

WENSLEY ROAD ESTATE IMPROVEMENTS

Newsletter | December 2021



WENSLEY ROAD
live. play. grow



Zelda Wolffe

Reading Borough Council Assistant
Director of Housing & Communities

Dear Resident,

This will be our last newsletter this year, and an opportunity to provide you with another update on the improvements taking place on the Wensley Road Estate.

You will have noticed the preparatory work taking place, getting everything ready for next year when the development begins in earnest starting with the construction of 46 new homes that are being made available to current tenants on the estate.

Whilst our younger residents have recently lost access to the MUGA and the play equipment in Courage Park, an exciting new collection of play equipment is being set up there and we hope will be available to use by February.

Parking has been an ongoing issue for residents around the estate, and to ease the situation we recently opened up another 45 spaces next to Riversley Court. In January we hope to open up another 15 spaces on a strip of land connecting Wensley Road to Lesford Road as well. Whilst the project is challenging for all, the outcomes will be worth it and we will all be able to share in the benefits.

It just remains for me to thank you all once again for your patience whilst we continue to make improvements to your estate, and wish you a Happy Christmas.

Yours,

Zelda Wolffe



PROJECT PROGRESS

Preparatory work is continuing ahead of the main construction work on the new housing which will begin in the new year. Current work includes the installation of hoardings which you will already have seen around the site, and utility work. We are working closely with Glenman to ensure that access for people living next to the site during construction is maintained with as little inconvenience as possible. This may require some adjustments as work progresses and we apologise for any disruption as we go along. We will try to keep this to a minimum.

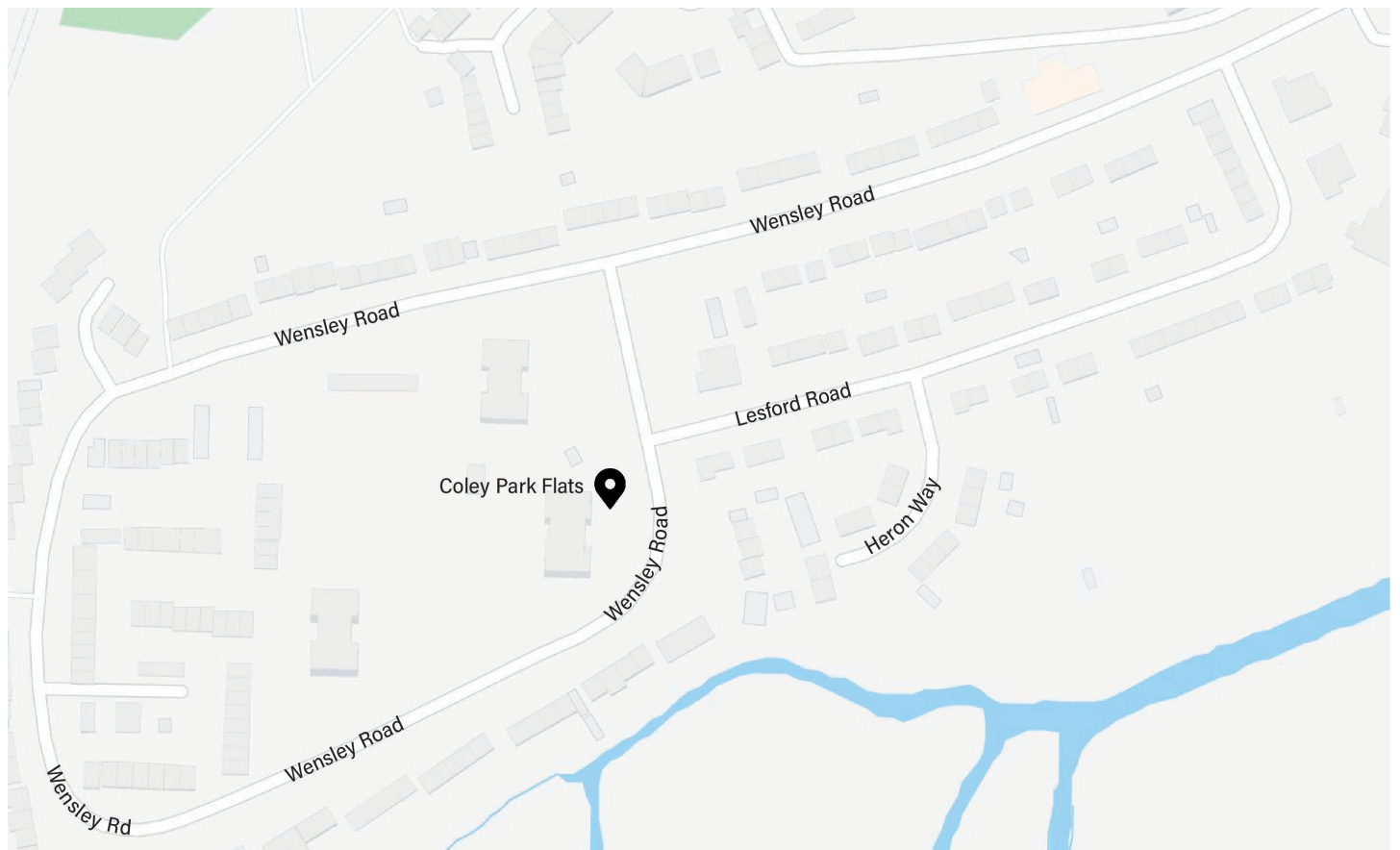
Piling is due to begin early in the new year to prepare foundations for the new housing.

Work has begun on removing the MUGA and tree protection is being installed around the trees on site that are being retained.

STOPPING UP ORDER AND ITS IMPACT

The stopping up order for roads and pathways has now been agreed and published. This allows the permanent closure of the section of road indicated by the hatched area on the map below and will enable construction work to proceed.

We are working with Reading Buses to agree a location for a new temporary bus stop on its diverted route, which will be in place in the new year. We will send out an update to residents when this has been agreed.



PARKING

Further to feedback from tenants at the walkabout sessions, we have been reviewing parking. Since the last newsletter, we have opened up an additional 45 spaces in the new temporary car park to the east of Riversley Court.

We have also prepared a strip of land running between Wensley Road and Lesford Road which will open in the new year to provide another 15 temporary car parking spaces. A planning application has been submitted with a view to extending the use of that space whilst the construction work continues.

CHRISTMAS EVENTS AND SUPPORT

- ★ Coley Baptist Church have a Carols by Candlelight service at 4:30pm on Sunday 19th December. The church are asking people to book for this service so that they can manage numbers.
- ★ Christmas food parcels are being delivered by Coley Baptist Church to those who are on Readifood referrals
- ★ Brighter Futures For Children are coordinating free childcare over Christmas for children in receipt of free school meals through St Mary & All Saints Primary School. The school is also coordinating free gifts for a number of families through the Salvation Army.
- ★ Any children who are entitled to free school meals can access any of Brighter Futures for Children's clubs funded by the Holiday Activity Fund this Christmas. For more information Google 'Brighter Futures Holiday Activities' where you can find a list of providers, the activities they are putting on, and their club locations.



PLAY AREA UPDATE

The exciting new Courage Park play area is coming soon! You may have spotted that the old play area has been closed since Friday 10 December to remove the old play equipment, and install the new junior play equipment and trim trail. With over £100,000 being invested, there is lots of new play equipment being added which we hope will be open for use by the end of January – depending on the weather!



ANSWERS TO YOUR QUESTIONS

We hold a regular tenant walkabout which is an opportunity for any tenant, especially from the towers, to find out more about the improvements which are planned for the blocks. The next one is scheduled for 26 January 2022. To receive full details of this please register your details – see 'Stay In Touch' below. In the meantime, here are the answers to some of the questions raised at meetings so far:

Q: once the new car parks have been installed are we going to be charged to use them?

There's also an opportunity to become more involved and use your interest in the project to become the voice of your community by joining our Tenant Panel. You'll help oversee the improvements that are coming up including new windows and landscaping, and represent your friends and neighbours too. To sign up or find out more contact our Tenant Participation Team Leader Mary Hull on the contact details above.

Q: there is some really inconsiderate and dangerous parking on the estate now which makes it dangerous for pedestrians. What is being done to tackle this?

The closure of the car park outside 203 put extra pressure on parking. We have worked with Glenman to open another car park outside Block 205 (opposite Lesford Road) to encourage cars off the loop and into these spaces which will make it easier for pedestrians. A strip of additional parking will also be opened between Wensley Road and Lesford Road in the new year. We would like to encourage everyone to use the proper spaces and please park considerately.

Q. The blocks are getting new windows, but what about the houses - will they be getting new windows too?

We are going to replace the windows across all our stock with triple glazing over the coming years to ensure homes are as energy efficient as possible. However, this is a massive project and will involve prioritising key sites first. The houses will have windows replaced, but likely at a different time to the blocks.

Q. Who is responsible for snags after planned works have been carried out?

It is the contractor's responsibility to put right any faults, but it is our responsibility as a Council to make sure that they do. The contractor carries out the works and we inspect them to make sure they have met our standards.

WHO TO CONTACT OVER CHRISTMAS

The site will be closed over the Christmas holidays from 24 December to 4 January.

Glenman will have roaming security on site over that period, but if there are any emergencies relating to the construction site, please contact:

- Nick Kidsley - **07940 746483** or
- John Beglane **07904 867942**.

If you need to contact us, please call the Reading Borough Council Property Development Team via the switchboard on **0118 9373737**.

STAY IN TOUCH

We're keen to ensure we have up-to-date contact information so we can let you know any information quickly and easily about the changes to the estate as they happen.

Please email Mary Hull – mary.hull@reading.gov.uk - with your name, address, mobile number and preferred email address or go to www.reading.gov.uk/wensleysignup to complete a short form.

WORKING STANDARDS AND CONTINUITY

We are establishing a Tenant Panel – up to 12 tenants who will work with us throughout the improvements to the blocks including being involved in the selection of the contractors, commenting on designs and service and monitoring the works. Training will be provided. If you would like to be considered as a panel member please contact Mary Hull: mary.hull@reading.gov.uk, text **07834335309** or call **01189 372730**.

