

# NOTES OF THE CENTRAL STREET AREA HOUSING PANEL

Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> July, Tompion Community Centre – 7pm

## Present:

Blanche Woodridge (BW)	King Square TRA
Irene Francis (IF)	St Lukes TRA
Barbara Coventry (BC)	Popham Estate TRA
Dennis Kleinburg (DK)	Whitbread Estate TRA
Terry Leferve (TL)	Pleydell TMO
Shirley Leferve (SL)	Pleydell TMO
Martin Rutherford (MR)	Popham Estate TRA
Francois Smit (FS)	Margery Street TRA
Liz Smithson (LZ)	King Square TRA
Elaine Smalley (ES)	Lagonier House TRA
Danny Unstead (DU)	Pleydell TRA
Gary Bates (GB)	Head of Services (Operations), HFI
Veronica Stephens (VS)	Consultation Officer, HFI
Catherine Curzon (CC)	Consultation Officer, HFI
David Salenius (DS)	Central Street Area Housing Manager, HFI
Miranda Griffith (MG)	Community & Service Development Officer, HFI

<b>1</b>	<b>APOLOGIES</b>	
1.1	<b>Apologies received from:</b> Troy Gallagher Adrian Hall Ian Merriman	
<b>2</b>	<b>ACTIONS FROM LAST MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING</b>	
2.1	DS reported that regarding item 10.8 he had done some research and had it confirmed that Islington Council don't have a responsibility of ensuring there is a good mix of people on the estate, only of ensuring that people on the priority list are housed.	<b>DS/PR</b>
2.2	MR commented that problems are still occurring with regards to the caretaking on Terling Walk. MR reported that QAO's have said after inspection that the walkways are clean, but when MR has checked the walkway afterwards it is still dirty. Terling Walk and Barnston Walk are particular concerns. DS will take this back to PR to confirm what is happening there.	
2.3	DS reported that under item 12.1, David Rawlings has agreed that the damage to the gate at Greenwood House was ICSSL's fault and that they will pay for it.	
<b>3</b>	<b>FEEDBACK FROM MAY 2009 CONSULTATION ITEMS</b>	

3.1	GB introduced himself to the panel as Head of Services (Operations) for two of the Area Housing Offices in the north of the borough. He is stepping in for Jon Farrant tonight.	
3.2	There were no comments on this paper.	
<b>4</b>	<b>CLIMATE CHANGE BRIEFING</b>	
4.1	GB summarised the report which was for consultation and invited comments and questions.	
4.2	DK questioned whether insulation works could be done at the same time as other works that require scaffolding, such as digital cabling, to enable cost effectiveness.	
4.3	GB agreed that the ideal for lots of work to be carried out when scaffolding is up, but it isn't always the case that funding is streamed at the same time etc and it can't always work out like this.	
4.4	DK would like some documentary evidence from Property Services that there is insulation in the property; he has been told there is but can see no evidence of it. DS will request this from Peter Taunton.	<b>DS</b>
4.5	LS asked how blocks get insulation. DS will check if King Square is on the list of those getting insulated in the future.	<b>DS</b>
4.6	ES reported that Lagonier House TRA was told they have to request insulation at the Energy Centre if they want it. DS will ask Mike Reese about this.	<b>MR</b>
4.7	FS commented that his block was recently insulated; however they'd missed some areas of the blocks and didn't return to complete them.	
4.8	BC asked whether tenants can put themselves forward for requesting insulation. GB reported it wouldn't be down to individual tenants, the decision will be a result of prioritisation.	
4.10	BW commented that the turbine on Kestrel House hasn't been working for five weeks. GB reported it will be working in early August according to LBI reports.	<b>DS</b>
4.11	IF asked whether this scheme is going to cost a lot of money for leaseholders. DS will feed back on this.	
4.12	GB pointed out that all residents will be written to so they can express their views before works are started.	
4.13	MR reported that there was no consultation about boiler replacements. This will be fed back to the projects team.	
<b>5</b>	<b>REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE RE-PROCUREMENT</b>	

- 5.1 GB explained what the synopsis of the report was.
- Item 6:
- 5.2 GB clarified on item 6 that at the moment HFI does not do inside decorations and several interior services. The question is whether there should be more repairs offered, and if so what should the scope of these should be.
- 5.3 LS feels that if it was Kiers carrying out the extra repairs it shouldn't happen due to the on-costs.
- 5.4 TL feels that as a TMO they do a lot of interior jobs. GB referred to the tenant's handbook which spells out what tenants should do and what the TMO should do.
- 5.5 ES feels it is important that whoever is called for a job, it should be made sure that they have the right skills.
- 5.6 FS feels that a lot of tenant's homes are in disrepair because they can't afford repairs. FS asked whether the tenants who can't afford some of the schemes could pay the Council to carry them through some kind of payback scheme, e.g. from rent over a year.
- 5.7 GB commented this could probably only happen if an item is rechargeable. This idea point will be fed back.
- 5.8 ES commented that the stacks have been cleaned at Lagonier House recently, but what they were told was that many problems are from the internal plumbing due to various street plumbers doing the jobs. A central repairs service could prevent these kinds of problems.
- 5.9 FS feels the tone of this report indicates that HFI isn't keen on this kind of scheme due to the cost. FS would like some clarification on why HFI feels it's going to cost so much.
- Item 7:
- 5.10 FS commented on the delay it takes to fit security doors once broken. The response time should be 24 hours rather than days.
- 5.11 LS commented that the system being suggested now is it was before the 18 current different response times.
- 5.12 UH commented that the state of homes is also the tenant's responsibility, and insurance should cover many of these things, particularly flooding. UH feels that LBI insurance should be pushed to encourage people to take it out. Several tenants agreed that insurance could be an item added on to service charges automatically, on a voluntary opts out basis.
- 5.13 JV commented on 7.2 response times for urgent repairs. There is no mention of response times for follow ups which should be stated on the report.
- 5.14 JV commented that the report has no explicit reference to communal repairs, which should have been included.

5.15	Item 8: FS feels that there needs to be more detail on how the quality upgrades would work in practise.	
5.16	<b>MR commented on the use of plastic trunking, and asked when can conduits not be used, and is it cost effective. MG to refer to Peter Taunton.</b>	<b>PT</b>
5.17	Appendix 2: MR commented that a problem is that contractors often can't speak English and they speak their own language to one another about the jobs, which can concern residents. UH suggested bringing it up at a steering group meeting.	
5.18	ES requested that contractors put a calling card through the door if they has visited and no one is in.	
5.19	PM commented that if contractors cause damage they must compensate for it.	
<b>6</b>	<b>SUPPORTING TENANTS AND RESIDENTS ASSOCIATIONS</b>	
6.1	Item 3.1 JV felt it was important to ensure that TMO's are included in the offers of extra support given by CSDO's and walkabouts with the Area Housing Manager.	
6.2	JV feels that HFI should offer more training opportunities to TRA's.	
6.3	BC commented that she came to a housing panel last year and housing panels networking session was mentioned, but hasn't heard anything since.	
6.4	FS asked whether there is information on how to set up a new TRA. MG commented that there is a TRA induction pack that is distributed to developing TRA's. Anyone who would like a copy of this for their TRA, please request one from Miranda.	
6.5	FS commented that he would like to see a strategy paper on how new TRA's are being developed and encouraged to get up and running on estates where there are currently no TRA's.	
6.6	FS commented that the only support TRA's now have is one person in the whole office (the CSDO), and supporting TRA's are clearly only one small part of what they're expected to do in their role.	
6.7	BC suggested that Simon James, head of Service Development, could come to one of the meetings to talk about how HFI encourages new TRA's to start within the area.	
<b>7</b>	<b>COMPLAINTS MONITORING OCTOBER 2008 – MARCH 2009</b>	
7.1	GB explained how the stages of complaints worked, from stages 1 to 3 up to	

	the housing ombudsman.	
7.2	JV asked why the breakdown on Stage 3 complaints and those escalated to the Housing Ombudsmen wasn't also listed on the breakdown.	
<b>8</b>	<b>CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2009/09 MONITORING QUARTER 4</b>	
8.1	IF asked about item 1 that indicates that Gambier and St Lukes are having works with £5000 assigned to it– DS reported this is a typo and they are not related, this amount is for Gambier only.	
8.2	BC requested that the Capital Programmes team separates out the updates into individual wards so its easier to find specific estates. This will be fed back to AS.	
8.3	TL reported that all the bad paving round Pleydell has now been marked with yellow markings.	
8.4	CC from the projects team introduced herself to the panel as a new Consultation Officer. FS commented that it's a shame that MPH moved on as he found that he was very effective and always got things done.	
8.5	DK commented on page 41 on the metal grid put on the barriers on Whitbread has been going on for two years now. CC with update DK on progress with this.	<b>CC</b>
8.6	IF asked about the barrier around the grassed area on St Lukes and if there had been any progress on this; MPH had originally been dealing with this. CC to feed back on the progress.	<b>CC</b>
8.7	BC asked about the item on page 4 regarding St Peters resurfacing of the play area only being £1400 which seems very cheap. DS reported that it looks like that was the original estimate but it wasn't completed for some reason.	
8.8	TL reported that ISHA still haven't done the pole lights on Pleydell. DS reported that he had talked to the Chief Executive about that, but he will chase.	<b>DS</b>
8.9	TL also reported that the hole opposite Galway Street is still there, which is causing a danger. KD has raised a job with Jomax but there has been no more progress on this. DS will get KD to chase Jomax on this.	<b>DS/KD</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>HOMES FOR ISLINGTON CONSULTATIVE PANEL UPDATE</b>	
9.1	FS asked how many days off HFI staff get for the voluntary work scheme. GB reported that it's only 2 days a year per member of staff if they request it.	
<b>10</b>	<b>FORWARD PLAN</b>	
	No comments were made on this paper.	

<b>11</b>	<b>CENTRAL STREET PERFORMANCE REPORT – MAY 2009</b>	
11.1	DS explained that Central Street has come 2 <sup>nd</sup> in terms of overall performance in the year to date of all Area Housing Office's.	
11.2	DS explained that there were 100 cases of ASB at the moment which is the highest in the borough. There are high levels of satisfaction on how they're dealt with, with satisfaction ratings of over 80% across the borough.	
11.3	In May Central Street had the lowest level of arrears and lowest average debt in the whole of the borough.	
11.4	Regarding care taking standards there was 96% in standard ratings in May, which is over the 93% target.	
11.5	Void ratings are relatively good but could be better.	
11.6	LS asked whether estates with active TRA's and TMO's would attract more complaints about ASB; i.e. whether those that have that confidence with engagement know better on how to report issues.	
11.7	LS also asked whether caretakers are told about inspections in advance. DS reported that there are two inspections, one of which HFI are not told about; these happen once a year.	
11.8	FS feels that before the fortnightly inspections attract a clean up before the inspections. QAO's should be out on estates most of the time.	
11.9	GB commented out that independent inspections go to a small sample of estates at any given time but have very strict markings. No forward notice is given to caretakers when these take place.	
11.10	IF asked how independent an independent inspector is, as there are constantly complaints that the blocks are filthy. GB reported that the inspectors works for HFI but he will not change his assessments on officers appeals apart from extremely rarely.	
11.11	FS feels that the standards given are not reflected in the tenant's perceptions. GB commented that the external auditors gave a result of a high standard of cleanliness with not much graffiti.	
11.12	DK pointed out that every meeting brings discussions of caretaking. TRA's want good standards, and the only way they feel they should have it is to have a service level agreement which has still not been progressed.	
11.13	GB suggested that a provisional SLA could be set up now while the measurement exercise is being confirmed. Measurements for these are being done for each estate across the borough, which is a lengthy process. There hadn't been measurements done for 20 odd years, and much can change within this time.	
11.14	IF has a list of caretaking duties are in all notice boards, which she feels	

	aren't currently being adhered to.	
11.15	FS wants the caretakers to sign off what they've done that day. GB commented that this kind of thing does happen elsewhere. Frequencies and timings can be displayed on estates which provide some guidance. However, there are instances whereby they could often sign off areas that they haven't done.	
11.16	UH pointed out that residents also have to take some responsibility of cleanliness of blocks, as caretakers can clean where tenants can mess it up literally minutes later.	
11.17	IF asked about the Estate Services Efficiency Review report that Cllr Gary Doolan had told tenants they could view. GB commented that this report was in draft stage, and that recommendations for the report and consultation around how caretaking could take place had come to the panel in a previous report.	
11.18	MR commented that the information on posters offering visits to residents that are on display in the Central Street Area Housing Office should be publicised more.	
<b>12</b>	<b>Any Other Business:</b>  No comments.	
<b>13</b>	<b>Date of next Meeting: 16<sup>th</sup> September</b>	