

# NOTES OF THE CENTRAL STREET AREA HOUSING PANEL

Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> November – Tompion Community Centre – 7pm

**Present:**

Una O’Halloran ( <b>UH</b> )	St Lukes TRA
Helen Cagnoni ( <b>HC</b> )	1 in 1000 Rep
Terry Lefevre ( <b>TL</b> )	Pleydell Estate TMO
Irene Francis ( <b>IF</b> )	St Lukes TRA
Martin Rutherford ( <b>MR</b> )	Popham 1 TRA
Patricia Nolan ( <b>PN</b> )	Popham 1 TRA
Eileen Nolan ( <b>EN</b> )	Popham 1 TRA
Richard Kelly ( <b>RK</b> )	Popham 1 TRA
Kay Winters ( <b>KW</b> )	Popham 1 TRA
Miranda Jules ( <b>MJ</b> )	Popham 2 TRA
Jo Pamment ( <b>JP</b> )	Lagonier House TRA
Elaine Smalley ( <b>ES</b> )	Lagonier House TRA
Blanche Woodbridge ( <b>BW</b> )	King Square
Frances Sullivan ( <b>FS</b> )	King Square TRA
John Kolm-Murray ( <b>JKM</b> )	Affordable Warmth Co-ordinator, LBI
Louise Quarrell ( <b>LQ</b> )	Special Projects Officer, HFI
Sarah Farley ( <b>SF</b> )	Consultation Officer, HFI
David Selo ( <b>DSe</b> )	Director of Resources, HFI
David Salenius ( <b>DS</b> )	Area Housing Manager, HFI
Miranda Griffith ( <b>MG</b> )	Community & Service Development Officer, HFI

<b>1</b>	<b>APOLOGIES</b>	
1.1	<b><u>Apologies received from:</u></b> Catherine Curzon Adrian Hall	
<b>2</b>	<b>Actions from last meeting and matters arising</b>	
2.1	Regarding item 2.1, MR got no feedback from LS. MR sent Apollo a list of questions following their first TRA meeting and hasn’t had a reply as yet. VS to feed back on this, whom was also copied into the email.	<b>VS</b>
2.2	On item 4.6, HC said that objections are being made from the London Tenants Federation that many of the community projects HFI are carrying out are being funded by the Housing Revenue Account (HRA fund), and therefore should be agreed by tenants before they automatically get funding. HC asserted that ASB, worklessness also affects non-tenants.	
2.3	DSilo resonded that there hadn’t been any guidance on HRA funding since 1995, and feels this is an issue that tenants need to be updated on.	
2.4	Regarding item 11.4, UH said that the ASB case hasn’t been dealt with satisfactorily and requested that a post-case survey be posted to the tenant. DS to talk to IN on this and feed back.	<b>DS</b>

<b>3</b>	<b>Cavity Wall Insulation – Louise Quarrell</b>	
3.1 3.2 3.3 3.4 3.5 3.6 3.7 3.8 3.9 3.10 3.11	<p>LQ introduced herself to the panel as Special Projects officer.</p> <p>LQ explained that HFI has secured £4m from the Homes and Communities Agency to carry out some insulation works. All properties will need to be surveyed before works are carried out, and some properties will need to use scaffolding to do this. However, any disturbance will be kept to a minimum.</p> <p>LQ distributed a list of properties earmarked for insulation; these will all need to be surveyed first, and if there are no problems found they will go ahead.</p> <p>Surveying properties will commence next month.</p> <p>MR commented that they were told on Popham 1 that insulation works were going to go ahead 3 years ago, but they never did.</p> <p>LQ explained that for buildings to be eligible for insulation under this funding pot, the property must obviously have a cavity to be filled and be 4 stories or under. If there's money remaining after properties on the original list are insulated, they may be able to put funding into higher rise blocks.</p> <p>Existing scaffolding being used to carry out other works will be used if possible.</p> <p>TL feels that high rises dominate this area and really need insulation, as damp has been known to come into the flats in some cases.</p> <p>LQ informed the panel that there shouldn't be a recharge for leaseholders.</p> <p>Workers shouldn't need to go into properties to carry out the works.</p> <p>For any more information on insulation, please call Louise Quarrell on: 020 7527 4142.</p>	
<b>4</b>	<b>Tackling Fuel Poverty in Islington – John Kolm-Murray</b>	
4.1 4.2 4.3 4.4 4.5	<p>JKM introduced himself to the panel, and distributed and explained Islington Councils Affordable Warmth Strategy, which commits itself to tackling the problem of fuel poverty in the borough.</p> <p>HC asked about Ebicol, the not-for-profit company that provide electricity and gas, asking whether the company would provide cheaper bills and why she hasn't heard of them before.</p> <p>JKM advised that the company is small and doesn't have the marketing budget of the many others. He can't guarantee the company will provide cheaper bills but certainly advises tenants to get a quote.</p> <p>JKM advised that HFI will be sending letters out this week for any of the 3,300 properties that will benefit from the 'Warming By Degrees' programme. This programme is mainly for those in street properties or those in 5 story buildings.</p> <p>JKM advised that anyone who will not benefit from the above programme can apply for the Energy Doctor, who can spend more dedicated time with you and do a good</p>	

	job of draught proofing.	
4.6	For any further information on the projects mentioned, please contact John Kolm-Murray on: 020 7527 3800.	
<b>5</b>	<b>Feedback from September Consultative Panels</b>	
	No questions were asked or comments made.	
<b>6</b>	<b>HFI Community Engagement Strategy Review</b>	
6.1	DSe explained that there will be an opportunity to feedback on the strategy up until the 7 <sup>th</sup> of December.	
6.2	Page 4 explains the main themes of the report and what it covers. One of the new themes is 'tackling poverty'.	
6.3	HC feels that if the panel agreed the report, it would be condoning the fact that community 'extras' such as fun days and Islington's Got Talent etc should be funded by the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), which she believes should be just for housing.	
6.4	DSe responded that the Housing Finance Review, being carried out by Government includes updating the accountancy guidance on charging expenditure to the HRA.	
6.5	UH also feels that Islingtons Got Talent and Fun Days shouldn't be funded by the HRA.	
6.6	HC feels that the Council has budgets for each of the issues raises such as youth etc, and activities should be paid through these rather than that poorest people in the community paying for such things.	
6.7	A vote was drawn for and against supporting the strategy. Votes to NOT support the strategy were unanimous.	
<b>7</b>	<b>Business Plan 2010 – 15</b>	
7.1	HC feels that a lot of items in the appendix are again non-housing issues that will be expecting to be funded by the HRA budget.	
7.2	HC feels that reducing overcrowding is a strategy, however the under occupation items are debatable as more detail is needed about it. She feels that 1 bedroom flats that are made available should be in the same estate/direct area, as often people don't want to move away.	
7.3	MG will feed back to the governance team that more detail is requested regarding item 2.1.	<b>MG</b>

7.4	DSe pointed out that on item 6.2 it refers to a new in-house repairs provision on certain areas of work, e.g. clearance of voids and assisted decoration,...
7.5	HC and UH feel that the item on the future of HFI skirts over the issues, and there isn't enough information to agree these issues such as under occupation and what will happen after HFI's contract finishes.
7.6	DSe stated the panel was being consulted on the strategic objectives within the business plan. The detail would follow the approval of the strategic direction, for further consultation with panels.
7.7	UH feels its strange there isn't more information post 2011 when its just two years away, as most companies have 5/10 year plans.
7.8	DSe agreed that business plans should be for the longer period, however current government financial restrictions do not allow this.
7.9	TL asked what 'de-conversion to non-domestic areas' meant. DSilo explained that this meant any areas adjacent to existing flats can be extended into, e.g. caretakers lodges, to make properties bigger. This is only applicable to existing Council areas.
7.10	Some members of the panel were concerned that the real plan for future funding of HFI would be to sell off properties.
7.11	DS reminded the panel that the HFI contract is running until 2014, not 2011.
7.12	MJ would like it minuted that the panel note the paper but do not fully agree with it, and that the issues and concerns get taken back.
7.13	HC asked whether the Community Gateway system is being explored, because it isn't mentioned in the paper. DSe responded that the Community Gateway, is one of a number options for the future to be considered. As HFI will be completing the Decent Homes Programme in 2010/11 it needs to consider with LBI options post 2010/11 for future capital funding in the housing stock.
7.14	A vote took place to note the paper on the proviso that more information is provided on each point and subsequently discussed, or disagreed. The result is as follows:  Agree: 3 Disagree: 9
<b>8</b>	<b>Complaints monitoring</b>
	No comments were made on this paper.

9	<b>R &amp; M Re-procurement Update</b>	
	No comments were made on this paper.	
10	<b>HFI and Consultative Panel Update</b>	
	No comments were made on this paper.	
11	<b>Capital Programme 2009/10 Monitoring 2<sup>nd</sup> Qtr</b>	
	No comments were made on this paper.	
12	<b>Forward Plan</b>	
	No comments were made on this paper.	
13	<b>September Performance Report, Central Street</b>	
13.1	DS distributed the report which shows the performance results of the Central Street Area Housing Office for September, and this year so far (April-September 09).	
13.2	DS reported that there had been a reduction of complaints into the office this year without counting the serial complainants cases.	
13.3	Seventeen comment cards were returned in September, all showing that services provided were rated as good or very good.	
13.4	Improving caretaking results is a very high priority in the office, as this year they were slightly lower than the target set with the exception of the month of October.	
13.5	HC stated that many tenants in rent arrears may be not taking up benefits. DS stated that as soon as benefits issues come to light, Housing Benefit advisers do get involved	
13.6	KW requested that the TRA could give out leaflets and advice on paying rent over the Christmas period and where to get support.	
13.7	MR stated that there are problems with the caretakers on the whole estate and walkway, although estate services are arguing there isn't.	
13.8	KW supported this, saying that there were piles of leaves left from sweeping them from 6 <sup>th</sup> November that still haven't been collected, and walkways are not getting swept, but estate services are denying it.	
13.9	DS responded that Estate Services have allegedly been down to the estate to try and clear them up. DS has asked for the report from them evidence, and should get this by the end of the week.	

13.10	MJ asked whether claims for liability could be put in if people are falling over and injuring themselves due to slipping on wet leaves. DS say they potentially could.	
13.11	MR pointed out that on page 41, Birdbrook House is listed under Popham 1 but it should be Popham 2. SF to take this back.	<b>SF</b>
<p><b>14 Central Street Move</b></p>		
14.1	DS distributed the report on the Central Street Area Housing Office move, which is due to take place on the 11 <sup>th</sup> of January. The new office is located next to the old post office in Old Street.	
14.2	DS explained that the new office would be nearer the 56 and number 4 bus routes and would be therefore easier for people from St Peters ward to access.	
14.3	MR feels that the location of the new office is too far away for many elderly residents on Popham estate to get to, and suggested either a pick-up bus or surgery at the community centre once a month or so.	
14.4	DS agreed this may be a good idea if there is a demand for this from the tenants around Popham estate.	
14.5	DS confirmed that there will be services operating over the Christmas period when the area office is shut between the 25 <sup>th</sup> of December and 3 <sup>rd</sup> of January.	
<p><b>15 Any Other Business</b></p>		
<p>There was no other business to discuss.</p>		