

**Date:** 05 December 2023

**Reference:** If you call us about this letter and are asked what you're calling about, please say "Building problems at Summerhill Grove". This will help us to direct your call more effectively.

Dear Resident,

This letter is to inform you that as of the 05 December 2023, the customer consultation on the investment options on 3 & 4 Summerhill Grove has begun and will end on 19 January 2024.

To aid the consultation process and our communications we have developed a microsite which can be accessed via the following link: [www.riv.org.uk/summerhillgrove](http://www.riv.org.uk/summerhillgrove)  
This webpage is designed to provide real-time updates to customers and other key stakeholders on progress of the consultation and improvement works and answer frequently asked questions.

The aim of the consultation process is to allow time and space for customers to tell us (Riverside) about their concerns with regards their homes and the whole building, including communal areas.

Riverside wish to provide quality homes that are decent in accordance with our regulatory obligations, safe, warm and affordable for tenants. We are committed to doing so and take our responsibilities very seriously and do not retreat from making considerable investment in our properties, when appropriate.

We strive to do better and are trying to gain a balanced picture considering the impact of our residents living at 3 and 4 Summerhill Grove. We would like to understand the challenges of keeping your property comfortably warm when considering the size and height of the rooms coupled with the commercial element of the significant expenditure required.

Initial expenditure of approximately £200k has already been committed and progressing on site. These works are to prevent water ingress which consist of internal camera drainage survey and associated works to assist with the removal of standing water to the front and rear elevations. The works include:

- Roof works, lead lining Finlock gutters, creating wider, higher and new gutters, rainwater pipes, and works to chimneys.
- New detail to dormer windows.
- Increased ventilation and new extractor fans.
- Damp remediation including lime plastering.
- New kitchen/tiling (where required).
- New/refurbished windows (where required),
- Boiler/heating installation (where required).

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- Making good and decoration (where required).

Longer term there is a budget expenditure requirement of approximately £1m (subject to market tendering and conservation permissions) to bring the condition of the properties to meet Riverside's standard.

The works include:

- Replacement of the existing pointing with lime-based mortar joints.
- Remove existing painted render and replace with suitable breathable alternative.
- Repoint entrance steps to limit water ingress below.
- Install damp proof course (DPC) to the solid partition internal walls as required.
- Removal of damp plaster and installation of appropriate damp proof membranes and/or newton lining systems.
- Demolish and re-build damaged sections of partition between the storage rooms and meter cupboards.
- Removal of defective plaster in the communal space leading to the rear garden and re-plaster with a breathable lime-based plaster.
- Open both chimneys at lower levels and remove all debris then block up openings and supply and fit ventilation grilles.
- Fire safety works including new fire doors/fire compartmentation/smoke and heat detection and consideration of a new fire alarm system.
- Thermal improvements to increase efficiency e.g. wall insulation/ roof insulation/new and/or reconditioned windows/new heating installations.
- New kitchens.
- New bathrooms.
- Potential rewiring works.
- Ventilation strategy with new kitchen and bathroom extractor fans.
- Internal door replacements.

Considering the above we would like to understand your views on the different aspects of the work we believe is necessary versus the competing demands and restrictions of what is permitted due to the conservation status of the building. These include ongoing concerns regarding EPC ratings and costs for customers to heat their homes.

In addition, Riverside are considering the viability of investment into the two basement flats 3a and 4a, which includes the option of an alternative tanking method. It is our initial opinion that despite investment, these two flats would remain prone to damp and mould and be uneconomical to heat. Therefore, decommissioning the two properties will be considered taking into consideration customer feedback from Summerhill Grove customers. This means they would no longer be used as residential properties. However, no final decision has been made and we welcome your views.

An Independent Tenant Advisor, Adrian Waite ([www.awics.co.uk](http://www.awics.co.uk)), has been appointed for the duration of the consultation period to provide independent advice and guidance to customers. They can be contacted via:

- Freephone: 0800-321-3045
- Email: [Summerhillgrove@awics.co.uk](mailto:Summerhillgrove@awics.co.uk)

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We would like to invite you to share your views by completing the attached survey. The survey can also be completed online using the following link:

<https://forms.office.com/e/f9Ab8QjvTg>

A drop-in session will be available on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> December between 4-6pm at the Summerhill Bowling Club, Summerhill Pavilion & Gardens, Winchester Terrace, Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE4 6EH. Representatives from Housing, Assets, Community Engagement and Adrian Waite will be available should you wish to discuss any matters.

Alternatively, if you would like an individual face to face, Teams or telephone appointment with Riverside, please contact me directly:

[Heather.Sherriff@riverside.org.uk](mailto:Heather.Sherriff@riverside.org.uk)

Tel: 07580 761588

Or via the dedicated email address

[riverside.summerhillgrove@riverside.org.uk](mailto:riverside.summerhillgrove@riverside.org.uk)

Yours sincerely,



Heather Sherriff  
Housing Services Manager  
Riverside Housing Group