

HOUSING NEWS



Affordable housing company breaks ground on new development in Wanstead

London's fastest growing affordable housing developer has broken ground on its latest scheme in Wanstead to provide new homes for Redbridge residents.

Council Leader Cllr Jas Athwal and Cabinet Member for Housing and Homelessness Cllr Farah Hussain kicked off construction on the innovative project by breaking the ground on site at the end of August.

Pocket Living will transform the disused garage site on Gardner Close into a two-story building offering 20 affordable one-bedroom homes for sale – with 20 per cent off the full market value.

The homes remain affordable in perpetuity and are always restricted to first-time buyers living or working in the local London borough. They are ideal for singles and unlike shared ownership buyers own 100% of their homes.

Pocket Living's Chief Executive Marc Vlesing said: "Sadiq Khan invested in Pocket Living to help us build quality affordable homes for local people on middle incomes that stay affordable forever. We're extremely excited

to be delivering our first homes in Redbridge. We know there is huge demand in the area for Pocket. We already have over 150 local people registered for a Pocket flat in Redbridge. We want to help local people to get a foot on the housing ladder."

Council Leader Cllr Jas Athwal said: "First time buyers in Redbridge and across London face a huge challenge when trying to find a home. We are in the midst of a housing crisis and schemes like this are an important tool in providing genuinely affordable homes. This is just one step in delivering on our pledge to build 1000 affordable homes by 2022 – 600 of which will be council homes."

Pocket Living's commitment to delivering affordable housing has been backed by Sadiq Khan, Mayor of London who in 2017 provided the company with a £25million loan to deliver sites like Gardner Close. The Mayor's backing will see Pocket Living start on 1059 affordable homes by March 2021.

Work on pioneering hostel to help homeless nearly complete

Council Leader Cllr Jas Athwal and Cabinet Member Cllr Farah Hussain paid a visit to a pioneering pop-up hostel in Ilford.

Project Malachi, which received £2.5m from the council, will create studio flats for up to 42 of the borough's most vulnerable residents.

Delivered in partnership with the Salvation Army, the hostel aims to take vulnerable people off the streets while longer term work takes place to help address the complex issues that lead to street homelessness.

Fifteen of the 42 rooms will be for those who have no recourse to public funds, with the remaining being used for temporary accommodation for other single people.

Council Leader Cllr Jas Athwal said: "In Redbridge, we are committed to end the cycle of rough sleeping once and for all. It's our duty to support those in our society who find themselves without a home and are most vulnerable so I'm delighted we're funding a brand-new shelter to prevent needless suffering on the streets. This, along with our current shelter, Ryedale, we can provide 60 rough sleepers with safe and secure accommodation and continue to work with them to find them longer term, sustainable housing solutions."

Cllr Farah Hussain, Cabinet Member of Housing and Homelessness added: "Our support for this ground-breaking hostel shows we are being bold in our efforts to wipe out rough sleeping by providing the borough with more safe shelter. Our work also goes much further, we've tripled our outreach support, invested in the Housing First service to provide even more accommodation for those with history of living on the streets and appointed a coordinator to work with partners. An immigration advisor with language skills has also been recruited to work with non-EU nationals and increase our outreach work."

Construction on the shelter is nearly complete and is due to be opened later this year.

