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Ref: S162

Dear Resident,

Fisherton Major Works (Project S162):

Thank you to all those who attended the Major Works meeting on 14 July 2022 at Derry Hall. The Frequently Asked Questions have now been written up and can be found below.

If you have any queries you can contact us by:

- Calling Westminster City Council Housing on **0800 358 3783** (freephone) - ask to speak to Isobel Williams in the Resident Advocacy Team.
- Emailing housing.enquiries@westminster.gov.uk, please quote reference '**project S162**'.

Find out more

Major works projects need a considerable amount of organising before they start. There are several stages that need to happen before the works start, including formal consultation with leaseholders via a Section 20 Notice of Estimate. We have produced a guide to major works to explain what to expect at each stage of a project, including our commitments to you and how you can help or get involved. Please note we are at the very early stages of these works at present, I will contact you again in the next 6 months with an update.

You can read the guide by visiting www.westminster.gov.uk/housing/major-works.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Isobel Williams'.

Isobel Williams
Resident Advocate



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

These questions have been generated following an introductory meeting with residents (Derry Hall) on 14 July 2022.

Q. Will the new windows be double glazed?

Yes, new windows will be double glazed. The selection and design of the windows will be carried out in the next phase of the project.

Note – Selina house will receive windows repairs only.

Q. How has the contractor for major works been chosen?

Westminster City Council considered several bids from contractors and at the start of 2018, we entered a ten-year partnering contract with two contractors to deliver major works across the City. These contractors are Axis and United Living, whom we have previously worked with and developed a strong working relationship. Entering into this contract has benefits such as cheaper preliminary costs which benefit the council and leaseholders. Each contractor is responsible for a specific area of Westminster with Axis contracted to work in the North and West area and United Living contracted to work in the South and Central areas. United Living will therefore be the contractor for the works at Fisherton Estate.

Q. How do we ensure the contractor's quality of work?

The contractor has a dedicated team including a clerk of works that ensures good workmanship on all works carried out. In addition, WCC will have a dedicated project manager and quality manager who will oversee the contractors work and performance.

We will also hold meetings with residents and carry out surveys to pick up on any issues that arise during the major works to your home. Prior to the works being signed off as complete, we will also invite residents to a walk around with the project team to ensure any snagging items are picked up.

Q. Can Street facing single glazed windows be prioritised when doing the window replacement?

It is too early to confirm this, but it can be discussed with the contractor during the design and programming planning stage.



Q. Will tenant front doors be painted?

The scope of works includes new Fire rated doors for tenanted properties. This will be painted in the factory prior to being delivered to site. Leaseholders will have the option to 'opt in' and have a new door fitted.

Q. How many times will scaffolding go up?

Scaffolding should only be erected once during the duration of the works.

Q. How will disruption due to works be managed?

The contractor will develop a detailed plan for these works and as part of this process we will look at ways to minimise the disruption to residents.

The contractors working hours will be limited to within the hours of 8am – 6pm Monday-Friday. Saturday working may be required in exceptional circumstances but only from 8am-1pm. Advanced notice will be sent to residents if this is required.

Due to the nature of major works however, some disruption will be unavoidable. The contractor will have a dedicated Resident Liaison Officer (RLO) who will be responsible for keeping residents updated on the works and give notice of any particularly noisy or disruptive elements.

Q. Will all windows within properties be changed at the same time?

Any window taken out will be made secure on the same day and will not be left exposed. Where possible we will try to do all of the windows in a day and if this is not possible for any reason we will explain this to you.

Q. Will the contractor clean up any mess made when installing windows and how will we ensure the contractor comes back to do this?

Yes. Photos will be taken before and after the works to the affected areas. We will ensure all making good is carried out and the contractor returns to complete the works. Westminster's Quality Manager will inspect all window installations on completion and will be able to pick up any issues if they arise.

That said these works can generate a lot of fine dust and it is a good idea to cover items up.



If there are any concerns while the work is in progress, you can raise this with the dedicated Resident Liaison Officer in the first instance.

Q. Can balcony door windows be replaced with double glazing as part of these major works?

Yes, any single glazed doors will be replaced with double glazing.

Q. Why were the windows not done when the Community Benefit Fund (CBF) was received and when initial letters were sent in 2014?

The Community Benefit Fund could only be spent once the Luton Street works had started. These started circa 2020 which means this fund can now be spent.

Q. How long will the guarantee on the windows be?

This is different for different manufacturers but generally this would be for 15 to 25 years.

Q. What happens if once installed, the windows are found to be defective?

Any defects must be rectified by the contractor as detailed within their contract. They have a contractual liability to rectify any defects.

Q. What is the timescale for the snagging period and what happens if the windows become defective after the defects or snagging period?

The defects liability period is for one year. This means that following the completion of the works, our contractor is responsible for addressing any defects with the windows (or any aspect of their work) during the next 12 months. Issues after that time will need to be reported to our repairs team in the usual way. Depending on the nature of the issue, window defects may still be covered by the manufacturers guarantee. A repairs surveyor will assess this and call on the guarantee as required.

Q. Will a Resident Liaison Officer (RLO) be available to assist with residents that do not feel comfortable having the contractor in their home, specifically will they be able to stay in the property whilst the contractor is there?

The contractor will have a dedicated RLO working on the project and they will engage with residents once the project starts to ensure residents feel comfortable with the works taking place in their homes. There will be a "Meet the Contractor" meeting at a later stage to ensure that all residents are given the opportunity to meet with the contractor and ask any questions they may have.



Q. How are issues escalated if residents are not happy with the works?

If residents are not happy with the works, in the first instance, we ask that residents contact the Resident Liaison Officer (RLO) to report any issues. The RLO will work with the site team to address any issues that may arise and agree a suitable way forward. Residents will also be able to contact the Westminster City Council Resident Advocate for the project (Isobel Williams) for further support if required.

Leaseholder specific queries:

Q. Are leaseholders able to 'opt in' to have internal wall insulation, or be given details of the contractor being used for this?

Leaseholders cannot currently opt in, but we are working on this and it maybe a possibility in the near future.

Currently we advise resident to use Trustmark to find qualified contractors, in this case, a PAS 2035 internal wall insulation company.

Other trades are listed there and information on the retrofit standard known as the PAS 2035 standard is also provided on their website.

<https://www.trustmark.org.uk/>

<https://www.trustmark.org.uk/tradespeople/pas-2035>

<https://www.trustmark.org.uk/find-a-tradesman?fromHome=true>

Q. Is a contingency amount included in the estimated quotes?

Yes, a contingency sum has been allowed for in all elements of the work. It should be noted the current costs are an estimate and subject to change following the contractors detailed design and planning phase.

Q. Why are Dickens House leaseholders being charged for roof works again when their roof was recently repaired?

Previous repairs were temporary patch repairs to address leaks. We have a responsibility when scaffolding a block to review the condition of the roof and establish whether any additional works are required at this time. A survey will be carried out in the first instance and only where issues are identified will further works be carried out. We will be happy to share the results with you.

If, following the survey, no further roof repairs are required, then no costs for this will be charged.



Q. How do we work out individual charges for each leaseholder?

The total cost is based on quotes from the contractors for each block or estate. The individual charges are then calculated using each resident's lease percentage. The lease percentage is calculated based on the number of bedspaces in the property compared to those within the block or estate.

Q. How can Lessee Operations be contacted regarding payment plans for major works?

Leaseholders can contact our leasehold operations team in a number of ways. This includes calling our contact centre on [0800 358 3783](tel:08003583783) where you can be passed through to an available member of staff, or you can email housing.enquiries@westminster.gov.uk where the query will be sent to the relevant team which will aim to respond within 5 working days.

Alternatively, you can also drop into our office at 137 Lupus Street, SW1P 3HE between 9am - 12pm or between 2pm – 5pm. Please note that you will need to book an appointment first, if you are visiting us between 2pm and 5pm.

20-minute Microsoft Teams appointments can also be made via our website at a time that best suits you: www.westminster.gov.uk/book-20-minute-telephone-appointment

Information regarding our payment plan options for major works can be found on our website here: www.westminster.gov.uk/housing/leaseholders/leasehold-communication/major-works-payment-plan. Full details of payment options available to leaseholders will also be included with the estimated bill when it is ready. No payment plan can be set up until the bill has been issued to residents. As we are still at the early stages of planning this project, we will not be in a position to issue estimated bills to leaseholders until much later in the planning process.

Q. Why are dormer windows being done separately (as per letter received from lessee services), will leaseholders be charged twice because of this?

There is a window in a property in Dickens Court that needs replacing which may not be able to wait until the major works in 2025. We are currently in discussion with the surveying team to establish whether the window can wait for replacement with the others when the major works start. Should the window need replacing now, this will be deducted from the number of windows that need replacing during the major works. Leaseholders will therefore not be charged again for this window.

Q. Can leaseholders preview sub-contracted quotes from the contractor and to what extent are sub-contracted quotes a true reflection of the cost of the works?

We will have a dedicated page on our website for this project where residents will be able to view supporting documentation for these works. Detailed price breakdowns are not able to be published on our website due to commercial sensitivity, however leaseholders will be able to view this information as part of the Section 20 consultation period. When the Section 20



Notice of Estimate is issued to residents' information on how to view the documentation will be included. Viewing the documentation at 137 Lupus Street is by appointment only and is only held in the office during the observation period. If for any reason you cannot make it to the office, please let us know as part of the observation process and the leasehold team will work with you to ensure you can see documents to make informed observations.

Under the terms of our partnering contract with United Living, they are required to gain a minimum of 3 quotes for subcontracted elements of work and put forward a business case to Westminster (WCC) for approval as part of the final planning stage of works. A WCC Quantity Surveyor reviews the business case and quotes provided to ensure they are happy the costs are a fair reflection of market rates.