

# John Barker Place Redevelopment Update



*Work began on 18 January 2021*

**We're delighted to share the first update of 2022 on the development of John Barker Place.**

Just over a year ago, we started working on the development of the new homes and shops at John Barker Place with our contractor, Jarvis. We've certainly come a long way since then.

We're looking forward to completing Phase 1 of the development in early summer 2022, which will become home to the residents at Westmill Lawns. The local convenience store will move across and open in the new development at the end of February and a new takeaway will open in the spring. Work on Phase 2, where the existing shops and flats are currently sitting, is planned to begin this spring.

Inside, there's a summary of the construction work scheduled to take place between now and the beginning of April 2022, we share updated plans for Phase 3 and 4 of the development, and share some community news.

As always, if you have any questions, please get in touch, our contact details are on the back of this leaflet.

**settle.**

## MP visit marks progress at new development

We were delighted to recently show Bim Afolami, MP for Hitchin and Harpenden, around our development at John Barker Place in Hitchin. Colleagues from our development team at settle and Jarvis joined Bim during his latest visit to the site. We were able to show Bim progress across the development including the first show flat.



Bim commented: "It was fantastic to see the great progress that had been made by settle and Jarvis on John Barker Place. The new development is a great investment into the Westmill Community in Hitchin and I look forward to visiting again in due course as the project approaches its completion."

## Names of new buildings at John Barker Place revealed

Last year we asked residents from Westmill Lawns to help us select names for the new blocks at John Barker Place, which we are delighted to reveal now.

- **Phase 1** will be called Kingfisher House and become home to the residents at Westmill Lawns.
- **Phase 2A & 2B** the new building that will replace the current row of shops and flats on John Barker Place will have two entrances. The building on the left side will be called Oughton Court and the block with the entrance on the right is to be named Cornmill House.
- **Phase 2C** the new building that will sit behind Phase 2A will also have two entrances, the building on the left will be named Reed House and properties on the right - Willow Court. The road between Kingfisher House and Oughton Court and behind Reed House and Willow Court will be named Kingfisher View. See plan below for more details.





## Construction update from January 2022 to April 2022

Throughout the development Jarvis have been working hard to stay on track with the construction timeline. Some of the scheduled work has been slightly delayed due to ongoing challenges with supply chains and Covid, but we remain on track to complete the overall development as planned in early summer.

Here are details of some of the work you can expect to see taking place between now and April 2022.

- Continuation of roof finishes to terrace areas
- Complete installation of solar panels
- Fitting of weighted handrails
- Dismantling of scaffold to main roof level
- Testing sprinklers on all levels
- Completion of internal walls and plastering
- Completion of ground floor shop, by end of February 2022
- Completion of main roof finishes
- Installation of electrical meters
- Testing all mechanical and electrical items
- Removal of crane on 25 February
- Finalising show flat for Westmill Lawns residents to view from mid-February.



- **Over 110,000 bricks have been laid**
- **164 external windows and doors installed**
- **200 lorry trips made to site carrying concrete for the piled frame and to support on-site drainage**
- **111 solar panels installed to the roof**
- **60 operatives, due to peak at 80**
- **15,000 cups of tea and coffee have been drunk on site!**

## Jarvis score an excellent from Considerate Constructors Scheme



In November 2021 Jarvis, received an excellent site report from the Considerate Constructors Scheme visit that took place the September before. The Considerate Constructors Scheme looks to raise the standards of the construction industry and encourage best practice beyond industry requirements.

An external auditor looked at five different headings; Appearance, Community, Environment, Safety and Workforce, with each score out of nine depending on how compliant Jarvis are.

Site manager Chris and the team received a total score of 41 out of a possible 45 and an overall review of 'Excellent'. The auditor noted how clean and tidy the site facilities were, the efforts undertaken to ensure communication with the local residents, and the level of cooperation provided by the site team to ensure it's an open operating environment for discussion.

A second visit took place on 21 January 2022. We will share the results as soon as we are able to.

# Future investment in John Barker Place

## New homes on site of Freemans Close

Outline planning permission was granted in 2020 for a third phase of development at John Barker Place to provide 49 new affordable homes on the site of Freemans Close. We're currently preparing the reserved matters application which will be submitted to North Herts Council in March this year. Subject to approval, work will begin on site in 2023, once Phase 2 is complete. The proposed properties will provide a mixture of social rent and shared ownership homes which we expect to be completed in 2025.



Number 6 shows Phase 3



1. Kingfisher House
2. Oughton Court
3. Cornmill House
4. Reed House
5. Willow Court
6. Phase 3

## Ongoing repairs

Whilst we're still in the beginning stages of proposed plans to develop these homes, we want to remind residents to continue to contact us if any repairs to the property are needed. We'll consider the necessary work that is required to help you to live comfortably in your home. We'll continue to get in touch directly with residents about updates on proposals to invest in the development of individual homes.

## John Barker Place and Westmill Road

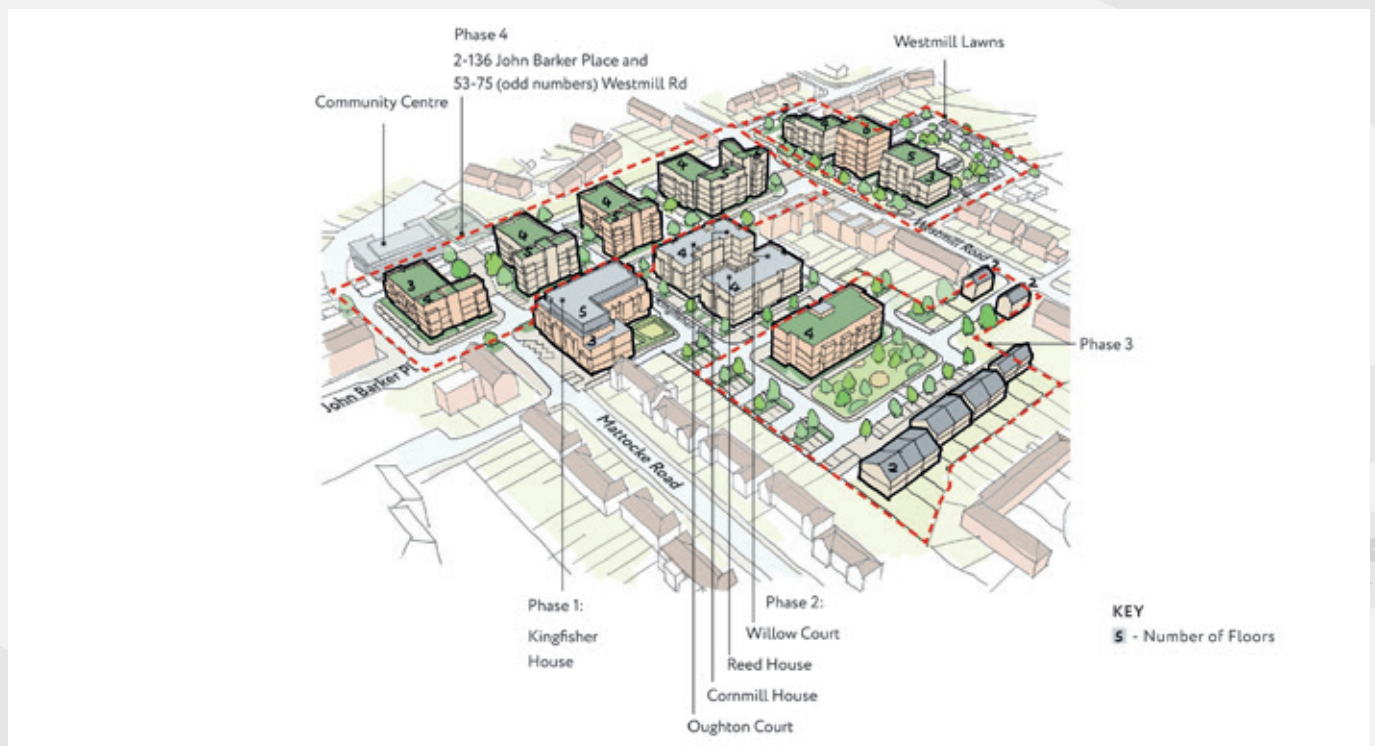
Towards the end of last year, we invited residents to an exhibition in the Westmill Community Centre to see the proposed plans and images for investment in homes at John Barker Place and Westmill Road. These are available to view on our website –

[www.settlegroup.org.uk/proposed-plans-for-jbp-westmill-road](http://www.settlegroup.org.uk/proposed-plans-for-jbp-westmill-road)

Initial plans include proposals to invest in the development of properties 2 to 136 John Barker Place (opposite the new development) and 53 to 75 Westmill Road (odd numbers only) and the site of the Westmill Lawns retirement living scheme.

We have received some feedback and are planning another exhibition to take place at the end of February 2022. Revised plans and images, which have been updated in line with the public feedback will be on display. Everyone from the Westmill community will be invited to look and comment on proposed plans.

If in the meantime, you would like to make suggestions regarding the redevelopment, please send us an email or contact **Tim (07938 378409)** or **Anne (07514 647401)**.



## Travel Plan in place

As part of the original planning application for the new development at John Barker Place, settle have submitted a travel plan to North Herts Council. A travel plan is a strategy for managing travel demand to a development site by addressing the travel needs of its users. It also includes ideas to reduce the impact of car travel by promoting and facilitating the use of sustainable modes of transport, encouraging a reduced travel need and increasing sustainable travel practices where appropriate. This is a live document and regularly monitored and reviewed. Tim Porter, head of regeneration at settle will be responsible for implementing and monitoring the travel plan through collaboration with residents. Over the coming months we will start to share information on the targets set in the travel plan and how residents can get involved to support this.



# Community News

## News from the Westmill Community Centre

All the regular groups have returned for 2022, apart from the toddler stay and play class - Cha Cha Chimps. The centre are looking for volunteers to get the class up and running again, if you've got some free time and would like to help, please contact Nadine at the community centre for more information by emailing [informationwestmillcentre@LIVE.CO.UK](mailto:informationwestmillcentre@LIVE.CO.UK).

Volunteers at the centre are collecting food donations for their food pantry to get the Family Lunch Club running again in time for Easter in mid-April and are looking for tinned and dried food donations.

The over 55's Friendship Club, which takes place on Tuesdays between 2-4pm are looking for more members. This is a social group where members can play bingo, have a chat and go on organised day trips away. If anyone wants to join, they can contact Nadine through the email address above.

North Herts Healthy Hub are running community wellbeing days at the community centre. The next session is on 7 February which includes 'Making a memory book for adults' from 11 to 12.30pm and 'Managing anxiety for adults' between 1pm to 2.20pm. To pre-book, contact [healthyhub@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:healthyhub@north-herts.gov.uk) or call **01462-474111**.

Create Community have started monthly meetings at the centre. If you're looking to meet new people and find out more about getting back into employment - come along. The next meetings will take place on 17 February and 17 March from 10am to 1 pm. Email [becky@create-community.co.uk](mailto:becky@create-community.co.uk) or call **07305 706412** for more information.

Settle neighbourhood officer, Michelle, will be at the Westmill Community Centre again every Thursday from 9am to 1pm if any settle resident would like to pop in and have a chat with her.

The centre manager, Nadine is also delighted to announce that a defibrillator will be fitted at the centre following a number of fundraising events in the local community, including quiz nights, raffles and nearly new sales. Thank you to everyone who was involved.

Notices of all the other group meetings that take place at the centre can be found on the website [www.westmillcommunitycentre.com/groups-clubs](http://www.westmillcommunitycentre.com/groups-clubs). You can also pop by and have a look at the community centre noticeboard. While there, take the opportunity to browse through the library of donated books in the foyer. Books can be donated, borrowed and swapped!

## Resident Steering Group update

The Resident Steering Group continue to meet monthly to share feedback and queries from residents on the redevelopment of homes at John Baker Place. New members are very welcome to join the group and help shape the redevelopment so that it brings benefits to the everybody in the community.

Please send an email to [johnbarkerplace@settlegroup.org.uk](mailto:johnbarkerplace@settlegroup.org.uk) if you are interested in attending or joining.

## Students from Priory School talk plans with development landscaper

The team of Year 8 students from The Priory School in Hitchin, who won their bid to design the residents' communal garden at Kingfisher House recently met with the landscape company, Land Structure Ltd to discuss their ideas. A plan will now be put together by Managing Director, Mike Miller and shared with the students and the residents for feedback in the coming weeks.

Sally Emler, Raising Aspirations

Co-ordinator at the Priory School said:

"The students are really excited about this project and enjoy meeting the residents – I think we underestimate the relationships that can be built between young and old. The fact that the children can take part in a project like this is great as it also opens their eyes to a possible career path they could follow."



## Your ideas for investment in the Westmill neighbourhood

We recently ran a survey and shared the feedback from residents in the Westmill community on where you think investment is needed to help make a difference to the area.

The top three priorities where residents wanted to see improvement were around speeding and parking, safety and estate appearance. You can also see a summary of these ideas on our website - [www.settlegroup.org.uk/westmill](http://www.settlegroup.org.uk/westmill). Some areas are the responsibilities of other local organisations and we remain committed to working with them to help make sure the Westmill community is a great place to live.

We want to hear more from you on the things that have already been suggested. We've organised two drop-in sessions in February, giving you the opportunity to come and share your views, exchange ideas on ways we can work together to improve on areas in need of investment.

Sessions will take place on **Saturday, 19 February 10 – 1pm** and **Thursday, 24 February 3-7pm** in the Purple room at the Westmill Community Centre, Rear of John Barker Place, Hitchin, SG5 2PG.

If you are not able to make these sessions and would like to get in touch, please send us an email to [westmillinvestment@settlegroup.org.uk](mailto:westmillinvestment@settlegroup.org.uk) or call us on 0330 343 0016.

We will keep you updated as plans progress. Information will also be available on the website - [www.settlegroup.org.uk/westmill](http://www.settlegroup.org.uk/westmill).

## Things we're working on now

A team of settle colleagues recently spent a couple of days tidying up alleyways across the Westmill estate to help improve their appearance. We've also started looking at some other things we can do, including;

- Rewilding some of the larger grassed areas on the estate to help encourage insects and wildlife
- More alleyway clean-ups and engagement with local residents to help address concerns in partnership with local organisations
- Working with North Herts Council to address litter concerns and reviewing sites of current bins, plans for more litter picks and a recycling bin area on the estate
- Visible advertising of community centre activities on local noticeboards.

## New face on site

Alex started working as a gatekeeper in early December 2021 as part of the government Kickstart scheme. Jarvis recruited Alex through the scheme, which provides funding to help organisations create new jobs for 16 to 24-year olds on Universal Credit. Alex explains what his daily job entails and how Jarvis are supporting him.

“My job is mainly opening and closing gates for vehicles like the forklift truck and occasionally helping with other things like picking up litter around the site and sweeping up. Jarvis have been flexible and supportive with my hours, which is important to me.

“Something I find really interesting about the job is when I am asked to go into the building. It’s nice to see the progress and see the things you don’t think about happening – like the pipes in the walls and electrics. I would like to learn more about plumbing or electricals. It would also be nice to learn how to drive the forklift!”

**Chris Creighton, site manager**, said: “We’ve always looked to provide local employment opportunities across our projects, so were delighted to work with the government's Kickstart initiative to advertise this opportunity and bring Alex on board.

“We will continue to provide Alex with a wider understanding of the construction process and help inform him on the next steps he can take in his career.”

To find out more about apprenticeship and work placement opportunities, send us an email explaining the type of role you would be interested in and your experience to: [johnbarkerplace@settlegroup.org.uk](mailto:johnbarkerplace@settlegroup.org.uk)



## Practice Fire Drill at John Barker Place

Herts Fire and Rescue Service recently carried out a practice fire drill in the flats over the existing shops at John Barker Place.

Station Commander for Hitchin and Royston Fire Stations, Clive Robinson said: “It is great for our crews to have the opportunity to train in a realistic environment. This involved crews from Hitchin, Baldock and Stevenage, which would be a realistic response to an incident of this nature in North Herts. Crews are observed searching in breathing apparatus while other crew members ensure that a suitable command structure is established. This allows safe systems of work to be employed throughout a dynamic, evolving incident.”



## Stay in touch

We will provide regular updates as the development work at John Barker Place continues. If you’d like to get involved and share your feedback, we’d love to hear from you.



You can keep up to date with the project by visiting [www.settlegroup.org.uk/jbp](http://www.settlegroup.org.uk/jbp)



We have set up a dedicated email address for any questions or feedback [johnbarkerplace@settlegroup.org.uk](mailto:johnbarkerplace@settlegroup.org.uk)



You can also call us on **0330 343 0016** if you want to talk through anything - ask for **Tim** or **Anne**.