

Leamington House and Horatia House Future options FAQs

What is happening now with Leamington House and Horatia House?

As you know, cladding was removed from Leamington House and Horatia House following the Grenfell tragedy.

We then found problems with the original 1960s concrete construction of the blocks during the detailed building surveys, which were carried out while we were looking for a suitable replacement for cladding. As a result, we put additional safety measures in place and started the process of moving residents to new homes.

While we have been finding new homes for residents, we have also been doing a lot of work to understand what the future options might be for the blocks. This has meant doing more survey work, and starting to get estimates for the cost of repairs.

What have you found out?

Our investigations have shown that, because of the way the buildings were constructed in the 1960s from large concrete panels, the work needed to repair HH & LH is significant and would be very expensive.

How much would it have cost to repair the buildings and how long would it take?

It is estimated that it would have cost around £86M to strengthen the two blocks and the work would take as much as five years. The estimated costs and timeframe mean that the council have decided it is not affordable to repair the blocks.

What options are being considered?

The report recommended we look at future options for redeveloping the site to create new affordable and social housing, working with residents in Somerstown to make sure the local community is involved. These proposals were agreed at a special cabinet meeting on 26 February 2019.

Will this mean fewer council homes in the future?

No. The council has already made a commitment to making sure at least as many council homes are available in the area in the future as are in the two blocks at the moment.

Will the blocks be sold off for student flats?

No. The council is committed to making sure there is affordable and social housing for local people in this area, including at least as many council properties as are in the two blocks at the moment. The blocks will not be sold-off for student flats.

Will we be involved in what happens to the area?

The council will work with residents and the wider community in Somerstown to make sure local people are fully involved in the future plans for Leamington House and Horatia House.

How can I find out more?

You can find more information on our website at

<https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/ext/housing/leamington-house-and-horatia-house>

Is it still safe for residents still living in the two blocks to remain?

Absolutely. The structures are safe for residents to remain in whilst we continue to move residents out into alternative accommodation.

When do you plan to have all residents moved

We are on schedule to have all residents moved out in Spring 2019.

What will happen to the two blocks once residents have moved out?

Once empty, both blocks will be secured and a security presence will remain to make sure the blocks are kept safe.

What about the residents who said they wanted to come back to the blocks in the future if that was possible?

We will continue to communicate with the residents who have said they would like to return in the future, and once we know what will be happening we will talk to them about the options available.