



## Housing and Growth Committee

24 November 2020

<b>Title</b>	<b>Council housing update</b>
<b>Report of</b>	Chairman - Housing and Growth Committee
<b>Wards</b>	All
<b>Status</b>	Public
<b>Urgent</b>	No
<b>Key</b>	Non-key
<b>Officer Contact Details</b>	Stephen McDonald- Director of Growth - 020 8359 2172, <a href="mailto:stephen.mcdonald@barnet.gov.uk">stephen.mcdonald@barnet.gov.uk</a>  Elliott Sweetman – Group Director of Operations and Property, The Barnet Group – 0208 359 5261 <a href="mailto:Elliott.Sweetman@barnethomes.org">Elliott.Sweetman@barnethomes.org</a>

### Summary

At the request of the committee, this paper updates the committee on the status of decanting the properties in Marsh Drive on the West Hendon Estate and the subsequent rehousing of residents in accordance with the Council's Housing Allocations Policy.

It also updates the committee as to the status of other council tenants on Grahame Park and Dollis Valley regeneration estates and provides information regarding the approach Barnet Homes takes to resident engagement and involvement more broadly across Council housing estates.

### Recommendations

**That the committee:**

1. **Notes the progress made with the decanting of the properties in Marsh Drive on the West Hendon Estate and the subsequent rehousing of residents as appropriate in accordance with the Council's Housing Allocations Policy.**
2. **Notes the longstop date of February 2021 agreed with Cadent to have Marsh Drive fully decanted**
3. **Notes the status of tenants on the Grahame Park and Dollis Valley Estates**
4. **Notes the significant investment being delivered to improve the condition and safety of the homes on the Grahame Park estate**

## **5. Notes the approach taken by Barnet Homes to community engagement and involvement across Council housing estates**

### **1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED**

#### **1.1 Marsh Drive, West Hendon Estate**

- 1.2 The regeneration of West Hendon is making good progress. The regeneration scheme will replace existing properties which are of a low quality construction and hard to maintain within the West Hendon estate, with new mixed tenure housing constructed to modern standards. The Scheme will deliver 2,194 new residential units - a net gain of 1,545 on the existing site and will increase the overall levels of affordable housing on the estate. These will be delivered over a 17 year period, with all new homes expected to complete by 2028/29. The scheme includes improved pedestrian and public transport links, an enhanced Town Centre and a new community hub and is delivered by the Barratt Metropolitan Limited Liability Partnership (BMLLP) – a Joint Venture between Barratt Homes and Metropolitan Housing Trust.
- 1.3 Construction started in 2011 with 851 new homes built to date, of which 250 are affordable housing. In addition, 1,118sqm of commercial floorspace has been created at ground level of the latest development phase close to Hendon Broadway. In Autumn 2019, construction started on the next phase of development (Phase 4) which will deliver 611 residential units (418 private and 193 affordable) with completion expected in 2023.
- 1.4 The 232 homes at Marsh Drive were earmarked for the final phases of the development and are not currently intended for demolition until 2022. However, the Housing and Growth Committee received a report on West Hendon in January 2020 and agreed that tenants and leaseholders at Marsh Drive should be rehoused by October 2020, some 18 months earlier than planned. This decision took into account a number of factors such as the condition of the homes and blocks in general and a requirement from gas network distributor Cadent that because of risks associated with the large panel system construction of these properties, that the piped gas would need to be removed if it were planned to keep the properties in use beyond this date.
- 1.5 The COVID-19 pandemic has presented a number of challenges in achieving the October 2020 timescale due to a slowing down of the number of council and housing association homes being made available. This has in part, been as a result of construction programmes being delayed and in part due to a reluctance of people wanting to move from their existing homes during the pandemic. Additionally, the governments ban on evictions has presented restrictions in accessing the court system should the need arise as part of the decanting process.
- 1.6 Barnet Homes therefore reached an agreement with Cadent in April 2020 for an alternative longstop date for the decanting of all homes in Marsh Drive, that being February 2021. This agreement was reached on the basis that Barnet Homes would continue with the precautionary risk mitigation measures agreed

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with Cadent and would use all best endeavours to decant the block as quickly as possible.

1.7 Positively, progress in relation to the rehousing programme has been good to date despite the challenges posed by the pandemic and a summary of the position as at 30 October 2020 is contained in the table below:

Tenure	Total	Rehoused	Found own accommodation / other	Have been made an offer of housing	Awaiting an offer
Non-secure	122	103	5	13	1
Secure	25	19	2	3	1

1.8 As reported to the committee in January 2020, the housing needs of each household have been assessed in accordance with the Council's Housing Allocations Policy which places people in bands based on their circumstances. This is done at a point in time, following their Housing Needs Assessment. The key objectives of this Allocations Scheme are to:

- Provide a fair and transparent system by which people are prioritised for social housing
- Help those most in housing need
- Promote the development of sustainable mixed communities
- Encourage residents to access employment and training
- Recognise residents who make a contribution to a local community
- Make the best use of Barnet's social housing
- Make efficient use of our resources and those of our partner Registered Social Landlords

1.9 Barnet Homes have endeavoured to provide options for rehousing the residents of Marsh Drive within the borough wherever possible. The table below shows a summary of the type and location of rehousing:

Tenure at Marsh Drive	Total Number at Marsh Drive	Found own accommodation / other	Rehoused or made an offer of social housing in Barnet	Rehoused on council regeneration estate	Rehoused / offered long term temporary accommodation in Barnet	Rehoused / offered long term temporary accommodation outside of Barnet
Non-secure tenants	122	5	99	2	13	3
Secure tenants	25	2	22 (1 remaining)			

## 2.0 Leaseholders

2.1 Of the 52 leasehold interests originally on Marsh Drive, 5 owner occupied properties remain to be acquired. Should private deals not be concluded, these will vest to the Council under CPO3 on 18<sup>th</sup> November. Of the owner-occupied properties likely to vest, there are 4 which present a risk that the

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leaseholders will remain in-situ post-vesting. Efforts are ongoing to help those leaseholders find housing solutions. Investor owned properties vested to the Council on 19<sup>th</sup> October. Of the properties that vested, 5 still have private tenants in occupation. Barnet Homes are working with these tenants to help them find new homes.

### 3.0 Management and Security

3.1 Barnet Homes continue to deploy full time estate caretaking, property guardian and security resources on the estate and this will continue until all properties are vacated and the blocks handed over to Barratt Metropolitan Limited Liability Partnership. As properties become vacant safety and security works are carried out to each property and Barnet Homes continue to liaise closely with Cadent to enable them to decommission individual gas risers to blocks as and when they become completely vacant, thereby reducing any risks associated with the gas supply further.

3.2 Barnet Homes continue their regular dialogue with the Residents Association and through regular estate wide resident newsletters and have maintained responsive to the needs of residents throughout the rehousing period.

### 4.0 Grahame Park and Dollis Valley Estates

4.1 At its September 2020 meeting the committee requested an update regarding the status of council tenants on other regeneration estates in the borough. Below is a table which shows a summary by estate of the number of tenants and leaseholders on Dollis Valley and Grahame Park Estates:

Estate	Secure Tenants	Non-secure tenants
Grahame Park Estate	367	574
Dollis Valley Estate	180	106

4.2 As has been the case at West Hendon and other phases of estate regeneration decanting previously, secure tenants who reside in homes which are scheduled for future demolition as part of regeneration plans are provided with an offer of a new home within the regenerated area of the estate. Non-secure tenants are assessed in accordance with the Council's Housing Allocations Policy which places people in bands based on their circumstances. This is done at a point in time, following their Housing Needs Assessment. The process of decanting generally commences around 18 months prior to the scheduled vacant possession date for the dwellings in question. This significant amount of time is required to ensure all housing needs assessments can be completed, necessary support provided to or signposted for residents as required and allows ample time to source appropriate forms of alternative accommodation.

4.3 In recognition of the significant period left to run on the Grahame Park estate regeneration scheme, the council through Barnet Homes is investing £32m in improving the existing homes on the estate. This investment includes H&S/compliance related measures such as upgrading the electrical rising mains to blocks, asbestos removal, rewiring of homes and fire safety works. It

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also includes the replacement and/or installation of secure controlled entrance systems to the largest blocks on the estate along with a range of other anti-social behaviour preventative security measures. Additionally, general refurbishment works to blocks and homes such as roof, window, kitchen and bathroom replacements will be completed over a 3 year programme.

- 4.4 Barnet Homes are working closely with a range of council services, the Police, Notting Hill Genesis and voluntary and community sector organisations to ensure that the existing estate is provided with adequate levels of investment, service and support to achieve the ultimate aims of the estate regeneration scheme.

## **5.0 Barnet Homes Resident Engagement/Involvement**

- 5.1 Barnet Homes generally take a centralised approach to customer involvement and scrutiny through our Performance Advisory Group (PAG) and Resident Support Group. These groups consist exclusively of tenant and leaseholder customers of Barnet Homes. Their role is primarily to provide a robust customer scrutiny function to ensure that the 'voice of residents' is adequately represented in relation to the delivery of the Barnet Homes' services they receive and to also provide input and direction regarding strategic decisions taken by Barnet Homes regarding customer services. The PAG have been instrumental in shaping the Barnet Homes Customer Experience Programme and were strong advocates of the recent insourcing of the Barnet Homes Repairs and Gas Service.

- 5.2 In recognition of the need to further enhance the role of residents in the governance of Barnet Homes, the TBG Board recently voted in favour of creating a Resident Board reporting directly into the Barnet Homes and TBG Boards. The Chair of the Resident Board will also be a member of the Barnet Homes and TBG Boards so as to ensure that there is a strong link between the boards and that the 'residents voice' is well represented in terms of oversight, scrutiny and strategic decision making.

- 5.3 There is also support provided in a localised manner for the creation and ongoing development of resident's associations and smaller local groups throughout the borough and we work closely with partners such as Colindale Communities Trust, Barnet Community Project, The Hope of Childs Hill, Burnt Oak Women's Group and resident's associations such as Granville Estate Residents Association amongst many others.

- 5.4 TBG have a Community Engagement Strategy which includes 3 themes:

1. Customer Involvement and Scrutiny – Barnet Homes, Open Door Homes and Your Choice
2. Community Engagement – Local need & environment
3. Community Development – VCS, youth, health and wellbeing, addressing poverty

- 5.5 The government published a Social Housing Green Paper in August 2018 and they have recently announced in Parliament that the Social Housing White

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Paper will be published later this year. The aim of the paper will be to ensure a new fairer deal for social housing residents. TBG will use this opportunity to review their Community Engagement Strategy which will include consulting with residents, the council, partners and the VCS.

## **6.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 6.1 Following the committee's January 2020 decision to decant Marsh Drive by October 2020, Barnet Homes have made good progress with that process despite significant challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Whilst every effort has been made to decant Marsh Drive within the original timescale, this has not been possible for reasons outside of any control and this has been acknowledged by Cadent with the agreement of a February 2021 longstop date.
- 6.2 Following the committee's January 2020 decision to invest £32m to improve the homes on the Grahame Park estate, Barnet Homes are projecting expenditure of £5m in the 2020/21 financial year on this programme despite the limiting impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

## **7.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED**

- 7.1 Improvements could have been carried out at the blocks on Marsh Drive and the piped gas could be removed and the heating in all properties updated, but this would have been prohibitively expensive in light of the previously planned demolition of the block in 2022. Any new heating system would be operational for an estimated 18 months before the blocks were demolished, during which time the Council would also be seeking to reduce the number of residents occupying the blocks ahead of the redevelopment.
- 7.2 A decision could have been taken not to invest in the homes on Grahame Park estate, however given the current condition of the stock and the length of time over which much of the estate will remain occupied for, this was not recommended.

## **8.0 POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION**

- 8.1 At West Hendon, Barnet Homes will continue to rehouse the remaining residents and secure the blocks up to the point that the site can be handed over to Barratt Metropolitan Limited Liability Partnership.
- 8.2 Barnet Homes will continue to deliver the £32m stock investment programme on the Grahame Park estate and its work with a range of council services, the Police, Notting Hill Genesis and voluntary and community sector organisations to ensure that the existing estate is provided with adequate levels of

investment, service and support to achieve the ultimate aims of the estate regeneration scheme.

- 8.3 TBG will undertake a review and update of the TBG Community Engagement Strategy following the government publishing the Social Housing White Paper.

## **9.0 IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION**

### **Corporate Priorities and Performance**

- 9.1 The regeneration of the West Hendon, Grahame Park and Dollis Valley Estates supports the Council's Corporate Plan 2024 which states our three outcomes for the borough focus on place, people and communities:

- A pleasant, well maintained borough that we protect and invest in
- Our residents live happy, healthy, independent lives with the most vulnerable protected
- Safe and strong communities where people get along well.

- 9.2 Under a pleasant, well maintained borough that we protect and invest in, the priorities are:

- ensuring decent quality housing that buyers and renters can afford, prioritising Barnet residents
- investing in community facilities to support a growing population, such as schools and leisure centres
- responsible delivery of our major regeneration schemes to create better places to live and work, whilst protecting and enhancing the borough.

## **10. Resources (Finance & Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)**

- 10.1 There are no direct resource implications arising out of this report.

## **11. Social Value**

- 11.1 There are no specific social value considerations arising out of this report.

## **12. Legal and Constitutional References**

- 12.1 The Council's Constitution, Article 7.5 responsibility for function, states the functions of the Housing and Growth Committee, includes responsibility for regeneration schemes and asset management as well as housing strategy and social housing. The Committee also has responsibility to receive reports on relevant performance information and risk on the services under the remit of the Committee.

## **13. Risk Management**

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- 13.1 As set out in the report to ARG on 27 November 2017 and 14 June 2018, the existing Regeneration Strategy was approved by Cabinet in 2011 and sets out the existing regeneration programme that is now underway. A new Growth Strategy was drafted in 2019 and consulted upon which provides an agreed strategic direction for the council's role in growth and regeneration.
- 13.2 A number of remaining blocks at Marsh Drive, which under the regeneration scheme are not due for demolition until 2022, have been deteriorating, and in some cases had fallen below a standard that was acceptable. To mitigate any potential risks outlined in earlier sections of this report the Council will re-house all Marsh Drive residents by the longstop date of February 2021.

#### **14. Equalities and Diversity**

- 14.1 Equality and diversity issues are a mandatory consideration in the Council's decision-making process. Decision makers should have due regard to the public-sector equality duty in making their decisions. The equalities duties are continuing duties they are not duties to secure a particular outcome. The equalities impact will be revisited on each of the proposals as they are developed. Consideration of the duties should precede the decision. It is important that Policy and Resources Committee, or the officer decision maker if the decision is delegated to them, has regard to the statutory grounds in the light of all available material such as consultation responses. The statutory grounds of the public-sector equality duty are found at section 149 of the Equality Act 2010.
- 14.2 A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to: 13 (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act; (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 14.3 Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to: (a) remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic; (b) take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it; (c) encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.
- 14.4 The steps involved in meeting the needs of disabled persons that are different from the needs of persons who are not disabled include, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities.
- 14.5 Having due regard to the need to foster good relations between persons who  
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share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to: (a) Tackle prejudice, and (b) Promote understanding.

14.6 Compliance with the duties in this section may involve treating some persons more favourably than others; but that is not to be taken as permitting conduct that would otherwise be prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010. The relevant protected characteristics are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage and Civil partnership

14.7 The Housing Allocations Policy was subject to an Equalities Impact Assessment. No changes to this policy are proposed.

## **15. Corporate Parenting**

15.1 The Housing Allocations scheme gives priority to care leavers, foster carers, and providers of Supported Living.

## **16. Consultation and Engagement**

16.1 The West Hendon Regeneration Partnership Board brings together key stakeholders involved in the regeneration of the West Hendon Estate and includes representatives from the Council, Barnet Homes, Metropolitan Housing Trust, Barratt London, West Hendon residents, community representatives and local Councillors. The Partnership Board meets regularly to discuss matters relating to development and regeneration activities on the estate and are supported by an Independent Resident Advisor.

16.2 Further to this, senior officers from the Council and Barnet Homes have met with West Hendon residents over the last 12 months to listen to and respond to any concerns they have.

16.3 The Grahame Park Regeneration Partnership Board brings together key stakeholders involved in the regeneration of the Grahame Park Estate and includes representatives from the Council, Barnet Homes, Notting Hill Genesis, Grahame Park residents, community representatives and local Councillors. The Partnership Board recommenced meetings in October 2020 and will continue meeting regularly to discuss matters relating to development and regeneration activities on the estate and are supported by an Independent Resident Advisor.

## 17. Insight

17.1 No specific insight data has been used in this report.

## 18. BACKGROUND PAPERS

18.1 Relevant previous decisions are listed in the table below.

Housing and Growth Committee – January 2020	West Hendon estate regeneration and non-secure tenants on regeneration estates	<a href="https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/document/s/s57396/West%20Hendon%20estate%20regeneration%20and%20non-secure%20tenants%20on%20regeneration%20estates.pdf">https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/document/s/s57396/West%20Hendon%20estate%20regeneration%20and%20non-secure%20tenants%20on%20regeneration%20estates.pdf</a>
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