

Estates Regeneration: Case Study

Sutton: Mixed sites development

Overview: The estates programme located in LB Sutton involves an extensive 14/15 year programme featuring the development of Durand Close estate in Carshalton, along with the smaller Corbet Close estate and a portfolio of defective Orlit properties. There are 13 other smaller sites captured in these proposals to improve community regeneration and housing provision across the borough. The regeneration project as a whole is expected to provide 680+ homes, with 64 per cent affordable.

The estate regeneration scheme was originally considered by LB Sutton in 1999 following a petition from residents at Durand Close. The borough was then able to include a number of other sites across the borough to benefit from the regeneration proposals. In 2002 a selection of partners got on board culminating in the establishment of the Lavender Housing Partnership in 2003. The partnership includes Affinity Sutton (originally Broomleigh Housing Association); Rydon construction alongside residents representatives.



How were the sites identified? The largest project involved the demolition of a 1960s built estate of 12 deck access blocks of social housing named Durand Close, consisting of 295 primarily three and four bed-roomed flats. The regeneration scheme originally set out to deliver 470 new homes, half of which would be affordable to local residents.

This estate was chosen because in the 1990s it had received media recognition as a ‘problem estate’ and had been compared among the worst estates in England. In 1994 a safer neighbourhood survey was undertaken and identified adverse social issues, with child densities and deprivation levels which were exacerbated by the poor living standards on the estate. There was the cumulative impact of higher than average anti-social behaviour and crime levels. The borough worked with the residents association to implement some local measures including use of garages for a community centre. However in 1999 the residents voted in favour of a comprehensive regeneration scheme.

The small sites identified in the project include a mixture of sites requiring redevelopment such as sheltered housing, battery garage blocks a landlocked derelict site and an old depot site and a smaller estate at Corbet Close.

Funding: The total cost of the project is £170 million, which includes £29 of government grant and a subsidy contribution. Proceeds from the private development for sale have helped with the provision of the rented and shared ownership properties.

Community consultation: The residents of Durand Close agreed a masterplan for the estate in 2006 following a consultation exercise, which resulted in more than 80% of residents in support of the project. The consultation involved active communication with residents groups, FIRST call Consultants and the developer Rydon on design elements of the new homes. The local led partnership forum Lavender Housing Partnership played an instrumental role in making decisions about the project structure and design and ensuring that the development promotes a sustainable community approach.

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Key successes: By spring 2016, a total of 450 residents had been rehoused across all the sites, with the provision of 430 new homes to date. A further 120 homes will be delivered on site along with another 131 new homes from the other projects such as the Orlit portfolio and Corbet Close.

Key Challenges: During this process concerns were raised by the GLA, about parking, play, open space and layout considerations. The transfer of four sites was put on hold for a number of reasons. Discussions about the allocation of housing to AffinitySutton (Broomleigh HA as was) required agreement in respect of the unit and tenure mix and the additional affordable housing to be provided. The approval of the Secretary of State was also required to give consent to the whole project.

The phased approach to the scheme saw works begin on the first related site in the summer of 2004, and the first demolition on Durand Close beginning with Phase 1a in 2007 and completion of the first new build units on site in summer of 2011. During 2016-18 it is anticipated that Durand Close (The Lavenders) will see the completion of the final phases of redevelopment with the final delivery stage of the project on other sites to be completed between 2017/19.

Lessons learned: Role of contractor is critical in terms of on site management during construction phases and maintaining trusted resident liaison. Early resident involvement in Master Planning, design stages and programme/steering group. Ensure local councillors and local community are engaged in the process. Be clear what the Council is able to offer - in term of rehousing, return to site, compensation, leaseholder package, local lettings etc.

Regeneration outcomes: The estate regeneration programme has delivered a number of benefits which include high quality housing with mixed use tenures sustainable for the whole community. The schemes has also delivered a new community centre and shop at Durand Close with an improved riverside amenity. The whole project has successfully been delivered with the full involvement of residents throughout the process.

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