

Committee	Dated:
Gresham (City Side) Committee	2 June 2017
Subject: Gresham Almshouses Update	Public
Report of: Director of Community & Children's Services	For Information
Report author: Jacqueline Whitmore, Sheltered Housing Manager	

Summary

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

Recommendation

- Trustees are asked to note the report.

Main Report

Background

1. This report is presented half yearly to the 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 which is not included in the current year's budget

Current Position

2. Social activities

Residents from both Gresham and City Almshouses are deciding on summer trips, suggestions have included coastal trips, and visiting buildings of interest/royal residences or Open gardens. As there is a reasonable sum left in the Social Fund, residents may choose to have two trips to more local venues, as reduced transport costs would make this more feasible.

There will be an estate summer event held in the garden, the Almshouses Manager will notify the date in the next two weeks, Trustees will be most welcome to attend.

3. Improvement plan

City of London Major Works team and an external Quantity Surveyor undertook visits to assess the level of work required in each Gresham home. As several of the Gresham Almshouses have recently had major work undertaken when the properties have been vacant, this has reduced some of the anticipated costs; for instance 5 Gresham recently had the kitchen and bathroom replaced as part of void works which will reduce the overall level of funding required.

More detailed plans of the project work are expected by the next Gresham Committee meeting.

4. Communal Garden

The Almshouses Manager has surveyed residents with plans for the communal garden at the rear of the community hall. Residents have made suggestions on planting and layout which have been incorporated into the design. Contractors will be engaged to undertake much of the work after quotes have been submitted. This should enhance the outlook of the communal hall as well as provide comfortable outdoor, private space for residents to socialise.

5. Cat Survey

At residents' request, Officers recently undertook a review of the current Pets Policy as a few residents had expressed a wish to have a cat. A survey was sent to each resident to establish the demand for change – specifically to allow up to two indoor cats. Overall, the response was reasonable – 17 out of 50 residents gave their views – but only 8 residents voted for a change. As there were not enough residents in favour of a change at this time, the current Pet policy will remain in force. Officers have agreed to revisit the policy again in a few years.

6. Vacancies

Since the last update report, Officers have advertised a vacancy in the Square Mile for 5 Gresham Almshouses. Unfortunately, there were no external applicants, thus a resident from City of London Almshouses who had previously expressed an interest in moving into the Gresham Almshouses was very pleased to accept the offer of the property.

We have one new vacancy, which is being advertised within the Square Mile. As the current vacant property requires no major works, officers anticipate they will be able to fill this vacancy quickly.

The waiting list for City of London Almshouses has just reopened after being closed for two years due to the decant process underway at Mais House.

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