

Holly Lodge Residents Association (HLRA)

Co chairs' report to the Annual General Meeting held on 16th October 2019.

Social Events

Over the last year the HLRA has organised a Christmas party, an Easter party, Easter Egg hunt and a summer street party held in Langbourne Mansions. All events were well attended and enjoyed by all. We also organised a SWISH clothing swap event. Thanks in particular go to Shannon Francis and Alison David. We will hold another Christmas party this winter.

Residents' Gardening Sessions

Residents gardening sessions were started this year. Participants meet every Saturday morning 11.30am in the middle gardens between Oakeshott and Makepeace. They carry out light gardening task under the guidance of our resident gardeners' Kat and Emma. The group planted and harvested a great crop of potatoes in unused land behind Oakeshott. It's a very relaxed and enjoyable activity and all residents are welcome to drop in on any Saturday. The HLRA would like to thank Kat Wojnar for all her work in setting up the group.

The polytunnel behind Oakeshott has been repaired. If residents are interested in having a plot in the polytunnel to grow food they should contact the TRA. We hope to allocate plots in the coming year.

Youth Football Project

The HLRA won a grant to provide free football training session for young people. These were run by the Bloomsbury Football Academy in the summer of 2019. Young people from Holly Lodge attended and received coaching training. The remaining funds from this grant will be spent on other youth projects on Holly Lodge in the coming year. We're also applying for funds for a weekly youth football session and multi-media skills training.

Youth work on Holly Lodge

A small group of young people have been carrying out small improvement works in the community centre and gardens under the supervision of two youth workers, in a project run by Camden. They have pointed the paving on the community centre terrace, sanded and varnished benches and will be helping to mend the pond in the middle gardens this autumn.

Bins

The HLRA has informed the council that bins are overflowing and rubbish is falling on to the streets. The council have provided some more bins, but we have asked for more. The council have also drawn up provisional plans for bin sheds, however consultation is needed before these can be built because this is a conservation area. The HLRA will have to apply for funds

to pay for these bin sheds because the council will not fund them. We will apply for a grant from the District Management Committee (an organisation bringing together local residents associations), once we have a quote from the council.

Locking of Fire exits

The council has proposed locking the fire exits on the roofs of all the blocks that have them. **A final decision has not been made and we are asking all residents to express their concerns.** The council plans to install hard wired smoke alarms and 30-minute fire doors to all flats, measures which we support. The council says when the flats have new doors and alarms, it will be safe to lock the roof fire exits. We disagree because our blocks were built in the 1920s and cannot be fully compartmentalized (sealed off from smoke and fumes). We only have one stair-well and it is therefore vital that we have two routes of escape.

The council also says the roofs are unsafe and it would be expensive to make them safe. Improvements would include: higher railings, new lighting, up-graded bridges between blocks and the removal of spiral staircases to the roofs. The council says residents would be asked to pay for these improvements. We think it is wrong to ask residents to pay for basic fire safety measures. The council has done costings on the basis that the roofs would become 'amenity areas' for residents to use. We explained that residents do not want the roofs to be used for anything other than an escape route. The council are now investigating how much it would cost to close the roofs for general access, but make the fire exits accessible only in the event of an emergency.

Heating and Hot Water

Camden approached us in December 2017 with proposed options for replacing the heating and hot water systems on Holly Lodge. Its preferred solution was to pump water up the hill from the new boilers installed on the Whittington estate. The HLRA and other residents' groups made detailed criticisms of their proposals. Camden agreed in July last year to another review. We are currently waiting for their new proposals.

Reporting Drug Dealing

The HLRA have been working with our estate officer and local police after several incidences of drug dealing were reported in the garages behind Langbourne Mansions. Camden have asked residents to report any incidents they see to the Police Safer Neighbourhood Team 020 8721 2699 -SNTEK-.KentishTown@met.pnn.police.uk and also to our Housing officer Nandita.Chatterjee@camden.gov.uk and to Camden Safety Team: communitysafety@camden.gov.uk .

Chair

Andrea Westall stood down as chair of the HLRA committee at end of 2018. The committee would like to thank her for her tremendous work and energy, and for setting up our website, which has been a goal of ours for many years, but only finally came to fruition when Andrea got on the case. www.myhlra.org

Join Us!

The Holly Lodge Residents Association (HLRA) aims to represent residents' views in discussions with Camden Council and also organises social events. All residents of the mansion blocks are automatically members.

We would like to encourage residents to join the HLRA committee. It is not an onerous commitment; you can do as little or as much as you choose. It's great to have a good spread of people from across the estate participating.

The HLRA committee meets on the second Monday of every month at 7pm. All residents are welcome to attend these committee meetings.

Grace Livingstone

Shannon Francis

Co-Chairs, Holly Lodge Residents Association

16th October 2019