

Committee(s): Housing Management and Almshouses Sub-Committee– For Information	Dated: 17/04/2024
Subject: Access Audit Remedial Project	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation’s Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	1, 2, 3, 4, 12
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	Y
If so, how much?	£TBD
What is the source of Funding?	
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain’s Department?	N
Report of: Judith Finlay Executive Director of Community and Children’s Services	For Information
Report author: Jason Hayes, Head of Major Works	

Summary

This report outlines progress made with the access audit remedial project for City of London Housing Estates. This is following an accessibility audit which assessed how well City of London estates performed with regards to access in and around the estate.

Whilst this report provides a brief update, the project requires authorisation through the necessary steps of the Corporation’s governance structure and project processes.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- Note the report.

Main Report

Background

1. An accessibility audit was completed by Direct Access Consultancy Ltd over several months in 2022. With recommendations made per estate. The audit

assesses the buildings against the Equality Act 2010 as well as other codes of practice and Building Regulations where applicable.

2. The audit assessed approaches into the estates, routes, steps, signs, ramps, means of escape, corridors and other provisions that help make access easier and compliant.
3. The audit was undertaken in two parts, the first being information gathering by visiting the site and then results, and recommendations, made via the report, together with priorities.

Current Position

4. A full review has been undertaken by the Major Works Team to identify what work is to be prioritised and what work has been undertaken to date.
5. Work completed as part of the capital works programme will have had a positive impact to protected characteristics of residents or their visitors. This can include accessible bathroom adaptations as part of the decent homes project or adaptations to doors as part of the fire door replacement project. Any replacement work within the capital works programme will usually require compliancy with the latest Building Regulations, such as approved document Part M, which ensures that people are able to access and use the buildings, and their facilities. With each new project a Test of Relevance is undertaken before deciding if the work requires a full Equality Impact Assessment.
6. The project manager for the access audit remedial work has set out a prioritised list of immediate work and is working through the costs to complete the more essential items. They are also identifying work which will fall into the scope of other imminent projects such as lighting upgrades or corridor refurbishment work.
7. Some information is missing in the reports that will help finalise the range budget estimates. This information has been requested directly from the consultants. Any cost estimates will be checked with a Quantity Surveyor for accuracy.

Options

8. The options appraisal should identify:
 - a. Actions that are covered by existing or upcoming projects for the essential improvements identified by the report.
 - b. Other less urgent items that can be aligned with the future works programme.
 - c. The cost of completing the recommendations in the report.

Proposals

9. Consultation on the proposals will need to be undertaken with residents, and officers, and other key stakeholders to identify any additional needs or requirements. Some of the remedial work may impact accessibility whilst the work is being undertaken. This will need careful planning and communication. A communications strategy has not yet been finalised.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

Strategic implications – Remedial work undertaken as part of the recommendations set out within the reports will ensure our estates are compliant, meet the expectations of the Equalities Act 2010 and other codes of practice that support accessibility.

Financial implications – Funding will be required to support the remedial work. No external funding has been identified yet.

Resource implications – None.

Legal implications – Legal action for non-compliance, lack of support or discrimination against protected characteristics.

Risk implications – As per legal implications above.

Equalities implications – Remedial work will support the protected characteristics outlined in the Equalities Act 2010.

Climate implications – None.

Security implications – None.

Conclusion

10. The report provides progress update on work completed to date and what the next steps are to be undertaken essential work to estates to improve the facilities provided making them more accessible to those living, visiting and working on the estate.
11. Once the current review is complete, and costs estimated, a further report starting the project under the gateway process, can be undertaken. The gateway report is expected at the next Housing Management and Almshouses Sub-Committee meeting on 8 July 2024.

Appendices

None

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