

Frequently asked questions (FAQs) – The Beeches

Here are answers to some of the questions we've been asked about the Beeches. If you have a question that hasn't been answered, please email enquiries@bvt.org.uk or call us on 0300 333 6540.

1: Who are Spring Housing Association (HA) and why is BVT partnering with them and not running the scheme themselves?

Spring HA was set up to provide accommodation and support services to people with a housing need and to prevent homelessness. They're a registered charity, regulated by the Charity Commission. We have been working with Spring HA in Bournville since 2019 when the charity took management of a former BVT care home. The service provides homes to those at risk of homelessness, helping to transform people's lives. One of our core values is partnership and we work with organisations with specific skills and expertise. Spring HA has an excellent reputation and experience in managing social housing, which is why we're working with them.

2: Who will maintain the grounds and apartments?

The buildings, green space and car park are all being leased to Spring HA which will manage the day-to-day running of the housing scheme. This includes arranging repairs and maintaining the grounds. Whilst Spring HA will be the main provider of services at the Beeches, we'll still manage the wider Bournville neighbourhood and work with Spring HA and residents to respond to any issues that may come up.

3: When will work to the building start and what will this look like?

The original timeline for the re-development has changed. Since Spring Housing began work on the site, unforeseen works have caused delays. These have now been addressed and work to phase 1 (The Conifers) of the existing buildings is due to be completed in November 2025. The remaining phases are scheduled to be fully complete by February 2026. It is anticipated the first families will start to move into their new homes across phase 1 in December 2025 (subject to sign-off by Birmingham City Council's building control teams). Remaining families will gradually move in as each phase is completed.

4: What facilities are there onsite for families?

Existing gardens will give families space to play and enjoy green space. Off site, Bournville has lots of open spaces, parks and facilities. Families moving into the Beeches will be made aware of these. We've also spoken with local partners who are committed to working with us and Spring HA to welcome new families.

5: What will be the impact on local services, for example school places, GP access, etc?

If families moving to the Beeches want to change their child's school, they'll have to complete a 'change of school in-year' application. If the school has places, their child will be offered one. If the school doesn't, their child will be put on the waiting list for their preferred school, and they'll be offered a place at the nearest available school. There are several GP surgeries in the area and families who want to change their GP will need to register with a surgery accepting new patients.

6: How will families be directed to local services, community centres, places of worship, play groups, etc?

As part of Spring HA's tenancy induction, all families will be informed of facilities in the area.

7: How are you working with others?

We continue to work together with West Midlands Police, the local MP and Councillors, local schools, community groups and organisations in the area. As Spring HA prepare for the first families to move in, there will be additional opportunities to work together to make sure families are welcomed to the community.

8: How can I keep informed and updated?

We set up a 'Friends of The Beeches' group that has met several times. Members have been able to ask questions, share their experiences and identify how we can continue to work together with Spring HA and others to make sure there is a successful transition to the Beeches becoming a home for families. As a member of the group, you can hear details as the project develops, continue to raise concerns or questions and get involved in working with us and Spring HA to make sure we do what we said we would. We'll also

keep updating information on our website when it becomes available. If you'd like to join the friends of group, please email communityadmin@bvt.org.uk

9: When will families start moving in and how can we make sure they're welcomed?

Families will move into the Beeches in a phased manner (i.e., not all families at the same time) to make sure they, and local residents, are able to adjust to the change in use of the Beeches. It is anticipated the first families will start to move into their new homes across phase 1 in December 2025 (subject to sign-off by Birmingham City Council's building control teams). Remaining families will gradually move in as each phase is completed. Bournville already offers a wide range of activities, events and places. As we get closer to this date, we'll work with Spring HA, groups and community places to make families aware of activities and events so they can take part if they want to.

10: What will happen to families at the end of the lease?

The lease with Spring HA is for six years. After this, the site returns to us, and we expect to use it for long-term development. This is likely to mean the scheme will end and no more families will move in. Well in advance of this, BVT and Spring HA will work together to make sure there's a clear plan for families, so they're not moved back into unsuitable accommodation.

11: Will there be security and CCTV on the site?

Once occupied, the site will have CCTV in operation 24 hours a day. This is to make sure the site remains secure. Spring HA also operate an emergency 24-hour response line, managed by Spring HA managers from across the charity, alongside a mobile security worker.

12: How will anti-social behaviour (ASB) be managed, either against residents living at the Beeches or if residents carry out ASB themselves?

As part of Spring HA's tenancy sign up and induction, residents are made aware of their rights and responsibilities and the consequences of any breach. They also work with local agencies, such as the police and PSCO teams, to reduce the likelihood of ASB. In the event you experience any issues, or have any concerns regarding any anti-social behaviour, please contact Spring Housing on 0121 663 1433 or email at info@springhousing.org.uk.

13: How is this work being funded?

The physical alterations are being funded through a grant from Birmingham City Council (who get funding from central government). Spring HA has the experience and expertise to manage this type of funding and the refurbishment of the Beeches.

14: What is the history of the Beeches?

Dating back to the 1890s, the Beeches has been used for lots of purposes. Built by George Cadbury, it was first a respite centre for Salvation Army officers. Later it became a holiday home for children from inner-city slums. After this, it was used as a residential educational establishment for single women before being transformed again, when Cadbury's used the site as an employee training facility. Up until March 2020, the Beeches was a hotel and conference centre.