



# Your update

## Neighbourhoods Matter – planning for the renewal of Friars Close



### Stay safe and healthy

We hope that you and your family are keeping safe and well during this difficult time. Our Riverside communications team is continuing to provide regular updates to tenants about how services are being delivered, and what we are doing to support vulnerable people.

You can get the latest information from our website at [www.riverside.org.uk](http://www.riverside.org.uk).

If you can't access the internet and would like printed information, please contact Mandy Rana on 07929 368603 or email: [friarsclose@riverside.org.uk](mailto:friarsclose@riverside.org.uk).



### Welcome to the first edition of Your Update – our regular newsletter to you about the proposed redevelopment of Friars Close.

### Moving forward and consulting with you

Despite the unprecedented situation caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, we remain keen to work with you to develop a plan for the future of Friars Close and 1-3 Burrell Street. As we can't meet with you face to face at the moment, we will consult with you by post, over the phone and by email so please do keep us up to date with your contact details.

Many of you came to our tenant engagement event at the Hilton Hotel on 3 March where we discussed the possibility of redeveloping Friars Close for the first time. At this early stage, our current thinking is to provide new, improved homes for existing tenants while adding more homes for affordable rent and sale.

Since that first event, we have been gathering information to help us understand what your housing needs are. Our team has been speaking with you to find out more about your current situation, such as who is living with you and whether you have particular needs that your current home does not meet. This information is important because it will help us to understand the types of homes needed at Friars Close to enhance the quality of life for you all.

We have collected information from around 90% of you. If you haven't yet filled out a housing needs survey, please contact your Resident Liaison Officer, Mandy Rana on 07929 368603 or email: [friarsclose@riverside.org.uk](mailto:friarsclose@riverside.org.uk).

**You can find out what tenants have told us so far on page 2.**

### Next steps

We would like to run our next consultation with you in mid-July by which time we are expecting further relaxation in social distancing restrictions.

We suggest that we run this as an outdoor exhibition-type event in the communal courtyard area at the back of Friars Close so we can maintain social distancing whilst letting you read the boards we bring along and answer any questions you might have.

We will contact you nearer the time to make sure residents would be happy to attend this kind of event but please let us know your views now if you like.



Transforming lives  
Revitalising neighbourhoods

### What's inside this issue?

What you've told us so far, page **2**

Meet the team, page **3**

Your questions answered, page **4**

# What you've told us so far



**When we met with you in March to talk about the potential redevelopment of Friars Close, we explained that our intention would be to replace your home with one that is more modern, energy efficient and adapted to your needs.**

At the same time we would be able to offer more homes for affordable rent, as well as providing homes for sale, which would subsidise the cost of the rented accommodation.

From this meeting and through the housing needs surveys, you told us:

## What you like about Friars Close

- The location for work and transport links
- The local support networks available
- The close knit community

More than half of tenants want to stay in the local area because of work, caring responsibilities, support networks and the good local amenities.

## What you'd like to change about Friars Close

- More than half of you said you wanted better security in homes and across the estate
- Many of you said that lifts in the building would make coming and going easier
- Some of you would like to have a home with a balcony
- Many of you agreed that the site needs an overhaul as it feels run down

## Our housing needs survey also showed that:

- A quarter of households are overcrowded
- Just under half of households have more than one adult child living with them
- A quarter of tenants said that accessibility was a problem – particularly the stairs.

## Who can I contact?

To find out more, give your views or ask a question, you can contact:

- Mandy Rana, Resident Liaison Officer, 07929 368603
- Our dedicated email address: [friarsclose@riverside.org.uk](mailto:friarsclose@riverside.org.uk)
- Your housing officer David Wade on 0345 111 0000



# Homes for adult children



**If the redevelopment goes ahead, we would be able to reduce the overcrowding at Friars Close. We also know that approximately half of the households on Friars Close have adult children as part of their family.**

To explore options around assisting adult children with their own tenancy, we will be contacting those households directly, to understand whether they want to keep the

household together or would prefer that their adult children have their own tenancy in the new development.

We can then look at potential ways we can support adult children, whether this be through support to access housing with Southwark Council or by providing homes within the new development.

If you wish to discuss this particular issue further, please contact Mandy Rana on 07929 368603 or email us at [friarsclose@riverside.org.uk](mailto:friarsclose@riverside.org.uk)

## Ground maintenance

**Your housing officer, David Wade, has confirmed that the ground works including weeding, litter picking and general garden maintenance continues to be carried out by Mitie.**

Work had previously been postponed for a period of 4-6 weeks due to the current restrictions around COVID-19. However, Mitie is now scheduled to re-start work and has confirmed ground maintenance on the estate resumed in early May and will run every two weeks.

You told us at the consultation event in March that the door entry system at Friars Close had not been working properly and we apologise for this inconvenience. We are pleased to advise you that the problem has now been fixed and we apologise for the length of time taken to get this resolved.

To get up-to-date information on Riverside repairs services during the pandemic, please call 0345 112 4466 to hear a recorded telephone message.

## Meet the team

**Riverside's London regeneration team will be working with you to explore design proposals on the future of your estate. You may have already met some of us at the last event or spoken to one of us over the phone. Here are the names and faces who will guide you through this process.**



**Mandy Rana,  
Resident Liaison  
Officer**

Mandy works closely with tenants at Friars Close and is your first point of contact.



**Jo Downs, Tenant  
Engagement  
Manager**

Jo is the lead on our engagement and communication with you.



**Sophie Lejeune,  
Senior Development  
Manager**

Sophie will project manage any redevelopment plans for Friars Close.



**David Swarbrick,  
Director Development  
and Regeneration**

David leads on our regeneration strategy and has overall responsibility for any redevelopment work undertaken.



**Steven McIntosh,  
Project Leader**

Steven will oversee any redevelopment work on Friars Close, should it go ahead.

# Your questions answered



As part of our consultation with you, we are keen to answer any questions you might have. Please email your comments and questions to: [friarsclose@riverside.org.uk](mailto:friarsclose@riverside.org.uk) Here are some of your questions so far.

## Why can't you upgrade the existing scheme?

We want to provide modern, spacious homes that are accessible and meet the needs of tenants. We also want to provide more homes to address the current housing shortage.

We are exploring options as to the best way to do this and we will present these options to you at a future consultation, including a refurbishment option and full redevelopment.

## What happens to us while the new homes are being built?

Everyone would need to move off site for a minimum of two years. We will work with you to ensure you have a temporary/permanent home that meets your needs, and is in the same local area.

## How many homes are you proposing to build and what will the size of the blocks be?

We have no fixed plan of numbers at this stage. All existing tenants will have a new home and we will also build more affordable homes for rent.

To cover the cost of building the affordable rented homes, we will also have to build some homes for private sale. This will mean that the new development will be taller than the existing block.

Southwark Council and you, the tenants, will play a role in deciding how many homes will be built.

## Can we design our homes?

We will hold consultation events with you to work up design proposals to agree what the layout of your new home could look like.

## Will my tenancy and rent stay the same?

All tenants will keep the same tenancy type when they return to their newly-built home and the rent will be the same for each unit type.

## How will I pay for the moving cost?

You will get a disturbance allowance to cover your moving costs. In addition, if you have lived in your home for more than 12 months, you will also be entitled to a one-off home loss payment. The amount is set by the government and is currently £6,400 (as at May 2020).

## How long will it take from start to finish?

The project could take around three years to complete, from developing initial designs for the new homes through to finishing the building work. If we go ahead with a full redevelopment, we will give you more details on the whole process from start to finish.

## Can I move away permanently?

You will have the option to move away either temporarily or permanently. Whichever option you choose, you will receive a disturbance allowance and the home loss payment.

## Got any ideas?

What would you like to see in this newsletter? If you have any ideas for future editions, please contact us by email at: [friarsclose@riverside.org.uk](mailto:friarsclose@riverside.org.uk).

