

Committee	Dated:
Housing Management & Almshouses Sub-Committee	25 April 2016
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. Tesco have teamed up with Groundwork to launch a grant-giving initiative, which is funded by the 5p bag levy. We are pleased to announce that three of our estates have won grants. Holloway Estate was awarded the £8,000 and a gardening group will be putting the money to good use. Edible Golden Lane was successful in getting the second place amount of £10,000, which will be used to replace bag allotments with raised beds on the Golden Lane Estate. Harman Close on the Avondale Square Estate won the 1st place grant of £12,000. Estate staff will support residents to carry out gardening projects.
3. On 9 December, Members, residents and staff attended the Topping Out ceremony at Avondale Square Estate for the new flats, Estate Office, and Community Centre. At the ceremony, Community & Children’s Services

Committee Chairman Dhruv Patel spoke about our homebuilding target, and guests were given a tour of the worksite.

4. Estates continue to encourage residents to sign up to the Self-Service internet service, where residents can see their rent accounts, report repairs online, and pay their rent.
5. We continue to support tenants through the impact of Universal Credit. The fully live digital service has been rolled out to Avondale Square Estate, meaning that anyone of working age applying for any of the legacy benefits will have to apply online for Universal Credit. A lot of work is going on behind the scenes to identify residents who will be negatively impacted by this new system, and we are working with these residents to minimise the negative impacts.

Avondale Square Estate - Allocated Member, Virginia Rounding

6. Shaun Thurston, the new Estate Manager, has recently emailed me to introduce himself and update me on the many projects happening on the estate. I look forward to meeting him personally on the estate now that he has settled into his role.
7. As mentioned in the general estate matters section of the report, the Harman Close Scheme Manager was successful in getting the first place grant of £12,000 from Tesco Bags of Help. With this, they plan to put in new flower beds, new fencing with a trellis and new paving – which has been needed for some time.
8. The new flats, estate office and community centre are due to be completed at the end of June, and estate staff will be working with residents to make the best use of the new facilities.
9. Decent Homes works are progressing, and Shaun has been meeting with the contractors weekly to discuss progress and any concerns the estate office becomes aware of through residents.
10. In addition to the large projects already happening on the Avondale Square Estate, the Gas Board are carrying out works to move gas supplies from inside flats to the outer fabric of the buildings. This is a very large piece of work, but estate staff have been helping to coordinate it, and have used it as a way to get residents to clear their balconies of clutter.
11. I was proud to hear that several residents and City of London staff received awards from the Mayor of Southwark for their work in improving the South Bermondsey neighbourhood. At a ceremony in February, six residents, along with Kirsty Leitch, Neighbourhood Development and Engagement Manager, and Wendy Giaccaglia, Area Manager for the Out-of-City Estates were presented with the awards.

12. At the City of London Time Credits 4th birthday celebrations in February, the Avondale Square Estate staff, Avondale Community Events, and Edible Avondale SE1 jointly won the "Making a Lasting Difference" award.

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

13. I have met with Angela Smith, the Estate Manager and her team, and have visited all three estates to discuss issues relating to them.
14. Members will recall that we have a Neighbourhood Security Patrol Service, Parkguard, who provide security services to our housing estates in the City and to York Way and Holloway Estate. Parkguard have extended their services to Windsor House to tackle low-level nuisance on our estates. Their work is to support that which is done by the estate office and the local Police, and will also provide an extra sense of security to residents. Patrols started on 1st February 2016, with very positive feedback on this service from residents and staff.
15. The refurbishment project at Dron House was completed on 28 January 2016. The community hall and estate office is now open and functioning, along with a brand new 3-bedroom property. The new resident is preparing to move in by the end of March. The new community centre will be a valuable resource in the local area. Estate Staff are currently negotiating with a local business to set up a community nursery. This will be a pre-school provision Monday to Friday (9-12.30) for children between the ages of 2-5. It is hoped services will commence in May.
16. The Estate staff held an opening reception of the community centre on 10 March. This was an enjoyable evening attended by many residents and staff members.
17. At Isleden House, the London borough of Islington have agreed the pre-planning application in principle for the proposed conversion of a workshop into three flats. This project will provide much-needed additional accommodation to relieve pressure on the City of London's housing register.
18. I hope to attend further resident meetings at Windsor House, Isleden House and Dron House arranged in May and November 2016.

Golden Lane – Allocated Members, Gareth Moore and Deputy John Barker, OBE

19. We communicate on a regular basis with Laurence Jones, the Estate Manager and aim to be a very visible presence on the estate.
20. Members will be pleased to know that the recladding project at Great Arthur House is now well underway. The new windows have passed all the stringent testing and all the technical issues have been resolved. It is hope that by the time this report is published we would have seen the installation of the first

windows. Residents continue to be kept informed of progress through regular bulletins and newsletters. We are working with the contractor to ensure they remain well-supported through the process.

21. The Community Centre has now been returned to the management of the City of London. A joint steering group of officers and residents has been set up to look at ideas and proposals for the future use and management of the centre. Residents will be fully consulted once proposals are collated.
22. The refurbishment of the under-5s play area has now received all the relevant permissions. The contract to undertake the work is currently being tendered. We anticipate that work will be completed in time to allow use in the summer months. There will be no charge to leaseholders or to the Housing Revenue Account.
23. Resident drop-in sessions have now taken the place of the previous format of open meetings. The three drop-in sessions so far held have been an overwhelming success, with a greater number of residents attending. Officers from the City of London, our contractors, and the City of London Police have been in attendance. This format not only attracts a wider audience, but gives those residents who would not usually comment at meetings the opportunity and the ability to speak freely to officers on a one-to-one basis about projects on the estate or surrounding areas. Feedback from residents has been extremely favourable with many supporting this format for continual engagement.

Holloway & York Way Estates – Allocated Members, Deputy Catherine McGuinness, Michael Welbank, MBE and Barbara Newman, CBE

24. We have met with Michelle Warman, the Estate Manager, on a number of occasions over the past few months to discuss issues relating to Holloway and York Way Estate, and have attended walkabouts on each of the estates.
25. Resident Meetings were held on both Estates in March. The York Way meeting, although not very well attended, was very interactive and allowed for residents to discuss issues important to them. The meetings focused on the current major works, such as the new door entry system, the Decent Homes project and concerns regarding repairs. Parkguard patrol officers attended to give residents an update as well as an opportunity to raise any issues with the service. Residents praised the work that Parkguard do in keeping the estate safe and deterring perpetrators of anti-social behaviour.
26. The new door entry system is almost complete on both Holloway & York Way Estate. There have been some issues with works being carried out in early evenings and Saturdays, but on the whole, the process has been managed well by Michelle, the Property Services Team and the contractors, AJS. Michelle has put together a very clear and practical way of issuing the fobs to the residents in good time for the system to go live.

27. The Planning application submitted over a year ago for the redevelopment of the Islington Arts Factory was registered on 18 March 2015. An application has been made to Historic England to list the church properties (Church, old school house and Vergers cottage). This has yet to be determined by Historic England. If it is listed, a listed building application will be required. We have now agreed nomination rights with the London Borough of Islington's Housing Department.
28. Michelle has been working with the London Borough of Islington's local police and three other social landlords - Southern Housing, Hyde and Circle 33 Housing Group to share the cost of neighbourhood patrols by Parkguard, who already work in other parts of Islington to tackle low-level nuisance. They have some powers to assist Police and also have the flexibility to build a rapport with residents on the estates as well as assist in combating anti-social behaviour. This pilot commenced in June 2015, and the feedback so far has been very positive. Parkguard have provided a very detailed report of what they've done so far.
29. Communication with the residents has continued with the review of the quarterly newsletters, regular correspondence and weekly bulletins in the notice boards. Holloway Estate is still developing their Resident Group, and they have incorporated a sub-group to focus on a garden project. The Estate Manager was successful in a bid for external funding from Ground Works for £8,000 from Tesco's 5p carrier bag charges. This was a result of the residents' comments and feedback from our walkabouts to improve the look and feel of the estate. The residents are keen to utilise the services of Ground Works to bring their project to life.
30. We are pleased that both York Way and Holloway Residents are planning community events for HRH The Queen's birthday and will also be taking the opportunity to earn Time Credits. To date there have been 416 time credits earned across both Estates. The Time Credit programme has also been an opportunity for residents to network with other resident groups around idea generating, funding, and support.

Middlesex Street Estate - Allocated Member, Deputy Henry Jones

31. I maintain regular contact with the Estate Manager, Paul Richardson and discuss any issues with him as and when they arise.
32. Greg Nott has settled very well into the role of Estate Officer. He has brought with him new processes and streamlined old ones. These have been well received, and have enabled the estate to run smoothly. Billy Lambert, Customer Services Officer, also continues to provide a high level of service, and I know that his efforts are much appreciated by Paul Richardson.
33. The latest Residents' Meeting was held on Wednesday 10th February and was well attended by residents. Among the subjects discussed were food recycling, the City of London Police update, the on-going ramp removal project, and project updates for the estate.

34. The outdoor gym proposal is still in discussion, and further information on progress will be communicated to the estate when it becomes available.
35. A shopkeepers meeting was held on Wednesday 2nd March. During the meeting, we discussed leases, estate issues, and recycling for the commercial units. It is anticipated that if the commercial units were to recycle, a saving could be made for each unit. The estate team and Amey (our refuse contractor) are to commence recycling for the commercial units in the new financial year.
36. The estate recycling area has recently been moved from outside the car park shutters to inside the ground floor car park. The sign has been moved to redirect residents to the correct area. The estate team continue to work closely with their recycling colleagues to increase recycling participation on the estate.
37. A few residents organised a children's Christmas party at the estate. Lots of children attended and had great fun on the day. Snacks and juice were provided, as well as a gift for each child.

Southbank Estates – Allocated Member, Randall Anderson

38. An open meeting for residents was held in December 2015, taking on a more festive feel as an informal drop-in session. Staff served mulled wine and mince pies to residents as they took the opportunity to talk to officers and managers on a one-to-one basis. Staff sought residents' views for the recently updated Estate Plan. Updates were given on forthcoming estate projects and ideas for community events.
39. Lift renewal works have started at Collinson Court. The project has gone very well so far, with the works running approximately three weeks ahead of schedule. Estate staff are hopeful that a local project to install CCTV in the new lifts to detect and deter vandalism will be approved.
40. In February, a Pancake Mardi Gras celebration was held at Collinson Court on Shrove Tuesday. The event was a huge success involving residents of all ages, local businesses and voluntary groups. They took part in pancake tossing races, face painting and adapted bicycle rides. It's hoped that this will be the first of many events.
41. Deputy Chairman, Ann Holmes, accompanied the Director of Community and Children's Services on a tour of the Southbank Estates in February to explore sites for potential housing development.
42. Since the last report, there have been some staff changes. The Estate Officer for William Blake Estate left the City in January to take up a post with Guinness Trust Housing. In January, a new Estate Officer for Sumner Buildings, Jack Balnaves, joined the Southbank team from Hackney Homes. He is really making an impact on the estate so far, and is very proactive.

43. The defects liability period at Horace Jones House is almost up. There have been many challenges, but estate management staff are working in partnership with City Surveyors and the developers to resolve outstanding issues.

Sydenham Hill Estate – Allocated Member, Mark Wheatley

44. I had an enjoyable tour of Sydenham Hill Estate and Mais House in January where I was able to meet with estate staff. I am delighted to learn that visits have been arranged for other members to see Sydenham Hill and Mais House. Two resident meetings were held in January at Sydenham Hill Estate. The first was to seek residents' views on the content of the Estate Plan, which is soon to be distributed to all residents. The second was a general open meeting. A representative from the gardening contractors, Walworth Garden, attended to talk about their work as a registered charity and their ethos of trying to give young people a start in working life. Residents appreciated hearing this, and were very complimentary about the standard of ground maintenance Walworth Garden is providing on the Estate.

Sheltered Housing – Allocated Members, Ann Holmes and Mark Wheatley

45. We have spoken with Jacqueline Whitmore on several occasions recently to discuss matters relating to all the sheltered schemes, and to arrange visits.

46. Each sheltered estate enjoyed celebratory events over the Christmas period including lunches out in local restaurants, quizzes and live music entertainment.

47. As previously reported, City of London Officers are continuing to work with residents at Mais house after the decision of the Community and Children's Services Committee in January to redevelop the site. Residents have been interviewed and initial details of preferences for home moves have been gathered.

48. As mentioned in the General Estates Update section, Harman Close Scheme Manager, Carl Newbold, has successfully won a grant through an initiative called Tesco Bags of Help. The grants are raised from the 5p bag levy recently introduced. Carl is delighted with winning bid and the residents at Harman close are looking forward to a revamped garden for the summer.

49. Residents at Isleden House are in consultation with Fusion regarding the installation of an outdoor gym. The gym is designed to encourage older people to undertake outdoor exercise and promote healthier living. In February, a local youth group, Urban Hope, visited the residents for a skills exchange. Residents taught the group how to play old fashioned card games and how to knit and crochet, whilst the group reciprocated by helping residents with their electronic glitches, like how to manage text messages on mobile phones, reprogramming a kindle and setting up a DVD so one resident could have subtitles on his films. The group enjoyed their time at Isleden

House so much that they have invited the residents to a supper night at their hall where they will be cooking the meal themselves.

Background Papers

50. 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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