

Community & Children's Services Members' Update

Allocated Member: John Fletcher Estate Name: Middlesex Street Date of Report: 13/01/2026

Date of visit	Reason for visit	Who seen	Any outcomes
Autumn 2024	Multiple including one to one with community leaders, social events and RA meetings.	Community leaders and residents.	

Issues.

Issues completed since last report	
Issues underway last report.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Electric shocks from kids' playground Changes made but need to have right weather conditions to fully assess if resolved. The contractor is aware that this is being kept under review. Regrettably, mild static electric shocks were still being experienced on dry sunny days throughout Summer and Autumn 2024 on items of play equipment, despite numerous attempts to resolve with anti-static sprays and applications of sand and cork. In addition, soundproofing works to the MUGA at Middlesex Street were completed in summer 2024 but have been subject to vandalism. Further site meetings with designers and suppliers were held in Autumn 2024 to address these issues as a matter of priority. To be revisited in summer 2025 when the play areas will be back in regular use. <p>Summary report has been drafted by Head of Major Works and legal advice and updated estimated cost is currently being sought before it is presented to Committee in March 2026.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Installation of new Entrance Canopy to Petticoat Tower (Artisan Street) and Concrete Repairs The project to install a new canopy over the Artisan Street entrance to Petticoat Tower was handed over to the Major Works team in the second half of 2023 from the Department of the Built Environment. The works were originally commissioned a number of years ago, as part of improvements to the public realm. Post handover, progress was prevented by a lengthy delay in obtaining planning consent for the new canopy. This was finally received in May 2024. The project was subsequently allocated to the Major Works team to progress but subsequently stalled due to a lack of funding for staff costs and professional fees. There's a strong rationale to combine the canopy work with outstanding concrete repairs, which haven't progressed on the Middlesex Street estate. This is now a single project. The aim will be to deliver the combined package for Spring 2027 once the Eastern Base project has fully completed on site. The Major Works Team has already instructed the original Architect to explain the revised approach. <p>Competitive fee proposals for Contract Administration, Quantity Surveying, Clerk of Works and Structural Engineering were received during summer 2025 and the consultant team has since been fully appointed.</p>

	<p>The newly appointed design team will be managed by the Major Works Team through the design and procurement process, which was initiated in November 2025. Initial site visits have been undertaken and preliminary meetings held to discuss the scope.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disabled access <p>There is now a timetable in place for consultants to re-assess the requirement on all estates and then implement.</p> <p>The Major Works Team began by liaising with the City's Access Advisor in order to engage a specialist NRAC access/inclusive design consultant with expertise in historic buildings, inclusive design, and community engagement. When it became apparent that the potential value of appointment would require formal procurement processes (with significant timescales), it was decided to split it into two distinct phases: the first to undertake a desktop review of the 2022 audits, carry out site visits and provide one report per estate with recommendations and budget costs; the second to carry design, specification, tendering and contract administration duties in relation to the identified works. Pick Everard was appointed following a mini-tender exercise for the first phase and commenced their site visits (including Dron House, York Way Estate and Windsor House) in late March 2025. The first six estate reports were issued at the end of May and the remainder at the end of July 2025.</p> <p>The Major Works Team has since reviewed all 13 estate-based reports and costings and a summary report was presented for consideration at HMASC in November 2025. Next steps in terms of budget allocation and consultant appointment will be confirmed over the coming months, once the strategy for delivery of the work is confirmed as a portfolio-wide approach.</p> <p>In January 2025 it was confirmed that the automation of the communal entrance door to Petticoat Tower will require an application to the Building Safety Regulator or BSR (which is expected to take upwards of 6 months). The application process could not be commenced without a contractor first being appointed and works have to be formally tendered before that. Quotations were successfully sought in October 2024, but a BSR application and approval are needed before the works can be commenced – confirmed by Local Authority Building Control.</p> <p>An appropriately competent consultant has since been appointed, and the application to the BSR was submitted in October 2025 with the Major Works Team monitoring progress. A decision was expected in late December, but the BSR has since requested an Extension of Time until 24/02/26. The Major Works Team will continue to monitor and chase in the meantime.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repaint where old signs taken down <p>Repair and clean grills Repair doors and replace spring covers. After Police works complete will access any additional works in the car parks and get it sorted.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communal fire doors being fabricated <p>Installation of the communal fire doors is expected to commence April to June 2026, but, critically, this is dependent upon Building Safety Regulation</p>
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(BSR) approval. An appropriately competent consultant has been appointed, and the application was submitted in October 2025 with the Major Works Team monitoring progress. A decision was expected in late December, and an update is currently being chased by the appointed consultant, with a response from the BSR still pending. The Major Works Team will continue to monitor as a priority in the meantime and provide further updates as soon as possible.

Snagging and making good after repairs and maintenance work. A greater feature of new contract due to start on 1 of April.

- **Heating project**

Work underway with one-to-one visits. When completed by 31st January a full, comprehensive report on the system by independent consultants will then be commissioned. The review has been commissioned and will include an assessment of the heating project, we will share the outcome of the one-to-one visits with the consultants, and they will be given the report produced following the one-to-one visits this month. There is no intention to recharge for this.

The results of the troubleshooting and diagnostics exercise that was undertaken throughout December 2024 and January 2025 were shared with MSERA via a detailed email summary on 18.02.25 (complete with results of individual visits). Approximately 30 visits were carried out with nothing to indicate a fundamental issue with the system performance. The Corporation's appointed consultant Butler Young and Associates were commissioned to undertake a separate technical review of the heating system performance, which has since been shared with MSERA and key stakeholders in May 2025. The report did not highlight any fundamental issues in relation to the communal heating system.

Latest developments now relate to the implementation of a Heating Enhancement Project (funded exclusively with Climate Action Strategy funding). The enhancement works will include upgrading the existing insulation around pipework, installing better controls and re-balancing radiators within individual properties. It is anticipated this work will take approximately 1 day per home and should involve minimal disturbance or disruption.

The works will be carried out by TSG plc and will be taking place within 3 different areas over the next 15 months:

- Communal plant room – April 2026
- Communal areas – May 2026 – June 2026
- Individual dwellings – July 2026 – March 2027

This will need to be carefully coordinated with the ongoing heating replacement project, which is scheduled for completion in March 2026. The same contractor TSG Building Services will be used to minimise disruption.

- **Sprinkler project**

Communal areas – Sprinkler install and boxing complete

	<p>Movement of supply tank in carpark – Commenced, projected completion April 2026</p> <p>Flats: Option 1 – Sprinklers, Evac System, Alarms - 21 complete Option 2 – Evac System, Alarms - 8 complete Option 3 – Alarms - 14 complete (43 out of 88 flats complete)</p> <p>Please note that whilst the infrastructure for the Evacuation alert system is installed unless there is 100% take up by residents it cannot be commissioned. Also, the sprinkler system cannot be commissioned until the supply tank movement is complete.</p>
Not yet started since last report.	
New issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Basement Car Park <p>Residents must now park in the basement. It leaks profusely. The floor is littered with construction detritus, such as and screws and nails, puncturing tires. Building materials, including paints etc. are still stored there. Fire risk?</p> <p>Several leaks were investigated and traced to the new heating system pipework, which have subsequently been repaired. A further inspection of the car park is being undertaken on 15/04/25 to assess the current situation and whether any further investigation and repair is needed.</p> <p>The Estates Services Team undertake regular estate inspections, which includes identification of any health and safety issues and arranging removal of any items of risk.</p>

Any other matters to report.

- There are still questions over who pays for some of the works and if charges to leaseholders have always been correct. The Chair of the Leaseholders Association is working with Chamberlains to resolve.

Further to a review of the estimated works costs, DCCS officers provided key stakeholders with a break down of Leaseholder charges to date in early Autumn 2025, including a very high-level reconciliation of the estimated final account. This was confirmed via email communication in July 2025. Further discussion will take place post-completion of the project (anticipated for March/April 2026), once the final account has been agreed with the contractor and the total costs (and Leaseholder recharges) are determined.
- The heating system appears not to work properly unless the flats have a “full” installation. Residents were given the option of having less or smaller radiators, but it is unclear if they were properly warned about the performance consequences and agreed to accept them.