

Committee Housing Management & Almshouses Sub-Committee	Dated: 26 09 2017
Subject: City of London Almshouses Update	Public
Report of: Director of Community & Children's Services	For Information
Report author: 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. This report is presented to alternate meetings of the Housing Management and Almshouses 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, which is additional to the current year's budget.

Current Position

2. Waiting List

Officers have recently advertised in local press and City of London housing estates in order to ensure there is a reasonable waiting list for the Almshouses. Prospective Licence holders replying to the advert have been interviewed and reassessed for suitability. Due to unexpected moves off the estate, we currently have two void properties. Officers will make every effort to fill these as soon as possible, to maintain the income from maintenance fees.

3. Social activities

Residents had a special picnic day held last month where the Almshouses Manager had created old fashioned games such as Tombola, Coconut shy, Hook the fish, Jenga and Croquet. The Manager also made a giant scrabble board, and residents enjoyed a game testing their word knowledge against staff. The weather held fair, without being too hot so residents were able to enjoy being

outdoors in the garden. A buffet lunch was provided made by the Almshouses Manager and the Sheltered Housing Officer, consisting of healthy options as well as a sweet treat or two. Many residents attended the event with family guests and children; the event was enjoyed by all.

Residents wished to visit Windsor this year instead of the previous seaside trips; this was arranged for 30 August. There were ten attendees as well as some guests to; all had an enjoyable trip and day out.

4. Weekly Maintenance Charge arrears

One resident is persistently in high arrears with maintenance payments. Officers are working with this resident to support a consistent repayment plan.

5. Refurbishment Programme

Officers and the Major Works Delivery Team have been working closely to prepare the refurbishment plans for the estate agreed for this current financial year.

A full asbestos survey and testing has been undertaken in preparation for the works, as well as CCTV drain inspection. The drain inspection highlighted several issues which will be addressed within the scope of the refurbishment work.

Officers from the Major Works team visited the estate with architects to review the construction of the windows pending consideration on replacement or refurbishment of current window frames. They established that the main building windows (1–38) could easily accommodate replacement double glazed panes of glass without making the building appearance change. However the remaining windows i.e. numbers 39–44, East Lodge, and the Gresham Almshouses, as they are a different design, will be harder to change without noticeable difference. Officers are seeking guidance from London Borough Lambeth Planning regarding their preferences as these few properties are listed buildings.

A detailed report presented to Members once the work plan and full costs have been finalised.

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