

City of London Corporation Committee Report

Committee(s): Housing Management & Almshouses Sub-Committee – For Information	Dated: 27/01/2026
Subject: Housing Major Works Programme 2026-36	Public report: For Information
This proposal: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• delivers Corporate Plan 2024-29 outcomes• provides statutory duties• provides business enabling functions	Providing Excellent Services
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	No
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	HRA
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	Yes
Report of:	Director of Community & Children's Services
Report author:	Greg Wade, Head of Major Works (HRA)

Summary

This report provides an overview of the intended strategic approach for delivery of the Housing Major Works Programme from 2026-36, which will be led by the Major Works Team (HRA) and supported by the New Developments and Special Projects Team within DCCS' Housing Department.

The works will encompass comprehensive upgrades to the City of London Corporation's social homes in respect of comprehensive upgrades to kitchens, bathrooms, heating systems, lifts, roofs, and communal spaces. Extensive fire safety and electrical works will also be undertaken as part of the programme, to meet the City Corporation's statutory landlord obligations. Furthermore, decarbonisation will be a key focus, with a view to actively supporting the organisation's investment and supply chain net zero targets of 2040.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

Note the report and consider the future commitments, targets and challenges in delivering the Housing Major Works Programme.

Main Report

Background

1. In 2014/15 the City Corporation committed to investing circa £110million on a Major Works Programme for the maintenance, refurbishment, and improvement of its entire social housing portfolio (including the Golden Lane Estate). The works, in the main comprised the following:
 - Window repairs / replacements;
 - Re-roofing (including repair / replacement of rainwater goods);
 - Decent Homes (new kitchens and bathrooms);
 - Electrical rewiring and upgrades (communal landlord supply and domestic);
 - Heating replacements and upgrades (communal and domestic);
 - Concrete and external fabric repairs;
 - Fire safety improvement works (fire door replacement, compartmentation works, fire-stopping, fire alarm upgrades, sprinkler installation);
 - Energy efficiency works (co-funded through Climate Action Strategy funding);
 - Estate Improvement works (minor landscaping / security / fencing / waste storage / external drainage).
2. The programme was originally intended to be a 5-year one. However, the size and complexity of certain high-profile projects, along with persistent staff resourcing issues and the addition of unprogrammed works, meant that delivery of the works had to be re-profiled into an elongated programme, which was considered both realistic and achievable.
3. Works to the value of £70m have been successfully completed since the original commitment in 2014/15, with the remaining £40m committed to projects in active development (the majority being those on the Golden Lane Estate).
4. Furthermore, despite the significant improvements undertaken since 2014/15 and the £30m already committed to the Golden Lane Estate in particular, further work is essential to:
 - Meet Building Safety Act 2022 standards
 - Achieve Net Zero targets
 - Comply with Awaab's Law
 - Complete the Golden Lane Estate Major Works Renewal Programme

5. Consequently, on 12 December 2025, the Court of Common Council approved a £211 million funding package to accelerate improvements across all 12 City Corporation housing estates. This funding package includes an allocation of £152 million from the City's Fund to support the Housing Major Works Programme, which will be delivered from 2026-36.
6. These additional funds include a further £75m commitment to the Golden Lane Estate, taking the overall investment to £105m, with a deadline of all 9 blocks being successfully completed by 2035.
7. The Housing Major Works Programme will be monitored and managed at several levels, both corporately and within the department. This includes:
 - The new Gateway Process (via the Corporation's Project P3 framework);
 - Community & Children's Services Committee (C&CS);
 - Projects and Procurement Sub Committee;
 - Housing Management & Almshouses Sub Committee;
 - Housing Programme Board.
8. The Housing Programme Board (HPB) is a cross-departmental group which will now meet on a monthly basis to oversee the Major Works Programme and provide an approvals route for the new Gateway process. It is chaired by the Director of Housing and comprises of senior officers from:
 - Housing Management;
 - Major Works Team (HRA);
 - City Surveyors;
 - Planning;
 - Finance;
 - Town Clerks;
 - City Procurement.

Current Position

Current and Future Projects already in development

9. The Major Works Team currently has a small crop of mid value projects which are being progressed through the early design stages and are expected to start on site in 2027/28:
 - George Elliston and Eric Wilkins Lift Refurbishment and Upgrade
 - York Way Estate Lift Refurbishment and Upgrade
 - York Way Communal Ceiling Reinstatement and Communal Areas Refurbishment
 - William Blake Estate Window Replacement and Associated Works
 - George Elliston and Eric Wilkins External Refurbishment

10. These have provided a useful thread of continuity for the team, alongside the completion of the following legacy projects in 2024/25:

- Holloway Window Replacement and Associated Works
- Southwark Window Replacement and Associated Works
- Windsor House Window Replacement and Associated Works
- Sydenham Hill Window Replacement and Associated Works

11. Furthermore, in 2026, the following projects are intended to commence on site:

- Harman and Iselden Fire Safety and Compliance Works
- Electrical Upgrade Programme
- Middlesex Street and York Way Estate Heating Optimisation Works

Statutory Compliance Considerations

12. In addition to the works detailed by Savills' stock condition survey in 2018, further compliance-related planned programmes have since been identified:

- Electrical Planned Maintenance Works originating from Electrical Installation Condition Reports (upgrades to communal landlord's supply, distribution boards and communal lighting)
- Fire Safety Works originating from Fire Risk Assessments (compartmentation works, fire-stopping, fire alarm upgrades)

13. In early 2025, an M&E consultant was appointed to undertake a review of the EICRs across the entire portfolio, followed by individual site visits and a priority assessment of all landlord installations, accompanied by budget costs for the identified works.

14. This exercise has culminated in an Electrical Upgrade package, which is currently being developed with the appointed consultant and an appropriately competent and experienced contractor. This package is intended to commence in April 2026 and will address the quick wins in terms of electrical remedial work across the entire portfolio. The intention will be to complete this programme within 12 months of commencement i.e. by the end of March 2027.

15. Given the scale of identified electrical major work, the decision has been made to also incorporate this element into all pipeline and future projects, with the intention of addressing the overwhelming majority of the housing stock within the next 3 years. Typical examples of major electrical work would include lateral mains replacement and/or complete communal lighting upgrades. These works will also be subject to section 20 consultation.

16. In respect of fire safety considerations, The Major Works Team has commissioned a multidisciplinary consultant to undertake a review of the FRAs and fire strategies across the entire portfolio. This will be followed by individual site visits and a priority assessment, accompanied by budget costs for the identified works. This survey programme is scheduled to commence in January 2026 and is expected to be completed by July 2026, following which a fire safety planned maintenance works

programme can be developed for implementation in 2027. It is still to be determined whether these works will be subject to section 20 consultation.

Decarbonisation

17. The City of London Corporation is in receipt of Social Housing Decarbonisation Funding, as part of a successful bid lodged as part of the London Councils Consortium in 2024. The Major Works and Climate Action Strategy Teams are working closely and have established a Retrofit Assessor and Coordinator for the past 12-18 months, commissioned to identify potential opportunities for expenditure in respect of the allocated grant funding.
18. The decision has been taken to explore the possibility of 'bolting-on' decarbonisation works to two existing major works packages, as part of a 'fabric first' approach:
 - William Blake Estate Window Replacement and Associated Works
 - George Elliston and Eric Wilkins External Refurbishment
19. Both packages have lead consultants appointed and a delivery timeline, which aligns with the rigid expectations of the grant funding. Currently this is considered to be the most pragmatic and effective solution, given the time pressures in existence. Discussions are underway with both sets of consultants and the Major Works Team is working proactively to combine the planned maintenance and decarbonisation elements at the design stage. This process will be closely monitored at senior-level over the coming months.

Interim Works

20. Given that the expected timeline for commencement of major works projects is in excess of 2 years, there will be a requirement for interim works in priority cases.
21. In respect of electrical compliance, an emergency package of work is being developed at pace (see item 6 above).
22. It is highly likely that some identified fire safety works will have to be treated in similar fashion, which will likely be led by the Repairs and Maintenance Team.
23. An interim repairs initiative has been implemented on the Golden Lane Estate, where individual homes are being assessed for potential Health & Safety risks (i.e. the potential for glazing to fall out of deteriorated timber frames and sashes). High quality repairs are consequently being instructed where deemed necessary.

Options – Procurement and Delivery

24. Various procurement options can be considered in respect of long-term planning. In the interest of expediency, the City of London Corporation could consider the formation of its own bespoke framework. This could offer the following advantages:

- Accelerated procurement process
- More transparency
- Greater certainty in terms of quality
- Opportunity to build strong market relationships with established contractors
- Potential economies of scale through repeat business
- Greater satisfaction from Leaseholders

25. It should be acknowledged this process could take 2+ years to implement and so it should be considered in tandem with traditional procurement methods for the existing crop of pipeline projects.

26. In respect of portfolio-wide programmes which do not require section 20 consultation (i.e. Decent Homes, Estate Planned Maintenance etc), given the relatively small number of tenanted homes within the portfolio (i.e. less than 2000 units) and limited number of estates, there is a strong argument to suggest that a single procurement exercise involving a constructor-partner could be a viable approach.

27. This approach is not without risk but could offer benefits in terms of accelerated delivery and also the potential to use external frameworks (as opposed to multiple single stage competitive tendering exercises on an estate-by-estate basis).

Proposals

28. Members are asked to review the report and offer insights / commentary to the suggested approach and rationale.

Key Data

29. See Appendix 1 for Housing Major Works Delivery Programme (high-level budget costs) for a snapshot of the current assumptions and anticipated expenditure.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

Strategic implications

These projects form part of the current and future Housing Major Works Programme which originally commenced in 2014 but has now been re-profiled to be delivered from 2026-36.

Financial implications

There is now a firm commitment to successfully spend £211m by 2036. Consequently, expenditure will need to be monitored on a periodic basis (monthly / quarterly / annually) from April 2026 and benchmarked against an anticipated spend profile.

Resource implications

All projects will be delivered by the Major Works Team (HRA), supported by the New Developments and Special Projects Team.

Legal implications

Key considerations will be the requirement for Leaseholder recovery, the potential for legal challenge based upon whether the costs are recoverable, statutory breach in respect of compliance

Risk implications

Key risks largely relate to potential programme delays, relating to the following:

- Governance Approvals process
- Statutory procurement requirements
- Successfully managing substantial works in and around residents' homes
- Section 20 consultation and Leaseholder anxiety in respect of billing
- Planning and Listed Building consent
- Higher Risk Buildings requiring Gateway 2 Applications to the Building Safety Regulator
- The challenges of large-scale resident decanting (GLE)
- Appropriate resourcing in terms of personnel and management
- Multiple concurrent contractor activity within estate boundaries (CDM)

Equalities implications

These will be assessed project by project.

Climate implications

Net Zero targets 2040 should be considered in terms of the City Corporation's aspirations.

Security implications

None.

Conclusion

30. The City Corporation's decision to significantly invest in its social housing stock presents an excellent opportunity to upgrade, modernise and also to meet its statutory landlord obligations. However, extensive planning is also required, if the targets for achievement are to be successfully met over the next decade.

31. Significant challenges are apparent, given that the Major Works Team has not traditionally had the opportunity to exhibit flexibility or dynamism in respect of project delivery. The historical approach has been driven largely by urgent need and severe budgetary restrictions.

32. Consideration should be given to various alternative procurement and delivery options, in order to maximise efficiencies wherever possible. It should also be noted that significant spend should not be expected until years 2/3 of the programme, given the length of time it will take to mobilise and progress projects through the early design stages. However, provided that planning is effective and the strategy is adhered to, successful completion of the programme within 10 years should achievable.

Appendices

Housing Major Works Programme – January 2026 (High-level)

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