

## **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE HLRA COMMITTEE HELD ON OCTOBER 8TH 2018 AT THE HOLLY LODGE COMMUNITY CENTRE**

PRESENT: Andrea (Chair of meeting), Jane, Judith, Robert, Yvonne, Hertha, Grace, Josh, Lana, Shannon, Alison, Roger (acting Secretary).

ABSENT with apologies: Deborah, Andy, Kim, Jay, Bernadette. Dermot Alexander was also co-opted onto the Committee in his absence

New members of the Committee, Jane, Robert and Yvonne were welcomed and everyone introduced themselves.

### **CHOOSING OFFICERS**

Members all agreed to the following appointments:

Co-Chairs: Andrea, Shannon; Vice-Chair: Grace

Treasurer: Lana

Secretary: Kim, Alison

It was noted that the Committee is leaseholder heavy and, as the estate is about 48% leaseholder and 52% tenant, it is necessary to co-opt more tenants to reflect the Estate's residents.

### **FORMAL PAPERWORK**

All members of the Committee were given copies of the HLRA Constitution. The Equal Opportunities Policy was also unanimously accepted.

### **SUB-COMMITTEES and REPS**

DMC reps: Josh, Roger; DMC Sub: Grace

Garden subcommittee: Deborah, Robert, Jane

Refuse and Recycling: Yvonne

Youth: Shannon

Bicycles subcommittee: Jay, Grace

Heating & Hot Water subcommittee: Judith, Lana, Dermot

HLCC subcommittee: Hertha, Grace, Roger.

### **AGM/QUESTIONNAIRE FEEDBACK**

There were 60 returned questionnaires out of the 471 flats, a 13% response rate (1 in 8). What was most encouraging was the number of people willing to volunteer to take part in gardening, social events and goods swaps.

ACTION: Andrea to give Deborah, Robert and Jane names of those interested in gardening.

There were lots of ideas for activities and people willing to offer skills, particularly film-making, cookery, photography, first aid, design and computing. Martin (on HLCC Committee) is arranging a film club to open around Christmas.

## GARDENS

Many members have noted that we have a new, very enthusiastic full-time gardener - Kat. She is full of ideas and the Gardening Sub-Committee will arrange a meeting with her (probably during the day).

**ACTION:** The Gardening Sub-Committee to arrange the meeting at which all those expressing an interest in gardening will be invited and projects considered, including what to do with the polytunnel at the back of Oakeshott (however it was noted that this latter project needs first to be discussed with the originator of the original project before any discussions are had).

The DMC sub-committee will look into seeking funds from Camden for projects such as restoring the pond, or new bin storage if necessary.

Roger reported that the Green Party petition to ban the use of the herbicide Glyphosate (Round-Up) in the Borough was being presented to the Council that evening with nearly 1000 signatures. At our request, there has been a temporary ban on its use on the Estate and we hope this will be made permanent. Several members mentioned that the bee population has been much more robust this summer on Hillway as a result of the ban mostly put in place by HLE employees.

## REFUSE AND RECYCLING

The Estate Manager has requested a meeting with the TRA to update on the redesign and repositioning of refuse and recycling bins. In particular we await a quote on replacing part of the raised flower bed on Makepeace, by the Sheltered Accommodation, with a covered bin area.

**ACTION:** Andrea to contact the Estate's Manager to arrange a meeting for herself and Yvonne to attend.

Robert observed that any redesign for bin areas should be appropriate to the Estate, as with the bin shed by the Nursery. Whereas Camden is unlikely to go to the expense of such a construction, nevertheless consideration should be made for bin areas to be in keeping with the Estate.

It was observed that food waste bags are expensive to buy and many people don't know how to source them free from Camden.

**ACTION:** Andrea to put a link on the HLRA website about sourcing free bags from Camden. Robert to email the link to Andrea.

## SOCIAL EVENTS

There is a successful Repair Cafe in Belsize Park which could be a model for us to follow.

**ACTION:** Andrea to investigate.

It was agreed to have a Clothes and Goods swap day on Saturday 10th November.

**ACTION:** Alison to organise (the CC has been booked).

It was agreed that we must be careful not to end with the CC cluttered with unwanted clothes and goods and need to think carefully about how this is avoided.

ACTION: Shannon to arrange with a charity to be involved so that any left over clothes could be distributed to the homeless at Christmas – such as Crisis or St Martin's.

## COMMUNITY CENTRE

At the last meeting of the HLCC Shannon set out her ideas for a Saturday Youth Club. This was received enthusiastically by the HLCC Committee which looks forward to it starting early next year.

It was reported that the HLCC has secured a £6,000 grant from Camden's Community Investment Levy. This will provide funds to set up the film club - projector, screen, blackout blinds etc; also to refurbish the CC - new tables etc. Shannon reported that Hugh Boatswain will supply the Youth Club with laptops and printers, so maybe the HLCC should not spend money on these.

ACTION: the HLCC reps to monitor and advise on spending of the £6,000 to avoid any overlap.

A meeting of a sub-committee of the HLCC is to be held on 15th October to arrange a National Lottery Funding bid under 'Reaching Communities'. This is for funding over £10,000 primarily for a part-time Manager for the CC, probably three days a week, including Saturday Youth Club. This would enable the CC to be open much more often, for instance as a Cafe. The Manager would also have an outreach function and could arrange to action ideas from the Questionnaire, such as utilising skills that residents have offered.

## BICYCLES

An email has been sent to residents asking whether they are in favour of the very secure Cycle Hoop storage system; 11 replies so far but it is early days. There is concern about their location but they could be discreetly placed between blocks (where some very insecure bike sheds are now) and on Swains Lane where pavements are wide. The Questionnaire had revealed a huge demand for safe cycle storage which was currently not being met on the Estate and people were being forced to keep bikes in their flats or risk them tied to railings outside. With Camden's new emphasis on fitness, encouraging cycling should be a central concern.

ACTION: Andrea to inform Jay of numbers from the two recent consultations to carry forward with Camden.

## HEATING AND HOT WATER

Judith volunteered to be the point of contact between the Committee and Grainne who has done so much insightful and useful work on this very complex issue.

With the death of Derek Wells, the officer in charge, much of the old ground will have to be covered again with the new officers. However, our position is clear:

A) with the Council's new emphasis on community involvement and officers listening to residents, we reject any attempt to impose a solution on us, such as the extension of Highgate Newtown Estate's boilers to service us with a pipeline down Chester Road

and heat exchangers in every block (currently causing massive problems in Highgate Newtown) without appropriate consultation and rigorous evaluation of options.

- B) Camden's propensity to look for a one-size-fits-all solution, fails to take into account the wide diversity between blocks on the Estate. The first action must be for Camden officers to make themselves aware of this diversity. ACTION: Heating and Hot Water Sub-Committee to provide Camden with addresses of flats reflecting this diversity which officers can inspect to gain a better understanding of the problems and possible options
- C) Residents should be consulted on what they want
- D) Camden should develop a new set of options to be presented to residents in a clear and unbiased manner.

## SECURITY ON ESTATE

A private research company has been asked to research the feelings amongst plotholders about security on the Estate, as well as to create a space to discuss a potential range of responses. This 'Research Workshop' has been arranged in the Community Centre for Wednesday 7th November at 7pm. However, initially only plot-holders were to be invited to participate. A few flat residents were subsequently asked. The HLRA has objected to this low level of representation of flat owners and the research group agreed that six people living in the flats should have guaranteed places on the Workshop. The six chosen at the meeting are: Shannon, Grace, Jane, Roger, Andrea, and either Paris or Jyoti.

ACTION: Shannon to consult Jyoti or find another young male representative.

ACTION: Andrea to organize a consultation meeting for flat residents to complement and add to this research to ensure that the whole of the Estate is able to participate. Although the Estate is in one of the safest areas in Camden, there are concerns with bicycle theft, anti-social behaviour, vandalism and drug dealing on the top park. However, previous discussions on this top have aired concerns that if private security guards are used to patrol the Estate, they may challenge and harass residents, especially young ones, as appears to have been the case when trials have been done on the Estate. This could greatly exacerbate divisions between plot and flat owners, although affected young people have included those who live in houses. However, it is not clear that this would be the result of the research workshop and subsequent HLE discussions.

## UPCOMING MEETINGS AND CHRISTMAS PARTY

At Deborah's request, the next meeting will be held in the afternoon, Monday 12th November at 4pm.

The December meeting will be held on Monday 10th December, 7 - 9pm. Both these meetings will enable us to prepare for the Christmas party on Saturday 15th December. All these dates are entered into the CC Calendar and the hall reserved for our use.