

Minutes HLRA, 16th July 2018, 7pm, Community Centre, Makepeace Avenue

Present: Andrea Westall, Grainne Ennis, Roger Elliott, Danny Gallivan, Alison David, Kim Sutherland, Hertha Koettner-Smith, Lana Lewin, Shannon Francis

Apologies: Deb Froome

Agenda		Action
Matters arising	<p>Trees on Langbourne: Lana trying to chase down a survey that was undertaken. Will try again. There is also a need to check that none of the trees are covered by a preservation order.</p> <p>Arrange a Langbourne meeting for September to discuss the situation, gather opinion, and liaise with Camden.</p>	<p>Lana</p> <p>Shannon</p>
Heating and Hot Water	<p>Grainne gave an update (see attached Appendix One) on a recent meeting with Camden attended by several members of the Committee, as well as two local councilors and Camden officers. There was a welcome willingness to review options.</p> <p>One action we can do to help with an improved options appraisal is to offer a range of indicative flats on Oakeshott Avenue and Makepeace Avenue.</p> <p>Several committee members offered to help and suggestions were made of people who might occupy other flat 'types'.</p>	<p>Grainne (and others to offer contact details)</p>
Date of next AGM	<p>It was decided to organize a prior joint meeting of the Community Centre and TRA to bring fresh ideas to the AGM. Suggested timing is for the first two weeks in September. (DMC meeting is on Tues 11th September)</p> <p>Suggested dates for the AGM were Monday 17th or 24th September. The idea would be to have an event which is interactive with resident to brainstorm areas to get involved in, showcase what is happening. There would be refreshments. This should increase attendance, engage more volunteers and be useful in working out future activities. It could also be an opportunity for classes at the Community Centre to advertise what they do.</p> <p>Reports need to be compiled (Community Centre, HLRA Finances, Year overview) Introduction of Youth TRA</p>	<p>Andrea</p> <p>Andrea</p> <p>Lana Andrea Shannon Young person</p>
Finances	<p>Lana to get together with Grace to finalize forms and signatories</p> <p>Need receipts from the party to balance the accounts</p>	<p>Lana</p> <p>Alison</p>

Street Party feedback	<p>Everyone felt it was a fantastic event. The kids particularly loved it. Positive, brilliant Kids loved it!!</p> <p>Lessons for next party: Decide on a date much earlier/ Focus more on Great Get Together and Jo Cox. Hold the party in June (16th/17th - ish) in Langbourne</p> <p>Send thanks to the Fire Brigade (Shannon offered to cook up a curry and drop it down to the Station)</p>	Alison Shannon
Bikes	Grace to forward updates	
Fire Safety	Grace to forward updates	
Youth TRA	<p>Has stalled because Committee have been busy with Exams</p> <p>Paris to hold a meeting of the committee in August.</p> <p>Kim asked for week beginning 13th since Eva is around then.</p>	Shannon to liaise with Paris
DMC feedback	<p>Summary from last meeting attended by Josh, Andrea and Roger is attached as Appendix 2. The upshot of the meeting was that the roof leaking situation in 9-16 Langbourne seems to be being resolved. A surveyor attended the day after the meeting. Overall it was felt that this was a good forum to use since many of the key players (councilors, Camden officers) are in the same room.</p> <p>Andrea had been contacted to add other issues that we discussed to the minutes of that event - such as a programme of proactive maintenance and repair to save costs for Camden and residents as well as ensure safe, and quality housing.</p>	Andrea to contact Josh to follow up on 9-16
Questionnaire	Andrea seeing Hugh Boatswain (Camden Tenant Participation) this week to get the questionnaire sent out to residents.	Andrea
First Aid training	<p>As above, Andrea seeing Hugh to ask about what might be possible. We discussed three levels: basic first aid (important for community centre volunteers); Emergency Responder (useful to have a known network); and Defibrillator training.</p> <p>It was also agreed that it would be a good idea to fundraise for a defibrillator on the Estate particularly since the Sheltered Housing Block apparently did not have one.</p>	
Gardens	<p>Gardens on Langbourne are currently being worked on.</p> <p>No response to Glyphosate letter to Camden to try to get the temporary ban on its use extended. We need to follow this up and also find out whether or not the HLE has banned its use etc.</p>	Andrea
AOB	Danny suggested that we could create a commemorative garden for Anya and we would add this to list of future activities	Andrea

	<p>Hyperoptic Cable on the Estate – HLE had been contacted by a company that provides this (high speed and relatively cheap) and then contacted ourselves. We can find out who might be interested but need to wait to see if Camden would allow this before we let people know.</p> <p>Fire Safety – we need to make sure that we stay high on list of priorities particularly given the fact that there is no representative for HL or indeed estates like ours on the Fire Safety Panel.</p> <p>There is a joint committee meeting of all the Estate Committees on Wednesday 18th.</p>	
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Appendix One - Feedback from meeting with Camden about the proposals to improve the heating and hot water system

A subset of the HLRA and HLLA met with Camden on Monday 9th June. The previous officer, Derek Wells, has died and a replacement Contract Manager has not yet been appointed. We met with Primesh Kalia who is responsible for the project for the time being. Eva Taylor was also there - she is responsible for resident consultation, as well as Nina whose title was Energy Efficiency and Performance Manager.

Primesh described their intended approach to sort out the boiler problems by connecting Holly Lodge to the Whittington/Highgate Newtown Estate and installing a plate heat exchanger in the existing boiler house. The water would come into our boiler house and then flow on from there as it does today, at least to begin with. He described this a Stage 1. Stage 2 would then involve what they described as “work in dwellings” which would probably involve fitting heat interface units and replacing the pipework.

Primesh said the advantages for Holly Lodge would be that the boiler maintenance cost would be shared with Highgate Newtown. When asked if there was really the capacity at HNT he said the boilers there would need remodelling and that there would be sufficient capacity but not spare capacity.

We pointed out that whilst the boiler location needs resolving, it is not in fact the boiler that is causing heating/hot water failures - it is in fact the sub-plant rooms between blocks, and that connecting us to HNT would do nothing to resolve that. We also pointed out that by connecting us to HNT they would effectively remove any debate over what Stage 2 would involve - so much would have been invested in connecting us that we would have to remain on a communal system, even if it wasn't the most cost effective and least disruptive option for residents.

We also pointed out that we had still had no response from Camden to our initial list of questions and challenges to the options appraisal. Primesh and Eva said they would send us a response.

We said we wanted the option for individual boilers to be considered properly and for options which were not feasible to be removed from the appraisal rather than remaining and clouding the issue. Primesh said he would ask Alex Maguire from TGA who did the original options appraisal to look at it again. We pointed out that this would put Alex in a rather

difficult position. We also pointed out that TGA do not appear to belong to any of the organisations dedicated to communal heating systems, nor does their website make any mention of it as an area of expertise. We therefore doubted their credibility in this area.

We pressed the point that resident consultation should not straightaway take the form of a big public meeting and that a more preferable approach would be to take the time to explain the proposals to smaller groups and let them see the details. (We could have good visual material on display in the Community Centre.) They seemed to agree that this was a good idea. The point was also raised that they should not appoint a project manager until they have a project, and for that have to complete a statutory consultation.

We committed to send them our list of advantages for individual boilers. These may not be the preferred option for all residents but the options appraisal ignored any of these advantages and therefore should be redone to reflect this option properly. We also said we would find a range of flats that they could come into so they can better understand the challenges of pipework and heat interface unit locations - studio, one and two bed from different blocks. (Not the blocks where all flats have individual boilers as they seem to have dropped the idea of replacing those.)

Appendix Two - Report from DMC (District Management Committee for Housing)

Our deputation was moved right to the start of the meeting, which was very handy. We had both Councillor Meric Apak & Oliver Lewis there, as well as the official representatives from Camden council planning / repairs team, who listened to our deputation and responded - confirming the issue(s) would be taken in hand. It kicked off a lengthy discussion with contributions from several other TRA Reps.

Additionally Andrea raised the issue of the Fire escapes / connecting walkways (as part of the discussion on maintenance). So, as there was also a discussion on Fire Safety on the Agenda, we discussed the Holly Lodge Fire Risk Assessments (FRAs) / roof exits etc. We stated that we were glad to have heard that these would now not be locked, as per the wish of the estate residents, & explained to the DMC about the 2016 FRAs which recommended locking the roof exits. The Camden director of Resident Safety (new appointment this year) said that a new set of FRAs is being done for all Camden properties & gave us the timetable for the new FRAs across the whole of Camden. The Holly Lodge ones are spread out between Q3 2018 through to 2020, and according to Camden's report on Fire safety, the FRAs will "include contacting the relevant TRAs to ensure they are aware when the risk assessment will take place so that a TRA representative could attend" - so we will make sure we are directly involved in our next Fire Risk assessments.

What the deputation was about

- 1) To raise the issue of the not-yet-fixed roof problems in Langbourne 9-16, which was identified as faulty structural work back in September 2016. The issue only came to light because of investigation of the roof resulting from ongoing water damage to the attic space over a period of time, caused by a faulty roof access hatch.
- 2) To use this as an example of why we want Camden to set up a routine system of maintenance checks of the blocks on the estate, which are approaching 100 years old.

"We are making this deputation because of concerns we have on the Holly Lodge Estate about the need for regular maintenance inspections for the blocks on the Estate. The blocks

are nearly a century old and our concerns come about because of an issue with one of the blocks in Langbourne which was discovered in 2016 and has still not yet been resolved.

At that time a block on Langbourne Mansions (Flats 9 to 16) had issues with the fastening on the attic access hatch on the roof which had been going on for some time and which had been reported as faulty by the tenant in the flat below. It kept coming off and this had been reported out to Camden before that time.

However at the end of May 2016 it was broken and the access hatch was open. The hatch gives access to the attic space and during heavy rain water had poured in through the attic space into the top 2 flats, causing damage to the tenant directly under the roof space where the hatch is, with water pouring down the plaster work and light fittings, and damp coming through in the other top floor flat next door. Immediately after this checks were made (By Thames water & by Camen) and they found the inside of the attic space was soaked, had waterlogged insulation and damp woodwork and it looked like this had been going on for some time.

The top floor tenants got councillor Sally Gimson to view the damage & after this repairs were made to the interior of the flat.

Because of these problems Camden Council got engineering consultants "Ellis & Moore" to do a survey on the roof in September 2016, and they found structural problems with the roof supports which had been caused by water tank installation at some point some years before. The main part of that report, which was sent by Camden to the Langbourne top floor residents, reads: "4 water tanks were found to have been installed adjacent to the eaves and, as a consequence the collar and strut system have been modified.

Unfortunately the modification and possible subsequent remedial works do not provide sufficient support.

We confirm that significant roof spread has occurred as the rafters have spread at their support to the perimeter walls. The ceiling joists were found not be tied to the rafters and therefore resulting in roof spread. In addition the modification of the strut as removed the support for the purlins and therefore the purlins are not adequately supporting the rafters. The existing mid-height collars, adjacent to the tanks, were also found not be connected to adequately the rafters and purlins and gaps of approximately 30mm maximum are evident"

Mike Bennett the Contract Manager for Property Management "Supporting Communities" at Camden emailed the top floor tenants in November 2016 saying the repairs would "involve intrusive roof access via openings externally through roof covering." , saying this work would be picked up in the new year. A job reference for the work was supplied by Eva Ellis from major repairs (ref 2053711/1) .

This was September 2016, nearly two years ago, and since then no work has been carried out to address the issues picked except for the replacement of the attic hatch & screwing it shut to prevent water getting in.

If there is a structural problem in the roof relating to faulty work done during installation of water tanks, why has this not been addressed for this length of time ?

There have since been emails between tenants, leaseholders and Camden, but the discussion has been about leaseholder payment, but from Camdens side we would expect

that once the roof structure was found to be faulty as a result of incorrect work done during installation of water tanks, Camden should have moved to fix it by now and any discussion about leaseholder payment would be a separate matter, as this is an issue which affects the block as a whole, leaseholders or Camden Tenants.

Firstly we'd like to know what is happening with this issue and when Camden plan to fix it. We would also like to know what checks they will make to find out if the period of water damage has caused any other problems in the roof structure or insulation which need fixing and also if Camden plan to check the other blocks roofs for similar issues caused by water tank installation.

Secondly we'd like Camden to meet discuss with our TRA about setting up routine inspection checks for these blocks, or find out what checks Camden currently have in place. In the case of the roof in Langbourne, it seems the problems with water in the roof space had been going on for some time, as well as the other structural issue which was then also found out during their investigation"

After this we'll have one of the top floor residents speak about the issue (Alan) & then Andrea will explain what our proposal is and how we'd like the council to respond, with some more detail on the pro-active maintenance checks.

Additional points on proactive maintenance checks

Repairs and major works often happened after a long period of neglect and lack of ongoing maintenance. This means that the works themselves will therefore be extensive and more costly to Camden than they would otherwise be. We suggested that there should be a schedule of ongoing building inspections and proactive (rather than reactive) maintenance. This will not only improve the quality of housing but also ensure that both tenants and leaseholders are able to enjoy safe and attractive housing over time. We would welcome a meeting, perhaps with all TRAs, relevant officers and councillors to consider how this process could work. It is an extension of the work Meric Apak is doing to rethink housing services. (A very simple example is the recent extensive internal refurbishments that were done to the flats. Already, 18m to 2 years on they are starting to show cracked paint and marks on the walls. This situation could easily be dealt with by freshening up the paintwork etc every few years – rather than just allowing it to decline in quality for the next 20 years.)

There is a related point for leaseholders which particularly affects Holly Lodge particularly since we are nearly 50:50 tenant/leaseholder. Leaseholders are being forced to pay at a point in time for sometimes nearly 30 years of neglect and lack of maintenance. Their liability for those works is therefore morally questionable. It would make sense not only to have a rolling programme of maintenance but also perhaps to have a rolling financial pot that builds up over time which means that leaseholders are not expected to pay such large amounts in one go.

Because of the complexity of departments and responsibility in Camden, as well as the problems arising from ageing building stock, it would make it much easier and more constructive to have a named relatively senior Housing Manager for each Estate to act as the first point of engagement. It is impossible as TRAs, or individual residents, to know who to go to to deal with different issues, and extremely frustrating and time-wasting when passed around multiple people. Again, this is a similar change to that being proposed by Meric Apak for individual residents to be allocated a single point person for repairs.