

Blackbird Leys Redevelopment Autumn 2024 Community Newsletter

Welcome to the latest Blackbird Leys community update.

Work is continuing to deliver 294 new affordable homes, retail areas, community facilities, new green spaces and improved roads and cycle routes to Blackbird Leys, in partnership with Oxford City Council and our contractor, The Hill Group.

Since the last newsletter, we've made plenty of progress at the District Centre and Knights Road. This update gives more information on construction that has taken place since our last update, and details about what to expect next.

We've also unveiled a fresh look for the Blackbird Leys website, where you can find out the latest information about the project: blackbirdleys.co.uk.

As work continues, keep an eye out for posters on noticeboards, as well as updates and information events from the project team

Construction update

Over recent months, building work by Hill has included:

District Centre	Knights Road
Spring	
Starting to pour concrete for Block D foundations (near Evenlode Tower)	Creating foundations for a site welfare facility
Artwork project on hoarding (temporary fencing) at Block D	Completing piling (creating deep foundations)
Installing a crane base at Block D	Starting work on roads and drainage
Continuing with drainage work	Completing the asphalt layer on the first section of the loop road
Summer	
The crane was delivered	Continuing drainage and work on foundations
Completing the footpath from Evenlode Tower to the leisure centre	Work on below ground brickwork for terraced homes
Gas main diverted in Blackbird Leys Road	Setting up scaffolding for above ground brickwork

Starting preparations for the concrete frame at Block D including materials to be delivered	Installing the first floors of the buildings
Completing work on the ground floor layer, and starting to construct the concrete frame for Block D	Repairing the road and footpath to Spindleberry Close



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

District Centre	Knights Road
Autumn	
More progress on above ground works at Block D	We will continue work on the first 28 houses, with roofs and windows set to be finished
Installation of a temporary steel structure to support the first floor of Block D, and constructing reinforced concrete frame	We will continue foundation and drainage work
Temporary power connection to allow generators to be removed	Internal work, including mechanical and electrical work, will begin on the first homes
	We will begin preparations for the second phase of construction and work on the western side of site



You said, we did

<i>It's difficult to cross Blackbird Leys Road</i>	We have provided two sets of dropped kerbs
<i>It's difficult to access the parking at the leisure centre from Evenlode Tower</i>	We have laid a path for direct access
<i>People trip over tree stumps</i>	We have put barriers around trees



Road work

At the District Centre, there are some service diversions taking place including to gas, electricity, water and telecommunications to support work on roads and the construction of Block A (near Windrush Tower).

This includes localised traffic restrictions such as two- and three-way controlled traffic lights. Hill is working to reduce disruption as much as possible.

We are also finalising an agreement with Oxfordshire County Council which will allow us to progress with highways works. After this, we will hold a drop-in event to provide more information on how these works will be carried out.

Meet the team from Hill



Richard Colwill

Project Manager at the District Centre

I have been working in residential construction for the past 20 years.

I look forward to delivering the scheme to provide much-needed affordable housing and community spaces for Blackbird Leys – especially the new public square outside Block A.



Chris Doyle

Senior Site Manager at Knights Road

I have been working in construction management for nearly 15 years.

Being from Oxfordshire myself, I am proud to be helping provide new quality homes for Blackbird Leys.

Block A update

We are taking additional steps to improve building safety in line with the Government's recent Building Safety Act.

We are currently waiting for approval from the Building Safety Regulator before construction work can begin at Block A (near Windrush Tower).

We expect to receive approval from the regulator by the end of November. Construction should then begin in early 2025, with work completing at the end of 2026. These timings will be confirmed once we receive approval.

More information can be found on our website, and we will update the as the community as redevelopment progresses.

Wildlife and ecology

Supporting and protecting wildlife is an important part of the redevelopment plans.

We are improving green networks and providing new habitats for animals. To support preparation for tree work, we installed 37 bird boxes and 37 tree-mounted bat boxes.

Our contractor, Hill, is also taking careful steps when operating around wildlife. This includes changing the street lights and keeping artificial lighting to a minimum to reduce disturbance to wildlife.

Fencing has been placed around the woodland area at Knights Road and construction sites have been designed with ramps for wildlife to move around safely.

Blackbird Leys Community Centre

Since last summer, we have worked with the local community to understand your views and aspirations for the new Blackbird Leys Community Centre and the public space surrounding it.

We have held several events for the community to share their views on the designs as they have progressed, and these have been reflected in latest plans.

The design team is now finalising a detailed planning application, which will be submitted very soon. Once this is submitted, we will provide information on how to access and comment on the application on Oxford City Council's planning portal.



We will be holding a final exhibition event on Tuesday 15 October at Holy Family Church on Cuddesdon Way, from 2:30 – 6pm to present the final designs to the community.

Working with the Blackbird Leys Community

Are you interested in working on the Blackbird Leys redevelopment project or learning skills in construction?

Our programme includes opportunities for upskilling, training and employment. In our last newsletter, we outlined some of our commitments to the community.

In this newsletter, we've included further information about what we've been doing, and some of the ways for the community to get involved.

- **Career fairs:** We hosted a stand at the careers fair at Kassam Stadium, which was attended by 31 schools and colleges and 2,800 students.
- **Local workforce:** Our bricklaying team has taken on apprentices from the City of Oxford College, Blackbird Leys campus. There are still employment opportunities for Blackbird Leys and Oxfordshire residents at both sites. Contact the team at Hill for more information.
- **Litter picking:** Hill has also been litter picking around the Knights Road site, including in Spindleberry Park, Spindleberry Close and the footpath to Kassam stadium. The team filled 12 bin liners during their most recent litter pick in September (pictures below).



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.