

NORWOOD AREA FORUM

MINUTES

NORWOOD AREA HOUSING FORUM

Date: 1 February 2006

Time: 7.00pm

Venue: The Old Library, Knights Hill, West Norwood SE27

Present:

Tenants & Residents

Ray Farrow (Chair)
Jean Haley (co-Chair)
Susan deSwarte
Reg deSwarte
Amanda Dunne
Glen Falconer
Patrick Gomollon
Alex Dabbs
Belinda Mollross
Rod Brown
Lesley Dillon
Albert Jones
Jean Vallotton
Paula Howell
Jenny Forster
Chris Owen
Brenda Hoare
Chris Allery
Cathy Butler
Theresa Fraser
Eileen Titchener
Idham Ramadi
Alf Smith
Joyce Bird

Holderness TRA
Central Hill TRA
Mount Pleasant TRA
Mount Pleasant TRA
Windsor Close
Dunbar St
York Hill TRA
Deronda Estate
Vincennes Estate
Rosendale Estate
Vincennes Estate
Vincennes Estate
Fern Lodge TRA
Central Hill TRA
Bloomfield TRA
Bloomfield TRA
Bloomfield TRA
Cheviot Gardens TRA
Bloomfield TRA
Hainthorpe Estate
Deronda Estate
Rosendale TRA
Portobello Estate
Portobello Estate

Councillors

Councillor Robert McConnell
Councillor Jeremy Baker
Councillor Irene Kimm
Councillor Janet Grigg

Knight's Hill Ward
Knights Hill Ward
Thurlow Park Ward
Gipsy Hill Ward

Guest Speaker

Amanda Adams

Lambeth Play Association

Norwood Housing

Jackie Thomas
Bayo Igoh
Adelle Pobee
Maggie Mapes
Joanne Hall
Babatunde Dawodu
Ian Phillips

Area Housing Manager
Area Operations Manager
Executive Support Officer (Minutes)
Estate Services Manager
Resident Participation Officer
Principal Building Surveyor
Senior Programme Manager

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Tim Poole
Venetia Bailey

Gas Servicing
Housing Officer

1. Chair's welcome

- 1.1 The Chair, Ray Farrow, welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Apologies

- 2.1 Apologies were received from:-

Councillor Geraldine Evans – Knights Hill Ward
Councillor A'Court - Gipsy Hill Ward
Councillor Gareth Compton – Gipsy Hill Ward
Councillor Clare Whelan - Thurlow Park Ward
Councillor John Whelan Thurlow Park Ward

Mr Bellman – Hope Park
C Williams - Berridge Estate
Sophia Davis - York Hill TRA
Christine Banya -Hainthorpe Estate
Clover Williams - Dunelm Grove
H.D Walton - Central Hill
Freda Walton - Central Hill
Mrs Margaret Wrigley - Vicars Oak Road
Daphne Altamore- Bloomfield TRA
Ann Hazell - Central Hill TRA
David Green -Berridge Road Estate
Doreen Niblett - Bentons Lane TRA
Dr Sobowale - Bentons Lane Estate

3. Matters Arising from the meeting held on the 30 November 2005

- 3.1 Point 7.1 Schedule has not been received for the refuse collection.
- 3.2 Point 7.6 – The rubbish is swept at least once a week.
- 3.3 Fern Lodge – Two wardens have not been in uniform and they have had no visible identity.
- 3.4 Overhanging hedges about other residents who are not taking proper care of their properties.
- 3.5 Point 11.1 – Vincennes Estate would like to thank Bayo Igoh for getting lighting work completed.
- ### 3.6 Lambeth Play Association – Amanda Adams
- 3.7 The main aim of Lambeth Play Association is to make Lambeth a better place to play for children and young people. Given this task to achieve this across Lambeth is a team of seven staff. In Norwood, Lambeth Play Association has been working at the Hainthorpe Estate Meadows.
- 3.8 Lambeth Play Association also work with organisations who want to support children. They are involved in a number of activities, including fundraising. Free training is available for anybody who lives in the Lambeth area and for those who aspire to becoming youth workers or working with children.
- 3.9 Fern Lodge TRA – wanted to find out how the Lambeth Play Association could be contacted. Lambeth Play – Yes and this will be distributed at the end of the session.

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- 3.10 Central Hill TRA – expressed the view that lots of events organised for youth in the Norwood area are based in the Old Library and the information is not passed to people in the Upper Norwood area. Upper Norwood area is often excluded from these activities.

ACTION: Upper Norwood youth would also be considered for these activities.

- 3.11 Rosendale TRA – What suggestions does Lambeth Play have on involving the youths in their Tenant and Residents' Association?
- 3.12 Lambeth Play – the youths need to be incentivised for participation. Amanda will take details of this TRA member.
- 3.13 Bloomhall TRA – Upper Norwood youths have been promised many things and yet they have still been excluded from many things.
- 3.14 Lambeth Play – can assist in terms of fundraising to raise money.
- 3.15 Theresa Frazer – Would it be possible to use the TRA grant to raise money with Lambeth Play Association?
- 3.16 Resident Participation Officer (RPO) – No. However, it is possible that you could work with Lambeth Play in-order to get additional funding.
- 3.17 **Gas Servicing – Tim Poole (Team Leader)**
- 3.18 Cllr McConnell –raised the issue about the length of waiting time for a response from this department as an important issue. Cllr McConnell enquired about how long a customer should wait for a response when they have reported problems with their heating and hot water.
- 3.19 Tim Poole (TP) – explained that the initial response time is 24hours. They work with contractors to ensure that vans carry enough parts to enable them to fix a job the first time. In some cases it may take up-to 48 or 78 hours, but he has not been aware of any particular cases which may have taken longer.
- 3.20 Cllr McConnell – referred to a particular case where an elderly person went to bed for 5 days without any heating or hot water. In a case like this, is compensation payable?
- 3.21 Central TRA – Co- chair Jean Haley expressed disappointment with British Gas for not attending the Norwood Area Forum. For 3 months at previous meetings Dave Sandford has promised to bring British Gas Call-Centre Manager to a meeting with residents, but this has not taken place. Thirdly, the length of time it takes for compensation to be processed is lengthy. British Gas, in her opinion is letting them down.
- 3.22 Deronda TRA – Does the council have any idea on the life expectancy for communal convention boilers?
- 3.23 Tim Poole – There are still old boilers. The condensing boilers have about a 10-year expectancy life. There have been issues with these and it is a manufacturing problem. TP explained they are still experiencing problems but they are focussing on insulation requirements and ensuring they comply.
- 3.24 Cheviot Gardens TRA – For frail elderly tenants, automatic compensation should be made available.
- 3.25 Tim Poole – For missed appointments, compensation is available. TP understands that this needs to be made more accessible to all tenants.

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- 3.26 Bloomhall TRA – Insulation was installed after 3 weeks. Another neighbour has still not received this installation. Her insulation issue was reported last year and it was only 3 weeks ago that the work has completed. Compensation should be granted.
- 3.27 Central Hill TRA – British Gas should supply a heater if heaters break down – however, tenants are not aware of this fact.
- 3.28 Tim Poole – New service standards packs are now completed which state the expectations for the service-users.
- 3.29 Jean Haley – Enquired about where these packs are kept, as she would like a copy.
- 3.30 ACTION: Tim Poole to find out as these packs should have already been dispatched.**
- 3.31 Portobello Estate – explained that when his heater broke down, within 30minutes a British Gas van had pulled up to his address and provided with a new heater.
- 3.32 Mount Pleasant TRA – There seems to be a lack of communication between Gas Servicing and British Gas departments. SDS has called for this message to be taken up to Tom Bremner (Head of Housing Management Services) and Housing Property Services – and would like a reason why there are different levels of service.
- 3.33 Service Improvement Group Meeting - Jean Haley Feedback**
- 3.34 Jean Haley informed the Forum about the decision made at the meeting that there would be no increase on garages until the audit has been agreed.
- 3.35 In terms of rent – no control.
- 3.36 Service charge – Agreed that it would not go up more than inflation.
- 3.37 Tenancy Checks – will be done to check if there are any vulnerable tenants not already flagged up. Condition of property survey – suitability, tenancy responsibilities highlighted rents, rubbish etc. A scheme due to be set up so that people from B&B will do tenancy checks and not the HO of that patch.
- 3.38 Maggie Mapes – Handyperson Update**
- 3.39 Handyperson repairs will not affect regular repairs. Caretakers have been on various courses including plumbing to assist them in this role.
- 3.40 The Local Services Team Manager will assign jobs to the caretakers.
- 3.41 Vincennes TRA - Caretakers are now getting extra jobs. However on their estate it has taken three months for them to get lights completed. What will happen to their regular jobs if they have so much to do?
- 3.42 MM – Caretakers' ordinary day-to day checks will still continue.
- 3.43 Vincennes TRA – A tenant had had a flood in his property, but was told they could not enter his property.
- 3.44 JT informed the forum that if there is a major flood, under the tenancy agreement, the Council has a right to force entry into a property.
- 3.45 Bloomhall TRA – raised the point that when a forced entry has taken place in these instances, tenants should be responsible for this.
- 3.46 JT – Not aware of this.

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- 3.47 Alf Smith –said that when a repair was required at his property, the Caretaker Handyperson showed up right away and completed the repair at his property and he was satisfied with the work done.
- 3.48 Jean Haley – informed the forum that she had had raised the issue of caretakers/ handyperson role at the Tenants Council meeting and requested to have in writing what training caretakers have had and which duties come first.
- 3.49 MM – Caretakers on duty will carry out jobs. If there are staff shortages, this will be suspended.
- 3.50 Cllr Grigg – Disabled people’s needs need to be taken into account when caretakers/handyperson carry out their duties.
- 3.51 Susan de Swarte – explained that if there are specific requirements for repairs in disabled people’s homes, Aids & Adaptations could look into these.
- 3.52 Babatunde Dawodu – informed the Forum that HPS have taken on management of repairs and existing repairs for specific disabled people units.
- 3.53 Performance information was presented to the Forum. JT went through each of the performance areas, and explained to the forum the Norwood Area’s performance for quarter 3 October- December 2005.

3.54 AOB

- 3.55 JH informed the Forum that Chairs and Vice Chairs will get a PIN number to use when making calls to the caller centre, especially when they calling on behalf of other people.
- 3.56 Rosendale TRA – Leak of water by the side of Eagle Court has been reported in the past. However, this water is still there. In addition, there is children’s playground, which is boarded up as well as tyres that are being dumped near Heron Court.

ACTION: LSTM to check this.

- 3.57 JT – Water issue should have been dealt with.
- 3.58 Mount Pleasant TRA - Awaiting walkabout information.

ACTION: HO to provide walkabout information.

- 3.59 Vincennes TRA – acknowledges that Cleanaway is doing well on their estate.

8.0 Date of next meeting(s)

- 27 April 2006 – The Central Hill Day Centre
- 31st May 2006 - The Central Hill Day Centre
- 26th July 2006 - The Old Library
- 27th September 2006 - The Central Hill Day Centre
- 25th October 2006 - The Old Library
- 29th November 2006 - The Central Hill Day Centre
- 13th December 2006 - The Old Library

The meeting ended at 9.15pm.