

Blackbird Leys Redevelopment March 2024 Community Newsletter

Welcome to the latest Blackbird Leys community update. You may have seen construction starting at the District Centre and Knights Road since the end of 2023.

Work has now begun to deliver 294 new affordable homes, along with retail areas, community facilities, new green spaces and improved roads and cycle routes to Blackbird Leys.

Peabody, working in partnership with Oxford City Council, received approval for the redevelopment of Blackbird Leys from the council’s planning committee in August. Since formal planning permission was granted, our contractor Hill has been busy with work across the sites.

This newsletter provides more information on construction that has taken place so far, and details about what is next for the redevelopment.

Since our last newsletter, we have hosted many community events to talk with residents about the programme of work and our evolving designs for the new Community Centre. At these events, our aim has been to support and encourage as much community involvement as possible. We want to carry out this transformation with the people of Blackbird Leys.

As work continues, we will continue to write regularly to the community to provide updates. Keep an eye out for posters on noticeboards, and you can also visit the Blackbird Leys website for more information: blackbirdleys.co.uk

Construction update

Over the past few months, early building work by Hill has included:

December to March	
<i>District Centre</i>	<i>Knights Road</i>
Putting up hoarding	Installing fencing
Demolishing garages near Evenlode Tower	Soil stripping (removing the top layers of soil)
Completing temporary access to Blackbird Leys Adventure Playground	Starting piling (creating deep foundations)
Starting piling (creating deep foundations) for Block D, near Evenlode Tower	
Demolition and preparing materials at Block A near Windrush Tower	
Demolition of the Community Centre	

A lot more is expected for the coming months. Some of this activity is set out below.

April and May	
<i>District Centre</i>	<i>Knights Road</i>
Preparing for piling work to start at Block A	Continuing piling work
The tower crane will be put in place at Block D	Laying new roads and drainage
Construction of the concrete frame to start at Block D	

We expect to complete construction by summer 2026. We have set out completion dates for the different sites below.

- **Block A and the Community Centre** – spring / summer 2026
- **Block D** – summer 2025
- **Knights Road** – between spring 2025 and spring 2026

Hill will continue to write to people who live closest to the work site to provide more information as things happen on site.

Meet the Builder

Thank you to everyone who came along to Hill's Meet the Builder event at the end of January.

It was great to meet everyone, to answer your questions and to hear your comments.

Here is how we have taken on board feedback so far:

We provided dropped kerbs at the junction of Blackbird Leys Road and Pegasus Road and by Evenlode Tower to provide level access for those crossing the road.
Oxfordshire County Council highways repainted markings at the junction of Pegasus Road and Blackbird Leys Road to make these clearer.
We are discussing a drop-off area for taxis by Evenlode Tower with Oxfordshire County Council highways.
We have adjusted the fence at Spindleberry Close to make sure there is access to Spindleberry Nature Reserve.
We have put up more signs and reinforced the fence at Kassam Stadium to show that the shortcut is no longer available.
We will continue to keep residents updated through site noticeboards, letters to impacted residents, and updates from the City Council.

Blackbird Leys Community Centre

Over the past few months, we have been working with the local community to understand your views about the new Blackbird Leys Community Centre and the public space surrounding it.

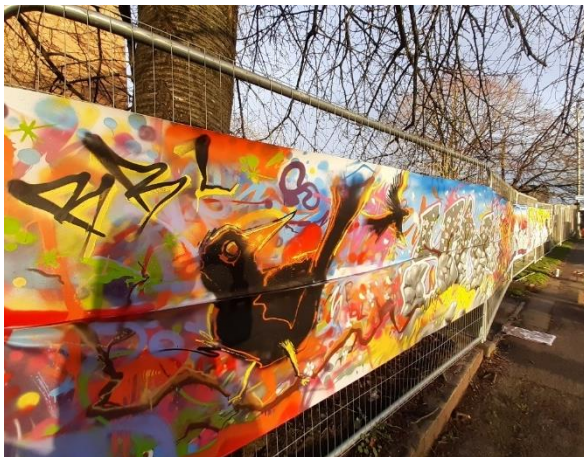
This will be at the heart of the Blackbird Leys scheme. Thank you for everyone's support and input in developing the design with us so far.

A few of the events we have met you at:

- Wednesday drop-ins at the Community Larder in November, December and January
- "Meet Santa" at the Leys Pool and Leisure Centre in December 2023
- Youth sessions at Leys Pool and Leisure Centre in January
- FriendLeys (seniors) drop-in at The Venue @ Cowley in January
- Community fun day in February, with mural painting, roller skating and music

We have now finished demolition of the Community Centre. Plans for the new Community Centre will be finalised in the coming weeks, and we will submit a detailed planning application to Oxford City Council in the summer.

Keep an eye out for the final exhibition which will be advertised on posters in Blackbird Leys soon. We are looking forward to sharing the design of your new Community Centre.



Above: photos from some of the community events we have met you at

Working with the Blackbird Leys Community

How you can get involved

Are you interested in working on the Blackbird Leys redevelopment project or learning skills in construction? We will soon be setting out how the local community can get involved.

Our programme will include opportunities for upskilling, training and employment. This is to support the local workforce, and the construction sector is also facing a skills shortage.

Our commitments
5% of workers on site will be apprentices or trainees.
We will work with local schools and colleges to recruit apprentices and trainees.
We will work with supply chain contractors who have a good track record supporting trainees.
Workshops, career talks, work experience, and STEM-related activities will be run with local schools and colleges.
Job opportunities with Hill will be available for Blackbird Leys and Oxfordshire residents.
We will prioritise locally sourced materials and services, where possible.

We will share more information about our commitments in the next community newsletter.

Community artwork

Thanks to everyone who took part in the mural painting at the Community Centre on 10 February.

There will be plenty more opportunities for community artwork over the next few months. We are working with youth groups who run youth activities in the Easter holidays. This will include an art workshop, where young people will be able to work with a local artist.

Keep an eye out for more information about future events from Oxford City Council.

Contact us

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



If you have any questions or would like more information about the Blackbird Leys redevelopment, you can contact Peabody via joanne.hoy@peabody.org.uk with 'Blackbird Leys' in the subject line.

If you have any questions about construction work, you can contact Hill at residents@hill.co.uk or on 0800 032 6700.

You can also **scan the QR code** (left) to visit the Blackbird Leys website for more information: blackbirdleys.co.uk.