

TOLLGATE GARDENS NEWS

JUNE 2013

NEXT STEPS



This newsletter is a special one, as it marks the beginning of a new stage in the development of the Tollgate Gardens estate. The council held a public consultation on 16th and 18th May on the planning application which will take forward the regeneration of the Tollgate Gardens estate. The planning application is due to be submitted in mid June, but before this time residents can submit comments to Michele Lawrence, the Community Engagement Officer (see contact details on back page). The exhibition boards showing the plans are available to view at westminster.gov.uk/tollgategardensrenewal and the boards are also on display at drop in sessions, or by appointment only. Once the planning application is

submitted residents will again have the opportunity to comment on the planning application. We will publish details of the planning application on the council's website but residents will also receive details of the planning application direct from the planning department.

We also intend to hold drop in sessions during June and July to make more residents aware of the planning proposals, as we know that not everyone was able to make the sessions that have been held in the past. These will be combined with advice on other housing issues from CityWest Homes.

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The council's Cabinet Member for Housing has given permission for decant status to be awarded to all secure tenants on the estate. This means that tenants in Wingfield and Godwin Houses will receive almost the highest priority for decanting within the council's housing waiting list. Letters have already gone out to leaseholders and a letter has now gone out to tenants explaining the process. We will be visiting tenants individually during June to assess tenant needs.

The intention of this newsletter is to inform you about aspects of the next stage and to outline the process for both tenants and leaseholders. Clearly we cannot put everything in a newsletter, but hopefully this will give you a useful overview. Whilst we have tried to limit reference to legal terms and legal documents, should you require help understanding these legal terms or have any concerns please contact Michele Lawrence on mlawrence1@westminster.gov.uk or **020 7641 4537** to discuss further



Temporary lets on the estate

Once decant status is awarded to Tollgate Gardens estate, a number of actions will be put in place. These include the use of vacant properties and decanted properties as temporary accommodation and the suspension of the right to buy on the estate.

As existing Tollgate residents are decanted from the estate into temporary accommodation with the right to return to the estate, their former homes may be used as temporary accommodation to give respite to families currently on the council's waiting list. Please note

that no new secure tenancies will be created. Vacant properties in Tollgate House will be offered first to Godwin or Wingfield residents as temporary or permanent accommodation and then offered to the general waiting list.

Temporary tenancies in Godwin and Wingfield will be short term so that vacant possession of the blocks can be obtained quickly for the purpose of progressing regeneration of Tollgate Gardens estate. The use of these flats will also protect the estate from antisocial behaviour and avoid making blocks seem abandoned.

Right to Buy

The right to buy will be suspended on Tollgate Gardens estate following service of an Initial Demolition Notice (IDN). This is the formal legal documentation outlining the proposed demolition of the blocks. It means that any right to buy applications submitted will be placed on hold and will not be progressed during the period stated in the IDN or until service of a Final Demolition Notice (FDN). When a FDN is in force, all existing or future right to buy applications can be refused.

Following service of the IDN, the suspension of the right to buy is effective for a period not exceeding five years or until service of a FDN (which takes place at a later stage).

If anyone has an outstanding right to buy application in place at present, it will be necessary to speak to your contact officer at CityWest Homes about how this application will be treated. If you do not know who your contact is, please contact the Community Engagement Officer on mlawrence1@westminster.gov.uk or **020 7641 4537** to discuss further.



Decant process for tenants

A dedicated Decant and Relocations Officer will be appointed to support tenants through the decant process and act as a first point of contact for all rehousing related questions. The council is committed to supporting households to move through one of the five rehousing options available (see flowchart for details on options), either on a voluntary basis or by mutual agreement.

Support will be provided to tenants to move through the rehousing process with as little disruption as possible. Once the decision has been made to start moving a household, tenants will receive written confirmation that they need to move to facilitate development. An appointment will be made to visit the household in their home to give information about the rehousing options available and to

gather information about the household's specific needs.

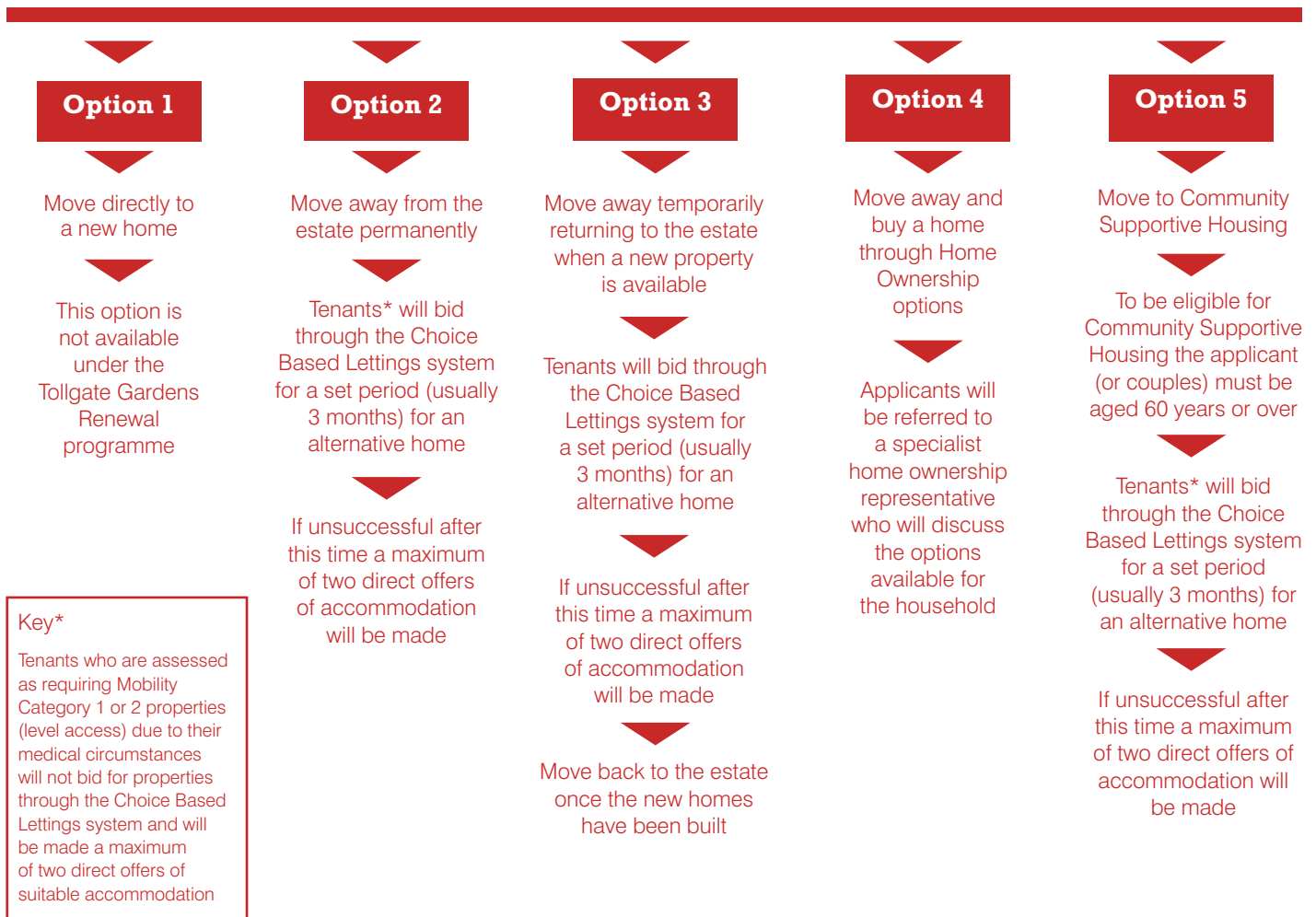
We expect to be in a position to start visiting people in their homes within the next two months. Look out for updates in future newsletters and on the website. If you have any questions in the meantime about rehousing options please call Rebecca Ireland, Housing Needs Commissioner, on **020 7641 2578**.

Process for secure tenants in Godwin and Wingfield House who need to move

Letter sent to all tenants advising them that regeneration and decanting programme is starting

Godwin and Wingfield House tenants will be contacted by a council officer offering a home visit to collect information on their housing needs and discuss the re-housing options available to them

The tenant chooses one of the available options and is re-housed through that route

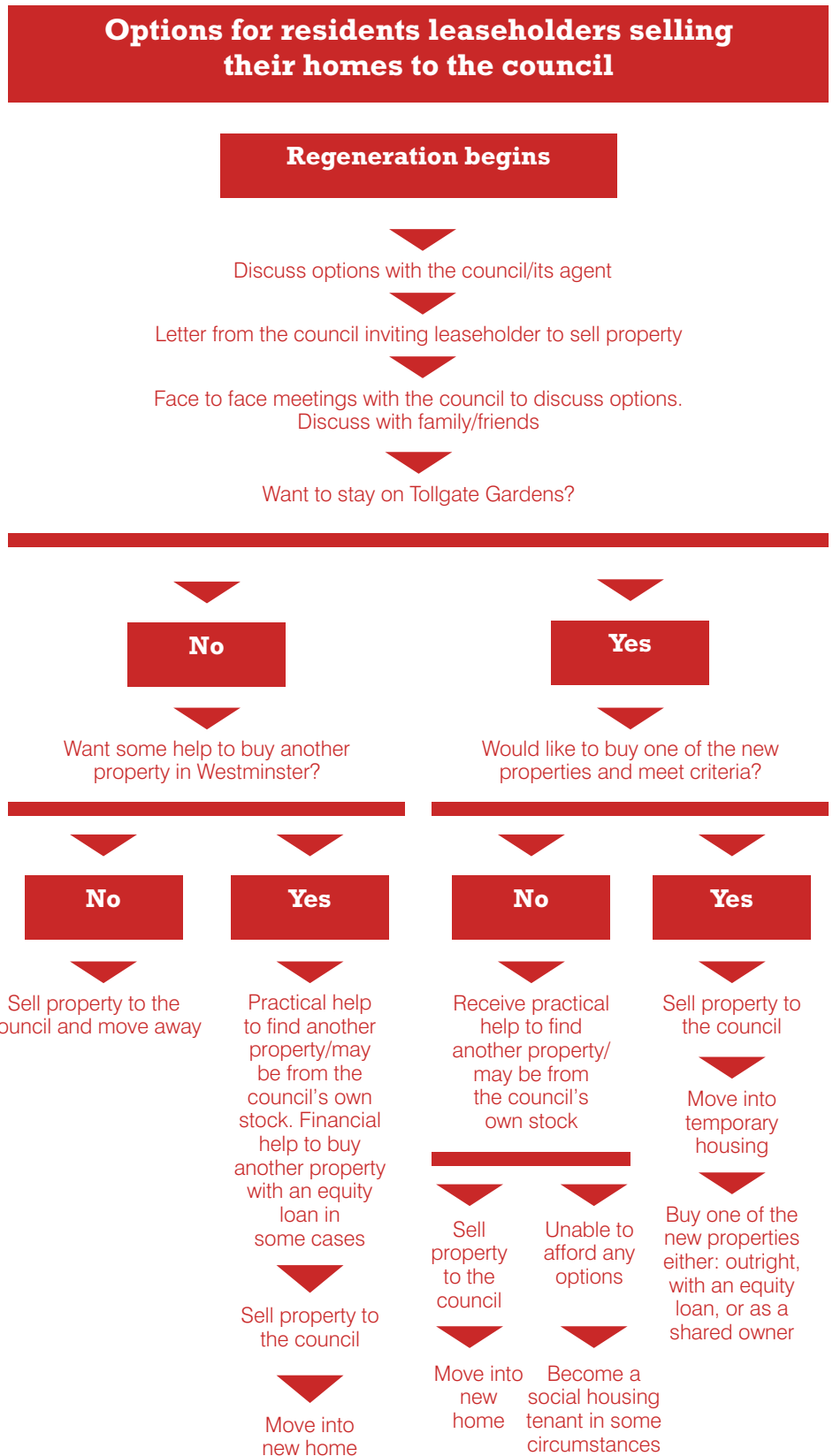


Equity share offer for leaseholders

The equity loan offer is to enable resident leaseholders to return to Tollgate Gardens estate, if they wish to, and live in a new home with similar costs compared with their original property. However as the new homes will not be ready to move into straight away, leaseholders will need to move off the estate for a period whilst the new homes are being built.

To be eligible leaseholders need to contribute the value of their existing home plus any homeloss payment into the purchase and this will form their equity share. Where leaseholders have a mortgage, a new mortgage of the same value will need to be raised before the purchase can go ahead.

It is proposed that the remaining share will be held by the council as a charge on the property with no interest being payable, although this has not been finalised at present. The leaseholder will be the legal owner of their home and able to sublet, subject to appropriate consents being given. The council will only recover its share in the event that (a) the property is sold or (b) the leaseholder increases their share or (c) following death of the leaseholder subject to a (single) right of succession (to be agreed by the council). For further information contact Cecily Herdman, Leaseholder Policy Officer, on **020 7641 2789**.



? Ask the councillor

Each issue, a resident is invited to ask Cabinet Member for Housing, Councillor Glanz, a question about the housing renewal plans in their area. This month a Tollgate Gardens resident asks:

How will the council ensure the decanting process of residents is as easy as possible?

We are committed to ensuring the moving process is as smooth as possible with the minimum disruption to residents of Tollgate Gardens. We are currently recruiting a dedicated officer who will work with residents to understand their needs and find the right temporary homes for each family that will need to move.

Residents who don't have access to a computer or aren't familiar with the process for bidding for homes will get help from the Estate Office and our resident support teams. Residents will be continually supported by the team throughout the re-development process.

Our leaseholder residents on the estate have already started working closely with Westminster Community Homes to decide which options are suitable for their circumstances and this will continue throughout the process.

We will bring additional advisers to the estate, which will give residents the opportunity to regularly speak to officers about their concerns or questions. We will keep you up to date with the

progress of the project through the residents' forum, newsletters and regular drop in sessions. We also work with an independent advice service (First Call) that is available to advise residents on the options available to them including legal advice. For more information on this service, please contact the Estate Office or please find contact details on back page.

Whilst residents are in temporary homes off the estate, we will keep residents up to date as far as possible regarding the progress of the re-development by inviting them to events, exhibitions, meetings on the estate and providing them with any written information they need. It is however important that residents also actively engage in this process, to ensure that they remain aware of current developments.

We will ensure that the Tollgate Gardens section of the council website is kept up to date and will send out regular email alerts and letters to residents on progress. If you haven't done so already, please give the Estate Office your email address to ensure you are kept up to date.



If you have a question that you would like to ask Councillor Glanz, please get in touch by emailing tollategardens@westminster.gov.uk or calling 020 7641 4537.

Be a part of Tollgate Gardens News

We welcome articles, letters, information about upcoming events and offer free advertising for local businesses in the community.

If you would like to submit anything for the next edition of Tollgate Gardens News please email mLawrence1@westminster.gov.uk, call 020 7641 5371 or visit westminster.gov.uk/tollategardensrenewal for more details.

We are on Facebook. Visit facebook.com/tollategardensrenewal and click like for updates.



What's on

Coming up:

Green Fingers Club Launch – Tollgate Gardens estate 10 June 2013

We have planter boxes at the back of Wingfield House. If any residents would like a box we will provide a free start up pack for growing flowers or vegetables. There are eight boxes and we will be giving them out on a first come first served basis. We welcome families to take part, potentially making a vibrant intergenerational project.

Good Neighbours Day – 31 August 2013

For all CityWest Homes residents. We are currently looking for volunteers to get involved. For more details contact Jan Nairn: 020 7245 2697.

Drop in sessions

Previously drop in sessions on Tollgate Gardens estate have been held on Wednesday mornings but this was not convenient for residents to attend. As the level of work on the regeneration project intensifies, it will be necessary for the project team to have a presence on the estate to support residents through the various phases of the project including planning and the decant process. Therefore the new drop in sessions will begin on Wednesday 12th June at 4-5 pm at the community hall and will continue thereafter on Wednesdays at 4- 5pm. The drop in sessions will be tailored according to resident needs and we welcome your views.

Please contact the Community Engagement Officer with suggestions on mlawrence1@westminster.gov.uk or **020 7641 4537**.

Tenant Decant Policy for Renewal Areas

The council is undertaking statutory consultation regarding the rehousing of secure tenants living in homes on renewal estates. The draft policy sets out the rehousing options for secure tenants where there are proposals or plans to redevelop their home. It applies to

areas and estates identified for regeneration in the 2010 Housing Renewal Strategy. The consultation runs until **30 June 2013**. The policy is available on the Westminster website at westminster.gov.uk/services/housing/housingstrategy/

Compulsory Purchase process

The council intends to actively engage with residents to negotiate the acquisition of properties from leaseholders and to facilitate tenant moves as far as possible, in order to achieve vacant possession of Godwin House and Wingfield House on the Tollgate Gardens Estate (the Estate). However, if it has not been possible to achieve vacant possession of these blocks by agreement, the council will need to use its compulsory purchase powers to enable the development of the Estate to proceed.

In order to facilitate the regeneration proposals, authority has been obtained from Councillors (in principle) to enable a Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) to be made and submitted to the relevant Secretary of State for confirmation. Notice of making of the CPO will be served on all relevant persons who have an interest in the land included in the CPO.

The CPO is effectively the legal means by which the council can achieve site assembly to enable the redevelopment to go ahead, if it has not been possible to acquire the relevant properties by agreement. Anyone whose property has been acquired as a result of compulsory purchase action, is entitled to statutory compensation, including disturbance costs covering reasonable costs and expenses properly incurred as a result of the acquisition of the property.

It is the councils intention to continue negotiations to acquire properties throughout the CPO process. The Department for Communities and Local Government, has produced a series of five booklets which explains, in simple terms, how the compulsory purchase system works can be found here: gov.uk/government/publications/compulsory-purchase-and-compensation-booklet-1-procedure, the first of these booklets.

Find out more

Want to learn more about the housing renewal plans for Tollgate Gardens and be kept up to date with events, resident meetings?

You can visit westminster.gov.uk/tollgategardensrenewal to read more or email tollgategardens@westminster.gov.uk to register for email alerts.

Contacts

Community Engagement Officer: Michele Lawrence
Email: mlawrence1@westminster.gov.uk Tel: **020 7641 4537**

Housing Needs Commissioner: Rebecca Ireland
Email: rireland@westminster.gov.uk Tel: **020 7641 2578**

Leaseholder Policy Officer: Cecily Herdman
Email: cherdman@westminster.gov.uk Tel: **020 7641 2789**

Independent Tenancy and Leaseholder Advisory Service: Louie Blair
Email: tollgate@first-call-housing.com Tel: **0300 365 7150**