

Event Name	Future of St Raphaels Residents Public meeting
Location	Grand Hall, Brent Civic Centre
Date and Time	27 February 2019
Councillors in attendance	Councillor Eleanor Southwood, Lead member for housing Councillor Muhammed Butt, leader of the council Cllr Ernest Ezeajughi, Stonebridge ward councillor Councillor Promise Knight, Stonebridge ward councillor Councillor Harbi Farah
Officers in attendance	Phil Porter, Strategic Director, Community & Wellbeing Hakeem Osinake, Director of Housing Troy Francis, Head of Housing and Neighbourhoods Christina Byrne, Community Engagement & Partnerships Manager Jill Rennie, Senior Project manager Nadia Khan, Communications Account Manager Khadija Koroma, National Management Trainee Tom Welsh, Head of Chief Executives Office Bunmi Osaghae, Housing Support Team Leader
Information sent out in advance	Letter
Attendance Numbers	70

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Christina Byrne Community Engagement & Partnerships Manager welcomed all to the meeting and explained housekeeping.
- 1.2 Councillor Eleanor Southwood, lead member for housing gave a warm welcome to everyone and explained that the purpose of this meeting was to take a look to where we have got to in terms of engagement and that the Council will continue to work in partnership with all residents.

2. Where we are

- 3.1 Councillor Southwood gave a **presentation** on what has happened since the last public meeting that was held before Christmas; what has picked up from conversations in recent engagement with residents, how these are being addressed; and what the immediate next steps are in terms of engagement with residents. It was very much a resident-led process and the council truly want to work alongside residents to develop these proposals.
- 3.2 Since the engagement process commenced with residents last year the council has held two initial public meetings with residents in December 2018. The meetings were very well attended, which obviously just highlighted how important this matter is.
- 3.3 The initial feedback received from those meetings was that some people felt that they didn't get the opportunity to ask all of the questions that they wanted to ask – particularly

in relation to their own living situation. So it was decided to organise four drop-in sessions on the estate through January – February to enable residents all to speak to officers and councillors more personally and about resident's specific concerns.

- 3.4 A first meeting was held here to begin the recruitment process for the Independent Advisor. The advisor who will be independent from the council will work with both the council and all residents to provide another formal way for residents' voices to be heard. After this meeting, the council had a follow up workshop meeting last week to design and finalise the process for all of the prospective candidates – and to ensure that the appointment of the advisor reflected residents' needs and views. This has been followed with an additional general public meeting this evening. The council really wants to build on the positive conversations that has taken place with residents at the recent drop-ins. The council very much want to listen to residents in smaller settings to give everyone a chance to make their opinions known.
- 3.5 Overall, around 400 sign-ins to all these events have taken place which is a good start, and we want to continue to speak to as many people as possible on the estate.

3. You said, we did

- 4.1 There has been a clear sense that the council need to provide residents with as much information as was possible at this stage of the process in a way that is clear, accessible and gave an overview of the different aspects to the proposals. As such, the website was and is being updated ongoing at www.brent.gov.uk/straphs to reflect this. It was recommended that residents should continue to visit the website as the process progresses.
- 4.2 The feedback received from residents that the public meeting format at the start of the process was not the best way for residents to ask specific questions about resident's situation so we organised four drop-in sessions which enabled residents to come and speak to officers directly on the issues concerning residents and allowed officers to answer residents as best as possible. The general feeling has been that this was a preferable way to engage and establish a direct dialogue with residents. The drop-ins also allowed officers the opportunity to speak to residents in-depth and what residents' concerns were and are. It was really beneficial to be able to speak to residents in person and get to the root of some of residents' concerns and try to alleviate these. It was agreed that speaking in person has been a really helpful exercise for all involved and so officers are planning to keep this up and engage with as many more of residents as possible over the next month through four days of door-knocking on the estate so officers can keep up these conversations and continue to understand residents' concerns. In addition, it also allowed residents the opportunity to raise any current housing issues residents had directly with housing staff.
- 4.3 Residents said that residents appreciated the opportunity to speak to Senior Officers or Councillors face-to-face at the drop-in sessions, so officers have made sure there were enough staff at each of the drop-in sessions. This is an ongoing engagement process, and officers are happy to remain visible to residents as much as possible and provide residents with moments to speak with senior officers and councillors directly.
- 4.5 Residents mentioned that it would be useful to have engagement meetings on a mix of different days and times to enable as many people as possible to attend around their daily commitments so officers made sure there was a mixture: with drop in sessions in the evening, one in the morning on a weekday and one at midday on a Saturday. It is always useful to do this, and we will ensure we keep this in mind for future engagement events and the door knocking.

- 4.6 There were complaints, particularly after the first public meeting, about the venue being too small/not ideal. The council sought to address this by using both the Conference Hall and Grand Hall as larger venues for public meetings and spread the drop-ins to take place at: Sufra, St Patrick's Church Hall, in a marquee next to Sufra, and in the Living Room.
- 4.7 The council has outlined that a key way for residents to get involved would be through the recruitment of the Independent Advisor who will provide another way for resident's voice to be heard collectively. Residents at the first meeting wanted more involvement in the recruitment of the Independent Advisor.
- 4.8 Officers held a workshop last week which let residents design the questions that residents wished to be asked to the Independent Advisors who have applied; decide what residents wanted the Independent Advisor to present to residents; and to decide whether residents wished to attend the subsequent meeting with independent advisors prior to the vote which will take place. The meeting on which residents can vote on the preferred Independent Advisor will take place on 5 March. Residents were reminded that they need to register for this event with proof that they are a tenant/resident/stakeholder on the estate
- 4.9 Throughout all this process the council has been listening to what residents' concerns are. The council has sought to address and provide residents answers in different formats by compiling a list of all of the known questions that we have been asked by residents on the estate, before picking out the most frequently asked ones and placing them on the website. The FAQ document includes: general questions about the proposals for the project on things like funding; information about how residents could be affected depending on residents' situation and tenancy type; specific information for leaseholders and freeholders; the different ways about how residents could get involved and an overview of the ballot process. If residents haven't read any of these yet, in addition to the conversations residents have this evening, please visit www.brent.gov.uk/straphs
- 4.10 It is important to note that the council has given as much information as possible to this stage of the process and have acknowledged the frequently asked questions which the council is not able to answer conclusively at the present time. The draft guiding principles document is also available and sets out in practical terms what existing residents might expect to gain from either of the two options: infill (partial redevelopment/refurbishment) or comprehensive redevelopment. In doing so, it provides something for residents to discuss and comment on as the council works together to agree the future of St Raphael's Estate.
- 4.11 The council want to continue to work alongside residents and hear residents' views throughout this process. Residents were encouraged to provide details to sign up to the newsletter and although residents had an opportunity to ask any questions this evening, they could email straphs@brent.gov.uk.

5. Key Concerns

- 5.1 Whilst the FAQs on the website provide much wider detail on each of these it was felt that it would be useful to address some of the more general and perhaps most frequent issues that kept arising from our conversations with you across the drop-ins. These are;

Q.1 What will happen to me if the property is redeveloped? (Tenants, leaseholders, freeholders etc)

- Secure council tenants and people in temporary accommodation (subject to the allocation policy review) - all current secure council tenants and people in

temporary accommodation (subject to the allocation policy review) on the estate will be offered a new home on a redesigned St Raphael's Estate which will also have new community facilities and an improved road layout if this option is chosen. Council tenants and people in temporary accommodation (subject to the allocation policy review) on the estate will all have priority to move to other parts of Brent if they prefer. Council tenants and people in temporary accommodation (subject to the allocation policy review) on the estate will be able to stay on the estate either as a council tenant or transferring to a registered social landlord.

- Resident Leaseholder – the Council would work with resident leaseholders on opportunities to stay on St Raphael's through them purchasing a home on St Raphael's including through shared ownership and shared equity where available.
- Non-resident leaseholder – no obligation to rehouse in most circumstances. Leaseholders temporarily absent would be classed as resident. Tenants of non-resident leaseholders - no rehousing obligation but, in some cases, households may be able to make a homelessness application. Advice and assistance in finding a new rented home, usually in the private rented sector.
- Unauthorised occupant (for example, squatter or illegal sub-tenant) - no rehousing obligation but, in some cases, households may be able to make a homelessness application. Advice and assistance in finding a new rented home, usually in the private rented sector.]

Q2. Will residents be moved off the estate?

- This will depend on whether infill (partial redevelopment/refurbishment) or comprehensive redevelopment is chosen by St Raphael's Estate residents and who is affected. Brent Council will develop an offer to tenants and residents, which would explain what will happen should a person's property be identified for redevelopment or refurbishment. The offer will differ depending on a person's tenure.

Q3. We want to remain council tenants

This will depend which improvement option is chosen by St Raphael's Estate residents and who is affected. For a comprehensive redevelopment (option 2) the council's aspirations are:

- the comprehensive renewal of the estate which would not only increase the number of homes, but would also increase the number of social rent/London Affordable Rent homes on St Raphael's.
- the council will continue to be a landlord on St Raphael's, but would need to work with registered social landlords on the estate to deliver the scale of investment required. Therefore, all secure Council tenants will continue to have a secure social rent tenancy, but there will be a mixture of landlords.
- any social tenants transferred to registered social landlords, either staying on St Raphael's or choosing to move elsewhere in Brent, will move across on protected terms and conditions with comparable rents and service charge adjustments.

Q4. How will the council ensure that all residents are consulted?

- An Independent Advisor is set to be appointed and a Tenants/Residents'/ Stakeholders Board set up. The council is absolutely committed to ensuring this is a resident's led project. The council and the Independent Advisor will work to ensure everyone is involved. We will ask that anyone who has a specific need or concern should contact us or the Independent Advisor and we will work with you to ensure that you are able to be involved and are able to play a full role in any ballot about a comprehensive redevelopment. As we will go into on the next

slide we will also be continuing engagement through door-knocking, and regular updates via a newsletter and different communications channels.

Q5. Who can vote? What will the ballot process be?

The eligibility is determined by the GLA, please see the extract below from the Affordable Housing Capital Funding Guide:

- *To ensure resident ballots are consistent across London, IPs do not have discretion to set the voter eligibility criteria for ballots. Ballots must be open to all residents on an existing social housing estate – not just those currently occupying homes that are due to be demolished – that fall into one or more of the following three eligibility criteria:*
- *Social tenants (including those with secure, assured, flexible or introductory tenancies named as a tenant on a tenancy agreement dated on or before the date the Landlord Offer is published – see from paragraph 8.5.11 for further information about the Landlord Offer).*
- *Resident leaseholders or freeholders who have been living in their properties as their only or principal home for at least one year prior to the date the Landlord Offer is published and are named on the lease or freehold title for their property.*
- *Any resident whose principal home is on the estate and who has been on the local authority's housing register for at least one year prior to the date the Landlord Offer is published, irrespective of their current tenure. This would include those residents living in temporary accommodation.*
- We expect the ballot process to take place next year, the details of how the process will run will be made clear to you all nearer the time. The Landlord Offer will be the formal commitment to residents ahead of any ballot and agreed after the views of residents are fully known and the detailed work on the financial viability of both options is complete.

Q6. What is the difference between comprehensive redevelopment and in-fill refurbishment?

- A comprehensive comparison of the two options at this stage can be found within the draft guiding principles document on the website www.brent.gov.uk/straphs.

6. Immediate next steps

- 6.1 In terms of what is next over the next month or so – you have another direct way to get involved by voting on the prospective Independent Advisor at a meeting on 5 March. This is due to take place at 6.30 at Oakington Manor School. The role of the Independent Advisor is going to be a crucial element to resident engagement and we obviously want to make sure you have your choice of advisor in place to benefit you and the council by all working together going forward. It is hoped that after the vote has happened the Independent Advisor will be able to take up their post as early as possible and all can continue to move other aspects of the project forward – including you all each step of the way.
- 6.2 It has been great for everyone to be able to speak face-to-face about the proposals and your concerns and the ways we can re-assure about the councils' intentions. This will be followed up with a series of days of door-knocking with Housing officers going out to speak to you directly on the estate. The council will continue to use any feedback to draw on the proposals going forward. So you should all probably expect to receive a friendly visit from one of our officers on the mixture of dates listed in the presentation.

- 6.3 With the Independent Advisor in place by mid to end of March, the council will work with them and you to begin the process of recruiting to a local Tenants, Residents and Stakeholders Board. This is to further ensure that you are all at the forefront of decision-making and it is the councils' priority that engagement with residents and the local community is meaningful and inclusive.
- 6.4 In early March, the council we will also be inviting expressions of interest from architects. This will then close at the end of March, and the council will formally go out to tender for interested organisations in April to bid to be appointed as the primary architect for the estate. It is anticipated to confirm the appointment to begin design work for the estate in May-June. The council will be looking to ensure you are engaged with this process via the Independent Advisor and tenant/residents/stakeholders board, so that the council is appointing an architect team that everyone is satisfied with.
- 6.5 Another drop-in session in the midst of this will take place on 9 April.
- 6.6 After this, the council will continue with newsletters, keeping the website and social media updated and release a series of videos which build on the guiding principles and FAQs but in a more visual form and help to explain the proposals for the estate via another media.
- 6.7 This is by no means the end of the line, but these are the immediate next steps that you should expect in terms of our consultations with you.

7. Table discussions

- 7.1 This presentation was followed by roundtable discussions hosted by the following;
- Councillor Eleanor Southwood, Lead member for housing
 - Councillor Muhammed Butt, leader of the council
 - Cllr Ernest Ezeajughi, Stonebridge ward councillor
 - Councillor Promise Knight, Stonebridge ward councillor
 - Phil Porter, Strategic Director, Community & Wellbeing
 - Hakeem Osinake, Director of Housing
 - Troy Francis, Head of Housing and Neighbourhoods
 - Jill Rennie, Senior Project manager

Over 70 residents attended this meeting.

The meeting and discussions concluded at 8.20pm.