



## **Minutes of the HLRA Meeting 14<sup>th</sup> October 2024**

**Present:** Annette Davies (AD) (Meeting Chair), Shelby Ellis (SE), (Secretary), Keith Bristow (KB), Karen Brown (KAB), June Heslop (JH), Ross Hollingshead (RH), Sam Hollingsworth (SHW), Paul Hoskins (PH), Melanie Johnson (MJ), Lyn Roberts (LR).

**Apologies:** Ashley Hasler (AH), Nicola Hughes (NH), Angela Ogbe (AO), James Sturgeon (JaS), Claire Wych (CW).

### **1. Welcome**

1. Welcome to new members including Liana Berkeley-Hill (LBH) observing the meeting.
2. Appreciation expressed to Sarah Hands (retiring Chair) for all her hard work as a member/chair of the HLRA for several years.
3. Discussion re the vacant position of Chair/Vice-Chair took place. AD & SE (Secretary) agreed to take joint responsibility for the position of Chair and LBH agreed to take minutes when SE is Chairing a meeting.

**2. Minutes of AGM held 9<sup>th</sup> September 2024**- minutes agreed & are available on HL notice boards & RMG Living (London).

### **3. Berkeley Homes Report**

RH provided updates which are recorded under "Section 6 Ongoing Actions".

### **4. RMG Report**

September 2024 RMG Report

- Drainage contractors inspected, unblocked and cleaned drains at Alisander Close and installed a new water drinking fountain for the gym.
- We welcomed our new gardener Jason Bray, he brings a wealth of gardening experience and knowledge to his role. He is relishing the challenge and is enjoying the work.
- UKPC the parking contractors for the unadopted areas on the development have set out the new signage, These works are due to be completed Wednesday.16 October. We will inform residents when parking enforcement will re-commence.
- Estate manager facilitated our fencing contractors to repair various fencing issues.
- The water features contractors serviced a rill on 20 September and treated the water features with Bromine and Chlorine.
- There is an increase of residents who smoke are disposing of their cigarette ends into communal areas from their properties. This is illegal and we ask these residents to stop this behaviour and to others we would encourage residents who witness this behaviour report the incident to Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council.
- There has been recent examples where residents are allowing or giving access to their friends or family to enter the gym and using the facilities.
- Estate manager has produced a monthly list of outstanding remedial works that requires various contractors to quote for each of the tasks.
- Fly Tipping in the bin stores remains a problem, residents are advised that if their waste cannot fit in the bin provided then it should be disposed of by taking it to the recycling centre.
- **The village hall income for the month of September was £200.** (Residents can hire hall. Cost of hire is £12.50 an hour and can be booked via the Estate Manager [john.shaw@rmg.london](mailto:john.shaw@rmg.london) )

### **5. SH Report**

#### **Staffing**

No update.

#### **4 Edwards Close – reinstatement of Bin Store**

SH have received quotes for the bin store reinstatement. They are currently reviewing these quotes with their insurers and will make a decision soon. Once approved, SH will discuss the start date and communicate details to the block residents.



### **Holborough Lakes resident meeting**

SH provided an update on their ongoing work with Southern Housing (SH) residents. SH has been working with a select group of residents to establish a resident's group. They believe that a resident's group will play a valuable role in supporting the HLRA committee in promoting sustainability and a cohesive community.

SH will be meeting with their residents on 22nd October 2024 to look at service issues around grounds maintenance, repairs and looking at engagement options to enable SH residents to achieve their goal to feed into the wider estate management arrangements. SH will continue to keep the HLRA informed of the progress of this initiative.

### **Fly Tipping**

SH want to express concern regarding the issue of fly-tipping in their community. This is unsightly and harmful to the environment but also creates a negative impact on the overall appearance and liveability of our neighbourhood. The cost of disposal through waste recycling services also increases our estate service charge.

If you witness any instances of fly-tipping or know anyone who is allowing a friend or relative to use SH bin store(s), please report it to SH or the estate manager, John Shaw. SH will take appropriate action to address the issue and hold those responsible accountable.

## **6. Ongoing Actions**

### **08/20a and 1/21 Review of Lake Level/Sluice Gate Operation**

MJ reported that she has been unable to find a company to carry out the required risk assessment.

RH advised that he may have contact details of a risk assessor to carry this out.

**Action: Discuss sluice gate risk assessment & provide further update. (RMG/BH) MJ/RH**

### **16/21 Cracked Bonded Paving**

RH advised that discussions are ongoing with the contractor in relation to rectifying these works & a schedule will be prepared taking into account unfavorable weather conditions.

**Action: Confirm any warranty for these works.**

**RH**

**Action: Update on progress of works. (BH)**

**RH**

### **17/21 Cobbles.**

RH advised that McCoda's work was complete.

The issue with loose cobbles in Whitby and Elderwood was discussed. MJ explained that this issue is caused by the weight of the TMBC refuse removal vehicle & the team are continuously repairing these. A suggestion that these areas be tarmacked was discussed, but this would considerably alter the aesthetics of this area. It was agreed to monitor the costs to residents of repairs to these areas. AD expressed frustration at BH developing areas which are aesthetically pleasing but pose long term financial burdens on residents.

**Action Closed for Time Being**

### **25/24 Fencing in relation to ASB.**

RH reported that BH consider the costs in relation to erecting the suggested fencing astronomical & they also have concerns that erection of it would dramatically alter the vista of the lake. BH are still reviewing the police proposals.

**Action: Update on crime-prevention fencing. (BH)**

**RH**

### **25/22 Road Adoption Plan**

BH are working with KCC. RH hoped to have a further update by November. A discussion took place regarding removal of yellow lines & several members expressed concerns over dangerous parking on adopted roads. RH advised that reports be made to the police and KCC as it is the latter's decision/responsibility to have the lines reinstated. BH cannot change the situation now the roads are adopted.

**Action: Update on progress of road adoption.**

**RH**

***Residents are reminded that there is a 20mph speed limit on the estate and are also asked to park in a safe considerate manner.***

#### 85/21b Reducing the Impact of Fuel Charge Increases on Service Charge

MJ advised that timers have been fitted to the VH heaters. There have been challenges with the timer on the water feature which MJ is discussing with the contractor.

Replacement of LED bulbs in bollard lights - a plan needs to be drawn up and agreed. LR volunteered to liaise with RMG to produce a paper to present to the committee for their approval. (By 13/01/25))

**Action: Update on timer on water feature. (RMG)**

**MJ**

**Action: Provide plan for replacing bulbs in bollard lights. (HLRA/RMG)**

**LR/JaS/MJ**

#### 37/22 Obsolete Meters

LR sought a clarification on the meters from RH. He explained that these meters are either in bollard lights or streetlamps but was unable to identify the precise locations. He advised that JaS was aware of their locations. LR expressed her incredulity that these meters were connected to any circuit especially a lighting circuit as their usage was an average 2 units per day, but they are costing residents £300 each in annual standing charges. LR to pursue this issue with JaS.

**Action: Expedite enquiries regarding obsolete meters. (BH/RMG)**

**RH/JaS**

**Action: Investigate transfer of accounts into BH's financial responsibility. (BH)**

**RH**

**Action: Provide dates when meters were removed. (BH)**

**RH**

#### 29/24 2023 Service Charge – Electricity Costs

The committee were disappointed that JaS was not in attendance at the meeting to discuss this issue. There are still 5 questions requiring answers from the communication dated 28/08/24. LR had sent a further email to JaS on 8/10/24 seeking responses & is still awaiting a response.

**Action: Respond to questions ref 2023 electricity costs. (RMG)**

**JaS**

#### 29/23 Insecurity at SH Apartment Block.

JH advised that unfortunately, there was no new information available regarding a potential start date for the building security systems. As soon as a final decision is reached, SH will communicate the details to their residents.

**Action: Address insecurity SH block. (SH)**

**AO**

#### 34/24 UKPC Monitoring SH Residents' Parking Spaces.

This was tried previously, and it was unsuccessful.

**Action Closed**

#### 35/24 SH Questions ref Estate Maintenance.

1) How often should SH expect the gardeners to come to maintain Southern Housing zones? - Fortnightly or once a month during the growing season.

*RMG Response - Fortnightly or once a month during the growing season. Monthly 4-5 weeks as per the zone planer the zone plan*

2) What service has been provided in the SH area since May?

*RMG Response - General estate maintenance as per the above.*

JH expressed concern at the level of service provided to SH areas & believed that there had been a lapse in the agreed specification plan due to the estate team operating understaffed at times throughout the year. She expressed the view that periods of understaffing within the estate team should be noted within the annual accounts in order that they can be checked for appropriate adjustments. It was agreed that JH, AD & MJ would coordinate a walk around the estate with the Estate Manager to review the SH grounds and maintenance specification.

**35/24 Action: Hold meeting with Estate Manager. (HLRA/ RMG)**

**AD/JH/MJ**

#### 36/24 Defects Around Estate

I. **Loose manhole cover on Manley Boulevard.**

RH advised that RMG will ensure this is addressed, but BH will cover the costs.

II. **Drainage cover on the green by the tree adjacent to Manley Boulevard.**

MJ to liaise with Estate Manager to get this addressed.

III. **ACO drain maintenance- provide maintenance info to relevant home owners.**

RH will ensure information is sent out.



**36/24 Action: RMG to address manhole cover on MB. (RMG)** MJ  
**Action: Address drainage cover on the green. (RMG)** MJ  
**Action: Circulate ACO drain maintenance information. (BH)** RH

### **37/24 Ground Below Monkey Bars**

MJ advised that all the play areas undergo an annual risk assessment and have been deemed fit for use according to current standards & requirements. The committee expressed regret that a child had injured themselves but felt that additional expenditure was unnecessary unless the risk assessments deemed it necessary.

**Action Closed**

### **42/24 Cleaning of Rubbish Bins**

MJ advised that the external estate bins are periodically cleaned by the estate team. RMG advised that the most cost-effective way to empty the external communal bins is to dispose of them in apartment bin stores otherwise there will be charge to dispose of this rubbish. An estimate has been obtained of the cost to jet wash the apartment bins professionally, (this will need to be coordinated with the refuse removal day). The cost is approximately £50-£60 per bin. This is an issue for Walters Close residents to discuss and agree with RMG. It was agreed to hold this action over until AH was present at the meeting.

**42/24 Action: Canvass views of Walters Close residents. (HLRA)** AH

### **45/24 Legal Status of Woodland at Rear of LVC**

RH stated that he was awaiting a definitive answer to this question from BH's legal team as there were several differing plans relating to the area created over a period of time.

**45/24 Action: Provide evidence of legal status of Woodland rear LVC. (BH)** RH

### **46/24 Security at Halloween**

MJ advised that Mavco Security can provide two teams of two operatives on Halloween night 31/10/2024 18:00-00:00 to patrol the estate and help prevent any anti-social behaviour. The SIA operatives will be in high viz and have body worn cameras. The cost will be on an hourly rate of £19/h + vat. The total cost for the night will be £456.00 + vat. The committee agreed that this was a reasonable cost which they felt would be of positive benefit to all residents & hopefully reduce the ASB which was experienced last year.

**46/24 Action: Engage security for Halloween. (RMG)** MJ

### **12/23 Replacement Inspection Covers**

BH insist that these covers are fit for purpose and are unyielding on this. SHW and other residents strongly disagree, but unhappily resign themselves to the situation.

**Action Closed**

### **19/22 Discussion ref Future Management of Estate**

RH advised that BH hand-over of estate to residents' control is likely to be one year from the hand-over of roads to KCC for adoption.

**Action: Discuss future of estate. (HLRA)** HLRA

### **The following actions were agreed as closed:**

14/24	Dogs in apartments- letter sent.	Action Closed
15/24	LVC Water Pump- Duty Point attended- problem appears resolved.	Action Closed
33/24	Remove bindweed. Estate team dealing with issue.	Action Closed
34A/24	Defective Bollard Lights Primrose. Fixed.	Action Closed
27/24	Burglaries at Bike Sheds. No CCTV captured.	Action Closed
22/24	AGM / Publish 2023 Accounts. Published.	Action Closed
24/24	Contact Southeast Water. Area tidied.	Action Closed
30/24	Review of service charge budget processes. Process explained.	Action Closed



31/24	Fungus build-up on the fountain. Removed.	Action Closed
32/24	Wildlife area in front of Walters Close. Cut back.	Action Closed
41/24	Flashing speed sign. Enqs with KCC – estate does not meet criteria.	Action Closed
40/24	Cyclical decorations. RMG are communicating with relevant residents.	Action Closed
33a/24	Exit Interviews. RMG are considering these proposals.	Action Closed
43/24	Security camera Walters Close – quote requested & Walters Close residents will be contacted to seek their views.	Action Closed
38/24	Parking Lambe Close – Est. Man has raised this with the 2 x vehicle owners - enforcement recommencing now that signage has been updated.	Action Closed
44/24	Chemicals rills – bromide & chlorine.	Action Closed

## **7. Social media and newsletter**

SHW continues to progress developing the website & hopes to circulate it to the committee soon. (Committee members were requested to provide a photo and short bio.)

## **8. AOB**

LR sought a response to an email she had sent to MJ, several weeks previously, regarding the charges for changing the code on the LVC bike store. MJ confirmed residents were charged £60 for every change of the code. MJ was asked to source an alternative lock. It was agreed that this matter will be further discussed outside of the HLRA.

Meeting Closed: 8.45pm Next Meeting: 11<sup>th</sup> November 2024.