

Bellevue Mansions

Tpas Independent Tenant and Resident Advice for Bellevue Mansions

Countdown to decision time on Bellevue Mansions: what you need to know

This is the third newsletter from Tpas, your Independent Resident Advisor for the Bellevue Mansions regeneration project.

As you know, Hyde intend to ballot residents on its proposal to regenerate the estate. This will involve the demolition of your existing home. A majority of residents eligible to vote have to vote in favour of the proposals for them to go ahead.

The Mayor of London's guidelines which govern regeneration proposals in London, say that a social landlord must appoint an Independent Resident Advisor to work on the project. Our role is to give independent advice to all residents on an individual and collective basis, advise resident representatives as they discuss proposals with the landlord and check all the information going to residents is accurate and not misleading.



We have no view on whether residents should vote yes or no in relation to estate regeneration, but we want to ensure residents vote on the basis of accurate information on what a yes or no vote means for them.

In this newsletter we want to give people our view on;

- Where we are in the process and what has happened so far
- What residents we have spoken to have told us
- What we think people want and need to know in relation to the process

It is likely there will be a vote on the regeneration proposal in late May/early June of this year and we think it's important we outline the issues that people need to be thinking about now.

Where the regeneration process it up to

For the regeneration to go ahead i.e. the demolition of the existing buildings and construction of new ones, there has to be a majority vote by Bellevue Mansions residents in favour of it.

Currently we are in the consultation phase of the project prior to the ballot phase. This phase and the ballot process are governed by the guidance drawn up by the Mayor of London;

These regulations say that people need to vote on specific proposals laid out in a proposal document, also known as the landlord's offer. They have to vote **Yes** or **No** to these proposals and there are no other options.

The proposal document must list;

- The proposed design of the newly regenerated estate, including the proposed number of new properties to be built.
- The proposals for rehousing residents and the support they will receive from Hyde to do this
- The compensation residents will receive for the loss of their home and separately to cover the costs of moving
- How the ballot will be conducted, who can vote and how the ballot will be administered.
- The proposal that residents of Bellevue Mansions will be asked to vote on.

The Mayor of London's guidance **Better Homes for Local People** says that when the proposal document is delivered to everyone then people should have at least three weeks to read it and the ballot will be held over the following three weeks.

At the moment, our estimate is that the proposal document will be produced in early to mid-May and the voting will take place in late May to mid to late June 2025. This is just our estimate though.

Where are we currently and what is happening next?

The resident steering group has been discussing the estate designs based on the feedback received from consultation with other Bellevue residents and work the architects have done. Hyde are looking to identify the option they want to take to residents in the proposal document by mid-March 2025 after discussions with the steering group and a review of the financial viability of the proposals.

The steering group have also been continuing to discuss other elements of the proposal document and in particular the rehousing and compensation options for residents. Hyde now plan to talk more widely to tenants and leaseholder on their proposals and ask residents what they would like to see within these.

This feedback will be looked at with the steering group before the proposal document people will vote on is finalised.

Some background on the Resident Steering Group

Following Hyde appointing architects to help with the design proposals, a resident steering group was set up which was made up of tenants and leaseholders who had expressed an interest in joining following requests from Hyde. It has an agreed terms of reference and code of conduct.



The aim of the steering group is to discuss all the main elements of the regeneration proposal that residents will be asked to vote on in late May/early June.

The steering group was set up in January 2024 and has met roughly once a month since August 2024 and up until November, has mainly focused on the design proposals for the estate and what people should be consulted on.

The steering group also had a meeting with the Hyde Asset Management Team in October 2024 to understand their plans to maintain and improve the building in the event of residents voting against the proposals. It has also met with Tpas separately, with only resident representatives present to discuss good practice and common issues to help them in the discussions with Hyde.

The steering group has recently been discussing other issues related to the landlord proposal around rehousing, compensation and the ballot in its meetings.

The resident steering group is made up of both tenants and leaseholders in roughly equal proportion. It isn't made up of residents who only support regeneration proposals.

Very much like the residents of Bellevue Mansions themselves, some people on the steering group are not in favour of regeneration/demolition, some are and the rest are not sure.

However, this does not matter too much as how all residents vote in the ballot itself will determine the choice about whether the landlord's proposals will go ahead.

The steering group's function is to act in the interests of all residents and make sure the proposals that Hyde put forward to Bellevue Mansions residents to vote on are fair, workable, represent good practice, ensure resident rights are protected and meet the expectations of the GLA guidelines.

It's not too late to get involved in the process

There has been a lot of information given to residents, but a lot of people have yet to engage with Hyde or Tpas.

This is not unusual in our experience, as people often find what's proposed confusing and sometimes don't get involved straight away.

But as the ballot date comes nearer, people do tend to get more involved and want to know what's going on and how it affects them.

In our view we think everyone who is affected on the Bellevue Mansions estate should now try to get involved as much as they can, start to look at the material they are sent and ask Hyde and/or Tpas about anything they are unsure about.



Why is it important to get involved and what are the issues?

It's important that every tenant understands how the proposed regeneration may affect them. In terms of compensation, where they might be moved to, what size home would they get, could their



adult children be able to get a separate home, what are the designs for the newly redeveloped estate and would they like to live there?

Leaseholders also need to understand what compensation they may get for their home and how the process will work, what support they will get from Hyde to purchase another home, how long could they remain in their property, how would they be compensated for home moving costs and what opportunities do they have to buy a newly built home on the estate?

Equally, tenants and leaseholders need to think about what happens if there is a no vote. What building improvements are planned? Will this be disruptive? What will the quality of life be in this building and for leaseholders in particular, what cost are they looking at for improvement works to Bellevue Mansions if residents vote against the proposals?

The above are just some of the things residents need to think about and make sure that they understand them.

How you can influence the proposals and why you might want to

Another thing to be aware of is that as you read this, Hyde are looking at refining the proposal document and the offer they make to residents as part of this. To do this they will be asking residents what they would like to see as part of the proposals via focus groups, surveys and other consultation. So we would advise people to get involved in any consultation you are invited to participate in as it's a good chance to influence what is proposed.

Remember even if you disagree with the plans to regenerate Bellevue Mansions and currently plan to vote no, if the majority of residents vote yes then you will still be affected by the proposals. So, we would advise people to give their views on their content to influence what is finally offered to residents.



More information that Hyde need to collect from residents

For the Hyde team to plan most effectively for your circumstances and a possible move, they need as much information from you as possible. They have been trying to collect this information from people for the past year with limited success.

We understand Hyde will be knocking on residents' doors again in the run up to the ballot. Speaking to Hyde about your personal circumstances will not affect the ballot result in anyway, but it might help Hyde plan better for your needs in the event of a yes vote. So we would strongly advise people to talk to them.

What do I need to know and what questions should I ask?

Below are some examples of the kinds of things you may want to ask. It's not a full list and you may have others, but we thought the ones we have set out here may get people thinking.

If you are a tenant

- If I have to move, what size property am I entitled to?
- Is there a difference between temporary and permanent housing if I have to move?



- Can I just move permanently rather than move to a temporary home?
- What is my right to return to Bellevue Mansions?
- What size will the new build homes be?
- What compensation will I be entitled to?
- Will the costs of my home move be covered?
- How long will it be before I have to move if it's a yes vote?
- When are the newly-built properties likely to be completed?
- I'm overcrowded now so if I have to move, will I be given a property that is the right size for me and my family?
- I have more rooms than I need at the moment, so will I be housed in a home with the same number of bedrooms?
- I have some mobility problems and adaptations in my home, will this be taken into account when I move?
- Can my adult children be offered a home of their own? If they can what does that mean for me?

If you are a leaseholder

- Do I have to move home if there is a vote in favour of the proposals?
- What price will I be offered by Hyde for my home? How will it be valued?
- Who does the valuation of my home? Do I have to accept this?
- Can I buy one of the new-build properties on the estate?
- What help will Hyde give me to find a new home?
- Who will pay for my legal fees if I have to move home?
- If I sell my home to Hyde, when will I have to move home?
- Can my home be compulsory purchased?
- What compensation am I entitled to if I have to move home?

You will find the answers to many of these questions in this newsletter if you read it all. However, we have put a complete list of answers on our website which is <https://www.tpas.org.uk/our-projects/hyde-housing-belle-vue-mansions-itra>

Contacting Tpas

As always, we are available for people to contact us either by our freephone number, email or website. You can also ring Hyde and tell them you would like us to contact you.

We are quite happy to call you, do a skype or zoom meeting or come and see you in your home or if you prefer just to correspond via email.

However we end up communicating with each other, we are quite happy to answer any questions you have, take you through the ballot process, talk about the proposal document and advise about how we think the proposals may affect you and what you need to know. We are also happy to talk to you about any concerns or issues you have and talk to Hyde about these on your behalf if you wish.

We will also be present at most consultation events or advice drop-ins that Hyde may run. We are also considering running some drop-in sessions near to the time of the ballot.



We would just like to repeat that we really do have no view about whether people vote for the proposals or not. All we want to ensure is that residents are well informed about what the proposals mean for them when they cast their vote.

Our contact details are:

Freephone: 0800 731 1619

Email: bellevueresidentadvisor@tpas.org.uk

Web: <https://www.tpas.org.uk/our-projects/hyde-housing-belle-vue-mansions-itra>

What people told us when we spoke to them last year

As we mentioned, after doing an initial door knock in May of last year, we then did a series of one-to-one interviews with people, mainly over the phone going from mid-August to early October. However, we would like to stress we think we only spoke to about 30% of residents so we would not claim to have captured everyone's views.

Residents' concerns

The first thing that came across was that people were quite shocked about the proposals and were not sure what to make of them. They were not happy with Hyde's current service or the maintenance of their properties and their current condition.

Residents' homes

Despite this, some people really liked the properties they were in because of their size, space and location. Others were not as happy due to being overcrowded or just because of the size of their homes. Generally though, people really liked living in Bellevue Mansions due to location and sense of space around it. There were mixed feelings about community safety though in terms of the shared public areas. We also heard that there is a great sense of community at Bellevue Mansions and a worry this would be lost.

What people wanted to know

Once we got past people's general concerns about the prospect of demolition, what came across was that people really wanted to know how the regeneration proposals would affect them and when the process would happen.

The questions we got were on a wide range of matters, such as if people could move locally, the type of housing they would be offered and its size, what choice would they have, their rights as tenants.



and leaseholders, housing for adult children, compensation, how long it would take and how the ballot worked along with a number of other related questions, some quite specific to their circumstances.

There were some differences between the questions tenants and leaseholders asked due to their different rights in this situation and what they may be offered. But the main point that we found was that everyone wanted to understand what the proposals meant for them.

So, we think there is an appetite from all residents for as much information as possible and a lot of people wanted to know how their specific circumstances need to be considered.

The importance of Hyde giving residents clear information.

Hyde need to make sure that they make as much information available to people as possible in the time between now and the ballot. Hyde will have to make sure they are available to answer any questions residents have and get their feedback on proposals both individually and at consultation events.

The importance of residents giving Hyde feedback and asking them questions.

We think that all Bellevue Mansions residents need to actively try to engage with the process in terms of the information received and take the opportunity to talk to the Hyde team or us (or both) about their circumstances and give them feedback about what they want to see.

Resident opinion on the proposals and what we found.

We have heard some residents say to us that everyone living at Bellevue Mansions is against the proposals. However, this was not our experience after talking to people on the estate over quite a long period now. From our point of view, the actual situation is that some people are dead set against the regeneration proposals, some are very supportive and there are a significant group of people who are unsure of what to think and really want more information as well as see some more definite proposals.

What is true about regeneration at Bellevue Mansions?

Things that are not correct.

As we have talked to people over the last few months, a number are not sure about what will happen after the vote and their rights. Some residents have also been told things that are not correct particularly concerning how tenants will be affected. This is quite concerning for us as the independent advisor, as we want people to cast their vote on the ballot based on an accurate view of the facts and how they may be affected.

Below is an example of the kinds of things we have heard.



Tenants of Bellevue will;

- Be made homeless
- Be forced to move out of London
- Will not be able to live locally
- Have to move to another landlord
- Lose their tenancy rights/have less rights

None of this is correct and much of it is covered by the legal rights people have and will be in the proposal document.

Tenants' rights

By law, if you are a tenant of a social landlord and your home is going to be demolished, your landlord has to offer you suitable alternative accommodation.

A suitable home

This means a home that meets your needs in terms of size and bedrooms in an area that is sufficiently local to suit your family circumstances such as work, family and care responsibilities. So, the expectation here is that a household will be moved to a place that is local enough to do that.



The same tenancy rights

Any new tenancy you are given for a new home must be the same in terms of the rights you have now, whether you were given your tenancy by Lambeth Council or by Hyde. You will retain the Right-to-Buy or Right to Acquire if you already have it and your rights in terms of passing on the tenancy to family members remain unchanged. Because other landlords cannot guarantee these terms then you cannot be made to move to another landlord.

Rent

In terms of your rent, the law says that it should be affordable in relation to your circumstances, but it does not say it has to be the same. So, what this usually means it should be at a social rent level for the new property you were given. However, if this rent was significantly higher than your old rent then this may be looked at.

Compensation

Tenants should receive compensation for both the loss of their home and separately to this, the cost of moving home.

Residents should look out for is what is promised in the offer document itself as this will set out what the landlord is offering.



Things to look for in the landlord proposal

How many rooms will I be offered?

The first thing to note is that suitable alternative accommodation does not mean a right to like-for-like accommodation. So for example, if you are currently living in a four bedroom property, but only you, your partner and one child is living there you may only be entitled to be offered a two bedroom property. So you need to see what the landlord is offering in their proposal. It's unusual for landlords to offer like-for-like moves to its tenants but they sometimes offer one bedroom above what the tenant is legally entitled to if they are under-occupying their current property or they can offer compensation for the loss of rooms as an alternative. So you need to look closely at the landlord offer you are asked to vote on.

Where will I be rehoused?

The other important thing to look for in the landlord offer is what promises the landlord are making about where you will be rehoused. This depends on how many properties the landlord has in the local area and what they mean by local, so again it's important to look at what the landlord means by local and how near this would be to where you live now.

Moving off the estate permanently and temporary accommodation.

Some residents are not sure if they could move off the estate permanently.

You can opt to have a permanent move to another property off the estate (but still locally) or choose to exercise your 'right-to-return' and move to a newly built property on your old estate.

If you choose to move to a newly built property, you will be offered temporary accommodation in the meantime.

If you are offered temporary accommodation, it still must be suitable but it's less likely you will be given anything larger than what you need for your family to be properly housed. If you are moving permanently, you may be.

Finally, some people move temporarily intending to move to a newly built property on the old estate and then find they like their new home and don't want to move. Usually, the landlord allows them to remain in their new home permanently (unless there is some particular circumstance about that property that doesn't allow this).

So again, it's important to look at what Hyde offers in the proposal document.

Choice on the offer of a home.

Some people also think that they have to take the home they are offered by the landlord.

This is a bit more of a grey area legally but usually people don't have to take the first property the landlord offers that is deemed suitable. Hyde have indicated that tenants will be made two offers if moving on a temporary basis and four if the move is permanent. This is an important thing to look at in Hydes's proposal document.

Rent levels; will I pay the same?

People also are not sure what the new rent will be when they move.

Usually if people move temporarily, their rent is kept the same as their existing rent. When they move to the newly built property, it may go up but it will still be a social rent. Any big difference in a new rent level



is usually something that is looked at by the landlord as legislation states that the home should be affordable for the tenant. If a tenant moves permanently off the estate to another property, then their rent may rise if the rent for that property is higher than their original rent.

Why is this important?

The point of the above section is to show that residents do have considerable rights in a regeneration process like this and some of the rumours we have heard are simply not true.

However, we are also trying to make the point that even though people have rights, it is still very important to look at what Hyde are offering and for residents to make sure they understand what is being offered and talk to Hyde or ourselves if they are not sure.

Other questions we have been asked

Can we trust the promises in the landlord proposal document?

The other thing we have been asked is how can people trust Hyde to fulfil what it promises in the proposal document?

There is no absolute guarantee on this but in the Mayor of London's guidance, *Better Homes for Local People*, landlords are required to deliver on what it has promised in all areas of the proposal document.

There is some room for manoeuvre for landlords, but not much. This is checked regularly by the GLA. If the landlord is found not to be delivering on what it has promised, then the GLA will ask for the money they have contributed to the scheme to be returned. So we think this does offer a strong degree of confidence for residents.



Will the Ballot be going ahead and how does it work?

The ballot on regeneration will be going ahead this year (May or June is the best current estimate) and all eligible residents will be asked to vote.

The rules also say the outcome is decided by a simple majority of people who vote. **So, if you want to influence the outcome of what's decided, you must vote.**

If you don't vote then you are leaving the decision about what happens to Bellevue Mansions and your home to people who do.



We have spoken to some people who have said they do not want to take part in the ballot or are not interested. This is of course their right, but we don't advise not voting as this will directly influence what happens to your home in the future.



The ballot itself will be handled from start to finish by an independent ballot management company who are specialists in handling ballots, for example trade union or other regulated public votes.

The ballot forms will go directly to them to be counted. Hyde will not receive the votes, will have no control over counting of the votes or the determination of the results.

What happens if there is a no vote on regeneration plans?

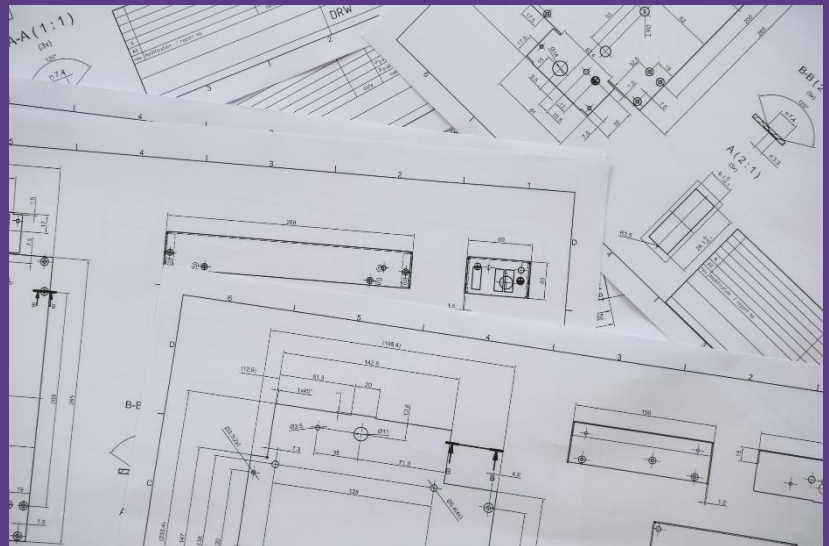
One question that residents and the resident steering group have asked Hyde is what happens if there is a no vote and the regeneration plans are not carried forward by Hyde?

If there is a no vote, then Hyde will simply follow a long-term programme of maintenance and improvements to Bellevue Mansions as it would do with other properties it manages.

This will mean that over time they will look at addressing any repair issues with the building that are causing problems, replace the windows, kitchens and bathrooms when they are due for replacement and try to improve the heating and thermal efficiency of the building as much as they can.

Due to the age of the buildings there is a limit to how much the comfort and thermal performance can be improved. Equally there are basic standards of building maintenance, condition and thermal performance Hyde must meet. Due to stricter environmental regulations Hyde must also work to ensure that the building is as energy efficient as possible.

The upshot of all this is that residents of Bellevue Mansions will see several improvement works being carried out over the next 10 to 20 years which may be quite disruptive to tenants and will also result in leaseholders having to pay considerable sums towards these works. Residents will also be consulted on these works and be involved in their implementation.



This information is based on the briefing and Information presented to the resident steering group by the Hyde Asset management team In October 2024. It was agreed at the steering group that Hyde will provide a summary of this information to all Bellevue Mansions residents before the ballot takes place. This is so that they can understand what will happen if there is a vote against the regeneration proposals.

Could there be another ballot if there is a no vote?

This question was asked by the steering group to discuss what would happen if there was a No vote in the ballot. The Hyde project team said that they did not have any plans to do a second ballot if there was a no vote. However, they said that this would ultimately be a decision for the Hyde leadership team.



Final thoughts

Shortly after you read this newsletter, we are anticipating that you will be receiving more information from Hyde and they will be conducting more consultation events.

In May you should receive Hyde's proposals and then be asked to vote on them.

So, in anticipation of this, we wanted to give you our view on what been happening, where we are in the process and most importantly give you an idea of the sort of issues we think are important.

When the proposal document comes out, we will do another newsletter giving our views on the this. In the meantime, we will continue working to ensure residents have access to accurate information, can get involved and that their interests and views are being taken account of.

We are happy to meet with individual residents to discuss exactly how the proposals affect you and what they mean in terms of the options you have and answer any other questions you have about the proposals. This could be via phone, Zoom or Skype, etc. or face-to-face at your home.

If you want to speak to us to get independent advice on anything at all related to the Bellevue Mansions regeneration, please just get in touch using the details below:

Your Independent Advisors



Dave Smethurst



Matthew Wicks

You can get in touch with us in the following ways:

Freephone:

0800 731 1619

Email:

bellevueresidentadvisor@tpas.org.uk

Web:

<https://www.tpas.org.uk/our-projects/hyde-housing-belle-vue-mansions-itra>

