and the tenants who attended found it beneficial as well as staff. Posters were displayed in all blocks 10 days prior to the event and 5 days prior we did a leaflet drop to all residents.

3.4 Estate Walkabouts

Estate walkabouts with WDCO and other stakeholders take place on the 1st Tuesday of every month. The last walkabout took place on 6 December 2022. The next will take place on 5 January 2023.

3.5 Communal Pest Control Update

Our pest control contractor attends monthly to bait the bin stores of our blocks. After each visit they provide us with a report which makes recommendations, if required, which we action. This includes proofing, which we have completed in the bin stores. We will continue to monitor the situation in the communal areas. As per action from the last WDCO board, Neil and Jada are meeting with Maplewood TRA chair Omar re our pest control strategy on 6 December 2022.

As before, we carry out monthly estate inspections (covering hallways, riser cupboards, bin stores, communal gardens etc). If any issues are found relating to pests these are noted down and actioned. Our cleaners are in and out of the bin stores every day and report any issues to us (e.g., mice sightings, holes that need filling) which we action.

Where required, we have asked Hackney to add specific external areas of the estate to their wider baiting programme. We have spoken to Rendall and Rittner who confirm a very similar approach to NHG regarding pest control. We have asked the ITLA for assistance to set up a meeting with partners (Berekley, Hackney, WDCO, R&R) to work on a joint strategy for the external communal areas of the estate. Date to be confirmed.

3.6 Service Charge Update

Proposed service charge budgets for 2023/24 have been set and will be sent to residents for consultation before the end of the year. NHG will then have a period to respond to resident enquiries and feedback and make any final amendments. The final budgets will be sent to residents before the end of February 2023.

4. COMMUNICATIONS

NHG continue to attend the monthly Woodberry Down Communications Group and supported the completion of the Woodberry Down Communication activity planner and contributed to the Woodberry Down Newsletter. NHG was involved in the planning and organisation of the festival, attending weekly Winter Fest planning meetings. NHG attended the Winter Festival on the 28 November 2022.

Appendix 1

Actions update (from tariff and metering meeting on 07.11.22)

- NHG to write to residents regarding government rebate for heat network customers, once known

Government have announced that heat network customers will no longer receive the £100 rebate - this is due to support already being provided via the EBSS and ERBS.

- NHG to seek G15 comparable information on tariffs

Laura Coleman (NHG) (LC) made requests for other HA's and LA's to provide their current rates. Advised that they are happy to share this information, however no commitment as to when they can share it as they are all busy dealing with notification letters regarding the ERBS schemes.

- NHG willing to hold a specific drop-in session for queries/questions related to tariffs

Heating Network and Energy team have suggested this takes place in February due to internal changes. Date to be scheduled and circulated in the new year.

- LC to review future resident consultation options re changes in tariffs

Correction to comment relating to previous consultation with residents. To confirm we have used NHG residents for consultation on billing services, not tariff changes. LC enquired if NHG would consider engaging with customers for future tariff changes - this was not considered an option, as the costs are a direct pass through.

- NHG, Insite and ITLA to co-ordinate a plan of action re gaining access to repair faulty meters

Housing officers have assisted Insite in contacting residents listed as having faulty meters to arrange access. Insite have further appointments booked for 15, 16, 17 December. NHG to confirm outstanding repairs after these dates.

- LC to liaise with Insite and send communication ASAP to residents on how to take and submit meter readings and how estimated bills are calculated

Detailed information on the above sent to all residents' w/c 28 Nov.