

**Queensland Road Residents Association Meeting
Meeting – 10 January 2017**

Attendees (13)

Karshan Moodley (Chair)
Alex Fisher (Vice Chair)
Anna Morkowska (Treasurer)
Lizzie Ramsey (Secretary)
Rhys Morgan
Rebecca Anderson
Laura Roughan
Natalie Tuckwell
Nuria Martinez
David Gritzman
Vanessa Bassan
Vivian Buffard
Micheal Soteriou

Apologies

Dom Manley
Fiona Green

Review of the Constitution and Roles of Committee Members

1. Role of Committee Members (taken from the Constitution)

The roles of the committee members was reviewed.

- a) The Chairperson will:
 - i. Usually chair all meetings.
 - ii. Ensure that all can contribute without interruption.
 - iii. Prepare the agenda with the secretary and ensure that all agenda items are resolved.
- b) The Secretary will:
 - i. Deal with all correspondence.
 - ii. Keep minutes of all meetings and records.
 - iii. Prepare the agenda with the chairperson.
- c) The Treasurer will:
 - i. Keep up to date records of all transactions.
 - ii. Make sure all members of the Association receive all their expenses promptly.
 - iii. Make regular financial reports and prepare the accounts for auditing by Newlon.
 - iv. Present accounts to Newlon for auditing.
- d) General Members of the Committee will:
 - i. Work as part of a team and have the right to represent the association of outside bodies.
- e) The Vice-chair will:
 - i. Act as a deputy to the Chair
 - ii. Take chairpersons duties in their absence.

The RA also reviewed the main priorities of the RA, which were established in the June 2016:

- a) Service Charge / Management (at present)
- b) Co-op
- c) Neighbourhood Watch
- d) Arsenal
- e) Highbury Ward Partnership
- f) Social Activities for Queensland Road Residents
- g) Service Charge / Management (Historic)
- h) To report all minutes from meetings and further updates using the notice boards

Engagement

1. Communications and decision making

A new process was agreed for communication lines to Newlon and for decision making. This aims to make the RA more representative and transparent and to prevent miscommunication.

Decision Making

If a decision needs to be made by the RA which involves changes to communal facilities / the way we use our buildings (a "bigger decision"), all General Committee Members (members who attend meetings) will need to vote. General Committee Members will have 48 hours to vote after the meeting if fewer than 80% are in attendance at the meeting. For a decision to be made and then actioned the majority of the general members will need to be in agreement. If there is complete rejection, the issue will be held til the next meeting for discussion.

Once there is better communication with other Members living on the road who do not attend meetings (through new website / postering) decision making and voting can be reviewed.

Formal Communications to Newlon:

If a deadline set by Newlon is involved, the Committee will send a holding email to let Newlon know they would like to formally respond.

The Decision Making Voting Process will then be implemented.

Once the decision is made the Committee (Chair / Vice Chair / Secretary / Treasurer) will review all correspondence before it is sent officially. This will help to alleviate any unintentional miscommunication.

2. Engagement with Residents

A wix website has been set up to contain RA information. Residents will be able to vote for any suggestions made by the RA moving forward. The website contains links to the Facebook page and to subscribe to mailing list.

Newlon has informed the Secretary that the RA now needs to send out correspondence. A mailchimp account has been set up in order for residents to subscribe to receiving minutes.

This has been placed on the new website and will also be sent to Newlon to send out with the January minutes.

A short summary of minutes will now also be posted on the Facebook Page. The same summary will be postered on the notice board in each block. Full minutes will be posted on the RA Website and will be sent to those who subscribe to the new mailing list.

Poster boards have now been placed in all buildings and are important so the RA can keep residents informed. The following people are responsible for the notice boards:

No1 – Natalie Tuckwell & Vanessa Bassan

No3 – Alex Fisher

No34 – Karshan Moodley

In buildings where there are no reps all of the above people will try to access and update the notice boards. If anyone would like to sign up and help they can contact the Residents association email account.

Some General Members have noted that they would like to find a better way to support people who have taken on tasks for the RA.

Viv Buffard is leading on the communal garden project for numbers 1 & 3 Queensland Road's communal garden. It is hoped that more incentives like this can progress moving forward. However, some responses have not been positive, it was noted we need to keep improving on communication.

This is the same for NHW stickers. Both NHW & the communal gardening project in No. 1 & 3 have been supported by the RA.

For support, it was agreed projects are now run by "teams" of people as opposed to one person in particular.

3. Facebook groups – Queensland Road

Admin for the group confirmed as: Viv Buffard, Alex Fisher, Nora McGregor and Natalie Tuckwell.

A Residents Association Facebook profile has been set up to make posts on Facebook. This will make clear when the RA is behind an initiative which has been suggested and is being implemented by the RA. The account will be used to post minutes and points of discussion.

4. RA social event / resident engagement

The RA wants to engage more, accumulate more General Committee Members who attend meetings and help implement initiatives.

The RA also wants residents involved with their work as a community and it is felt a social event may help. This has been advertised on the website and will be discussed in more detail at the next meeting.

5. Garden Project (1 & 3 only)

There has been progress with help from Judith Perry at Newlon: a small first group of residents (and two children) planted over 150 bulbs and some herbs, with compost added to the soil. Lots of interest via Facebook on being involved. Gardening advice has been given from the local community group at Olden Garden, Drayton Park.

However, during the planting event we discovered that the outdoor tap & a tap in the cupboard on floor 2 which we were given keys for are not connected to the mains or the rainwater collector on roof. Plants cannot be watered and will be a problem during drier months. Newlon have been informed and are investigating.

The order of tools, a low-level raised bed and storage box (that Newlon have offered to purchase from their community initiatives funding, not from service charge) is on hold until residents of 1 & 3 Queensland Road have been consulted and the water supply issue is resolved.

To date there has been good response, but the RA has received one objection (due to lack of consultation and the initiative itself) and as such we have to assume there will be others who will object too.

It was agreed to roll out a consultation over the next month and to manage responses whilst Newlon resolves the problem of the water supply. It was highlighted that it was good to highlight this issue to Newlon, as historically, the gardeners have not been able to tend to the communal terrace properly.

The consultation is now underway through the website and volunteers / objections can be voiced to Queenslandroadresidents@gmail.com.

Neighbourhood Watch

There has still been no buy in to the scheme. Agreed to advertise the scheme more on the new website, facebook, and on the notice boards.

Vivian is meeting the coordinator of the Highbury Stadium Apartments scheme for advice. Rebecca Anderson mentioned that she used to live at this development and the scheme was a success there.

There has been some objection to the stickers which were placed on the entrances to buildings in November. To be part of the scheme and its benefits (such as lower insurance costs) the stickers need to be displayed. We have been sent new stickers but they still have compare the market meerkats on as they sponsor the scheme. The RA agreed to display these on the notice boards so residents can see them and provide feedback over the next few months. It was also agreed that they could perhaps be displayed in a more subtle location, or we could contact the council to see if we can put them on the lamp posts on the road.

We will also look to engage with the Coop on the scheme and to put posters up in the Co-op.

Antisocial Behaviour

It was also discussed that the main issue on the road is not Crime, but it is mainly Anti Social Behaviour. Vivian is engaging with the Hub on this and they are thinking of ways to reduce the problem.

Alex and Karshan attended the last Highbury West Ward Meeting and they advised that it was reported that Newlon has been told by the council to improve their control of ASB.

The RA would like Newlon to engage with Neighbourhood Watch and discuss how we can engage better on this issue and link up the initiatives. This is to be discussed in detail when Newlon attend our meeting.

The RA also will try to invite a rep from Neighbourhood Watch and the Hub.

The RA also discussed the cost of a patrol by the Council. Rhys Morgan offered to look into this.

Newlon

Newlon have agreed to meet at our March Meeting. Please note this will only be for General Committee Members who have attended meetings to date.

Topics for discussion to be agreed in the February Meeting and it was agreed that this **will not** relate to the service charge where possible. Rather the RA wishes to focus on other initiatives (such as Neighbourhood Watch / Community Events)

Newlon have agreed to speak with the Isobel Place Residents Association and ask them about attending a meeting / providing some guidance in terms of managing expectations

There is a training course for "Effective Meetings" which starts on 7 Feb 2016. This explores the role of a chairperson before, during and after meetings, examines the key duties of a chair person, looks at the skills and personal qualities of a chairperson to manage a variety of different situations and to pick up tips on effective chairing. The training contains online forums, games and videos to inspire. A number of General Committee Members are going to sign up to this course. Vivian to forward details to the general committee members.

Service Charge

To date Karshan has sent letters to Newlon requesting sight of the accounts on behalf of the RA. We have been advised that the documents should be made available to view from 9 January 2017.

Rebecca Anderson & Rhys Morgan are both accountants and have agreed to provide some guidance for responding to the Service Charge Accounts Statement for 2015/2016. They are to set up a working group with Karshan and Alex.

For the review of the service charge statement be an efficient process it was recommended that the key lines with the biggest variances should be focused on.

The working group will also try to gain some insight into what the service charges are for other similar buildings in the area as again this should help to bring some focus back to what we are trying to achieve.

The RA was happy for the working group to move forward on this basis and the working group will report findings briefly at each meeting.

1. Other Outstanding building issues (responses from Newlon to November meeting)

a) Water testing answers (health issue for **1 Queensland Road only**)

*Residents of **1 Queensland Road** understand that the insulation of the water pipes in the building is faulty and although Bill provided reassurance that the cold water is safe, would it be possible to have some certification/ proof of water testing from the Head of Building Services.*

Newlon will provide certification for the most recent sample.

b) Extraction systems (fire & safety issue)

The RA realises that the cooker hoods & extraction systems are the responsibility of individual properties. However the query relating to the extraction systems was mainly related to the servicing of the fans and filters / vents in communal areas. How often are they serviced, and why do they need to be serviced this often?

*It has also been queried whether vents / windows can be opened at **10 Queensland Road**.*

The filters and fans on the roof are serviced twice yearly.

*Vents are permanently open, but the windows cannot be opened at **10 Queensland Road**. (contained in the October minutes)*

c) Gardening (at present only for the communal garden at **1 & 3 Queensland Road**)

Vivian Buffard met the gardeners recently as she is setting up a community flower bed on the communal terrace (as advertised on the facebook group). She found out that John O'Connors do visit every 2 weeks but they do not have access to taps on the communal terrace and cannot water the plants. This is being followed up with Newlon.

Amended to read 2 weeks rather than 3 weeks.

The community garden is to be trialled for a 3 month period. Newlon are going to provide Vivian with keys to the taps, and also will be helping RE the cost of the plants.

*The green roof at **1 Queensland Road** has been confirmed as the responsibility of Arsenal to maintain. This is to be bought forward with Arsenal.*

d) Cleaning

Claudia has now inspected the condition of the buildings on Queensland Road and felt that the standard of cleaning was acceptable.

*The RA has noticed that in **3 Queensland Road** the quality of the floor cleanliness has improved, and also that corner protectors have been put up outside the lifts on all floors. However there are some, perhaps more reactive maintenance issues (such as damage to the wood frames around doors on the ground floor) that they would like to be investigated further if possible. Additionally, bar code stickers have been left on the corner protectors.*

*It was reported that in **34 Queensland Road** the quality of cleaning is still not acceptable – marks on the carpeting from rubbish etc.*

It was suggested that LR should get in contact with Claudia and perhaps have a walk around one day also with Wates, so expectations of the quality of repairs & cleaning can be fully understood. It would also be useful if the RA could be informed of any “big cleaning” / maintenance projects that are upcoming so they are better aware of what is being programmed for the buildings.

Karshan Moodley (the Chair) met with Claudia Kirby (Neighbourhood Officer) and completed the walk around at 34. The quality of repairs and cleaning were found to be to a good standard by Newlon.

e) Concierge (cost issue)

This is still a concern as a cost, as it is significant and Resident's cannot see / understand the benefit to the concierge.

Concierge carry out Health & Safety patrols, monitor CCTV 24/7 and report repairs. Jane Collins (PA to Housing Director) to provide the Concierge full job description.

f) To get a process agreed for reporting on repairs from the CRM system (maintenance)
To be sorted with Newlon still

Repairs are picked up through the Service Centre, the Estate Inspectors and RLR also report repairs during estate inspections.

g) To work with someone from Newlon on a quarterly basis to discuss and plan costings and contracts (rather than query them retrospectively). (cost issue)
To be sorted with Newlon and perhaps tie in with attendance at a quarterly meeting?

All contracts are tendered and when section 20 notices are sent out, residents are given the opportunity to view proposed contracts. We are happy to send out

In the future, where possible the RA would like to be better informed about the production of the Service Charge, and would be grateful if Newlon could attend a meeting to discuss the statement once it is confirmed.

The Estates Team are happy to discuss and attend a meeting early next year 2017.

Co-Op

There was an armed robbery at the Co-Op on 17 December

The RA to investigate engaging with the Coop on the Neighbourhood Watch and anti social behaviour.

Arsenal

Issue of noise from the Astro Pitches continues. Keir carried out a sound check and said the building is sound proofed. However the noise is still unacceptable and discussions continue with Arsenal.

Islington Council

Car parking update from Natalie – Natalie has sent results of her survey to the council. Request is for Loading bays only.

It was noted that you can buy visitor parking badges for the road from the council so residents or visitors **can** park if necessary.

Highbury Ward Partnership

AOB

1. Leaking toilets – Most toilets have this problem in 1 & 3 Queensland Road. There is a build up of limescale in the valve for the flush which means water continuously flows into the bowl. The valve requires replacement to avoid increased water bills. There is a video on the facebook group and details to be put on the RA website to raise awareness.
2. Eon – Many households have been hit by higher bills as Eon put them on the wrong tariff. However, these additional charges have been found to be incorrect. Vivian to email Newlon the full details. The RA would like Newlon to communicate details to all residents as some households have been hit by bills in excess of £500 which will cause considerable worry.

Next Meeting

The next meeting is 8 February.

The March Meeting is 8 March.