

Summary of Resident Panel meeting

held on January 16 2020 at Cloudesley House, 16b Cloudesley Street, London N1 0H

Residents Present: Liam, Dot, Logan, Janice, Fenan, Steve, James

Staff/Board: Susan French (CEO) (SF)
Pam Sedgwick (Operations Director) (PS)
Nancy Korman (Board member) (NK)
Barbara Sidnell (Board member) (BS)
Dean McGlynn (Project Manager) (DMc)

1. Welcome and Introductions

Apologies were received from Chris.

2. Repairs Schedule

The repairs schedule that will set out the repair responsibilities for tenants and BHA was reviewed again.

NK asked if a simpler version would be available for older or more vulnerable residents. PS said that this would be simpler for all residents and that staff have a good overview of extra services older and more vulnerable residents receive.

Janice and Liam asked if this applied to upgrades that residents have made to their homes and if BHA would take retrospective action where permission has not been given to residents to carry out these upgrades.

PS confirmed that this would not be the case, within certain safety limits, and it would be made clear that these would be assessed on an individual basis but residents should ask permission for any alterations or adaptations they have made to their home. This should include any relevant certificates that prove they have been carried out safely.

It was agreed that the table would be updated in line with Liam's additions and changes and would be circulated to the panel to be signed off for the end of January.

It was agreed that BHA's recharging policy should be reviewed at an upcoming meeting.

3. Caretaking and Estate Services

In light of recent changes to caretaking staff, PS wanted to update the panel on how we might deliver the caretaking service in the future.

PS described some options that are being looked at and any that seem feasible will be brought back for further discussion.

Steve wondered if the caretaking service includes cleaning and believed that this should be improved at Highbury View. Dot added that the service was very valuable to the

sheltered housing service at Highbury. Steve agreed but also thought there should be greater clarity on the role of a caretaker in relation to Highbury View.

PS added that in any new service a one-off 'big clean' would be done in order to set standards for staff and establish expectations that residents should have of the service.

If any new service was to be implemented or current arrangements extended, PS confirmed that if this would result in any increase in Service Charges then residents would be consulted with beforehand.

PS also confirmed that 3-monthly walkarounds are being done by staff and that residents will be invited to join these once we have completed one further cycle of visits.

4. Fire Safety and Communal Areas

PS set out that BHA have been advised by our H&S consultant to take a zero-tolerance view on items left in communal areas. BHA has historically been lenient with residents on this issue but are now stepping up efforts to remove items or get residents to remove them on their own.

The panel were shown examples of items being left in communal areas and agreed that these should be removed as soon as possible.

Dot believed that BHA should make it clear to tenants that if there are any accidents involving these items, they may be liable.

PS also updated the panel that there will be a programme of Fire Safety works at Highbury View over the next few months to comply with Fire Risk Assessments and get communal and flat doors up to the latest fire safety standards. This will be followed by works to other blocks most of which are of a lower priority.

5. Green Doctors

PS informed the panel that BHA are working with the Green Doctors service to provide energy saving advice to residents. This service has proven successful with other housing associations to assess the energy performance of people's homes and provide them with advice on switching energy providers and installing smart meters.

At present BHA have 50 free visits to residents from the Green Doctors. PS encouraged the panel to make an appointment with the service and also to tell their neighbours to do so too. If there is demand, BHA will increase the number of visits Green Doctors will carry out.

Steve asked what BHA could do to ensure that more vulnerable or private residents know that this service is available. PS confirmed that BHA will try and target residents they know could benefit from a visit.

Steve also asked that the staff members covering Highbury View in Graham's absence make residents there aware of this service.

6. **Anti-Social Behaviour Review**

PS introduced this item as the beginning to an Anti-social Behaviour (ASB) policy developed with residents. This is in light of a general increase in ASB across BHA's estates. The panel asked if figures could be broken down by estate and clearly marked by season.

PS added that the staff time and resources needed to tackle ASB were significant and this had an effect on BHA delivering other services. PS was looking for volunteers to help work on development of a new policy and procedures to help staff and inform residents about dealing with ASB.

Steve stated that CCTV is an important tool in dealing with ASB and is significantly cheaper now. Steve added that vulnerable residents must be provided with support in reporting and dealing with ASB. Steve also added that BHA may need an independent person or organisation to provide objective points of view and insight when it comes to complex cases involving residents.

BS believed that BHA must assess local resources and solutions to ASB from Islington Council and other local organisations. BS added that young people would also need to be involved for this to be successful. Dot agreed and added that older people's input must be recognised, especially when it comes to older members of families, to help deal with ASB.

Fenan and Liam agreed that this is a hard issue for Housing Associations to tackle but that guidance to residents and giving residents confidence in BHA's policy and procedures was important to the success of this.

BS and Fenan agreed to volunteer for PS's policy review.

7. **Domestic Abuse Policy Development**

Following the review of the draft Domestic Abuse policy, PS confirmed that Logan and Janice have agreed to help in creating a new policy for BHA.

BS asked if this would include Elder Abuse. PS confirmed this would overlap with this topic as well as the safeguarding policy.

8. **Any Other Business**

SF informed the panel that BHA produce summary Board minutes along with resident panel minutes that are posted in the window of 60 Morland Mews and on BHA's website. The panel received a copy of the board summary minutes and the Board see the Resident Panel minutes.

Along with the Recharge policy, SF added that BHA's Sustainability strategy and Community strategy would be useful for the panel to look into at upcoming meetings.