

Committee	Dated:
Housing Management & Almshouses Sub-Committee	27/11/17
Subject: Housing Estates – Allocated Members’ Report	Public
Report of: Director of Community & Children’s Services	For Information
Report author: Wendy Giaccaglia, Area Manager, Out-of-City Estates	

Summary

This report, which is for information, provides an update for the Committee on events and activities on the City of London Corporation’s social housing estates.

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.

Recommendation

Members are asked to note the report.

Main Report

Background

1. 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. This report is presented to the Housing Management Sub-Committee twice a year.

General Estate Matters

2. Members toured the estates in September with Housing staff to look at the buildings and grounds, and to speak to staff on the estates.

Avondale Square Estate Manager, Shaun Thurston, and Head of Estates, Bayo Igoh, attended the LB Southwark Housing Heroes Awards in July where the City of London were presented with the Good Landlord Award for the work we do with the wider Old Kent Road community. It was a great honour to have won this award. In addition to this recognition, Shaun Thurston was recognised by the Mayor of Southwark for his contribution to community building in Southwark at the Big Local/South Bermondsey Partnership Champions Event at Millwall’s football ground in June.

3. Following the devastating fire at Grenfell Tower, all estate staff have been working to ensure their estates are made as safe as possible, including ensuring the removal of items in communal areas that may present risks. Fire Risk Assessments are being undertaken on all of our estates, and Estate Managers are accompanying assessors on these visits.
4. Residents are using the NoiseApp to record incidents of noise nuisance from their smart phones. It has aided in the investigation of noise disturbance, as it is easy to use and allows us to hear exactly what the residents are hearing.
5. Several Community events have taken place across several of our estates, including the annual Picnic on the Green on the Avondale Square Estate, which gets better each year. Sumner Buildings had a summer party for the first time in several years with the support of the estate team. Residents enjoyed the event, and vowed to continue it annually. There was a garden party at the City of London Almshouses over the summer which drew residents and their families out to play games and eat lovely food organised by the Scheme Manager and Sheltered Scheme Officer.

Avondale Square Estate – Allocated Member, Deputy John Tomlinson

6. I have been contacted by the Estate Manager, Shaun Thurston, and am looking forward to meeting him and the estate team very soon. In the meantime he has sent me updates on what is going on at the Avondale estate.
7. There have been some changes in staff on the estate since the last report, with Estate Officer, Rachel Punter, taking a secondment opportunity at Mais House where she is the Scheme Manager, working with the few residents remaining in that scheme before it is redeveloped. Adedeji Folami has been covering her post as Estate Officer for Avondale, and he has settled in very well on the estate.
8. I am pleased to announce that both Avondale Community Events (ACE) and the Avondale Estate Team have been recognised and awarded for their achievements on the estate. ACE were national finalists for the TPAS awards in Excellence in Community Action, while the Avondale Estate Team won the Good Landlord award during the Housing Heroes awards for the London Borough of Southwark.
9. ACE held their annual Picnic on the Green on Saturday, 9 September which proved to be a hugely successful day as children across the estate enjoyed a day of activities which included a bouncy castle, face painting and arts and crafts.
10. ACE secured a grant for the planting of a living wall on one of the main garages as you come into the estate. The work has now been carried out and the plants are in, so we are looking forward to seeing the results next summer.

11. In response to residents' concerns about anti-social behaviour on the estate, the estate team have been working hard to improve security and safety. Further CCTV cameras have been fitted across various locations on the estate to monitor the hot spot areas. In addition, the estate team work closely with the local Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT) who have now stepped up patrols within stairwells and communal areas to catch offenders.

Small Estates (Dron House, Isleden House and Windsor House) – Allocated Member, Deputy Elizabeth Rogula

12. I am in regular contact with the Estate Manager, and her team to discuss issues relating to the three small Housing Estates.
13. I am delighted to report the Contractor, Open View, have completed the Electrical testing and smoke detector installation project for all tenanted properties at Windsor House and Dron House.
14. Decent Homes contractor, TSG, held 'Meet The Contractor' events at both Windsor and Dron Houses in August. Tenants were invited to have a look at the different types of kitchens and bathrooms that were being supplied. They were also able to book a survey and an appointment for their property to be inspected. I am pleased to report that these meetings were well attended, with residents feeding back that they appreciated being able to meet the contractor and talk to CoL staff at the same time.
15. I am pleased to report that Dron House Estate has appointed a new Estate Officer. Gavin Orr joined us from Open Spaces in June. Gavin has settled in extremely well and is already held in high regard by the residents, staff and contractors alike. He is an important and valued member of the Dron House Team.

Golden Lane Estate – Allocated Member Barbara Newman, CBE

16. Estate staff would like to welcome Barbara Newman CBE as our new Allocated Member. We look forward to her visiting us and the development of a great working relationship.
17. The Estate Manager and Area Manager (City & Fringes) continue to meet with Cripplegate Ward Members on a regular basis.
18. The Great Arthur House curtain wall project continues. There have been delays due to issues around the window sills, condensation and the final internal finishing. These items are currently being addressed and estate staff continue to keep residents informed through regular newsletters and bulletins.
19. Lift modernisation works are nearing completion. Work is currently being undertaken on the lifts serving Basterfield House and Cullum Welch House. Works on the second lift in Cullum Welch House and the lift in Bowater House will commence in the New Year. We anticipate that all work will be completed by the end of March 2018. Residents are being kept updated on progress.

20. Refurbishment work on the Community Centre has commenced and the new centre has started taking shape. Locality has surveyed residents about the possible move of the estate office to the community centre. They are also working with the community centre steering group on the management of the centre when it reopens in April 2018. We will continue to work with the residents' group and keep the wider estate informed of progress.
21. The tiles for the gable end walls at Stanley Cohen House have finally arrived. The black plastic protection has been removed and the preparation work is well underway. We have kept residents informed about progress and we have been working with those directly affected to ensure that disruption is kept to a minimum.
22. The central heating boilers renewal across the estate is almost complete. Renewal of the boilers in Great Arthur House has been temporarily suspended due to the curtain wall project. Once the work to the block is complete, the new boilers will be installed.
23. Resident drop-in sessions continue to be held regularly. City Officers and contractors are able to engage with residents on a one-to-one basis to discuss projects or matters of personal interest. We remain fully committed to ensuring residents are involved in the development of the community and that they are engaged in discussions about the estate. Members will soon be notified of the drop-in and walk-about dates for 2018.

Holloway & York Way Estates – Allocated Member, Mary Durcan

24. I am pleased to report that I met with Estate Manager Greg Nott and the rest of the team for the first time during a members visit to see both sites. During the visit it was highlighted how well kept and maintained the estates were.
25. I also visited the York Way estate again at the end of September to discuss the estates in more detail with Greg. We discussed upcoming projects and development of the estate. We also discussed estate improvement ideas for the estates, such as the recycling proposal on the Holloway estate. I was pleased to learn that the York Way 50th anniversary celebration is currently being planned, and will be a great highlight for the year to come.
26. Resident meetings were held in September for both Holloway and York Way. The drop-in sessions provided residents with the opportunity for one-to-one discussions with the officers of their choice to be able to talk about things that matter to them. Officers from the estate teams and homeownership attended both meetings, providing information and assistance to the residents.
27. Greg has made some headway on various improvements. York Way has now had approval to refurbish the community hall toilets, and this work is due to start in January 2018. Another small project that is due to go ahead is the much needed replacement of the speed bumps throughout the York way estate.

28. The Holloway Estate Garden Project continues to grow, with more residents taking an interest in the area. A launch party is planned in late November to coincide with the completion of the sheltered seating area. We've applied for additional funding through the City's Stronger Communities grant fund.
29. Some important maintenance projects have taken place and are on-going on both estates. These include the electrical testing and rewiring in properties and communal areas, and Phase Two of Decent Homes for properties in need of kitchen and bathroom replacements.

Middlesex Street Estate – Allocated Member, Deputy Henry Jones

30. Estate Manager, Michelle Warman, has implemented a more customer focused housing team with the support of Matt Ring, Estate Officer and Charlotte Gliniecki, Customer Services Officer. Michelle has made the team more accessible by having alternative housing surgeries on the Podium, and making herself and the team more visible to the residents.
31. Two properties have been investigated for illegal sub-letting, and have been found to have unauthorised occupants living in them. For one of them, the keys have been returned and the Tenancy Fraud team is pursuing a criminal case against the tenant. The other case will likely go through the court process for eviction.
32. Michelle has identified a significant number of vulnerable residents and has been having regular Adults at Risk meetings with Social Services, the Police and Tenancy Support. These meetings have made a difference to the support needs of some residents, with one having been moved to a place of safety. Michelle has made important links with partners of other services, which has had a positive impact on those residents.
33. There have been a number of resident meetings, including the regularly planned drop-in meetings that most of the City Estates have adopted, as it is a more productive way of engaging with residents. At these meetings, residents raised concerns that the estate is particularly vulnerable due to the ANPR system having constant fault. These faults have resulted in the shutters having to be left open, allowing unauthorised access by vehicles, in addition to rough sleepers and drug users. To combat this, Michelle organised an open meeting in May, inviting City Police, St Mungos, ParkGuard and the Homelessness officer for the City of London to speak to residents. This was well attended, and there was a follow-up meeting in August for the Police to update residents on issues that were raised. The ANPR system has been upgraded to a digital system as a result, and is working much better.
34. In May there was a consultation with the young people who use the Youth Club in Middlesex Street. City Gateway, with support from Leila Ben Hassell, discussed what facilities young people would like to have. Their opinions were sought on the proposal for the outdoor gym equipment. Michelle arranged a prize draw vouchers to thank them for their input. A follow-up meeting is planned for before Christmas.

35. Andrew Carter and Jacquie Campbell visited the Estate with Senior Managers in July for a fire safety drop-in following the tragic fire at Grenfell Tower to reassure residents and take questions on any concerns they may have.
36. The Recycling team had a Give and Take day in October to promote recycling in the City and to give residents the opportunity to clear out unwanted items. The Bulk Waste collection team were on-site to take away large items. Michelle used this opportunity to work with a hoarder living in one of the studio flats along with her support worker to make further progress with reducing the amount of clutter in her flat.
37. The survey for the glass panels on Petticoat Tower has been completed and has been incorporated with planned works to replace the current panels with a safer, stronger design.
38. The landscaping project to improve Artizan Street outside Petticoat Tower began in July, and has caused a lot of disruption to the residents and visitors to the Library facilities. Michelle has been working closely with the project Engineer for the City of London and Rineys to communicate progress on the project to residents. In particular, she has planned and managed the car park facilities in conjunction with the contractors to allow the paving work to be completed with as little disruption as possible at the entrance to the car park via Harrow Place.
39. Tesco Funding, managed by Groundworks, is providing a £10,000 grant for Podium Improvement Project, which includes an outdoor gym and improvements to the ball court. This is a resident-led project, with the funds being managed by the Garden Club. They have already made progress with the project and have installed a water feature. The Club are currently working on a space for a memory garden, and repairs and maintenance of the wooden seating and planters.
40. The outdoor gym project, overseen by Leila Ben-Hassell and Michelle, is in the planning stages. The gym is planned to be placed under the arch on the Podium to create a calming space to enjoy the gym equipment. The planters currently situated in this area will be relocated to the area in front of the tower to fill a void space that is currently used for ball games.
41. On the 9th September 2017 along with myself the Garden Club, John Fletcher and the Estate Team we organised and funded a resident summer Podium Party. The Portsoken Volunteers carried out a Musket Display with live fire, and were happy for residents and guests to take advantage of photo opportunities with them. There were activities for the children, including face painting and a bouncy castle. There was live music, food and drink supplied. The Library team were also part of the day and arranged some craft activities for the children. It was very well attended and an example of excellent partnership working between members, Estate Team, Library Team and residents.

42. I was also privileged to organise a very special birthday party on the 17th October 2017 at the Dorsett Hotel as promised for one of our long-term residents Manny Blankett as he reached his 100th Birthday. The Estate Team were a fundamental part of the planning stages, they designed the invitations and met with Manny to put together the list of invites of friends, family and a selection of neighbours which the Estate Team were able to send out and manage the RSVP list. The Estate Manager organised the telegram from the Queen, and once again the Portsoken Volunteers supported this event and welcomed the Lord Mayor & Lady Mayoress into the building. As it was also his birthday I presented both Manny and the Lord Mayor with a birthday cake to celebrate the occasion. Catherine McGuinness, Alderman Sir Michael Bear, Lady Bear and Chief Commoner Wendy Mead were amongst the 80 guests. The Dorsett Hotel very kindly funded the evening as it was a landmark birthday

Southbank Estates – Allocated Member, Randall Anderson

43. Since the last update a resident's drop in session was held in 11th April 2017 at Blackfriars Settlement. A number of residents participated and had discussions with officers about repairs, projects and general estate matters. Dave Walker from Southwark Mediation Service was also on hand to talk to residents about the services his centre offers. Residents continue to give good feedback on the venue and the less formal format of the drop-in sessions.
44. The residents at Sumner Buildings put on a very successful Fun Day event in August. The event was very well attended by residents from all over Southbank Estates and local business provided raffle prizes. There was music and entertainment for the children. The event has now inspired the residents to plan future social events for the estate. The event was supported by the Southbank Estate Team, who not only helped out with the organising, but also approved community grant funding.
45. In August, Andrew Carter held a Fire Safety drop-in at Blackfriars Settlement to give residents reassurance following concerns raised after the tragic Grenfell Tower fire. No residents attended this session, even though it was well-advertised. Feedback we've had from residents following that session was that many felt the City did a good job of giving out clear information in the days and weeks following the tragic fire at the Grenfell tower.
46. The pilot project to install CCTV at William Blake Estate was completed in September. It is hoped that their presence will help to tackle anti-social behaviour in the area. The project has been warmly welcomed by the residents who have been liaising closely with the Estate Teams and local police to improve security around the estate.
47. Committee Members were taken on a tour of Southbank Estates in September, where we had the opportunity to meet some of the Estate Teams.

Sydenham Hill Estate – Allocated Member, Susan Pearson

48. A drop-in session took place in July at the Lammas Green community hall. Residents were given the opportunity to discuss the department's new Allocations Policy as part of the consultation process. Information booklets were distributed and residents were encouraged to complete a survey. Residents also had the opportunity to talk to the new Communications Manager to discuss any concerns about the Mais House redevelopment.
49. Residents at Sydenham Hill Estate are currently being consulted on whether they would like their winter meeting to take place during the day. The summer meeting would continue to be in the evening so that those at work could still attend if they wish.
50. The Estate team are currently exploring solutions to tackle local fly tipping which is becoming a challenge on the estate.
51. Committee Members were taken on a tour of Sydenham Hill Estate in September and had the opportunity to see the inside of Mais House and Lammas Green. I look forward to returning to the estate and working with Sonia, her team, and residents.

Sheltered Housing

Mais House – Allocated Member - Mark Wheatley

52. I met with Jacqueline Whitmore, Sheltered Housing Manager and visited Mais House during the summer.
53. The decant of Mais House residents has gathered pace since the last report with resident moves to their new homes planned up until early December. There may only be three or four residents left in Mais House by the end of 2017 if all goes to plan. London Borough of Lewisham have supported residents who wish to remain in the local area to find new homes through their vacant property adverts, and we have been fortunate that a local Almshouse, St Clements Heights, have been able to allocate homes to six residents, very nearby Mais House.
54. The fish who have long enjoyed their home in the Mais House entrance pond have had a decant of their own – they were moved in the autumn to Harman Close where the pond filters and pumps were upgraded to welcome the new “residents” from Mais House. I’m pleased to say that the move went swimmingly.

Harman Close – Allocated Member - John Tomlinson

55. Work on the garden at Harman Close, undertaken by GroundWorks as part of the Tesco Bags of Help scheme, was completed earlier this year, enabling residents to grow their own vegetables during the summer. Residents also started a gardening club to encourage friends and neighbours to join in their

success. The residents were so pleased with the result of the garden work, Scheme Manager Carl Newbold applied for a further grant to create a picnic area and successfully won £2000 in grant funding.

56. Under the Decent Homes project, work to replace the heating at Harman Close was due to commence in the summer. However, due to technical issues, this work will now commence early Spring 2018. Residents were able to view and “feel for themselves” the new system proposed for their homes as a pilot was run with new radiators installed in an empty flat for residents to view and feel how efficient the system will be even on low settings. This flat is now occupied and the resident is very pleased with the performance and control over his heating system.

Isleden House - Allocated Member Elizabeth Rogula

57. I visited Isleden House during the summer and see Jacqueline Whitmore Sheltered Housing Manager often throughout the year. Isleden House sheltered residents have thoroughly enjoyed the use of their new gym equipment installed a few months ago. One resident has been able to maintain his fitness and upper body strength after vital surgery which has been very positive for him. Several residents who have not taken exercise for more than 20 years have enjoyed a new found energy after beginning a new exercise regimen using the equipment on a daily basis. The residents decided themselves there would be a core time for use so as not to disturb nearby neighbours (9am–5pm daily) and this has been successful. Although the vegetable garden space has been used for the gym area, raised beds were created to make it easier for the keen gardeners to continue growing their favourite vegetables throughout the summer.



58. The communal hall has benefited from a fresh new look after redecoration last month, the colour scheme picked by resident majority choice is very warm and welcoming. The work undertaken included repairs to the entrance hallway, and decorated offices which are now bright and fresh for both residents and staff.

Background Papers

This report was compiled in consultation with the Allocated Members, managers and staff of the City of London's housing estates.

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