

Council agrees to buy more former army homes

Edinburgh city council has added 40 new properties to its social housing list after buying more homes from the Ministry of Defence.

The council's Finance and Resources Committee backed the almost £4m purchase of the homes on the Dreghorn estate next to Dreghorn barracks.

The acquisition of 17 more homes makes the council the largest landlord on the 78-home estate in Colinton.

Chair of the committee Councillor Mandy Watt said: "I think this is something which is very welcome. Are we happy to agree this goes forward?"

Councillors on the committee backed the purchase.

A report to the committee said: "In January 2023 Committee approved the purchase of 23 surplus homes at Dreghorn Barracks. The purchase of the houses was completed in March."

"In October 2024, the council noted interest in the additional 17 surplus properties and garages."

Following the acquisition of the first phase of houses, work has been undertaken to bring the homes up to standard for re-letting. This has involved the removal of asbestos containing materials in the attic space and other minor remediation works. An approximate figure of £20,000 was budgeted for each

house.

The second tranche will cost the council £3,850,000 to buy.

The report highlighted the benefits for the council and new tenants: "The purchase of homes across Edinburgh will have a positive impact on equality and poverty through the provisions of good quality, affordable housing. The location of the development is generally close to sustainable mass transport links and local amenities.

"Increasing the number of affordable homes in the city is critical in addressing the housing emergency. The council is seeking to develop sustainable communities and places which deliver a positive impact beyond the built environment."

The neighbouring Dreghorn barracks remains an active military base. It is one of three barracks which is home to the Edinburgh garrison. It is currently home to service personnel from the Rifles, Royal Regiment of Scotland Band and the Royal Logistic Corps EOD 521 Squadron bomb disposal unit.

By Stuart Sommerville, Local Democracy Reporter