



Housing Annual Report | 2021

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Introduction

By Cllr Vanisha Solanki - Cabinet Member for Housing and Homelessness

Welcome to the first online version of our Annual Report.

Looking back over 2021 we have had plenty to report on, mostly good, and it is pleasing to see that the majority of our work within Housing has been well received by the residents and communities we serve.

Despite the issues we previously faced with COVID-19, we are continuing with our affordable housing programme at quite a pace. We are currently consulting and engaging with residents on the nine estates across the borough to help ensure they have the opportunity to influence how any new scheme will look.

The estates are:

- Little Gearies, Barkingside
- Heathcote/Glade Court, Clayhall
- Avenue Court, Woodford Green
- Suffolk Court, Newbury Park
- Budoch Court, Ilford
- Torrington Road, South Woodford
- Wallers Close, Woodford Bridge
- Shakespeare Square, Hainault
- Norman Road/Ilford Lane, Ilford

I have made a point of visiting most of them to see how we are progressing. I was at Norman Road recently with our Leader, Cllr Jas Athwal and was delighted to see developer Longley, are already ahead of schedule. Across the road is the Builders Merchant B&K, which has been on the same site for over 30 years. We made a point of popping in to say hello to current owner Harri, who will be providing much-needed materials to the site. Our housing programme is doing all it can to help house residents and support local businesses.

Finally, my personal highlight of the year was being invited to the opening of 33 new homes at Marlyon Road in Hainault. I met Nurse Kamlesh Gupta, who works in the nearby King George Hospital and had just moved in. She told me about the realities of working with COVID-19-suffering patients every day.

And now, to see the joy on her face as she moved into her first proper home with her husband was a lovely reward for someone doing such a tough job.

Highlights of the year

By Carol Hinvest - Operational Director of Housing



"I started working in Redbridge in March 2021.

I've spent many years in the housing world, and my mantra has always been: how can the work I am doing help our residents? Yes, we can build more affordable housing, which we are doing as best we can, but sometimes it is just the little things that make the difference.

Here are two such examples: Jane, a Housing Officer, visited an elderly lady who was self-isolating and couldn't get to the pharmacy to collect her medication. Jane went to the pharmacy herself with the resident's prescription and delivered it personally.

I am pleased to say that this shows the dedication of our staff to our residents and their individual needs. Another success I am proud to see is adapting homes to help our disabled or elderly residents. In the last year, we made over 60 improvements to homes, mostly in updating shower facilities. There were also stairlift installations, ramps at entrances and lowering of pavements. We have already helped over 100 residents with similar installations in the current financial year.

And finally, I must go back to our affordable housing. Despite rising costs, COVID-19, and even Brexit, Phase 2 of the programme still aims to deliver a fantastic 282 homes across nine sites".



Cllr Solanki and Cllr Athwal at spades in ground event, on site at Norman road

Affordable housing programme

Mears all up and running

Mears is our maintenance and gas servicing contractor for Redbridge homes. The contract officially started in last April and got off to a good start.

Yes, there have been a few teething problems which was always to be expected with a major new contract like this, but the partnering team have shown their worth and overcome those challenges with careful planning and plenty of good engagement with residents. The new contract is now well-placed to provide a good service to our residents for the next seven years.

Full steam ahead for AHP with another 276 units about to start

The Council's affordable housing programme is going ahead with 54 units on site and a further 276 homes due to start on site early in the new year.

The Phase 2 programme, which aims to deliver 282 homes across nine sites, has encountered some tricky market conditions that have subsequently slowed the programme down, while a combination of Brexit and COVID-19, has seen the price of materials soar. As expected, this is having a knock on impact on construction and material costs. However, the programme is still on schedule and tackling ongoing issues as it progresses.

The programme aims to deliver 282 units with a split set out below:

73 x 1 beds

114 x 2 beds

58 x 3 beds

37 x 4 beds

The focus is on providing much-needed family accommodation.

Little Gearies, Heathcote Court, Suffolk, Budoch, Avenue, and Shakespeare Square are part of a two stage tender process with an aim to start the main works in May/June 2022. The full breakdown of homes in each location is as follows:

Site	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed	Total
Little Gearies	24	41	18	20	103
Heathcote	14	8	6	5	33
Suffolk	12	20	21	7	60
Budoch	1	13	4	2	20
Avenue	10	17			27
Shakespeare	8	6	7	3	24
Norman	1	5			6
Torrington and Wallers Close	3	4	2		9
					282

The year in pictures



-  Cllr Vanisha Solanki (left) and volunteers plant bulbs in flowerbeds outside the Orchard Estate Community Hall
-  The new housing scheme at Marlyon Road
-  Project Malachi run by the Salvation Army
-  The new station entrance to Ilford Station at York Road
-  The Mayor of Redbridge with local Hainault resident, Gladys, on her 100th birthday
-  Leader and President Yang President of the Royal Town Planning Institute



- Stephen a resident at Project Malachi
- The Ryedale Project in Ilford
- The Marlyon Rd and Old Mill Court housing schemes



Don't Miss

First residents move in to new council homes in Hainault

By Ray Chalkin
Published: 10:41 AM May 14, 2021

Redbridge Council leader Joe Athwal and Cllr Vasiliki Sotiriou with King George Hospital senior consultant Gaurav (Gaurav) Saxena, who was one of the first residents to move into his new council home in Marlyon Road. Credit: Redbridge Council

The first residents have moved in to 33 new council homes in Hainault. The Marlyon Road development, delivered by Redbridge Council in partnership with ENGIE, is part of the authority's plans to build 400 new affordable homes by 2022.

Don't Miss

Building work begins on new 'affordable' homes at Norman Road

By Daniel Gayne
Published: 3:54 PM November 11, 2021

Cllr Vasiliki Sotiriou and Redbridge Council leader Cllr Joe Athwal at Norman Road ground breaking. Credit: © 2021 Austin Homes

Building work is underway on new "affordable" housing in Linford. The Norman Road development is part of a Redbridge Council plan to increase the stock of affordable homes in the borough.

Redbridge Council leader Cllr Joe Athwal and Cllr Vasiliki Sotiriou, cabinet member for housing and businesses at the authority, were both on site on Monday, November 8, as ground was officially broken and the first pylons laid. The scheme, which the council expects to be completed by next autumn, consists of five two-bedroom flats and a single one-bedroom flat.

Wanstead Guardian

Construction work underway on new home scheme in Redbridge

By Marly Carr | @marlycarr
November 11, 2021

Building work begins on new affordable homes at Norman Road.

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Update on rough sleepers

Help us support rough sleepers

It is a dangerous time for anyone who has to sleep rough. In Redbridge, the council works in partnership with local charities, to tackle and prevent rough sleeping in the borough.

To stop people having to beg, alongside our partners we:

- provide people with emergency places to stay & sleep
- offer support with a wide range of health needs
- find people somewhere to live that's suitable for their longer-term needs
- help people move towards independence.

We understand that you might feel compelled to give money to someone begging on the street. However, many rough sleepers have complex issues around physical wellbeing, mental health and substance abuse.

By giving what you can spare directly to our partners, or by volunteering, you can help people to make sustainable, life-changing steps that can end the cycle of rough sleeping for good.



How to support our partners

The Welcome Project a rough sleepers' day centre in Ilford, offers informal training, education and help to access health services. Visit: www.healthylivingprojects.org.uk

RAMFEL a specialist immigration advice and legal representation charity, supports non-UK nationals in Redbridge, with advice to help them get off the streets. Visit: www.ramfel.org.uk

The Salvation Army leads Project Malachi in Ilford, supporting people into work and longer-term accommodation. Visit: www.popuphostel-ilfordsalvationarmy.nationbuilder.com/donate

“Our aim in Redbridge is to work collaboratively with partners to prevent and reduce rough sleeping, supporting people off the streets, where they can rebuild their lives and thrive, with the ultimate goal of ending rough sleeping in the borough.”

Redbridge Council's Cabinet Member for Housing and Homelessness, Cllr Vanisha Solanki



@Jas_Athwal • 19 Nov

Last night I joined councillors and officers walking Redbridge streets to find & support rough sleepers. It is damning that in one of the richest countries in the world people still sleep on the streets. The Government must act and provide funding to end rough sleeping for good.

Get help for a rough sleeper

Call **Street Link** on **0300 500 0914** or visit www.streetlink.org.uk and Street Link will arrange for the rough sleeper to get access to local services and support.

Supporting rough sleepers during the pandemic

Since March 2020, alongside our partners, we have provided emergency accommodation for almost 400 rough sleepers, bringing everyone off the street at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Many rough sleepers were offered help and support for the first time, and are now moving on to sustainable, longer-term homes.

The services we can offer alongside our partners have been transformed for the future, with out-of-hospital care, extra support with drug and alcohol addiction, and greater support for individuals without entitlement to state benefits.

The enhanced support includes 18 newly converted self-contained studio flats at the Ryedale scheme in Ilford, now being let on two-year leases to support local rough sleepers towards independence.

CASE STUDY

Project Malachi changing lives

Pop up hostel and workshop, Project Malachi, allows rough sleepers who are not entitled to state benefits to get the help and support they need.

Construction of the hostel was funded by Redbridge Council, who also made the land in Chadwick Road, available to the Salvation Army while the regeneration of Ilford Town centre is ongoing.

Staffed by Salvation Army volunteers 24 hours a day, seven days a week, the project offers a broad range of support, from therapeutic support for mental health and substance misuse to assistance with securing work and training opportunities.

"I'm now almost recovered from all my health issues. I've made some good friends here and feel like I'm part of a community again. My aim is now to get back to work and get my own place."

Stephen Serrant, Project Malachi resident

Resident involvement

Results of our **biggest ever STAR survey** with more than **1,400** responses

Resident involvement / STAR survey results

The pandemic meant that we weren't able to hold any face-to-face meetings with residents, but we still ensured that our residents were kept updated & engaged.

Online meetings meant that some residents were able to attend events, who might otherwise, have not been able to.

A significant focus for the team was the consultation on much-needed new Council homes to be built in a variety of locations.

40 sessions were held over Zoom, supported by a series of newsletters for each scheme. Other work over the year included starting work on a new resident Engagement Strategy.

This work continues as we want our approach to work for all residents, giving everyone the opportunity to get involved in ways which work for everyone.

Survey of Tenants and Residents ('STAR')

We were really pleased that more than **1,400** residents responded to the STAR survey. This two-yearly satisfaction survey gives us really important feedback on various aspects of the service and helps us understand what is working well and where we need to focus our efforts. The headlines include:

66% are **satisfied** with the value for money of their rent (tenants only)

66% are **satisfied** with their neighbourhood as a place to live

64% are **satisfied** that Redbridge provides a home that is safe and secure

61% are **satisfied** with the overall quality of their home

53% are **satisfied** with the overall service they receive from Redbridge

53% are **satisfied** with repairs and maintenance in general but 35% are dissatisfied

50% are **satisfied** that Redbridge Council is easy to deal with

42% are **satisfied** that Redbridge provides opportunities to make their views known

40% are **satisfied** with the value for money of their service charge and 38% are dissatisfied

38% are **satisfied** Redbridge listens to their views and acts upon them, whilst 38% are dissatisfied

Update on consumer standards

Over **90% satisfied**
with our handling of
complaints

Number
of anti-social
behaviour
(ASB) cases we
managed to close
for 2020/21,
133

From the ASB
cases, **95.8%**
satisfied for
complaint
handling and
91.7% satisfied
for complaint
outcome

Number
of tenancy checks
done in 2020/21,
1147
concentrating on
identifying and
supporting the
most vulnerable
tenants

Percentage
of initial tenancy
visits completed
within 20 working
days in 2020/21,
77%

What's next

The housing officers
are using our new
policy to focus on
ensuring all reports
of ASB are dealt with
swiftly and more
effectively



Other **news** in brief

Conference report

Our annual Residents' Conference for Council tenants and leaseholders took place on Saturday, 2 October. The first time as an online event, we were delighted that **60** residents took part.

The event was themed around the recent government Social Housing White Paper <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-charter-for-social-housing-residents-social-housing-white-paper>



Our keynote speaker was Louise Thompson from the Tenant Participation Advisory Service, who gave a presentation on the emerging headlines from the White Paper.

Cllr Vanisha Solanki
attended the whole event
and said afterwards:

Considering, it was our first attempt at holding the conference remotely, I thought it was a great success. It's always difficult to know exactly what the reaction is when you can't hear or see people, but it was clear that we were engaging with our residents, judging by the responses we received in the live chat box.

We broke out into five workshops which allowed us to have more detailed discussion with residents on key aspects of the White Paper.

The breakout sessions included:

- Workshop 1** Being safe in your own home
- Workshop 2** How we are performing
- Workshop 3** Complaints handling
- Workshop 4** Listening to the resident voice
- Workshop 5** Homes and neighbourhoods

All workshops were well attended and gave residents the opportunity to ask any questions they had. A key finding that residents were keen in getting more involved and were honest about where we could improve our services.

We finished with an open Q&A session. A number of good questions were asked, ranging from our approach to anti-social behaviour, fly-tipping, communal maintenance and our Affordable Homes Programme. We'll be following up this event using focus groups, with residents, to help develop our response to the main themes of the White paper, as well as starting broad consultation on a revised strategy for resident engagement.

Iford regeneration gets prestigious seal of approval

Redbridge Council's flagship regeneration scheme of Iford Town Centre received a prestigious seal of approval this year, with a visit from the President of the Royal Town Planning Institute.

Dr Wei Yang gained an insight into Redbridge's largest regeneration opportunity, which is planned to see the delivery of 6,000 new homes and 3,000 new jobs, by 2030.

A new Cultural Quarter will also combine civic, leisure, education and community uses, kick-started by "The Spark Iford", free public art gallery SPACE studios and the imminent arrival of food market Mercato Metropolitan.

Leader of the Council, Cllr Jas Athwal said

"It was fantastic to welcome Dr Yang, the President of the Royal Town Planning Institute, to Redbridge this week for a tour of Iford town centre. Her visit is a testament to our progress in transforming our borough by building new, affordable homes, delivering brand new, high quality spaces, both for residents to enjoy and for local businesses to thrive, and making sure that this transformation delivers for local people."

Cabinet Member for Planning, Cllr Sheila Bain, added

"In Iford, we are developing a modern metropolitan town centre to accommodate planned future growth. By investing in the quality of place for our residents to both live and work, current and future residents will have access to excellent services on their doorsteps, particularly within the emerging cultural quarter.

"We continue to work tirelessly alongside key partners, such as the Greater London Authority, which has helped develop our affordable housing programme and part-funded infrastructure improvements, including the new southern entrance to Iford Station."

Dr Wei Yang said "I was delighted to meet The Leader of the London Borough of Redbridge Cllr Jas Athwal and the planning team led by Brett Leahy, as well as the senior management team in charge of regeneration, and the community hubs programme.

"I was impressed by the close collaboration between different departments and how planning has been utilised to turn the council's unique challenges into opportunities for innovation, growth and development through proactive communication and engagement with local communities. Also, it was really encouraging to hear the planning team's Career Grade, Grown Your Own, Kick Start, and weekly welfare and wellbeing survey initiatives. I applaud the council's great effort and would welcome their best practice to be shared more widely."

During her visit, Dr Yang met Cllr Athwal and senior planning, regeneration and housing officers. She enjoyed a tour of Iford Town Centre, including an overview of the ongoing transformation of Iford High Street, Space Studios and Mercato Metropolitan.

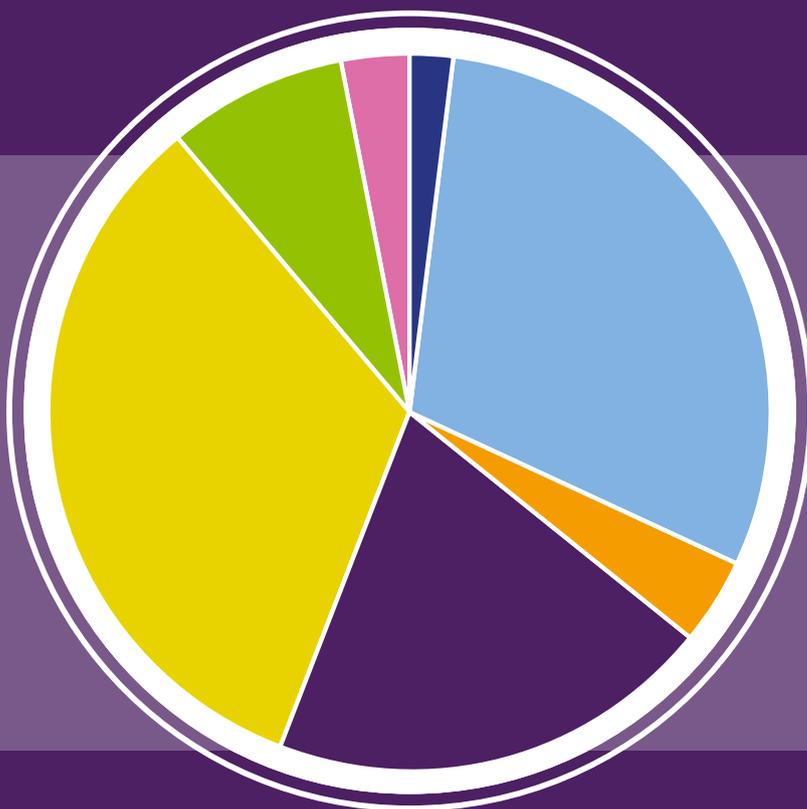
Dr Yang also visited the Iford Western Gateway, the area around Iford Hill, Chapel Road and south of the main Iford Station entrance, the stepping stone into Iford with the arrival of the new Elizabeth Line.



Cllr Jas Athwal and Dr Wei Yang at the London Borough of Redbridge presentation

How we spend your money

How every £ of income is spent



- Transfer to Reserves **2p**
- Management Expenses **30p**
- Special Services **4p**
- Repairs and maintenance **20p**
- Support to Capital Programme **33p**
- Net Borrowing Charges **8p**
- Other Expenditure **3p**

Management

Expenses for the running costs of our existing stock and creation of new homes

Special Services

Expenditure for services recovered through tenants' and leaseholders' service charges

Repairs and Maintenance

Work done to ensure homes and estates are safe and in good working order

Support to Capital Programme

Financing major items of expenditure in homes and on our estates

Net Borrowing Charges

Borrowing to invest in new and existing housing stock

Other Expenditure

Includes insurance of homes and other charges

Transfer to Reserves

Where income exceeds expenditure, the balance is transferred for future use

Have **your** say

HAVE YOUR SAY AT COUNCIL MEETINGS in 2022

All meetings will be available to view online, and some meetings will be held at the Town Hall. Visit www.redbridge.gov.uk for information, agendas, and links to join online.

Resident Housing Panel

Mondays 6.30pm to 8.00pm

Committee Room 1, Redbridge Town Hall

11 July

5 September

7 November

Leaseholder Forum

Tuesdays 6.00 pm to 8pm

19 July

18 October

<https://www.redbridge.gov.uk/housing/help-improve-housing-services/#ResMeet>

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