



# HOUSING NEWS

## Lower Oldpark

August 2020. Lower Oldpark Community Association, 9-23 Avoca Street, Belfast BT14 6EN. Tel: 02890351334. Email: loweroldparkhousing@gmail.com

### Cliftonpark Avenue Site Developer Finally Selected

The Housing Executive (NIHE) has selected the developer for the site at the junction of Crumlin Road/ Cliftonpark Avenue / Landscape Terrace. The appointed company is Landscape Enterprise Ltd of 95 Crumlin Road (the site of the existing petrol station and Spar shop).

The final NIHE internal decision on who would be developing the site was made in late September 2020. The solicitors for the NIHE and the developer will now complete the conveyance process.

Landscape Enterprises Ltd is headed by Director Gavan Wall who owns the existing petrol station and Spar shop at the Crumlin Road/ Landscape Terrace junction. It has planning permission to build a new petrol station and Spar retail unit on the green space fronting onto the Crumlin Road. Behind this, running along Cliftonpark Avenue, it will be building 6 new three-bedroom private homes.

On completion of the new petrol station and the 6 homes, the existing petrol station will be demolished and Landscape Enterprise Ltd will develop 4 new houses on the site.

Gavan Wall advised Lower Oldpark Community Association that he expected to begin building work on the petrol station and the 6 houses early in 2021.

### Many Thanks To Contractor

Lower Oldpark Community Association (LOCA) would like to extend a big thank you to the contractor building the houses at the Cliftonpark Avenue/ Oldpark Road junction.

Brendan Loughran and Sons Ltd bought a range of gardening equipment for LOCA to use for its Gardening Equipment Lending Service. This service, which will allow residents to borrow gardening equipment at no cost to themselves, is able to begin this year because of the invaluable help from the building contractor.

### Bathroom Kitchen Replacement Scheme Ongoing

Phase One of a two phase scheme to replace bathroom and kitchen facilities in Housing Executive properties in Lower Oldpark began on 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2020 and Phase Two is expected to start on 12th October 2020. In total, 117 NIHE properties are in the scheme, 56 in Phase One and 61 in Phase Two.

The work involves the provision of new, modern kitchen units with splash back wall tiles and new floor covering. Bathrooms will get new modern baths/ shower units (depending on what is currently in place), sinks, toilets, wall tiles and flooring. Some properties are also having internal partition walls that had been removed by tenants reinstated. This is essential for health and safety reasons.

The programme of when work in each property in Phase Two will start hasn't been finalised yet. The contractor continues to call with Phase Two tenants to agree things like colour of kitchen units and floor covering. The contractor will provide tenants with exact start dates and relevant notice. The Housing Executive will be writing to tenants whose homes are included in the scheme.

The contractor is Mascot. Its Tenant Liaison Officer, Sarah Acheson, and scheme forman, Paul Harley, will be able to help with any problems. You can also contact the Lower Oldpark Community Association Housing Project Worker, Gary Hughes, on 028 351334 or mobile 028 96928293, or the NIHE Patch Manager, Martin McClure, on 028 95982761.

### Courts' Project Progress

Lagan Construction has been appointed as the contractor to deliver the long awaited Lower Oldpark Courts' Environmental Improvement Scheme.

The Department for Communities (Building Successful Communities - BSC) informed Lower Oldpark Community Association (LOCA) that the company has been appointed to carry out work in seven Lower Oldpark housing courts. The courts affected by the scheme are Foyle, Shannon (including 1-11 Shannon Street), Bann, Liffey, Bandon, Manor and Southport.

A start date at the end of the of November 2020 for the whole scheme is under consideration. Start dates for work in each court have to be finalised. LOCA will update residents as more information becomes available. The contract for the work in all seven courts is expected to last 44 weeks. The contractor can work in up to three courts at a time. It currently isn't known how long work in each court will take.

The scheme will involve the removal of all existing hard surfaces and planted areas in each court and their replacement with new shared pedestrian / vehicle surfaces. Also, new pedestrian walkways will make sure that there is wheelchair access to all homes. There will also be car parking areas, occasional trees and new street lighting.

LOCA has asked that residents are invited to information sessions for their individual courts before work begins. For more information, contact:

- Darrell Black of the Department for Communities – Building Successful Communities) on 028 90515309 or;
- LOCA Housing Project Worker Gary Hughes on 028 90351334 or 028 96928293.

## Housing On the Bonfire Site

Lower Oldpark Community Association (LOCA) has been in discussions with the Housing Executive about the development of owner-occupier housing, including affordable housing, on the open green space site bounded by the Oldpark Road peace wall, Mountview Street, Manor Drive and Manor Street. The site is sometimes known as 'The Bonfire Site'.

The site could take between 25 and 30 three-bedroom family homes. These houses would replace the 37 Housing Executive properties demolished about 15 years ago. Many people will remember this housing in the former Mountview Court, Beechpark Street and Beechnut Place.

Any new housing development on the site would not affect the current Oldpark Road peace wall arrangement. If, at a future date, Lower Oldpark residents chose to have access directly onto the

Oldpark Road, the design of the housing could allow for this.

Before any private housing development on the site could take place, the site would have to be released on the open market for sale, a developer selected, plans drawn up and planning permission obtained.

LOCA would like to hold a consultation meeting for residents to give their views on this proposed use of the site, but, given the Coronavirus restrictions, this isn't possible. However, LOCA would like to receive your views by:

- Email [loweroldparkhousing@gmail.com](mailto:loweroldparkhousing@gmail.com)
- Facebook @loweroldparkhousing
- Phone 02890351334/ 02896928293
- Drop a note in to LOCA's office at 9-23 Avoca Street BT14 6EN

Send your comments to the Lower Oldpark Housing Project Worker, Gary Hughes.

## Social Housing Scheme Progress

A planning application for the development of 12 new social houses in Lower Oldpark has been submitted to Belfast City Council (BCC).

If approved, the proposed development would take place on the open green space fronting onto Manor Street, Alloa Street and the former Annalee Court.

The developer, Clanmil Housing, submitted the planning application following the completion of a community consultation carried out by Lower Oldpark Community Association

(LOCA). Consultation forms were distributed to Lower Oldpark houses on the north side of the Oldpark Road on 26<sup>th</sup> August 2020 and occupants invited to provide feedback by 11<sup>th</sup> September 2020. Large copies of the plans were made available in the Community Centre in Avoca Street. Also, all the plans and drawings were made available on the LOCA website at <https://loweroldparkhousing.co.uk/news-2>. No negative responses were received. It is unclear, at present, how long a decision by BCC on the planning application will take.

## Affordable Housing Scheme

It is hoped that the development of five affordable owner-occupier homes at the Cliftonpark Avenue/ Oldpark Road junction will be completed before Christmas 2020.

The developer, Apex Housing, put the houses on the open market in June 2020. Lower Oldpark Community Association (LOCA) put a note out telling local people about the houses being on the

market.

Apex put the houses on the market again in early September 2020. LOCA has been trying to ensure that those people who registered an interest in June or July don't have to register again. Apex Housing has failed to co-operate with LOCA on this, so LOCA will be addressing this.

## Appeal For Children To Stay Out

Lower Oldpark Community Association (LOCA) is calling on children and young people to stay out of the building site at the junction of Oldpark Road and Cliftonpark Avenue.

Some children and young people have been using the houses under construction as a hideaway place. The problem is that they are putting themselves at risk as building sites can be dangerous places. There is also the potential for damage to the houses. LOCA is also asking parents to discourage their children from going onto the site.

## LOCA Responds To Crumlin Road Proposals

Lower Oldpark Community Association (LOCA) has responded to a planning application for a social housing scheme by NB Housing.

The application, which was received by Belfast City Council (BCC) Planning Department on 4<sup>th</sup> March 2020, is for the development of 14 units of accommodation on the vacant site lying between Century Street and Albertville Drive - 197-203 Crumlin Road. The proposal includes 9 two-bedroom houses, 3 three-bedroom houses and 2 one-bedroom apartments.

LOCA became aware of the application from BCC's planning website on 25<sup>th</sup> May 2020. BCC sent out community consultation letters on 26<sup>th</sup> May 2020. LOCA submitted its response on 4<sup>th</sup> June 2020. This focused on the issue of parking provision for future and existing residents of Century Street and Albertville Drive. LOCA also highlighted the need for retail development on the Crumlin Road.

Full details of the application and LOCA's response are available at <http://epicpublic.planningni.gov.uk/publicaccess/>. The planning reference is LA04/2020/0754/F. A summary of LOCA's concerns can be found on the Lower Oldpark Housing website <https://loweroldparkhousing.co.uk/news-2>

LOCA previously highlighted to NB Housing the need for a scheme that was mostly three-bedroom housing. NB Housing made no amendments to the housing mix in response.