

Blackbird Leys Redevelopment – November 2023 Community Update

You may be aware that a planning application for the redevelopment of Blackbird Leys was approved by Oxford City councillors in August 2023.

The regeneration is being delivered by not-for-profit housing association Peabody in partnership with Oxford City Council. The plans will create 294 new affordable homes, as well as a new Community Centre, shops, landscaped green and open space and other community benefits. This phase focuses on the District Centre and land between Knights Road and the Kassam Stadium.

Since the application was approved, we've been working with planners to meet the requirements that will allow construction to start on site soon.

This newsletter provides **details about the work that is now due to begin**, and information about ongoing work to design a **new and improved Community Centre for Blackbird Leys**.

As work begins, we'll continue to write regularly to the community and provide updates. You can also visit the Blackbird Leys website for more information: www.blackbirdleys.co.uk.



Above: Architect's visualisation of the proposed Blackbird Leys District Centre, showing new landscaped public spaces, new homes and shops in Block A, a Community Centre to the back (still to be designed) and the proposed redeveloped Church of the Holy Family (not part of this scheme).

On-site early works

Subject to final details being agreed, we expect early work will start on site in the coming weeks.

Our contractor, Hill, will be preparing the site and putting up hoarding to secure the work area at the Community Centre and Evenlode Tower parking and garages. Once the site is set up, work will start, beginning with the demolition of the garages next to Evenlode Tower. The demolition of the existing Community Centre is expected to take place early in 2024.

Hill will soon be writing directly to those people who live in the area that is closest to the work site to provide further information. Oxford City Council will write directly to residents of Evenlode Tower about the changes to parking arrangements and accessing of stores.

Early next year we will set out the phasing plan for the construction work, which will include the estimated timings for when construction work will be carried out in different parts of area.

There will also be a 'Meet the Builder' event taking place in January 2024 at which the local community will be able to learn more about the construction process and ask the project team questions. We will write to residents to provide further information about this.

If you have any queries relating to the construction work, you can contact Hill at residents@hill.co.uk or on 0800 032 6760.

Community Centre – working with residents to shape the plans

Since August, we have been working with local communities to understand their views about the new Blackbird Leys Community Centre and the public space surrounding it.

The planning consent for the Community Centre and surrounding public open space is in 'outline', meaning that there are further opportunities to influence the plans. The new centre will be the heart of the scheme – so we want the community to be involved in developing the design with us.

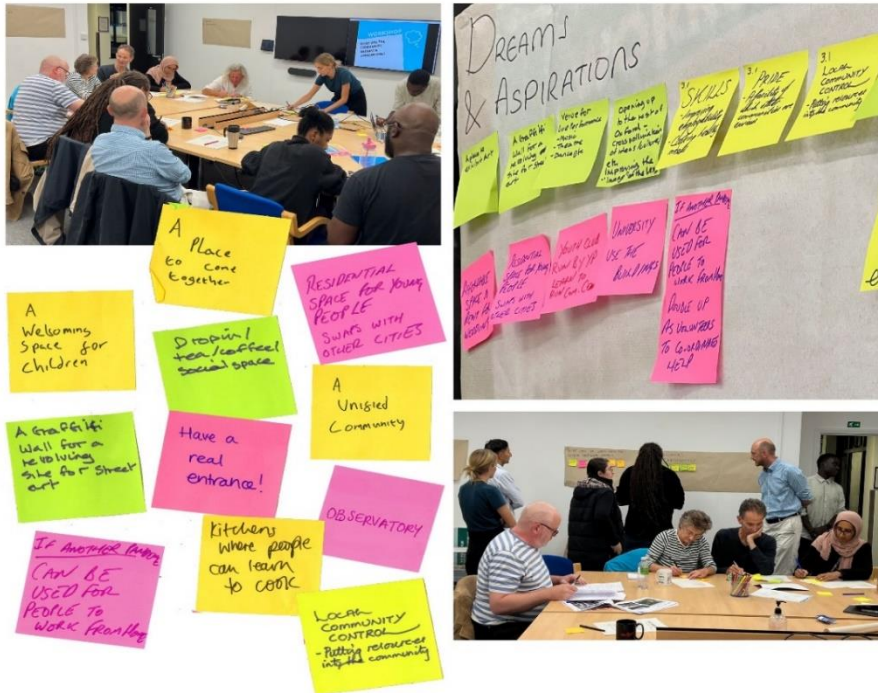
Over the past few months, we've been meeting with key local stakeholders, users of the existing centre, and the wider community to feed into our vision and emerging designs. We have also set up the Leys Community Review Panel made up of local residents, which is continuing to meet with the project team to communicate the community's interests to the design team.

We're currently working on initial design ideas, and are hosting further public events to hear your thoughts on those. Below are some upcoming events for the community to come together, see what the design teams are working on, and share ideas:

Transition by Design and Oxford City Council will be in **the Leys and at the Community Larder on various Wednesdays between 12pm-2pm at the Leys Pools and Leisure Centre** in Blackbird Leys, beginning Wednesday 29th November

Friday 8th December, 5pm-8pm: Leys festive "Meet Santa" Christmas event at the Leys Pools and Leisure Centre, Blackbird Leys

Saturday 9th December, 10am-1pm: Leys festive "Meet Santa" Christmas event at the Leys Pools and Leisure Centre, Blackbird Leys



Above: Photos of community engagement workshops for the Blackbird Leys Community Centre and Public Space project. Photos by Transition by Design.

There will be more opportunities to have your say before a planning application for the Community Centre is submitted.

You can also fill out Transition by Design's online form to share your thoughts and ideas. This can be accessed via the Blackbird Leys website (www.blackbirdleys.co.uk). To contact Transition by Design, please email bblcommunityengagement@transitionbydesign.org.

We plan to submit our detailed planning application for the Community Centre in **spring 2024**.

Community skills, employment and opportunities

Are you interested in working on the Blackbird Leys redevelopment project or learning skills in construction? We will soon be setting out how local people can access these opportunities.

We're also planning for the community to be involved in artwork for the hoarding around construction areas.

We'll share more details in our next community update, and you can contact us using the details below.

Further information

Thank you for reading this edition of the Blackbird Leys newsletter.

If you have any queries or would like further information about the Blackbird Leys redevelopment, please contact Peabody via joanne.hoy@peabody.org.uk, with 'Blackbird Leys' in the subject field. You can also visit the Blackbird Leys website for more information: www.blackbirdleys.co.uk

If you have any questions about the construction works, you can contact Hill at residents@hill.co.uk or on 0800 032 6760.