



Scrutiny committees gather evidence on issues affecting local people and can make recommendations based on their findings.

Health, Housing and Adults Scrutiny Committee – 30 January 2025

Housing Capital Projects and Regeneration

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Reason for report	Requested for work programme by planning group	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	To inform executive policy development	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Pre-decision scrutiny	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Item referred by other body	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Other (see summary)	<input type="checkbox"/>

Summary

With the variety of housing capital projects being undertaken a broad update has been provided on the progress being made. This report provides an overview on the new build housing for The Lakes regeneration project, the new council house development at the former Cripps Lodge site and the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) Wave 2 energy retrofit works. To compliment this report, as requested, also provided is an overview of the social value being generated at the Lakes and via the SHDF projects. The Chairs of each Estate Renewal Forum are also attending to provide verbal updates to the committee.

1. Recommendation

1.1 The Committee is invited to note the report.

2. Background and overview

2.1 The Lakes

2.2 The renewal of the Lakes estate continues to be a key priority of our Council Plan. It provides new homes for those needing to move out of the ageing Serpentine Court before it is demolished. The scheme has and will provide significant improvements across the whole estate.

2.3 In December 2023 Council granted approval to enter a construction contract with GRAHAMs, who were selected as our preferred contractor to deliver a revised Phase A. This will deliver 183 new council homes, new commercial and community space and an improved public realm, including Warren Park.

- 2.4 GRAHAMs are currently onsite working across 5 sites on the Lakes Estate and these sites are at different stages of completion, with the first site expected to handover the new homes by July 2025. We are currently on target to deliver all 183 new council homes by the end of March 2026 as planned and within the approved budget and we were successful in sourcing circa £15M Homes England grant funding to help deliver these new homes.
- 2.5 As the development has progressed, we have continued to engage with the local community, using various methods and have frequently met with the Serpentine Court Steering Group (SCSG), The Lakes Estate Renewal Forum (LERF) and the Locals of the Lakes Residents Association (LOLRA). With the great progress that has been made at the end of 2024 the SCSG took the view to effectively merge with the LERF, but we have made sure that we are still able to directly engage with representatives of residents who remain living within Serpentine Court. GRAHAMs have also employed a Resident Liaison Officer (RLO) who worked with these residents to help select the differing colour choices for the various options being brought forward. Their RLO also attends each LERF and is based on site for any queries that arise.
- 2.6 Throughout the past year we have seen many residents move out of Serpentine Court, due to the challenges faced in continuing to maintain this block. Many have taken the option to move permanently whereas others have moved on a temporary basis, with a view to moving into a new council home on the Lakes when they are completed.
- 2.7 GRAHAM's also hosts and maintains a microsite for the project, providing updates and contact details for local residents. This can be found at: [The Lakes Estates - Graham](#)
- 2.8 The attached Annex A includes a series of photos showing how the build has been progressing.

2.9 The Former Cripps Lodge site

- 2.10 In July 2024 a delegated decision was taken to approve a budget utilising right to buy receipts to deliver 66 new council homes in Netherfield at the former Cripps Lodge site. Planning permission has been secured and implemented on this site and following the decision a competitive tender process was commenced.
- 2.11 The tender closed in December 2024 and officers have been in the process of evaluating these tenders with a view to selecting a preferred contract by the end of January 2025. However, it has become clear that during this process there are several financial clarifications that need to be finalised before we are able to select the preferred contractor. With this taken into account we plan to make this selection in early February and enter into a Pre-Construction Services Agreement (PCSA) soon after, as we did with The Lakes. Officers expect works to commence on site in the late summer 2025, with the site being completed in approximately 2 years after.

2.12 Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) Wave 2.1

- 2.13 MKCC was successful in securing £22.7M government grant funding to contribute to the delivery of energy improvement works on approximately 1,600 council homes. The total funding to deliver these works with Housing Revenue Account (HRA) funding is £65.1M. Like wave 1, these works are being delivered by Mears.
- 2.14 The programme targets the worst energy performing assets, which also coincides with these homes needing significant fabric improvement / replacement within the HRA business plan period. Around half of the homes will be subject to a full fabric replacement, including roofs, windows, doors, and cladding. These are centred on estate areas, such as Netherfield. This programme also includes 'wider' homes, which do not require full fabric intervention, for example loft insulation only to reach an energy performance (EPC) grade C. These are widespread multiple dwellings across the city rather than clusters of homes on estates.
- 2.15 Delivering energy improvement works to our council homes so they are an Energy Performance Certification of C or above, on a fabric first basis, helps keep them cooler in summer and warmer in winter. Where the work renews main fabric elements (roofs and cladding), this also gives up to 50-year additional life to those homes and will save around £400 in tenant utility bills (for full fabric replacement). The works will be done to meet the grant conditions with works expected to be completed in late 2025.
- 2.16 The scope of works required is a blend of grant applicable measures to each home, which are identified by pre-works retrofit assessments (including air testing) so that the works are PAS 2035 compliant. PAS 2035 is the British Standard for retrofitting energy works to dwellings which makes sure measures done have a positive outcome in terms of thermal performance and for those living in the homes and helping reduce heating costs (based on current rates).
- 2.17 Work is progressing across estates in Milton Keynes on a wide number of homes, with Netherfield seeing the bulk of these improvements first.
- 2.18 Whilst timescales are challenging, we are confident in successfully delivering this programme and feedback from tenants who have already had their homes upgraded has been very positive. With this in mind, we will soon be publicising the positive impacts that these works have had to encourage more tenants to provide access to their homes to allow us to undertake the works and keep to the programme.
- 2.19 The delivery of this programme has however, been very challenging for several reasons. These include the type of construction of our existing homes, the wide range of improvements required alongside working with tenants who have already made adaptations to their homes. It has also been necessary to separate these works out from our existing contract with Mears and over the past couple of months we have been working with our legal colleagues to enter a new JCT contract which focuses on the SHDF works.

2.20 Annex 2 includes a series of photos showing the before and after energy improvement works have been undertaken.

2.21 Social Value

2.22 As part of our competitive tender process, we ask (and score) our prospective contractors detail how they will fulfil the expectations within the More for MK Approach.

2.23 On the Lakes project GRAHAMs have a standard section on how they are engaging with the community and the social valued they are adding to the local area in each of their monthly contractor's report. This includes targets that were set during the procurement process. The latest example of this can be seen in Annex C.

2.24 Mears are also monitoring the social value they are adding within their SHDF works and examples of this can be seen in Annex D.

2.25 Alongside this monitoring the Housing Development and Regeneration Team updates our internal procurement team accordingly. This allows us to monitor the social value corporate projects across the authority are delivering.

2.26 Estate Renewal Forums (ERFs)

2.27 Our 3 established ERFs have continued to grow and develop throughout the year. Chairpersons of the different ERFs have attended presented previous scrutiny committee meetings and all 3 will present a brief verbal update at the meeting.

2.28 The Lakes ERF (LERF) has been our longest serving ERF and has had its busiest year to date. This has been linked to the onsite delivery of the Lakes Regeneration and as was stated previously in the report it has seen the SCSG merge into this meeting. The LERF have recruited 10 volunteers and have provided over 2,000 hours of volunteering hours and have engaged with over 1,000 local residents. It meets regularly and agenda items and activities have included:

- Regeneration/development
- Housing
- Allocations
- ASB/Fly tipping
- Health and Wellbeing
- Family/Youth activities
- Warm spaces/cost of living crisis
- Consultation of new play areas and Courtyards
- Updating local councils on condition of public areas / landscaping.
- Estate inspections to make sure quality of the local green areas / paths / parks are of a good standard and making sure fly tipping is removed and paths are cleaned
- Supported the consultation on selecting the colour schemes for new development.

- 2.29 Alongside the list above the LERF has works to help those impacted by the cost-of-living crisis and have led on initiatives, such as:
- Warm spaces / Movie Monday
 - Coffee mornings / bingo
 - Free warm blankets
 - Christmas hampers
 - Food larder.
- 2.30 The Fullers Slade ERF (FSERF) has this year seen a change in Chairman and our thanks goes to David Meadows who has led this since it was setup.
- 2.31 In the past year the FSERF has benefited from the installation of new play equipment on Spider Park, funded from the Shared Prosperity Fund. The FSERF played a crucial role in carrying out the consultation required for the new equipment using their meetings, events, and activities as opportunities for local residents to have their say. The Mayor attended the official opening and the park has been very well used since.
- 2.32 Like the LERF Fullers Slade has helped those impacted by the cost-of-living crisis and also held several activities and events to encourage and improve the health and wellbeing of the local community. Examples of this include:
- Summer Fete
 - A Community Iftar event during Ramadan, bringing together people from many different backgrounds to learn about each other's culture and promote community cohesion, this was a first for Fullers Slade and was very well attended
 - HAF/Holiday Hunger activities – this was a first for the FSERF
 - Regular weekly activities including coffee mornings, Bingo etc to tackle loneliness and isolation and making links to support services.
- 2.33 The FSERF have engaged with over 500 local residents during the past year, recruiting 8 volunteers and providing over 1,600 hours of volunteering.
- 2.34 Alongside this, members of the FSERF have attended training and gained certification in Basic Food Hygiene Levels 1 & 2 and how to run a Community Project Course Level 2.
- 2.35 Despite the success the FSERF has had in the torrential rains we experienced last year the Hub was unfortunately damaged and has been out of use. However, repairs have been undertaken in January and this has now reopened.
- 2.36 Bradville ERF (BERF) was successful with carrying out a consultation on proposed new play equipment on the 'Big Slide Park'. Members worked closely with colleagues from MKCC and had numerous meetings to discuss options including meetings on site to see what was feasible. BERF held open drop-in meetings and invited residents/stakeholders to have their input on new pieces of equipment and once the consultation was completed, they followed up with feedback sessions to share result and plans based on what residents selected. Funding was secured through the Shared Prosperity Fund and the new equipment will be

installed by April this year. This consultation built upon that undertaken by the Stantonbury Parish Council.

2.37 The BERF has also been the main point of community engagement on the Bradwell Windmill Project which focuses Heritage, Food and Nature. In partnership with MKCC and MK Museum the project looks to repair Bradwell Windmill structure and create a plan with the local community for its ongoing care and protection.

2.38 The project also includes:

- Heritage Club looking at the history of the Windmill, the Railway, Bradville and its residents.
- Walks and tours of the Museum, Roman Villa, Bradwell Abbey and other heritage nearby.
- Access to Parks Trust events and helping create new green spaces for people and wildlife.
- Creating a new living, growing natural artwork 'Crop Circle' at the Mill.
- Mill Team Volunteering, Garden, food and keeping fit heritage themed clubs.

2.39 A Heritage Lottery application has been submitted to fund this project and we hope to hear the outcome of the bid by Spring this year. BERF have played a very active role in these projects so far and will be seeing them coming to fruition in the coming months.

List of annexes

Annex A – Lakes Photos

Annex B – SHDF Before and After

Annex C – GRAHAM's Social Value – The Lakes Regeneration

Annex D – Mears' Social Value - SHDF

List of background papers

None.