

1. LAHS returns

We have submitted new LAHS returns, why are you using 2013 figures?

The 2014 data is not yet available, so we are asking you to confirm that the 2013 figure we have is correct. Please note that 1st April 2012 is the date after which no newly arising decent homes were eligible for 2011-15 backlog funding, and this is carried forward into this programme.

2. Payment schedule

When will payments be made for this programme?

Payments will be quarterly in arrears from June 2015

3. Leaseholder capping

Why are you capping leaseholder payments to £15,000: this is too low for necessary comprehensive works?

The government direction capping all resident leaseholders' service charges at £15K where works to their property are due to government funded stock improvements programmes, came into force Tuesday 12th August. This direction will apply for the next five years and apply to any public funding streams, including 2015/16 Decent Homes Backlog Fund.

4. Leaseholder assistance

What are the expectations for leaseholder assistance for their contribution to works under this programme?

The bidding guidance asks for details of the way in which you have communicated with leaseholders and the financial assistance offered. This should as a minimum offer interest free loans and deferment of payments for at least 2 years.

5. Resident Leaseholder definitions

What is the precise definition of a resident leaseholder covered by the cap?

A resident leaseholder is one who has the property as their only or principle home at the time that works commence. It is for the Local Authority to establish the position for each leaseholder; GLA will not be investigating this.

6. Contracts

When will the contract be available?

For existing partners under this programme, contracting will be by means of a letter extending your current programme with some additional conditions. This will be issued before the allocations are announced. For any new partners, a new contract will be drawn up at allocation stage.

7. Decisions

When will the decisions be announced?

We expect to announce decisions by the middle of November to allow time for contracting before the programme starts in April 2015

8. Existing Programmes

We have already planned our 2015/16 programme; can we use this for our bid?

Yes, as long as the properties qualify for funding under the prospectus requirements and can be presented in the format required.

9. Non decency after 2015/16

Do all of our homes have meet decency by March 2016?

No, but the expectation is that any remaining decent homes work will be funded by the local authority with the opportunities offered by HRA self-financing. This will therefore be the last year of the programme

10. Under 10% non-decent

Are local authorities with less than 10% non-decent stock eligible for funding?

The programme is intended to assist those authorities with the highest levels of backlog non decency in their stock. Other local authorities may be funded on an exceptional basis, following an assessment of the strength of the case proposed by relevant bidders.

11. Definition of jobs and apprenticeships

What are the definitions of jobs and apprenticeships for the GLA when completing the supporting statements of the bid?

Jobs

The number of permanent jobs that have resulted through the development or construction phase of a project through GLA Group and associated spend. Construction jobs relate to employment site acquisition or preparation, physical construction, or procurement, legal and business operations related to a development.

For permanent positions (those that are expected to last longer than 26 weeks), both full and part time positions are to be recorded (using the same criteria as for direct jobs created). The number of hours worked should be recorded where possible.

In some instances, a project or programme may result in a number of positions being created (many of which may not last for 26 weeks). For instance, this situation may arise where a project or programme results in a stream of work which requires a number of different roles/specialisms to deliver. In this instance, where possible, the number of person hours worked should be recorded.

The activities related to the construction must be located within a London borough.

Apprenticeships

The number of apprenticeships that start as a result of GLA Group investment. Apprenticeships relate to work-based training programmes for people aged 16 – 24. These must relate to standard definitions of apprenticeships as outlined by the National Apprenticeship Service.

Apprenticeships can be counted only if they represent a new post in an organisation. Apprenticeship work placements must be expected to last for 26 weeks for it to be recorded as a successful apprenticeship start.

The apprenticeship work placement must be located within a London borough. An apprenticeship post which replaces an existing post in a business cannot be recorded.

12. Auditors amendments

There are not any amendments to auditors requirements in the GLA sample grant agreement letter schedule, what are they?

These amendments are currently being finalised and will be updated prior to signing and

agreeing 15/16 contracts. They will likely include a duty of care from the Local Authority auditor to sign off the works that have been completed with the backlog funding.

Added 20 August 2014:

13. Elemental cost definition

The GLA's DH Bid guidelines have asked bidders to follow the CLG's Decent Homes eligibility guide. It appears that the GLA's DH Funding Bid Application elemental cost breakdown (D1.3, F1.1, E1.3) does not include all the DH elemental works as defined by the CLG's DH guidance – namely, building components i.e. the structural parts of a dwelling (e.g. wall structure, roof structure)

Please can you advise whether the Authority can include, in its Bid, wall structure, and wall finish decent homes works, as defined by the CLG DH Guidance but not included in the GLA's DH Funding Bid Application (attached) elemental cost breakdown (D1.3, F1.1, E1.3).

Also, advise whether you will update the elemental cost breakdown section and resubmit an update application?

Costs provided should reflect the total cost for the replacement of the element and therefore include items such as fees and preliminary costs, but exclude client costs

This section will allow us to gain a greater understanding of both need and value for money. Providing us with data on how many elements are in need of renewal will help us understand the extent of works needed to homes and not just the overall cost

The reason we are only asking for these elements is that the cost variations for works to the wall structures and brickwork could be quite large depending on contractors but cost for other elements such as doors, windows etc. may suggest a market norm and assist with our value for money assessment.

What we have recognised that we will need to amend the bidding spreadsheet and the 'Other category' needs to be included for all the bidding sections and this is where we would like you to record the other costs per home contributing to the total scheme cost per home to be made decent.

The only costs that will be eligible to apply under the 'Other' category are those as defined with the DH decent home standard guidance as referenced in your email, therefore if wall structure, and wall finish decent homes works are deemed eligible then please include and provide a short narrative in statement 2 regarding value for money.

We will clarify this in the FAQs and reload this to the website and re-issue the bidding spreadsheet to all bidders.

14. Challenging or extensive works

Have you anticipated a price or building type threshold for standard vs challenging works?

We do not have an anticipated price or building type threshold for standard vs challenging works. We anticipate that as many boroughs are coming to the end of their backlog programmes and will have left their most challenging and therefore costly estates/blocks till

now in order that previous submissions were seen as good value for money.

This could mean that there are some non-traditional built form blocks that will be very costly to renovate and more than likely better to demolish and rebuild but might not be within the financial scope of the borough or fit in with the asset management strategy or indeed the new HRA business plan. Therefore under statement two regarding VFM bidders should provide narrative regarding these challenging works.

Added 28 August 2014:

15. Retrofit funding

With regard to retrofit funding, is there an expectation that this will be combined with a bid for decent homes backlog funding, or does the programme stand alone? As you may be aware, Brent's level of non-decency is well below the 10% threshold and, while we may still wish to submit a bid, the retrofit element is of particular interest.

The Decent Homes 15-16 funding is completely separate to any retrofit programme funding and is not expected that a combined bid is required. I have copied in Kore Mason, who works specifically on GLA Environmental Retrofit and Renew programmes, should you need to contact her about support the GLA can provide to your local authority

16. Match Funding

The documentation requires information about other sources of funding, but it is not clear whether there is a specific expectation about the possible level of match funding, please clarify this point

There is no expectation on the level of match funding, we would like to know what other funding is potentially provided alongside Decent Homes funding from the GLA

17. Statement 5 Retrofit

Under statement 5 question 2, we are asked the number of retrofitted homes resulting from the Decent Homes programme.

We may carry out some energy efficiency works to homes that are not part of the Decent Homes programme but may be a result of leverage and additionally from the Decent Homes work. Would you like these homes to be counted in the 15/16 section?

Bidders are to include the homes that are planned to be retrofitted through leverage resulting from the Decent Homes funding and make a note of this in section 1 of statement 5 (including the number of homes).