



Major works update – Scottish Towers

Westminster City Hall
64 Victoria Street
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Tel : 0800 358 3783

Date: 31 July 2023

Re: Scottish Towers

Dear Resident,

Re: Scottish Towers (project AB108): major works update

We are progressing with the plans for your buildings. Thank you to those residents who attended the in person and virtual meetings last month and have really helped us and our contractor to understand what you want from major works.

At the meetings we gave an overview of the works planned and explained the next stages before the work starts onsite. We have put together a 'question and answer' sheet for all residents. Please find it enclosed. If you weren't at the meetings and still have questions, you can contact us on the details below.

Next steps

1: Detailed costs and plans

Our contractor Axis is developing their plans in more detail, including getting tenders and costs for the works. This information will form part of their Service Provider Proposals (SPP). This will be submitted for the council's review towards the later part of August 2023.

The council will carefully review this document, and once satisfied, residents will be invited to view and discuss the proposals. We expect this will take place in the early part of Autumn this year.

2: Pilot works in advance of the project

We are also getting ready to carry out pilot works to a property at Scottish Towers.

The works that will be carried out inside the property are:

- Installation of new flat rated flat entrance doorset.
- Installation of new windows.
- Extractor fans in the kitchen, bathroom and hallway.



- Smoke detectors in the lounge, kitchen, hallway and bedrooms.
- Balcony works.

Scaffold will also be installed to do external concrete repairs and grit blasting.

We will be filming the works and will share this at the next meeting. This will give residents the chance to view the works and give feedback before the main project starts.

3: Communications and resident care – online tools

As discussed in the meetings, the new on-line communications plan that will consist of a resident App and webpage where residents can interact with their Resident Liaison Officers (RLO's) in real time, find all the latest information, watch videos of works in progress, and book appointments.

We are very excited to tell you that the first drafts are now completed and are being tested. We will share these with you and ask for your feedback at the next meeting.

More information

Copies of the presentation and all correspondence are available to view on the project's webpage: <https://www.westminster.gov.uk/scottish-towers-major-works-project-ab108/>

If you have any queries regarding the planned works that are not covered here, please contact me on the details below:

- Call Westminster City Council (Housing) on 0800 358 3783. Ask to speak to Amoy Ing in the Resident Advocacy Team.
- Email the Resident Advocacy team via residentadvocates@westminster.gov.uk
Please quote reference AB108 and to the attention of Amoy Ing.

Yours sincerely,

Amoy Ing
Resident Advocate | Housing and Commercial Partnerships
Westminster City Council
City Hall
64 Victoria Street
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0800 358 3783
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Question and Answer Sheet

WORKS RELATED QUESTIONS

1: Which blocks does the major works project (AB108) cover?

The project comprises of three tower blocks, Edinburgh House, Falkirk House and Glasgow House. It also comprises of six street properties at Lanark Road.

2: What are the main elements of work?

A: In-flat works:

- Pre-start surveys.
- Installation of new double glazed aluminium windows (all properties).
- Installation of new fire rated flat entrance and secondary means of escape doorsets to all tenanted properties (with leaseholder opt-in).
- Balconies and rear door replacements (all properties).
- Extractor fans in kitchens, bathrooms and hallways to all tenanted properties, where required, (with leaseholder opt-in).
- Installation of smoke detectors in the lounge, kitchen, hallway and bedrooms (tenanted properties).
- Installation of ventilation grilles and fire dampers. These are specialist devices which seal the duct in the event of a fire to prevent smoke travelling through the building. It will also include volume control dampers (VCDs), which ensure air is extracted evenly through the system.

Communal works (internal):

- Redecoration of all previously decorated internal surfaces including walls, ceilings and soffits.
- Replacement of the existing single glazed painted metal framed curtain walling to the communal areas.
- Replacement of existing floor tiles with a new fire rated flooring system.
- Replacement of the existing suspended ceiling grid to ground floor communal lobby areas
- Replacement of the existing communal extract fans, silencers, local ductwork, dampers and controls within the plantroom.

External works

- Installation of scaffold to all elevations (front, rear and sides of the towers) to allow the safe completion of concrete and brickwork repairs, decorations, window and curtain wall replacement and all works at roof level.
- Roof replacement including installation of a new mid height galvanised free standing safety handrail system to the entire main roof areas.
- Concrete repairs.
- Brickwork cleaning.



- Asphalt and timber repairs to private balconies (tenanted properties, where required).
- External decorations to all previously decorated surfaces including guttering and downpipes, bin storage rooms, storage sheds, railings and boundary walls.
- Replacement of pigeon spikes and netting where necessary.
- Sustainability and decarbonisation related works, including solar walls and air source heat pumps.

3: Are the existing windows likely to have some scrappage value. Will this be used to help bring the cost of the new windows down?

This is something the contractor is looking into as part of their detailed planning.

4: How long will the windows replacement work take to my property?

Based on window replacement schemes on other estates, the actual window replacement element tends to be very quick and can be done in one to two days depending on the size of the flat. Every window taken out will be replaced the same day.

Additional visits will be required for making good, and these can be arranged to suit the resident. The contractor will have a dedicated Resident Liaison officer (RLO) who will be onsite full time and be responsible for meeting residents and scheduling appointments for the works to suit residents.

5: Would residents have to temporarily stay elsewhere when the windows are being installed?

No. Any windows removed will be installed and tightly sealed on the same day.

However, there will be a Resident Welcome Centre which will be safely sited away from all noisy and disruptive construction works. There will be an open-door policy giving residents the opportunity to pop in for a face-to-face chat, have a coffee and address any concerns they may have regarding the works.

Residents can also use the Welcome Centre while works are taking place in their homes. This will have a fitted kitchen, comfortable sofas, TV and WIFI.

6: Some residents have decorated their kitchen and windows; how would you go about dealing with the internal works?

Pre-start surveys will be carried out in advance of the works. This includes precondition photos of the internal areas where works are planned inside your property. Your Resident Liaison Officer (RLO) will discuss the works, sequence and what happens if anything goes wrong. The contractor is required to make good all areas that they disturb during their works.



7: Can you help if I am unable to prepare the area where work is to take place?

You will need to clear window space and may need to move some furniture before the new windows are installed.

Your RLO will advise you when to start these preparations and can arrange assistance if you're physically unable to do it yourself. Anything that is removed to allow for clear access to install the windows, will be put back.

8: What type of flat entrance doorsets are you proposing to install?

The new flat entrance doorsets will be fire rated (FD30S) doorsets. FD stands for Fire Door, the 30 denotes that the door will withstand the blaze for a minimum of 30 minutes while the S means that the doors have been fitted with a smoke seal.

9: Where will the extractor fans be installed?

The fans will be installed to the kitchens and bathrooms of all tenanted properties. All routes for fans and ductwork within different flat types will be agreed prior to works starting. Also, the position of the new extractor fans will be confirmed at pre-start survey stage.

10: Can leaseholders opt-in to purchase the extractor fans?

Yes. We will write to leaseholders with more details of costs once we have received and reviewed these.

11: Will there be full scaffold for the duration of the works?

Yes. Scaffold will be required to all elevations (front, rear and sides of the towers) to allow the safe completion of concrete repairs, brickwork cleaning, decorations, windows and curtain wall replacement and all works at roof level. Scaffold will be removed once the scaffold dependant works are completed.

12: How long will scaffold be up for?

Axis will provide a detailed programme of works as part of their detailed planning process. This will confirm the sequence of works and the expected duration of scaffold to each tower. We will share this with residents at the next meeting.

13: How will the council and the contractor ensure residents safety and security while the scaffold is in place?

The scaffold will be fully alarmed at the first floor levels. Also, scaffold fans have currently been provided which safeguard residents and visitors against falling debris.



TIMETABLE AND KEY MILESTONES RELATED QUESTIONS

14: When are works expected to start?

There are several stages to go through, including formal consultation with leaseholders, before works start. Based on the current timetable, works are expected to start in the early part of next year (January 2024). We will keep you updated as the project progresses.

15: How long will all the works take once it starts? Will you be working on the three towers at the same time?

The works to the three towers are expected to be onsite for two years. The length of time this takes could vary however and we will keep residents updated as progress.

The original plan was to phase the works and do one tower at a time. However, the plan is to now do all three towers at the same time. The current timetable suggests a period of 18-24 months per tower, this means the works will be on site for around two years. We will confirm this once we have received and reviewed Axis' detailed plans.

16: At what point will we have the schedule of work detail?

The contractor will share a proposed programme of works with residents on completion of their detailed planning phase (this will be around the time the Section 20 notices are issued). This is expected to take place in the early part of Autumn.

This programme will outline the order each work element will be carried out. Prior to the work starting onsite, we will also hold a 'meet the contractor' meeting for residents to come and meet the team doing the work. At this meeting, the team will be able to talk through the process and time needed in each flat.

LEASEHOLDERS' BILLING AND COST QUESTIONS

17: How much will these works cost per flat? Are you not able to tell us what the estimate cost is for a 1, 2 and 3 bed flat?

We are not able to give an indication of costs at this stage. Costs will vary between flats based on the terms of your lease. We will only be able to work out each individual lessee liability once our contractor has fully priced up for the work and we are ready to issue formal Section 20 consultation notices.

While it isn't possible to agree a specific payment plan with anyone until the Section 20 estimate has been issued, leaseholders can contact the Leasehold Billing team at any time for advice, or to discuss concerns. You can do so by:

- Phoning 0800 358 3783 (ask to speak to a leasehold adviser)
- Emailing housing.enquiries@westminster.gov.uk



- Booking a 20-minute online appointment by visiting our website:
www.westminster.gov.uk/housing/leaseholders/contact-us

Once the Section 20 estimates are issued, we will carry out further engagement with leaseholders to ensure everyone knows the details of the options and support available to them.

18: When will I receive my Section 20 Notice of Estimate?

The Section 20 Notice of Estimate will be served after the Service Provider Proposal (SPP) document has been checked, agreed by us and shared with you. This is expected to take place in the early of Autumn and formal consultation with leaseholders will take place shortly after this.

19: How will the individual liabilities be calculated?

We are now billing leaseholders for major works delivered under the new 10 year term contract in the same way we currently bill for day to day service charges. This means we will send you a half yearly estimated bill for your major works in advance in April and October with your day to day service charges account, followed by an annual reconciliation statement the following October. For more information on leaseholders' billing, please visit:
<https://www.westminster.gov.uk/housing/leaseholders/service-charges>

CONSULTATION AND RESIDENT CARE QUESTIONS

20: The communication and resident care around the works and in particular noisy and disruptive works will be especially important. How will Axis deal with this?

We agree that good communication with residents about the works will be essential at Scottish Towers.

Axis will have three full time Senior Resident Liaison Officers (RLO's) one for each tower, each supported by two RLO's. The RLOs will be responsible for keeping residents updated on the works, arranging access and appointments for surveys and works inside your homes.

The RLOs will work out of the resident's Welcome Centre from Monday to Friday between the hours of 8am - 5pm.

21: Will there be any online tools available to resident during the works?

As discussed at the meeting, we are also developing a residents app and webpage for the works at Scottish Towers. We will share this at the next resident meeting. We are very excited about this as residents will be able to:

- Get real time information and the latest announcements.
- Find out about resident events including details of coffee mornings and drop ins.



- Book appointments for in flat works.
- Keep up to date with the project's progress
- See photos and watch videos of works taking place.
- Find answers to frequently asked questions.
- Contact the team including live chat during working hours.

22: What tools will be available for residents who do not want to use online tools?

We do understand that not all residents may want to use to online tools. Please be reassured that all residents will be given the RLOs direct contact details as first point of contact for any day-to-day queries. This will be a free phone telephone number. We will also carry out home visits and send letters in advance of the works, particularly where access is required for works inside your homes.

All residents will be given the email contact details for their RLO and the opportunity to contact their RLO with any day-to-day queries. Updates will be emailed to all absent leaseholders as well as any daily communication options for subtenants or managing agents. This will be agreed with all absent leaseholders.

OTHER QUESTIONS

23: Are there any plans to demolish the three towers? Are there any regeneration plans?

There are no plans for the regeneration of Scottish Towers. There's been a number of infill developments in the area but they are all now complete.

24: Are the tower safe? What was the outcome of the study carried out by the structural engineer?

Yes, the three towers are structurally safe and sound. We have been provided with confirmation from a competent Structural Engineer that the spalling concrete is due to the reinforcement bars not having the adequate amount of concrete cover, particularly at high level to all three blocks. This issue will be resolved once the works start.