



Gilbeys Yard Tenants & Residents Association

Looking After Our Community on the Gilbeys Yard Estate

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URGENT UPDATE NEWSLETTER

Proposed Redevelopment of Juniper Crescent and Gilbeys Yard

21st June 2020

Dear fellow Tenants and Residents,

We are writing to update you on the work we have done regarding the proposed redevelopment of Juniper Crescent (JC) and Gilbeys Yard (GY). **It's a lot of information so please do take your time in reading this.** The **ballot** was due to begin on the 8th June but will now **begin on the 22nd June**. On the 29th May, **GY TRA wrote to our Local Councillors, the Leader of the Council, our MP and Greater London Authority (GLA) to ask for their urgent support** in relation to the proposed redevelopment for the following reasons:

- 1. We need more time to discuss the need for Separate Ballots as voted on by the estate;**
- 2. Due to the COVID-19 lockdown the TRA have been unable to properly engage and consult all aspects of the final Landlord Offer with you and feedback to One Housing regarding any changes required by the tenants;**
- 3. More time to ensure that the Landlord Offer includes a fair deal on issues such as:**
 - 3.1 – 'Three Year Phased Protection Plan'** for possible increases to Service Charges and Council Tax
 - 3.2 – Indicative Space Standards;**
- 4. Clarity on 'Future Tenure Mix' and amount of additional Social Housing that will be created;**
- 5. Missing information – Tenants Rights**

PROPOSED REDEVELOPMENT BALLOT

1 - Separate Ballots: As you know, we have been consistently been asking One Housing for a separate ballot on the redevelopment for each of the two estates involved here, GY and JC since negotiations began three years ago. We provided minutes of our GY TRA AGM to One Housing where GY residents requested separate ballots in November 2018, but One Housing have consistently refused to grant this despite support from Councillors and our MP. One Housing insist that the two estates be regarded as one entity just because Camden Planning Framework has aspirations for the two estates, but it never mentions both estates need to be seen as one entity. The Camden Planning Framework clearly sees Gilbeys Yard as a separate location, entity and estate.

We know that most residents feel that this is unfair as these are two very distinct estates with their own identity and requirements. In addition, we know there is a disparity in numbers eligible to vote between the two estates, with 73 in GY and 113 in JC. This means that if the majority of eligible voters in GY vote in favour of the redevelopment and the majority in JC vote against it, then our views would be overruled and vice versa. The tenants and residents of Gilbeys Yard have consistently asked the TRA for this, so in order to fully clarify the situation the TRA recently conducted a socially distanced door to door recorded but anonymous vote as to whether residents want a separate ballot on the redevelopment. All but 9 of the 77 votes voted in favour of a separate ballot for GY. After presenting the results of the ballot to One Housing, they again responded with a refusal for a request to have a separate ballot. We know that the GLA clearly states that adjacent estates should not be "pepper-potted" together. Not only are the two estates not adjacent but have a huge commercial site in between. This proves that geographically the two estates should be considered separately and one ballot for both estates is in breach of the GLA guidelines and the upcoming ballot is in breach of the ballot.

LANDLORD OFFER

2 - Consultation & Engagement: You would have received a copy of the Landlord Offer at the beginning of March, and as you may know, Gilbeys Yard TRA did have a meeting planned for the 27th March but **due to the COVID-19 lockdown the TRA have been unable to properly go through all aspects of the Landlord Offer with you.** In addition, we have **not been given an opportunity by One Housing to give feedback about the final Landlord Offer.** Major changes came in on the 17th February that the Resident Steering Group couldn't address as the final Landlord Offer was delivered very shortly after on the 2nd March.

Chair: Karim Ullah

Secretary: Natalia Kireeva

Treasurer: Peter Keserue

Committee Member:

Vice Chair: Karl Lewkowicz

Vice Secretary: Maria Fernandes

Vice Treasurer: Ian Keserue

Caroline Delion-Court

3.1 - 'Three Year Phased Protection Plan': Service Charges page 11 & Council Tax page 17 of Landlord Offer: We know that as a result of the possible redevelopment, Council Tax and Service Charges will rise exponentially. This is an example comparison of running costs, current vs projected for a two-bed flat:

RUNNING COST COMPARISON	2 BEDROOM FLAT		
	CURRENT	PROJECTED	DIFFERENCE
SERVICE CHARGE (per year)	£1076.92* (£20.71 p/w)	£1,820.00 (estimated £35 p/w)	INCREASE OF £ 743.08
COUNCIL TAX (per year) ** (assumes a 1 band increase)	£1,623.45 (BAND D)	£1,984.21 (BAND E)	INCREASE OF £ 360.76
ENERGY BILLS (per year) *** (assumes 30% reduction/saving)	£967.63	£677.34	SAVING OF £ 290.29
TOTAL RUNNING COSTS:	WEEKLY:		INCREASE OF £ 15.65
	YEARLY:		INCREASE OF £ 813.80
	10 YEARS:		INCREASE OF £ 8,138.00

*Information taken from Gilbeys Yard Tenant

**Council Tax Banding information from UK Valuation Office Agency

***Information from National Energy Efficiency Database (Published June 2019)

How the Phased Protection Plan might work:

Protection Plan:	Increase:	Protection Amount:	Energy Savings:	Cost to Tenant:
Year 1:	£1,103.84	£1,103.84 (100%)	£ 290.29	- £ 290.29 (SAVING)
Year 2:	£1,103.84	£728.54 (66%)	£ 290.29	+ £ 85.01 (INCREASE)
Year 3:	£1,103.84	£364.27 (33%)	£ 290.29	+ £ 449.28 (INCREASE)
Year 4 – 10 (7yrs):	£7,726.88	£0.00 (0%)	£2,032.03	+ £ 5,694.85 (INCREASE)
Total Cost:	£11,038.40	£2,196.65	£2,902.90	+ £ 5,938.85 (INCREASE)

If redevelopment goes ahead, a tenant currently living in a 2-bedroom flat **over the course of 10 years could potentially be at risk of an additional total running cost of £5,938.85**. This works out to an **average of £593.89 extra per year over the next ten years** which is why the **phased protection plan offered by One Housing in the Landlord Offer isn't sufficient enough** to cover the additional running costs to tenants as a result of redevelopment. This also means that tenants in **larger properties will be at risk to a higher average running cost**. (Information correct as of 21/06/2020)

3.2 – Indicative Space Standards (p20 of Landlord Offer): The Space Standards in the Landlord Offer are poor. Space Standards in terms of Gross Internal Area have hugely reduced since what was presented by One Housing in November 2019 to what is in the Landlord Offer, March 2020:

Home Type:	November 2019:	Landlord Offer March 2020
1 BED	52.5 square metres	50 square metres – Loss of 2.5 sqm which is equivalent to a storage room.
2 BED	74.1 square metres	70 square – Loss of 4.1 sqm which is nearly the size of a bathroom
3 BED	110 square metres	102 square metres – Loss of 8 sqm which is the size of a single bedroom
4 BED	130 square metres	124 square metres – Loss of 6 sqm which again is nearly the size of a single bedroom

4 - 'Future Tenure Mix' and additional Social Housing: The Landlord Offer failed to mention 'Estimated overall number of new homes' and 'Future tenure mix' as per the GLA guidance. As raised by residents a number of times in our estate meetings, this is important to ensure that we don't end up becoming an estate that is **predominantly private housing** with segregation from the social housing, as well as the additional homes created being social rent homes which will help the Camden Waiting List and Homelessness Crisis. As a result of GY TRA intervening, One Housing sent out a 'supplementary document' on the 3rd June which still didn't include 'additional social rent homes' (**two months after the Landlord Offer was sent out on the 2nd March**)

and means the original Landlord Offer **failed** to mention 'Future Tenure Mix' as per the **GLA ballot guidelines**.

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One Housing state they will acquire **300 - 325** of the new **650 - 700** homes in the Joint Venture which **not only isn't a 50:50 Joint Venture** as mentioned by One Housing since appointing Countryside as their Development Partner, but let's say of the **300 - 325 homes** created by the redevelopment with **185 being re-provided for existing tenants**, that leaves **115 - 140 homes being available for possible Social Rent**.

50% of 115 – 140 could mean 57 - 70 of new homes that could and should be **Social Rent** – NOT 'London living' or 'affordable' rent which will make no difference to the housing crisis but only to One Housings income. **Not the 26 as previously stated by One Housing in February 2018.**

GLA Grant Application: In order to help tenants and residents in making an informed decision at the ballot, we have requested a copy of the grant application submitted by One Housing to the GLA committee who approved the grant, as well as the subsequent report. We are requesting **how much funding the GLA is providing** for the redevelopment if it goes ahead and **what conditions need to be met to secure the funding**. Specifically, tenants and residents need to know the **exact types of tenure required and what proportion of additional new homes provided need to be social rents including existing Social Housing**.

5 - Missing information – Tenants Rights: The Landlord Offer is also missing previously agreed items, in particular the rights of tenants. Some of these items include the following as recommended in 'GLA Capital Funding Guide: Section 8 – Resident Ballot for estate Regeneration Projects':

- **The 1973 Land Compensation Act** which should have been included in the Offer document as part of the 'Disturbance Package' (page 16 of Landlord Offer) but isn't mentioned until the glossary;
- **It was agreed in a Resident Steering Group meeting that tenants would get £500 for each bedroom if they were to downsize. This again has been left out (see page 17 of Landlord Offer). Camden Council Offer £1,500 per bedroom if you're aged 59 and below and £3,000 if you're 60 and over;**
- **One Housing's 'Menu of Estimated Service Charges' should have been included as an appendix to aid tenants in making an informed decision for the Ballot. This has also not been included.**

CONCLUSION

Despite support from our Local Councillors, the Leader of the Council and our MP, One Housing have not agreed to postpone the ballot for the reasons stated above. We needed more time to ensure a fair Landlord Offer that includes adequate information and works to the betterment of our local community as well as the wider community. We had hoped that One Housing would work with us so that we can address the concerns and issues we have raised, that they would agree to listen to the voices of GY residents' as well as adhere to the GLA Capital Funding Guide: Section 8 – Resident Ballot for estate Regeneration Projects', but One Housing refused.

The Landlord Offer **doesn't prevent the future of existing tenants from the unaffordable Council Tax and Service Charge increases and inadequate space standards**, in an **unfair and undemocratic ballot** that is being **rushed through by One Housing** in the face of a life changing pandemic. Due to the concerns and issues and the unwillingness of One Housing in trying to resolve these issues and concerns that we have raised, we

GILBEYS YARD TRA CANNOT and DO NOT APPROVE THE LANDLORD OFFER

We sincerely hope that at this critical time, Gilbeys Yard TRA can continue to fight for the rights and voices of our community. Please contact us on the details below if you have any questions or queries related to the proposed redevelopment or the estate in general.

To get Gilbeys Yard updates and news by email, please send an email to:
GilbeysYardTRA@gmail.com

To join the Gilbeys Yard Whatsapp group, text us on **079 3235 3943** with your name and flat or house number.

On behalf of Gilbeys Yard Tenants & Residents Association, Thank You!

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