

**TOWER HAMLETS COMMUNITY HOUSING****BETHNAL GREEN AREA RESIDENTS BOARD MEETING****WEDNESDAY 24<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2008****ZANDER COURT COMMUNITY ROOM – COMMENCED AT 6.30pm****MINUTES****PRESENT**

A. Ambrose	Achilles House – Chair (AA)
J Benson	John Fielden House (JB)
F Hunt	Hector House (FH)
L Thomas	Lysander House (LT)
R Farmer	John Cartwright House (RF)
J Grierson	William Rathbone House (WR)
M Meir	Gwilym Maries House (MM)
V Davis	Thomas Burt House (VD)
D Kelly	Argos House (DK)
J Kelly	Argos House (JK)
M Colley	Hector House (MC)
L Cosgrove	Ajax House (LC)
Y Aubert	Charles Dickens House (YA)

**OFFICERS PRESENT**

Elaine Hamilton	Community Housing Office Manager (EH)
Glyn Wiltshire	Repairs and Maintenance Manager (GW)
Christine Lightbody	Sergeant, Police Safer Neighbourhood Team (CL)

**DISTRIBUTION**

All Above	Chief Executive
Michael Tyrrell	Director of Housing
David Eatwell	Director of Technical Services
Peter Exton	Director of Finance
Harneck Chilemba	Housing Services Manager
Compton Gustave	Interim Community Development Manager
Mervyn Fox	Corporate Administration Manager
Sheila Bradley	Finance Manager
Justice Allotey	Finance Manager
Olu Oloruntuyi	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	Office

1. **APOLOGIES**

1.1 C Kellers - John Fielden House.

2 **DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

2.1 None.

3 **SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD TEAM**

3.1 CL clarified the SNT shift patterns were 10am-6pm and 2pm –10pm and these shifts were worked in equal numbers throughout the month.

3.2 CL also explained how the phone message system worked and assured residents calls were logged each day and call backs were made if callers had left a number.

3.3 Residents expressed their concern about the shifts ending at 10pm. They stated a lot of the ASB in the area happened after the SNT went off duty and the 999 service would not prioritise their reports to attend and take action at the time the offences were taking place.

3.4 CL explained it was unlikely that shift patterns would be changed to include the SNT working a night shift as the SNT were not a rapid response team and resourcing was the main issue.

3.5 JG asked for clarification on alcohol free zones and CL explained what they were and how they had been implemented successfully in some areas. She explained that the SNT's request for a zone in this area had been refused by Tower Hamlets Councillors.

3.6 Residents were unhappy about this and asked CL to take the matter back to the relevant forum given the statistical evidence that some blocks on Mansford and Avebury East Estates suffered persistent problems as youths gathered in their blocks, drinking and sometimes taking drugs. **CL**

3.7 FH reported that there was a problem outside Cambridge Heath station as a large number of men from the nearby rehabilitation centre were standing around drinking and smoking at all hours of the day and night, intimidating passers by. CL agreed to discuss the matter with the rehabilitation centres management team. **CL**

4 **AGREE THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

4.1 The minutes of the last meeting were agreed.

5 **MATTERS ARISING**

5.1 **Item 6.1 - Standard of horticultural weeding works on the estates** **GW**  
- GW reported that he was, along with the Director of Housing and the Director of Development, currently looking at the terms of a new contact to be tendered and implemented by April 2009.

- 5.1.1 Residents asked if the contract could be cancelled given the poor service and GW explained it could not as there would be cost implications.
- 5.1.2 GW explained that the contract would be monitored more closely up to end of March 2009. The Technical Team was currently preparing a spreadsheet of required works and the due dates. This spreadsheet would be passed to the CHO so they could monitor performance more closely. **GW**
- 5.2 FH asked GW to contact him to discuss the damage that Bow Landscapes had caused to a wall at Hector House. GW agreed to contact FH after the meeting. **GW**
- 5.3 LT reported that Bow Landscapes had cut the grass recently at the front of Lysander House but the Temple Street side had not been cut. **EH**
- 5.4 **Item 6.3 – Overgrown weeds at Argos House** - EH reported that this matter had been resolved.
- 5.5 **Item 6.11 – Door slamming at Lysander House** - EH reported that this matter had been resolved and LT agreed.
- 5.6 **Item 6.15 – Bike parked illegally Hector/Nestor House** - EH reported the resident had been contacted and the situation had been resolved. FH stated that he had seen the bike on one occasion again recently. CL asked FH to provide the SNT with the registration number of the bike if he saw it parked illegally again. **FH**
- 5.7 **Item 8.1.1 - Waring House – guttering leaking** - GW stated he would report the matter to the development team and ask them to deal with the matter at next week's Forum meeting. **GW**
- 5.8 **Item 8.1.2 - Standard of Apollo cleaning** - RJ reported that Development Team had been assured by Apollo that they were addressing this issue.
- 5.9 Residents were not satisfied with this response, as KP had previously reported that the Development Team would monitor blocks being worked on daily to identify poor cleaning. KP had agreed that where cleaning was poor, the CHO would be notified and Estate Cleaners would clean the affected blocks the following day. Despite this the Development Team had not identified a single block for follow up cleaning even though reports from Estate Cleaners and Estate Inspections continued to show there were problems. Residents asked that KP provide the ARB members with the details of blocks the Development Team had been monitoring. **KP**
- 5.10 **Item 10.1 – Invitation to Recycling Officer and Police** - It was noted that the SNT were in attendance. Residents agreed they did not want to invite the Recycling Officer to another meeting.
- 5.11 **Item 11.1 - Oil spill on tarmac outside Nestor House** - GW reported this would be included with the Lysander House works. **GW**

although there was no agreed start date as yet.

- 5.12 **Item 11.3 – Suspension of Jetwashing at Ada, Pritchard, Beechwood and Sebright Houses** - GW reported that discussions were underway with contractors to resolve the issue of the crumbling stairs. He stated he would provide an update at the next meeting. **GW**
- 5.13 **Item 11.7 – Minerva Community facilities – access too easy at the rear of the building** - GW reported that he had now had initial discussions with Shahan Miah (SM) on the easy access as well as the standard of the works. SM was investigating a solution. **GW/SM**
- 5.14 **Item 11.8 - Wire mesh repairs on Minerva Community Facilities** - GW reported that this matter had also been discussed with SM. GW's opinion was that the wire mesh was sub-standard and not fit for purpose. SM was investigating a solution. **GW/SM**
- 5.15 **Item 11.9 – The opening and closing hours of Minerva Community facilities** – EH reported that DE was currently seeking funding for a community warden scheme and these officers would be tasked with opening and closing THCH's community facilities and parks. EH also reported there was no short term solution as it would take some months to develop a new service and residents would be notified when a service had been agreed.
- 5.15.1 The ARB was not satisfied with this response and reported that a number of residents from Lysander House continued to complain about the lack of security in the area as youths were using the area until 3am. Residents asked EH to pass their concerns to DE on the lack of an opening and closing service, the standard of the railings and wire mesh on the facilities, the lack of anti vandal paint on the railings and the ease with which the area behind the community building could be accessed. **EH/DE**
- 5.15.2 GW informed the meeting he had already had preliminary discussions with SM on his concerns with the standard of the railings and wire mesh as it was not the same quality as in other THCH developments. GW agreed to convene another meeting with SM and invite EH. **GW**
- 5.16 LT informed the meeting that Mervyn Fox (MF) was organising a meeting for interested residents on the use of the Minerva Community Building. Residents asked EH to inform MF that the ARB would like all Minerva Estate residents to be invited to attend the meeting and not just those from Lysander. **EH/MF**
- 6** **MINOR WORKS REPORT**
- 6.1 Residents commented that the report did not include enough information on the proposed works and the timetable for action. **DE**
- 6.2 Residents asked why the separation of block and stairwell lighting on the Minerva blocks was not included in the report. The main problem had always been how dark the stairwells were after the new lift

towers were added to the buildings.

6.2.1 AA stated that in a response to her enquiry DE had stated that there was no funding available to separate the lights. AA stated that if this was the case, THCH had to adjust the sensors in some way to make the lights come on sooner and not when it was almost dark. GW agreed to investigate. **GW**

6.3 AA asked that DE was reminded that the ARB was still waiting for the promised THCH guidelines on how the £10k ARB minor improvement works budget could be allocated. **DE**

## **7 REPORTS**

### **7.1 Estate Inspections**

7.1.1 Residents from Argos House commented on the poor state of the front entry door and asked if it could be varnished. GW agreed to investigate where the block was in the painting programme and advised the door would be included in the works. EH to advise DK and JK. **GW/EH**

7.1.2 Residents from Argos House commented that the communal garden was in a poor state. GW stated that it may have been deleted from the horticultural contract and agreed to investigate and inform EH so the required works were undertaken. **GW/EH**

7.1.3 Residents from Argos House reported that number 10 had placed a large amount of bulk rubbish at the front entrance of the block. It had not been removed by the Estate Cleaner, although the majority was now gone as it had been taken by passers by. EH agreed to investigate and report back. **EH**

7.1.4 LT asked what was happening with the burst pipe at the side of Lysander House. GW confirmed the Technical Team was currently trying to resolve the problem and agreed to keep LT updated on progress. **GW**

7.1.5 MC reported that there was chewing gum on the stairs at Nestor House. It had been there for some time but had not been noted on the estate inspection sheets. EH agreed to investigate and report back. **EH**

7.1.6 MC reported that a pane of glass had been broken in the communal door at Nestor House. The pane was still not repaired and the promised boarding up because of jagged edges had not happened. EH agreed to investigate and report back. **EH**

7.1.7 VD reported a sticky patch on the landing close to number 17 that had been there for some time and had not been noted on the estate inspection. EH agreed to investigate and report back. **EH**

### **7.2 Anti-Social Behaviour**

- 7.2.1 YA commented that a number of residents in Charles Dickens House owned dogs and it had been noted some dogs had been urinating in the lifts. EH agreed to write to all residents in the block. EH
- 7.2.2 Residents also commented on the size of some of the dogs in the block. Some were very large and residents often felt intimidated, especially when more than one big dog was owned. Residents asked that the CHO write to all residents asking dog owners to ensure they were considerate of their neighbour's views on this and consider using muzzles, especially where more than one dog was in the communal areas. EH
- 7.2.3 JB reported a resident from his block had complained that no action was being taken on a reported ASB problem. EH agreed to investigate and report back. EH
- 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 were still concerned that the statistics were not clear and meaningful in the report. MF
- 7.4.2 Residents commented that the report had errors on page numbers and that the Minerva Community Facilities had been incorrectly renamed. AA asked why there was suddenly a need to for the ARBs to be classified as "a group of service users, representative" MF
- 7.5 New Build Report**
- 7.5.1 There were no comments on the report.
- 8 ARTICLES FOR UPDATE**
- 8.1 There were no suggestions for future articles.
- 9 FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**
- 9.1 Residents asked that MF be invited to the next meeting. EH
- 10 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**
- 10.1 DK reported that a problem with her radiator had taken 7 weeks to resolve. When the new radiator had eventually been fitted, it had leaked badly and had to be re-fitted. EH agreed to investigate and report back to DK directly. EH
- 10.2 FH complained that he had not received a comprehensive reply from the CHO on the broken URS problem. EH explained she had responded fully on the actions that would be taken by email.
- 10.2.1 There was a discussion on re-charging the council when their GW/EH

operatives broke the URS. GW and EH agreed to investigate how this could be done on this occasion as it had been Council operatives who had broken the URS.

10.3 FH complained that the CHO was not delivering the expected service on some occasions, failing to visit and relying on block letters. EH agreed to investigate and report back. EH

10.4 FH asked GW what was going to be done about the black wall at the South end on Hector House. GW explained he was investigating the problem. FH asked GW to ensure that if it was found to be leaseholder damage from the roof garden, the leaseholder was re-charged so that other residents did not have to meet the cost of the repair. GW

10.5 Residents noted that the bins on all estates had not been cleaned for some time. EH agreed to investigate and ensure cleaning took place. EH

10.6 Residents noted with concern that the car spaces on Canrobert Street had still not been suspended by the Councils Highways Department, which prevented the bin collection operatives from accessing the area. Residents felt there would also be problems if a fire engine needed access and they felt this was a health and safety issue. EH agreed to investigate and report back. EH

10.7.1 AA had circulated copies of Mike Tyrrell's letter to LBTH which expressed his strong concerns about the Food Waste pilot that they were conducting on THCH estates. The ARB totally agreed with MT's comments.

10.7.2 YA informed the meeting that he had written to a member of the council about his concern with the food recycling system. He had received an acknowledgement and would update members when a response was received.

11 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

11.1 It was agreed that Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> October would be the next meeting date at 6.30pm in the Zander Court Community Room.

**Signed.....**

**Date.....**