

ST RAPH'S YOUTH FORUM

Responses to your
questions

April 2020



Working together for the
future of
St Raphael's



Introduction by Cllr Muhammed Butt, Leader of Brent Council

We all want St Raphael's Estate to be a great place to live. We also know that we need to build more good quality, affordable homes to reduce homelessness and shorten the waiting list for council housing in the borough. Over the last 18 months, residents, businesses, stakeholders, industry experts and the council have come together to think about the best way to do this.

It's so important that, as young people living on St Raph's, you have your say on its future. In February 2020 I was privileged to be invited to the L.O.U.D event organised by a team of youth event planners who live on the estate, working with Beyond The Box Consultants. It gave up-and-coming local music talent a platform to shine, while encouraging young people to learn more about the two options for the estate: infill development and redevelopment.

I was truly impressed by the ambition, determination and skill shown by each of the youth event planners in organising this successful event, which over 180 people came along to. I was also presented with a list of your questions about the future of St Raph's, which this booklet answers. To make the responses easier to follow, we have split them into five categories:

- Definitions
- Designs & Delivery
- Landlord Offer
- Resident Ballot
- Infrastructure

I hope you will find the answers helpful, and that you'll be reassured Brent Council is truly committed to making St Raph's a great place to live for everyone. We can only do this if everyone in the community takes part in the discussion along the way, so I wholeheartedly encourage you to keep telling us what you think. Together we can shape a future St Raph's that we can all be proud of.

Yours faithfully,



Councillor Muhammed Butt
Leader of Brent Council

How the council makes decisions

Your council is made up of 63 councillors who are elected by residents in each of the borough’s 21 wards. They are responsible for agreeing the policies and priorities for all services to meet the needs of the people who live and work in Brent. Council officers, who are paid to work for the council, put the services agreed by councillors in place.

Most council meetings are open to the public, and all details about decisions are published on the council’s website. Visit [brent.gov.uk/your-council](https://www.brent.gov.uk/your-council) to find out more

Definitions

Explaining what’s meant by terms like ‘affordable housing’ and ‘overcrowding’, and the streets that are set to be included.

1	<p>Can you define affordable housing/rent?</p>	<p>The term ‘affordable housing’ describes homes that are affordable to households earning the national average income, or below. It’s used to describe several different types of rental home:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Socially rented homes – provided by councils or housing associations, more affordable than renting privately, with longer, more secure tenancies • Affordable rented homes – provided by councils or housing associations, with a higher cost than socially-rented homes normally around 80% of the local market-rate • Intermediate housing – provided by councils or housing associations at less than the local market-rate, including schemes that help people to buy or rent a home that they can afford. Examples include Shared Ownership and Shared Equity schemes.
2	<p>Can you define Brent’s definition of overcrowded homes?</p> <p>What is the maximum number of people that Brent recommends for children sleeping in one bedroom?</p> <p>Would gender affect this, and when will this be decided?</p>	<p>The council has a Housing Allocations Policy, which it uses as set of rules to decide how its limited amount of social housing is shared among residents. Having a policy makes sure that access to social housing is fair for everyone, and that those who need it most get priority. For the future St Raph’s, the requirements of each household will be assessed using the Policy guidelines, to decide what size home they need.</p> <p>The Policy uses the Government’s definition of the minimum amount of space required for a household to be considered overcrowded. A standard calculation is used to work this out, taking into account the age of the occupants, size of rooms and number of bedrooms. When allocating</p>

		<p>separate bedrooms, gender is taken into account where there are multiple children or young people aged 10 or over.</p> <p>Our Housing Allocations Policy is available to read at brent.gov.uk/housing</p>
3	<p>Can you define the areas A, B and C clearly by streets and not on a map?</p>	<p>In December 2019, councillors approved that only the area known as St Raphael's Estate (Area A) would be included within the future masterplans, and that the area known locally as the 'Old Estate' (Areas B and C) would be excluded.</p> <p>The following streets are included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bentham Walk • Besant Way • Hardie Close • Henderson Close • Lansbury Close • Lilburne Walk • Lovett Way • Owen Way • Pitfield Way (1-65 odd numbers only, and 66–120) • Overton Close • Rainborough Close • Tillett Close

Design and delivery

Explaining how new homes will be designed, how long the process will take and how it will work.

4	<p>What is the rough estimate of how long infill or redevelopment would take from start to finish?</p> <p>If redevelopment is the chosen option, will the building work happen in phases, meaning people will not have to be moved off the estate?</p>	<p>How long the building work lasts, from start to finish, will depend on whether infill or redevelopment is favoured by residents. In both cases, it will take around 12 months to initially develop detailed plans and get the approvals needed to begin building work.</p> <p>The infill option is made up of different, individual sites for building homes in various locations across the estate. If residents prefer this option, each site, once approved, would likely take around 18 months to two years to build. However, building work on multiple sites could take place at the same time.</p>
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		<p>The redevelopment option would likely take around 10 years in total, depending on the scale and speed of building work. It would take place in phases so that residents can move into their new home before their previous home is demolished. The aim of delivering the redevelopment masterplan in this way is so that all residents only have to make one move, from their existing home into their new home.</p>
5	<p>Do we have a choice as to where we move to if redevelopment takes place?</p> <p>Specific location as to where people will move to if redevelopment takes place.</p>	<p>If the community favours the redevelopment option, all residents can choose to stay living on the redeveloped estate in a new home, or to move elsewhere.</p> <p>For residents who choose to stay on the redeveloped estate, the phasing plan will decide where and when the moves happen. We will work with residents to support them to move with existing neighbours if they wish. However, this is dependent on the right size home being available.</p> <p>If someone is a council tenant, and they choose to move away from St Raph's, we will support them to find another council home in Brent if a suitable one is available.</p>
6	<p>Can you guarantee that people will only be moved within Brent?</p>	<p>Yes. If the community favours the redevelopment option, our aim is for all residents to only make one move, from their existing home into their new home. If some residents do have to be moved more than once, to help the development continue, they would only be moved within Brent.</p>
7	<p>When will construction begin for infill/redevelopment?</p>	<p>If the decision is made to progress with infill or redevelopment by the end of 2020, we would seek for the necessary approvals to be granted by the end of 2021. Construction would then begin in 2022.</p>
8	<p>Will you guarantee that all building work that starts will be completed, regardless of which party is in power?</p>	<p>As a council we are absolutely committed to delivering the best infill or redevelopment scheme for St Raph's, and we are confident that this and future governments will be supportive of house building and resident supported development. However, some factors like local politics, national government priorities and gaining funding through grants and borrowing will always be outside of our control.</p>

9	Will there be a limit on how many storeys high the development will be?	We know that, from the feedback we have received from residents at co-design events, the community generally prefers buildings less than six storeys high. The final masterplans will reflect this, alongside advice from our own planning team.
10	How many new homes will be flats vs houses (by houses we mean no one living above or below you)?	The number and split of flats, maisonettes and houses will depend on a combination of what residents prefer, what is needed for St Raph's residents and those in housing need across Brent, and the overall cost to the council. Although we cannot say for sure at this stage, we expect there to be around 75% flats plus 25% maisonettes and houses. We're also aiming to build more family homes, with three bedrooms or more, to help reduce overcrowding.
11	Will the new buildings have lifts?	Lifts will be provided for all new buildings above one storey (apart from houses). All new homes will also have step free access.
12	Can you guarantee that the materials used will be safe?	For both infill and redevelopment, all new designs, buildings and materials used for construction on St Raph's will be checked and approved to make sure they meet the most up-to-date national building regulations. These include for structural safety, fire safety, protection from falling, window safety, electrical safety and more. New homes will also use materials with lower environmental impacts.
13	Will the estate have more privacy regarding fences and windows?	When creating design proposals for St Raph's, the architects will need to show how each home has an appropriate level of sound and visual privacy to neighbouring properties, the street and other public spaces. This will include the location, and view from, windows, rooms, gardens and balconies.
14	Do residents get to design the interior of the new homes?	Residents will be able to choose between different options of materials and layout for some spaces within the new homes. This will happen after the ballot, once we know which masterplan is being taken forward.
15	What will be the advantages and disadvantages for Infill or redevelopment?	At the end of 2019 we developed a set of community priorities with St Raph's residents. This set out what the community would want to see delivered as part of any future scheme. The design team then created options for both infill and redevelopment, based on these priorities, which were presented to the community in March 2020. Each option meets the community priorities in differing ways.

		You can have a look at the options by visiting brent.gov.uk/straphs and clicking 'Previous events'.
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The Landlord Offer

The Landlord Offer for households in St Raph's will set out what everyone can expect to gain from either infill or redevelopment, whether they are a council tenant, leaseholder, private tenant or household living in temporary accommodation.

We will send every household a Landlord Offer later in 2020, before residents can vote in the ballot on which option they would like to take forward.

16	<p>Will rent prices stay the same after any redevelopment is finished?</p> <p>Will rent be affordable after redevelopment or infill?</p>	<p>If the community favours the redevelopment option, we will keep rent for council tenants as close to current levels as possible.</p> <p>For infill, rent for new homes will likely be set at London Affordable Rent, which is around 50% of market rent. This is the same as for other new homes built by the council in Brent.</p>
17	<p>What percentage of new homes will be council owned?</p>	<p>We want to build, and own, as many of the new homes as we can afford to.</p> <p>If the community favours the redevelopment option, around half of the new homes built would be for affordable or social rent. We are aiming for as many of these as possible to be owned and managed by the council, with the rest owned and managed by Housing Association partners. The remaining homes would be sold privately, to help pay for the overall redevelopment.</p> <p>For infill, we are currently working out the affordability of the council owning all of the new homes.</p>
18	<p>Would empty nest households be downsized if there were infill/redevelopment?</p>	<p>Earlier in 2020 we undertook a Housing Needs Assessment survey for St Raph's, so we could better understand issues like overcrowding and the need to downsize. We're aware from the results of the survey that some council tenants would like to downsize.</p> <p>If the community favours the redevelopment option, all council tenants will be offered a new home that is the right size for their needs. This means households that are</p>

	Will people currently living in overcrowded homes be given bigger homes (i.e. more bedrooms)?	<p>currently overcrowded will be offered a larger home (see Question 2). We are currently looking at what options we can offer to council tenants who are in homes that are too big for their needs. These options will be included in the Landlord Offer.</p> <p>For infill, there may be a voluntary option for council tenants to downsize – but only if they want to.</p>
19	Will people currently living in flats on the estate be given houses or flats after infill or redevelopment (and/or vice versa)?	If the community favours the redevelopment option, all council tenants will be offered a home that is the right size for their needs. This means that tenants who are overcrowded will be offered a larger home (see Question 2) that could be a house, a maisonette or a flat. If a household would prefer to stay in a house or a flat, we will try to accommodate this but it might not always be possible.
20	If redevelopment is chosen, will there still be the right to buy option for tenants?	<p>The Right to Buy allows most council tenants to buy their council home at a discount.</p> <p>If the community favours the redevelopment option, all council tenants moving to a new council-owned property will retain their secure tenancy and all accompanying rights – including the Right to Buy. However, your discount may be reduced so that it is not below the cost that was spent by the council on building the property.</p>
21	If you are a child/living with your parents now, if your parents die do you have to move out?	<p>If the community favours the redevelopment option, all council tenants moving to a new council-owned home would have the same secure tenancy rights as they do now.</p> <p>If both tenants pass away, their child may be granted the tenancy if they have been living at the property as their principal home. This would be at the discretion of the council and would need to be agreed by its Allocations Panel, which makes sure council housing is distributed fairly.</p> <p>Our Housing Allocations Policy is available to read at brent.gov.uk/housing</p>

22	Will landlords/council/housing association tenancies have their agreement stay the same as they are currently?	If the community favours the redevelopment option, all council tenants moving to a new council-owned home would have the same secure tenancy rights as they do now. We are currently working on the offer for Housing Association tenants and households who rent privately; both will be included in the Landlord Offer.
23	Will infill homes be prioritised for current residents living in overcrowded homes?	We are looking at ways we might be able to offer new homes within an infill scheme to existing council tenants living in homes that are overcrowded. This will also be included in the Landlord Offer.
24	Will older residents get priority for ground floor apartments?	If the community favours the redevelopment option, when allocating new homes we will consider the needs of every household individually to ensure their new home is accessible. Necessary adaptations can also be made to new homes to make sure they are accessible to households with specific needs.
25	Will each of the new homes be given private outdoor space?	Yes. All new houses, maisonettes and flats will have a minimum of five square meters of private outdoor space for 1-2 person homes, with an extra square meter provided for each additional occupant.
26	Those that are 18+ be rehomed alone or with family?	<p>If the community favours the redevelopment option, council tenants who have adult children living within their household can choose to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Move to a new home together with their family, or • Be offered a split tenancy where their adult child is offered a tenancy (home) of their own, as part of the redevelopment.
27	Will there be an endowment fund for the estate to access for this project? A fund for the community to apply to?	<p>Community funds are normally set up once building work begins. St Raphael's Voice, your independent resident board who represent the community, would work with us on this.</p> <p>You can contact your resident board by emailing straphaelsvoice@ppcr.org.uk</p>

28	If redevelopment was to happen what will be the range for number of bedrooms per home (eg.1-3 bedroom/1-4 bedroom)?	For both the infill and redevelopment options, we're aiming to create a mix of one, two, three, four and five bedroom homes.
29	When will families be assessed (size, children and ages), before construction work starts, or after?	Earlier in 2020 we undertook a Housing Needs Assessment survey for St Raph's, so we could understand the makeup of households on the estate. Before each phase of construction begins, we would repeat this survey to make sure we plan for the needs of residents.
30	If you own your property, and redevelopment is chosen but you do not wish to move out, what will happen?	<p>If the community favours the redevelopment option, to deliver the masterplan we will need to buy properties belonging to all private owners and leaseholders within the agreed development area (see question 3 for a list of the streets that are included). This would be done in phases.</p> <p>Ideally, we'll reach an agreement with all homeowners to buy their properties from them. However, if an agreement can't be reached with an individual homeowner within the project timeframe, or at a reasonable cost, in some cases we may apply for a Compulsory Purchase Order. This legal process allows public bodies like councils to take ownership of land where there is a strong public interest to do so.</p>

The Resident Ballot

In 2018 the Mayor of London introduced new rules for councils wanting to apply for funding to help complete major estate regeneration (redevelopment) schemes in London.

Councils now need to show that their plans are supported by existing residents. This is through a public vote, also known as a resident ballot. It's likely to take place for St Raph's later in 2020.

31	<p>How many ballot votes do each household get?</p> <p>Are there age restrictions for those who can vote in the ballot?</p>	<p>The Mayor sets the criteria for who is eligible. You can vote if you live in the agreed development area, are aged 16 or over, and are one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A social tenant, named as a tenant on a tenancy agreement • A resident leaseholder or freeholder, living in your home for at least a year
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A private tenant, who has been on the housing register in Brent for at least year • A household living in temporary accommodation. <p>Eligible residents are entitled to one vote per person. There is no limit to the number of eligible voters per household, provided you meet the criteria above.</p>
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Infrastructure

How green spaces, shops, community facilities, safety and transport links could change for the Future St Raph's.

32	We believe there should be open community spaces/areas on the estate after infill or redevelopment.	<p>Yes, there will be better community spaces created with both options: infill and redevelopment.</p> <p>For infill, this may include extending existing community facilities and refurbishing, for example, the existing retail units and public square on Lilburne Walk.</p> <p>If the community favours the redevelopment option, there is a bigger opportunity to build new dedicated and flexible use community facilities for people of all ages.</p>
33	What is the plan for security on the estate?	<p>Both masterplan options, infill and redevelopment, will improve the safety and security on St Raph's. The design of the new homes will help with this:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By placing entrances and windows on street fronts, and around public spaces, there will be more activity and greater interaction amongst neighbours – reducing the amount of isolated spaces • Entrances to all new houses, maisonettes and flats will be proper front doors of high quality • Shared entrances will be visible from public spaces, be will lit and have suitable security systems in place • The number of homes within each building, and how people circulate within them, will also be taken into account. <p>If the community favours the redevelopment option, there will be more opportunities to increase the</p>

		<p>lighting and other security measures in public spaces and around the park.</p> <p>The design team will also work with the Police, as part of their 'Secured by Design' initiative, to improve the security of buildings and their immediate surroundings to provide safe places to live, work, shop and visit. You can find out more at securedbydesign.com</p>
34	Where would shops be built if redevelopment takes place?	<p>The design team presented initial options for both infill and redevelopment in March 2020. Each of these options showed different ways that new shops and community facilities could be included in the future St Raph's.</p> <p>To see the options, visit brent.gov.uk/straphs and click 'Previous Events'.</p>
35	How will the project affect available land on the estate?	<p>To build the much-needed new homes for the existing St Raph's community, and other Brent residents, we will need to use some of the estate's available land. The amount of land that will be used for new homes is very similar for both the infill and redevelopment options. This has been talked about with the 200 residents who have taken part in design workshops so far. To minimise the loss of good quality open spaces, we will aim to only use land that is currently underused or of less quality.</p>
36	What percentage of green spaces will stay as green spaces?	<p>75% of green spaces will be retained for both the infill and masterplan options.</p>
37	<p>Will transport routes be improved?</p> <p>Will the same transport links be in place if it is redevelopment that is chosen, or will there be new bus routes in place (the 92 bus)?</p>	<p>With more residents moving to the area, there is a clear opportunity to improve transport routes for walking, cycling, public and private transport. The design team, the council and Transport for London have opened conversations about improving routes.</p>
38	Why are the bus routes for certain busses different on event days (e.g. 92&206 during event at Wembley	<p>The bus routes across London are managed by Transport for London, not Brent Council. You can sign up for alerts about Wembley Event Days at brent.gov.uk and plan your journeys using tfl.gov.uk</p>



Contact us

More frequently asked questions are published on our website, or you can get in touch with us direct:

Visit: brent.gov.uk/straphs

Email: straphs@brent.gov.uk

Get **SMS alerts** by texting STRAPHS, followed by your name, to 60002

Or speak to your Community Engagement Officer
Mohamoud Ibrahim on **07776 665 226**