



Questions and Answers

These questions have been asked by residents of John Aird Court at the Resident Drop-in sessions and meetings that have taken place. We have also included questions raised in the SPP meeting on 12 September 2024.

The answers are provided by the project team from Westminster City Council (WCC) and Axis Europe.

Q. When will the works start and how long will they take? When will my block be done?

A. Works are due to commence in January 2025 and will run until July 2026, all residents will be invited to a “Meet the Contractor” session with Axis Europe on commencement of works where they will be able to meet the site team and ask any questions.

The proposed programme for all works which indicates the sequence of blocks can be found on our website here:

[John Aird Court refurbishment works \(project Y107\) | Westminster City Council](#)

Q. Some blocks already have had new roofs installed in the last few years– Can WCC confirm which these are?

A. Roofs to blocks 116-126, 166-176 and 216-228 John Aird Court were renewed in 2015 and to 177-192 and 193- 215 in 2019. All these roofs are now under a 20-year guarantee. These roofs are not included in the roof renewals under this project.

The blocks that will have roof renewals are blocks 1-6, 7-17, 18-40, 41-55, 56-70, 71-93, 94-106, 107-115, 127-149 & 150-165 only.

All roofs to be renewed have been subject to detailed survey which have indicated the requirement for renewal. Copies of these surveys are available for review on request.

Q. Can we have a copy of the Axis SPP Presentation?

A. This is available on our website, please let us know if you require a copy to be posted to you.

Q. If there are any delays with access into properties or a block, will that affect the timeline and delay starting works on another block?

A. Answer – No, when planning such projects, Axis anticipates and expect some access issues and factor these delays into their programme.



Having delivered other projects in WCC, they have found that there are usually no more than 5% issues with gaining access to properties.

Q. Some residents have been told that the blocks next to the main road were supposed to be done first. Now residents are being told that High Rise Blocks including these will be done at the end of the programme, why is this?

A. Following new legislation brought in under the Building Safety Act 2022, all buildings of 7 floors and above or over 18 metres in height require a Building Control Application to be approved by the Building Safety Regulator prior to commencement of works.

The current processing time for these applications is a minimum of 6 months. To prevent any delay in starting the programme of works, we will commence with low rise blocks and works to high rise blocks will take place towards the end of the programme to allow time for approval to be granted.

Q. Fire Safety works seem expensive why and what is included under this?

A. Fire safety works include fire doors to intake cupboards and fire stopping and compartmentation works through the communal areas of the blocks.

All doors are specially tested, and third party certified. The compartmentation works are also third party certified, this means that works might seem more expensive than might be expected. All costs have been tendered and are reflective of the current market rates.

Q. The cost of the windows still seems expensive, why? Residents have found companies on the internet that can supply windows cheaper – can these companies be used?

A. Window suppliers need to meet the minimum standards of a pre-qualification questionnaire. This includes proving that they are financially stable and meet the health and safety and guarantee requirements that need to be met by WCC/Axis Europe for the windows.

Some of the suppliers identified online by residents are supply only so costs do not include installation. These companies are too small to produce the volume of windows required for the number of flats on the estate and would not meet the requirements of the pre-qualification questionnaire.

Axis Europe tendered the works and received three prices from suitable companies who met these requirements. The cheapest of which has been selected to deliver the works.

Q. What is happening with the old windows? Will leaseholders be given credit for the scrap value of the old windows?



A. WCC Planning have made it a condition of their planning approval for new UPVC windows that the old steel Crittall windows are recycled. The cost of recycling the windows exceeds their scrap value so there is no financial gain from this.

Q. How can costs for the new windows be accurate if the surveys have not been carried out yet?

A. Whilst there will be minor variations in window sizes which will be picked up at survey stage, the windows have been costed according to the average size of each type and the fabricator has built in a tolerance for the minor variations in size into their price.

Q. Extractor fans are being fitted in tenanted flats and are going through walls, what will happen to those flats that are leasehold but sold back to WCC? Who pays for these properties?

A. The cost for these is covered by WCC General Fund, there is no charge to leaseholders.

Q. WCC Voids Team have installed extractor fans through windows, who pays for these?

A. Any works carried out by WCC voids are paid for by WCC and there is no charge to leaseholders.

Q. The footpath is in terrible state due to tree roots at block 127-149, is this going to be addressed as part of the works?

A. All communal pathways will be surveyed, and any repairs needed will be addressed as part of the works.

Q. What are the permitted hours for works during the week and at weekends?

A. Standard WCC working hours are:

- Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm
- Saturday, 8am to 1pm

Residents will be notified in case of any weekend works.

Q. What about noisy works? Is there a noise management plan in place?

A. All residents will be notified of noisy works prior to commencement. This will enable you to plan ahead for this. Whilst there will be some elements of work that are unavoidably noisy, Axis Europe will try to minimise this. There will be no noisy works outside permitted hours.

Q. Will the current drainage/downpipes be renewed?



A. All below and above ground drainage including downpipes and gutters will be tested. We will use CCTV camera surveys where required.

Although there is no allowance for full replacements under the scheme, all necessary repairs and replacements in sections will be completed as required.

Q. Will guarantees be provided for all the works carried out?

A. All works are subject to a 12 month defects period under the terms of the partnering contract between WCC and Axis Europe. In addition:

- New roofs are subject to a 30-year Bauder guarantee.
- The new windows will be subject to a 10 year guarantee on glass and frames, and a 12-month guarantee on moving parts.
- Front doors are guaranteed by the manufacturer for 12 months.

Q. Will the bathroom and toilet windows reflect the current design? The alternative design selected by residents has only a single opening window. Most residents prefer the original design as the top window can be opened for ventilation whilst maintaining privacy and security?

A. Whilst residents have selected the alternative design option for the windows, we have reviewed the design for a single opening window to the bathroom and toilet in light of these concerns.

For the bathroom and toilet windows, we are all in agreement that it makes sense to maintain the existing design with a smaller top opening window and a larger opening window at the bottom.

This will be reflected in the design change submitted to WCC Planning, we will publish revised drawings on our website for residents to see as soon as these are finalised. All bathroom and toilet windows will be plain frosted & obscured for privacy.

Q. When do payments start for leaseholders?

A. The invoices will be issued in March 2025 and payment arrangements should commence from April 2025.

Q. Resident leaseholders get 5 year interest free payment options and then charged interest for the next 5 years, why is it charged at 1.5%?

A. It is 1.5% above Bank of England base rate. This is a Council policy decision in order that the Council is not offering a rate preferable to the market and hence subsidising further borrowing after five years.



Q. Why do payments start before works have even taken place to a block/property? Shouldn't this be staggered so that once works have been completed to a block, the payment then starts?

A. Under the terms of the leases, payments are due in full, on estimate, within 21 days of invoicing at the beginning of the financial year when expenditure is expected to be incurred.

The scheme rather than each smaller block is the designated entity for commencement. Further, the contractor payments are made throughout the financial year in stage payments and the Council needs to be able to fund these.

Q. If a resident leaseholder decides to rent their property halfway through the payment, do they lose out on the option plan?

A. It reverts to two years from the date of invoicing similar to a lessee who was subletting from the start. If the two years are already gone then payment is due in full.

Q. If a leaseholder can pay for the works upfront, is there a discount available?

A. No. The Council has a fiduciary duty to recover sums incurred by the works from lessees.