



Minutes of the HLRA Meeting 8th April 2024

Present: Sarah Hands (SH) (Chair), Keith Bristow (KB), Karen Brown (KaB), Annette Davies (AD), Melanie Johnson (MJ), Sam Hollingsworth (SHW), Nicola Hughes (NH), Angela Ogbe (AO), Lyn Roberts (LR), James Sturgeon (JaS).

Apologies: June Heslop (JH), Ross Hollingshead (RH), Jordan Howard (JoH), Matthew Shaw (MS), Claire-Louise Turnham (CT), Claire Wych (CW).

1. Welcome The Chair welcomed Ashley Hasler as an observer to the meeting in consideration of taking up membership on the HLRA committee. Following the meeting Ashley eagerly volunteered to join the committee & was welcomed to the group.

Prior to the meeting Jon Kanareck resigned from the committee. The Chair thanked him for his contributions to the HLRA.

2. Minutes of meeting held 11th March 2024- minutes agreed & are available on RMG Living London & HL notice boards. RMG are yet to resolve the IT issues to ensure residents are informed when minutes are available on the portal.

7/24 Action: RMG to circulate minutes to residents via email. (RMG)

MJ

3. Berkeley Homes Report No representative was available & no updates were provided. The committee expressed disappointment that RH has yet to attend a HLRA meeting or provide updates on actions.

4. RMG Report

Organisation Updates – March 2024 RMG Report

We kindly request that visitor parking bays are only used for 24 hours and no return within 48 hours. Please note that visitor bays are for all residents and visitors, residents who live closest to them do not have a priority for their usage.

There is an increase of residents who are allowing their dogs to foul the estate and not picking up the deposits. 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 incidents to Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council as well as to the Estate Manager.

Contractors inspected the water tanks at Lakeview Court and serviced the pods at 2 Walters Close. Estate manager facilitated the lightening protection contractors to various areas throughout the estate. Drainage contractors inspected and cleaned two blocked manholes at Ashfield Close and Booth Close. ***(NH queried whether this was on the adopted road as this should not be at residents' expense. 18/24 Action JaS to confirm works not on adopted road.)***

There have been recent examples where residents are allowing or giving access to their friends or family to enter the gym and use the facilities. Please cease this.

Estate manager ensured the bike store lock at Lakeview Court was changed and residents updated. Estate manager has produced a monthly list of outstanding remedial works that requires various contractors to quote for each of the tasks.

Fairwater serviced the Rills and water features.

Estate Manager arranged for the delivery of mulch to be spread around the many flowerbeds we have at Holborough Lakes.

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. TMBC have sub-contracted a company to enforce their fly tipping laws with fines.

Village Hall income for March was £375

5. SH Report

Fly tipping: There continues to be excessive fly tipping into SH bin stores. SH are working with TMBC to fine perpetrators when identified.

Bin store reinstatement: SH Maintenance team are liaising with the loss adjusters. SH will update residents/HLRA once there is a go-ahead to carry out repairs.

6. Ongoing Actions

17/24 RMG Liaise with UKPC

It was identified that UKPC cannot regulate the parking in visitor bays throughout the estate. Residents are requested not to park long-term in these bays as this is deemed ASB. JaS committed to researching whether such behaviour may be classed as breach of lease/transfer document.

Action: Research if parking in visitor bay may be classed as breach of lease/transfer.

(RMG)JaS

85/21b & 37/22 Reducing the Impact of Fuel Charge Increases on Service Charge

Bollard Lights

RMG are still awaiting the quote from IEBB.

Action: Obtain broken down quote from IEBB for 236 bollards & confirm if willing to carry out labour with parts supplied by RMG. (RMG)

MJ

Timers on Village Hall Heaters & Water Feature

RMG are still sourcing quotes.

Action: Obtain 2 further quotes, detailing labour & parts, for installing timers on VH heaters & fountain. (RMG)

MJ

Obsolete Meters

JaS explained that he had sought assistance from BH, EON & Full Power, but all to no avail as no-one has yet been able to identify the precise location of the 'missing' meters. LR enquired as to the meter located outside 48 Higham which had been located but is thought to be redundant & is costing residents circa £200 annually in standing charges. JaS committed to seeking further support from BH. The committee expressed further dissatisfaction with the time it was taking to resolve this situation.

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

RH/JaS

22/23 Gatehouse Maintenance and Repairs

Various resolutions were discussed to identify the best way forward for residents in terms of costs & retaining the aesthetics of the front entrance. Composite posts were identified as a possible good option despite being a potentially expensive outlay as it could save residents money in the long run. (Circa £10,000 every 3 years to repair wooden posts.) It was agreed that the two taller posts, which require the most frequent repair, could be removed without impacting upon the aesthetics & ambience of the front entrance as this would still leave the gatehouse & gates with two shorter posts on both sides.

Action: Investigate the possibility of removing 2 tallest gatehouse posts or replacing them with composite posts (RMG)

MJ

1/24 Service charge- Household Ratio's & Distribution

JaS sought clarification as to what further action was required of him. It was agreed that he would confirm what the current charge for the Estate Service Charge per square footage was and provide examples of total costs for various sized premises to reassure a wider population of residents, not just a single member of the HLRA. (NB *This costing is just for the actual 'Estate' Service Charge; it does not include any phase charges nor gym or satellite charges therefore actual charges will appear higher than this figure indicates.*)

SWH questioned JaS as to why the costs for security guards could not be treated as a separate schedule & divided equally amongst the estate population rather than be based upon the square footage of the property owned. She pointed out that the maintenance costs for the gate in Primrose were divided equally between nine houses rather than based on their square footage. JaS explained that the cost for security is deemed an estate service charge and as such is based upon square footage as defined within the leases and transfer documents. He explained that certain costings, like the gate, were set-up as separate schedules at the time of signing lease/transfer documents, but that it was no longer possible to change an estate service charge & make it a separate schedule as leases & transfer documents were now agreed. He advised SWH of her right to challenge the reasonableness of this at first Tier Tribunal. SWH stated her intention to give the matter more consideration.

Action: Provide examples of Estate Service Charge based upon square footage. (RMG)

JaS

29/23 Insecurity at SH Apartment Block.

AO advised that a surveyor has recently been appointed and once they have completed their induction they will start to address the ongoing projects including the insecurities at HL.

Action: Address insecurity SH block. (SH)

AO

03/20 Jeffrey's Lane Pedestrian Crossing, 88/21 Parking Village Hall, 25/22 Road Adoption Plan

No update from BH. SH had received a reply from the council formally stating that no crossing will be installed in Amisse Drive because, due to the road lay-out, there is no nearby location which satisfies all the requirements of the legal regulations for positioning such a crossing. (*The previous 'crossing' was painted by BH on an unadopted road and did not comply with legal regulations. It was therefore unenforceable. As the road is now being adopted, the council will only accept signage which complies with regulations to ensure the safety of all road users and allows for enforcement of legislation.*)

AO & KB raised concerns about the lay-out of the Edwards Close/Amisse Drive roundabout as drivers tend to cut this corner when entering Amisse, rather than driving around the roundabout, leading to potential head-on contact with vehicles exiting Amisse. AO expressed her belief that this roundabout was supposed to be updated to enable safer traffic flow from Edwards Close & committed to finding the documents regarding this.

Action: Update on progress of works required from BH.

RH

Action: Contact BH ref raised centre to Edwards Close/Amisse roundabout. (HLRA)

SH

Action: Research documents ref Edwards Close/Amisse roundabout. (SH)

AO

4/23 Park Repairs

MJ explained that she had challenged the quote for repairs to the park flooring as it was believed to include areas not requiring replacement. She hoped to obtain a reduction in the quote.

Action: Update on progress of repairs (RMG).

MJ

12/24 Dog Bins

MJ clarified that TMBC empty the dog bins on a Wednesday and any additional emptying incurs additional charges over the contracted charges. The committee expressed concern that the bins were not being emptied according to the contract. It was asked that the Estate Manager check the bins on a Tuesday afternoon and a Thursday morning. The committee also agreed that they would monitor this. It was queried as to whether the actual contractor emptying the bins was aware of the locations of all the bins as several new ones had been installed- MJ committed to liaising with TMBC ref this.

12/24 Action: Contact TMBC to ensure their contractor is fully aware of location of all the dog bins on the estate. (RMG)

MJ

12/24 Action: Estate Manager to check bins on Tuesday pm & Thursday am. (RMG)

MJ

13/24 Planting at Front of Estate.

MJ advised that the estate team will plant bulbs/ perennials in this area. It was asked that the Head Gardener be consulted as to what could be planted to ensure colour all year around. AD requested that the newly planted tree in the Providence House roundabout be watered to ensure it flourishes.

13/24 Action: Liaise with estate team ref annual planting in rill beds & watering new tree in roundabout at Providence House. (RMG)

MJ

14/24 Dogs in Apartment Blocks.

MJ had not yet sent out the letter as requested. LR advised her that there was an issue in LVC with a dog fouling in the lift on a regular basis and asked that the letter include instruction to clear up any dog fouling in communal areas.

14/24 Action: Write to apartment OCCUPANTS (not owners) ref lease conditions regarding keeping pets and the need to use short leads within apartment blocks & to clear up any fouling in communal areas. (RMG)

MJ

15/24 Maintenance of LVC Water Pump

This issue is still ongoing. MJ has been in contact with LR to advise that it is receiving attention. KB expressed grave concerns at the costs of recent engineer visits; LR has requested invoices to establish precise costs. KB & AO expressed concern, on behalf of LVC residents, that an overflow



pipe/release valve was discharging inside the bin store posing a H&S issue to users. RMG/BH do not accept that there is any risk associated with this situation as they state it is only clean water being discharged. KB, LR & AO will explore legal options in relation to this situation outside of the meeting.

15/24 Action: Respond to concerns regarding LVC water pump contractor. (RMG) MJ

11/24 Village Hall

The income for March was £375. Concern was expressed that on an annual basis this would be insufficient to cover costs. JaS calculates that the hall costs every resident circa £10 annually. He offered support in printing/distributing flyers to advertise the availability of the hall although it was accepted that the lack of parking was problematic. It was confirmed that the hall can be booked for young childrens' parties at weekends and during the week if this does not clash with pre-booked activities, but parties which may cause disturbance to nearby residents are not acceptable. (*Cost of hire is £12.50 an hour and can be booked via the Estate Manager*)

16/21 Cracked Bonded Paving/17/21 Cobbles Booth/Alisander/Poynder

There had been no update from BH since the last meeting.

Action: Provide precise & timely information to affected residents. (RMG/BH) MJ/RH

Action: Update on progress of works completion date & guarantee. (BH) RH

Action: Update on cobbles on adopted roads. (RMG) JaS

12/23 Replacement Inspection Covers

Still no update from BH.

Action: Provide precise specifications (size HxWxD) of the replacement inspection covers & where metal covers (covers only not the whole unit) can be purchased from. (RMG) MJ

10/24 Tarmac Parking Space Edwards Close Car Park (Near water board sub-station).

No update from BH.

Action: Update ref repairs parking space near water board sub-station. (BH/RMG) RH/ MJ

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

No update available. SH emphasised that this risk assessment needed to be in place before the residents would accept responsibility for operating this mechanism.

Action: RMG to obtain Risk Assessment & provide further update. MJ

57/21 Estate Maintenance & 20/23 Disposal of Grass Cuttings.

Jas Sidhu (RMG) did not attend this meeting. Order has been placed for Arien Apex 52 SD Commercial Zero ride on mower @£7500, Hayter Harrier 56 22" Rear Roller Mower 574A Pro version @£1500 & Honda HRD 536 HX 21"SP 4 Wheeled Rotary Mower @ £1099. JaS gave assurances that the machines would be serviced and used appropriately. NH requested that RMG consider a system of asset depreciation for the gardening equipment to spread the charges to residents over time.

Action Closed

28/22 Access to RMG Living for SH Residents

The committee was disappointed to hear that only one SH resident signed up to this service. Their details will be passed to RMG.

Action Closed

5/24 Bus Route Fencing on Manley Boulevard/Hedgerow

MJ has submitted the application for the grant and anticipates it being successful. Hawthorn bushes will be planted sometime between November to March to replace the fence as it becomes defective.

Action Closed.

16/24 Tent Erected on Bank of HL Lake

Tent is no longer in situ. The occupant's identity was not disclosed to the meeting. KB expressed concern that the situation should not be allowed to be repeated as this could give rise to the erection of a permanent structure in the area.

Action Closed



7. Social media and newsletter

SHW updated the meeting as to the progress of the new HLRA website identifying that the objective was to develop the current website into a more dynamic information portal which will be an extremely useful resource for the HL community. She advised that she will circulate a demo prior to the next meeting to facilitate a discussion on the content and facilities available within it. She requested that members familiarise themselves with it prior to the meeting. She anticipated the site going live in 4-8 weeks. SHW was thanked by the committee for her hard work & the many hours of her time she had volunteered to this worthwhile project. LR advised the meeting that she was no longer a member of the website sub-committee and that she wished it noted in the minutes that she had no responsibilities/accountability in relation to the website including none under the GDPR.

8. AOB

8.1 RMG Service Level Agreement (SLA) (NH)

NH asked RMG to clarify what the SLA was in relation to responses to enquiries from residents. JaS said the agreement for non-urgent enquiries was 5 working days. It was acknowledged that responses to the Invoice Group queries took much longer due to the complexity of their enquiries, however NH expressed concern that there were still enquiries outstanding from 2020. JaS explained that this was due to continued debate between RMG & the Invoice Group over a few issues; he agreed to expedite the resolution of these enquiries. NH enquired as to whether there were insufficient RMG personnel allocated to HL, but JaS felt this was not the case. JaS agreed to draw up a list clarifying the areas of responsibility for each member of RMG staff to circulate to residents as the committee felt there was some confusion over this.

19/24 Action: Identify areas of responsibility for RMG personnel. (RMG)

JaS

Meeting Closed 8.50pm

Next Meeting 7pm Monday 13th May 2024