

<b>Boleyn Road Area Housing Panel Minutes 19/01/06</b>		
	<p><b>Present:</b> Lorna Reid - Chair            Eamon McGoldrick – Chief Executive            Pritpal Chhoker – Boleyn Road Area Housing Manager            Peter Rushbrook - Estate Services Team Leader            Jenny Greenfield - Area Programme Manager            Jessie White - Hawthorne Close TRA            Karen Farragher – Park View TRA            Carol Johnson - Burder Close &amp; Boleyn Road TRA            Margaret Johns - Kerridge Court TRA            Shingi Njopera - Athenaeum Court TRA            Mrs Maura Lea - 1 in a 1000 rep            Terry Oliver - Groundwork Camden &amp; Islington            Councillor Terry Stacy            Lee Farrow – Performance &amp; Partnership Officer</p> <p><b>Apologies:</b> Alan Woolley - Mayville TRA            Pat Krouse - Hathersage Court TRA            Veronica Jones - Newington Green Mansions TRA            Anne Humphries - Aberdeen Park &amp; Fieldview Court TRA</p>	
<b>Item</b>		<b>Action</b>
1	<p><b>Introductions</b></p> <p><b>Chair</b> welcomed all attendees and noted a change in the agenda, with the tenant compact / local report moving to item 3.</p>	
2	<p><b>Groundwork presentation - Terry Oliver, Community Manager</b></p> <p><b>Chair</b> welcomed and introduced Terry Oliver from Groundwork.</p> <p><b>Terry Oliver (TO)</b> acknowledged that the majority of the panel was aware of Groundwork and their status as an environmental regeneration charity. Their mission is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Improve the environment</li> <li>▪ Help strengthen communities</li> <li>▪ Build confidence</li> <li>▪ Offer the chance for people to learn new skills to bring about neighbourhood renewal</li> </ul> <p>It was noted that some successful projects have taken place in the Mildmay area and more opportunities were available for TRA's to be involved in other improvement projects. It was noted that there is the possibility of a playground project at Highbury Quadrant, for which Groundwork were willing to under go feasibility studies.</p>	

	<p><i>Questions</i></p> <p><b>Jessie White (JW)</b> enquired as to why the costings provided by Groundwork are so high. It was also noted that works carried out at Hathersage Court have been heavily criticised and that playground equipment in St Jude's Street is, in part, not being maintained.</p> <p><b>TO</b> suggested that the costings can appear to be high, but explained that they use the landscaping institute sliding scale and as such are substantially cheaper than other landscape architects.</p> <p><b>Cllr Terry Stacy (CTS)</b> noted that Greenspace maintains St Jude's playground. He also asked that any works carried out at Highbury Quadrant have the full support of residents and to liaise with the TRA. He suggested the East Area Committee may be able to assist.</p> <p><b>JW</b> asked if the East Area Committee meetings could be re-sited as they are too far away.</p> <p><b>CTS</b> agreed to look into this with a view to bringing them back to Highbury Grove school.</p> <p><b>Maura Lea (ML)</b> asked if there will be a replacement Greenspace Ranger put in place for Newington Green.</p> <p><b>CTS</b> suggested LF could check this with Bob Gilbert (Assistant Director Greenspace &amp; Leisure).</p> <p><b>Chair</b> asked if there were any other potential schemes in the area.</p> <p><b>Carol Johnson (CJ)</b> noted the murals at Burder Close - which look very good and that the children are pleased with the result.</p> <p><b>TO</b> asked the panel to consider any other schemes that could involve Groundwork with a view to tying in with the 2006/07 tenant compact.</p> <p><b>Chair</b> thanked TO for attending the meeting.</p>	LF
3	<p><b>Minutes of last meeting - matters arising</b></p> <p><b>JW</b>, with reference to the King Henry's Walk drug abuse facility, explained that a meeting is being arranged for 30<sup>th</sup> January 06 at Mayville Community Centre.</p> <p><b>CTS</b> noted that he had visited the management team at the facility, was very impressed and that they were keen to open the facility for residents to view.</p> <p><b>Peter Rushbrook (PR)</b> noted that he checked the signage on Burder Close and it is the same size as the other two (where CJ had previously thought on was smaller).</p> <p><b>CJ</b> requested another sign on the estate.</p> <p><b>PR</b> explained that the first phase of the signage project concentrated on replacing existing signs and those that had been vandalised. This year, the second phase will review block signage and fit new signs where necessary.</p> <p><b>Shingi Njopera (SN)</b> noted that lights on Athenaeum Court are now working perfectly</p>	

	<p><b>Chair</b> requested a sign telling people where 60 Highbury New Park is - it is difficult to find and people frequently get lost.</p> <p><b>Eamon McGoldrick (EM)</b> noted that he would look into this.</p> <p><b>Chair</b> noted that the panel had nominated Alan Woolley (AW) as the representative for the tenants compact meeting. AW is unable to attend and requested that another volunteer to step in. No volunteers - LF to call around those panel members that are absent.</p> <p>Also enquired re the rumoured possibility of the disposal of the caretakers room at Highbury school. LF to remind CTS to look into this.</p> <p><b>CJ</b> noted that there are still issues with access at Burder Close and therefore progressing internal decorations.</p> <p><b>Pritpal Chhoker (PC)</b> noted that there are 4 or 5 properties still refusing access. They have been written to 3 times to help in building a case for legal team. Injunctions should shortly be obtained and things should then move very quickly.</p> <p>Minutes agreed</p>	<p><b>EM</b></p> <p><b>LF</b></p> <p><b>LF/CTS</b></p>
4	<p><b>Rents 2006/07</b></p> <p><b>EM</b> noted the main points of the report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- estimated average actual rent will increase by £3.45 per week or 4.9% (from £70.47 to £73.92)</li> <li>- majority (74%) of tenants are in receipt of housing benefit - any increases should have a manageable impact on the household budget</li> </ul> <p><b>JW</b> noted that, as a panel, rent increases have never been agreed.</p> <p><b>Chair</b> noted that concierge, heating &amp; hot water etc. goes up in relatively small amounts, but those in receipt of benefits are still liable to pay this, so the poorest people seem to suffer as a result.</p> <p><b>EM</b> acknowledged that such charges are outside the benefits system.</p> <p><b>JW</b> felt that leaseholders were being asked to pay double for services that tenants also receive (for concierge services for example).</p> <p><b>Chair</b> noted the slow move, via rental value assessments, to matching RSL rents.</p> <p><b>EM</b> noted that there is an overall effort to harmonise the two rents. Both are moving toward RSL's, but also reflect geographical and property values.</p> <p><b>KF</b> enquired as to why the values are different in different parts of the borough.</p> <p><b>EM</b> explained that there are government rules that dictate that all local authorities pitch their rents against RSL's. This is done around property values and income levels and caps that are tied into market values. Much of the freedom to set rents has been taken away from local authorities.</p> <p><b>Chair</b> expressed a need for more information in the reports, particularly when the panel is being asked for a view.</p>	

	<p><b>EM</b> to feedback to LBI.</p> <p><b>Chair</b> put the rent increase to a vote:</p> <p>7 against 0 for 0 abstentions</p>	
5	<p><b>Local Area Agreements (LAAs)</b></p> <p>For information</p> <p><b>EM</b> explained that the report concerned partner organisations e.g. the police, fire service etc coming together to agree set targets. There will be incentives for achieving these targets. A follow-up report published in April will provide more detail around the agreed targets.</p> <p><b>Chair</b> enquired as to whether there was any consultation.</p> <p><b>EM</b> noted that there were a number of sessions with the partners where there were direct service users, though they may have been representing partner organisations.</p>	
6	<p><b>Decision Items Considered at Board and Sub-Boards</b></p> <p>For information</p> <p><b>JW</b> noted a correction - JW is Chair of the Managed Property Sub Board (not acting Chair).</p>	
7	<p><b>Homes for Islington Update</b></p> <p>For information</p> <p><b>EM</b> noted recently completed decent homes projects (16 flats at 29-47 Highbury Grove).</p> <p><b>JW</b> noted the poor condition of these properties prior to the work being carried out.</p> <p><b>KF</b> asked for clarification around the policy for selling off housing stock in a poor condition.</p> <p><b>EM</b> explained that this case pre-dated the ALMO funds. In this case, there were not enough capital programme funds available to deal with these properties. With ALMO funding in place, improvements can be delivered without selling off stock.</p> <p><b>KF</b> asked why houses at Park View were sold off as they were seemingly not in poor condition.</p> <p><b>CTS</b> confirmed that there had been an error regarding the land sale.</p> <p><b>EM</b> noted that the houses may have looked OK, but would likely have cost a huge sum of money to put right. It was noted that there is a need to balance what could be done with monies gained from selling some properties against the cost of keeping them. In this case, receipts were ring-fenced solely for regeneration schemes.</p>	

8	<p><b>Local Area Consultative Panels Tenants Compact and Estate Security 2006/07</b></p> <p><b>EM</b> requested that panels aim to allocate funds for the 2006/07 tenant compact by February 06. If funds are not allocated by June 06, they may be diverted elsewhere.</p> <p><b>CTS</b> noted that Birchmore Hall (Highbury Quadrant) acts as a polling station and the paving around the hall is dangerous. Requested that any agreed works be carried out before elections in May 06.</p> <p><b>Chair</b> proposed that the panel agree a date for a special meeting to discuss allocation of tenant compact funds for 2006/07.</p> <p>Meeting agreed: <b>Tuesday 21.02.06 at Boleyn Road area housing office from 7pm</b></p>	
9	<p><b>Leaseholder Association Recognition</b></p> <p><b>EM</b> noted 2 kinds of leaseholder associations (LAs):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Statutory recognised LAs (recognised for a 4 year period)</li> <li>- LAs recognised by Homes for Islington</li> </ul> <p>The way forward:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- HFI will continue to support applications for statutory recognised leaseholder associations</li> <li>- HFI to recognise LAs where there is not an existing recognised TRA and on the condition that they adopt model constitution, hold prompt AGMs. LAs recognised by HFI have no seat on the housing panel but could sit on the Islington Leaseholder Forum</li> <li>- Leaseholder Major Works Steering Groups - HFI could advise leaseholders of this option at the first public meeting. Liase with steering groups throughout major works <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- upon completion of works, steering groups would be closed down.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>JW</b> noted that if there was just an LA in a given area, tenants would not 'get a say'.</p> <p><b>Chair</b> noted concern that leaseholders could 'take over' a TRA.</p> <p><b>EM</b> acknowledged that it may, in future, become more difficult to maintain the leaseholder / tenant balance due to the growth in the number of leaseholders.</p> <p><b>Chair</b> enquired as to the existence of a leaseholder 'legal action group'.</p> <p><b>EM</b> noted a PFI leaseholder action group - specifically around street properties.</p> <p><b>Chair</b> asked the panel to vote on the report.</p> <p>4 supported the recommendations  0 were against the recommendations  3 abstentions</p>	
10	<p><b>Diversity Monitoring</b></p> <p>For information</p>	

<p>11</p>	<p><b>Review of Complaints</b></p> <p>For information</p> <p><b>EM</b> noted that similar reports will be made available to panels every six months with a view to illustrating where HFI is using complaints to improve service delivery.</p> <p><b>Chair</b> noted a case where an elderly tenant on Grosvenor Avenue was not decanted despite major works being carried out. The tenant was sleeping on a reclining chair for six weeks. A washing machine plumbed in caused a leak over the Christmas period and the tenant was incorrectly advised about the cause. Works are continuing and the tenant's situation remains the same.</p> <p><b>EM</b> agreed to take this up - Chair to pass on the details.</p>	<p><b>EM / LR</b></p>
<p>12</p>	<p><b>Boleyn Road Area Office Report</b></p> <p>For information</p> <p><i>Tenants Compact 2004/05</i></p> <p><b>PR</b> noted the availability of extra funding, which lead to some schemes being withdrawn from the compact. The panel is asked to consider schemes highlighted with a view to finalising 2004/05 tenants compact (Lexfield House car park, Athenaeum Court lighting upgrade, Highbury New Park lighting, Seaforth Crescent lighting, Highbury Quad paving works).</p> <p>Panel agreed schemes</p>	
<p>13</p>	<p><b>Any Other Business</b></p> <p><b>Chair</b> noted an article that appeared in the Islington Gazette and the Tribune. The article alleged that resident's of Highbury Estate 'fear for their safety' due to poor lighting. Asserted that Highbury Estate is not 'shrouded in darkness' and that the TRA had received no such complaints.</p> <p><b>CTS</b> noted another article regarding Birchmore Walk that was factually incorrect.</p> <p><b>JW</b> showed the panel a 'welcome pack' available to new tenants upon moving in. The pack contains light bulbs, bin bags, cleaning products etc. and is supplied by Kier Islington.</p> <p><b>PR</b> provided further clarification around lighting audits carried out on Highbury Quadrant - noted that the 25 lights out on the estate (of approximately 700) amounts to around 3%.</p> <p><b>Chair</b> asked what the response time was for lighting repairs.</p> <p><b>PR</b> noted that they are treated as an emergency and that caretakers carry out immediate repairs wherever possible.</p> <p><b>KF</b> noted that £10k was given over to tree pruning in the tenants compact and asked for an update.</p>	

**PR** noted a recent meeting with Greenspace where he requested a full list of works carried out. Similarly, quotes are being sought to carry out pigeon proofing. The £5k put aside for signage - a special sign for Aberdeen Park, no ball games, no dogs, no dumping and no feeding pigeons have all been ordered. Confirmed that a no ball games sign would be allocated to Kerridge Court.

**JW** requested that letters be sent to all residents of Mildmay Street to discourage the feeding of pigeons.

**Date of next meeting - 9<sup>th</sup> March 2006**