

Resident Steering Group Meeting for Alice Shepherd House & Oak House
27th October 2025
31 Alice Shepherd House and via Zoom

Residents:

Cynthia Owusu (CO)
Jane McGregor (JM)
Sharon Holmes (SH) via zoom
Sasha Manley (SM)
Angela Greenaway (AG)
Alia Begum (AB)

Riverside

Paula Huzjak (PH)

Hill

Daniel Palman (DP)

Resident Advocate

Mike Tyrrell (MT)

ITLA:

Ray Coyle – Open Communities,
(RC) Chair
Murselin Islam– Open
Communities, (MI)

1. Welcome, introductions and apologies.

1.1 RC took the Chair and welcomed attendees.

1.2 Apologies – Isaac Amoah (Riverside).

2. Minutes of RSG meeting of Sept 2025

2.1 These were accepted as a true record of the meeting

3. Matters arising

3.1 (3.5) MI to send example service charges after this meeting – **Completed.**

3.2 (4.1) PH would inform the RSG if any feedback is received from planning meeting – Update sent by email and will be discussed in this meeting.

3.3 (4.4) MI to resend information from consultation event and February RSG presentation to SH – **Completed.**

3.4 (4.7) Website to be promoted via newsletter, emails and consultation events. It is nearly completed and info such as newsletters, the Landlord Offer and other project related information will be uploaded. PH said newsletters are more targeted on specific issues such as Housing Needs, Parking, Ground Floor flats etc. MT pointed out that this information is also stored on the 4 Estate Forum website at www.4estatesforum.org.uk.

3.5 (4.11) Riverside to send out another reminder letter to residents for feedback and option for an appointment to discuss the info presented at July event – PH said the reminder has gone into the current newsletter.

3.6 (4.13) PH agreed to set up a folder with all relevant info and place it at No 31. This is in progress and will be completed soon.

3.7 (5.2) MT will investigate the minutes of meetings at the start of the regeneration process and will report back. MT reported back at resident only meeting on 20 October 2025. PH will request a statement from Paul Handley regarding the adult child offer and the ‘like for like’ information. PH said Paul Handley will attend the November RSG meeting.

Action – Request for Paul Handley to attend November RSG meeting and ask someone from the council to attend as well.

3.8 (5.3) The next newsletter will clarify the term ‘freeze’ re Housing Needs Surveys - perhaps ‘lock’ may be a more appropriate term – **Completed.**

3.9 (5.6) Public meeting requested by AG. PH said Riverside wouldn’t recommend to hold a public meeting as attendances are not good. Riverside would like to propose a specific drop-in session. JM said this could disadvantage tenants as they will only get answers to their own specific questions and not hear other tenants’ questions and Riverside’s responses. After further discussion it was agreed that all questions raised by all tenants will be answered and the information will be made available to the whole community. This information will also be available on the website as well as in the folder 31 ASH.

Actions – Question raised and answers given will be noted and displayed at No 31 and put on the website. Project updates will also to be displayed in the ground floor lobby area and in/opposite. No 31 will have key information displayed.

3.10 (6.3) MT said he will request PH to confirm that every replacement two bed home in phase two will be 2 bed 4 person - as is the case at Tiller Road – MT has requested the information from Riverside and may have to wait till Hill has more design information available.

3.11 (6.4) MT to ask PH for the measurement of homes based on the plan for the Right to Buy, which is more reliable than other sources – MT has requested redacted lease plan from Riverside.

Action – PH will follow up with the issue.

3.12 (6.5) MT to follow up with PH about garage use by non-residents – MT said Riverside confirmed they are carrying out an audit for every garage and cannot respond until the audit is complete. MT said that this was also raised by another St John’s resident at the St John’s Leaseholder Association meeting. CO expressed her

dissatisfaction on how long it is taking to get the information she wanted. PH said garages are managed by the Housing Management Team, not by the Regeneration Team but she has also raised the issues with them.

4. Update for Riverside/Hill

4.1 DP gave a general recap of the process by going through the different design stages from high level design stage 1 to the more detailed levels 2 and 3. Currently the project is at the beginning of Stage 1 which is based on what was presented to tenants at the July consultation. This is very much at the pre-planning application stage and the planners have only seen what residents have were shown in July.

4.2 The concept shows the height of the southern block to 17 storeys. JM said they are not happy with this height and had raised this at the July consultation. AG asked why is it 17 floors? DP said they have submitted a small pack of information which includes a lot of background information, historical information, surroundings, infrastructure, strategy for decanting and moving between phases and the demolition of Oak House.

4.3 The pre-application meeting took place on 31st July and a further meeting was held with highways on 27th August. Various council officers attended the meeting including the senior planning officer people from design, heritage, waste management and highways. There will be series of pre-planning application (pre-app) meetings going forward. There will also be meetings with the Isle of Dogs/South Poplar Community Development Panel and Tower Hamlets Quality Review Panel.

4.4 CO said the design of the scheme needs to be something that residents are familiar with and that site visits need to take place as residents need to give their views on what they like and what they do not like. DP agreed and said Hill will be organising site visits. In terms of design and what the buildings might look like, they will be predominantly brick. Residents can influence the brick tone as well as internal and external features via the various consultation at later stages. DP said they always design the inside first and then the outside.

Action – Hill to organise site visits as soon as possible to show their work and that of the architects.

4.5 RSG members said in terms of the initial concept they have only seen one option which has now been presented to planners and that previously PRP came up with more options. PH explained that the early RSG meeting this year where HTA attended and the fire consultant explained why they have reached the current design and why it has changed. PH disagreed that this wasn't already explained. PH said the PRP concepts were for illustrative purpose only and were at an even earlier stage of concept development, prior to the changes in building regulations that have had a significant impact on design. Tenants said it is not about how the current

concept been developed, it is about residents being presented with just one concept.

4.6 JM said it was never meant to go over 10 storey but now it is 17, that is in favour of the developer and not residents. PH and DP said many factors have influenced the current height including fire regulation changes post the Grenfell, viability issues, the requirement of specific percentages of social housing, residents preference (landings, views), community space, parking, trees and so on. JM and SH asked whether there is a chance of the height being reduced and asked if this has happened on other sites. DP said nothing has been fixed and there are always possibilities that height could change, he has seen schemes where height has gone down. A lot of the time it depends on the borough and the local authority policies. PH reminded that the two concepts in the offer document show alternative heights above 10 storeys and explained neither were fixed and that the concepts were to explain and demonstrate what the regeneration could be like. These were never final designs and needed further development.

Action – DP to find example of schemes where height have been reduced through the process.

4.7 RC asked about the next phase of consultation. DM said it will be in the new year. RSG members raised concerns about the large gaps between consultation events and said Riverside should do more to speed up the progress. PH said it is not all down to Riverside or Hill. Planners can be slow in progressing things as is the case now.

4.8 Discussion followed on the various stages of design and how the whole process of planning works. DP will provide a flow chart to explain the various design stages and estimated time frame for each stage - this will be displayed at No 31 DP gave examples of delays on projects he is working on due to recent changes to staircasing. RSG members said it is a very stressful time for them as we are dealing with their homes and families.

Action – Flow chart to be produced on design and consultation phases.

4.9 MT asked about potential challenges to be faced post planning around Gateway approvals. DP said after gaining planning permission Hill will submit further, more detailed plans which will be examined by the Fire/Building Safety Regulator with a target feedback time of 12 weeks. However, there are backlogs which it is hoped will be cleared by the end of this year.

4.10 MI asked whether tenants' concerns about height has been relayed to the planners. DP and PH said they provided tenants feedback from the July consultation events in an information pack to planners and this would have been included along with the other information gathered at the events.

- 4.11 DP said planners are not opposing the 17-storey height. The reasons for this height were explained to planners including the need for 74 re-provided homes as well as additional affordable housing.
- 4.12 PH said currently there are 5 tenants and 3 leaseholder still at Oak House. One of the families have been offered a move. The other four properties are occupied by Guardians.
- 4.13 RC suggested that as detailed discussion taken place in this meeting about progress and RSG already have received the written feedback about the pre-application meeting, if anyone want to raise further questions they can do so in future meetings as well. RSG agreed.
- 4.14 MI asked whether it would affect the viability of the project if there were a change to emerging local plan of affordable tenure split of 85% social rent and 15% shared ownership . DP said they are already working on the new principles on other projects in the borough.

5. Any other business with Riverside/Hill

- 5.1 RSG members asked for honesty throughout the process, especially on timescales, even if it means negative news for residents but that will at least allow them to plan ahead based on reality and not on rumour and misinformation. PH and DP said they are being transparent throughout these meetings and will be maintaining this approach.

6. Any other business without Riverside/Hill

- 6.1 None

7. Date of next meeting – 24th November.