



District Councils' Network

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Longlands Refurbishment & Rooftop Development Dacorum Borough Council

The local need

Longlands is a block of flats with 26 residents and it was highlighted that the parapet wall was collapsing inwards. We consulted with the tenants at the early stages of concept and found there were lots of areas of refurbishment that they required, including improved bin stores, better rain water system and balconies. Also as Dacorum is in high demand of additional social housing we looked at the block's flat roof, with the view to providing 6 additional homes.

The vision

Dacorum wanted to look at the block including two elements: one maximising the benefit for existing tenants and two, benefit for ever growing housing need. Making sure that while the site had been set up, all areas of the block were upgraded to suit the tenants' needs. Dacorum wanted to make sure that tenants were involved with the decisions right from the start, even before designs were finalised. Several open days were organised before the tender was sent out for procurement.

The challenge

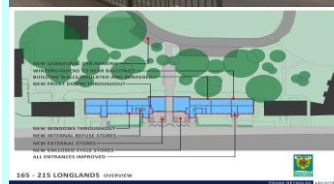
There were several challenges associated with this project. We had to do all encompassing preliminary tests to check the building could take the extra load and services before involving the design team and residents. Housing worked closely with the planners early on, to make sure the design was favourable, as this is an iconic block. Dacorum wanted to make sure the residents felt supported and understood all the stages of the project as carrying out external wall insulation, changing of doors and windows amongst other items could cause disruption. This is being achieved by key milestone open days, regular newsletters, updates in communal notice boards and a Resident Liaison Officer available on a daily basis.

The results

The block of flats is central to the area of Adeyfield. The Queen opened the square just prior to her coronation. It was looking tired and was in need of modernising. The design of internal rain water pipes, cantilver balconies and a poor roof covering was causing damp and water ingress to many flats.



All these issues as well as tenants wish list was taken into consideration and will produce a block with no maintenance for many years, reduced fuel bills, damp and condensation problems.



This is a pilot scheme and when completed successfully the result will be a possibility to maximise the area in Dacorum for future housing needs with no land costs, all in improving the living conditions of existing tenants

Where next?

The project is due to be finished early November 2015 and will be reviewed as a whole in terms of budget, programme, quality and benefits to existing and future tenants. If found favourable other blocks within the borough will be identified, looking at the two elements, of existing tenant refurbishment needs and the feasibility of building on the flat roofs.

For more information >>

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