



City of Westminster

Westminster City Hall
64 Victoria Street
London SW1E 6QP

Marie Baker
Resident Advocacy Team

Tel: 0800 358 3783
housing.enquiries@westminster.gov.uk

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Ref: Project Y100

Dear resident

Blandford Estate major works Project Y100 – project update

Thank you to those residents that were able to attend the online session and resident meeting held in March.

At the meeting we gave an overview of the works planned and explained the next stages before the work starts onsite in November next year.

For the benefit of all residents, I am enclosing a question-and-answer sheet of the key questions that were raised at the sessions and our answers to these. I have also enclosed an information sheet with details of the new payment plan options available to leaseholders.

As our plans progress for these works, we will arrange further meetings for residents to keep you informed. You can also refer to our website at any time as this will be regularly updated with all relevant information regarding the works: <https://www.westminster.gov.uk/blandford-estate-major-works-project-y100>

Working group:

As is clear from the recent meeting, one of the key areas of interest for residents is having an input into the work. We are committed to ensuring residents are fully involved in the planning and design process for the works and are therefore setting up a dedicated Blandford Estate working group. If you would like to be part of this group, please contact us to register your interest. by contacting Marie Baker in the Resident Advocacy team using the details below. Please contact us by **21 April 2023** to register your interest. We would like to have a good mix of both tenants and leaseholders on this group and whilst we encourage all interested residents to put themselves forward, if interest is high, we may need to carry out a selection process.



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If you have any questions about the planned works that are not covered in the question-and-answer sheet, please contact me and I will be happy to assist.

In the meantime, if you have any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact me on 0800 358 3783 or housing.enquiries@westminster.gov.uk.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'MB', followed by a horizontal line and a period.

Marie Baker
Communications Co-ordinator
Property Services Communications team



Blandford Estate Major Works (Project Y100) Questions and Answers March 2023

The questions in this Q&A document were raised at the residents meeting and online session held in March 2023 at Greenside Community Hall.

Which Blocks are having works?

We will be carrying out works to the following blocks

Farnham House	Mordern House
Lascelles House	Wimborne House

What works are being done?

The scope of works includes:

- roofing repairs
- brickwork repairs
- lighting upgrades
- timber repairs
- redecoration to all communal areas and previously painted surfaces
- window overhaul and repair (where required)
- asphalt repairs
- pram shed repairs
- external estate-wide repairs inc. landscaping
- Rainwater Goods
- Private balcony repairs
- Tidy external cables
- Fire safety works
- Electrical works
- Sustainability works.

When are works expected to start?

The works are currently planned to start onsite in November 2024. Please note that at this stage a programme of work, block by block, has not been finalised. Once this has been agreed we will share this with you. This will give you an indication when work starts to your block.

How long are the works expected to take?

The project is planned for 52 weeks, with an estimated completion of November 2025.

Who will be doing the works?

In 2017 Westminster City Council (WCC) appointed two term contractors to carry out major works across Westminster for ten years. The major works contractor appointed to carry out work in the central area of the borough is **United Living**. They will be carrying out the work under this project.



Why are you doing the works?

The work is required to keep the buildings in good working order and maintain the internal and external parts of the building. These works have been verified and justified through condition surveys by a third-party surveying company.

At what stage in the process is the scheme?

Westminster has drafted the Client Brief (scope of works) once this has been approved it will be passed to United Living who will then draft a Project Execution Plan (PEP). The PEP outlines their initial plans for delivering the project based on the work identified by the council

Will residents be included in the sign off the project?

Resident will have opportunities to input and comment on the works and project. The project will be signed off by the internal stakeholders at Westminster.

Are the pram sheds along the wall by the railway included in these works?

We are planning to refurbish the pram sheds, work includes:

- replacing the existing felt roofing system
- brick pointing/repairs or replacement
- external decorations

Can residents ask for further items to be included in the works?

Yes, as part of the scoping exercise if residents feel elements of work are missing, they can refer this to WCC for consideration.

Will you be changing all fans in the kitchen and bathrooms?

We will be changing the fans in all tenanted flats. Where required.

New lighting was recently installed, will this be replaced during the works?

No, only old lighting will be replaced during the works, if a new layout is required, we would look to relocate the recently installed light.

How will the lighting improvements prevent anti-social behaviour?

Through upgrades to the lighting system and further amendments the existing gates the anti-social behaviour around the estate should improve.

Who will be checking the quality and standard of the works?

United Living have their own Quality Management standards in place which are detailed in their Quality Management Plan, a copy of which will be included as part of their Service Providers Proposal (SPP). Over and above this the Westminster Quality Manager will inspect the completed works to ensure they meet the standards set out by the council.

Will the scaffold be up at all blocks for a year?

No, scaffold will not be up at all blocks for a year, but there may be a time where all blocks will have scaffold for a short period.

Will the scaffold have security?

United Living will install an alarm to all scaffolds and place fencing around the bottom of the scaffold. They ensure all ladders are secured, at the end of each working day.

What percentage of window repairs are you basing the costs on?

Repairs and overhauls where required. The cost allocated to windows was based on information provided to us within the condition surveys, due to the length of time taken to progress Y100 the

condition of some may have changed meaning an exact percentage wouldn't be accurate at this point.



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If repairs are not required, will I still be charged?

No, you will only be charged for works that have been completed on your block or estate.

The budget for the project has changed in the last week, can you explain why?

The budget for the project can change at any time and until the works have been completed. At this early stage during consultation and scoping there is more chance of changes. This remains the case until more detail surveys have been carried out and the design has started.

After the first meeting a further review of the budget was carried out and it was noted that expected inflation costs due to labour and materials had not been included and also the lighting budget appeared low so was increased.

Do you have an idea of the cost for leaseholders?

We have only estimated costs available at this stage. These are below and as indicated in the presentation.

Lowest: £9.8k, Average: £20.9k, Highest: £31.2k

How are the cost averages worked out?

The cost averages are worked out via a WCC internal system called C3. This produces a report based on the budget cost imputed. The results are associated directly to each property size/no of bedspaces as noted in the property lease.

How will the council manage the risk of inflation during the works?

The budget has an allowance included to cover a rise in inflation.

How can we be confident that we are getting value for money and are not being overcharged?

WCC's commercial team have qualified quantity surveyors who monitor and check the contractor's costs and works. These checks are carried out throughout the project and especially as key points in the project such as PEP, SPP, Section 20 and final account stage.

During the delivery period checks will also happen monthly on the contractors' monthly valuations.

In addition, if the contractor is sub-contracting any elements of work and gaining tenders, the partnering contract ensures that more than one quote must be gained to ensure the costs are a true reflection of the current market.

Please note:

- Any element of work that has been priced using National Housing Federation (NHF) Rates represents Value for Money as these rates were sought in a competitive tender procurement for the Term Partnering Contract (TPC) in 2017. Leaseholders were formally consulted in relation to this.
- Where Service Providers have priced any element of work using Business Cases, they are required to present a number of sub-contractor quotations in the interests of transparency.
- Service Providers Variable Profit is limited to 2% and is directly linked to their performance i.e., resident satisfaction, finishing on-programme, completing on-budget, Health & Safety, etc

Will I be able to see the tenders for this project?

Yes, once the Section 20 Notice of Estimate has been issued all documents will be made available for you to view at the nearest office.



Will I receive a Section 20 Notice of Estimate for the works?

Once the SPP has been agreed, Leaseholders will receive a **Section 20 Notice of Estimate**. This is the formal statutory consultation for leaseholders setting out the estimated costs. The notice will set out the description of the works and reasons for each aspect of the works. It will detail the project costs, set out block costs and estimated individual leaseholder liabilities. Leaseholders have 37 days to make written observations to this notice

Q: I am experiencing financial hardship; how can I get help with the costs?

Any leaseholder experiencing financial difficulties should contact us on 0800 358 3783 or housing.enquiries@westminster.gov.uk. The team will be able to talk through individual circumstances and discuss what payment options may be available.

Westminster Council recently reviewed the payment options available to leaseholders, please information below for details of updated payment plan options.

Where can I get more information on the project?

There is a dedicated project website, which includes the project documentation, copies of letters and the latest news. You can view the website at: www.westminster.gov.uk/blandford-estate-major-works-project-y100

Major Works service charges payment plans

To provide support to our leaseholders we offer the following payment options for our major works service charges;

Invoice	Term	Payment options available
Up to £2,000	12 months	If your invoice is under £2,000 you can spread your payments over 12 equal monthly payments. No interest is charged.
£2,000 and above	24 months	If you receive an invoice for more than £2,000 you can spread payments over 24 equal monthly payments. You must complete an extended payment instalment form. No interest is charged.
£2,000 and above (Resident Leaseholders only)	60 months	If you receive an invoice for more than £2,000 you can spread payments over five years in 60 equal monthly payments. This option will not be made available where the property is sublet, owned by a company, or owned by a housing association. You must complete an extended payment instalment form. No interest is charged.
£20,000 and above (Resident Leaseholders only)	120 months	If you receive a bill for more than £20,000 you can spread payments over ten years in 120 equal monthly payments. No interest is charged for months 1-60. Interest is charged on the balance remaining at month 60 at 1.5% above the Bank of England Base rate for months 61-120. This option will not be made available where the property is sublet, owned by a



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		company, or owned by a housing association. You must complete an extended payment instalment form.
£20,000 above	and 300 months	If you receive a bill for more than £20,000, Westminster City Council is now offering a Discretionary Service Charge loan, available to all leaseholders who are unable to secure borrowing from their mortgage company or a personal loan. The service charge loan will be secured by a way of a legal charge on the property for a maximum of 25 years. Interest will be charged at a variable rate of 1.5% above the Bank of England base rate and will be reviewed annually. You will also need to pay the administration costs involved. Westminster City Council is only a lender of the last resort.

If you have any questions about your major works service charge invoice and how to make payment, please do not hesitate to contact Leasehold Operations directly where our staff will be able to discuss the payment options available to you. Our friendly team are waiting for your call.

Telephone: 0800 358 3783

Email: housing.enquiries@westminster.gov.uk