

The Leaseholder(s)

Wandsworth Council

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Dear Leaseholder(s),

Section 20 – Goulden House, Ventilation Project (Phase 2)

Further to my letter dated 11th June 2026 regarding the above scheme, the Council has received a number of observations from leaseholders following the drop-in consultation meeting held on 2nd July 2026. These observations are currently being reviewed and considered.

In view of this, it has been agreed to extend the consultation period by an additional **four** weeks, expiring on Friday 21st August 2026.

I have included below a summary of the questions raised with the Council's response provided beneath each question.

1. Why is the Council proposing individual ventilation systems rather than retaining the communal system?

The Council's current position is that the existing communal ventilation system is no longer considered a practical long-term solution due to its age, condition, design limitations and difficulties with ongoing maintenance. It cannot be brought in line with current standards without major disruption to residents.

On this basis, the proposed solution was to abandon the existing central extract system and install individual extract ventilation systems to dwellings and the initial survey into whether we could repair the system was abandoned once it was clear that the cost, and the resulting charges to leaseholders, would be unjustifiable.

At the consultation meeting on the 2nd of July 2026, residents challenged this position and asked whether the communal system could be repaired, cleaned, renewed or upgraded instead of installing individual systems within flats. The Council and its technical consultants have advised that the existing system has defects and is increasingly difficult to maintain effectively with large numbers of sections inaccessible for cleaning.

Executive Director of Housing: Paul Chadwick

2. Are residents asking the Council to reconsider the communal ventilation option?

A key concern raised by eleven residents was that they remain unconvinced that individual ventilation systems are the only viable option. Those residents requested further information on alternatives, including cost comparisons, technical reports, survey findings, fire safety assessments and camera survey footage where available.

In addition, they asked whether the Council could obtain costs for a wider survey exercise to assess whether the existing communal system could still be retained. Camera survey and detailed ductwork survey reports have since been shared with the Co-op and will be uploaded by Annie Gleeson onto the Co-op's website alongside the previous documentation found at www.gouldenhouse.org/Ventilation-scheme.

On review of these concerns, the Council has since formally instructed the Consultant to provide a revised feasibility report with the associated fees to retain the existing communal system.

3. Will the Council carry out a full survey of every flat to see if the communal system can be retained?

The Council has since obtained costs for further investigations based on advice from the project team; it is not necessary to survey every property. Instead, a representative sample of flats will be inspected, supported by the extensive records, drawings and documentation already held for the building's ventilation system. This approach will provide sufficient information to assess the condition, layout and viability of the existing communal system and determine whether retention is a feasible option.

4. Does opting in to the current individual system mean I agree with the proposed scope of works?

No. If the scheme proceeds in its current format, the opt-in/opt-out exercise is intended to identify the number of leaseholders who want the Council's contractor to install the individual ventilation system within their property. It does not prevent leaseholders from continuing to raise observations, objections or concerns as part of the Section 20 consultation. Leaseholders can still participate in the consultation process regardless of whether they indicate an opt-in or opt-out preference.

5. Why were only representative surveys used rather than every property being surveyed?

Residents raised concerns that flat layouts vary across the block and that sample designs may not accurately reflect every property. Officers advised that a small percentage of surveys were carried out, but not every property type was surveyed individually due to the sheer number of variations within the building, however the majority of variations are minimal in design.

The system is generally uniform throughout the fabric of the building, with the main variations relating to riser access. As the ventilation system rises through the building in a consistent way, surveying a representative selection of properties was sufficient to inform the design approach while helping to minimise rechargeable initial survey costs to leaseholders.

In addition, the Council holds the original building design drawings for the ventilation system, which provided further information on the layout and routing of the existing system throughout the building. These records, together with the representative surveys undertaken, enabled the consultants to develop proposals without the need to inspect every individual property.

Before any works are undertaken, the contractor must survey each dwelling to identify proposed ductwork routes, affected services, extract equipment, power, switches, controls, boxing-in, fire-stopping locations, making good and decorating works. Survey and working drawings must be submitted to the Contract Administrator/client for approval before any works commence.

6. Will the proposed works damage fixtures, fittings, shelving or decorations?

Residents raised concerns about disruption inside homes, including the impact on existing layouts, fixtures, fittings, shelving and decorative finishes.

The specification requires the contractor to protect finishes, floors and walls before starting works. Any damage caused by inadequate protection would need to be rectified and made good at the contractor's cost. Repairs should be to the same standard and aesthetic appearance as the original finish.

Before works start in each dwelling, the contractor must carry out a photographic condition survey. A final photographic survey is also required after completion, so there is a record of the property's condition before and after the works. Any damage disputes can be raised with the Project Controller and reviewed against the pre/post photographic survey reports.

7. Will every flat have the same duct route?

No. The dwelling plans are indicative only, they show sample property types and possible service routes for tendering purposes and state that the layout may not necessarily reflect the exact flat type or layout in any dwelling.

If the scheme proceeds, the contractor must survey every dwelling and produce proposed layouts for client approval before undertaking works. Residents specifically raised concerns about differing layouts, internal duct routes, external terminations and the visual impact of the proposed works.

8. What happens if a dwelling does not require an individual fan?

At the meeting on the 2nd of July 2026, residents asked whether charges would apply where a fan was not required. Officers advised that all properties require an individual arrangement as the communal system will be fully decommissioned.

9. What are residents' future maintenance responsibilities if individual systems are installed?

Concerns about ongoing maintenance, servicing obligations and potential future costs after the contractor warranty period expires were raised. The current specification includes a 12-month rectification period following practical completion.

After the warranty period, routine maintenance is not expected to be required for the mechanical extractor fan, other than repairs in the event of a failure and grilles will need to be cleaned only when necessary.

10. Why was T Brown Group included in the tender process despite resident concerns?

Residents raised concerns about T Brown Group, including dissatisfaction with previous duct survey works, concerns expressed by the Goulden House Management Committee and negative online reviews of the company.

The Council has carefully considered these comments and recognises the importance of resident confidence in any contractor appointed to undertake major works.

The Council is required to procure major works in accordance with public procurement legislation and the statutory Section 20 consultation requirements. Any contractor appointed must therefore be made through a compliant procurement process, with decisions taken fairly, transparently and in accordance with the relevant legal and contractual requirements.

The online reviews relate to T Brown's domestic heating and repair services which are not representative of the company's commercial and major works operations which are delivered by different teams under different contractual arrangements. As such, the reviews are not representative of the company's experience in delivering large-scale communal building services projects.

T Brown has successfully delivered several major mechanical and engineering projects for Wandsworth Council and has demonstrated its technical capability and resources to carry out complex communal building services works necessary to undertake complex communal building services works.

Should the company be appointed, its performance would be managed through robust contract management, regular inspections, quality assurance checks and ongoing monitoring to ensure compliance with the specification and contract requirements.

11. Why is the Council considering the lowest tender?

Residents made clear that they were not simply asking for the cheapest option and that the lowest-priced tender is not always the best option.

Under the Council's Code of Practice for the Procurement of Goods, Works and Services, where the estimated value of Works is over £207,720, officers are required to seek tenders from a minimum of 6 companies and Council project officers are allowed to nominate for inclusion in the list up to four companies, who in their opinion and based on their past experience, have the proven technical ability and financial acumen to undertake works of the type, size and value to be procured.

In addition, dependent on the number of companies who are nominated, further companies to make the numbers up to six are selected on a purely random basis from Constructionline, which is a government approved online web portal providing nationwide listings of companies who are able to undertake schemes of works in various technical disciplines and who are pre-qualified as meeting strict technical and financial standards.

Each of the companies who are invited to tender, whether nominated by project officers or randomly selected from Constructionline are positively asked if they wish to be included in the tender list before being invited to tender. Companies often decline to be included depending on issues such as current workloads etc. It is therefore assumed that they will submit a tender accordingly if so invited. This transactional part of the procurement process is undertaken by the Council's Central Procurement Section based within the Council's Finance Department.

In relation to the tender list for the proposed works at Goulden House, we invited eight contractors and of the eight companies who were invited to tender Clairglow Heating, T Brown Group, Westminster Building Services and BTU (Installation and Maintenance) were officer nominated companies. The remaining companies were all drawn at random from Constructionline.

Each was identified as being of the right size and having the necessary technical experience and financial standing to undertake the works and each confirmed on being approached and being advised of the nature, size and scope of the works, that they wished to be included on the tender list.

12. Why did some contractors decline to tender?

Residents requested clarification on why some contractors did not submit tender returns. Contractors are not usually required to provide detailed reasons for declining to tender, and it is not unusual for invited contractors to decide not to submit a bid.

A contractor may decide not to submit a tender for several reasons, including existing workload pressures, limited available resources, programme constraints or a decision that the project is not suitable for their business at that time.

13. Have residents' previous comments and observations been responded to?

The Council has reviewed the consultation records and is satisfied that responses were issued within the applicable target timescales. If any Leaseholder believes that a specific query has not been responded to, they are encouraged to resend the email or confirm the date it was submitted so this can be checked and responded to. The Council will then review its records and provide a response where appropriate.

14. Residents feel there has been a lack of engagement

Residents expressed dissatisfaction with what they consider to be a lack of engagement from the Council. This included concerns about whether residents had received sufficient technical information, survey findings, fire safety information, cost comparisons and clear explanations about the tender and opt-in/opt-out process.

At the meeting on the 2nd of July 2026, residents requested further information, including cost comparisons, technical reports, survey findings, fire risk assessments, camera survey footage where available and further information about alternative options.

Please refer to point 2 above. Following the consultation meeting held on 2nd July 2026, leaseholders requested that alternative feasibility options be explored. Revised proposals, together with the Consultant's associated fees, were subsequently received for the Council's consideration. They have now been formally instructed to proceed with a costed feasibility to retain the existing communal system.

15. Has fire safety been considered?

Fire safety was raised by residents in relation to the existing ducts and the proposed works. The proposed specification includes fire-stopping requirements where ductwork, penetrations or openings affect fire-rated elements. It also requires roof-level apertures left by removal of existing plant to be fire-stopped and weatherproofed.

All fire-stopping requirements arising directly from these works will be completed in full compliance with current fire safety regulations by a qualified specialist subcontractor and supported by all relevant certifications.

16. Has the building insurer been informed about the condition of the ventilation ducts?

Residents have asked whether Zurich, as the building insurance provider, has been made aware of any potential fire risks associated with the ducts.

The Council can confirm that Zurich has not been separately notified regarding the current existing condition of the ventilation ducts. As part of the insurance renewal process, the Council provides Zurich Municipal with relevant underwriting and construction information.

Zurich Municipal reviews the information provided and may raise further queries where clarification is required. The new ventilation system will be installed in accordance with current fire safety requirements, including all necessary fire-stopping measures.

17. What will happen where residents have already opted out and arranged their own contractor?

Residents raised concerns that some leaseholders may proceed with their own private installations before the Council has responded to the wider issues raised at the meeting.

Leaseholders who have already returned a ballot form indicating that they wish to opt out and arrange their own contractor to carry out the works remain responsible for ensuring any privately arranged system complies with the Council's requirements, building regulations, external ventilation requirements and inspection/approval requirements. They will still contribute to the maintenance charge through their annual service charge.

18. Was the consultation meeting a “paper exercise”?

Residents expressed concern that their objections and alternative proposals were not being taken seriously at the meeting held on the 2nd of July 2026. The purpose of these proposed works is to ensure that properties are provided with an effective ventilation system serving the properties at Goulden House and to meet the statutory and regulatory requirements.

Section 20 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 requires the Council to consult leaseholders on the proposed works, the estimated costs and to consider any observations received during the consultation process. The consultation process remains open until **21st August 2026** and feedback received during the consultation period will be reviewed before any final decision is made.

Goulden House Phase 2 Ventilation Works: Technical FAQ

What does removal of the existing central system include?

The works include mechanical and electrical isolation, removal and safe disposal of the existing central roof-mounted extract plant and removal of associated power supplies, controls, isolators, cable containment, cable management systems and cabling back to the electrical distribution board serving those systems. The Section 20 cost schedule describes removal of 16 existing centralised extract plant items.

What happens to the holes and roof areas left by removing the old plant?

The work spec requires the space vacated by the system removal to be made good. Ductwork holes are to be sealed and fully fire-stopped to 2 hours, made good, and the roof surface weather-proofed to match the existing roof finish, described as hot finished asphalt/bitumen. The Section 20 schedule separately includes 2-hour fire-rated stopping of apertures formed at roof level and re-weathering using asphalt and hot bitumen to make all apertures weathertight.

What new system will each dwelling receive?

Leaseholders who opt-in will receive a new, fully controlled, ducted mechanical extract system with an in-line fan. The system will combine and extract foul air from the bathroom and WC areas and discharge it safely to an outside wall or facade via a single purpose-made air duct, in accordance with Building Regulations Approved Document Part F. Leaseholders who opt-out will be responsible for arranging their own mechanical extractor system that adheres to the specification.

Will contractors need access inside my flat?

Yes, if your dwelling is included in the in-dwelling ventilation installation. Access is required for survey, drawing production, installation of extract fan/ducting/controls, builders' works, fire-stopping, boxing-in, making good, decoration, testing and commissioning.

Will work in my flat be left unfinished?

No, the specification requires each discipline of work to each dwelling to be continuous once commenced through to completion. It also limits the contractor to working on a maximum of five dwellings at any one time. Each dwelling should be left clean, habitable and safe at the end of each visit.

What protection will be used in flats?

Before undertaking works, the contractor must provide full protection to finishes, floors and walls within each building/flat. Damage resulting from inadequate protection is to be rectified and made good at the contractor's cost. A condition survey with photos will be done before any work commences followed with post-completion photographs.

Will my property be left without lighting or power overnight?

No. The work specification states that at the end of each day, the contractor must ensure any affected power supplies are left in full operation and in a safe-to-use condition. No property is to be left without lighting or power overnight by the contractor.

What type of ductwork will be installed?

The work specification requires new internal ductwork within dwellings to be installed in rigid rectangular PVC ducting and fittings. The final section to the external terminal grille is an exception: a PVC-to-metal transition piece, a white powder-coated metal grille and a suitable metal sleeve are required where ducting passes through external walls.

Will the ductwork be left exposed?

No, all exposed ductwork will be boxed in on completion. Joints are to be made good and painted with primer and then two coats of white emulsion.

How will the ductwork be installed?

At high level from the bathroom WC through to the nearest external wall where it drops down to low level below the window, ductwork and fittings must be adequately supported, installed straight in horizontal and/or vertical planes, and arranged in a neat and workmanlike manner.

Supports must accommodate movement caused by thermal change and isolate ducts from the structure to prevent noise or abrasion.

How will fire-stopping be dealt with?

All fire-stopping arising as a result of these works is built into the specified works. Where new service ductwork passes through fire break walls, slabs, voids or barriers, the sleeve must provide a minimum clearance of 10mm around the duct and the clearance must be packed from both ends with suitable fire-stopping material, such as intumescent mastic or fire collars, to provide fire integrity equal to the wall, slab or barrier being crossed.

What about holes through walls, floors, ceilings, voids or roofs?

All holes where ductwork, boxing, containment or trunking passes through walls, slabs, floors, voids, ceilings or roofs will be sealed with fire-retardant non-setting mastic to fulfil fire-stopping requirements. All holes through brick and block walls, will be diamond drilled. The fire integrity and rating of the element being crossed must be maintained.

Will there be a defects period?

The contract particulars in the mechanical specification state a 12-month rectification period following practical completion. Any defect reporting route should be confirmed in resident correspondence once the works are underway or completed.

Who will deal with resident appointments and complaints?

The contractor must provide a Resident Liaison Officer for the entire duration of the contract. The specification states the RLO is to have no duties other than access to accommodation, administration, settling complaints and other resident-related matters regarding installation of the new system.

Can the RLO visit outside normal hours?

The specification states the Resident Liaison Officer may be required to visit residents outside normal working hours where necessary. This is to support access and resident liaison, not to allow noisy works outside the specified working hours.

How will disruption be controlled?

The contractor must use method statements that explain work sequencing, noise minimisation, logistics, cleaning, protection, material delivery/removal and testing/commissioning strategy.

The specification also requires cleaning at the end of each shift and prohibits overnight storage of protection, equipment, plant, tools or materials within a building.

Any disruption to services will be notified in writing by the contractor in advance of a minimum of 72 hours.

Will noisy equipment be controlled?

The contractor's risk assessment and method statement (RAMS) will demonstrate how this has been factored into the works as is required under the specification.

The specification states that noise is to be minimised by installing the quietest available plant and equipment whilst satisfying the service requirements.

It also includes noise and vibration provisions requiring effective silencers for compressors, percussion tools and vehicles, and restrictions on radios/audio equipment where they may cause nuisance.

How much work can happen at once?

The contractor is limited to working on a maximum of five dwellings concurrently at any one time. This is intended to manage access, resident impact and quality control.

Will Community Fibre or similar cabling be protected?

The specification requires contractors to provide suitable protection to all services, plant and equipment surrounding all work areas.

It is not envisaged that any existing cabling, services, etc. not associated with this scheme will need to be moved temporarily, altered or relocated.

Kind Regards,



Ashraf Mimoune-Eloudghiri
Consultation Officer