



Safety in your building

17 August 2022

Vantage Point,
Berger Road,
Homerton,
E9

Dear residents,

The Hive
22 Wembley Park Boulevard
Wembley
HA9 0HP

www.networkhomes.org.uk

customerservice@
networkhomes.org.uk
0300 373 3000

Ecologist hired to advise on biodiversity, plus night work likely not required

In our last letter, we let you know the planning application had been rejected based on biodiversity, carbon offsetting and visual impact. We have taken several steps to address this. We've also made some progress in other areas and have included below.

Ecologist joins the team

We've hired an ecologist to advise us on the best way to mitigate the reduction of biodiversity and the carbon impact from changing the green wall. We're currently looking at adding some planters to the courtyard of Vantage Point and possibly some other changes.

Alongside the ecologist, we've also added a planning consultant to the team to advise us on the planning process and hopefully ensure our next application is successful. We're going through 'pre-application' with Hackney council which will allow us to discuss our plans before submitting the formal application again. Once we've got the outcome of the new planning application, we will write again.

Network Rail – night working now unlikely

Our contractor Claritas is making progress with obtaining the necessary permissions from Network Rail that are required due to the proximity of the building to the railway line. We need to ensure that the work we will be carrying out does not pose a danger to passing trains or to passengers on the platform.

We have received some positive news! Network Rail has said the scaffolding to the rear of the development will be able to be put up during normal working hours. On another remediation project close to the railway, we have had to erect scaffolding during the night which has been disruptive to residents. We are pleased this is unlikely to be needed at your building.

Highways application – impact on parking and access

Our contractor has been liaising with Hackney Council as the work will cause some disruption to pedestrian and car access to Digby Road and Berger Road. We will need to put up scaffolding that will impact the footpaths and part of the road.

Our contractor's plan is to create double width scaffold outside Archer Tower and Nock House on Berger Road, and to locate some containers on the scaffold to provide the operatives with welfare facilities. Locating welfare facilities on the scaffold is considered the best option given the space constraints we have.

A summary of this letter

We've appointed a planning consultant and an ecologist to help us get planning approval for the replacement of the green wall.

We must ensure the work we do does not cause a safety issue to passing trains or passengers on the platform. We think it is unlikely that we will have to put scaffolding up during the night on the side facing the railway line.

We're applying for the necessary permission from Hackney Council for our scaffolding on Berger Road and Digby Road, as it may cause changes to access and parking arrangements.

We are hopeful work will be able to start in October or November – **this has not been confirmed yet**. Work should take between 12 and 18 months to complete and we will hold a webinar once we've got a start date to go over everything.

A reminder

Your building's fire strategy is **simultaneous evacuation**, which means you must evacuate if you hear the fire alarm, even if you think it is a false alarm.

As a result, there will be some inconvenience to all residents but particularly to residents living on the first and second floor of Archer Tower and Nock House which have a window facing Berger Road. We will be contacting these residents individually.

Some street parking spaces will be lost during the work and access to Digby Road and Berger Road will be affected. We will need to apply to Hackney Council for permission to do this. Hackney will notify the local community according to their processes which we understand will include notices in the local newspaper and possibly also notices on lampposts.

Progress with remediation project logistics

The contractor has submitted their proposals to undertake the work and we're now discussing details about their proposals including their logistical plan, how they will undertake the work and the impact this will have on residents. We have also received initial pricing from the contractor – as a reminder, we have a successful insurance claim for the external wall remediation costs. We are hoping to be able to conclude these discussions and enter into a contract in the coming weeks.

Proposed timeline for the project

If everything above goes to plan – planning application, Network rail agreement, Highways access and contract with Claritas – we will be able to provisionally start the work during October or November. This will move back to later in the year if we experience any further challenges with these areas. The contract is suggesting the works could be completed between 12-18 months from start.

Once we've got all of the above agreed, we'll hold a resident webinar before work starts so you can meet the contractor team and we can share information about the project and explain how it will impact you. As a reminder, the remediation to the external wall will include:

- Replace insulation and complete other remediation work behind the terracotta tiles. Existing terracotta tiles will be re-installed onto building.
- Replace grey boards around balconies and complete remediation work behind this boarding.
- Replace green wall – new design and appearance is still subject to planning.
- Localised remediation work behind brickwork located around the Network Homes office.

Further support

If you need further support, you can:

- Go to the London Fire Brigade's website, which is offering a free online tool which guides you through a fire risk assessment of your home (home visits are available for more vulnerable residents): <https://www.london-fire.gov.uk/safety/the-home/home-fire-safety/>
- Visit our website where we have a building safety section with lots of information and frequently asked questions: <https://www.networkhomes.org.uk/buildingandfiresafety/>
- View resources which may help: <https://www.networkhomes.org.uk/buildingsafetyresources/>
- Remind yourself of our top fire safety tips, including not using BBQs on balconies: <https://www.networkhomes.org.uk/advice/health-and-safety/fire-safety-top-tips/>
- Check our document library for your building's letters and documents – it takes a little while to load: <https://www.networkhomes.org.uk/vantagebuildingsafety/>
- Get in touch with us on customerservice@networkhomes.org.uk if you have any questions.

Kind regards

Raj Gandecha
Head of Resident Management (Building Safety)