

Committee	Date:
Gresham (City Side) Committee	9 October 2015
Subject: City of London Gresham Almshouses Update	Public
Report of: Director of Community and Children's Services	For Information

Summary

This report gives Trustees and Members an information update on the City of London Gresham Almshouses, in Lambeth.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Note the report; and
- Note the agreement made by officers to Housing Management and Almshouses Sub Committee regarding a change of name for the post of Matron to Almshouses Manager at point 7 of the report.

Main Report

Background

This report is presented half yearly to Trustees of the Gresham Almshouses. It updates Trustees on operational matters relating to the Gresham Almshouses and their residents and highlights any issues of concern, particularly where funding is required for which is not included in the current year's budget.

Office & Community Facility

1. This facility is now fully furnished including comfortable lounge furniture, tables chairs. Residents have been using the hall for various meetings, a regular craft group and games afternoon as well as quiz nights and a fish and chip lunch. Residents would like to thank the Gresham Trustees for their donation towards the cost of the soft furnishings and the TV.

Road repairs and lighting

2. The work to renew the road surface and install low level lighting round the estate is now complete. This was undertaken in September with minimal disruption to residents. The cost of the repair has been accounted as 16% of the total cost £48,000 which was incorporated into the City of London Almshouses Trust budget for 2015/16, therefore, no extra funding was required for this work

Communal garden wall

3. The work to repair the garden wall has been delayed due to the treatment of Japanese Knotweed and a change of contractor. The cost of repair is £14,000. Details of the Repairs and Maintenance budget where this will be funded from, is available in the Revenue Outturn – 2014/15 paper presented at this meeting.

Vacant Properties

4. There is one vacant property no 3 Gresham. This property will require some work to investigate some damp issues in the bedroom before it can be offered to a prospective resident. This issue is currently under investigation by Property Service Manager. Once the property is ready for occupation Officers will advertise in the Square Mile social housing estates for interest in moving into the Gresham bungalow. In the past, Gresham vacancies have been filled by City of London Almshouses residents who have expressed an interest in moving into a Gresham property. There are currently five applicants on this waiting list.

Tree pruning

5. A survey by London Borough of Islington contract staff was undertaken of all trees on the estate. This survey outlines the condition trees on the estate and has recommendations for care and pollarding of each individual tree. The survey will be used by LB of Islington contractors when submitting application to London Borough Lambeth for permission to pollard selected trees and any other recommended maintenance issues. Officers were introduced to the services of London Borough of Islington through a Gresham Committee member at the last committee meeting and are very grateful for the contact information which has proved very useful.

Concessionary TV Licence

6. All Gresham residents are either in receipt of the concessionary licence fee of £7.50 per year or receive the licence free (over age 75). As the Gresham homes are run by a separate charity, they receive the concessionary licence whereas City of London Almshouses residents do not, as too many residents in those properties are working more than 15 hours per week.

Governance

7. Members of the Housing Management and Almshouses Sub Committee noted at their July meeting that decisions affecting Gresham Almshouses were taken to the Gresham Committee and any maintenance or development schemes were proportionately funded from Gresham Trust. The Assistant Director for Housing & Neighbourhoods reported that, at the request of the Chairman of Housing Management and Almshouses Sub Committee, a review of the Charitable Objects for the City Almshouses Trust will take place later in the year. It was also resolved by Committee Members that the job title of 'Matron' be changed to Almshouses Manager to prevent any ambiguity that the officer in post, has any medical training.

Christmas hampers

8. Members are asked to note that Christmas hampers will be delivered on the morning of 9 December this year. Arrangements will be made by Officers for any member wishing to visit the estate to undertake hamper delivery.

Jacqueline Whitmore

Sheltered Housing Manager

T: 020 7332 3782

E: Jacqueline.whitmore@cityoflondon.gov.uk