



**Millbank Estate major works (project S159)  
Questions and Answers**

The questions in this Q&A were raised by residents who attended the online sessions in June and July 2020.

**The work**

**Q: What work is planned?**

**A:** The work involves external and internal repairs and decorations, including:

Window repairs and decoration	Replacement of tenants' front entrance doors, with an opt in for leaseholders
Roof repairs	Replacing the lateral mains
Timber repairs	Metalwork repairs
Brickwork repairs	External works
New door entry system	Communal decorations and flooring
Fire safety works	Replacing communal doors
Repairing and cleaning rainwater goods below ground drainage systems	

Full details can be found at [www.westminster.gov.uk/yourhousing/S159](http://www.westminster.gov.uk/yourhousing/S159)

**Q: How will the windows be repaired? If they are beyond repair, will they be replaced?**

**A:** A survey of all the windows in your home will be carried out, closely monitored by the dedicated Westminster City Council (WCC) quality manager before works start. The repairs will be carried out using a repair care system that has a 10-year guarantee. At every stage of the repair the quality manager will inspect the windows and agree if they can move on to the next stage. Each window will have a unique reference number and the repairs carried out will be noted for future reference and available to you. All windows will be fully operational after the repairs. If a window is beyond physical repair it will be replaced but, given the scope of the project, it is envisaged that this will be a rare occurrence.

**Q: What are the plans for the outward opening windows?**

**A:** These windows will be surveyed and repaired as outlined above. There is no plan to change the opening direction of these windows. If they are beyond repair, they will be replaced like for like.

**Q: Will a survey of all front entrance doors, tenants and leaseholders, be carried out to make sure they meet current fire and building regulations?**

**A:** As part of the project all tenants' front entrance doors will be replaced. If you are a leaseholder and would like a survey on your front entrance door, please contact Lindsay Jenkins using the contact details on page 5.

**Q: I am a leaseholder and interested in purchasing a front entrance door, what do I do?**

**A:** Please contact your resident liaison officer. They will let you know the cost and specification details of the front entrance door. WCC will then contact you to go through the process for purchasing and paying for the front entrance door. This is a voluntary opt-in for leaseholders and not compulsory.

**Q: What is the extent of the electrical works, why are they required and what survey has been conducted to justify the cost?**

**A:** The electrical works includes, lateral mains renewal, new containment system, new distribution boards, communal lighting, and door entry system. Following risk assessments and surveys the planned electrical works are reasonable to prevent further issues and to satisfy building regulations. All elements of works have been submitted to commercial analysis and confirm the pricing of works in accordance with the commercial marketplace.

**Q: What external work is being done?**

**A:** External work includes CCTV drainage surveys and associated repairs, removal and relocation of planters and cleaning external paving.

**Q: Will we have the option to choose the internal decorations colour scheme?**

**A:** Yes, we will ballot all blocks on the choice of wall, floor and front entrance door colours and we are working with the TMO to decide on a colour pallet.

**Q: Will the current communal lighting be upgraded and changed to a sensor system?**

**A:** Yes, the communal lighting will be upgraded and changed to a sensor system.

**Q: Can I have the description of works and timings for each?**

**A:** Yes, the description of works is on the WCC website project page (address on page 1). Each element of work has been programmed but we will have a more accurate time once United Living is onsite and surveys and pilot properties have been completed.

**Q: How will you measure the quality of the works?**

**A:** There is a dedicated WCC Quality Manager assigned to this project, Lee Hodgson. Lee will work closely with United Living's onsite team and inspect the works at various stages of the project. If you have any concerns about the quality of the works, please contact WCC using the details on page 5.

## **The programme**

**Q: What are the start and finish dates for each block?**

**A:** The project has been divided into three phases. In total we estimate the works will take two years to complete. An estimate of the programme for each block is below:

Phase one Oct 20 – Sept 21	Phase two Apr 21 – Mar 22	Phase three Dec 21 – Sep 22
Moorland House	Wilkie House	Hogarth House
Maclise House	Gainsborough House	Reynolds House
Mulready House		
Millais House		

## **COVID-19 safety**

### **Q: What new measures will be put in place?**

**A:** Keeping you and the onsite teams safe during this time is the number one priority. United Living has introduced a range of measures to keep everyone safe and confirm their approach is 'COVID-19 Secure'. This includes five steps for safer working. United Living will:

- Carry out a COVID-19 risk assessment which will be available online.
- Introduce cleaning and hygiene in line with guidance.
- Take all reasonable steps to help people work from home where possible.
- Take all reasonable steps to maintain social distancing while working.
- Take practical measures to manage transmission risk if social distancing is not possible.

Some examples of the safety measures to be taken by United Living are:

- Site compounds will have one-way systems, social distancing, shifts for start of works / breaks, and adaptations to containers to provide additional canteen facilities.
- All reasonable steps will be taken to maintain social distancing including signage and floor markings and limits to the number of people working where possible.
- There will be sanitising stations on any scaffold towers and at the base of access ladders.
- Restrictions on travel to and from site, with a booking system for deliveries.
- Operatives working in flats will operate a buddy system. These 'buddies' will not work with others to limit the possibility of transmission.
- Additional personal protective equipment (PPE) will be used during in-flat works.
- Where possible residents will be asked to stay in a different room while works are done.

### **Q: How will you ensure United Living is working safely?**

**A:** In conjunction with United Living's onsite team, we will visit the site regularly to carry out an inspection and monitor work to ensure all agreed COVID-19 secure methods are adhered to. Any breaches of this will be escalated to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

If you have any concerns about the safety measures or how they are being implemented, please contact WCC using the contact details on page 5.

## **The costs**

### **Q: Why have the costs increased since 2018?**

**A:** The scope of work has changed significantly since the original Client Brief, and first costs, in 2018. The project now includes the following work:

- The renewal of lateral mains into each property.
- Additional fire safety works increased in terms of number of fire doors included.
- Increase scope of scaffolding to allow for staircase towers, weekly inspections and pavement licenses and alarms.

- External works, asbestos and drainage works have also been added to the scope.
- Increased quantities of window repairs

There is a cost comparison on the WCC website project page (address on page 1) titled '08 01 2020 S159 SPP Presentation'. This highlights the elements of works where costs have increased and elements of additional works which are included in the scope.

**Q: Will the costs go up again?**

**A:** The Section 20 Notice of Estimate you received in November 2019 is an accurate estimate of the costs for the revised scope of work. If for any reason the costs change, we will write to all leaseholders in line with the Section 20 process at final account stage.

**Q: Can I have a breakdown of the costs identified under each heading of the Section 20 Notice of Estimate?**

**A:** Yes, there is a breakdown of what works are associated with each heading on the WCC website project page (address on page 1) titled '01 01 2020 S159 S20 description of headings'.

**Q: What is the charging structure for United Living's contract?**

**A:** The Westminster City Council contract for major works includes a pricing structure for certain types of work. In line with this, United Living's plans have been priced using a mix of National Housing Federation standardised market rates and using Business Cases where works are specialised, in this instance costs are sought from a number of sub-contractor quotations to ensure value for money. For more detail, the costs and pricing methodology are included in '08 01 2020 S159 SPP Presentation' on the WCC website project page.

**Q: How are the charges for the works allocated between the blocks?**

**A:** Each element of work is costed per block. The breakdown of each block's costs can be found on the WCC website project page titled PCAF – block name.

**Q: When will we see a detailed breakdown of costs and billing by United Living that indicate what specific works were carried out?**

**A:** When the project is complete, the final account is prepared by the contract manager. The final account details the works that were agreed on site and the amount that has been paid to the contractor to carry out the work. We will use the final account to revise the estimated cost that was billed to you to reflect what was spent on your block and (or) estate.

**Leaseholder repayment plans**

**Q: Why has the option to pay on final account no longer available?**

**A:** The payment options were reviewed by WCC and the option to pay on final account was removed because under the terms of the lease, payment on estimate is required.

**Q: What are the current payment options?**

**A:** There are a number of options available, and these will vary depending on your circumstances. To discuss your payment options, please contact leasehold operations using the contact details on page 5.

**Q: When will the direct debit payments start?**

**A:** Direct debit instalments will start when the project starts. Leasehold Operations will contact you near the time.

**Q: Did Westminster City Council receive the application for a First Tier Tribunal?**

**A:** Yes, the application has been received and a case manager has been assigned to manage the case.

**Information, help and advice**

**Q: How will you keep me updated on progress with the works to my block?**

**A:** When the works start onsite, United Living (UL) will be your first point of contact for any queries. UL will ensure regular updates are sent to all residents as the project progresses.

Here are the ways we will keep you updated:

- UL will start contacting all residents by phone, email and letter in the coming weeks.
- UL will send an introduction booklet with key information about the works to your block, including contact information for the UL team working on your block.
- Monthly updates will be posted in the communal notice boards at your block.
- UL will arrange regular online information sessions for residents.
- Visit the project webpage: [www.westminster.gov.uk/yourhousing/S159](http://www.westminster.gov.uk/yourhousing/S159)
- Contact Westminster City Council by phone on 0800 358 3783 and ask to speak to Lindsay Jenkins in the Property Services Team or email [housing.enquiries@westminster.gov.uk](mailto:housing.enquiries@westminster.gov.uk).