

THE FUTURE OF THE ST JOHNS ESTATE



Back in 2014 it came to light that the One Housing Group who are the Housing Association that own the Barkantine, Kingsbridge, St Johns and Samuda Estates were considering a project to demolish the estates and replace them with 9,000 new homes. This regeneration proposal at the time was called “Project Stone”.

The picture to the left shows how a redeveloped Barkantine Estate could look under the regeneration proposal.

One Housing Group and Argent have said that the image shown is from a very early research report into whether or not large-scale redevelopment of the estates was possible. In theory, and that this was an exercise to explore one of the options. They have told us that no decisions have been made and they want to engage with all residents and local communities about the options for the four estates.

Despite what some people think, the proposal has not gone away. One Housing Group are working with a Developer called “Argent”. Argent are best known for their work in redeveloping the area around Kings Cross Station. One Housing Group are working with Argent because the Government offer very little money to Housing Associations to develop new homes and they have to build new homes for sale to subsidise the development of new homes for rent.

THE 4 ESTATES FORUM



For the past six months a group of individual residents across the four estates have been meeting together trying to find out more about the proposals. They have made two decisions, firstly to formalise the group by creating the “4 Estates Forum”, and to take on Mike Tyrrell (pictured left) until April 2017 to act as their Independent Advisor. Mike can be contacted at mike@4estatesforum.org.uk.

The first issue the Forum has taken on, is to challenge the assumption from One Housing Group that the four estates on the Island are their most expensive homes to maintain. This is one of the reasons that they have given for the Estates to be redeveloped. As a result with the support of the Council a fresh stock condition survey is about to get underway. This survey will be undertaken in February and March. The results of this will be open for all residents to inspect. We will keep you up to date on its findings and where residents can go to inspect the outcomes.

ROLE OF THE 4 ESTATES FORUM

The constitution of the 4 Estates Forum sets out that its main function is to act as an umbrella group for all residents (whether tenants, leaseholders or freeholders) on the Barkantine, Kingsbridge, St Johns and Samuda Estates on the Isle of Dogs. It provides an opportunity for the residents of the Estates to come together to discuss issues of mutual concern in an open, productive and co-operative manner.

The constitution clearly states that the Forum will not make decisions about the individual estate or blocks as that is a matter for the residents concerned. The Forum will instead encourage all residents to input into the future of their homes.

Currently the Forum meets twice a month on a Wednesday evening at the St Johns Community Centre, and so representatives have to have the time to spare to be able to serve on the 4 Estates Forum.

ELECTION OF REPRESENTATIVES TO THE 4 ESTATES FORUM

The Forum has been meeting informally. It is now time for representatives to the Forum to be elected. The Barkantine, Kingsbridge, St Johns and Samuda Estates will each elect four representatives to the 4 Estates Forum at their meetings in January and February 2017. The St Johns Estate elected their representatives at the open meeting of the Leaseholder Association on Monday 16th January 2017 and the open meeting of the TRA on Monday 23rd January 2017. The meetings elected: Jackie Campbell from Castalia Square; Maureen Mallett from Kingdon House; Maggie Phillips from Kingdon House; and Jill Skeels from Chipka Street

Each of the representatives that are elected to the Forum has to give the following undertakings:

- to use their best endeavours at all times to act in the best interests of the Forum
- to undertake to attend the meetings of the Committee on a regular basis (currently twice a month).
- as far as possible, take into account the views of the residents on the Barkantine, Kingsbridge, St Johns and Samuda Estates on the Isle of Dogs.
- to behave in a courteous manner with all other Members of the Forum, and professional advisers in person, in writing and through social media.

ST JOHN'S TENANTS & RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

The St Johns TRA meets monthly and over the next year it is important that Residents work together to ensure they are properly consulted over these proposals. Please do your best to get to the TRA meetings. They are held on the third Monday of each month (except August & December) at 7.30pm at the St John's Community Centre, Glengall Grove, London E14 3NE. If you would like to discuss any particular TRA issue, please do not hesitate to contact Maggie Phillips on 07910 416868.

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