

TOWER HAMLETS COMMUNITY HOUSING

BETHNAL GREEN AREA RESIDENTS BOARD MEETING

WEDNESDAY 20th MAY 2009

ZANDER COURT COMMUNITY ROOM – COMMENCED AT 6.30pm

MINUTES

PRESENT

A Ambrose	Achilles House (AA) - Chair
F Hunt	Hector House (FH)
L Thomas	Lysander House (LT)
A Ibbara Jenson	Paris House (AJ)
S Dodds	Thomas Burt House (SD)
J Benson	John Fielden House (JB)
R Farmer	John Cartwright House (RF)
C Kellers	John Fielden House (CK)
E Whitehead	Sebright House (EW)
V Davis	Thomas Burt House (VD)
L Cosgrove	Ajax House (LC)
M Meir	Gwilym Maries House (MM)
J Kelly	Argos House (JK)
D Kelly	Argos House (DK)
J Bergonzi	William Channing House (JB2)
M Colley	Nestor House (MC)
C Robertson	Zander Court (CR)
A Robertson	Zander Court (AR)

OFFICERS PRESENT

Elaine Hamilton	Community Housing Office Manager (EH)
Katie Thompson	LFB - Community Safety Team (KT)

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
Arum Sigavnaman	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 Glyn Wiltshire, Irene Poole, J Grierson.

2 LONDON FIRE BRIGADE - COMMUNITY ACTION TEAM

2.1 KT gave a presentation showing recommended fire safety precautions in the home and blocks.

2.1 KT explained that small fires, started by youths, were an issue in Tower Hamlets generally. Residents confirmed this was not a particular problem in this area of Bethnal Green.

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

3.1 None.

4 AGREE THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

4.1 The minutes of the last meeting were agreed.

5 MATTERS ARISING

5.1 **Item 4.2 – Police Ward Panel minutes** – EH reported the minutes had been sent out.

5.2 **Item 4.3 – Incident at Argos House** – EH reported that DK was contacted on 21st April.

5.3 **Item 4.4 – Cost of tree works at Beechwood/Sebright Houses** – GW reported that the information had been sent to DB.

5.4 **Item 4.5 – Missing tree Beechwood/Sebright Houses-** GW reported that Spitalfields HA had now indicated they would not take responsibility for replanting the tree. David Eatwell further reported that BG CHO would contact the Chief Executive of Spitalfields HA on behalf of THCH. **EH**

5.5 **Item 4.10 – Lighting Sensors On Minerva** – EH reported that the contractor had surveyed the blocks and the lighting was operating correctly in all blocks. The contractor had confirmed there was a solution to improve the lighting in all the stairwells and had estimated the costs at around £7,800. EH was currently investigating obtaining funding for these works. **EH**

5.6 **Item 4.11 – Lighting on Hector House staircases** – EH reported there was still a problem with Hector House that was being investigated and she was liaising directly with the contractor who had installed the lights. The ARB expressed disappointment at the different information that had been provided on a number of previous occasions by GW, that clearly stated that the contractor could not find any fault with the lighting system and yet now they state there was problem. **EH**

- 5.7 **Item 4.12 - Burst pipe at the side of Lysander House** – GW reported EDF were currently on site and the repair would be completed when the works were finished. DE further reported that land belonged to LBTH and GW would provide the CHO with the name of the LBTH contact to monitor progress. EH
- 5.8 **Item 4.13 – Bin cleaning** – GW reported that there was no written agreement with the Borough as the bins were supplied on a on a supply and maintain only basis. DE further reported that a copy of the terms and conditions would be distributed at the meeting. EH confirmed this would be sent out shortly to attendees and that she would inform residents when a bin cleaning contract had been agreed. EH
- 5.9 **Item 4.15 – Painting programme specification – inclusion of soffits, fascias and grilles** – The specification was supplied but residents could not understand it in the format presented. EH agreed to bring a simplified summary of the programme along to the next meeting. EH
- 5.10 **Item 4.16 – Specialist works for cleaning Perspex windows** - GW reported the site visit had taken place and the follow up works had been agreed.
- 5.11 **Item 4.17 – Marks on the blocks from old ISTM signs** - EH reported that work was ongoing and some blocks had been done. The contractor had a target of end of May to complete and scaffolded blocks would be done when the scaffold was removed. Residents asked that work was undertaken where possible on the scaffolded blocks now to reduce the need/cost of having to provide suitable access in the future. EH
- 5.12 **Item 4.18 – “No Spitting” signs** - EH reported that some signs had been replaced the signs had been delivered and a programme of works had been worked out to have the signs installed by the end of May.
- 5.12.1 Residents asked EH to note that a sign was required outside the Minerva Community facilities. EH
- 5.13 **Item 4.20 – Gallows Gate at Priam House being left open** – EH reported that the gate had been repaired and residents had to close it to release their key. FH stated that the gate was still being left open regularly and EH agreed investigate again. EH
- 5.14 **Item 4.21 - Details of support for Newark Youth Group** – IP reported that THCH worked with a number of youth providers including Newark Youth. THCH paid Newark Youth a total of £250 in 2008/9 for their services in providing youth activities in both Bethnal Green and Shadwell areas. This included the sponsorship for the children’s football tournament.
- 5.15 **Item 4.22 – Ethnicity statistics** – The statistics were provided.

- 5.16 **Item 4.24 - Illegal Parking in Treadway Street** – EH reported that the Council had confirmed they were surveying the area and considering the request for yellow lines. The Parking Team had also been made aware of the problem. **EH**
- 5.17 **Item 4.25 – CCTV at Lysander House and Minerva Estate** – EH reported that the system was operational now and updated training on using the system was being arranged by GW. **GW**
- 5.18 **Item 4.26 – CCTV at Beechwood House** – EH reported that the footage could not be accessed and DB had been advised.
- 5.19 **Item 4.27 – Gate on Minerva Community Facilities, Minerva Street side being left open** – IP reported that the users had again been reminded not to leave the gate open. Residents were not satisfied with this response, especially as FH reported that one user had actually been seen accessing the area via the gate to pick his child up.
- 5.19.1 It was clarified that this was a housing management matter and residents asked EH to arrange for this gate to be welded shut as agreed in the consultation exercise. **EH**
- 5.20 **Item 4.28 – Locking one gate to the football area** – It was reported that this was a day to day housing management issue. Residents agreed this particular gate should remain locked at all times as. This would not prevent access and therefore did not conflict with THCH Parks and Playground Management Policy. **EH**
- 5.21 **Item 4.30 – Parking outside Minerva Community Facility** – IP reported that users groups had confirmed they would park for loading and unloading purposes only. FH restated that illegal parking was actually occurring outside the front of the building and was going on all the time. It was agreed EH would look at ways to prevent users from parking in this area. **EH**
- 5.22 **Item 4.33 – Leaking guttering at the back of Minerva Community Facility** – IP reported this had been reported as a defect and would be repaired shortly. Residents wanted to know the date the repair would be done. **IP**
- 5.23 **Item 4.34 – Litter at the Minerva Community Facility** – EH reported that the litter guard had been fitted.
- 5.24 **Item 4.36 – Noise from water tanks at Hector House** – GW reported that the target date on the works was 20th May and FH confirmed the work had been done.
- 5.25 **Item 4.38 - Parking Agreement with Apollo** – EH reported that the Development Team had been informed on 21st April.
- 5.26 **Item 4.41 - Works to the railings at entrance to Paris House and outside 8-9** – EH confirmed the works were completed.

- 5.27 **Item 4.42 – Canopy outside 14 John Nettlefold House** – EH reported this was an individual matter that would be dealt with via the resident and the CHO.
- 5.28 **Items 5.1.2 & 5.2.1 - Park and Playground Management & Relationship Breakdown** – EH confirmed the comments had been passed to DE. DE reported that both policies had been approved at SDC. The conditions contained in the Park and Playground Policy would be operational 7 days a week and the Relationship Breakdown Policy applied to tenants only.
- 5.29 **Item 6.1.2 – Standard of cleaning on Avebury East estates** – EH reported that some wet areas had been noted on recent jet washing and deep cleaning projects. MM confirmed they had been noted during his normal estate inspection and EH agreed to address with the relevant estate cleaners. **EH**
- 5.30 **Item 6.1.3 – Chemical cleaning on stairwells** - EH confirmed there had been a misunderstanding that had now been clarified.
- 5.31 **Item 6.2.3 – Rough Sleeper in Gwylim Maries House** – EH reported that Rough Sleepers Unit had visited the block on several occasions and not found the rough sleeper. They have advised they will continue to monitor. There had been no further reports from residents that this was a problem.
- 5.32 **Item 6.5.1 – New Build Report on Southwood Smith House** – EH apologised as the circulated report had been the incorrect version.
- 5.33 **Item 7.1 – Community Development activities** – AC reported that CD activities were reported regularly in Update and it was not feasible to include a full list of the activities each month.
- 5.34 **Item 9.1.1, 9.1.2, 9.1.3 & 9.1.4 – Community Warden Scheme** – EH confirmed the comments had been passed on to DE.
- 5.35 **Item 9.2 – Beechwood House lights** – EH confirmed the time clock had been changed.
- 5.36 **Item 9.3 – Condition of gardens and verandas** – EH confirmed the letter was sent w/c 4th May. It was agreed that individual properties would be targeted from now on, not addressed via estate wide letters.
- 5.37 **Item 9.4 – Food recycling bins** – EH confirmed the bins had now been removed by the council.

6 POLICY REVIEWS

6.1 Under Occupation

6.1.1 There were no comments on the policy.

6.2 Void Property Management

- 6.2.1 2.4 – it was suggested that TV aerials/sockets should be added.
- 6.2.2 2.5 – it was suggested that the first paragraph start with “Properties”.
- 6.2.3 2.12 – it was suggested that this paragraph be placed after paragraph 2.8.
- 6.2.4 Residents suggested the whole policy be reviewed to ensure it flowed in sequence.
- 6.2.5 EH to pass the comments to DE. EH

7 REPORTS

7.1 Estate Inspections

- 7.1.1 Residents reported there were marks on the landings after jet washing at Achilles and Nestor Houses. EH
- 7.1.2 It was reported that number 5 and 6 Ajax House left recycling rubbish outside their homes continually. EH
- 7.1.3 Residents reported that lots of residents in Lysander House left their recycling out all the time and the estate cleaner was simply putting it in the normal rubbish. They asked EH to send a block letter and remind the estate cleaner not to place recycling rubbish in the normal bins. EH
- 7.1.4 Pages 17 and 18 – Residents noted how many times the CHO had emailed the Technical Team for help resolving the tree branch blocking the window and the moss. They asked EH to escalate the issues. EH
- 7.1.5 Residents asked EH to address the increasing problem of weeds and moss in the BG area. EH
- 7.1.6 Residents at Argos House asked if there were any plans to renew the windows to the block. EH
- 7.1.7 FH asked EH to double check that the dumped rubbish noted in the joint courtyard was correctly split between each block on a monthly basis. EH
- 7.1.8 JB1 commented that he would like the minutes to record that ASB in John Fielden House was much improved since the door entry system had been installed.

7.2 Community Development

- 7.2.1 JB2 noted that the majority of attendees at THCH’s youth group activities were Asian. She asked that THCH develop a strategy to develop youth activities for all. EH/IP

7.3 New Build

- 7.3.1 AA asked that the report author noted that David Eatwell was reporting differently on the subject of Southwood Smith and his version of the current plan for the block was the same as that of the Finance & Development Committees. She asked that the content of this report be brought into line. **EH/AE**

8 ARTICLES FOR UPDATE

- 8.1 There were no suggestions.

9 FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- 9.1 There were no suggestions.

- 9.2 EH reported a resident of the Mansford Estate had raised objections to the withdrawal of the food recycling service, as requested by the members of the BGARB.

- 9.2.1 EH also relayed LBTH's request that the ARB allow the service to be reinstated. They currently had funds to provide some form of 'housing' to place the bins in and also gave an assurance that the service would be much improved.

- 9.2.2 After some discussion members agreed that they would not reconsider their decision until the Council could demonstrate a successful service elsewhere within THCH. It was also agreed that members did not want another presentation on food recycling by council officers until the latter could be shown.

10 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 10.1 JB2 asked if bike stores would be included in the environmental plan on the Mansford and Avebury. It was agreed this query would be raised at the following week's forum meeting.

- 10.2 Residents reported that bikes were being chained to estate railings right across Minerva Estate and they asked that the CHO investigate if more bike spaces could be installed. **EH**

- 10.3 EW reported that youths were gathering regularly outside number 18 Beechwood House. **EH**

- 10.4 RF reported that rats had been seen in the bin area at John Cartwright House in and around the square. **EH**

- 10.5 RF reported that a resident in John Cartwright House was regularly feeding the birds and it was agreed food in the area would encourage vermin. RF to supply the address to the CHO. **RF**

- 10.6 AA & FH reported that the contractor, Costers, had recently placed mesh covers underneath the drains secured simply by cable ties - as such they were being removed. EH agreed she would get the **EH**

contractor to return to carry out the work properly.

11 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

11.1 It was noted that Wednesday 17th June 2009 would be the next meeting date at 6.30pm in the Zander Court Community Room.

Signed.....

Date.....