

<b>Committee</b>	<b>Dated:</b>
Housing Management & Almshouses Sub-Committee	<b>20 November 2019</b>
<b>Subject:</b> Housing Estates – Allocated Members’ Report	<b>Public</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Director of Community & Children’s Services	<b>For Information</b>
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### **Summary**

This report, which is for information, 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. A new estate inspection regimen was piloted over the summer and went live earlier this month. Inspection results are being posted on noticeboards and online for residents to see.
3. Andrew Rasbery, a Porter/Gardener on the York Way Estate, came up with an anti-litter poster competition for 4-12-year olds to address a problem he

could see with people discarding cigarette ends and general litter on the estate. The winning entry became the official poster that was put on display on the York Way and Holloway Estates, and the competition is now being rolled out to all of our other estates as a way to raise awareness and encourage people to dispose of their litter appropriately.

4. In an effort to improve the way the City of London communicates with residents, Housing have created a new twice-yearly magazine to replace the estate newsletters. The first issue will be released shortly and will be available online for residents who prefer to receive copies via the internet rather than hard copies.

#### **Golden Lane Estate – Allocated Member Barbara Newman, CBE**

5. Estate Manager, Michelle Warman, has continued to meet monthly with Cripplegate Ward Members to discuss matters affecting Golden Lane Estate and other broader matters across the City of London Housing estates.
6. Members joined Michelle for a walkabout in September where Jason Hayes, Head of Major Projects, attended and gave an informative update on the current status of concrete repairs and the forthcoming window project. Jason was able to answer Members' questions and concerns directly.
7. Michelle liaised with residents to incorporate the 'Community Conversation' with the scheduled Resident Drop-In on 11 June 2019. The session was also attended by Members, with discussion focused on estate matters, anti-social behaviour reporting, and general use of the green space on the estate.
8. There were two weekend openings of the Great Arthur House roof garden this year, which has been closed to both residents and the public since the 1980s. The roof garden opened in July as part of the Mayor of London's National Park City Festival, and again in September as part of London Open House. Golden Lane residents, Paul Lincoln & Steven Malies, coordinated both events and were also able to secure a donation of plants and flowers from Camden Garden Centre to re-create the original ambiance of the garden.
9. Park Guard and the City of London Police continue to support the estate team with removing unauthorised filming and photography from groups visiting the estate out of hours.
10. Our local City of London Police community team are also working with Park Guard and external partners to manage the increase in rough sleepers and begging in the area. They are also helping to manage the groups of young people regularly congregating on the estate and sometimes creating issues for residents.
11. I was saddened to learn that Barrie Ellis, former Resident Estate Officer for the Golden Lane Estate for many years, passed away last month after a long battle with cancer. Barrie was well loved by generations of residents and staff and will be sorely missed.

## **Middlesex Street Estate and Dron House – Allocated Member, Jason Pritchard**

12. Estate Manager, Laurence Jones continues to hold regular meetings and provides Members with regular updates on matters of importance or issues which affect the estate.
13. Middlesex Street Estate continues to be transformed with many major projects in progress or about to commence. Residents are being kept up to date on progress through all communication channels.
14. The conversion of the top floor (podium level) of the shops on the estate was completed over the summer. The flats were officially opened and the ceremonial handing over of the keys to one of the new residents was carried out by the Department of Community & Children's Services Committee Chairman, Randall Anderson in July. I'm happy to report that residents are now settled in their new homes.
15. The six lifts on the estate are being replaced in a phased process with works progressing well. All lifts should be fully refurbished and back in full service by the end of May 2020. Estate staff continue to offer support to residents who need assistance whilst the lifts are being refurbished.
16. Security across the estate has been enhanced with additional security cameras having been installed. Digital CCTV cameras now cover the shed areas within Petticoat Tower, the Podium and the entrance to the ball area. As part of the lift replacement project mentioned above, CCTV cameras are also being installed in the new lifts.
17. Work to replace the glass panels on the Petticoat Tower stairwell will soon commence. A drop-in session to meet the contractor and to discuss how this work could affect residents took place in October.
18. The sharing of the basement level car parking space with the City of London Police is fully underway. All users within the "police zone" were successfully given alternative spaces. Work on the physical separation and enabling work has already commenced.
19. I am pleased to report that the Community Energy project I have started with residents on the Middlesex Street Estate is gaining traction. City of London Community Energy (CoLCE) is the square mile's first community-owned energy cooperative. The co-operative is a community-led, managed and owned endeavour with our first project on the Middlesex Street Estate aiming to install 50Kw of solar panels on the flat roof areas of Petticoat Square in 2020. The project will save 19 tonnes of CO2 per year. The green energy from the solar panels will be used to power the common areas of the Middlesex Street Estate and any surplus will be sold to the grid. The profits

from the sale of electricity will be used to benefit the society members and the residents on the Middlesex Street Estate. The project is not only about generating green energy; we also want local residents to have better control of their energy usage and lower their energy bills. We will be organising several drop-in energy advice sessions during the winter, and running solar panel making workshops. The first Energy Saving Advice workshops will take place in November 2019 in the Artizan Street Library and Portsoken Community Centre. I look forward to providing more updates as this exciting project moves forward.

20. In July, the Petticoat Square Gardening Club arranged the annual summer party. This afternoon of entertainment was supported by the City of London's Community Engagement team and Forget-me-not, who works with residents suffering dementia and their carers. The City of London gave further support through a financial donation. The event was extremely well attended.
21. The Petticoat Square Gardening Club was awarded £500 from the estate improvement budget to undertake repair and improvement work to the mobile planters on the podium. We look forward to seeing the results in the spring 2020.
22. Middlesex Street Estate have two centenarians on the estate. Their 101st and 102nd birthdays were recently celebrated.
23. The upgrade of the Dron House door entry system has been completed successfully. The system is now "cloud based" which means that entry fobs can be programmed and de-programmed remotely, offering a faster, more secure service to residents.
24. The roof replacement work at Dron House is now complete. Residents welcome the improvement in thermal insulation.
25. Planning permission has been granted by Tower Hamlets Council for the Dron House window replacement program set to start in early 2020. A drop-in session for residents to see the new windows and to meet the contractor will take place once the contract has been awarded.
26. The Neighbourhood Watch group that I helped to set up in 2017 on the Middlesex Street Estate with residents continues to go from strength to strength. The group was set up to bring residents together to make the community safer, share information on suspicious behaviour on the estate, help people protect themselves and their properties, and to reduce the fear of crime. This was achieved by means of improved security, greater vigilance, accurate reporting of suspicious incidents to the police and by fostering a community spirit. The Neighbourhood Watch has been a tremendous success and I am extremely proud to see the network we have created on the estate ready to act fast in the event of any suspicious or concerning activities around the estate.

### **Avondale Square Estate – Allocated Member, William Pimlott**

27. There are various projects on the Avondale Square Estate which are enhancing the overall look of the estate. In addition to the window overhaul project being in its final stages, the external redecorations project is wrapping up, with the garages, shed doors and fences and railings giving the estate a new lease on life.
28. In preparation for the 2020 project to renew the play equipment on the estate, residents are being consulted to establish what play equipment they would like.
29. I would like to wish Jeff Tenwick, Senior Porter, a very happy retirement. Jeff retired in August after 36 years working for the City of London and will be missed by staff and residents alike.
30. Residents have been busy planning and hosting social events. They held a picnic in May that was very well attended. A Macmillan coffee morning held by Avondale Community Events at the beginning of October raised several hundred pounds for the charity. They are busy preparing for the annual Christmas party now – this is one of the highlights for the children on the estate.
31. The Estate team are working in partnership with the City of London Adult Education team to deliver various training courses to residents of Avondale Square. These courses will include, basic IT, Arts & Crafts, English for Speakers of Other Languages, dance, and Maths & English classes. Drop-in sessions were held for residents in October.
32. An evening Estate Walkabout was held in September, with five residents attending. On the walkabout, residents felt that the back of the estate wasn't kept at the same high standard as the front of the estate. Estate Manager Marie Rene informs me that following this feedback, a work plan for the gardening and grounds was introduced to ensure that every part of the estate receives the same level of service. In addition, the whole porter/cleaner team spend every Thursday afternoon dedicated to working on the grounds together.
33. The Estate team have been liaising with the local Community Police who have increased their patrols on the estate following an increase in ASB perpetrated by young people from neighbouring areas.

### **Isleden House and Windsor House – Allocated Member, Peter Bennett**

34. The Angel Theatre Company have continued with their monthly craft sessions with the children on the Isleden House estate and neighbouring guests. They have enjoyed making puppets and cards of a seasonal nature.

35. Sheltered residents have enjoyed the garden throughout the summer, especially growing vegetables in the raised beds which have produced a glut of tomatoes this year.
36. Safer Neighbourhood Police Officers for St Peter's Ward continue to hold their public contact sessions in the Isleden House communal hall, which encourages the local community to develop working relationships with the Safer Neighbourhood Team. Officers are available to take reports, information and offer advice at these sessions which are held fortnightly. The police officers hold a similar session at the local library on alternate weeks.
37. The community centre at Windsor House is being well utilised. Since July 2019, the facility has been booked by a nursery between 8am and 2pm on weekdays during term times only. Residents and the community are able to use the centre outside of these times. The steady use of the space gives an income boost to the HRA.
38. A series of very successful engagement and consultation events took place over the summer period to discuss the long-term future of the Windsor House Estate. Residents were canvassed by consultants and staff through door knocking exercises and drop-in events. They were asked to consider refurbishment of the estate or the potential of a new build. The feedback from residents has been extremely positive. A summary of the consultation and feedback has been sent to residents, with further consultation and a vote on the preferred option soon taking place.
39. In the short term, refurbishment work will be undertaken on Windsor House. Works will comprise of external painting and a window replacement programme. Planning permission is currently being sought from The London Borough of Hackney and if successful, we hope to start on site in March 2020.

#### **Harman Close – Allocated Member – William Pimlott**

40. The Decent Homes works are nearly complete, with residents enjoying new kitchens, bathrooms, rewiring, hot water cylinders and upgraded heating. The communal wet rooms are also being refurbished. The internal hallway decorations and new front doors will soon be finished, bringing a bright and airy feel to the corridors. A new motion-activated, energy-saving lighting system has also been installed. Brightly coloured doors on each floor will assist residents with poor sight or dementia to recognise they are on the right floor for their home.
41. Harman Close residents recently held a MacMillan Coffee morning where they raised an outstanding £567 for the charity. They made cakes for sale, held a raffle, 'guess the number of smarties in a jar' competition as well as playing several games of bingo. Well done and thank you to the residents for their generosity as they support this event each year.

## **York Way & Holloway Estates – Allocated Member, Mary Durcan**

42. I had the opportunity to visit and introduce myself to the Interim Estate Manager, Abiola Ashiru in May. The estate was looking very clean tidy and vibrant - a reflection of the dedicated work of the entire estate team at York Way Estate.
43. Several projects have advanced since the last report. The redecoration project is now complete, with the internal and external estate areas being given a new lease on life. The difference it has made to the estate is very noticeable.
44. In August, consultations were held on the York Way Estate regarding future development. There was a door knocking exercise to talk to as many residents as possible followed by two evening public meetings, and the project has been received with mixed views, as is understandable. The next stage will be to create Resident Steering Group, and several residents have expressed an interest in being involved in that.
45. Over the summer, the York Way Estate experienced a water outage. It was a challenging week for the entire team, but they worked together very well to ensure residents were not left without drinking water. The wider Housing Team pulled together to help, arranging with a local leisure centre to use the showering facilities. Residents were incredibly patient and appreciated the efforts made by staff to rectify the situation. Many lessons were learnt from this experience and shared with the team.
46. A Community Fun Day was organised in June for all residents by the Residents' Association with support from the City of London. Residents always look forward to the summer party and say that it was a great day out!
47. On the Holloway Estate, the communal electrical re-wire project has started. The work is being done by Guardian, who were brilliant in delivering the tenanted property rewire contract earlier in the year.
48. New external lighting has been fitted, providing residents with a greater sense of security, particularly with dark winter days approaching.
49. The paving across Holloway Estate was renewed as a project, addressing the uneven slabs and slabs that have cracked over time. Additional bins have been provided, making the estate look cleaner and tidier.

## **Southbank Estates, Deputy Reverend Stephen Haines**

50. The rollout of super-fast broadband on the estates continues with all the blocks within Southwark now being able to access fibre broadband. This has been welcomed by residents of all tenures and gives everyone the opportunity to have a decent and reliable internet connection. Southwark Estate Office is soon to get a WiFi hotspot that residents will be able to come into the office and use should they need help getting online to fill in forms etc.

51. At William Blake Estate, the roof to Blake House has been successfully renewed. This job involved having to close the accessible roofs for a period while repairs were made and the new roofing was laid. The project went well and there was minimal impact on the residents during its progress to completion and the new roof will ensure the homes in Blake House are kept safe and secure into the future.
52. The renewal of the door entry system at William Blake Estate is underway, and I am pleased to note that the projects team have worked well with estate staff to communicate with residents to ensure that the project is being delivered efficiently and without inconvenience to the residents. Drop in sessions were held and the project has been received well by residents as it offers them more security to their estate.
53. Further consultation has taken place for development proposals at Sumner Buildings following some early consultation last year. There have been Resident Steering Group meetings as well as drop in sessions on the estate. The communications team have been taking in feedback from residents which will help shape any plans moving forward.
54. Residents from the estates are being given the opportunity to take part in adult education and skills provided by City of London in partnership with our colleagues at Avondale Square Estate. This is a great chance for our residents to pick up valuable skills and education within easy reach of their homes.

## **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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