

TRA Chairs Meeting

Fri 8 May 2009

Millwall Housing Office

Agenda

1. Board Minutes
2. Estate signage
3. Repair reporting to CCC – free phone
4. Community section - IH newsletter
5. Invoices Processing –Delayed payments
6. Resident profile information
7. Rent Increases & Statements
8. Community Chest process and payments
9. Major Works – Consultation
10. Major Works - Contractors
11. Chair – conflict of interest
12. Castalia Square
13. Roadmap- sub group
14. Estate agreements
15. Parking
16. SLA
17. Staffing issues

Points 13, 14, 15, 16 were not discussed due to a lack of time.

They will be added to the agenda for the next meeting.

1. Board Minutes

Chairs expressed their disappointment that the minutes of the Board Meetings had not been circulated as agreed. The last minutes received were June 2008 from Grace. CK agreed that the minutes should be circulated and are also placed in reception for all residents to view.

Action: CK to check the reception areas for copies of board minutes and to ensure missing minutes are circulated to all Chairs.

2. Estate Signage

The group discussed the process at length, it was accepted that some consultation had taken place. However chairs felt this had stopped last summer and apart from some ad-hoc consultation this process has now stopped. All agreed that signs had been agreed however it was felt that sign-off had not occurred and confusion existed amongst members on what had been agreed.

Action: CK to obtain the final versions and circulate final decisions and obtain sign off. This needs to be followed up in writing to ensure the final design is approved. Whilst it was clear that some communication on this matter had occurred i.e. colour, bold writing etc., it remained unclear what had been agreed. The final draft will be circulated and signed off by each TRA at their next meeting and each design will be specific to each area.

3. Repair reporting to CCC

All Chairs expressed concern calls to the CCC were charged. Chairs felt that this should be a free phone number and were concerned that the MD could not change this. Examples were given of poor service:

1. reporting repairs via Castalia Sq
2. length of call 20 mins
3. turn around times not adhered to by some contractors (EPS)
4. calls put on hold for long periods
5. Kingdon House communal lights not fixed and left on rather than on a timer
6. contractors pulled off other jobs when complaints made (RS – last Thursday)

Action: CK to report request for a free phone number to IH board and include budget costs. Board to direct on next course of action i.e. resident survey, executive report. Comments and concerns to be submitted to CCC for investigation.

4. Newsletters

The group discussed the resident's newsletter. One view was to have a TRA page in the newsletter. 3 chairs preferred to produce their own in-house newsletters and asked that the financial support be put in place to enable this to happen.

Action: It was agreed that a section of the next newsletter will be set aside for the TRA's. If they do not wish to use this space it will be used, where possible for residents letters or to promote events.

Action: CK to discuss TRAs financing arrangements with Alan M. The chairs view differed. TRA's would like the financing sorted out for their own PR.

5. Invoices

Chairs expressed concern around the length of time it takes for invoices (Service) to be paid. They all feel that this had deteriorated. Examples were given. Some concern was also expressed around service payments for the Friendship Club. The levels of invoices were high suggesting that no payments had been made. CK advised that she felt this was odd as the personnel dealing with payments remained unchanged.

Action: CK to investigate.

6. Resident profile

The meeting discussed the resident profiling form at length. Members general felt that it was intrusive and some questions were unnecessary. The meeting reviewed the form.

1. Next of kin - not necessary for all just for the elderly
2. Family details - why was this needed IH should already have it. We discussed changes in composition i.e. death, new baby, children moving out.
3. It was suggested that some area Profiling information could be obtained from Lap 8
4. Special Needs - not prepared to put disability on the form
5. Chairs advised that information sent out with the OHG logo on does not get read by many residents.
6. One chair felt that a presentation explaining a process at a TRA meeting before circulation of documents would aid with their completion

7. Rent Increases & Statements

Chairs expressed concern around this years rent increase. Examples were present of LH who had kept their increase low. CK explained the RPI is taken from September and next year RPI if forecast to be very low. The Governments rent reforms were explained in that the formula for increasing rents is set by central government and all rented accommodation regardless of landlord must achieve the target rent by 2010.

Concerns was raised regarding inaccurate service charge figures, some examples were given where there is not break down for services on the statement. In addition to this examples were quoted on statements containing inaccurate payment details. I.e. A credit payment is shown as a debit thus placing residents in arrears when they are not.

Action: CK to investigate with the rents team and report back.

Please Note: due to the fact that this is not a problem for all residents, names and addresses may be required to successfully investigate and resolve the problem.

8. Community Chest

The meeting discussed the Community Chest. CK advised that over 110K had been spent in the last financial year. Chairs expressed concern that some applications placed several months ago have not been processed. CK confirmed that there were no outstanding applications.

Action: CK to discuss with the Community Investment Team and establish why forms have not been processed and check where money has been paid. I.e. Club 55

9. Major Works - Consultation

Chairs expressed concern around the lack of consultation on the external programme. They advised it had started some time ago but had stopped almost a year ago. The exception to this was consultation on contractor appointments for the CCC and recently a print out of the proposals for the Playgrounds – print out by Alan. Some discussion around Baily and Gardner and Farra Huxley occurred.

Action: CK to discuss consultation programme with the major works team and report back.

10. Major Works - Contractors

The Chairs all expressed concern on the number of contractors on site assessing properties and taking photos. Whilst it was understood that this was linked to major works and the contractor tendering process, it was agreed that residents may find this concerning. It was agreed that advising residents that contractors are on site and explaining the reasons why would be beneficial.

Action: In the future; Information to be sent to residents advising them of the attendance of contractors. Contractors (including sub contractors to report to Millwall). Where possible High Vis jackets to be issued and all contractors. All contractors to wear / produce ID badges.

11. Conflict of interest

The 4 Chairs expressed concern around the IH Board chair and his appointment to the position of leader of the council. They all felt this created a conflict of interest.

Action: CK to raise concerns with the chair and report back.

12. Castalia Sq

The meeting discussed the use of Castalia Sq as an office. All agreed it was ideally located the chairs advised that residents visited this office more than they did Samuda. The general view was that the office should be a permanent office subject to some internal changes.

Action: Long term CK to review the location as part of the accommodation review and seek residents' opinion on location. Short term CK to review changes to reception area.

17. Staffing

Some chairs expressed concern around their CDO. Examples were presented such as failure to attend meetings, attitude. CK advised that she noted the concerns but questioned why they had not been raised with the manager. The chairs affected confirmed that their concerns along with others had been raised with Alan M but when he exculpated he was not getting a response. CK disagreed with this and advised that the manager is responsible for staffing issues and community issues and if there were performance issues he should deal with them. She confirmed that IH does have procedures for dealing with staff performance which could ultimately result in termination of employment.

Action: CK to raise the issues with Alan and Michelle

Proposed date for next meeting: Fri 29th May 2009, 2 – 4pm, location: tbc

Date and time to be agreed and the Board Chair to attend.