

TOWER HAMLETS COMMUNITY HOUSING

BETHNAL GREEN AREA RESIDENTS BOARD MEETING

WEDNESDAY 19th NOVEMBER 2008

ZANDER COURT COMMUNITY ROOM – COMMENCED AT 6.30pm

MINUTES

PRESENT

| | |
|-------------|-----------------------------|
| A. Ambrose | Achilles House – (AA) Chair |
| 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) |
| V Davis | Thomas Burt House (VD) |
| D Beal | Beechwood House – (DB) |
| R Farmer | John Cartwright House (RF) |
| M Colley | Hector House (MC) |
| L Cosgrove | Ajax House (LC) |
| D Kelly | Argos House (DK) |
| J Kelly | Argos House (JK) |
| J Dyer | John Fielden House (JD) |
| K Sanderson | John Fielden House (KS) |
| G Cook | Ajax House |
| J Grierson | William Rathbone House |

OFFICERS PRESENT

| | |
|-----------------|---------------------------------------|
| Elaine Hamilton | Community Housing Office Manager (EH) |
| Glyn Wiltshire | Repairs and Maintenance Manager (GW) |

DISTRIBUTION

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

1. APOLOGIES

1.1 Mervyn Fox, Irene Poole, Christine Lightbody, SNT Sergeant.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

2.1 None.

3 AGREE THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

3.1 Were agreed.

4 MATTERS ARISING

4.1 **Item 4.1.1- Youth ASB on Mansford Estate** - EH reported that the letter was sent to the SNT Sergeant on the 23rd October as promised.

4.2 **Item 4.2 – Loitering outside Cambridge Heath Station** – There was no report back from CL on this matter. EH advised that the police had confirmed they could not attend the meeting and it was agreed an invitation to attend would be made for the January 09 meeting. **EH/CL**

4.3 **Item 4.3 – Standard of Horticultural works on the estate** - GW reported that the spreadsheet had been compiled and agreed with the contractor. He explained the spreadsheet would be completed by the contractor and held at the CHO so monitoring could take place.

4.3.1 MM commented that the horticultural works on the estate had improved on the last monthly estate inspection.

4.4 **Item 4.4.1 – Cost of tree works at Beechwood/Sebright Houses** – After discussion between DB and GW it was agreed GW would check the costs on the service charge bill and report back. **GW**

4.5 **Item 4.4.2 – Tree pruning times** - GW confirmed the bulk of the trees in BG would be pruned in 2009/10. JB asked for a particular tree outside John Fielden House to be pruned. GW confirmed he would arrange for it to be done but after the scaffolding had been removed. **GW**

4.6 **Item 4.4.3.1 – Missing tree Beechwood/Sebright Houses-** GW and DB clarified that the tree had been removed outside number 1 Beechwood House in Teale Street. GW confirmed Spitalfields Housing Association would replace the tree in that vicinity when their works were completed. The ARB asked GW to establish when Spitalfields HA expected to complete their work **GW**

4.7 **Item 4.4.4 – THCH Contractor Contracts – Financial penalties and termination of contract for poor service-** DE reported that this was a standard clause in term maintenance contracts covering this point. It was not good practice, however, to simply terminate contracts when alternative methods of dispute resolution existed.

- 4.7.1 Residents were not satisfied with this response as they stated it had already been clarified that these terms were not included in current contracts. This had been the cause of frustration, particularly with the horticultural contract, given the poor service THCH had received. GW confirmed these clauses would be included in the new 2009/10 contracts.
- 4.8 **Item 4.7.1 - Bikes at Priam House** - EH reported that the situation had been resolved as owners had been identified and had come forward. The CHO had arranged for bike parking in the courtyard in line with THCH's policy.
- 4.9 **Item 5.8 - Waring House – leaking guttering** – GW reported that the development team had advised the works would be undertaken within the next four weeks within the major works contract. GW to inform the next meeting if the work had been completed but if not when it would be. **GW**
- 4.10 **Item 5.9 – Standard of Apollo Cleaning** – AA reported that she had raised this matter at the JARB meeting. Peter Exton (PE) had stated that the CHO were not informing the Development Team when blocks had been identified as poorly cleaned. EH confirmed the CHO's were regularly reporting the problems to the Development Team and failures were recorded on the monthly estate inspection sheets. Carl Phillips (CP) had agreed a system where Development officers would spot check blocks being worked on by Apollo. Where it was found the cleaning was below standard, development had put a system in place for the CHO to organise cleaning that would be billed to Apollo. Unfortunately, Development had not identified any blocks for cleaning at all. EH agreed to ensure PE was briefed on the current situation. **EH**
- 4.11 **Item 4.9.2 – Article in Update about how to complain about poor cleaning service from Apollo** - EH reported that an article had been included the Nov/Dec edition of UPDATE.
- 4.12 **Item 4.11– Minerva Community facilities – access too easy at the rear of the building** – GW confirmed THCH were exploring options to secure the Centre. This would include the installation of roller shutters once funds had been identified and costing were currently being obtained for roller shutters on the ground floor. **GW**
- 4.12.1 Residents asked why shutters were only being considered for the ground floor as previously the upstairs windows were also protected. Residents asked GW to consider finding funding to secure the whole building given the previous and current ASB problems. **GW**
- 4.12.2 LT asked if the spikes would be reinstalled and both GW and EH confirmed they would not.
- 4.12.3 FH thanked RJ for organising the closure of the facilities on November 5th to reduce the likelihood of ASB.
- 4.13 **Item 4.12 - Wire mesh repairs on Minerva Community Facilities –**

GW confirmed the works had been undertaken. He also confirmed the works had been done according to the THCH specification.

- 4.14 **Item 4.13 – Minerva Community Facilities – lack of an opening and closing service** – DE reported that the Community Warden Scheme currently being developed would provide an opening and closing service to THCH play facilities and discussions were being held with LBTH to provide that service in the interim. The works to the Community Centre were seen signed off by THCH as completed to a satisfactory standard.
- 4.15 **Item 4.14 – Use of Minerva Community Facilities** – MF reported that the meeting was held on Tuesday 11th November.
- 4.15.1 AA reported that only 5 people had turned up for the meeting. No decisions had been made and suggestions had not been discussed.
- 4.16 **Item 4.16 - Minor Works report** – DE reported that the generic report to ARBs would not include much detailed information specific to a scheme. This could be obtained from the local Community Housing Office who should liaise with the Project Officer in the Development Team.
- 4.16.1 Residents asked EH to bring a revised and updated minor works report to the next BGARB in January 2009. **EH**
- 4.17 **Item 4.16 – Lighting On Minerva** – GW reported that he would arrange a meeting within the next two with the installation contractor to jointly inspect the problems related to the sensor controls. If a satisfactory solution could not be found, final payment would be withheld and another contractor would be employed to undertake the required works. **GW**
- 4.17.1 GW also confirmed the contractor had been asked to ensure that the sensors were vandal proofed. **GW**
- 4.17.2 FH reconfirmed that the walkway lights were working correctly, but the issue he raised was with regard to the stairwell lights, which appeared to be on all the time. GW to get these checked **GW**
- 4.18 **Item 4.19 – Communal Garden horticultural works at Argos House** – GW confirmed the communal garden was now included in the contract.
- 4.19 **Item 4.21 - Burst pipe at the side of Lysander House** – GW reported that the matter had been reported to LBTH who were responsible for this matter. GW to monitor and report progress to the ARB. **GW**
- 4.19.1 LT reported that EDF had also advised him that they would be making a complaint to the Council about this matter.
- 4.20 **Item 7.1.5 – Chewing gum on the stairs at Nestor House** - EH reported that the chewing gum had been removed.

- 4.20.1 MC reported there was now more chewing gum on the stairs of the block. **EH**
- 4.21 **Item 4.25 - Dogs in Charles Dickens House** – EH reported that the letter had been sent out on 16th October as promised.
- 4.22 **Item 4.27 – Statistics and information in Community Development report** – It was reported that Mervyn was due to leave and so, residents agreed they would make representations at that time.
- 4.23 **Item 4.29 – Repair at 9 Argos House-** EH reported that the matter had been resolved and DK agreed.
- 4.24 **Item 4.31 – Service from CHO** - EH reported that the issues had been addressed.
- 4.25 **Item 4.32 – Damaged wall on Hector House** – GW reported that he had gained access and carried out an inspection but it had not been possible to identify where the problem was coming from. He confirmed he would be asking a specialist contractor to inspect. GW to report on progress at the next meeting. **GW**
- 4.26 **Item 4.33 – Bin cleaning** – GW confirmed he was still in negotiation with the Council. **GW**
- 4.27 **Item 4.34 – Car spaces on Canrobert Street** - EH reported that DC of the Development Team was liaising with Highways on this matter. Residents could raise the issue with her directly at the next Mansford Forum meeting.
- 4.28 **Item 5.1.1 – Carry forward items on estate inspections** – EH reported that officers had been reminded that all outstanding CHO actions must be finalised at the end of the relevant month.
- 4.29 **Item 5.2.1 – Missing Environmental ASB statistics** – EH reported that the missing statistics had been sent to all attendees after the last meeting.
- 4.30 **Item 5.5.2 – ASB at Gwilym Maries House** – EH reported that although visits and calls had been made to residents, it had not been possible to identify the culprits.
- 4.31 **Item 5.5.1 – Information given in New Build Report** – AA reported that the New Build Report had been revised.
- 4.32 **Item 8.1 – Letter re parking arrangements** – EH reported that the letter had been sent as promised and a subsequent letter regarding the increased hours of the service had also been sent to all residents.
- 4.33 **Item 8.2 – Cars speeding outside Lysander House** – EH reported that temporary signs had been installed. Permanent signage was on order and would include information on controlled parking, through

road and speeding limit.

4.34 **Item 8.3.1 – Food Recycling** – EH reported on the current position of the service and the pilot end date of 31.3.09. Council officers had requested more time to resolve the problems. Residents again expressed their concern about the whole scheme and the poor collection of food rubbish by the Council. Residents confirmed they wanted THCH to inform the Council that they would like this service withdrawn. **EH**

4.35 **Item 8.3.3- Food recycling on Dinmont and Minerva Estates** – EH reported that the bins had been removed.

5 CORPORATE PLAN

5.1 Maximising opportunities to make our homes more sustainable

5.1.1 Residents suggested this should state “introduce sustainable energy initiatives on **at least** 4 THCH blocks per annum”.

5.1.2 Residents asked that THCH reconsider this target to make it more challenging.

5.1.3 Residents asked if a target of implementing improved loft insulation in THCH could be included in this section.

5.1.4 Residents asked THCH to consider including “to take advantage of all government initiatives in this field”.

5.2 Working with our residents to shape local community services

5.2.1 Residents asked that a target of holding annual CHO office open days be included in the plan.

5.3 Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour

5.3.1 Residents commented that there does not seem to be enough emphasis on Youth Groups and they would like to see more challenging targets in this area.

5.3.2 Residents asked if the March 2008 on implementing CCTV schemes was correct.

5.4 Cleaning our estates to a high standard

5.4.1 Residents asked that the annual best block target be removed from the corporate plan.

6 ESTATE CLEANING SERVICE STANDARDS

6.1 EH gave a report on the current situation with the newly introduced work sheets. Monitoring of the pilot had shown there were some problems delivering the promised standards and more work was needed to identify the reasons and rectify.

6.2 It was agreed that Estate Cleaning Service Standards would be included as an agenda item for January's meeting. **EH**

7 REPORTS

7.1 Estate Inspections

7.1.2 At page 11 of the report it was noted that the hoarding at the side of 12 William Rathbone House needed tidying up. JG stated he would raise this issue at the next Mansford Forum meeting. **JG**

7.1.3 MC commented that the general condition of the walls was poor at Nestor House. EH to check when the block was due to be painted. **EH**

7.1.4 Residents noted that graffiti on Helen House had been carried forward from the previous month. EH to investigate. **EH**

7.1.5 DB commented on the three ongoing actions for horticultural works. GW stated that the re-seeding had been confirmed and the other works would be resolved shortly. GW to let the ARB know when this would occur. **GW**

7.1.6 Residents noted the gradings awarded for the Perspex windows. Although contractors clean these windows, specialist works would be required to enable these windows to be graded as "good". GW agreed to investigate this with the contractor. **GW**

7.1.7 Residents stated that there were still marks on many blocks left by the old ISTM signs. EH agreed to ensure that CHO's checked all blocks. **EH**

7.1.8 Residents asked that "No Spitting" signs are replaced in Minerva and Dinmont blocks. **EH**

7.1.9 Residents asked if THCH would consider permanent "No Smoking" signage in the blocks as they felt the stick on type kept going missing. **EH**

7.2 Anti-Social Behaviour

7.2.1 JB asked why there had been a huge reduction from last month in the reported environmental ASB. He stated he had made reports that were not included. **EH**

7.2.2 MM asked why there were so few environmental ASB reports for Gwilym Maries House. **EH**

7.2.3 Residents asked if the police had taken follow up action on the ABC contracts on youths who gathered at John Fielden House. **EH**

7.2.4 FH reminded residents that the Police & Community Safety Board launch was being held on 11.1.09 and encouraged all residents to attend.

7.3 **Rents, Repairs, Voids, Telephones and Correspondence**

7.3.1 There were no comments on the report.

7.4 **Community Development Report**

7.4.1 Residents commented that the report was not consistent or accurate on occasions. The recent EID party had been reported but not the Hop Festival. These matters to be addressed when the new CD manager takes up the post.

7.5 **New Build Report**

7.5.1 There were no comments on the New Build Report.

8 ARTICLES FOR UPDATE

8.1 Residents asked that an article be placed in Update about the installation of the door entry systems. **EH/AC**

9 FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

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

8 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

8.1 LT reported that the gates to Lysander House had been left open. It was noted that the gates on other blocks had been left open too. EH to query if the gates had been left open by the Horticultural Contractor. **EH**

9 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

9.1 It was agreed that Wednesday 21ST January 2009 would be the next meeting date at 6.30pm in the Zander Court Community Room.

Signed.....

Date.....