

MINUTES OF THE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 21ST SEPTEMBER 2021

PRESENT: Roger (Chair), Lorna, Josh, Steve, Judith, Jane, Grazyna

APOLOGIES: Jess, Jay, Grace, Kim, Lise, Alison, Tamatha.

The Minutes of the last meeting held on 8th June were approved.

HEATING AND HOT WATER

Judith has written a Summary Report following the HHW Group's meeting with LBC and Councillors Anna Wright and Oliver Lewis on 13th September – see Appendix 1.

LBC has emailed following this meeting: "We will write to all residents regarding the phase 1 project very soon. This will provide residents with information and the option to find out more about the project and ask their questions via a live interactive zoom session".

There has not been a residents' consultation meeting with LBC on this subject since 2016. Consultations have been solely with the HHW Group. It was therefore agreed that following LBC's letter to residents, the HLRA should call a meeting of all residents and our Ward Cllrs before the LBC meeting to brief residents, answer questions and find out their opinions.

Roger will email Meric Apak, Cabinet Member for Better Homes, for information on the decision-making process:

- Will LBC's meetings with residents be true consultations or engagement exercises simply to inform?
- How will residents be represented during the decision-making process, including on tendering?
- Who makes the final decisions on such major projects?

WEEDS AND HARD SURFACES

Roger has written Notes on the meeting held with LBC on 14th September on resurfacing hard areas – see Appendix 2.

He will send these Notes to LBC with a covering letter pointing out that their grounds' maintenance sub-contractors, Idverde, use the Foamstream method to control weeds on 176 housing sites in the Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham. Why shouldn't the same system be used on our Estate?

Also, he will ask for the deployment of the Caretaking Support and Response Group to get on top of the massive problem of weeds on the Estate.

POND

Mulalleys have offered to repair the pond but we have to clear it first and look after the plants for re-introduction. It was agreed we should consult Deborah Froome. The Gardening Group will clear the pond on 9th October, starting at 10am. Roger will contact Deborah, alert the Gardening Group and liaise with Mulalleys.

FIRE SAFETY WORKS

Fitting alarms (heat and smoke) should be completed on HLM this week. Next week, Mulalleys will move onto MM.

Fire Safety doors have been fitted to 1-11 HLM, are being fitted to 55-78 HLM and will be fitted to 277-294 HLM next week. Mulalleys will move down to MM and finally to LM. They intend to complete the work by Christmas.

Steve pointed out that Camden will provide a warranty for the fire doors and Certification that they meet all of the fire safety standards. Any alteration to the door will invalidate the warranty and certification. However, the fire rating of the door (D30) is more important than Camden's certification. If residents want to alter the door in any way, they must ensure that the alteration does not invalidate its fire rating. He has sent an email on the subject to Roger.

If you have the code for the colour used in your block when it was last refurbished, please would you let Suket know for painting electrical cupboard doors:

suket.patel@camden.gov.uk.

AGM

The last AGM was held by Zoom on 29th September 2020. We need to hold another within 15 months to remain valid as a TRA.

Roger will check with Camden's Tenant Participation that they can send someone to observe an AGM on October 20th at 7pm by Zoom. If they can, he will inform residents by email and poster at least two weeks in advance.

Roger announced that after three years as Secretary and then Chair he will be standing down at the AGM. He pointed out that the Secretary needs to take responsibility for the steady stream of emails that arrives almost daily for hollylodgera@gmail.com. Combining this with the Chair is very time-consuming. Also, the Constitution stipulates that the posts of Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and DMC reps. should not be combined. The work-load must be shared, possibly with a co-Chair and co-Secretary (one to monitor emails and another to arrange and minute meetings).

AOB

Grazyna's block, 29-39 MM, is still having problems with caretaking. Roger will get in touch with Gary Nicholls, the Caretaker Manager.

APPENDIX 1

HEATING AND HOT WATER SUMMARY REPORT October 2021

Camden needs to replace the temporary boiler which provides hot water and heating to **Makepeace Mansions and Holly Lodge Mansions** flats. It intends to also upgrade and modernise facilities. Several consultant reports have been prepared since the proposals were mooted in 2015 (?)

and a group of residents under the Holly Lodge Residents Association, has been meeting with Camden to facilitate discussion. The last Zoom meeting was on **13 September 2021** led by Suzanne Afra, Head of Capital Works. This was in response to a HLRA request to meet our Councillors. Councillors Apek, Lewis and Wright attended. The consultant remains Alex Maguire, FLOH.

Notes from Suzanne, the HHW Group from previous meetings are on <https://www.facebook.com/groups/HollyLodgeLeaseholdersAssociation>

Next Steps

Camden says it will send an update letter soon and may arrange a 'residents' briefing session' (sometimes called a residents' engagement meeting) with an FAQ document. Presumably on Microsoft's Team software which is favoured by Camden who do not want to convene face to face public meetings.

New at the September meeting is that Camden is looking at the retrofit requirements for all its properties so Phase2 will include a review of the fabric of the meeting.

Camden's recommendation is to have:

- o A district heating system, supplied from the current location of the boilers with a new boiler for the supply of the heating and hot water to the blocks on the estate.
- o The existing distribution pipework is less than 10 years old and therefore Camden is proposing to reuse this pipework, which has a remaining life of at least 15 years.
- o Each flat will have a heat interface unit (HIU) installed to provide hot water 24/7/365 to both kitchen and bathroom (*which will be connected by new pipes if currently separate*) and heating
- o Heating flow and return pipework will be connected from the new energy centre (*i.e. the HIU*)
- o The mains water pipework will also need to be renewed for the hot water supply to the HIU.
- o Each HIU will be fitted with a heat meter which will measure the heating and hot water usage in each flat. Each resident will be charged for heating and hot water used in the flat. (*This is still an aspiration as does not happen in the Refurbished flats nor yet at the Whittington Estate where HIUs have been recently installed*)
- o The proposed option is to carry out the work in two phases; phase one replace the existing boilers and phase two renew the heating to the blocks and internally within the flats.

The HHW Group has a number of issues with this proposal, for example:

- space requirements in small one bed flats
- reports from the Whittington Estate of disruption, quality of work,

- problems in Refurbished flats with temperature/pressure delivery, absence of individual metering despite HIUs being installed
- Group's preference for individual boilers
 - potential imposition of central heating on tenants and leaseholders who have hot water only and have their own systems for heating.
 - Cost!! Both capital costs and future running costs – both still to be quantified.

Holly Lodge Heating Project HHW Group Position @ 13.9.2021

Background

- There is insufficiently detailed analysis of the existing heat network performance, and the current heating/hot water provision and consumption by individual flats and blocks, to support the proposed design changes to the central plant and network.
- The proposal to replace the temporary boiler alone is not supported by a majority but all options should be explored for consultation with residents. *A comprehensive demand assessment is needed however the project proceeds.*
- Not enough detail has yet been provided on design and costings for the 30+ variety of flats to allow consultation with residents.
- Low confidence in Camden's ability to deliver quality work at a competitive price. *That this concern is shared by other Camden Estates can be seen in NCJ letters.*
- CIBSE Code of Practice (CoP) for heat networks sets minimum standards and can be applied to existing networks with variations justified in Statements of Applicability and Evidence packs.
- Aim: to provide an appropriate, safe, reliable, efficient and affordable system for residents, with the same consumer protection as customers of conventional energy suppliers - as the CoP provides.

Proposal to Camden

- Commission the project in accordance with the CIBSE Code of Practice for Heat Networks, meeting the minimum requirements as far as possible. Instruct a Certified Heat Networks Consultant under the Code.

- Undertake a comprehensive, costed feasibility assessment and cost benefit analysis over both short and long term following the CIBSE CoP for the three different Block types:

7 Blocks/ 85 flats: Refurbished flats with HIUs and underfloor heating (poor design & installation and ongoing performance issues due to oversized HIUs and inadequate pipework insulation)

6 Blocks/103 flats: Hot Water only (DHWS): unknown heating provision; new pipework required with consequent maximum disruption and repair; many already have electric heating.

7 Blocks/ 144 flats: Have HHW: unclear re. new pipes/radiators.

Needs also to take account of the different block layouts.

This is to establish current and future demand, preliminary design issues, viability of individual provision, capital and running costs **for residents**.

- That LBC commit to an open-minded public consultation which listens to residents ie. not just 'engagement' or 'task & finish groups'.

Unanswered Questions

- How will these works result in reduced heating costs for tenants and leaseholders?
- What are the capital costs for the different types of flats?
- What assistance is there for leaseholders beyond the standard LBC payment terms? - What government grants are available to Camden or residents? - Can leaseholders' costs be capped?
- Will LBC undertake to pay for repair, fire stopping and redecoration of all flats?
- How would disruption and knock on repair costs be addressed for DHWS- only flats if HIUs & heating are installed?
- How will the reported issues in the 85 Refurbished flats be addressed? How do these existing network issues effect the central plant replacement?
- Can any replacement be designed to allow leaseholders to opt for individual boilers? (Only a cold water supply is needed).
- Will Camden provide its residents with the consumer protection guaranteed under the CIBSE CoP, with justified variations and follow up registration under the Heat Trust?
- Will Camden employ a certified Heat Networks consultant?
- Is a gas based system future proof? Will it be flexible enough to respond to possible changing regulations?
- Could a programme of installing double glazing be considered as an alternative to HIUs?

The HHW Group is unlikely to support any proposals from Camden which do not address the above concerns.

APPENDIX 2

NOTES ON THE MEETING HELD ON 14TH SEPTEMBER 2021 ON RESURFACING AT HOLLY LODGE.

PRESENT:

Roger Elliott, Chair Holly Lodge Residents' Association (TRA)
Deborah Froome, Resident Holly Lodge
Jessica Polowski, Committee Member HLRA
Jane Atkinson, Committee Member HLRA, Garden Group Convener
Anna Wright, Ward Councillor
Nick Wilmot, Volker Highways
Dee Cole, Senior Highways Engineer, LBC
Jevaughn Bailey, Grounds Maintenance Monitoring Officer, LBC
Nathalie Kusneraitis, Greenspace, LBC.

APOLOGIES

Oliver Lewis, Ward Councillor
Sharon Calvey, Head Estates Management.

Roger outlined the situation that since LBC agreed with residents not to use Glyphosate weed killer on the Holly Lodge Estate three years ago, no alternative weed control method has been introduced and weeds are badly damaging hard-standing areas. They are causing trip hazards, are unsightly and many residents are complaining.

The HLRA has repeatedly asked LBC to introduce a non-toxic form of weed control but nothing has been done. The HLRA does not consider that resurfacing hard-standing areas is either a financially or environmentally viable form of weed control.

Deborah said that the problem is one of departmental responsibility. Housing is responsible for weed control carried out by Caretakers vigorously sweeping hard-standing areas around their blocks and in the garden between Makepeace Mansions and Holly Lodge Mansions. In the past, Housing also funded Grounds Maintenance to spray with Glyphosate. Since, this spraying has stopped, Housing has done nothing to arrange an alternative. As a result, weeds have grown out of control in the garden and on many pathways. Since Caretaking was taken back in-house by LBC in April 2020, Estates Management has not resolved this problem.

Roger regretted that nobody from Caretaking/Estates Management was present at the meeting. These notes would be sent to them asking for rectification.

Jessica further clarified the areas of responsibility of the Caretakers and that this work is not being carried out. She queried whether residents were being charged under Grounds Maintenance for this work. Jevaughn said he would look into this.

Roger asked Nathalie whether LBC carried out non-toxic weed control in the Borough, other than manually. She said they employ Foamstream in some parks but the equipment is bulky and may not be suitable for an estate. She said they have not used heat treatment and it would involve training operatives and might have H&S implications. Jessica said she thought she had seen Holly Lodge Estate using heat treatment (since confirmed by Roger).

Anna said that clearly the weed problem must be resolved by Housing and Grounds Maintenance speaking to each other and coming up with a solution. She would lead on this.

The meeting then left the Community Centre to go on site - the garden between Makepeace Mansions and Holly Lodge Mansions. Dee pointed out that the current contract from LBC to Volker Highways was only for the York Stone around the pond and below it. A further contract would have to be made for the upper terrace and path down to the pond. She agreed that the York Stone did not need to be taken up and re-laid, only re-pointed. Deborah insisted that as this is a heritage site in a conservation area any work on the York Stone must be done to the highest standard, including the distinctive decorative markings inscribed in the concrete mortar.

She also pointed out how inappropriate it is to try to mow the area with a large sit-on mower as that damages the York Stone and cannot mow around the many trees. On the other hand, strimming tends to cut the grass too short and idVerde is leaving it unraked. The solution must be push-mowers. Jevaughn agreed to write this into their contract.

It was agreed that a solution **must** be speedily found to the weeding problem by Housing and Grounds Maintenance working together so that Highways could re-point the York Stone this financial year.