

NOTES OF THE CENTRAL STREET AREA HOUSING PANEL

Thursday, 18 September 2008 – Brunswick Estate Meeting Room – 7pm

Present:

Helen Cagnoni (HC)	Greenwood, Wilmington, Farrington TRA (Chair)
Shirley Lefevre (SL)	Pleydell Estate TMO
Terry Lefevre (TL)	Pleydell Estate TMO
Francois Smit (FS)	Margery Street TRA
Joe Trotter (JT)	Peregrine House
Blanche Woodbridge (BW)	King Square TRA
Sharon Hayward (SH)	Finsbury Estate TRA
Frances Sullivan (FS)	King Square TRA
Danny Unstead (DU)	Pleydell Estate TMO
Irene Frances (IF)	St Lukes TRA
Maureen Smith (MS)	Brunswick TMO
Carol O'Neil (CN)	Tompian Estate
Abena Asente (AA)	Housing Environment Coordinator, HFI
Lena Shah (LS)	Projects Team, HFI
Jon Farrant (JF)	Senior Area Housing Manager
David Salenius (DS)	Area Housing Manager, HFI
Miranda Griffith (MG)	Community & Service Development Officer, HFI

1	APOLOGIES	
1.1	Apologies received from: Cllr Jyoti Vaja Dennis Kleinburg Cllr George Allan	
2	PETITION 1: Windows on Gastigney House	
2.1	DS presented the petition which raises concerns about the original decision not to replace windows on Gastigney House.	
2.2	DS referred to the report which states that property services have since been down there and are now saying they will replace the windows. The letter that was sent out to the residents is copied onto the report.	
2.3	Works to replace the windows are due to start in 2009. It probably won't be done at the same time as kitchens and bathrooms. A steering group is being set up to consult with the residents.	
2.4	TL asked whether cradles could be used to replace windows rather than using scaffolding in order to save money. LS will take this back to the projects team to investigate.	LS
	PETITION 2: Recycling issues at Turnpike House	

2.5	DS again presented the petition, which 17 residents had signed the petition to complain about the communal access balconies since recycling. HFI had advised there was not much that could be done to alter this. They've allocated particular recycling to particular chutes – because of that tenants are complaining there are more people using the balconies, so they are getting more disturbance.	
2.6	DS stated that HFI did carry out consultation with residents before designating certain chutes as recycling only, however the head of the petition didn't accept that.	
2.7	DS is due to meet the LBI manager of recycling to discuss whether the method of collection can be changed. If it can be, residents will have to be surveyed to see if they agree to new collection times.	
2.8	Residents from the block explained that the main problem is that people using the recycling chutes are walking past bedroom windows.	
2.9	FS commented that the TRA haven't heard anything about the petition.	
2.10	JT commented that three recycling bins outside Turnpike have been stolen.	
2.11	SH is concerned about fire escape access; fire officers have said they don't need to be open. If residents are concerned about fire access they should ask the fire brigade to go round and measure it up.	
2.12	HC commented that if there is a problem being caused by recycling it should be taken very seriously. DS will feed back information on this to residents at Turnpike House and at the next panel.	DS
3	NOTES OF LAST MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING	
3.1	SH pointed out that under item 3 F that she had asked HFI officers for clarification on future profiling rather than a sustainability assessment, to understand how long materials put in through capital programmes will last as they don't seem to be as good quality as those installed before the works.	
3.2	JF responded that there should be a planned approach rather than a reactive response.	
3.3	JF will take this point to the budget group that he attends once a month and see what is being done about this.	JF
3.4	JF stated that stock should be kept to a good standard by tenants, and that kitchen and bathroom replacements should last for a long time with limited ongoing maintenance costs.	
3.5	TL commented that on Pleydell estate it's already looking tatty after works done fairly recently.	
3.6	IF commented that regarding item 3 Q, that the tiles on her balcony are cracking and the patio dips in the middle. She has been told that it has a 20 year guarantee but would like a written guarantee.	

3.7	JF responded that HFI want to make sure they're getting value for money; if tenants are feeling they have inferior work they will take that up with the relevant contractor.	
3.8	HC suggested that IF should keep a diary of events regarding the tiles on her balcony.	
3.9	SH pointed out that £600 million hasn't been spent on the Decent Homes Programme as quoted in item 3 W. This was accepted to be a typo.	
3.10	JT asked about what was happening about the assisted decoration programme as referred to in item 4 E. DS stated that existing priority lists will be maintained in the areas.	
3.11	HC wanted to make it known that EC1 item had decided to build an adult education centre on the only youth site which is 3 Corners., and all facilities for young people have had to be taken out of there. HC feels that if they wanted to put an adult education building they should have put it on the education site on Middleton playground, which they have now agreed will be flats. HC thinks it's disgraceful that EC1 didn't consult with residents about this.	
3.12	IF asked whether the panel could write and object. Rachel Fairburn from EC1 who was attending the meeting said she will feed back on this and investigate.	
3.13	FS asked about item 16 E regarding the firm who's meant to be monitoring the clamping. It was confirmed that the firm in question is called 'Wings'. DS will chase up David Hutchinson to see what this service is providing.	DS
3.14	SL asked DS to also check why Wings won't remove motorbikes on no parking spaces.	DS
3.15	JT commented that people often put their bikes on landings and stairwells, and are putting brackets up. JF commented that cards should be delivered by HFI staff to tenancies asking them to remove their bikes and also to deal with other problems.	
3.16	FS pointed out that Islington has the highest rate of bike theft in the country, however there's nowhere for people to put their bikes.	
3.17	DS responded that they are looking at a pilot study as to how pram sheds can be converted to store bikes, which would increase security. If enough revenue can be raised from it, it could go ahead. Areas being looked at for the pilot are the Triangle and King Square.	
3.18	SL pointed out that bicycles on landings is a health and safety risk. Satellite dishes are also causing some obstructions.	
3.19	On item 6.2 regarding estate recycling coming from the HRA, HC would like to know what the environment standard is, and whether it should come out of	DS

	the environment budget rather than the HRA. DS will look into this.	
3.20	SH pointed out that there's only one consultation paper which is disappointing, considering the government has asked local authorities to consult with their tenants more. JF will take this point back to HFI.	
3.21	HC pointed out that on page 11 it states that motor and cycle parking will be on estates being on the agenda in November, which it isn't. HC would also like to restate the need for proper figures to be included in plans.	
3.22	JT pointed out that there is no information supplied by National Grid on their works.	
3.23	HC pointed out that there has been an increase of complaints since last year, and would like some figures on this.	
3.24	SH asked that because HFI is part of the Federation of ALMOs, if they support a government paper why weren't residents consulted at meetings such as this. SH would like to know how such decisions get made.	
4	SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY	
	Some items relating to this were discussed in 'matters arising'.	
5	ITEMS CONSIDERED AT BOARD AND SUB-BOARDS	
	These were not discussed.	
6	HFI AND CONSULTATIVE PANEL UPDATE	
	These were not discussed.	
7	FORWARD PLAN	
	This was not discussed.	
8	CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2009/09 MONITORING 1ST QUARTER	
8.1	HC wanted to question the replacement of electrical mains on Greenwood when it was refurbished in 1990, stating that there shouldn't be any laterals. LS will investigate this and feed back.	LS
8.2	IF reported that the date of the contract has passed at St Luke's and major works are still going on despite a completion date of August. There's a walkabout in October. LS will find out when it's due to be completed and feed back.	LS
8.3	IF added that they haven't glossed all of the doors on Newland Court.	
8.4	HC commented that there has been feeling that since project officers have centralised that the quality has gone down.	

8.5	IF feels that the whole of the estate should be able to benefit from compensation. Una has put in a formal complaint to Eamon. HC reasserted the importance to the panel of putting formal complaints in.	
8.6	JF reported that the above points will be looked at as an issue.	
8.7	SL commented that under Contract 19 the central heating is being done and tenants have been told that boilers have to be removed and put in a different position. SL wants to know why they're getting half of the job and their radiators are not being replaced.	DS
8.8	DS will check out whether radiators will have to be replaced.	
8.9	TL has been told that after major works, kitchens might not be put back exactly the same way, and that work can't be refused as the C duct is going to be closed down.	
8.10	LS reported that kitchens will be made good after works, and if they can't a new kitchen would be put in. Surveyors have gone out to each leaseholder property.	
8.11	SH commented that when there was consultation on Contract 42 they were told that in instances where there were people who didn't want work done, the Decent Homes standard says the local authority aren't obliged to carry out works where new tenants have moved in and previous tenants refused works. SH wants to know why some money can't be put aside for new tenants to have such works done. SH was told that works would be done in this instance in consultation meetings.	
8.12	JF responded that there is no money once capital programmes have left the estate. SH commented that if it's about £5000 work per property, it must be a minimum amount to replace those where tenants have moved on. JF will take back the tenants observations and explore it further.	JF
8.13	HC commented that when properties are void they should be brought up to standard.	
8.14	JF responded that unfortunately there isn't the money in the budget to put in a whole new kitchen and bathroom to voids properties.	
8.15	TL asked JF about a woman who died on Pleydell recently who'd spent £5000 on the bathroom, and Kiers came and ripped it all out – why? JF reported that this shouldn't have happened and will investigate the case if TL provides him with the address. DS reported that there is a policy being developed at the moment on what alterations should be taken out of properties.	JF
8.16	JF will take back the panel's observations and the questioning around the policy of replacing. This will be taken to Peter Taunton, the head of Property services. He will be making the decision around the policy around his capital planning programme. JF will feed back at the next meeting or sooner.	JF

8.17	SH will email the minutes from the consultation meeting to JF.	
8.18	SL asks what happens to the money that's not being spent on flats refusing works. JF responded that agreed costs are done once the survey has been done; money left over is put towards another contract.	
8.19	DU reported that on 85 Grayson House there were workmen from the council upgrading the flat, but no one's moved in it. DS reported that someone is due to move in.	
8.20	Individual queries on the tenant compact will be brought up at the Bunhill sub panel.	
8.21	SH asked about capital programme funding allocated last year being carried over to 08/09 and if so, whether it had been carried over as it's not stated on page 21. LS will ask Alistair Gale to look into this and feed back to the panel.	LS
8.22	IF referred to a comment 3 rd paragraph down on page 25 where a further site visit is being arranged by Murphy's and wonders what has held it up. IF wanted to point out that all brass handles have been stolen on Godfrey House. HC asked to find out whether there will be an insurance claim on this. LS will ask Jason Ross on what has been progressed around this.	LS
8.23	HC commented that she was interested to see that water boosters are going into high blocks after complaints from low water pressure households.	
9	CENTRAL STREET PERFORMANCE REPORT – JUNE 2008	
	This item was not discussed.	
10	ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR UPDATE	
	This item was not discussed.	
11	DOG CONTROL ORDERS PUBLIC NOTICES	
11.1	AA gave a brief background to the dog control zones, explaining that the new legislation is that local authorities can authorise dog control zones. It went out for consultation in libraries, town halls, on the website and the press. LBI proposed two borough wide controls; 1) putting dogs on leads and cleaning up dog mess, and 2) creating dog exclusion areas – mainly children's playgrounds and sports grounds.	
11.2	IF pointed out the exclusion zone on St Luke's is only on the playground and there's a big problem with dogs. Some of the notices are inside the building rather than outside. DS pointed out that this sometimes happens if the signs outside keep getting taken down.	
11.3	SH asked whether the list of dog exclusion zones can be added to. AA responded that it can't at the moment. Abena suggested that people look on	

	the LBI website under 'interactive maps' then environment and leisure to show exactly where exclusion zones are, otherwise they can ask AA directly.	
11.4	DU pointed out that in Radnor Green park there are no dogs during the day but there are a lot coming out at night. AA responded that the out of hours team work after 12 some nights and there is one Animal Welfare Officer (not dog warden).	
11.5	The ASB hotline can be used to report irresponsible dog ownership.	
11.6	JT stated that the dog zone signs aren't big enough. JF pointed out that some people will just ignore signs whatever size they are.	
11.7	HC pointed out that when fines start getting dealt out a difference will be seen in improvement.	
12	ANY OTHER BUSINESS	
12.1	MS pointed out that seven people from Mulberry asked if their windows are going to be replaced. MS asked if they need to send in a petition.	
12.2	DS will take this back to projects to investigate, and feed it back.	DS
12.3	TL asked about the steel plate and pole lights that haven't been replaced on Pleydell estate; Ropers went into liquidation so who will pay for it? DS reported that Mike Rees is looking into this – DS will chase this up.	DS
12.4	IF commented that lots of tenants are complaining about having to pay for communal digital TV aerials when it doesn't come into play until 2012. IF understood that Triangle is making an official complaint.	
12.5	HC reported to the panel that she had heard about a new system where digital TV can be gained through existing cables that go into all properties and therefore lessens the need to have to dig into the property, and HFI should stop the programme while they investigate this. HC heard this information at the last ALMO board meeting.	
12.6	DS asked whether anyone would like to sit on the Estate Services Improvement group. It meets bi-monthly in the evening from 6 until 7pm, to improve estate services. Carol O'Neill and Maureen Smith volunteered.	
12.7	FS told the panel that Service Level Agreement's being developed for caretaking staff have been suspended. Abena said that this will be picked up again soon, but there isn't a definite deadline as yet.	
12.8	SH suggested sending the agenda to the TRAs and they email their suggestions.	
12.9	CN asked about the shops on the Triangle where there was meant to be a café but its now a motorbike shop, who are allowing motorbikes to park out the back. One man from the shop is also doing MOT's on Cyrus street. DS will ask Jan Cross to investigate this and feed information back.	

13	DATE OF NEXT MEETING: 13 TH NOVEMBER	
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