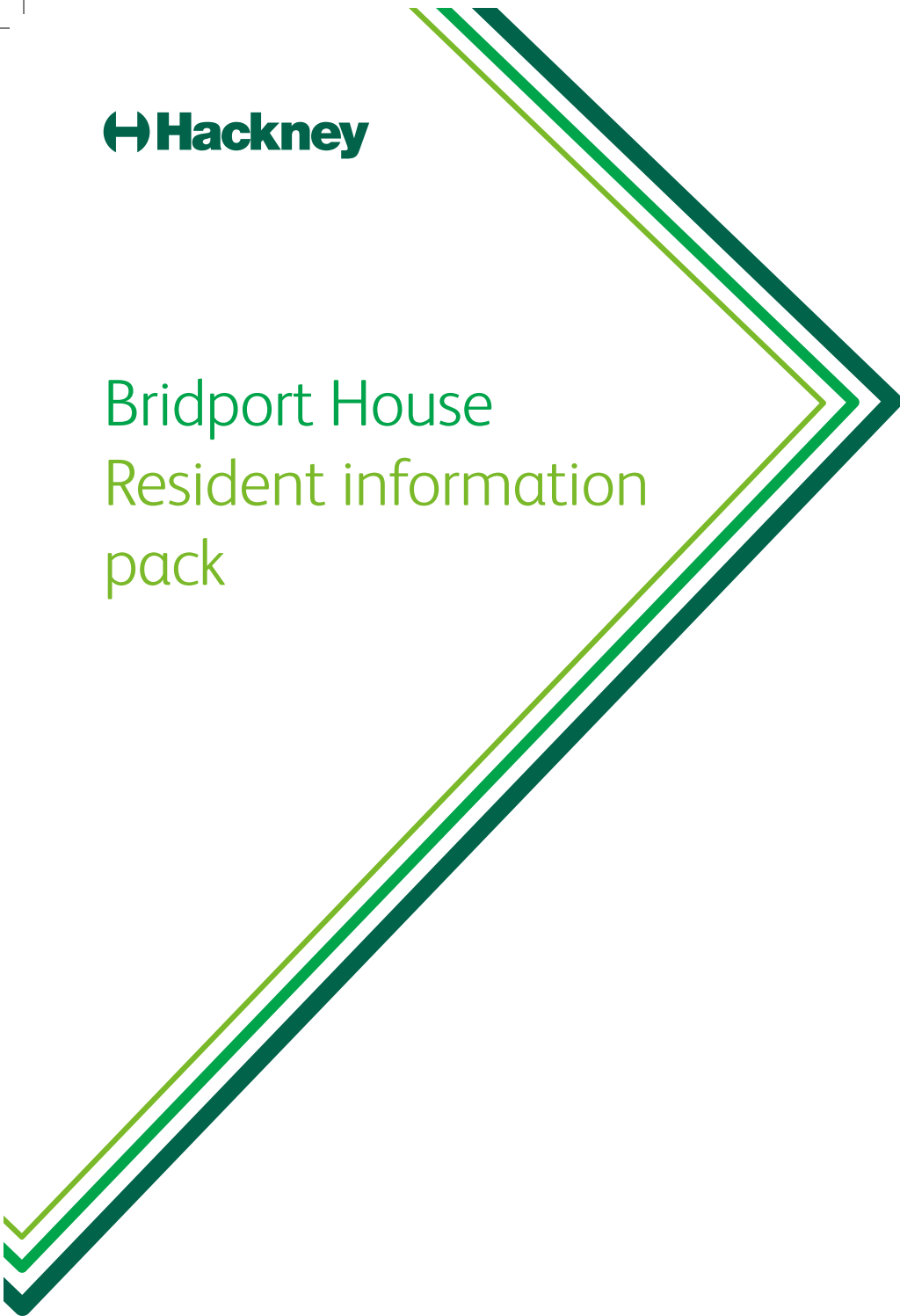




Bridport House  
Resident information  
pack



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This document sets out the issues with Bridport House, what will happen next and how you will be supported to move to a different home. Please read this information before making an appointment with our dedicated team to discuss your options.

## Background

### Lead-up to our investigations

This February we were examining a series of issues around the brickwork at Bridport House, as well as concerns about balconies following the partial collapse of a balcony tray in February.

#### This led to:

- Concerns over type of cavity wall insulation raised by architects working on brickwork repairs
- As a precaution, immediate 24-hour fire warden patrols put in place and a change in evacuation procedures to 'simultaneous evacuation'
- London Fire Brigade confirming that the building is safe
- An Information Centre being set up for residents to find out more
- Further investigations being carried out
- An update meeting held with residents.

## The results of our investigations

Since March, we've been carrying out investigations at Bridport House. We've worked with a team of independent experts, including fire engineers, architects, surveyors, the London Fire Brigade and others to fully assess their concerns. We received a final report in August.

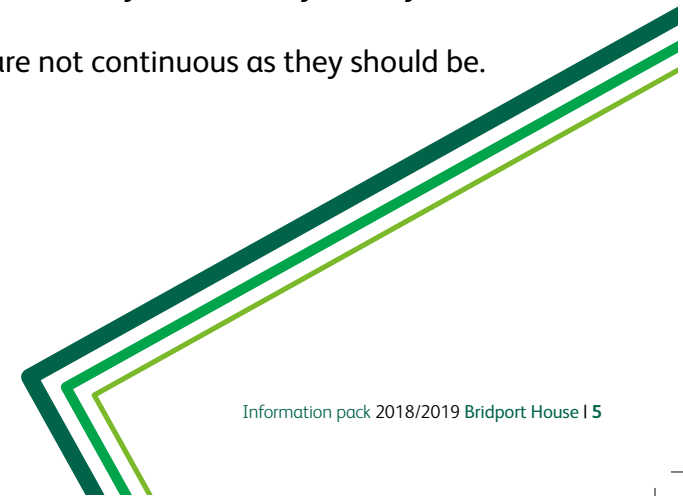
### Cavity wall insulation

The type of cavity wall insulation installed when Bridport House was constructed does not meet current building regulations, or the building regulations which existed at the time. The insulation material used is combustible – it should have been non-combustible – and was not approved for use in buildings above 18m in height, such as Bridport House.

### Cavity barriers

The situation is exacerbated by defects with the cavity barriers. Cavity barriers are non-combustible insulation inserted between the wall and insulation. They stop the spread of hidden fire and smoke in the wall. There are two types installed at Bridport House.

- One type is not suitable as it has not been tested in its current set-up
- Some cavity barriers do not fully fill the cavity as they are required to
- Some cavity barriers are not continuous as they should be.



## Brickwork

- Bricks are badly laid
- Mortar joints are not the right width
- The brickwork facade is wavy where it should be flush
- Bricks do not align with the windows
- Wall ties – which connect two layers of cavity wall – are damaged and possibly the wrong product
- Steel angle plates used to support the brickwork are not always installed correctly
- Movement joints that allow movement between areas of brickwork do not always run continuously as they should, and in some cases have not been filled with the right material
- Brick soffit panels (the underside of the entrance ways) are not sufficiently durable as the wooden boards they have been fitted to can rot when wet.

## Windows:

- Many window sills were removed and replaced after construction because of poor bricklaying, and the original holes were not subsequently filled and refinished.
- The new window sill placement left gaps at the top and bottom of windows, which over time may let water into the building.
- The seals at the window sills are too big and could contribute to fire spread.
- The bay windows do not comply with building regulations due to the combustible insulation and plywood installed in the cladding.

## Concrete panels:

- Some of the concrete panels are damaged with hairline cracks. This could be due to poor installation or because of defective panels which can degrade over time.
- The panels are classed as non-combustible but, when combined with the cavity wall insulation and timber structure of the building, are no longer compliant with building regulations.

## Balconies and terraces:

- Decking in many balconies is warped because it was not installed correctly and will need to be replaced.
- The metal paneling (balustrades) of some terraces and balconies have not been fixed properly and will need to be repaired.
- Some balcony roofs are not draining rainwater correctly and need to be repaired.
- Parts of the waterproofing layer on one terrace is missing causing leaks to the flat below and damage inside.

## Roof parapets:

- The roof parapets – where the building walls meet the roof – are clad with a thin laminate board which is combustible.
- In a number of places this board has cracked and fallen onto the roof.



- Below this board is another board that has combustible insulation underneath
- Both board types will need to be replaced with a material that is both suitable and meets Building Regulations.

 We've published a full report detailing these defects at [www.hackney.gov.uk/bridport-house](http://www.hackney.gov.uk/bridport-house)

## What will happen next?

**In the immediate term, we will:**

- Remove scaffolding in the next few weeks.
- Get your windows professionally cleaned.
- Remove the 24-hour fire warden patrols and install a communal fire alarm which automatically notifies London Fire Bridge upon activation.
- Give residents fire safety training, including additional support for those who need it.

We're recommending to the Council's Cabinet that the building should be repaired. That public meeting will be held on 16 September in Hackney Town Hall, at 6pm.

The Cabinet is a group of nine elected councillors – called Cabinet Members – appointed by the Mayor of Hackney. Each Cabinet Member has a specific area of responsibility. They, along with the Mayor of Hackney, make important decisions about Council policies, proposals and services.

We don't yet have all the details of how this work will take place and don't know exactly how long it will take, but we'll keep you updated throughout this process.

## Repairing Bridport House

**To resolve all the issues permanently, we will need to carry out major work:**

- Replacing cavity wall insulation with a safer, non-combustible material that meets building regulations, and reinstalling cavity barriers correctly.
- Removing all the brickwork and then reinstall new brickwork and balconies, in a different way, that permanently fixes those problems.
- Permanently fixing all the issues with windows, concrete panels and roof parapets.

In doing the insulation work, we would have to remove the outer layer of the building, exposing the current insulation in a way that is potentially unsafe for you to remain in your home. The work is expected to take up to two years to carry out and will be noisy and very disruptive.

For these reasons, you will need to move from your current home while we complete this work, and we won't start the work until all residents have moved to alternative accommodation. We will be working hard behind the scenes while we are supporting you with your move, to ensure a specialist company is ready to undertake this work as soon as the last resident is moved from Bridport House.

We don't yet have all the details of how this work would take place, but we will keep you updated throughout this process. We will also involve you in the process for selecting the specialist company, as well as involving you to see the progress being made.

## Why you need to be rehoused

**Safety:** Removing the brickwork and exposing flammable insulation underneath for an extended period is a significant fire safety issue, even if we put mitigation in place.

It is our duty of care to keep you safe. We are not prepared to put your lives at risk.

**Impact:** You would experience the following for years: loss of daylight by scaffold wrapped in fire-retardant sheeting; significant noise and dust in your home; cold homes due to loss of insulation; loss of use of balconies and gardens; lack of privacy; inability to open windows at certain stages.

Work at Bridport House would last around three years. We are not prepared to expose you to such intolerable and unacceptable living conditions.

**Timescale:** The full repair process, including procuring a contractor and carrying out the work, could take up to three years. Keeping residents in Bridport House will prolong this timescale even further and protract the upheaval.

We want to fix Bridport House as quickly as we can – and ensure all the issues are resolved fully and to the highest possible standards – so you can return to your homes and enjoy the quality of life you deserve.

We are also exploring:

## Rebuild of Bridport House

While our intention is to repair Bridport House, we will also be presenting to Cabinet alternative possibilities, including rebuilding on the site of Bridport House. Work would begin once all residents have moved to alternative accommodation. In this instance, all residents would be guaranteed the right to return to a brand new home at a social rent at whatever we build in its place.

## Have your say at Cabinet

Bridport House residents can – through one or more nominated individuals – make representations, directly addressing the Cabinet, about any concerns they may have.

To do this, residents must notify the Council's Governance Services (**020 8356 3432; [governance@hackney.gov.uk](mailto:governance@hackney.gov.uk)**) eight working days before the meeting (so, by noon on 3 September). The notification must be through a deputation form, which can be found here:



**[www.hackney.gov.uk/elected-representatives](http://www.hackney.gov.uk/elected-representatives)**.

This has to be signed by 10 people living in the borough.

## Options for you and your family

We are extremely sorry that the work we need to do means you and your family will need to move from Bridport House. We know how much you and your neighbours love your current homes – despite the problems you have experienced – and we intend to complete this work as quickly as we can so you can return here if you wish with these issues permanently fixed.

Whichever of the following options you choose, you will be supported by a dedicated team to make the process as smooth as possible, taking into account your needs. You will also receive a package of compensation, some of it tailored to individual circumstances, that recognises the disruption this work will cause you.

In the next few days and weeks you will be offered one-to-one consultations with a Council officer who will talk through these options and answer any questions you may have. This officer will be part of a specialist team dedicated entirely to working with Bridport House residents. While you do need to move so we can complete this work, we will not rush you into a decision, and we understand that this is an unsettling and difficult decision to make.

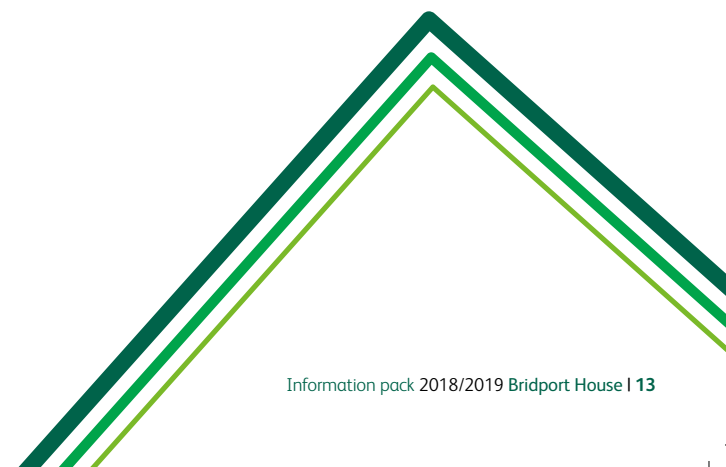
Independent Tenant and Leaseholder Advisers will also be able to provide independent support, advice and advocacy.

### Option 1 - Move into another Council home temporarily until the work is complete

We will offer you a Council home elsewhere in Hackney, as local as possible, that meets your household's needs. Your tenancy conditions would be unaffected, and you would have the right to return to your home at Bridport House once work was complete. If for any reason this wasn't possible, you would have first dibs on new homes completed.

If you choose this option:

- We would make you an offer of alternative Council accommodation that meets your needs – either on the Colville Estate or elsewhere in Hackney.
- This home may not be a new-build like your current home, but would meet our usual housing standards.
- You would be able to move back to your current home once work is completed.
- You would receive a Disturbance Payment to compensate you for any reasonable expenses involved in moving home – such as removal vans, storage of furniture or reconnection of services.
- A dedicated Council officer would be available for you to contact with questions or concerns throughout the work.
- You could choose to make the move permanent at a later date, if you wish to.



## Option 2 - Move into another Council home permanently

We will offer you a permanent move to a Council home elsewhere in Hackney that meets your household's needs. You would still have a secure Council tenancy, and the Council would remain your landlord.

If you choose this option:

- We would make you an offer of alternative Council accommodation that meets your needs – either on the Colville Estate or elsewhere in Hackney.
- This home may not be a new-build like your current home, but would meet our usual housing standards.
- You would receive a one-off Home Loss Payment of £6,300 to compensate you for having to move from your existing home.
- You would receive a Disturbance Payment to compensate you for any reasonable expenses involved in moving home – such as removal vans, storage of furniture or reconnection of services.
- You would not be able to move back to Bridport House once work was completed.

## Option 3 - Move permanently into a housing association property

If available, we will offer you a permanent move into a housing association property that meets your household's needs. This would mean the housing association would become your landlord.

If you choose this option:

- We would make you an offer of a housing association property in Hackney that meets your needs.
- You would end your Council tenancy, and the housing association would become your landlord. These tenancy

conditions may be different to your current agreement with the Council.

- You would receive a one-off Home Loss Payment of £6,300 to compensate you for having to move from your existing home.
- You would receive a Disturbance Payment to compensate you for any reasonable expenses involved in moving home – such as removal vans, storage of furniture or reconnection of services.
- You would not be able to move back to Bridport House once work was completed.

## Option 4 - Move permanently to a home outside of Hackney

The Council and Greater London Authority operate schemes to support tenants who want to move outside of the borough, or London, into alternative accommodation. These schemes are already in operation, but we will help you apply for them if you would like to.

If you choose this option:

- We would explain the options that may be available, and support you through the application process for a relevant scheme.
- If you did move, your tenancy agreement with the Council would be terminated, and you would not be able to move back to Bridport House once work was completed.
- If no homes were available under these schemes, you would still be entitled to the other options set out in this document.
- You would receive a one-off Home Loss Payment of £6,300 to compensate you for having to move from your existing home.
- You would receive a Disturbance Payment to compensate you for any reasonable expenses involved in moving home – such as removal vans, storage of furniture or reconnection of services.



## Option 5 - Buy a new home built through the Council's housebuilding programme

The Council is building new homes of all types across the borough, including for shared ownership or outright sale. If you are able to meet affordability requirements, you would receive first dibs to purchase a home. If you choose this option:

- We would meet you to discuss the homes currently available for purchase, and the affordability requirements you would need to meet.
- If you did move, your tenancy agreement would be terminated, and you would become a Council leaseholder.
- You would not be able to move back to Bridport House once work was completed.
- If no homes were available under these schemes, you would still be entitled to the other options set out in this document.
- You would receive a one-off Home Loss Payment of £6,300 to compensate you for having to move from your existing home.
- You would receive a Disturbance Payment to compensate you for any reasonable expenses involved in moving home – such as removal vans, storage of furniture or reconnection of services.

## Option 6 - Stay with friends and family

If you would rather, we will support you to stay with friends and family while work is completed. If you choose this option:

- You would receive a Disturbance Payment to compensate you for any reasonable expenses involved in moving home – such as removal vans, storage of furniture or reconnection of services.
- You would not have to pay rent, Council Tax, or utility standing charges for your home at Bridport House while work was completed.

- If you, and your friends or family, are in receipt of benefits, we would top up any reductions in any benefits that may be incurred for 'non-dependents' – such as adult children or relatives – who are living in the home.
- You would receive a one-off discretionary single payment based on individual circumstances for the inconvenience and additional costs likely to be incurred by staying with your family and friends.
- You would be able to move back to your current home once work is completed.

## Key contacts

Our dedicated team is available for one-to-one appointments with you in your home to discuss these options and the process for moving home.

To make an appointment or speak to someone about these options, you can contact:

Colin Bright, Rehousing Manager, on [colin.bright@hackney.gov.uk](mailto:colin.bright@hackney.gov.uk) or **020 8356 7591**

We have also opened an Information Centre in the currently vacant cafe space on the ground floor of the Mono Tower (Phase 3 of the regeneration) on Penn Street, where you can ask us any questions you may have. It will be open:

- Thursday 29 August, 10am-9pm
- Friday 30 August, 10am-4pm



The latest information will always be available at [www.hackney.gov.uk/bridport-house](http://www.hackney.gov.uk/bridport-house)

