

## **Gants Hill Community Hub FAQs**

### **Why not just leave Gants Hill Library alone? Are there any problems with it right now?**

The Council is facing extreme financial pressures with the reduction in funding from Central Government, which is in the region of a 60% cut since 2010. The Council needs to plan now to protect libraries and other services from future closures. If we don't do anything now the Council will inevitably be left facing tough decisions on service closures as the direction of travel is increasing demand and funding pressure. The community hubs provide an opportunity to protect the library from closure and redesign it to suit current needs, in addition to bringing other services under one roof.

### **Do you own the Gants Hill library site and car-park?**

Yes, the Council owns the Gants Hill site and all community hub locations.

### **Why not choose an alternative location for the community hub?**

A detailed audit was carried out for the hub locations. The six locations identified were dependent on good accessibility and central locations to the ward areas that the community hubs serve. It is important that core services and community spaces are accessible to Redbridge residents, are evenly distributed and have good transport links nearby.

### **Are you closing Gants Hill Library down?**

No, and we want to protect all libraries in Redbridge from closing. We view a library as a key component of any proposed hub and we need all our libraries to remain. There are no agreed design proposals for the Gants Hill hub until the results of the consultation have been consolidated.

### **Are you demolishing Gants Hill Library?**

There are no current agreed design proposals for Gants Hill library. We need to review the outcome of the community engagement and scope the services to be included in the hub to inform design proposals.

### **Will there be a new library of the same size and offering same services in Gants Hill?**

We would expect the hubs programme to expand the services that the library can offer, such as an increased study space.

### **Will the new library be open for the same hours as it is now?**

Depending on what residents choose, it could mean that the library opens for longer to meet the demands of the community.

### **Will there be a GP surgery?**

We're working with the Clinical Commissioning Group who direct local health services on this. They have indicated that they want to provide a new GP practice in the area and we want to look at whether this can be on the Gants Hill site as part of the more detailed design work to come.

### **Will the new hub have any community space that we can rent for events?**

We're looking to work with residents to design the spaces and services within the hubs, this could include a hireable space for private events if space allows.

### **Will there be a reduction in car parking spaces in the car park?**

Yes this is likely, we don't know how much yet, but we want to ensure the appropriate levels of car-parking spaces remain. We would expect some car parking to be lost to the development of the hub and association housing. We want to maintain the right level of car parking to support the hub and

the local shops and businesses. The local Planning Policy will also advise on the level car-parking provision that needs to be provided. The Council will also review on-street parking across the borough as a separate exercise.

**What will happen to the library during construction?**

If any construction needs to take place this will either be done as a phased build, or a temporary location for the library would be looked for in close proximity to the current one. As with any development work there will be a level of disruption, the Council will ensure any contractor has a robust management plan to minimise the inconvenience to residents.

**Will you keep the existing building?**

This depends on the outcome of the consultation and to what extent the priorities can be provided within the existing space. If the outcome of the design brief is to be re-development then careful consideration will be taken to the heritage features of the library and the design will attempt to retain features or incorporate them within the new design. The design proposals will have continuous engagement with residents.

**Is the existing building listed – if so, what is its status?**

Yes, this is a locally listed building. Any changes or demolition would need to be considered and consulted upon as part of the pre planning process before anything can happen.

**Will Redbridge Institute of Adult Education at Gaysham Avenue close?**

No, this facility is an asset to the locality and will not close when the new hub is completed. The Redbridge Institute will be able to use space at the hub to carry out more outreach services in the borough.

**How many new homes are you proposing?**

We are at the very early stages and there is no detailed design work as yet. However, indicative feasibility work suggests around 100 new homes could be accommodated as part of any development. Care will be taken in creating a place with sustainable homes and services that are accessible.

**What type of housing are you proposing?**

The type of housing expected would have to be a good mix one bedroom to family sized homes. The scheme will need to include at least 35% of the build to be affordable housing.

**Is there enough capacity in local services to accommodate more homes?**

Capacity has been assessed as part of the Local Plan process and we have identified these areas within the Gants Hill Investment and Growth Area in order to deliver new housing. The Local Plan has assessed Gants Hill to provide housing over the next 15 years, which in comparison to the rest of the borough is a relatively small amount. The hubs programme seeks to respond to new housing by increasing local services in accessible areas where we expect development.

**Will there be any commercial space for small/local businesses?**

This will be open for consultation with residents, but we envisage space will primarily be available for services and local groups rather than business.

**Will the proposed space for local police teams be a contact point for the public too?**

We understand the concerns with the closure of Barkingside Police station. The community hub could be a good opportunity for the Police to have a base, and we will feedback the comments from the consultation to the Police and discuss their thoughts.

**How much will this hub cost and how will it be paid for?**

The costs will be determined when final designs and plans are drawn up and will be part of the co-design process with residents. Consolidating services in one place will help provide economies of scale, efficiencies and the potential for income and capital generation from any housing.

**When will you submit a planning application?**

The work is at a very early stage, we don't anticipate a planning application being submitted until some time in 2020.

**How long will construction last?**

This will depend on when the Hub is designed and will depend on the complexity and nature of the build.

**Will the current play area be built over? Will there be any open space?**

Green and open space is important to Redbridge Council and the Council continue to invest in maintaining all parks within the borough. The scheme designs will look at keeping as much green and garden space as possible, along with providing public play areas to meet our child friendly borough objectives.