

<b>Committee</b>	<b>Dated:</b>
Housing Management & Almshouses Sub Committee	26 September 2016
<b>Subject:</b> City of London Almshouses Update	<b>Public</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Director of Community & Children's Services	<b>For Information</b>
<b>Report author:</b> Jacqueline Whitmore, Sheltered Housing Manager	

### **Summary**

This report gives Members an information update on the City of London Almshouses, in Lambeth. Some of the information in the report also relates to the eight Gresham Almshouses on the estate.

### **Recommendation**

Members are asked to note the report.

### **Main Report**

#### **Background**

1. In February 2013 the City of London Almshouses Trustees Committee was merged with the Housing Management Sub-Committee to form the Housing Management & Almshouses Sub-Committee. This report is presented to alternate meetings of the Sub-Committee. It updates Members on operational matters relating to the 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.

#### **Current Position**

##### **2. Staff Development**

Last June we employed a new scheme manager at Harman Close, Carl Newbold; as part of his training and development we have facilitated a swap in duties with Tracy Taylor the Almshouses Manager for a short period. Carl is currently undertaking some formal training and it has been a good experience to manage Almshouses for a short time as there are some differences in tenure. Carl has found this swap very helpful and is enjoying his time at the Almshouses.

##### **3. Social activities**

Carl, the Interim Almshouses Manager, has started weekly coffee morning, and has organised fish and chip lunches which have been popular. A day trip in August to Eastbourne was enjoyed by residents.

#### **4. Estate meetings**

Officers continue to hold meetings with residents and Southwark Mediation Centre staff, the latest topic for discussion was use and availability of the communal hall and how residents can become more involved in running the hall. A survey was sent out to residents to ask for views on activities and events and for volunteers to be nominated key holders which would allow access to the hall when staff are not on duty.

#### **5. Refurbishment Programme**

Officers will shortly be presenting a paper to the Gresham Trustees to request agreement for funding to allow the Gresham properties to be included in the two-year refurbishment programme for the CoL Almshouses. Property Services officers are, meanwhile, drafting a programme of work so that resident consultation can be started and the process for drawing up a specification to tender the work can commence.

#### **6. Repairs**

Property Services Team Manager continues to visit the Almshouses on a regular basis to check quality of repairs; no major issues have been reported

#### **7. Rent Arrears**

The current arrears have reduced since our last report, the majority of debt still relates to the previous report on two residents; officers can provide details to Committee Members on these arrears upon request.

#### **8. Vacancies**

There are currently three vacancies. These will be offered to residents of Mais House as a priority. Two of the properties require substantial work which is underway (replacement kitchens).

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