



Minutes of the HLRA Meeting 11th March 2024

Present: Sarah Hands (SH) (Chair), Keith Bristow (KB), Annette Davies (AD), Melanie Johnson (MJ), Sam Hollingsworth (SHW), Nicola Hughes (NH), Angela Ogbe (AO), Lyn Roberts (LR), Claire Wych (CW).

Apologies: June Heslop (JH), Ross Hollingshead (RH), Jordan Howard (JoH), Jon Kanareck (JK), Matthew Shaw (MS), James Sturgeon (JaS), Claire-Louise Turnham (CT).

1. Welcome The Chair welcomed Karen Brown as an observer to the meeting in consideration of taking up membership of HLRA committee. Following the meeting Karen eagerly volunteered to join the committee & was welcomed to the group.

2. Minutes of meeting held 12th February 2024- minutes agreed & are available on RMG Living London & HL notice boards. RMG are addressing the IT issues to ensure residents are informed when minutes are available on the portal.

7/24 Action: RMG to circulate minutes to residents via email. (RMG)

MJ

3. Berkeley Homes Report No representative available & no updates provided.

4. RMG Report Organisation Updates – February 2024

The estate team have welcomed Lewis Godly-Arnold our new gardener who comes with valuable experience in landscaping in previous roles.

Residents are encouraged to call the Police on the non-emergency number 101 should they witness anti-social behaviour.

We kindly request that visitor parking bays are only used for 24 hours and no return within 48 hours. Please note that visitor bays are for all residents and visitors, residents who live closest to them do not have a priority for their usage.

Drivers of vehicles leaving the estate at the front of house are advised that it is a traffic offence to turn right into the petrol station. Several near misses were reported to the Police who are monitoring this.

There is an increase of residents who smoke are disposing of their cigarette ends into communal areas from their properties. This is illegal and we ask these residents to stop this behaviour and to others we would encourage residents who witness this behaviour report the incident to TMBC.

Contractors inspected the water tanks at Lakeview Court and 2 Walters Close.

Contractors inspected and replaced two manhole covers at Hambrook Road and Alisander Close. There have been recent examples where residents are allowing or giving access to their friends or family to enter the gym and use the facilities; this is not permitted.

Estate manager ensured the bin store lock at Lakeview Court was repaired.

Estate manager has produced a monthly list of outstanding remedial works that require various contractors to quote for each of the tasks.

Fly Tipping in the bin stores remains a problem; residents are advised that if their waste cannot fit in the bin provided then it should be disposed of by taking it to the recycling centre. TMBC have subcontracted a company to enforce their fly tipping laws with fines.

Safeplay contractors visited and inspected the playparks and both trim trails.

5. SH Report

Misuse of Bin Stores. There is a major problem with fly tipping into Southern Housing bin stores by residents & non-residents. The Estate Care operative is working closely with TMBC to issue fines and Community Protection Warnings (CPW) on offenders. The additional weekly bin collection at 4 Edwards Close will continue while waiting for feedback from the insurance company.

Visitors Parking. Cars are parking in some visitors bay for long period of times particularly around Pollyfield Close & the Edwards/Amisse Drive & drivers are misusing the disabled bays without any action from UKPC.

Action 17/24: Speak to UKPC ref monitoring of Pollyfield/ Edwards/Amisse areas (RMG) MJ

6. Ongoing Actions

85/21b & 37/22 Reducing the Impact of Fuel Charge Increases on Service Charge

Bollard Lights

LR identified 236 estate bollard lights. RMG discussed possible discounts with IEBB for a bulk order, but this was not possible. The cost of the bulbs has increased since their quote was submitted, however IEBB have agreed to hold to their original costing. The committee agreed that the bulbs should be changed across the estate enabling a bulk order to be placed. NH suggested that the cost of purchasing the parts direct from a supplier should be researched to identify if this will reduce overall costs. It was requested that IEBB provide a quote for replacing all 236 bollard lamps broken down into separate labour and parts costs (detailing which parts are required). RMG will confirm if IEBB are willing to provide purely the labour.

Action: Obtain broken down quote from IEBB for 236 bollards & confirm if willing to carry out labour with parts supplied by RMG. (RMG) **MJ**

Timers on Village Hall Heaters & Water Feature

MJ advised that switches can be installed on the Village Hall heaters which will allow the user to put the heaters on for restricted periods, thus preventing them from being left on for an unnecessary unlimited time. The first quote for this work came in at £662 for all 5 heaters. BH agreed to a timer being installed on the entrance water feature to restrict its operation to daylight hours. There is, however, a concern that restricting the operation of the fountain may allow calcium build-up on the steel features and this will incur costs of contractors cleaning it on a regular basis. The electrician had also advised that the timer will need replacing on a regular basis as they had a restricted life expectancy. The committee felt that, despite these potential additional ongoing costs, cost savings would be made over time by restricting the operation of the fountain. The first quote for installing this timer was £1,093. RMG were asked to obtain 2 more quotes for both these jobs.

Action: Obtain 2 further quotes, detailing labour & parts, for installing timers on VH heaters & fountain. (RMG) **MJ**

Obsolete Meters

RMG reported that their utilities' portfolio broker has confirmed that the missing meters are registered on the national database, but further work is required to establish if they are still in use and their exact location. The committee expressed frustration at the time this was taking as the obsolete meters are costing residents circa £600 each a year in standing charges alone. It was asked that BH make a more concerted effort to establish the situation regarding these meters.

Action: Expedite enquiries regarding obsolete meters. (BH/RMG)

RH/MJ

57/21 Estate Maintenance & 20/23 Disposal of Grass Cuttings.

Jas Sidhu (RMG) was unable to attend this meeting as he was on holiday. The grass disposal areas had been checked by the Estate Team who reported that there is still space for further garden waste disposal within Holborough Lakes boundary. RMG requested agreement to purchase the following equipment - Ride-on mower which will mulch the grass as it cuts with a 4-year warranty @£7500. A rear roller mower with a 1-year warranty @£1500 and/or a rotary mower with 1-year warranty @£1099. AD expressed concern regarding the care of such equipment as previous mowers appeared to have a very short lifespan. NH asked for details of the condition of mowers currently being used. CW questioned whether there were other mid-range models that could be considered, but believed the grass mulching benefit would help reduce costs of long-term grass disposal. KB suggested that further negotiations take place to reduce the costs and/or improve the service contract. SH supported the purchase of the ride-on mower but hoped for improved warranties/service package on the other mowers. MJ explained that there was a 2 month wait for delivery on the mowers & requested a prompt decision from the HLRA regarding their purchase.

Action: Establish condition of current mowers & what additional requirement is. (RMG)

MJ

Action: Identify if costs/service packages/warranty can be improved. (RMG)

MJ

Action: SH, NH, JH & AD to arrange meeting, discuss & report back. (HLRA)

SH

Action: Jas Sidhu to be invited to HLRA meeting. (RMG)

MJ

22/23 Gatehouse Maintenance and Repairs

RMG provided two further quotes for work on the gatehouse. One quote was costed at £23,570 to replace all 6 wooden posts as this contractor believed they were beyond repair. A third quote was costed at £4,860 for redecoration but did not specify how many posts this covered. The variation in these quotes created confusion for the committee as to the genuine maintenance requirements. The committee were incredulous that less than 3 years ago a substantial cost (£9,240), was incurred to decorate these posts, when it appears that the wood was already rotting. The committee questioned the need for the retention of the posts as they appear to be purely decorative. They also requested that RMG investigate the cost of replacing them with composite posts rather than wooden ones to reduce the ongoing maintenance costs.

Action: Investigate the possibility of removing gatehouse posts or replacing them with composite posts (RMG) MJ

16/21 Cracked Bonded Paving/17/21 Cobbles Booth/Alisander/Poynder

There had been no update from BH since the last meeting. MJ believed that the work was progressing to plan & offered to circulate a map indicating completed areas. RMG & BH had experienced some thwarting informing residents in advance of work being carried out in their area due to belated updates from the contractors. The committee asked BH to improve the lines of communication to ensure residents (including SH residents), are notified in advance, as promised, of work in their area to minimise disruption to them.

Action: Provide precise & timely information to affected residents. (RMG/BH)

MJ/RH

Action: Update on progress of works completion date & guarantee. (BH)

RH

Action: Update on cobbles on adopted roads. (RMG)

JaS

1/24 Service charge- Household Ratio's & Distribution

JaS had emailed JK advising him that a check of the records relating to his service charge confirmed that the apportionment of the charge had correctly steadily decreased as new units were constructed on the estate, but once the development construction was complete and all the existing estate units were included within the 2022 budget the apportionment remained the same for 2023. SH thanked JaS for this confirmation. She requested that to reassure all residents that their charges had been similarly adjusted, would he check a larger sample of records relating to the various estate phases and report back.

SWH further challenged RMG on the distribution of the Estate Service Charge for the provision of security guards. She expressed concern that owners of larger properties are charged more for this provision under the system whereby the percentage of the estate service charge paid is based upon square footage of the property, even though there is no benefit from the security provision. She sought further clarification on the assertion made by JaS at the meeting of 12/02/24 that there was no flexibility in this system. She stated her belief that such flexibility already existed evidenced by the Phase 5 service charge for maintenance of the gate in Primrose Close being averaged out between nine houses; she questioned why other charges cannot be similarly averaged out.

Action: Check apportionment percentages on wider sample of estate charges. (RMG)

JaS

Action: Provide further explanation of distribution of Estate Service Charge based upon square footage & why owners of larger properties are required to pay a greater percentage of the costs of the security guards. (RMG)

JaS

29/23 Insecurity at SH Apartment Block.

A lengthy discussion took place regarding this issue. AO explained that the repairs to the door entry system of the SH apartment blocks was deemed part of a reinvestment process & not day-to-day maintenance, & this work was not budgeted for in this financial year. She explained that there was a delay due to the sudden departure of an inhouse surveyor and this position needed to be filled before the reinvestment processes can be resumed. She confirmed that section 20 notices had been served according to legal requirements & quotes for the work had been obtained. Members of the committee expressed their concerns for the welfare of residents living within insecure apartment blocks & asked that SH prioritised the securities of buildings on Holborough Lakes. AO advised that this work was considered a priority due to concerns raised by residents. The committee requested an update as to when the surveyor may be recruited.

Action: Address insecurity SH block. (SH)

AO

28/22 Access to RMG Living for SH Residents

MJ advised that she has not received the details of interested residents from JH.

Action: Pass details of interested residents to RMG. (SH)

AO/JH

08/20a and 1/21 Review of Lake Level/Sluice Gate Operation

RMG have arranged for a Berkeley senior technical manager to inspect the sluice gate operation.

There was no known time frame for their visit, but MJ was hopeful it would take place before the next HLRA meeting. She committed to providing an update once the visit had taken place.

Action: RMG to obtain Risk Assessment & provide further update.

MJ

11/24 Village Hall.

A record of the actual bookings for February had not been included in the RMG report; it was requested that the monthly report include details of all the actual bookings for the preceding month in order to identify how well the hall was generating income.

Action: Estate Manager to include VH bookings in his monthly report. (RMG)

MJ

5/24 Bus Route Fencing on Manley Boulevard/Hedgerow

MJ had attempted to gain information regarding the grant for hedgerow to replace the fence but was encountering difficulties in gaining responses from contact points. SH & CW offered to assist with this task & MJ will liaise with them direct outside of the meeting.

Action: Research grant available for planting hedgerow. (RMG)

MJ

03/20 Jeffrey's Lane Pedestrian Crossing, 88/21 Parking Village Hall, 25/22 Road Adoption Plan
SH had made numerous enquiries with various agencies regarding the need for a pedestrian crossing but had received very few responses. It appears unlikely that a crossing will be installed in the area as legal requirements prevent this due to the proximity of road junctions. There had been no update from BH since the last meeting.

Action: Update on progress of works required from BH.

RH

10/24 Tarmac Parking Space Edwards Close Car Park (Near water board sub-station).

There was no update from BH in relation to this item.

Action: Update ref repairs parking space near water board sub-station. (BH/RMG)

RH/ MJ

4/23 Park Repairs

The bin and rope have been replaced, but there is a wait for the repairs to the rubber flooring. RMG were unable to offer a timeframe for this but have requested the contractor expediate the repairs.

Action: Update on progress of repairs (RMG).

MJ

12/23 Replacement Inspection Covers

No update since the last meeting.

Action: Provide precise specifications (size HxWxD) of the replacement inspection covers & where metal covers (covers only not the whole unit) can be purchased from. (RMG)

MJ

48/21 Tarmac Land – Overgrowing Plants Causing Damage to Fencing.

SWH had sent photos to MJ & will liaise directly with MJ outside of the meeting.

Action Closed

9/24 Dogs Fouling in and around Poynder Drive/Linnit Road

RMG have sent a letter to the offending owner & the estate team will monitor the area &, if necessary, the dog warden will be contacted.

Action Closed

33/22 Faulty gate – Primrose Close-

RMG have circulated instructions to residents. SWH expressed her disagreement with signing the waiver but agreed that the action could be closed.

Action Closed

7. Social media and newsletter

SHW & SH have dedicated many hours creating a new HLRA website which they will imminently share with the rest of the committee for feedback & approval. Committee members will then be encouraged to provide interesting content prior to publication to the HL community.

8. AOB

8.1 Dog Bins.

AD observed that the estate dog bins appear to be overflowing and bags were being left on the ground around the bins. MJ said the bins should be emptied on a Monday and Friday. The committee expressed the view that the bins were not being emptied to that schedule & asked that TMBC be contacted to ensure they fulfilled the contract which residents paid them to carry out. It was also asked that the estate team contact TMBC if the bins were not emptied on the scheduled days.

12/24 Action: Contact TMBC ref dog bin emptying contract. (RMG) MJ

8.2 Planting at Front of Estate.

AD requested that bulbs/ perennials be planted in the beds around the rills in order to reduce the time taken to tend these areas by the estate team.

13/24 Action: Liaise with estate team ref planting in rill beds. (RMG) MJ

8.3 Dogs in Apartment Blocks.

AD requested that RMG write to occupants in apartments reminding them of the requirement to seek permission from RMG to keep a pet. She also asked that dog owners be advised to keep their dogs on short leads within apartment blocks to prevent other residents from receiving unwanted approaches from dogs within the restricted confines of a building as this can be distressing for some individuals who find such approaches uncomfortable.

14/24 Action: Write to apartment occupants ref lease conditions regarding keeping pets and the need to use short leads within apartment blocks. (RMG) MJ

8.5 Maintenance of LVC Water Pump

LR, KB & AD asked on behalf of fifteen Lake View Court (LVC) residents that it be noted in the HLRA minutes that they have recorded a lack of confidence in the current contractor, Pillinger, who service the LVC water pump & have asked RMG to seek a quote from an alternative company. They wished RMG to also note that the overflow pipe is still causing a substantial water spill in the bin store which represents a H&S risk, and they question the legality of such a pipe discharging within the confines of a building.

15/24 Action: Respond to concerns regarding LVC water pump contractor. (RMG) JaS

8.6 Tent Erected on Bank of HL Lake

AD & KB reported that a tent has been erected on the bank of the lake near the dive school and they have reported this to the police & the estate team. SH asked RMG to inform BH & request they take some appropriate action in order to prevent this from escalating into more serious ASB.

16/24 Action: BH to take action regarding trespassers in tent by lake. (RMG/BH) MJ/RH

Post meeting update – tent is no longer in the location.

Meeting Closed 8.45pm

Next Meeting 7pm Monday 8th April 2024