

## **MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE HOLLY LODGE RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION HELD BY ZOOM ON 20<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2021 AT 7PM**

**Attendees:** Roger Elliott (Chair) 162MM, Grace Livingston 146HLM, Victoria Plum 346HLM, Lorna Jane Russell 157HLM, Janet Anderson 149MM, Michele and Jerry Freedman 100HLM, Lise Gallagher 223HLM, Grazyna Korbel 36MM, Virginia Cleugh 50LM, Tamatha Weisser 283HLM, David Fermer 61LM, Josh Cedar 146HLM, Charlotte Parker 212MM, Alice Lambert 221MM, Anna Parkinson 58LM, Jane Atkinson 251HLM, Inma Mejias 12AMM, Catherine Bousfield 126MM, Sophie Bircumshaw 268HLM, Steve Barton 83LM, Judith Walker 132MM, Alison David 64HLM, Sue Dibben, Linda Seddon.

**Councillors:** Oliver Lewis (start of meeting 7pm to 8pm) and Sian Berry (8pm to end of meeting).

**Camden Observer:** Hugh Boatswain.

**Holly Lodge Estate:** Robert Schoenbeck

**Apologies:** Jenny Quiggin 113MM, Ana Caroline Dias 291HLM, Sarah Gillam 64LM, Deb Froome 285HLM, Jonathan Vickers 160MM, Caroline Steenman-Clark 134MM, Debs Wild 267HLM, Zoe Coleman 31HLM, Dermot Alexander 353HLM, Anthony Tyreman 93HLM, Vicky Hackett 87MM, Gillian Ingram 56LM, Jody Roberts 34HLM, Grainne Ennis 133MM, Sally Davies 118MM, Kim Sutherland 147MM, Sharron McKeivitt 386HLM, Simon Woods 186 HLM, Iruma Doman 82LM, Camilla Scaramanga 142MM, Constance Redgrave 116MM, Patricia Capone 126HLM.

Councillor Anna Wright.

### **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE AGM HELD ON 29<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2020**

The Minutes were approved and Matters Arising are dealt with below.

### **CHAIR'S REPORT**

#### **FIRE SAFETY**

The contractors for the Fire Safety Works, Mulalley & Co., have been on site for nearly six months. Much of Holly Lodge Mansions now has its new fire safety doors and alarms. Mulalleys are working down to Makepeace and then Langbourne. They hope to finish the whole estate by Christmas.

24 of the estate's 31 blocks require this work to bring them up to current fire safety standards (7 regenerated blocks are already up to standard). It has been a disruptive process, especially coming at a time when people are still uneasy over Covid. Residents with original doors, nearly 100 years old, are naturally reluctant to see them discarded and replaced by modern ones. The Camden Project Manager, Mr Suket Patel, has gone out of his way to source designs that are close to the originals and to give a wider choice of colours than is usual. But still there have been a lot of questions and complaints about the designs, their frames, size, furniture, thresholds, fanlights etc. The Leaseholders' Association is understandably concerned about costs even though the doors themselves are being gifted by Camden (leaseholders own their front doors).

We ask that people recognise that these works are being done for everyone's safety. Although some people may be dissatisfied, others are pleased with their new doors, especially those whose original doors were ripped out by Camden years ago.

### **Fire Exits**

We foresaw that the Fire Safety works would be disruptive, so we specifically asked Camden to decouple them from the contentious issue of locking the fire exits to the roofs. They agreed to this. So, the situation remains the same as it was last year (see the report in the AGM Minutes, 29/09/2020, on our website myhlra.org).

### **HEATING AND HOT WATER**

The Heating and Hot Water Group has had several virtual meetings with Camden (see Report below). We are now asking Camden to hold consultation meetings with all residents on this issue because the last one was six years ago; much has changed since then in the energy field, and residents should be informed and consulted on developments.

Camden will only conduct such meetings virtually, though they are willing to follow up face to face with those without access. We are expecting them to send a letter to all residents soon to arrange this meeting.

### **GARDENS**

The Gardening Group has continued its work both outside with the vegetable beds behind Holly Lodge Mansions and in the polytunnel. Anyone wishing to join, please email [hollylodgera@gmail.com](mailto:hollylodgera@gmail.com).

### **Weeds**

Everyone must have noticed the proliferation of unsightly weeds on the estate, damaging pathways and hard standing areas. Three years ago, at the request of residents, we asked Camden to stop spraying the herbicide Glyphosate on the estate. They agreed to this but have failed to provide any alternative means of controlling weeds. We had a meeting last month to bring the three Camden departments concerned together – Ground Maintenance, Caretaking and Highways (who manage the hard standing areas). Councillor Anna Wright attended the meeting.

Gardening works are outsourced by Camden to Idverde who use a Foamstream (hot water) method of weed control on 176 housing sites for Hammersmith and Fulham. We are asking Camden to contract Idverde to use this method on our estate. We are also asking Camden to deploy their Caretaking Support and Response Team, (it is the caretakers' responsibility to clear weeds by sweeping hard areas, including in the garden between Makepeace and Holly Lodge Mansions).

### **Pond**

The pond has leaked for years. Our Gardening Group has recently cleared it in preparation for its repair and renovation by Mulalleys. Camden has given us funds for this. We are preserving the best of the plants and some pond life in plastic containers for reintroduction when the pond is repaired. We hope the pond will look cleaner and brighter for this work.

## **Hedges**

Our hedges are one of the glories of our garden Estate but their growth has caused problems, encroaching on pathways (particularly during social distancing) and limiting sight-lines when people come out of blocks. Hedges do need to be severely cut back every few years and this will happen this autumn. A hedge without leaves may look unsightly but please be assured that come spring they will leaf again and be all the stronger for the pruning.

## **CO-OP**

In May, we held a meeting with Cooperation Town, an organisation on Highgate Road with Camden Council support which is helping to set up small local co-ops. The idea is that local co-ops can source free food through Cooperation Town and buy in bulk with small weekly donations from their members. This tackles the problem of providing good food while fostering self-reliance as the co-ops organise themselves on a democratic basis.

We helped set up one of these co-ops which uses the Community Centre for storage and distribution every week. This is a good example of the HLRA and the Community Centre coming together to support an autonomous group of residents. Anyone interested in being a part of the co-op, please email [cooperation.hollylodge@gmail.com](mailto:cooperation.hollylodge@gmail.com).

## **SOCIAL EVENTS**

We secured some funding from Camden to celebrate Christmas and Easter. Because of Covid, residents could not come to Father Christmas in the Community Centre so we took Father Christmas to the residents. Holly Lodge Estate helped by providing their electric buggy which was transformed into Santa's sleigh going round the estate with gifts for the children. Afterwards, there was impromptu, socially distanced carol singing on all three Avenues.

At Easter, there was an Easter Egg hunt and games for children in the park at the top of the estate. Let's hope that this Christmas and next year we can have more social events, perhaps a street party again in the summer.

## **COMMITTEE**

As you can see, this has been another very busy year for the HLRA and I would like to thank all those who have helped. The Heating and Hot Water Group, convened by Judith Walker, has been particularly busy meeting with Camden on this complex issue (see Report below). Our thanks to Councillors Anna Wright and Oliver Lewis for attending these meetings and for their support.

I would also like to thank Grace Livingstone as the prime organiser of the social events at Christmas and Easter which have so raised our spirits during these troubling times. She has been ably and enthusiastically supported by Barbara Wheatley, manager of the Holly Lodge Estate, and by many of our committee members, including Josh Cedar, Oliver Spisak, Steve Barton, Jane Atkinson and Lana Lewin. I would also like to thank Lana for her work as our Treasurer, overseeing our finances and grant applications. Finally, I must thank Cllr Sian Berry for her support this year.

After three years as Secretary and then Chair, I will be standing down from the Committee after this AGM. Also standing down are Hertha Koettner-Smith, Isobel Rogers and Yvonne Coney. I would like to thank all three: Hertha for many years of positive input, Isobel for working on the issue of secure cycle sheds, and Yvonne for the unglamorous but vital work on bins and recycling. Lise Gallagher is resigning as Secretary but is standing again for the Committee. My thanks to her also.

Please do consider standing for election to the committee. You can choose how much or how little you do, and on what issues, from the serious to the social. The HLRA always needs new committee members and we know there is an enormous range of talent on this estate.

Roger Elliott (Chair)

## **HEATING AND HOT WATER (HHW) SUMMARY REPORT October 2021**

### **A Brief History**

Camden needs to replace the temporary boiler which provides hot water and heating to flats on Makepeace Mansions and Holly Lodge Mansions (Phase 1).

Camden also intends to upgrade and modernise the heating and hot water facilities in the flats (Phase 2).

A residents' meeting was held in 2015 to present the consultant's initial report but it was confusing and unsatisfactory. So, the HLRA set up a sub-committee, the HHW Group, to facilitate discussion with Camden. This Group has held numerous meetings with Camden which has come up with various modified reports. However, as you will see, there are still many outstanding concerns and questions.

The Consultant was, and remains, Alex Maguire of FLOH.

The last meeting in September was attended by Councillor Meric Apak (Cabinet Member for Better Homes) and our Ward Councillors Oliver Lewis and Anna Wright. There was little that was new to us except that Gavin Haynes, Director of Property, has been tasked with looking into the retrofit requirements of all properties – the fabric of the buildings.

We asked for a meeting to be convened for all residents so you can be updated and give your views. Cllr Anna Wright supported this. Camden agreed to call this meeting soon. They will send a letter to all residents which will contain an FAQ document. Camden probably views this meeting as a residents' briefing session, what they call an 'engagement', rather than a true consultation.

### **Camden's Recommendations**

- o A district heating system for flats already connected, supplied from the current boiler house with a new boiler - Phase One.
- o The existing distribution pipework will be reused as it is less than 10 years old and has a remaining life of at least 15 years.
- o In Phase Two, each flat will have a heat interface unit (HIU) installed to provide hot water 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 in blocks will also need to be renewed for the hot water supply to the HIU.
- o The HIUs will be fitted with a heat meter which will measure the heating and hot water usage in each flat. Residents will only be charged for the heating and hot water used in their flat.

## **Our Concerns**

The HHW Group has a number of issues with these recommendations:

- Space requirements for the HIUs in small one bed flats
- Disruption and quality of work in flats, particularly in those with different hot water pipes for kitchens and bathrooms which will have to be combined (reports from the Whittington Estate cause concern)
- Current problems in Refurbished flats with temperature/pressure delivery
- Absence of individual metering in Refurbished flats despite HIUs being installed; (the same situation is present on the Whittington Estate where HIUs have been recently installed)
- A query over the age of the existing distribution pipework – more than 10 years?
- The HHW Group's preference for individual boilers, especially by 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
- Insufficient analysis of the existing heat network's 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
- Insufficient detail 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. This concern is shared by other Camden Estates as can be seen in recent Camden New Journal letters
- Role of residents in decision making is unclear.

Judith Walker

## **ELECTION TO THE COMMITTEE**

Standing again for the Committee are:

Alison David, Anna Parkinson, Grace Livingstone, Grazyna Korbel, Jane Atkinson, Jay Levy, Jessica Polowski, Josh Cedar, Judith Walker, Kim Sutherland, Lana Lewin, Lisa Rose, Lise Gallagher, Lorna Russell, Oliver Spisak, Rapi Kaur, Sabrina Bordin, Saira Malik, Stefi Falco, Steve Barton, Tamatha Weisser.

The 21 current members of the committee were re-elected. People who would like to join as new members can get in touch at any time at [hollylodgera@gmail.com](mailto:hollylodgera@gmail.com).

## **1. Social events**

### **2024 will be the Estate's centenary**

The Manager of the Community Centre, Len Lauke, is co-ordinating the event. Please contact Len Lauke at [hollylodge.manager@gmail.com](mailto:hollylodge.manager@gmail.com)

**Ideas so far:** street party with 1920s costumes; Jody Roberts is preparing a quilt and will co-ordinate with others who want to take part; Lisa Rose's play about Angela Burdett Coutts; lecture series on history of estate; mini fun fair with ponies, candy floss, basic games, bumper cars; dog show; collage with faces of people who lived on the estate; memories of older residents and photos of the estate in the past.

### **Christmas outside event, similar to last year**

Oliver Lewis noted that councillors have community infrastructure levy (CIL) money that can be applied for by the committee for community events.

## **2. Fire safety works**

Inevitably, this has caused some disruption to people's lives. Some fire door appointments have not been respected; Tamatha had to take time off work to attend such appointments and Mulalley did not turn up or provide any advance notice of cancellation or re-scheduling.

There has been damage done the block's walls or paint work but Mulalley has assured residents all will be made good; Camden Council should not sign the work off until it is done so. Lorna reported that communications have been smooth but she was meant to have her door fitted on Tuesday and this was postponed due to delays with delivery.

There is concern that the fire doors are narrower than the original doors. Usually this is only by 1-1.5cm but in a few cases it is up 2-3cm. Josh has followed this up. Suket Patel writes:

The reason for the loss in widths of the doors is down to two main reasons. Firstly, we are required to fire stop around the door which typically means we lose 5-10mm around each side of the door, and the second reason is due to the frames of the new fire rated doors being wider than what you have in situ currently. There are a few occasions where we are restricted by the width of the internal corridors and the difference between the frame position on the inside compared to the outside. Every attempt is made to ensure the opening is as close to the current as far as possible. This is more difficult in some blocks than others as we do find some anomalies when the architraves/frames are removed.

Lise noted that an invoice for the management of the fire safety works in the block was sent to her to be paid for as a leaseholder whereas Camden had confirmed that leaseholders would not be charged for fire safety works management. The invoice cannot be paid online as it is for £2.71 and Camden's online portal only allows to pay a minimum of £5. Other residents had similar issues.

Roger assured residents that the fire doors are safer than current doors. However strong our old doors seem, they are not certified as fire doors (and the only way to do so would be to burn test them to destruction!). The enforcing authority is London Fire Brigade and they regard them as non-compliant.

Victoria Plum said that she has been very satisfied with Camden and with Mulalley's communication and workmanship. Suket Patel has received several emails from residents saying they are delighted with their new doors.

### 3. Heating and Hot water

Judith reported on the latest updates. In November, Camden has said it will send a letter to all residents setting out initial proposals for heating and hot water, beginning by replacing the temporary boiler. Camden will arrange a Zoom meeting. Judith suggested that the committee organises a face to face meeting with residents.

Grace queried whether there had been any thoughts given to the environment and climate change.

Oliver noted that for phase 1 (installation of the new boilers) gas seems the only option, but phase 2 offers more opportunity to introduce environmentally friendly initiatives.

Judith noted that the fabric of our old buildings needs to be considered. Camden needs to look at double glazing and insulation but there are problems with finance and possible massive internal disruption within flats.

Sue asked if there had been any updates on who will pay. The old boiler broke down and Camden has replaced it with a temporary boiler that it rents at considerable expense. Now Camden proposes to replace this with their own boiler and charge leaseholders for the costs. Should leaseholders be liable for replacing a boiler that Camden installed and which did not work?

Jerry noted that the boiler needs to be at high temperature because the unregenerated flats are not insulated. This makes the regenerated flats far too hot – uncomfortable and a waste of energy. Insulation should come before generation but there is currently no plan to insulate the unregenerated blocks.

Jerry also proposed that the Plant Rooms could be investigated for housing air-source heat pumps to individual blocks.

Tamatha noted that there are alternative solutions including grass powered gas. More information can be found from ecotricity.

Roger noted that many of the new technologies are as yet unproven – air-source heat pumps for large estates like ours, hydrogen fuel, bio-fuels. This is why Camden is still proceeding with a gas boiler but decisions should be flexible and future proof. It is likely that gas will become more expensive whereas electricity from renewable sources will become cheaper (particularly if the government reverses its subsidies from domestic gas to renewable electricity).

### 4. Gardens

**There are issues with weeds.** The HLRA held a meeting with the three departments involved: Ground Maintenance, Caretaking and Highways to find a solution. Anna Wright said she would lead on this. Camden's contractors, Idi Verdi, use an environmentally friendly hot water system to control weeds on 176 housing estates in Hammersmith and Fulham. Camden should use this system if possible and bring in their special caretaking team (the caretakers are responsible for controlling weeds on hard standing areas).

**Pond:** the gardening group has taken out plants and water containing pond life so that Mulalley can clear what remains and repair the leak and clean the stonework, including the statue. The plants and pond life will then be returned.

Mulalley has been specifically asked to pause once they have cleared the pond so we can inspect the emptied pond and decide on how to proceed. Camden has provided funds for this work but is otherwise not involved.

**Hedges:** are to be pruned back soon. In many places they are overgrown onto the pathways, making passage difficult, especially with social distancing. In other places there are gaps which need to be filled, such as on Oakeshott avenue by Swain's lane. Residents are warned that the hedges will be cut back to the twigs but will leaf again in the spring.

## **5. Food Co-op**

Cooperation Town helped set up a food co-op on the estate 5 months ago. There are 15 people in the group which is now running well. Initially, there were problems with not everyone contributing wholeheartedly, even though the commitment is only about one hour a week. It is vital that co-op members contribute their time and effort; an essential aspect of the co-op is the development of self-reliance.

Currently, most of the food is free from Cooperation Town, food which would otherwise go to waste. The group is looking to organise the bulk purchase of food. Collections and distribution are done weekly.

The problem of identifying food poverty on the estate was raised, particularly as Highgate Newtown Community Centre has suspended the food bank which gave food parcels to residents. The food co-op could be more widely advertised again so that residents know they can get free or very low priced food, provided they participate wholeheartedly in the group. Anyone who want to join can contact Josh or Naomi at [cooperation.hollylodge@gmail.com](mailto:cooperation.hollylodge@gmail.com).

## **AOB**

- Grace raised the question about whether gas boilers for heating and hot water are appropriate with Camden Council having declared a climate emergency and the need to move to carbon net zero. Sian agreed and said that she and her new Green Party colleague, Lorna Russell, are planning to bring this up with the Council.
- Grace also warned that the issue of locking the roofs will be raised again next year.
- Bike parking: the four Cyclehoops in Swain's Lane were quickly filled. We need more. There is a reluctance to put cyclehoops between blocks as they are vulnerable to break-in. The current shelters could be provided with lockable doors. Or a cyclehoop container could be installed by the garages on Langbourne, provided it has CCTV. Sian said this looks like an initiative that Councillors could back for funding from their community infrastructure levy (CIL). She recommended checking the Cyclehoop website for different designs. Virginia asked if we could add Cyclehoops on the avenues where they are overlooked by flats and therefore safer. Roger said that we need to discuss this with Holly Lodge Estate as it would mean the sacrifice of parking spaces.

The meeting ended at 8.30pm

## **TREASURER'S REPORT:**

1st October 2020 to 29th September 2021

Opening balance	£	7,079.39
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**Income**

Donations	£	356.00
Camden Council grants	£	150.00
Total	£	<b>506.00</b>

**Expenditure**

Christmas Community party	£	805.00
Easter event	£	158.23
Amp purchase	£	150.00
Website fees	£	87.00
TRA/AGM Meeting expenses	£	45.30
Zoom annual renewal	£	143.88
Pimlico plumbing boiler inspections	£	102.00
Memorial plaque	£	70.00
Other expenditure	£	178.00
Total	£	<b>1,739.41</b>

Balance carried forward	£	5,845.98
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