

TOWER HAMLETS COMMUNITY HOUSING

BETHNAL GREEN AREA RESIDENTS BOARD MEETING

WEDNESDAY 15th OCTOBER 2008

ZANDER COURT COMMUNITY ROOM – COMMENCED AT 6.30pm

MINUTES

PRESENT

A. Ambrose	Achilles House – (AA)
J Benson	John Fielden House (JB)
F Hunt	Hector House (FH)
L Thomas	Lysander House (LT)
C Kellers	John Fielden House (CK)
J Bergonzi	William Channing House (JB)
M Meir	Gwilym Maries House (MM) Chair
V Davis	Thomas Burt House (VD)
D Beal	Beechwood House – (DB)
G Cook	Ajax House (GC)
M Colley	Hector House (MC)
L Cosgrove	Ajax House (LC)

OFFICERS PRESENT

Elaine Hamilton	Community Housing Office Manager (EH)
Glyn Wiltshire	Repairs and Maintenance Manager (GW)
Irene Poole	Resident Participation Officer

DISTRIBUTION

All Above	
Michael Tyrrell	Chief Executive
David Eatwell	Director of Housing
Peter Exton	Director of Development
Harneck Chilemba	Director of Finance
Compton Gustave	Housing Services Manager
Mervyn Fox	Interim Community Development Manager
Sheila Bradley	Corporate Administration Manager
Justice Allotey	Finance Manager
Olu Oloruntuyi	Finance Manager
Sirajul Islam	Community Housing Officer Manager S & W
Bridgett Bardwell	Human Resources Manager
Andrew Coleborn	Policy & Communications Manager
Tracey Bellamy	Lettings Manager
Maryann Lowry	Lettings Manager
Glyn Wiltshire	Repairs & Maintenance Manager
Annie Evans	Senior Development Manager
Masood Hussain	Community Housing Office Manager-Spitalfields Office

1. APOLOGIES

1.1 J Grierson, Mervyn Fox.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

2.1 None.

3 AGREE THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

3.1 Item 5.7 – it was agreed that the reference to scaffolding should be deleted.

3.2 Item 10.3 – it was agreed the paragraph should have stated that block letters were being relied on.

3.3 Pending these amendments the minutes of the last meeting were agreed.

4 MATTERS ARISING

4.1 **Item 5.1 – Alcohol free zones** – The SNT sergeant, CL reported that it was a police and council officer decision not to proceed with “no alcohol” zones in the area. She advised that other legislation was currently being used to resolve the problem. New legislation to resolve this matter was also being considered by central government.

4.1.1 Residents were unhappy with this response as they felt that any new legislation could take a long time to implement and would not resolve the current problems. Residents asked EH to write to the SNT sergeant asking what was being done in the short term about the youths that regularly gathered in stairwells drinking and taking drugs. They also wanted clarification on what new legislation was being planned. It was agreed EH would bring a copy of the letter to the next meeting. **EH**

4.2 **Item 3.7 – Loitering outside Cambridge Heath Station** – There was no report back from CL on this matter. Residents asked EH to invite CL to the next meeting so a report back could be obtained. **EH**

4.3 **Item 5.3 - Standard of horticultural weeding works on the estates** - GW reported that the spreadsheet had been created but all the required information was yet to be included. When this was done, the spreadsheet would be issued to each CHO so they could monitor performance. **GW**

4.4 **Item 5.4 – Standard of horticultural work** – GW confirmed a new contract would be tendered for April 09. He stated the performance monitoring being put in place would commence shortly and stay in place until the contract was re-tendered in April 2009. GW confirmed that Bow Landscapes would undertake horticultural works in and around John Fielden House after the scaffolding was taken down.

- 4.4.1 DB stated he had recently received his service charge bill and it showed 12 trees had been pruned at Beechwood/Sebright and each flat had been charged £65. DB stated he felt this charge was excessive as he recalled asking for 3 trees to be pruned. GW agreed to investigate and report back. **GW**
- 4.4.2 JB stated that he had been advised that most trees in BG area would be pruned in 2008/9. GW stated that as far as he was aware, the majority of trees would be pruned in 2009/10. GW agreed to check and report back. **GW**
- 4.4.3 DB stated that although GW had advised that a new tree had been planted in place of a tree that had been removed at Beechwood/Sebright, this was not correct. GW stated it was his impression that this had been done. DB explained that the missing tree that had been removed had been close to flat number 1 and the replacement had been planted between the blocks on the grassed area. DB stated this was not a suitable replacement.
- 4.4.3.1 GW stated that to remedy the situation, Spitalfields Housing Association would replace the tree at outside number one when their works were completed. GW agreed to advise DB on the timescale for the replacement. **GW**
- 4.4.4 DB asked that all new contracts for 2009/10 contain clauses that allow financial penalties and termination of the contract if poor service is received. All the members of BGARB voted on this suggestion and agreed it should be implemented. GW agreed he would pass this recommendation onto DE for when the new contracts are written. **GW**
- 4.5 **Item 5.5 – Damage to wall at Hector House** – There was no report back for the meeting. GW agreed to contact FH in the week commencing 20th October. **GW**
- 4.6 **Item 5.6 – Grass not cut at Temple Street side of Lysander House** - EH reported that the grass was cut on 8.10.08.
- 4.7 **Item 5.6 – Bike parked illegally Hector/Nestor House** – FH reported the bike is no longer chained to the railings although he had seen it parked in a car space bay on a couple of occasions.
- 4.7.1 FH reported there was a similar problem at Priam House as a number of bikes were regularly chained to railings. **EH/AT**
- 4.8 **Item 5.8 - Waring House – leaking guttering** – There was no report back for the meeting and residents confirmed they had not brought the matter up at the Mansford Forum held the night before. GW agreed to raise this with the development team. **GW**
- 4.9 **Item 5.9 – Standard of Apollo Cleaning** – Residents confirmed they had raised this matter at the Mansford Forum the previous night. Development officers had given assurances that project officers would monitor the situation on a daily basis. Residents stated they were not satisfied with this response as project officers had promised

action before but there had been no improvement in the standard of cleaning. Residents agreed they would make formal complaints if the blocks were found to be in a poor condition at the end of the day.

- 4.9.1 AA agreed she would raise the matter with PE directly. **AA**
- 4.9.2 It was also agreed that an article should be placed in Update advising residents of how they could complain if Apollo failed to keep the blocks clean at the end of the day. Members agreed formal complaints should be made when the service failed. **EH**
- 4.10 **Item 5.10- Oil spill on tarmac outside Nestor House** – It was noted this matter would be completed in the Lysander House works.
- 4.11 **Item 5.11 – Minerva Community facilities – access too easy at the rear of the building** – GW reported he had discussed concerns with SM. GW confirmed he would bring a definitive answer on what would be done to the next meeting. **GW**
- 4.12 **Item 5.12 - Wire mesh repairs on Minerva Community Facilities** – as above. **GW**
- 4.13 **Item 5.13 – Minerva Community Facilities – lack of an opening and closing service and general standard of works** – Residents asked that DE report back on these matters, **EH/DE**
- 4.14 **Item 5.15 – Use of Minerva Community Facilities** – Residents asked IP to pass along their concerns that a recent meeting arranged by MF had not been arranged by inviting all residents on the estate. IP explained that all residents on the estate would be invited to the next meeting. **IP/MF**
- 4.15 **Item 5.16 - Minor Works report** – There was no report back for the meeting. Residents asked EH to raise their concerns that the report had not included enough information on the proposed works or a timetable. **EH/DE**
- 4.16 **Item 5.17 – Lighting on Stairwells, Minerva and Dinmont Estates** – Residents confirmed there were still problems with the lighting. GW agreed and advised he had been in contact with the contractor to raise the issues. It had been concluded there were 2 main problems. The first was that the lights were not turning on and off correctly. The second was that the times were incorrect. GW confirmed that THCH still had retention money on the works and the contractor had been asked to rectify the problem before the final payment was made. **GW**
- 4.16.1 FH stated these were not the only issues as in his and some other blocks. In those blocks the lights were on all day. GW agreed to resolve this issue with the contractor. **GW**
- 4.16.2 FH asked if the lights could be covered with grills given the recent breakage. GW agreed to investigate. **GW**

- 4.17 **Item 5.18 – Guidelines on 10K ARB minor improvement works -**
AA stated she had received no response yet.
- 4.18 **Item 7.1.1 – Front door at Argos House -** EH reported that Argos House would be included in the 2008/9 painting programme. GW confirmed the door would be varnished when the block was painted.
- 4.19 **Item 7.1.2 – Communal Garden horticultural works at Argos House –** GW stated that the area was not included in the current contract. He confirmed he would ask that works be undertaken as soon as possible by Bow Landscapes and he would ensure that this area was included in the new contract in April 2009. **GW**
- 4.20 **Item 7.1.3 – Bulk rubbish at Argos House -** EH reported that the resident had correctly arranged for the council to collect the rubbish but the collection date had failed. THCH had now removed the remaining items.
- 4.21 **Item 7.1.4 – Burst pipe at the side of Lysander House –** GW reported that he was still trying to resolve this issue with the Water Company. **GW**
- 4.21.1 LT asked GW to note that needles had been placed in the drain.
- 4.22 **Item 7.1.5 – Chewing gum on the stairs at Nestor House -** EH reported the chewing gum had been removed
- 4.22.1 MC confirmed there was still chewing gum in the area outside her window. EH agreed to investigate and resolve. **EH/AO**
- 4.23 **Item 7.1.6 – Broken pane of glass in communal door at Nestor House -** EH reported that the pane of glass had been replaced. The pane was a double glazed unit and one seal was intact and this was the reason it had not been boarded up.
- 4.24 **Item 7.1.7 – Dirty communal landing Thomas Burt House -** EH reported that the marks had been removed.
- 4.25 **Item 7.2.1 – Dogs in Charles Dickens House –** EH reported that the letter would be sent out 16.10.08. **EH**
- 4.26 **Item 7.2.3 – ASB report John Fielden House -** EH reported that the resident concerned and JB had been fully updated on the actions taken.
- 4.27 **Item 7.4.1 – Statistics and information in Community Development report –** IP stated she had distributed the new format report. As residents had only just received the report it was agreed they would provide comments at the next meeting. **ALL**
- 4.28 **Item 9.1 – Invitation to MF for October meeting –** IP confirmed MF had been invited to the meeting but had regretfully had to send his apologies. She confirmed he would attend the next meeting.

- 4.29 **Item 10.1 – Repair at 9 Argos House-** EH reported that she was still waiting for a report back from the contractor. **EH**
- 4.30 **Item 10.2.1 – Repair of URS at Nestor House –** EH reported that the URS had been repaired at the Council’s cost.
- 4.31 **Item 10.3 – Service from CHO -** EH reported that these matters had been raised with the CHO and the service failures were being addressed. The CHO would provide FH with an update. **EH/AO**
- 4.32 **Item 10.4 – Damaged wall on Hector House –** GW reported no progress as access had failed. GW agreed to work with the CHO to obtain access under the terms of the lease. **GW/AO**
- 4.33 **Item 10.5 – Bin cleaning –** EH reported that the council had confirmed cleaning was not included in the contract. Residents asked that this function be negotiated back into the contract with no increase in the charges. **GW**
- 4.34 **Item 10.6 – Car spaces on Canrobert Street -** EH reported that the problem is illegal parking on the highway, not on THCH land. JB asked that THCH request the yellow lines are extended to resolve the access issue. **EH/GJ**

5 REPORTS

5.1 Estate Inspections

- 5.1.1 Residents commented that there were a large number of carry forward items each month on the report sheets. Weeding works in particular were always carried forward. **EH/GW**

5.2 Anti-Social Behaviour

- 5.2.1 It was noted that the environmental ASB statistics were missing from the report. EH agreed to send it out to all attendees the following day. **EH**

- 5.2.2 MM reported that someone was repeatedly urinating on the first floor of Gwilym Maries House. EH agreed to try and find out if the perpetrator could be identified. **EH**

- 5.2.3 JB stated there were still problems with the SNT team. A number of calls had been made to the team but no call backs had been received. It was agreed that the Christine Lightbody should be invited to attend the next meeting. **EH**

- 5.2.4 Residents asked when the next Police public meeting would be held. FH informed residents that it was to be held on the last Tuesday in November, 25th November.

5.3 Rents, Repairs, Voids, Telephones and Correspondence

- 5.3.1 There were no comments on the report.

5.4 **Community Development Report**

5.4.1 IP summarised the team's activities in September 2008.

5.4.2 Residents asked that MF be invited to the next meeting so that required reporting activities could be clarified.

5.5 **New Build Report**

5.5.1 Residents asked that the report's author delete completed projects. **EH/AE**

6 ARTICLES FOR UPDATE

6.1 Residents asked that an article be placed in Update advising residents how to complain about Apollo cleaning when major works were being undertaken. **EH/AC**

7 FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

7.1 Residents asked that MF be invited to the next meeting. **EH**

7.2 Residents asked that Christine Lightbody, SNT Sergeant, be invited to the next meeting. **EH**

8 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

8.1 Residents asked for clarity on the new parking control arrangements. EH provided a verbal update and confirmed an explanatory letter would be sent out with next month's Update. **EH**

8.2 LT stated that a number of cars were speeding in and around the block. He asked that a sign be erected advising there was no through road and advising about speed restrictions. **EH**

8.3 Residents from Mansford and Avebury East estates complained about the food recycling pilot. They stated there were bins all over the estates that had not been emptied.

8.3.1 Residents complained that it has not been made clear how long the pilot would run or how the success/failure of the pilot would be assessed. EH agreed to obtain the information and report back. **EH**

8.3.2 Residents asked that the pilot was terminated given the poor standard of collection by the Council. **EH**

8.3.3 Residents on Minerva and Dinmont estates asked when the bins would be removed from their estates given that the pilot was ended. EH agreed to remind the council officer about removing the bins. **EH**

9 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

9.1 It was agreed that Wednesday 19th November would be the next meeting date at 6.30pm in the Zander Court Community Room.

Signed.....

Date.....