

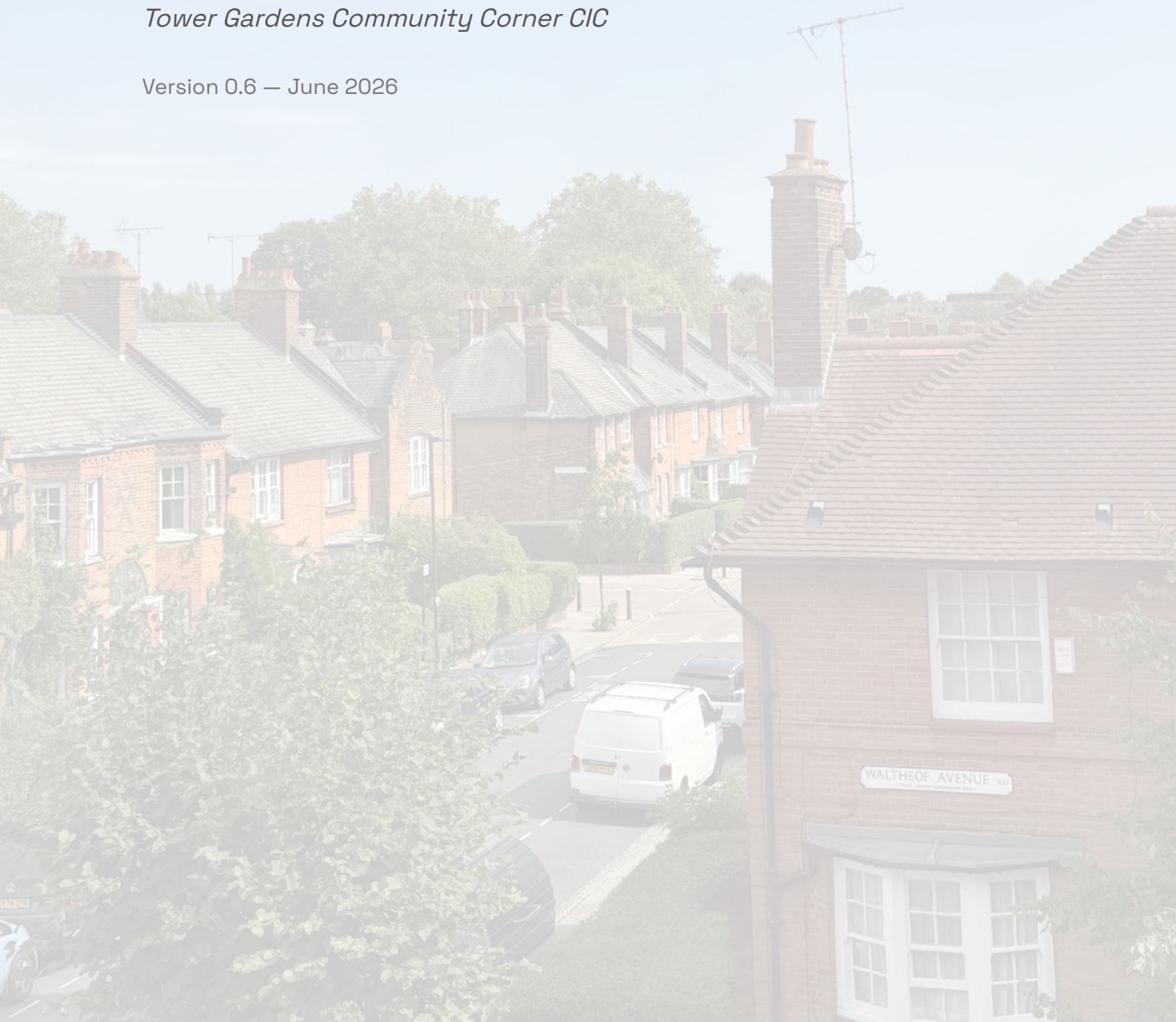


100 Tower Gardens Road

*A resident-led vision for 100 Tower Gardens Road,
the estate, and the whole neighbourhood*

Tower Gardens Community Corner CIC

Version 0.6 — June 2026



Our Vision for a Community Hub

Our Manifesto

The White Hart Lane ward, in which Tower Gardens is located, is one of the most deprived in Haringey and in England. It also has no general community space. The prominent building at 100 Tower Gardens Road — historically the estate office — has been left empty, deteriorating, and holding the lowest possible energy rating. With the building now on Haringey Council's disposals list, an opportunity has emerged to reclaim this local asset.

Tower Gardens Community Corner CIC is a resident-led Community Interest Company. Our Manifesto is simple: *We will purchase this historic asset, transform it through community action, and use operational surplus generated to invest in the health, sustainability, and resilience of Tower Gardens and the wider neighbourhood.*

Stages of Transformation

Stage 0: Getting Started

We are working with Haringey Council on a rent-to-buy proposal — a lease of five years, with an option to purchase. This would allow us to begin using the space straight away. This stage allows us to:

- **Activate the space:** Start running community activities, events, and programmes, delivering benefit to the neighbourhood immediately.
- **Build our volunteer base:** Grow the team of residents and supporters who will make the hub work in the long run.
- **Prove ourselves:** Demonstrate to the council, to funders, and to the wider community that we can run the building well — making the case for permanent ownership.
- **Unlock capital fundraising:** Create a track record of activity and income, which together with the option to purchase, is essential for the fundraising needed to buy and retrofit the building.

Stage 1: Creating a Thriving Neighbourhood Hub

We will provide the flexible, accessible, multi-use space the community is demanding, operating as a resource for all.

- **A Public Living Room:** A welcoming space on the ground floor for informal gathering, intergenerational activities, social clubs, local exhibitions, and more.
- **A Social Enterprise Space:** The upper floors will be available as hireable office and desk space and meeting rooms, generating revenue.
- **A Support and Learning Centre:** Hosting essential services, workshops, learning, and more in collaboration with local partners.
- **A Resource for Community Groups:** Dedicated spaces for tool storage for local groups like Haringey Fixers and Friends of Tower Gardens.
- **A Heritage Engagement Programme:** A permanent exhibition and information boards detailing the history of the White Hart Lane Estate, its architecture, and the pioneering work of the London County Council.

Stage 2: Securing and Sustaining Our Historic Asset

With the lease in place and a track record established, the priority becomes acquisition and renewal.

- **Acquisition:** Raise capital to purchase 100 Tower Gardens Road, guaranteeing that it remains permanently dedicated to local community use, fulfilling the long-term needs and desires of residents.
- **Community-Led Retrofit:** Transform the building into a sustainable and cost-saving exemplar. The retrofit will offer local residents opportunities to learn about energy efficiency and building skills relevant to their own homes and the conservation area. In collaboration with Haringey Council, we plan to design best-practice guidance for all houses on the estate.

Stage 3: Reinvesting In Our Community and Environment

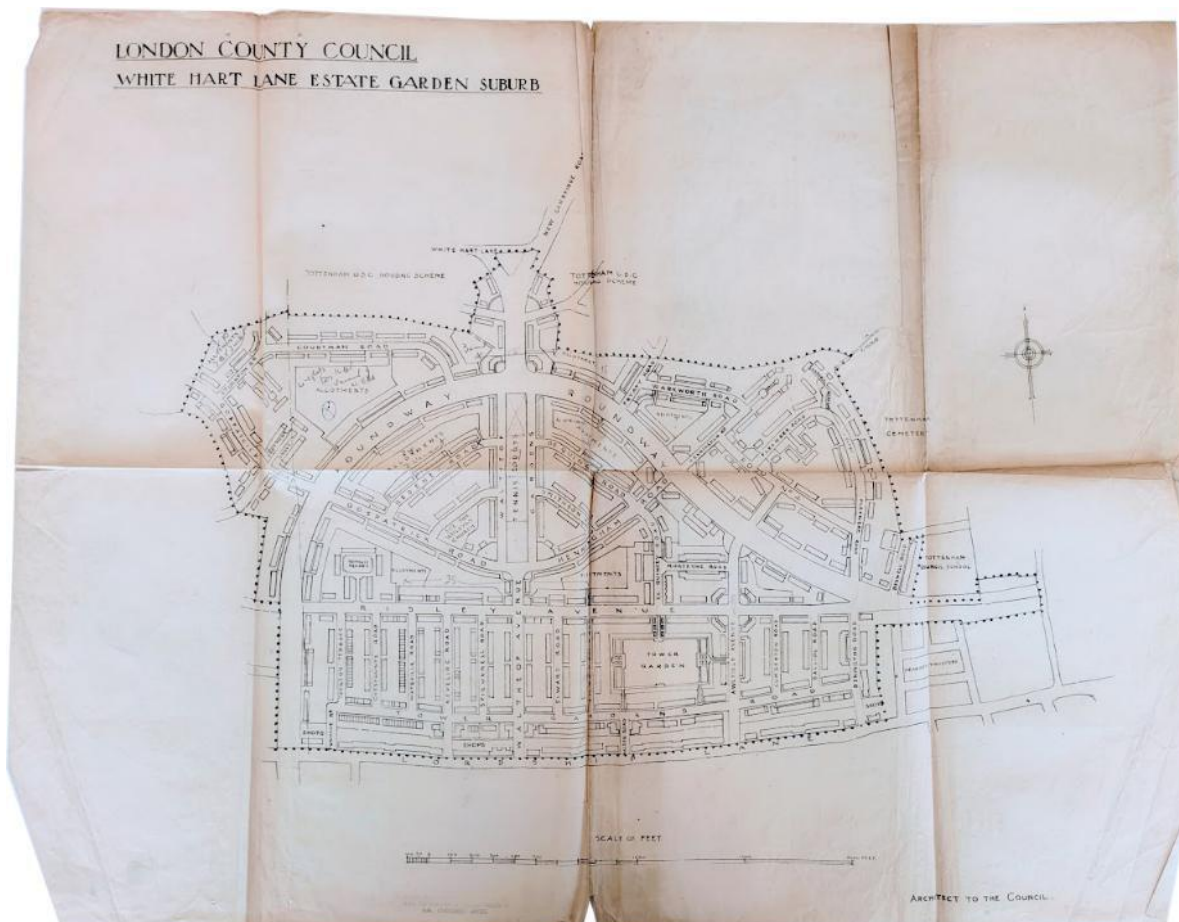
Our commitment to the community means the building's success will fund wider sustainability of the estate. Projected operational surplus will allow reinvestment in the neighbourhood.

- **Community Support:** Fund activities and services that directly address local concerns, such as cost-of-living issues, health and wellbeing initiatives; and support local volunteering and training efforts.
- **Affordable Access:** Use surplus funds to further subsidise rental rates for local artists, makers, and smaller community groups.
- **Estate-Wide Energy Efficiency:** Dedicate funds to environmental and sustainability projects on the estate, leveraging skills gained through the retrofit pilot to improve energy efficiency in Tower Gardens more generally.
- **Park and Green Spaces:** Provide financial and practical support to Friends of Tower Gardens, ensuring investment in the local park and other green spaces.
- **Local Adaptation:** Fund projects to address future environmental impact on the neighbourhood, e.g. exploring solutions for increased flood risk, or preparing older homes for extreme heat.

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Our Neighbourhood: Heritage, History and Community



Plan of the estate from the early 1920s.¹

Heritage

Tower Gardens, located in the White Hart Lane ward in North Tottenham, is a uniquely designed semi-circular housing estate. Built between 1904 and 1928 in the Arts and Crafts style, it was among the earliest municipal “cottage estates” and is considered a pioneering example of this type of housing development.

Of the four original London County Council (LCC) cottage estates, Tower Gardens was the largest and the first to be constructed outside the LCC’s administrative boundary. Initially called White Hart Lane Estate, it later became known as Tower Gardens Estate.

The estate wasn’t just an architectural achievement — it was a radical social intervention by the LCC’s Housing of the Working Classes branch². The LCC purchased the land in 1901 and started building in 1904. Later, Samuel Montagu, 1st Baron Swaythling, offered the Council £10,000 towards the cost of development

¹The London Archives GLC/HG/HHM/22/014.

²London County Council, [Housing of the Working Classes in London](#) (1913).

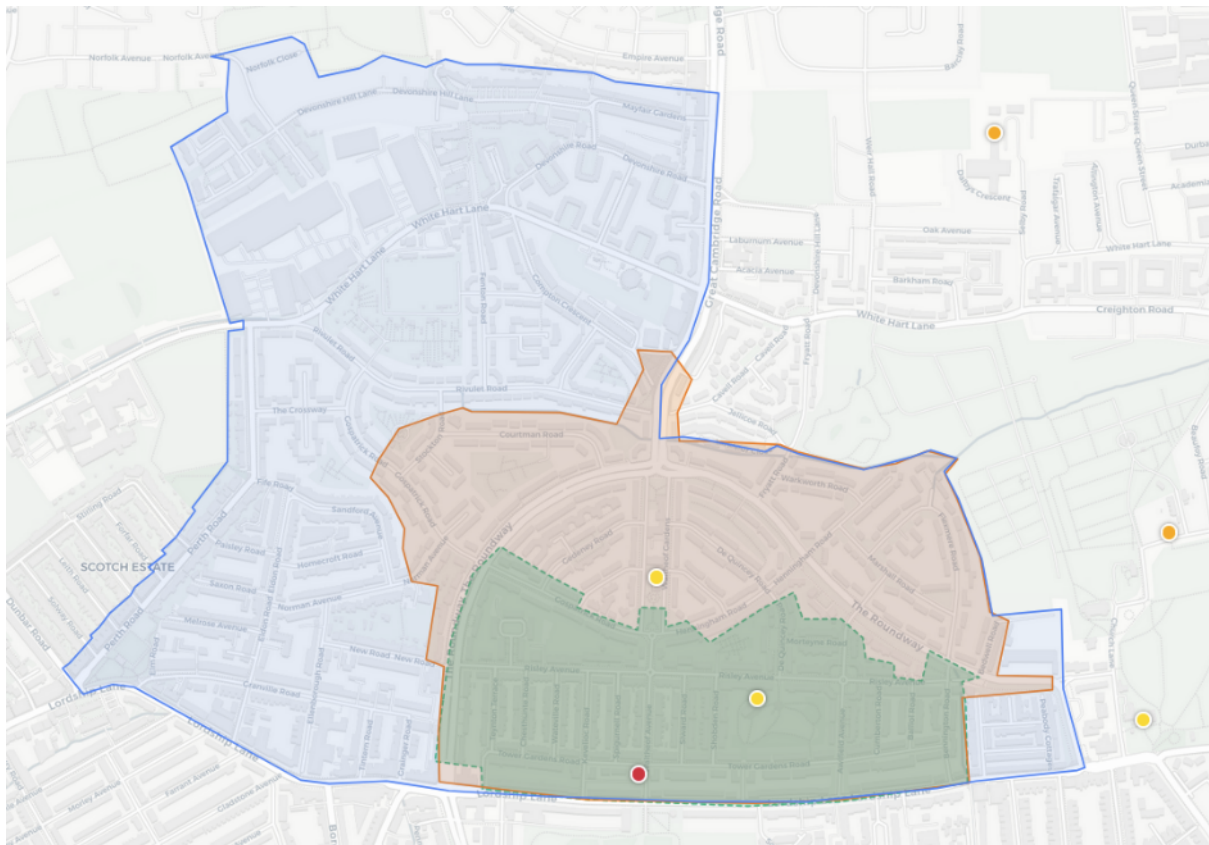
with the condition that “all houses erected thereunder shall be offered in the first instance, and from time to time as vacancies occur, to residents of three-years’ standing and upwards in the Whitechapel division of Tower Hamlets, without distinction of race or creed”.

The LCC’s meticulous record-keeping means that a wealth of original plans, photographs, and administrative documents related to Tower Gardens are preserved at The London Archives and Bruce Castle Museum and Archives.

Conservation Area

Tower Gardens was designated a Conservation Area in 1978, formally recognising its “special architectural or historic interest, the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”. An Article 4 Direction was introduced in 1981, and later extended in 2020, to protect the estate’s unique character — it means that even minor alterations such as changing windows or painting brickwork require planning permission.

Our Neighbourhood Today



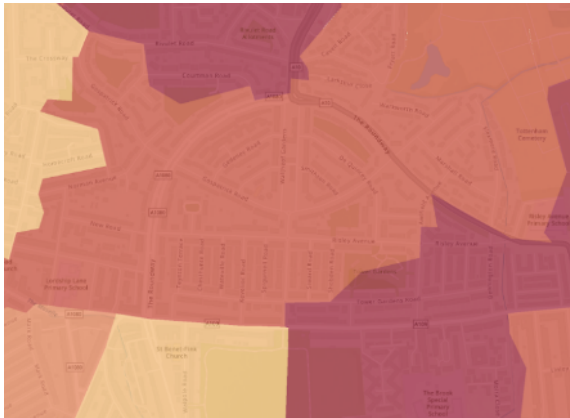
Map showing 100 Tower Gardens Road (red) as well as services and council buildings (yellow), some nearby community spaces (Selby centre and Antwerp in orange), White Hart Lane ward boundary, original estate area and Tower Gardens conservation area.

The White Hart Lane ward is one of the most deprived in Haringey, and in England more generally, by the Index of Multiple Deprivation. Tower Gardens Estate constitutes about a third of White Hart Lane ward by area, and closer to a half by number of households.

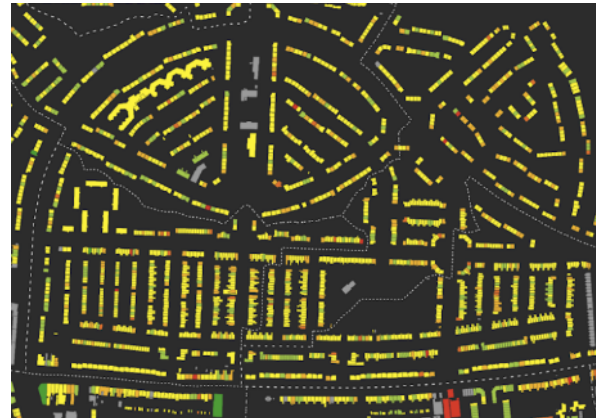
Census data for the White Hart Lane ward (2021) shows that 44% of residents are born outside the UK; 25.7% belong to Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African communities, 10.9% are from Asian communities, 8.1% from Mixed or Multiple Ethnic Groups, and 13.9% from Other Ethnic Groups; 49% live in socially rented accommodation; and 34.7% of households are deprived in one dimension, 22% in two dimensions, and 9.1% in three dimensions.

A significant proportion of homes on the estate also have poor energy performance. The majority of properties have an EPC rating of D or below — and by 2030 all homes will need to reach at least EPC C.

A significant characteristic of the neighbourhood is an explicit lack of community space — both on the estate and in the wider ward.



Indices of multiple deprivation 2019 (red showing the highest levels of deprivation).



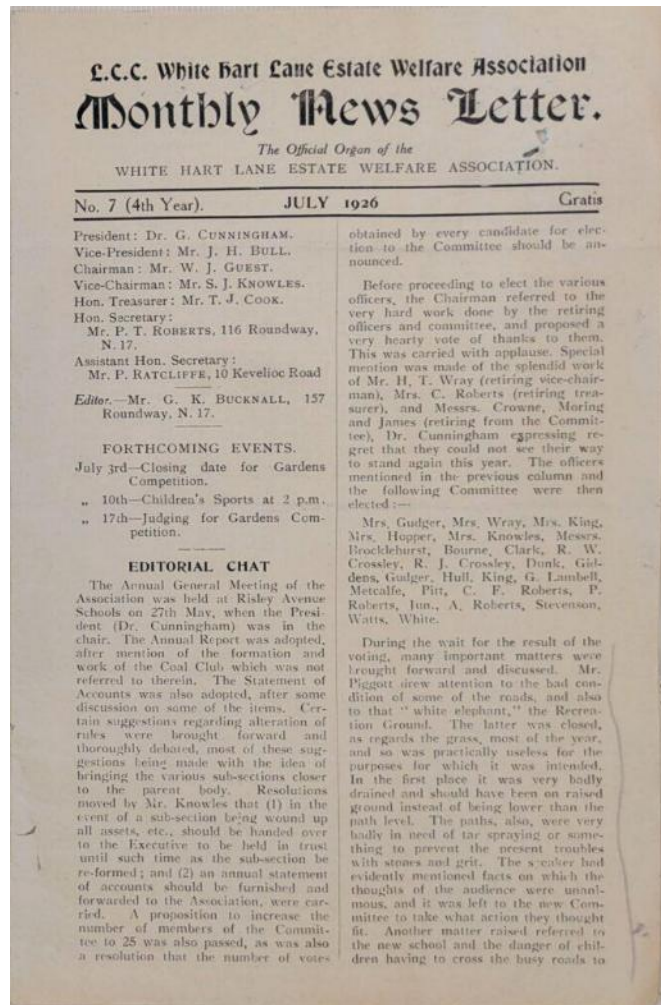
EPC rating of houses in Tower Gardens: D (yellow), below (orange and red).

Community History

Despite a meeting hall being promised next to 100 Tower Gardens Road in the original plans, but never materialising, the estate has a rich history of active residents. A residents' group, initially known as the White Hart Lane Estate Welfare Association, has existed since 1919 with various subcommittees covering sports, horticulture, and a loan club.

Today, as well as Tower Gardens Community Corner CIC, the estate has a vibrant Residents Group, an active Friends of Tower Gardens park group, and residents are constantly involved in volunteering in the broader area. Notably, the residents group spearheaded the campaign to save Lordship Rec when it faced development.

The estate has always had a rich tradition of social activities. The White Hart Lane Estate Welfare Association organised whist drives, dances, sports clubs (cricket, bowls, netball, tennis, football, cycling and swimming), annual sports days, flower competitions, and a loan club. A monthly Newsletter (delivered by street reps to all homes) was produced up to the 1950s.

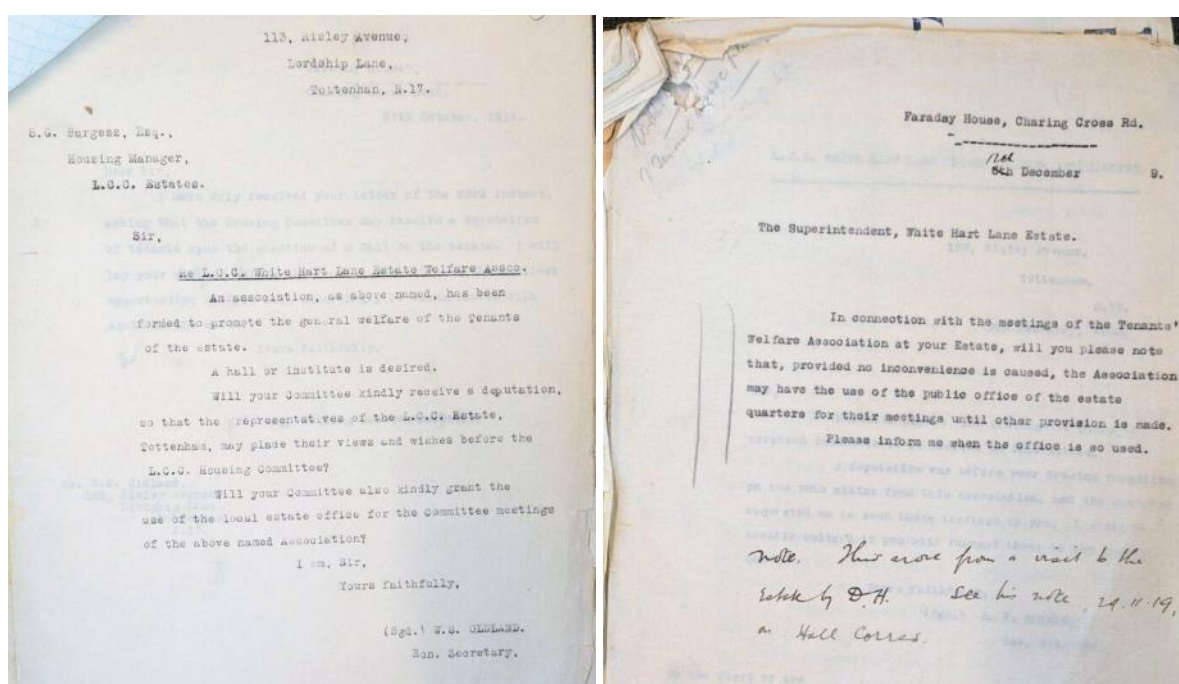


WHLEWA Newsletter from 1926. Half a dozen are conserved at The London Archives.

Timeline of community spaces on the estate:

- 1912:** London County Council plans a meeting hall next to 100 Tower Gardens Road. Drawings are created and the building is costed at £4,500 together with the estate office, but the hall never materialises.
- 1919:** Residents Group is formed and starts asking for “a hall or institute” on the estate. It calls itself the White Hart Lane Estate Welfare Association.
- 1920:** LCC discusses a larger meeting hall on the Eastern section of the estate as it is planned to grow to over 2,200 houses.
- 1920s:** Residents Group is allowed to use rooms in the new estate office at 100 Tower Gardens Road for its first meetings. Residents Group also uses Risley Avenue School for meetings and larger events.
- 1930s:** A private pavilion is built next to the tennis fields on Waltheof Gardens green. Newer and larger LCC estates, including Downham, St. Helier and Watling, get a community centre.
- 1948:** Residents Group takes over the Pavilion — the Waltheof Club is born!
- 1975:** Waltheof Club burns down. Residents Group then uses a temporary clubroom at 100 Tower Gardens Road.

- 1978:** New club opened in Waltheof Gardens in a new building.
- 1980s:** Waltheof club building taken back by Council and later demolished.
- 2000s:** New Residents Group uses the building in the park for meetings and events. 100 Tower Gardens Road goes from being a housing office to being used by HomeStart and later also as a SureStart nursery.
- 2010s:** Residents Group no longer allowed to use the building in park, so pays to use Chad Gordon Campus in Waltheof Gardens and other spaces for meetings.
- 2024:** Residents start asking that the vacant 100 Tower Gardens Road be turned into a space for the community.
- 2025:** Residents form Tower Gardens Community Corner to work on the vision to finally use the building for the community. Council puts 100 Tower Gardens Road on a list of buildings to sell without involving residents.



The request and permission granted to use space in 100 Tower Gardens Road, conserved at The London Archives.

The Building at 100 Tower Gardens Road



100 Tower Gardens Road in 1925.³

A Long Legacy

The building at 100 Tower Gardens Road has been a cornerstone of the estate for over a century. Built shortly before 1920, it was established as the official estate office, from which the LCC managed the tenancies and maintenance of the estate.

In its earliest days, it was used for tenants' association meetings — a role it reprised in the 1970s after the Waltheof Club building burnt down — and was also used for other occasional community events.

The building ceased to be the estate office in the 1990s and was repurposed to house HomeStart — a charity helping families with young children — and then also a SureStart nursery in the late 2000s.

Its life across the last century demonstrates a strong legacy of social and community use for the benefit of local residents.

A Huge Opportunity

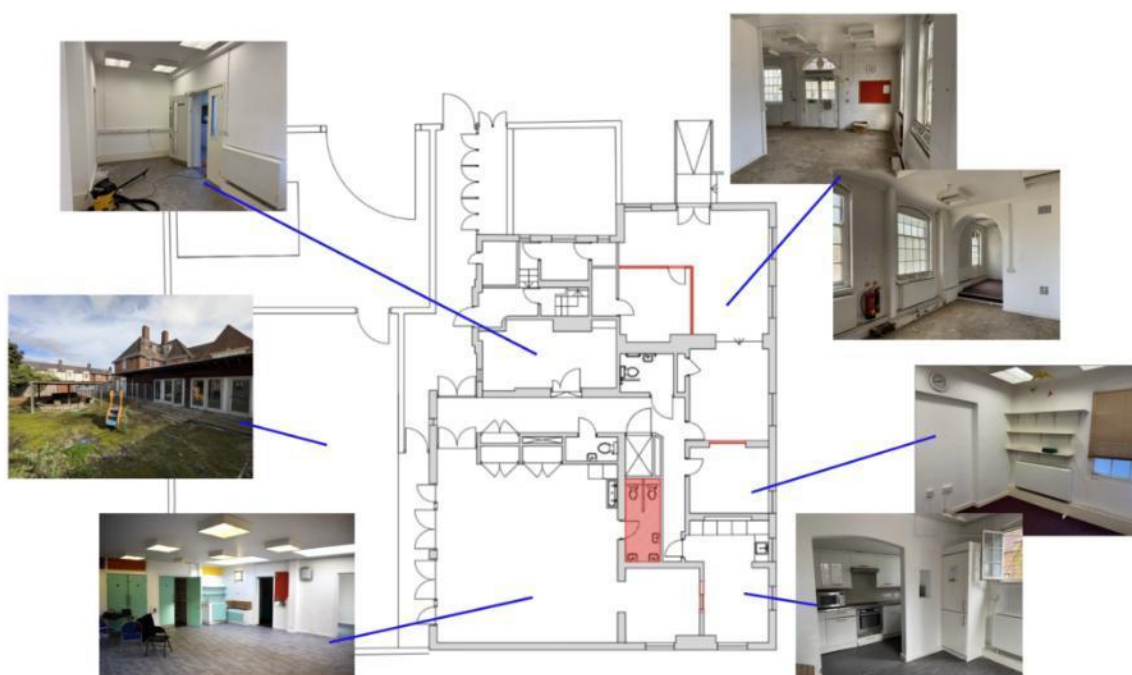
The building presents a significant opportunity due to its size, location, and flexible layout. It comprises 270 square metres of “usable” space (ignoring corridors, cupboards and loos) across three floors, plus two separate yards and a garage — making it the only asset of its scale in the ward suitable for a community hub.

³The London Archives SC/PHL/02/0894/A2577.

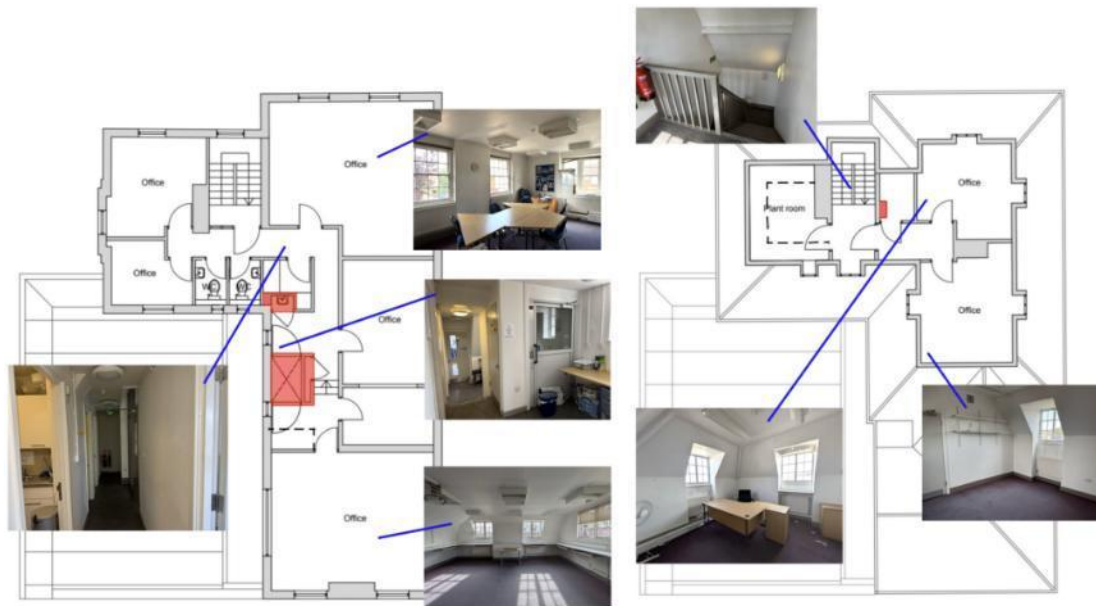
The internal arrangement is perfect for a multi-use model:

- **Ground floor:** The old nursery can be isolated from the rest and has its own access from the back yard. The remainder of the ground floor contains a large entrance, two separate rooms, two toilets (one accessible) and a kitchen.
- **First floor:** Office and meeting spaces, accessible via a separate entrance and served by a lift from the ground floor. Two large rooms are well suited to workshops or co-working, and there is a kitchenette and loos.
- **Second floor:** Two smaller rooms with views over the estate.
- **Yards and garage:** Two separate yards offering substantial outdoor space suitable for community gardening, outdoor events, or social gatherings.

The layout allows for a phased activation of the building and a mixed operational model where different activities can run concurrently without interference.



Ground floor plan by Unit38 Architects — showing rooms, facilities, and possible intervention zones.



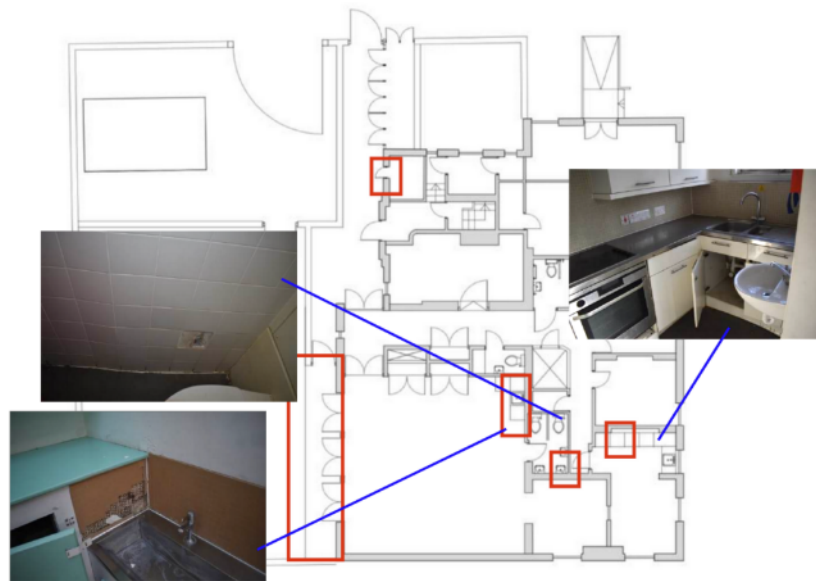
First and second floor plan by Unit38 Architects.

A State of Disrepair

While the building is structurally sound, years of vacancy and neglect have led to a significant state of disrepair. Its current state contributes to a wider perception of neglect on the estate, compounding issues of fly-tipping and poor maintenance.

Tower Gardens Community Corner CIC recently commissioned a building condition survey by James Walker of JNW and Co. Overall, the building is “OK”, given its age. It does however have some expensive concerns, including:

- **Roof:** The roof has never been properly insulated, and there is no membrane beneath the tiles. Tiles are also starting to come loose.
- **Windows and dormers:** The building retains its original single-glazed timber windows. These are in poor condition, with varying levels of timber decay and some missing panes. They are thermally inefficient. The dormers also need attention, and possibly rebuilding.
- **Heating system:** The two gas-fired boilers, located in the second-floor plant room, were installed around 2005 and are likely at the end of their useful life.
- **Other:** Electrical and fire safety systems are old and need testing. There are also leaks, broken fixtures, and a kitchen in need of refurbishment.



Examples of the building's current state of disrepair.

Energy Performance

The building currently holds an EPC rating of D, but the Display Energy Certificate (DEC) based on actual annual energy use is G — the lowest possible rating. These values, and the gap between rated and actual performance demonstrates the urgent need for refurbishment and retrofit.

Through community involvement, funding, and a training programme, we believe we can collectively undertake the retrofit of the building and in doing so set up the opportunity for residents of the estate to learn and develop the skills required to retrofit their own homes. This would be coordinated also with the council, as around 60% of houses on the estate are still social housing.

Tower Gardens Community Corner CIC has now commissioned Crew Energy to survey the building and provide a retrofit report.

Heritage Status

Tower Gardens was designated a Conservation Area in 1978. This status acknowledges the estate as a “pioneering housing estate” and a prime “exemplar of the pioneering social policies of the LCC”. 100 Tower Gardens Road is explicitly listed as a “Positive Contributor” to the conservation area, making the council’s statutory duty to “preserve or enhance” its character a material planning consideration.

We believe that community ownership is the best way to guarantee the sensitive retrofit and long-term stewardship this designated heritage asset requires.

Our Proposal

What Residents Have Said

The vision for 100 Tower Gardens Road is the direct result of an inclusive community engagement process designed to ensure the project is rooted in the expressed needs and desires of local residents.

TGCC has been employing a varied engagement strategy to reach as broad a cross-section of the diverse local community as possible.

The results provide a clear community vision. Residents feel a strong sense of pride in their neighbourhood's history and green spaces but are frustrated by a lack of investment, anti-social behaviour, and — most prominently — the lack of any dedicated community space.

What people asked for

- A place to meet their neighbours, host community meals and events.
- A space for community groups, and for hire.
- Activities for wellbeing and health, as well as cultural and art events.
- A café, a youth club, facilities for older residents, and more.
- Secure storage for community groups like Haringey Fixers and Friends of Tower Gardens.

What people said they did not want

- Lots of cars or noise — it's a residential area.
- High prices that exclude local people.
- Anything that displaces or excludes the existing community through gentrification of the building.



Wordcloud of possible uses of 100 Tower Gardens Road from community engagement.

Proposed Layout and Uses

The plan is to create a multi-use community hub that serves the diverse needs of the neighbourhood while generating a sustainable income to ensure its long-term viability.

Ground Floor: Community Use and Activities

The ground floor will serve as the heart of the community hub — a welcoming and flexible “Public Living Room”. This space will be designed for informal gatherings, intergenerational activities, social clubs, local art exhibitions, and small concerts.

Smaller rooms will host workshops and support services in collaboration with local partners. The old nursery can be used for activities, including paid-for classes, while the Public Living Room is still available for other members of the community. The yard and garage will also be improved, offering further opportunities for community and income-generating activities such as events or specialist workshops.



Rendering of a public living room.



Rendering of the main hall in use by the community.



Rendering of a children's party in the main hall.

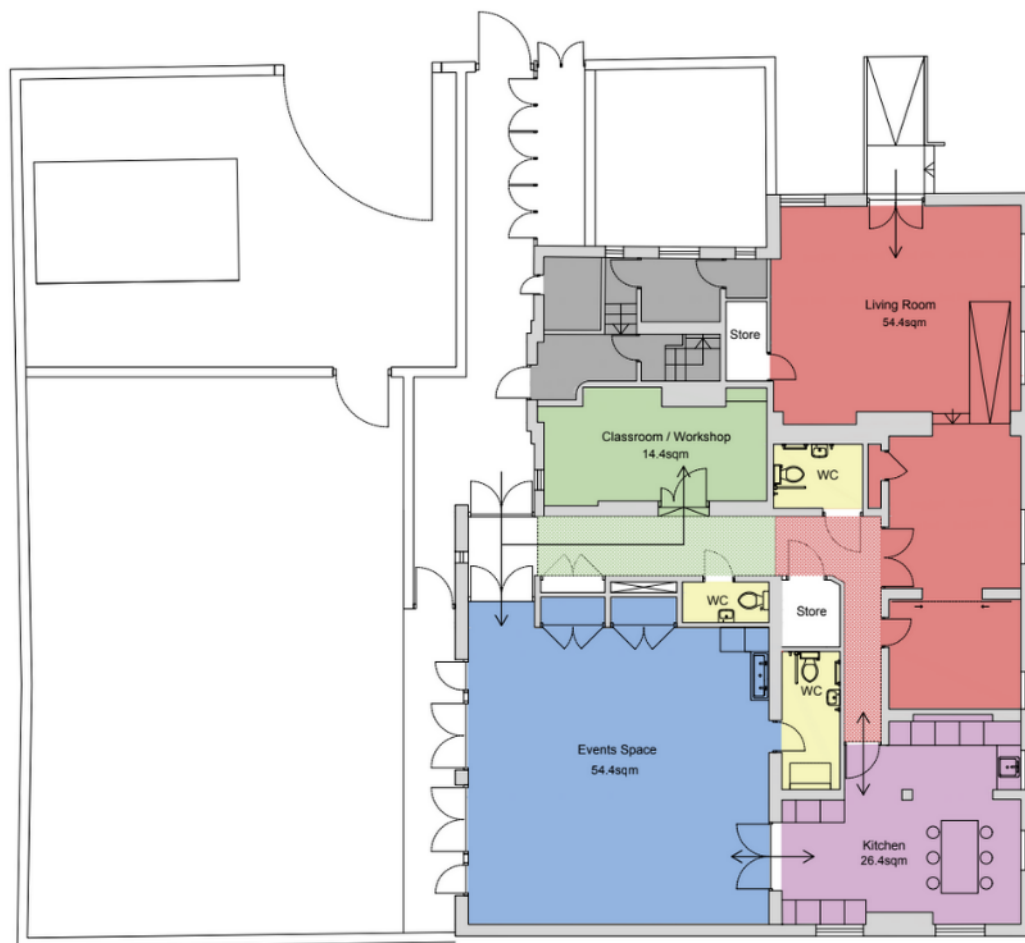


Rendering of an exercise class in the main hall.

The ground floor of 100 Tower Gardens Road offers immediate potential for community use, even before the full retrofit is complete. The main hall and main workshop room can be used immediately. Simple interventions can rapidly transform the whole space.

Proposed ground floor interventions:

- **Enhanced accessibility:** Addressing the single step at the current entrance with a ramp will instantly improve accessibility for all.
- **Optimised flow and functionality:** Refitting the existing kitchen and opening it up into the former nursery room will create a larger, more versatile kitchen ideal for events, workshops, and community meals.
- **Sound insulation:** The main workshop could be used as a music room and would benefit from sound insulation for simultaneous use with other activities.
- **Outdoor potential:** The two separate yards offer substantial outdoor space that can be easily activated for community gardening, outdoor events, or social gatherings.



One of the proposed layouts discussed with Unit38 Architects.

First and Second Floors: Social Enterprise Space

The upper floors will be designated primarily as a “Social Enterprise Space”, offering hireable office and desk space and meeting rooms. This will cater to local freelancers, small businesses, start-ups, and social enterprises in need of affordable

and professional workspace. This commercial rental stream is a crucial engine for the project's financial model.



Rendering of a shared office space in use.



Rendering of an artist studio on the second floor.

Flexibility and efficient storage solutions will allow, for example, the first floor workshop rooms to be used for community activities on weekends when not booked for income-generating purposes, ensuring maximal benefit to the community.

The first floor offers significant potential for immediate activation. The top-floor rooms would benefit most from the proposed retrofit and roof works.



Layout for possible office space on first and second floors.

A Week in the Life: Mock Schedule

The following illustrative schedule shows how 100 Tower Gardens Road could operate over a typical week. This is indicative only — the actual programme will be shaped by demand and developed with the community.

	Weekdays	Weekends
Mornings	Public living room: Coffee mornings for over-60s; specialist interest groups Main hall: Toddler playgroup Music room: Community support services	Public living room: Local exhibition Main hall: Fitness classes; art workshops Music room: Repair café; kids' music lessons Yard: Community gardening
Afternoons	Main hall: Woodcraft Folk workshop	
Evenings	Public living room: Book clubs Main hall: Tower Gardens Residents Group meeting; fitness classes	Main hall: Private hire events; film screenings; small concerts

A Phased Approach

Our transformation of 100 Tower Gardens Road will unfold in strategic phases, ensuring immediate impact while building towards long-term sustainability.

Phase 0: Lease and Activation

- **Agree the rent-to-buy lease:** Finalise the proposal with Haringey Council officers and bring it to cabinet for a vote.
- **Essential works:** Undertake the minimum repairs and fit-out needed to make the building safe and usable.
- **Community pilot programmes:** Launch initial activities — a Public Living Room, small workshops, informal gatherings — to build demand, gather feedback, and demonstrate impact.
- **Back yard work:** Begin improvements to the back yard and garage through volunteer efforts, creating communal growing spaces and tool storage for Friends of Tower Gardens.

- **Social enterprise activation:** Begin marketing and letting the first floor to local freelancers, start-ups, and social enterprises, in order to understand demand and best use.
- **Build the case:** Use this period to grow our volunteer base, develop our track record, and lay the groundwork for capital fundraising.

Phase 1: Acquisition and Ground Floor Focus

- **Acquisition:** Raise the capital needed and secure ownership of 100 Tower Gardens Road, placing it in a trust to guarantee it remains permanently dedicated to community use.
- **Ground floor retrofit and fit-out:** Building on the essential works completed under the lease, invest in a full fit-out of the ground floor — completing the Public Living Room, kitchen, music room, storage, and yard — to create a welcoming and fully operational community space.
- **Back yard and garage:** Complete improvements to the back yard and garage, creating communal growing spaces, outdoor event space, and tool storage.

Phase 2: First Floor Retrofit and Activation

- **First floor retrofit:** Undertake the energy-efficient retrofit of the first floor, creating modern, flexible office and desk spaces, workshop rooms, and meeting rooms for hire.
- **Learning and growth:** Continuously evaluate programmes and rental strategies, adapting the business model based on community needs and financial performance.

Phase 3: Second Floor Retrofit and Full Operation

- **Second floor retrofit:** Extend the retrofit to the second floor, completing the full building. The two top-floor rooms, with their views over the neighbourhood, will benefit most from the proposed roof and insulation works.
- **Operational independence:** Achieve full operational self-sustainability through diverse income streams from all floors.
- **Estate-wide reinvestment:** Reinvest operational surpluses into wider community and environmental projects across the Tower Gardens estate, such as energy efficiency improvements for homes and support for green spaces.

The detailed project timeline is being developed in collaboration with Unit38 Architects and Crew Energy, following the RIBA Plan of Work stages. This provides a well-established framework for managing the design and construction process, from initial briefing and feasibility through to handover, while remaining flexible enough to adapt as funding is secured and as we learn from early phases of activation. We plan to publish milestones soon.

Impact: What This Will Mean for the Community

The project's primary social impact will be the creation of a vibrant, inclusive, and supportive community hub in a ward that currently has no such facility.

- **Building community cohesion:** The Public Living Room will provide a neutral, welcoming space for residents of all ages and backgrounds to meet, socialise,

and build relationships, reducing social isolation and strengthening neighbourhood ties.

- **Access to services and support:** By hosting essential services, workshops, and adult learning classes, the hub will provide residents with convenient access to support that can improve health outcomes, enhance skills, and provide pathways to employment.
- **Community empowerment:** The operational model, which reinvests surplus into community-prioritised activities, gives residents direct control over local resources, fostering a sense of ownership and pride in place.
- **Volunteering and training:** The hub will create numerous structured volunteering opportunities. The community retrofit programme will offer tangible training in green construction skills.
- **Jobs created:** The establishment and ongoing operation of TGCC will create both direct and indirect employment opportunities within the local community.

Policy Alignment

The TGCC project is not an isolated request but a direct, resident-led initiative that delivers on the core ambitions of Haringey Council's own strategic vision. The new Draft Local Plan (consulted on in December 2025) provides a clear policy framework that this project aligns with and actively supports.

Haringey Local Plan Priority	Relevant Statement	How TGCC Delivers
A Greener, Cleaner, Safer Borough	"We have met the target in our Climate Change Action Plan of becoming a net zero-carbon borough... A focus on retrofit first and driving up energy efficiency of new buildings has been crucial to achieving this."	The community-led retrofit of the DEC G and EPC D-rated building will serve as a high-profile exemplar project. The hub will promote sustainability skills and support wider estate retrofitting, directly contributing to carbon reduction goals.
A Culturally Rich Borough	"Development has enhanced our historic environment... Our borough fizzles with arts, culture and creativity."	The project will rescue, restore, and celebrate a significant non-listed heritage asset. It will provide a new cultural venue for local exhibitions, recitals, and a permanent display on the unique heritage of the LCC estate.

Haringey Local Plan Priority	Relevant Statement	How TGCC Delivers
A Borough that supports us to Live Well	“Development has helped strengthen our communities by delivering new social infrastructure... ensuring everyone is able to access a wide range of services within a short journey of their home.”	TGCC will create the only piece of dedicated social infrastructure in the entire ward, providing a ‘Public Living Room’ and a hub for community support, directly addressing the identified infrastructure gap.
An Inclusive Economy	“Our policies have helped ensure Haringey is a borough of opportunity, supporting our independent local businesses, attracting investment and delivering new Good Work opportunities, particularly green jobs.”	The upper floors will provide affordable, hireable office and desk space for local freelancers, start-ups, and social enterprises. The retrofit project will provide training in green construction skills.

It also delivers on the Haringey 2035 vision’s call to maximise the use of existing assets for social cohesion, and is a practical expression of The Haringey Deal – the council’s commitment to co-producing decisions with residents.

The Cost of Doing Nothing

The building at 100 Tower Gardens Road, in its current empty and deteriorating state, is a detriment to the neighbourhood. As a large and prominent building at the heart of the estate, its vacant and un-maintained state contributes significantly to a wider perception of neglect and decline.

The vacant property has become a magnet for anti-social behaviour, including street drinking and drug use, creating an environment of insecurity for residents. The adjacent alleyway has become a hotspot for illegal dumping. Leaving the building unheated and unmaintained also creates physical risks, accelerating its decay and potentially leading to more costly structural problems in the future.

The council’s decision to place the building on its disposals list presents a critical juncture. A sale on the open market would likely see it converted to a use that does not serve the community, permanently removing the only viable asset for a local hub and locking in the social infrastructure deficit for the foreseeable future.

In contrast, transferring the asset to the community represents a strategic investment in reversing these negative trends and turning a liability into a source of community pride and regeneration.

Our Approach: Community, Retrofit, Heritage

The Building Work: A Heritage-Sensitive Retrofit

100 Tower Gardens Road is the only original public building in the Tower Gardens Conservation Area and specifically noted as a Positive Contributor Area. That designation will shape how we approach the work.

Our approach will prioritise solutions that are both environmentally ambitious and heritage-compatible — demonstrating that these two goals are not in tension.

Conservation-compatible methods and materials

The Article 4 Direction removes permitted development rights for alterations that could erode the estate's uniform character — including changes to windows, doors, and brickwork. As a Positive Contributor to the conservation area, 100 Tower Gardens Road carries a statutory obligation that we take seriously: all works must preserve or enhance its character. We believe community ownership is the best guarantee that this obligation is met, because we — unlike a private developer — have every reason to get it right: we live next door.

The project will adhere to best practice for retrofitting historic buildings, employing a 'whole-building approach' that treats the entire structure as an interconnected system. This ensures that interventions such as improving airtightness are balanced with the need for adequate ventilation to prevent moisture issues, and that all new materials are compatible with the original building fabric.

Haringey's emerging Local Plan supports a whole-building approach, as further confirmed in discussions with the Team Manager for Policy & Conservation. Comprehensive technical guidance is available in Historic England's Advice Note 18, *Adapting Historic Buildings for Energy and Carbon Efficiency*, revised in February 2026⁴, which sets out the whole-building approach in detail and covers insulation, heating systems, heat pumps, windows, and solar panels in the context of conservation area obligations. Useful guidance at the level of a single home can also be found in the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings' (SPAB) *Old House Eco Handbook*⁵ — a practical guide to retrofitting for energy efficiency that neighbours are already using and sharing.

Energy efficiency solutions

To ensure the retrofit is both technically rigorous and contextually appropriate, TGCC has commissioned a detailed retrofit analysis from Crew Energy. The analysis will aim to identify the most effective and conservation-compatible combination of improvement measures for the building, and explore which of these are replicable for homes across the estate. Measures under consideration include: solar photovoltaic panels, air source heat pumps, air-to-air heat pumps, secondary and double glazing, loft insulation, building management systems (BMS), heat transfer solutions, and UV window films for solar gain reduction. Where possible, the analysis

⁴Historic England, [Advice Note 18: Adapting Historic Buildings for Energy and Carbon Efficiency](#) (revised February 2026).

⁵Marianne Suhr and Roger Hunt, [Old House Eco Handbook](#) (SPAB, 2023).

prioritises environmentally sensitive materials such as natural wool insulation, compatible with the breathability requirements of the original solid-wall construction.

Crew Energy brings extensive experience of retrofit projects across London, and the collaboration is conceived as more than a technical survey. The insights from this building will inform practical guidance for estate residents and will be shared with Haringey Council as part of the wider best-practice programme described below. We also hope to learn from Crew Energy and use their expertise to run workshops on a broader range of topics.

Community-Led: The Retrofit as a Training Programme

Central to our approach is that the retrofit of 100 Tower Gardens Road will not be contracted out and closed off. It will function as a live training site — an opportunity to involve local residents directly in the work, and to build lasting connections and skills across the estate. This is what we mean by ‘community-led’: not consultation, but hands-on participation. Crucially, the community-led model does not compromise on technical standards. Unit38 Architects and Crew Energy will be crucial in delivering this programme, but we also hope to partner with lots more groups, individuals and companies as the programme evolves.

A live training site

Local residents will have structured opportunities to learn practical skills directly related to the retrofit interventions being undertaken. Training will include:

- **Energy efficiency and sustainable construction** — understanding how buildings lose and retain heat, and how retrofit measures address this.
- **Heritage building techniques** — in particular the specialist repair and conservation of original timber windows, a skill that is directly applicable to homes across the estate and that is increasingly scarce.
- **Whole-building thinking** — how to consider a building as a system, balancing improvements in airtightness with ventilation and moisture management.

This hands-on training will equip residents with practical knowledge they can apply to improve the energy performance of their own homes across the Tower Gardens estate, extending the carbon reduction and cost savings beyond the building itself.

Best-practice guidance with Haringey Council

In collaboration with Haringey Council, the lessons learned from this retrofit pilot will be used to develop and disseminate best-practice guidance for retrofitting properties within the Tower Gardens conservation area. This positions 100 Tower Gardens Road not just as a building being improved, but as a centre of excellence and a practical resource for estate-wide regeneration.

This partnership with the council reflects a shared interest: the council has a statutory duty to preserve and enhance the conservation area, and a pilot project that develops replicable guidance for the hundreds of homes on the estate serves that duty directly.

The council’s stake in this guidance goes beyond planning policy. Approximately 60% of homes on Tower Gardens estate remain in council ownership, meaning

Haringey is not only the planning authority overseeing the conservation area but also the landlord responsible for most of its homes. A shared retrofit guide is therefore directly in the council's operational interest as a landlord too. Other historic conservation estates have developed comparable resident-facing guidance: the Hampstead Garden Suburb Trust, which manages a similar Arts and Crafts estate with an Article 4 Direction, has produced detailed design guidance covering windows, insulation, solar panels, and heat pumps⁶. London Councils published a Heritage Retrofit Guide in 2025, noting that 17% of London homes are in conservation areas and providing practical frameworks for sensitive retrofit across the capital⁷. A comparable guide for Tower Gardens, tailored to the LCC cottage estate and its small houses, would be a significant legacy of this project.

Community involvement from day one

The retrofit will begin to activate local residents from the moment the building has been acquired. Rather than a period of construction followed by an opening, we see the retrofit phase itself as a moment of community building — with events, open days, and training sessions running alongside the physical works.

Impact: What the Retrofit Will Achieve

The community retrofit programme is designed to deliver lasting impact across two dimensions: environmental and heritage.

Environmental impact

The project is a direct and practical response to the climate emergency, demonstrating a model of sustainable development that is also replicable.

- **Operational carbon reduction:** The deep retrofit will dramatically improve the building's energy performance, drastically reducing operational carbon emissions and lowering running costs, ensuring the building's long-term financial and environmental sustainability.
- **A catalyst for wider change:** Through its training programmes and the best-practice guidance developed with Haringey Council, it will act as a resource for improving energy efficiency across the entire Tower Gardens estate, neighbouring Noel Park, and broader neighbourhood. The reinvestment of any operational surplus into estate-wide environmental projects will further amplify this impact, supporting local adaptation to climate risks including extreme heat and flooding.

Heritage impact

The retrofit approach — conservation-compatible materials, respect for original fabric, the whole-building methodology — will directly preserve and enhance the character of this historic building. Done well, 100 Tower Gardens Road can serve as a model for sensitive retrofit of the many similar LCC-era buildings on the estate and across London, demonstrating that heritage protection and climate action are compatible goals.

⁶Hampstead Garden Suburb Trust, [Design Guidance](#)

⁷London Councils, [Preserving the Past, Powering the Future](#) (2025)

The retrofit will also address unsympathetic later additions to the building that have degraded its character as a Positive Contributor. These include security grates on windows and snow guards installed on the roof, which are both identified as harmful to the building's appearance in the Tower Gardens Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (2019)⁸. Removing these elements and restoring the building's original appearance is a direct and visible contribution to the conservation area.

Running the Hub: Our Ongoing Approach

Once the building is open, we are committed to running a hub that reflects our founding values — community-led, environmentally conscious, and rooted in the heritage of the estate.

A retrofit and skills hub for the estate

The expertise and relationships built during the retrofit will not be set aside once construction is complete. We intend for 100 Tower Gardens Road to continue operating as a resource for energy improvement and green skills across the Tower Gardens estate and beyond.

This will include:

- **Retrofit workshops and skills sessions** — regular programmes teaching residents practical skills in energy efficiency, sustainable construction, and the care of heritage building fabric, applicable to their own homes.
- **Ongoing guidance for estate residents** — helping neighbours understand what improvements are possible within the conservation area, and how to navigate planning requirements under the Article 4 Direction.
- **A community resource for the council's estate-wide retrofit programme** — working with Haringey Council to extend the lessons of the pilot across the conservation area.

Heritage, history, and the LCC

100 Tower Gardens Road has been at the centre of this estate for over a century. We are committed to making that history visible and accessible.

A permanent heritage exhibition within the building will tell the story of the White Hart Lane Estate — its origins in the pioneering social policies of the London County Council, its Arts and Crafts architecture, and the century of community life it has supported. This will be an accessible, welcoming resource for residents, schools, and visitors alike.

TGCC already has established relationships with the institutions that hold this history. Bruce Castle Museum and Archives, Haringey's local history museum, have previously run an annual exhibition on the estate, and generously provided material for our Community Celebration event in September 2025. We have also worked with The London Archives and drawn on their photographic and documentary collections. The permanent exhibition at 100 Tower Gardens Road will be developed in partnership with these institutions but led by TGCC, with a clear editorial vision: to balance architectural and social heritage, and to give equal weight to the history of

⁸Haringey Council, [Tower Gardens Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan](#) (2019).

recent decades and the full diversity of the community that has called this estate home. We are keen to appoint a heritage and history advisor to guide this programme.

Growing spaces and the yard

The two yards at 100 Tower Gardens Road offer significant potential for community growing and environmental education. Our approach to the yards will include:

- **Raised beds and a small greenhouse** — providing growing space for residents, community groups, and educational programmes.
- **Community gardening sessions** — regular volunteer-led sessions open to all, with a particular focus on food growing and biodiversity.
- **Environmental education** — connecting the growing spaces to the hub's wider programme of sustainability workshops.

The yard programme will be developed in partnership with existing local groups, including Friends of Tower Gardens, who will benefit from dedicated storage and working space within the building.



Rendering of a community garden in the back yard.



Rendering of the workshop room on the first floor being used for music practice.

Sharing and Borrowing: A Library of Things

One of the simplest and most practical things a community hub can do is make it easier for neighbours to share resources. We plan to establish a Library of Things — a collection of tools, equipment, and household items available to borrow, free or at low cost.

A Library of Things reduces the need for every household to own items used only occasionally, lowering costs for residents and reducing consumption and waste. It is also a practical expression of community trust and mutual aid that strengthens ties.

The estate's distinctive character, with small front gardens bounded by privet hedges that are part of its character, creates particular shared needs. Hedge maintenance is a regular requirement for every household, but not everyone owns hedge trimmers, and not everyone pays for a garden waste bin. A shared tool library addresses exactly this kind of everyday need: practical, low-cost, and directly relevant to the specific conditions of life on our estate. Alongside tools and

equipment, we plan to include a book-lending collection covering both general reading and more practical titles, including guides to maintaining and improving older Arts and Crafts and Edwardian homes, giving residents access to specialist knowledge that is otherwise hard and expensive to find.

Operational principles

Across all of these programmes, our operational approach is guided by the same principles that shaped the retrofit:

- **Community-led:** programmes are developed in response to expressed community needs, not imposed from above.
- **Financially sustainable:** activities are designed to generate income or leverage external funding, ensuring the hub does not depend on subsidy to survive.
- **Environmentally conscious:** from the energy use of the building itself to the materials we buy and the food we grow, we aim to model the behaviour we are encouraging in others.
- **Open and welcoming:** the hub is for everyone in the neighbourhood, regardless of background, age, or ability.

About Tower Gardens Community Corner

What We Are

TGCC was formally incorporated on 16 December 2025 (Company Number: [16914132](#)) as a Community Interest Company limited by guarantee. This legal structure was chosen to prioritise community benefit. A key feature is the statutory asset lock, which guarantees that all building assets and surpluses are used exclusively for the public good and the long-term resilience of the Tower Gardens estate. The building cannot be sold for private gain.

The CIC is a relatively simple structure to set up and has been a useful vehicle to get this project started. A big part of building a track record in the first three years will also be co-developing a governance structure alongside local residents and building users that is structured for long-term accountability. The organisation grew out of a grassroots movement and a constituted group formed in early 2025, driven by community consultations that identified a crucial need for a local social and economic hub.

The current directors are **Karen Loasby, Kate Swade** and **Dayal Strub**. All three directors of TGCC are residents of Tower Gardens estate and are actively involved in local groups including the Residents Group and Friends of Tower Gardens.

What We Have Done So Far

Key milestones to date include:

- **February 2025:** Constituted community group formed following community consultations identifying the need for a local hub.
- **March 2025:** Online survey — 79 residents responded.
- **May 2025:** First engagement event at the building — 116 people spoken to.
- **September 2025:** Community celebration at 100 Tower Gardens Road — over 260 people attended, with a history exhibition.
- **December 2025:** Formally incorporated as a Community Interest Company.
- **December 2025:** Residents' workshop on the project plan.
- **March 2026:** Residents' update event ahead of formal proposal to the council.

The group has also raised funds for the project, including a Mayor of London Community Weekend grant (£1,800), SIB Reach viability grant (£10,800), and via a crowdfunder (£5,000).

The work to date builds on years of achievements of the many local groups.

Advisory Board

TGCC is supported by an advisory board of specialists in community asset development, architecture, heritage, governance, and community wealth building.

David McEwen and Unit38

David is an architect and Tower Gardens resident, co-founder of Unit38, an architecture co-operative focused on collective ownership and community wealth

building. Unit38 managed Pelican House, a social centre in Bethnal Green, and been central to the Wards Corner Community Plan in Tottenham.

Brendan Conway

Brendan is a values-led property professional and community organiser with over 25 years of experience in the London built environment. He has worked across private, public, and social sectors, providing strategic advice on development, regeneration, and sustainable place-making.

Lorraine Hart

Lorraine is a planner and consultant who has supported dozens of community-led asset projects since the 1980s, including the Boundary Estate Community Launderette. Expert in business planning, governance, and options appraisal for land and buildings.

Frances Northrop

Frances is an Associate Fellow at the New Economics Foundation, a director of Totnes Community Development Society and a trustee of Annetta's Trust. She specialises in how change is created through different means – culture, policy, practice and campaigning – and is experienced in all four areas.

How We Plan to Organise

Once 100 Tower Gardens is fully operational, day-to-day operation of the centre will be managed by a small, professional staff team, supported by a structured volunteer programme. A blended model ensures efficient management while keeping overheads low and maximising community involvement. The core staff will include:

- **Centre Manager (part-time):** Responsible for overall strategic and operational management, including financial oversight, partnership development, and staff management.
- **Administrator / Bookings Coordinator (part-time):** First point of contact, managing enquiries, room bookings, invoicing, and administrative support.
- **Caretaker / Cleaner (part-time):** Responsible for daily upkeep, minor maintenance, security, and health and safety.

As well as other roles, as needed, and accounting and technical support. All staff will be employed on fair terms, at or above the London Living Wage.

Partnerships

TGCC will not operate in isolation. Our strategy is built on fostering a strong network of partnerships to maximise the centre's impact and ensure its services are relevant and integrated locally.

Given its proximity, and that multiple members live in Tower Gardens or nearby, we have discussed our plans with the Lordship Hub Co-op and have their support.

We are actively engaging with a wide range of potential partners, including local community groups and clubs who will form the core of the weekly activity schedule, and statutory and voluntary sector organisations who will hire space to deliver their services directly to the community. We are also considering partnering with a local

charity, with shared values, that can become an anchor tenant for the upstairs, and a partner in running the hub.