

Committee: Housing Management & Almshouses Sub-Committee	Dated: 16/05/2019
Subject: Housing Estates – Allocated Members’ Report	Public
Report of: Director of Community & Children’s Services	For Information
Report authors: Sonia Marquis, Area Manager (North) Wendy Giaccaglia, Area Manager (South)	

Summary

This report provides an update for the Committee on events and activities on the City of London Corporation’s social housing estates.

The report is compiled in collaboration with Allocated Members, whose role is to take an active interest in their estate, to champion residents and local staff and to engage with housing issues in order to play an informed part in housing-related debates within the Committee.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- note the report.

Main Report

Background

1. The Allocated Members Scheme was introduced in 2000, when Members of the Community & Children’s Services Committee were allocated to different City of London Corporation housing estates. This report is presented to the Housing Management Sub-Committee twice a year.

General Estate Matters

2. There have been several staff patch changes in the Estate Management team since the last Allocated Members Report. The Estate Manager at Avondale Square, Shaun Thurston, left the City of London in December 2018. This position was filled by Marie Rene in February 2019. The Estate Manager at York Way and Holloway Estates, Greg Nott, is on secondment as Project Manager working on the Estates Standards Review. Greg’s substantive position is being covered temporarily by Abiola Ashiru.

3. Further changes have occurred to balance out workloads across our patches. The Estate Manager for Middlesex Street, Laurence Jones, has had his portfolio extended to include Dron House and Windsor House. The Southbank Estates and Sydenham Hill are now managed by Philip Ford, who joined City of London in November 2018.
4. The patch areas are due to be numbered from 1 to 6. Sonia Marquis is now the Area Manager responsible for estates north of the river, patches 1 to 3. Wendy Giaccaglia is the Area Manager responsible for estates south of the river, patches 4 to 6. Wendy remains as Area Manager for sheltered housing. Sonia and Wendy's job titles have changed to reflect this new responsibility and the "City and Fringes" and "Out-of-City" distinction is being phased out.
5. As mentioned, estate services are currently under review. The estate teams have been assisting Greg Nott in this project to improve and standardise the cleaning and grounds maintenance services across all Estates. A separate report on this project, and the progress it has made, will come to this Committee later in 2019.

Avondale Square Estate – Allocated Member, William Pimlott

6. I am pleased to inform Members that the new permanent Estate Manager, Marie Rene, joined us at the end of February 2019. It was an honour to visit the estate in April. I found the staff to be extremely dedicated and hardworking and appreciate the time they took to give me a tour of the Estate. I became aware of several challenges and issues the team are currently trying to tackle relating to anti-social behaviour, the play areas, and new developments proposed for the estate. I was encouraged to learn that there are on-going estate team meetings to support staff as they address these issues.
7. Marie introduced herself to residents at her first Open Meeting in April. In the short time since Marie has started, residents have noticed big improvements, and have given very positive feedback to Senior Management.
8. Representatives from CommComm, Filigree and Common Place were invited to the April Open Meeting to introduce themselves to residents. As we've been doing on other estates where development is planned, Avondale Square Estate residents were invited to share their visions for what they would like to see on their estate. The residents were told that further meetings and events will take place in the near future to start that consultation process.
9. Marie has been focussing on the cleaning standards on the estate and has greatly improved systems and processes in the estate office to give residents a better, faster service. In addition, she has staff working on several projects to improve services and ensure that the estate is managed efficiently.
10. There are a lot of building projects happening on the estate, from Decent Homes works in Harman Close, to the window overhaul project. The external redecoration programme is also underway, and residents are looking forward to the fresh new look of the outsides of their homes. Electrical testing on

tenanted flats is due to begin this summer.

11. On 6 April, Avondale Community Events (ACE) organised their annual Easter Egg Hunt, always a popular event. They held the Easter Bonnet contest and had an Easter egg roll on the grass. As always, the event was greatly enjoyed by families on the estate.

Harman Close – Allocated Member William Pimlott

12. Decent Homes work, including electrical rewiring and replacement of the heating system, has commenced at Harman Close. Although it is quite disruptive for residents in their bedsit properties, they are managing with staff support to pack and move their belongings temporarily. Two flats have been set aside for residents who are unable to remain in their homes while the work is undertaken. Residents whose homes have been refurbished are delighted with their new kitchens and bathrooms.

Small Estates (Isleden House and Windsor House) – Allocated Member, Peter Bennett

13. At Windsor House, the hall refurbishment went extremely well with only one small area of work to left to refresh. Estate staff held an Open Evening at Christmas, the residents who attended were pleased with the improvements to the hall.
14. A local nursery has made enquiries regarding daily use of the hall. Staff have engaged with the nursery to agree terms and conditions of use. Residents' views were sought on the hall's use for this purpose and they had no objections to the hall being used in such a way during school term times. This will bring in additional income and increase the use of the facility, which does not attract many bookings at present.
15. A resident's survey will be conducted shortly regarding use of the playground on the estate. The Estate team look forward to taking forward resident's preferences. The playground requires extensive repair, however as there are play facilities in the adjoining park, residents will be consulted on their need or wish for another play area on the estate.
16. From 1 April, Laurence Jones has taken over as the Estate Manager on a permanent basis, following a period in which Jacqueline Whitmore managed the estate on a temporary basis following the departure of the long-time Estate Manager, Angela Smith. Laurence is a long-term staff member who currently manages Middlesex Street Estate, Spitalfields and Dron House.
17. At Isleden House, the door entry system will shortly be replaced as it is nearing the end of its operational life and is in increasing need of repair.

18. Plans are progressing on the three proposed new flats at Isleden House. There was an initial delay while further investigations into the original foundations of the building were carried out, however it has been established that these are suitable to sustain the added properties. There are regular meetings with consultants, the project team and estate staff regarding this project, which will see three much-needed family-sized homes added to the estate (each with three bedrooms).
19. Little Angel Theatre “Crafternoon” sessions for children were awarded more funding which has enabled continued sessions. Each session has a different theme and is enthusiastically received by the children attending.
20. Regarding the estate management changes, Isleden House will continue to be managed by Jacqueline Whitmore (both sheltered and general needs housing, with the Scheme Manager assisting). Jacqueline has the extra capacity to continue managing Isleden House as she no longer has the responsibility of Mais House. This arrangement is intended to be simpler than the previous one, in which Isleden House had a general needs Estate Manager who was part-time, as well as full-time staff who managed the sheltered housing. General needs residents will now have better access to on-site staff.

Golden Lane Estate – Allocated Member, Barbara Newman, CBE

21. Michelle Warman continues to meet Cripplegate Ward Members on a monthly basis, along with Jason Hayes, Head of Major Projects, to discuss matters affecting Golden Lane Estate. A comprehensive update of the several projects currently on the go at Golden Lane has become a regular feature of the meetings.
22. Fellow Members will be pleased to note that concrete repairs to the blocks are now completed. The project team has been applying several finishes to the site to match, as best they can, the surrounding areas. The team are hoping to meet with Planning Officers shortly to sign off the project.
23. I am happy to report that the Decent Homes project went very well with high levels of customer satisfaction reported.
24. The Estate Walkabout in February 2019 was well- attended by fellow Members and residents. Jason Hayes gave a detailed visual explanation of the concrete repairs. We also viewed an empty property, and an explanation was given on how the new heating system will operate. Fellow Members commented on how much they appreciated the Walkabout, and found it helpful to see first-hand many of the issues discussed at meetings.
25. I am encouraged by how well the teams can accommodate and successfully progress the other projects including fire doors at Great Arthur House, the water tanks overhaul, electrical testing and smoke alarm installations. Officers faced some difficult challenges gaining internal access to several properties. A working party of residents and officers has been set up to look at the design

and practical function of the proposed new windows, the objective being to procure energy efficient windows that are easy to operate, and clean inside and out.

26. The COLPAI Project is progressing. A new schedule of meetings and Drop - in Sessions have been arranged by the communications team, these are due to take place on a monthly basis.
27. The estate team's quarterly drop-in meetings are still planned throughout the year, although I note attendance from residents has dropped slightly. However, a range of dedicated officers and partners attended the most recent meeting to address residents' concerns including Property Services, the Home Ownership Team, Police, Parkguard and WDP (a drug and alcohol misuse outreach service)

Holloway & York Way Estates – Allocated Member, Mary Durcan

28. In November 2018, I had the opportunity to join the team for the estate walkabouts which, although not well-attended by residents, gave the Estate Manager a chance to discuss how the estates are coming along and especially see how the redecorations to the York Way estate are having a wonderful impact. The area is looking a lot brighter and cleaner because of it.
29. As well as the redecorations on York Way, there have been additional areas targeted for improvement. These are the external lighting on the buildings, and the refuse areas, which now have fantastic new doors providing much improvement in the look and cleanliness of the estate overall.
30. Holloway Estate has also seen its own lighting upgraded, which has been carried out as part of the communal rewire project. This project was completed at the end of March 2019.
31. There has been a new recruit on York Way, with the introduction of Andrew Rasberry. Andrew is the new Porter/Cleaner/Gardener and has been brought in with a view to improving the external and green areas of the estate. He has a keen interest in gardening and is focused on involving the community in planting and brightening up the estate.
32. In January I took the time to do a return visit to the Holloway Estate, this time accompanied by Assistant Director for Barbican and Property Services, Paul Murtagh, and Estate Manager (at the time), Greg Nott. During November's walkabout there were several maintenance issues that stood out which I wanted to discuss with Paul to see how they could be addressed. It was agreed that some redecorating of external areas is required, and the windows needed replacement. Paul was able to confirm that this was already in the pipeline and some remedial works to the paintwork on the external bin doors and railings could be carried out in the meantime.

**Middlesex Street Estate, Dron House and Spitalfields - Allocated Member,
Deputy Henry Jones**

33. I am happy to report to Members that, after five months based at the Portsoken Community Centre, the estate team has now returned to their newly-refurbished office on the ground floor of Artizan Street Library. The process of moving back went smoothly. Residents have welcomed having the estate team in close proximity again, with staff now able to see residents more easily. The new office has its own private interview facilities and leads straight off reception, an improvement on the old office.
34. The Christmas event was well attended despite it being one of the coldest days of the year. Father Christmas was on hand to give out presents and add some warmth to the occasion. We are hoping to have another estate event in the summer months.
35. The conversion of the top floor (podium level) of the shops, and the old porters' mess room, into ten new homes, is nearing completion. The converted properties will soon be handed over to the City of London for allocation. These flats will provide much-needed homes for at least 10 households on our register and will go towards meeting our housing objectives.
36. The concrete repairs project has just come to an end and the lift refurbishment project has now commenced. All six lifts across the estate are being replaced. The estate office and the project team are working with residents to ensure disruption is kept to a minimum. Residents are being kept updated through regular newsletters and bulletins.
37. There are many other projects which will shortly be commencing on Middlesex Street Estate. These include the replacement of the emergency generator, and the balcony windows and doors within the Tower. Staff will work with residents to ensure any particular needs are taken into consideration during this work.
38. The landscaping project to enhance the area of Artizan Street outside Petticoat Tower is now complete. The full transformation will be more evident when flowers are in full bloom during the summer months.
39. At Dron House, the residents' Christmas party was a great success with many residents attending the gathering at the estate's small Community Centre.
40. The renewal of the kitchens and bathrooms under the Decent Homes programme is now complete.
41. The door entry system is due to be replaced. We anticipate that this project will commence early in the Summer.

42. At Spitalfields there was a recent project to re-number the properties at 17 Lamb Street, to make the numbering system clearer and more logical.
43. The Relationship between the Estate management team and the management company is developing in order to improve the service to the residents.
44. Tenancy checks have been completed at Spitalfields as part of the Tenancy Visits Project.

Southbank Estates – Allocated Members, Randall Anderson and Mark Wheatley (Sumner Buildings)

45. Philip Ford recently started in the role as Estate Manager and is settling in well. We thank Juan Munoz-Garrido for stepping up while recruitment took place; he has now returned to his position as Senior Resident Estate Officer.
46. The new post of Customer Service Officer for the Southbank Estates and Sydenham Hill has been recruited; Kelly Edwards joined the team at the end of April. Kelly was one of the Visiting Officers who took part in the Tenancy Visits Project, so she is already quite familiar with our estates and the residents she will work with. This new post will enable the team to extend the estate office's opening hours and allow residents to contact them more easily throughout the day. This new post will also mean that the Estate Officers can spend more time attending to their duties on the estates.
47. The fibre broadband rollout continues on the estates, with Pakeman House now receiving a super-fast broadband service, which is greatly appreciated by residents.
48. Decent Homes works are now complete on the estates, and residents have been informed of forthcoming electrical testing works.
49. In February, the first Resident Steering Group meeting for development proposals at Sumner Buildings was held, with constructive feedback from residents being obtained for the project team to take forward.
50. Works are ongoing to the roof of Blake House on William Blake Estate to improve the integrity and safety of the useable roof space. The works are due to finish in late Spring.
51. Residents of Collinson Court and Great Suffolk Street have been busy holding both a Pancake/Mardi Gras festival outside Collinson Court and starting up a gardening club. Both events are well-received by all.

Sydenham Hill Estate – Allocated Member, Susan Pearson

52. Consultation for the redevelopment of the Mais House site is well underway, there have been very active and constructive Resident Steering Group

meetings with the City, and our partners, to help shape the delivery of much-needed homes on the site.

Background Papers

This report was compiled in consultation with the Allocated Members, managers and staff of the City of London's housing estates.

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