

THE LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN

At a meeting of the **HAMPSTEAD DISTRICT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE** held on **THURSDAY, 9TH MARCH, 2023** at 6.30 pm in the Zoom meeting

REGISTERED DMC MEMBERS PRESENT

Toyin Majiyagbe (Chair)	Taplow TRA
Anne Ward (Vice-Chair)	5-7 Belsize Grove TRA
Jeremy Woolcock	50 Fitzjohn's TRA
Malcolm Bush	Abbey Road Housing Co-op
Fiona Cubbins	Alexandra & Ainsworth TRA
Ubah Egal (sub)	Alexandra & Ainsworth TRA
Casey Okezie	Blashford TRA
Jeremy Yankey	CASP
Andrea Yennadiou	Hilgrove Estate TRA
Janice Smart	Lymington Road TRA
Fatima Abubakur (sub)	Mortimer Crescent TRA
Mary Ryan	Sidney Boyd Court TRA
Lynda Stuart	Webheath TRA

OTHER RESIDENTS PRESENT

Pamela Holmes-Gunsell (sub)	Blashford TRA
-----------------------------	---------------

COUNCILLOR OBSERVERS PRESENT

Councillors Nancy Jirira and Nanouche Umeadi

OTHER COUNCILLORS PRESENT

Councillor Meric Apak (Cabinet Member for Better Homes)
Councillor Eddie Hanson

OFFICERS PRESENT

Graeme Beedham	Head of TP and Leaseholder Engagement
Celestine Fairhall	Neighbourhood Manager
Stanton La Foucade	Tenant Participation Co-Ordinator
Susan O'Hara	Principal Caretaking Manager
Nilva Thompson	Neighbourhood Manager
Vinothan Sangarapillai	Committee Services
Danny Waite	Head of Repairs and Operations

The minutes should be read in conjunction with the agenda for the meeting. They are subject to approval and signature at the next meeting of the

Hampstead District Management Committee and any corrections approved at that meeting will be recorded in those minutes.

MINUTES

1. REGISTRATION OF TENANTS ASSOCIATIONS AND CO-OPTION OF TENANT REPRESENTATIVES

RESOLVED –

THAT the 'A' and 'B' lists be noted.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Arun Kumar (Abbey Green Estate TRA), Brian Richardson (Arkwright Mansions TRA), Nevenka Martin (Taplow TRA), Caroline McHugh (Studholme Court TRA), and Hasan Shah (Burnham TRA).

3. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THIS AGENDA

There were no declarations of interest.

5. NOTIFICATIONS OF ANY ITEMS OF BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR DECIDES TO TAKE AS URGENT

There were no notifications of urgent business.

6. MINUTES

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meetings held on 8th December 2022 and 11th January 2023.

With regard to the 8th December minutes, the representative of Sydney Boyd Court said that the gate had subsequently been fixed before Christmas, but had now stopped working again.

RESOLVED –

- (i) THAT the minutes of the meeting held on 8th December 2022 be approved as a correct record;
- (ii) THAT the minutes of the meeting held on 11th January 2023 be approved as a correct record.

7. HAMPSTEAD DMC PROGRESS REPORT - ACTION POINTS UPDATE

The progress report was noted.

8. HOUSING SERVICES CONSOLIDATED REPORT

Consideration was given to a report of the Director of Housing and the Director of Property Services.

Graeme Beedham, the Head of Tenant Participation and Leaseholder Engagement, introduced the report. He reported on housing contractor performance and clarified that GEM and BTU were the contractors for the Council's Mechanical & Electrical work.

With regard to the Landlord Services update, it was reported that officers were progressing with the tenant visits programme. About half of all tenants they had visited had said they were in financial hardship.

Mr Beedham informed the meeting that there were changes to the social housing regulatory framework. The regulator would be consulting on consumer standards. As part of the regulatory framework, social housing providers would be asked to conduct annual surveys of their residents and report the results.

The Vice-Chair, Annie Ward, asked about how the survey would be conducted and who would be undertaking it. The Head of Tenant Participation said that it would be conducted by an organisation called Housemark. He also said that Camden might be asking extra questions in the survey, beyond those required by the regulator. Ms Ward said she had experience in market research from her previous employment and would like to be involved in the survey design.

Members raised concerns about maintenance issues. The representative from Hillgrove Estate said that internal lights were not working in one block and so the stairwells were dark after dusk and this caused a trip hazard.

Susan O'Hara, Caretaking Manager, said her service would action this.

ACTION: Susan O'Hara (Principal Caretaking Manager)

Queries were raised about lifts not working or frequently breaking down in Sydney Boyd Court, Taplow, and Webheath. Danny Waite, Head of Repairs and Operations, said that there had been delays in obtaining spare parts for lifts, particularly during the pandemic. There was a particular problem for "closed protocol" lifts and so the Council was asking contractors to install "open protocol" lifts when they were installing new ones.

The representative from Abbey Road Housing Co-Op asked how long the policy to have open protocol lifts had been in place, and if the lifts in his estate were open or closed protocol. Mr Waite said that approach had been in place for approximately the last two years and that he would check if the Abbey Road lifts were open or closed protocol.

ACTION: Danny Waite (Head of Repairs and Operations)

The Chair reported that when people phoned up to report a lift that was not functioning, they were sometimes told that this had not been reported before even if it had. Her concern was that lift repairs requests were being noted against flat numbers rather than against the lift itself, so if residents from different flats reported a lift fault it might not be clear to operatives that it was the same lift.

Danny Waite said that lift repairs should be logged against the block, but that there was sometimes a lag in data from the out-of-hours service being available to staff working in the daytime service – and so a daytime operative might not be aware of a fault that had been logged earlier with the out-of-hours service.

Jeremy Woolcock, the representative from 50 Fitzjohn's TRA, thanked the Chair for arranging a surgery and thanked Danny Waite for his comments there. Mr Woolcock said that he was still awaiting information about where Fitzjohn's was on the list for planned works, as they were in need of work on their windows and doors. He added no works had been done on the estate for more than 50 years.

ACTION: Susanne Afra (Head of Capital Works)

A resident said that there was a smell of solvent in the lifts on the Rowley Way side of the Alexandra & Ainsworth estate. She was concerned that people were sniffing solvents there and that it could be a fire hazard. Officers said that solvent abuse should be reported to community safety. They added that caretakers' duties included cleaning the lifts, but solvent smells were difficult to remove.

A query was raised about whether the list of actions from the walkabout would be publicised for residents to see. Stanton La Foucade, Tenant Participation Co-Ordinator, said that the action list had gone to the TRA officers for their comments and could then be circulated more widely.

ACTION: Tenant Participation

RESOLVED –

THAT the report and the comments above be noted.

9. REPORT OF THE CABINET MEMBER FOR BETTER HOMES

Consideration was given to a report of the Cabinet Member for Better Homes.

Councillor Apak highlighted the impact of the pandemic and its aftermath on Council services. He said there was also increased inflation and energy costs following the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

He added that there had been a long-term impact on the HRA from the mandated rent reductions of the early 2010s, when central government had been mandating local authorities reduce their rents in order to reduce housing benefit expenditure.

Councillor Apak added that local authorities had new duties regarding fire safety and damp and mould which could have significant long-term pressures on the budget.

Councillor Apak welcomed the channel shift in reporting repairs. He said 70% of repairs were now logged online, which freed up phone lines for those who needed to use the telephone.

He said that the common denominator of many problems he had come across in his casework was poor communication. He wanted to see that improve.

Members highlighted instances of poor communication they had received from the Council. They said that the speed of response to emails needed to be improved.

The Vice-Chair said that her estate had not had a housing officer for months, so residents did not know who to contact.

Officers said that the restructure of the service was in a transitional stage and they were looking to recruit new housing officers. The establishment of dedicated rents and home-moving teams would mean that other housing officers would have more time to speak with tenants with other queries.

Residents said that it often was not clear to them how to escalate queries, particularly if they were not receiving responses from some officers or the responses were inadequate.

RESOLVED –

THAT the report and the comments above be noted.

10. HAMPSTEAD DMC BUDGET REPORT

Consideration was given to a report in the supplementary agenda from the Head of Programme, Housing.

Members agreed to consider the Blashford bid without an introduction from the TRA, as Casey Okezie was unable to stay logged in to the Zoom meeting due to IT difficulties.

Hampstead District Management Committee - Thursday, 9th March, 2023

The Blashford bid for £3785 to cover the purchase of flowers and plants to improve the aesthetics of the area was agreed.

Mary Ryan, the representative from Sydney Boyd Court, highlighted that the problem mentioned at the last meeting of delay in the actioning of their bid was continuing. Residents felt frustrated and disrespected by the long delay.

The Chair, Toyin Majiyagbe, said that residents were dissatisfied with the bids process. She had raised a complaint about the delay in the Sydney Boyd bid but the works had still not progressed. She said that residents had been given incorrect and conflicting information by council officers on the progress of bids. Reps had to face residents and answer questions from them about what was happening with regard to bids, when the cause of delays sat with the Council which needed to release the funds and instruct the contractor to carry out the works. She said this showed a lack of respect and consideration from the Council for TRA reps and the voluntary work they did.

Members asked that the works requested in that bid be progressed.

ACTION: Neighbourhood Housing Manager

RESOLVED –

THAT the following bid be agreed:

TRA	BID REQUEST	AMOUNT	COMMENTS
Blashford	DMC Funding requested to cover the cost of the purchase of flowerpots, compost and 'feel good plants and flower' to improve the external aesthetics around the building	£3785	Quotations obtained by TRA from B&Q website

11. LOCAL ISSUES

Queries were raised about the Hilgrove and Templar House walkabouts. Stanton La Foucade said there was one action outstanding on each of the walkabout action plans.

Residents raised matters relating to CCTV. Some representatives from estates without CCTV said they would like it installed, in order to deal with crime and anti-social behaviour.

A resident from Mortimer Crescent said that there had been a number of break-ins in the estate and there was no CCTV. The Sydney Boyd Court representative said she was disappointed her estate was not included in the CCTV upgrade programme.

Residents said they would like to see the criteria used to decide whether an estate should be prioritised for CCTV.

Residents also raised concerns about places where CCTV had been installed but was not operational. A resident from the Rowley Way side of Alexandra & Ainsworth said that they were being charged for CCTV but there was no CCTV on their half of the estate.

Graeme Beedham said that it was possible for residents to request a service charge refund if they were charged for CCTV and the service was not being provided. He would send further information about this to the Chair.

ACTION: Graeme Beedham

Councillor Eddie Hanson said that it was planned to install CCTV in the Rowley Way part of the Alexandra and Ainsworth estate in the summer.

Nilva Thompson, Neighbourhood Manager, said that the Council had 250 winter warm packs to distribute to vulnerable tenants, and asked reps to inform other residents of this.

12. MINUTES FOR REFERENCE

The minutes were noted.

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT

There was no other business.

14. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The dates of future meetings would be:

- Thursday, 22nd June 2023
- Thursday, 21st September 2023
- Thursday, 6th December 2023
- Wednesday, 10th January 2024 (Joint DMCs)
- Thursday, 14th March 2024

The meeting ended at 8.40pm.

Hampstead District Management Committee - Thursday, 9th March, 2023

CHAIR

Contact Officer: Vinothan Sangarapillai, Committee Services

Telephone No: 020 7974 4071

E-Mail: vinothan.sangarapillai@camden.gov.uk

MINUTES END