

Committee(s):	Date(s):
Housing Management Sub-Committee	02 July 2012
Subject: Housing Estates - Allocated Members' Report	Public
Report of: Director of Community & Children's Services	For Information
<p><u>Summary</u></p> <p>This report, which is for information, provides an update for the Committee on events and activities on the City of London Corporation's 11 social housing estates.</p> <p>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.</p>	

Main Report

Background

- 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. The purpose of the scheme was:
 - To give residents and staff a named Member to 'champion' their estate
 - To allow Members to take an interest in the estate, its residents and staff
 - To develop a group of members with housing knowledge & experience to contribute to the CC&S Committee.
- At its meeting in June 2010, this Committee received a report from the Allocated Members on estate matters, and agreed that this should be presented twice a year.

Current Position

General Estate Matters

We have now developed 3 pilot Estate Plans and delivered these to residents of Golden Lane, Holloway and Avondale Square Estates. Feedback has been positive, and we are now rolling the plans out to other estates during the year.

Our nine apprentices have now been with us for some months, and are proving a big success. They have all gained qualifications and an enormous amount of experience. Three have already secured jobs for when their apprenticeship finishes in September. We have developed the scheme to offer some Year 2 places, with more advanced training and experience, and will also be recruiting some new apprentices later this year.

We are working with other departments and agencies to run two projects on some of our estates, designed to encourage residents to become involved in volunteering and to generate a sense of respect and care for their estates and each other. The 'Our Place' project is being run in partnership with Waste Watch, Environmental Services and the SPICE timebanking project. On the estates involved, it will bring people together to consider how they want to improve their environment and to carry out projects. These may include recycling projects, growing food, energy conservation measures, or things like litter picks. There will also be a publicity campaign promoting a sense of ownership of the estate. The second project is a Good Neighbour Scheme, designed to train volunteers to provide support and help to newcomers and vulnerable residents, and to match them in a buddying scheme. We are working on this with Adult Social Care, Broadway, SPICE and the CVS.

Avondale Square Estate - Allocated Member, John Chapman

I am delighted to be able to report that the Jubilee party organised by Avondale Square Residents' Association (ASRA) was a great success. ASRA secured external funding which allowed them to hold a wonderful event, which was attended by the Chief Commoner and his wife. Residents at Harman Close, our sheltered housing scheme, enjoyed a fish and chip dinner with entertainment by way of celebration, and invited elderly neighbours from the rest of the estate.

The project to refurbish the lifts in the tower blocks is going well – 3 lifts are now complete and the work is on schedule. A new door entry system has been successfully piloted in one block, and tenders will now be invited to install this elsewhere.

Our most exciting news is that architects have been appointed to build a new community centre and more homes on the estate. Residents are fully involved in plans and there have already been well-attended consultation events.

Avondale Square is involved in the 'Our Place' project and talks are taking place about the Good Neighbour Scheme. We hope that both of these projects will help to promote a sense of community on this, our largest estate.

Dron House – Allocated Member, Deputy Henry Jones

Residents of Dron House have been concerned recently by youths gathering on the estate. Staff are working with the local police team, the Safer Neighbourhood Unit and the Anti-social Behaviour Unit from Tower Hamlets in order to address this.

On a more positive note, the estate held a Jubilee Party on June 4th, which helped residents to get to know each other. This sense of community is now to be built on with the 'Our Place' project, which will focus on bringing residents together to care for and respect their environment and each other.

Golden Lane – Allocated Members, Gareth Moore, Angela Starling

We are extremely pleased to be able to inform the Committee that the refurbishment of Golden Lane Leisure Centre is now complete. The Lord Mayor declared the centre officially open on 26 April 2012 by unveiling a memorial plaque. Early feedback from residents has been positive, with many taking advantage of the preferential rates offered to them.

Part of this development included the refurbishment of the former nursery on the estate. This has provided much-needed community space which has become the new home of the Ralph Perring Club as well as being available to community groups for hire.

Our Jubilee Day, on 2 June, was a huge success and we were pleased to welcome the Chief Commoner and his wife. The party was a double celebration for residents as it marked the fiftieth anniversary of the estate. One of the big attractions was that tours were given of the roof garden at Great Arthur House, rarely seen now as it is normally closed for health and safety reasons.

We are pleased to report that new cycle racks have been installed at various locations around the estate, providing safe storage for up to 48 bicycles. These were funded by Transport for London as part of their Cycle Superhighways programme. Our Garden Club continues to thrive, and we are planning to install water-butts to help with future drought situations.

Golden Lane will be one of the 'Our Place' estates, working with residents to build on the community work done by Waste Watch in the past year.

Holloway Estate – Allocated Member, Deputy Catherine McGuinness

The Holloway Estate is one of the first estates to have an annual Estate Plan, which has now been delivered to all residents. A Focus Group contributed to this, and the plan covers a range of issues of concern to residents, particularly some minor disturbances from young people and the need to bring forward the plans for new windows.

Staff take enormous pride in the presentation of the estate. They have just repainted the inside of the community hall, which looks much better. They have also been hard at work on the gardens. The estate is fortunate in having beautiful grounds and an enthusiastic and knowledgeable gardener, Harper Ozkulac, as their Estate Officer.

Isleden House – Allocated Member, Elizabeth Rogula

Residents have experienced some disruption recently at Isleden House, due to fire proofing works, but I am pleased to say that these have now been completed. Having attended a recent walkabout on the estate, I was pleased to see that it is looking very attractive and all seems to be well.

Following the installation of a television in the communal lounge, two movie clubs have been started on the estate and attendance at these is increasing. A Breakfast Club is also proving popular, and a quiz night is planned for July.

The Jubilee was celebrated by residents with a Big Lunch on the 3 June, consisting of a hog roast, and then a community gathering to watch the flotilla on television.

Middlesex Street Estate – Allocated Member, Deputy Henry Jones

In the last Allocated Members report, I announced the exciting project to build a new community centre and library on the Middlesex Street Estate, along with a number of new affordable homes. I am delighted to say that work has now commenced on this project, starting with the creation of a new entrance to the estate and work in the carpark, where the new library and community centre will be sited. We have also appointed a Community Centre Manager, Steve Berwick, who will be working with library and housing staff and managers to plan the use of the new centre ready for when it opens in November.

The Residents' Association held a Fish and Chip Supper on 8 June to celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee, and a day of celebrations was held at Mansell

Street Estate to which residents of Middlesex Street were invited. This was a very successful event, and we were honoured to welcome the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress.

Our very popular Home Beat Officer, John Innes, retired from the police service at the end of May. John was a very well-known and liked face on the estate, and residents presented him with a gift to mark their appreciation.

Middlesex Street will be at the forefront of the Good Neighbour Scheme currently being planned by officers with other agencies.

Southwark & William Blake Estates – Vacancy for Allocated Member

A long-awaited project will shortly commence at Sumner Buildings, Pakeman and Stopher House, with the installation of new door entry systems. Consultants have been appointed to oversee the tendering process and installation of the systems, which will provide additional security for residents and their homes.

To mark the Queen's Diamond Jubilee, the Collinson Court & Great Suffolk Street Residents' Association held a party for residents on the green open space behind Collinson Court. This was well attended and a good opportunity for residents from different blocks to get together and meet each other.

A new gardener has settled into the William Blake Estate and it is looking particularly colourful. Residents are looking forward to having new trees planted in the Autumn to replace the eight lime trees which had to be removed last year due to serious health and safety concerns.

Sydenham Hill Estate – Allocated Member, Deputy William Fraser

The long-standing residential Estate Officer, Frank Heggie, left us to return to his native Scotland in May. This was an opportunity to consult with residents about their wishes for the future of the role. A meeting was held on the estate to discuss various possibilities. A number of options were drawn up and costed. Each household was then told what the financial and other implications of each option would be for them, and were asked to express a preference. The overwhelming majority voted to retain the post as it is, so it is now being advertised.

I am pleased to say that there were two Diamond Jubilee celebrations on the Sydenham Hill Estate. Mais House Residents' Association had a party and a special exhibition, showing photographs of residents from 60 years ago and today. Lammas Green and Otto Close residents also held a party in the Community Hall.

Windsor House – Allocated Member, Virginia Rounding

Windsor House will be one of the next three estates to have an Estate Plan and a meeting was held at the end of April to discuss the future of the estate and resident priorities. The meeting was well-attended and very useful for managers, who were able to hear first-hand about issues the residents wished to raise regarding the need for new windows and door entry systems. I understand that officers are now making a case for bringing this work forward on the planned maintenance programme.

The Estate Officer is making good progress with visiting all residents on the estate to inspect properties and look at any changes in tenancies. This is also an opportunity to talk with residents about the impact that planned changes to welfare benefits will have on them, and to help them prepare for these.

York Way Estate – Allocated Member, Billy Dove

I am delighted to say that York Way held one of the biggest celebrations for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. Although the party took place on the Sunday, which was, sadly, extremely wet, spirits remained high, and residents turned out to enjoy a wonderful day. The event included entertainment from a local drama group, a bouncy castle, face painting and a visit from the Pearly King and Queen, as well as a mechanical 'bucking bronco' which was tried out by the more intrepid partygoers! The Mayor of Islington attended the event and we were honoured to welcome the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress. The Residents' Association had successfully bid for external funding, which enabled them, as well as running the event, to give a souvenir commemorative coin to every home. They are to be commended on giving everyone a truly memorable Jubilee.

Financial and Risk Implications

There are no known financial or risk implications in this report. The costs of all activities and plans referred to in the report will be contained within existing budgets.

HR Implications

There are no known HR implications.

Strategic Implications

Activities on the estates reported on here contribute to delivering the Departmental Priorities: "Supporting and empowering our communities and enabling people to make a positive contribution" and "Improving the health and wellbeing of communities and individuals".

Consultees

This report was compiled in consultation with the Allocated Members, managers and staff of the CoLC's housing estates. The Town Clerk, Chamberlain and Comptroller & City Solicitor have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

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