

## **Ealing Council and Affinity Sutton Finally Get Close to Signing a Contract to Demolish Dean Gardens Estate**

Dean Gardens Estate was built on allotment land by Ealing Council in the 1960s. The 209 unit residential site - dominated by three tower blocks (Archer, Crossbow and Target Houses) - occupies almost four acres. It is bounded to the north by Tawny Close, to the west by Seaford Road and to the south and east by Sherwood Close and Northfield Avenue. The estate has been poorly managed and maintained for years. Anti-social activity, drug taking, drug dealing, under age drinking, stabbings, rough sleepers, suicide attempts, damage to property, racial attacks and juveniles running riot have been features of the estate for years. Ealing Council began re-development negotiations with a well respected Housing Association - Affinity Sutton – in December 2012. Now, 14 months later, news emerges that a formal agreement with Affinity Sutton is in the offing.

Ealing Council Cabinet met on 18 February 2014 and agreed to proceed to draft contract stage with the Affinity Sutton Housing Association to redevelop the Dean Gardens Estate. 22 pages of information relating to the redevelopment was published by Ealing Council prior to the Cabinet meeting. Currently the homes on the estate are variously leasehold, freehold and Social Homes for Rent. Affinity Sutton will be offered a 125 year lease on the land and will act as the Registered Social Landlord for the new rented properties. Affinity Sutton expects to submit a Planning Application in summer 2014. The new residential development of 292 new homes will comprise a range of tenures including private ownership, social housing and affordable housing. A new Community Centre will be built on the site.

### **209 Old Homes will be Replaced by 292 New Homes**

The leaseholders' and freeholders' homes will be bought out by Ealing Council. Should these people then want to buy a new home from Affinity Sutton in Sherwood Close they will be able to do so. An attempt will be made to re-house all those currently renting or owning property on the estate. The re-development will be conducted in three phases.

### **Demolition will Start in early 2015**

The western third – including Archer House – will be demolished first as part of Phase 1. Phase 1 new build is scheduled to be completed by Autumn 2016. Phase 2 is the mid portion of the estate and includes Crossbow House. Phase 3 comprises the north eastern portion of the site including Target House which will be demolished and redeveloped last. Phase 2 and Phase 3 will likely feature private flats along the western side of Northfield Avenue. Phase 3 is expected to be completed by summer 2020.

### **New Access to the Site via Tawny Close**

Currently there is no access to the site from the narrow Tawny Close. In fact an eight foot high metal fence separates the troubled Dean Gardens Estate from the Sheltered and private housing in Tawny Close. Immediately north of where Archer House is situated a strip of land adjacent to 19 Tawny Close is to be purchased by Compulsory Purchase Order in order to facilitate this new vehicular link between Tawny Close and a new road to be created in the redevelopment.

### **No Access Planned via Northfield Avenue**

I'm sure there is a good reason for this – but WECNF has yet to discover what that reason is.

### **Dean Gardens Estate Name Will Disappear**

Affinity Sutton's architects are determined that the new homes to be built on the site will not have the 'look' of a housing estate. Affinity Sutton refer to this re-development of the site as 'Sherwood Close'.

### **WECNF Has Met with Affinity Sutton Four Times**

The company does clearly want to work with local stakeholders.

Eric Leach

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