



UPDATE - Chalcots Estate Major Works Project – 10 June 2024

Scope of the Major Works

The Chalcots estate has **five high-rise tower blocks built in the late 1960s and early 1970s, providing 717 homes for over 3,000 residents**, including about 130 Leaseholders. The estate is made up of the following tower blocks: Blashford (73 flats), Bray (160 flats), Burnham (160 flats), Dorney (158 flats), and Taplow (160 flats).

The scope of the major works project is to **renew the building envelope of all five buildings** whilst residents remain in situ with main priorities to:

- **achieve the highest standard of fire safety** within the context of existing buildings
- **improve the buildings' longevity** with associated greater cost-efficient maintenance
- **improve the wellbeing** of current and future residents

The major works project includes roof replacement with installation of a building maintenance unit, new cladding system, window replacement, brick work replacement to lower floors and insulation to ground floor flats.

The **structure of Blashford is different** and the project is therefore split into two contracts: **Design and build for Blashford** and **Build only for the four similar towers**.

Every effort is made to help minimise the disruption to residents by making available respite lounges, noise cancelling headsets or ear defenders, free access to local facilities such as the swimming pool at the Swiss cottage leisure centre as well as making available home away from home flats¹ to residents where they can move into when the works take place in their homes.

Approach to the Major Works

The works are being carried out at **Bray and Taplow first, followed by Burnham and Dorney** with currently **a total of 361 homes with new windows installed, which equates to about 60% of homes across the 4 towers** (excluding the 44 homes obstructed by scaffolding). The major works at Blashford are done in parallel separately with another contractor and are much more intrusive in terms of duration and disruption to residents.

The approach to the first two towers, Bray and Taplow, was to **commence the installations with a soft start followed by a slower pace of installation to ensure quality throughout as this approach allows us to learn and prepare for issues that may arise during construction**. Since June 2023, the pace of the installations has significantly increased and the individual window replacement approach allows flexibility to accommodate residents' availabilities to carry out the works in their home

¹ The Home Away from Home flats are units on the estate or nearby and are furnished and equipped void properties based on the principle of an apart hotel.

Bray & Taplow Towers - Progress and estimated timelines

The **progress to May 2024** is summarised below:

- All façade preparation work is completed and cladding rails installed
- The **roof works are completed** for both towers
- The **rails for the Building Maintenance Unit are installed** at both towers
- **Window installations have been completed in over 95% of homes** in the two towers (without scaffold obstruction) with 4 homes awaiting works at Bray tower and 28 homes ready for works at Taplow tower
- The **scaffold is coming down** since 25 September at Bray tower and since 13 November 2023 at Taplow tower with an increased pace since April once quality issues are fully addressed
- The **cladding system** is fully installed almost **half way down the building to floor 11 at Bray** and about **1/3 of the upper part of Taplow tower down to floor 15**

The **estimated completion timescales** are summarised below as follows:

- It is anticipated to complete last 4 homes by early June 2024 at Bray tower
- The window installations to the 13 homes on the ground and first floors at Bray currently restricted by scaffolding will be completed from July once the scaffold is being removed
- The scaffold at Bray is scheduled to be removed in August 2024
- It is anticipated to complete the remaining window installation to the 28 homes at Taplow without scaffold obstruction by early July 2024, subject to access into homes
- The window installations to the 7 homes on the ground and first floors at Taplow currently restricted by scaffolding will be completed from July once the scaffold is being removed
- The scaffold at Taplow is scheduled to be removed in September 2024
- The insulation and cladding panels continue to be installed to the outside of both buildings and should be completed in September 2024 for both towers
- The new brickworks to ground and 1st floors will be completed in early September 2024 to align with the new cladding installed
- **Full demobilisation is planned for September 2024** followed by final sign off and hand over and it must be noted that the site office will remain at the forecourt of Bray for the duration of the project till Spring 2025

Burnham & Dorney Towers – Progress and estimated timelines

The **progress to May 2024** is summarised below:

- The **scaffold building** started in May 2023 and completed at both towers in November 2023
- The **brickwork to the ground and first floors was removed** to both towers in October and November 2023
- The **telecommunications equipment on Dorney tower got replaced** and relocated in December 2023
- The **window replacements started** to the lower part of the buildings since 28 September with some **95 homes with new windows completed** across both buildings
- **Roof works and replacement** are progressing since November 2023 and will be **completed in June 2024** with the **Building Maintenance steel structure installation**

The **estimated completion timescales** are summarised below as follows:

- Window replacement progresses at greater pace since March 2024 with expected completion in December 2024, subject to access
- The scaffolding should start to come down in July 2024
- The installation of the new cladding system is estimated to complete in January 2025
- Brickwork replacement is scheduled to complete in February 2025
- **Works and demobilisation should be completed by March 2025**

Blashford Tower – Progress and estimated timelines

For **Blashford** tower, the works delivery programme has been shared with residents and includes their feedback and suggestions where possible. The **installation work is more complex and more intrusive** and residents are strongly encouraged to move to a Home Away from Home flat for the duration of the works of up to 12 weeks (compared to an average of 3 weeks of works in homes at Bray, Burnham, Dorney and Taplow).

The **progress to May 2024** is summarised below:

- The **site set up has started in March 2023** and was mostly completed by the end of 2023
- All required **final intrusive surveys, test installations and testing construction methods** on the building have been completed to finalise design and progress manufacturing
- The **respite lounge for residents is in place** since December 2023
- The **brick work and construction work to the basement has started** in November 2023
- The **window replacement works take place from the bottom upwards** and have started in January 2024 as follows:
 - i. The **window replacement is completed to ground and first floors**
 - ii. **Windows are being replaced** in homes on **floors 2 and 3**
 - iii. **Preparation works** have started in homes on **floors 4 and 5**
- **Cladding rails** are installed **from ground floor to floors 7 and 8**
- **Roof replacement works have started in March 2024**

The **estimated completion timescales** are summarised below as follows:

- The **window installation works are under way in 19 homes** and every effort will be made to complete the works inside homes by the end of 2024, but without compromising quality and the installations may need to be paused over the festive season to then complete in early 2025
- The new roof installation with Building Maintenance Unit is scheduled to complete in October 2024
- The cladding installation progresses alongside the new window installation and should be completed in February 2025
- The **site demobilisation should be complete in June 2025**

Engagement with Residents

The **overriding principle** is to engage and listen to all residents to help address concerns and to work in partnership with each household.

Overall, **residents feed back** across the four similar towers thus far is that:

- Residents are **happy with the new windows** and with the standard of works
- Residents say that the **new windows improve ventilation and reduce external noise**
- Residents who have the new windows and the new cladding in and around their home are very **happy with the views and the insulating impact from the new cladding system**
- Many residents comment positively on the **quality of the items installed**, on the **care and consideration** given and on the **respectful behaviour** of operatives
- Residents who require a Home Away from Home flat when works take place in their home are **grateful for this facility**

We have also received helpful and constructive feedback to help improve the delivery of the works, particularly in terms of:

- **Keeping to commitments** such as limiting noisy works to start from 9am and not before
- **Clear and timely communication** on what to expect, and
- **More consistent high standard of cleanliness** inside homes and in communal areas

Residents comment very positively about the external appearance of the completed upper parts to the buildings with the new windows and cladding system and say they are proud to see what their building will look like.

The overwhelming feedback specifically from Blashford residents is to get the works done promptly without compromising on quality.

Resident's **individual queries** or concerns are responded to or addressed to find the best solution, including at show flat meetings, home visits, surgeries and open days.

General queries including about technical information are provided in the resident handbooks (one for Bray, Burnham, Dorney and Taplow and the other one for Blashford), the window design booklet, fact sheets, user guides as well as at virtual resident meetings open to all residents and through regular Question & Answer up-dates, which are shared on the Chalcots project webpage on **www.camden.gov.uk/chalcots-estate**.

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