At a meeting on Tuesday 29 November 2016, Havering Council’s Interim Director of Housing, Neil Stubbings, briefed residents on the latest progress with the Housing Regeneration Programme.

He explained that Demolition Notices were served on Monday 14 November 2016.

Mr Stubbings said: “These are legal notices we must issue so that you all know we plan to regenerate the estate and remain in force for at least seven years.

“That means we must start work on site before November 2023 and our current aim is to be on site in 2019.

“We are currently bringing together a team of experts to help us choose the right development partner to be part of a Joint Venture where the Council and the developer set up a separate organisation to do the development work.

“We aim to have that development partner in place by late 2017 and the Joint Venture in place during 2018.

“A few people have already moved from the estate – some leaseholders are in the process of selling their property and one or two Council tenants have also moved already.

“We will be starting the decant process in earnest from Tuesday 17 January 2017.

“We will be using direct offers as empty properties will first be checked against people wanting to move from the regeneration areas before they are placed on the system for general bidding.

“This means that you will have first choice of properties which become vacant and which match your housing needs.

“You will generally be expected to move within a couple of weeks of accepting a reasonable offer that meets your requirements.”

More information: www.havering.gov.uk/OldchurchGardens

Decant Assessment Forms

Every Council tenant who has had a one-to-one meeting about their housing needs has been sent two copies of the Decant Assessment Form which summarises the information given to us during that one-to-one meeting.

Residents are asked to carefully check the accuracy of the information on the form as this will be used to identify suitable properties to offer them for their new home while the regeneration takes place.

If the information is accurate, tenants should sign, date and return one copy of the form to us.

If tenants wish to amend any of the information, they should make the changes on the form and return it to us so we can amend our records and issue a new form for them to agree, sign and return.

It is very important that tenants return this form as soon as possible as we will not start considering you for moving to a new home until we have received the form back from you.

The forms will help us assess housing needs which will be used when empty properties become available so we can see if they match tenant’s requirements.

Tenants are asked to let us know of any changes so that we always have the latest available information about their housing needs so we can make the best possible match.

If tenants have any questions about this form please contact John Bloss john.bloss@havering.gov.uk
Next meeting
If you want to know more about the proposals for Oldchurch Gardens, please drop in to see us between 7.45pm and 8.45pm on Tuesday 21 February 2017 at Romford YMCA, Rush Green Road, Romford RM7 0PH.

Local Lettings Plan
The Local Lettings Plan has been published on the Council’s website and provides detailed information on what residents can expect as part of the regeneration process.

A summary of the main points for:
• Secure Council tenants
• Leaseholders
• Private sector tenants
will be published on the website when available.

A summary of the main points for Waterloo Estate residents is being prepared and will be published when available.

More information: www.havering.gov.uk/HousingRegeneration

Your questions answered

Q1 I’m with a Private Sector Landlord (PSL) – what happens to me?
A1 The Council has no legal duty to house you and your landlord will be required to sell the property with vacant possession. We are able to provide advice and support as you look for a new home in the private sector. You will be entitled to Disturbance Payments.

Q2 What will the Council charge in rent for the new homes?
A2 The rent is calculated based on a Government formula and can’t be calculated until floor sizes and other dimensions are known. If you are currently on a Social Rent you will remain on a Social Rent.

Q3 New doors have been fitted since we moved our furniture in and they are narrower so the bigger items won’t go through.
A3 We’ll discuss this with the removals company and find a solution.

Q4 If we don’t like the two reasonable offers what happens then?
A4 If you have kept us up-to-date with your housing needs we are confident the offers you receive will be reasonable and will match your needs. If they don’t we will discuss with you how to proceed.

Independent help available
Havering Council has contracted TPAS to provide free, independent help and advice to individual tenants.

TPAS will provide independent advice to any resident who needs help. They will support you and work on your behalf to ensure that you are fully informed. For more information on their approach, role and standards that you can expect from TPAS please look at their Service Charter on www.havering.gov.uk/TPAShelp

How to contact TPAS
Email TPAS at: haveringindep@tpas.org.uk
Phone TPAS on the Independent Advisor Freephone on: 0800 731 1619
(if you are calling from a landline the call is totally free to you but if you are using a mobile phone tell TPAS straight away and they will call you right back)

Who can I contact?
If you have a question about the consultation please email denise.kelly@havering.gov.uk if you are a Council tenant or ian.nolan@havering.gov.uk if you are a leaseholder of freeholder.

General enquiries www.havering.gov.uk/askhousing
If you do not have access to email you can leave a voicemail for Denise Kelly on 01708 434164.

Keeping in Touch
You can keep in touch with the latest news and information from Housing Services.

Go to www.havering.gov.uk/enews and choose At the Heart online.

There is also information available about this scheme at www.havering.gov.uk/OldchurchGardens
and about the housing regeneration proposals at www.havering.gov.uk/HousingRegeneration
You can follow us on Twitter @LBHHousing
You can also ‘Like’ us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/HaveringHousing