

Successful start to refurbishment of Sahlkamp-Mitte

Hanover/Berlin, 2 December 2015. Deutsche Wohnen has completed the refurbishment of a total of 55 balconies at 17, Elmstraße and 39, Schwarzwaldstraße. This marks a successful start to the process of upgrading the neighbourhood of Sahlkamp-Mitte in Hanover. Next year, extensive refurbishment work is planned in Spessartweg.

As Stefan Degen, CEO of Deutsche Wohnen Construction and Facilities, explains, “The refurbishment of these balconies is the first step on the way to upgrading the Sahlkamp-Mitte neighbourhood. We are sending a clear signal here that we want to commit ourselves in Hanover over the long term and that we intend to invest in this neighbourhood. The basis for this commitment is the constructive relationship of trust we enjoy in our work together with the city of Hanover. I would like to express my sincere thanks for this.”

The refurbishment work, which got underway at the end of August, had become necessary because the balconies were in a poor condition. Specifically, the concrete balcony walls were cleaned, refurbished and then given a coat of paint. Moreover, the balcony railings were re-pinned. Where parts of the balustrades were made of wood, the wooden components were all replaced. The balcony floors were also re-concreted and given a protective layer. The old pigeon nets were removed and replaced with new ones. Finally, stainless steel meshes were fixed to 31 loggias (so-called fire exit balconies) for increased safety.

In total, the balcony refurbishment cost EUR 500,000 and was paid for entirely by Deutsche Wohnen.

The bright and friendly colours used to paint the balconies are already an indication of the colour scheme that is planned for the next phase of refurbishment work in the neighbourhood. When this work starts on the odd numbers (3 to 17) of Spessartweg next spring, the colour design used for the buildings will correspond to that used for the balconies.

The work planned for Spessartweg will be carried out on the basis of an expert modernisation report that was commissioned by the city of Hanover and compiled in close consultation with Deutsche Wohnen.

The report makes clear that the housing in the neighbourhood urgently requires an energy-efficient refurbishment. In particular, the building shell does not provide a minimum standard of insulation, and this leads to high CO2 emissions and high operating expenses for the tenants. In addition, the windows, some of which are very old, have to be replaced with modern windows so that appropriate energy values can be achieved. The ceilings in the cellar area also need to be given modern insulation. Currently there is either inadequate insulation in the cellars or none at all.

All further work will be mainly on the appearance of the buildings and the surrounding areas and grounds. The facades, entrance areas, stairwells and cellar areas, which are looking the worse for wear due to rust, dirt, peeling paint and also vandalism, will be designed so as to be open and friendly. This will help to create a safer and more agreeable atmosphere in these properties.

Simple but effective measures will ensure that the external areas too are given a more agreeable feel. The refurbishment work on the odd numbers (3 to 17) of Spessartweg will involve 113 flats, and most of the work will be carried out outside of these flats.

Currently, the city of Hanover and Deutsche Wohnen are involved in final consultations. If these are concluded on schedule, work can begin in spring 2016. If everything then goes to plan, it will be possible to complete the refurbishment work by the end of 2016. Half of the total cost of approximately EUR 4 million will be borne by Deutsche Wohnen; the other half will be financed through programmes that provide city planning grants and subsidies.

Deutsche Wohnen took over these holdings in Sahlkamp in 2012 after frequent changes of owner had contributed, amongst other things, to a considerable backlog of refurbishment work in the area. In total, Deutsche Wohnen manages approximately 800 flats in Sahlkamp-Mitte and more than 1,400 in the entire Sahlkamp area. Deutsche Wohnen owns approximately 4,100 flats in Hanover and more than 5,400 in the whole Hanover region.

Deutsche Wohnen

Deutsche Wohnen is one of the leading publicly listed residential property companies in Germany and Europe with a business focus on managing and developing its residential property portfolio. As at 30 September 2015 the portfolio comprised 149,100 units in total, of which 147,000 were residential and 2,100 commercial. Deutsche Wohnen owns flats in four Berlin Modernist housing estates, which were given UNESCO world cultural heritage status in July 2008: White City, the Horseshoe Estate in Britz, the Carl Legien Estate in Prenzlauer Berg and the Ring Estate (Siemensstadt).