

## **Residents Association Meeting 5 September 2016**

Attended:

Bill Henderson, Newlon  
Samir Singh, Arsenal the Hub

Karshan Moodley  
Alex Fisher  
Anna Morkowska  
Vivienne Buffard  
Nora McGregor  
Natalie Tuckwell

Apologies:

Lizzie Ramsey  
David Gritzman  
Laura Roughan

### **1. Noise nuisance from the Hub AstroTurf football pitches into flats**

Natalie represented the problem on behalf of Nora (Tower 1) and Dan Kfoury (Tower 3). Samir Singh said that Arsenal's legal team are in conversation with the contractors, Kier, to try and get them to come and assess the problem and, more importantly, to make remedial changes. This has been ongoing for several months. Samir stressed that he is keen to try and get the problem fixed, and stressed that Newlon also need to put pressure onto Kier.

Samir agreed to get back to us before our next meeting. The RA also requested that Newlon/Bill put some pressure onto Kier as we are their tenants and some residents are not able to enjoy their homes without noise until after 10pm.

### **2. "Green roof" unsightly area on the roof above the Arsenal Hub.**

This was brought to the attention of Samir Singh, who wasn't aware that it was Arsenal's responsibility. Anna left photos of it for Samir after the meeting. Samir said he will look into and find out when it can be addressed (access is only via the Hub roof, not via the flats, although residents could show the scale of the problem from their flats).

### **2. Service charge / Management**

This took up the majority of the meeting, but was very useful as Karshan and Alex were able to ask several in-depth questions of Bill Henderson from Newlon, using the detailed answers from previous questions posed to Newlon and Judith Hughes, Head of Estate Management.

A summary of the main points and requests are detailed below:

#### **Communal cleaning**

**RA Question** : Please can we have copies of the Daily and Weekly Checklists emailed to the Residents Association

Varying levels of satisfaction. Requested from Bill Henderson: a copy of the checklist of the cleaning schedule as well as the SLA. Bill suggested that a meeting/walk round with the cleaning company should be organised ASAP to nip problems in the bud. Bill to ask Smarter Services to get in contact with the RA

#### **Pest control**

**RA Question** : Please can the RA be provided with Proofing works?  
Can we also confirm that there are no additional charges for works and maintenance, *i.e. blocking rat and vermin holes?*

Requested from Bill Henderson: a copy of the SLA

### **CCTV and Security**

**RA Question** : Please can we understand why there is £4500 worth of running costs when no equipment has been replaced ?

A question was raised as to why, if no equipment was replaced over the last 24 months, was the cost was so high. Bill to investigate.

### **Security and H&S patrols**

**RA Question** : The Residents of Queensland Road have overwhelming consensus on this matter.

We are not receiving value for this service.

As this is not a Value Added Service, we pass a motion to remove the service

( We request the full SLA for concierge inspection specification )

A high level of dissatisfaction regarding value for money. It's a 4 year contract, our only option is to challenge it via a first tier tribunal. Requested from Bill Henderson: a copy of the SLA and the concierge contract that is for the Queensland road development and to be discussed a method to collate our feedback to Newlon on the concierge.

Concern on Fire panels, the concierge are meant to check the panels daily and the fault was not picked up and only reported not working by Alex Fisher. Requested from Bill Henderson: he will check why the repair has not been completed on such a priority item such as the Tower 3 fire panel. It has been noted that the Concierge service has failed to perform a daily / weekly task.

### **Communal electricity**

**RA Question** : As we pay for the electricity, we require the individual bills for each block provided to the RA please.

The EPC rating for Queensland Road is A+, with 8 blocks totalling an average of £20000 per annum in Electricity charges. Please can you explain why the electricity bill is approx. £200k per year ?

Concerns were raised as the building is A+ rated and all the lights are LED, as to why the bill is so high. Requested from Bill Henderson: a copy of the bill, and Newlon to check the meter readings are correct and being passed to the supplier for accurate billings as smart meters are present for each building.

### **Light bulbs and fittings**

**RA Question** : If 48 lightbulbs were changed over a 1 year period, Why is the cost £3500 ?

This amounts to £75 per fitting.

This was queried as very high. Requested from Bill Henderson: a breakdown of the costs incurred this year as thousands of Pounds sterling are charged for a very cost effective item – LED bulbs.

### **Communal Telephone costs**

**RA Question** : VOIP costs don't correlate to actual charges.

Can you elaborate please?

Cost questioned, answers related to the phone service for the lifts is priority, however the lifts use a single analogue line, and with VoIP available for the door entry system costs are not reflective of this. Bill to supply phone bills

## **Gardening / ground maintenance**

**RA Question :** 14 visits per 7 month period

6 visits per 5 month period

20 visits in total

We need to see the SLA's as we have service calls logged and there is no evidence of the resolution or attendance to site.

We are meant to have 20 visits over the year. No evidence that this is happening. Requested from Bill Henderson: a copy of the SLA. Discussion of the option to take it on ourselves. Vivienne also recalled Newlon offering gardening training – Bill to follow up.

## **Scheme equipment (communal garden)**

**RA Question :** Why is there a £2000 cost when there has been no change to the scheme equipment ?

Discussion if we could improve the play equipment and options for shelter, more benches, in our communal garden. Bill Henderson said Newlon would be positive towards requests if all residents consulted. To be discussed further.

## **Communal water rates**

**RA Question :** Communal and Individual billing is metered so actual bills need to be provided please ?

There is currently a £2000 cost for 1 bucket of water per day, per block ?

Requested from Bill Henderson: a copy of the bill. Natalie also recalled that water for the cleaners was meant to be sourced via the water recycling in Tower 3 – Natalie to check with Tim Bryant from Newlon. Bill to supply bills for the year and ensure that the meter readings are being submitted to the Water supplier

## **Water hygiene service contract**

**RA Question :** Judith Hughes has mentioned Legionnaires tests are conducted quarterly.

Can we be provided with the Certificates please ?

Judith has stated EMS services maintain the water booster pumps so why are we paying again in the Service Charge item for Drainage and Water Pumps ( Item Code 24835 )

Requested from Bill Henderson: to report back on the results of the recent tests in people's flats for legionnaires' disease. Bill also to investigate if we are paying twice for water pumps – duplicated on service charge as well as being duplicated on the concierge duties.

Discussion of insulation issue and warm “cold water” to be raised and investigated further with Kier.- Bill to action

Questioning of cost and monthly testing as guidelines would dictate that annually would be sufficient

## **Door and Gate entry system**

**RA Question :** Why is there a £12 000 for 2 visits per year ?

Question on why cost is extremely high when this is not a daily, weekly or monthly service item, request for invoices.

## **Fire equipment and emergency lighting**

**RA Question :** We have a Service call logged by Alex Fisher.  
2 x calls to get a call reference number more than a month ago and No Response,  
No Resolution to date. Please explain process and procedure ?  
This also constitutes a Concierge breach for monitoring the Fire Alarm Monitors, as  
Item 1.1.4 of the Concierge Job Description

(see also H&S panels earlier in the list). Requested from Bill Henderson: invoices and details  
of how often these are checked, SLA to be passed to the RA

## **Lift service and maintenance**

**RA Question :** We are OK with this cost. Any confirmation that Newlon would like to  
provide?

Requested from Bill Henderson: a copy of the SLA from contractor (CrownAcre) and in  
particular details of what the agreed response time is.

## **Extraction systems**

**RA Question :** The extraction checks don't correlate to cost.  
Why are extraction systems not cleaned ?  
This poses a grease fire risk. Please can an update be provided as to why the  
extraction systems are not cleaned!  
Can we also have an ETA for fan attenuation?

We pay for these to be checked in communal systems but not in the flats themselves.  
Questioning that they are checked but the cost does not include cleaning. Concern that built  
up grease and debris in the extraction systems (both communal and in flats) poses a serious  
concern. Also, the extraction systems in flats are meant to be serviced once a year. This  
hasn't happened. Requested from Bill Henderson: investigation into changing inspection to  
include cleaning, and decision if Newlon will pay and arrange for inspection/cleaning in  
individual flats.

## **Communal maintenance**

**RA Question :** Please can we be provided with a monthly job sheet ?  
Please Detail works that remain within SLA and those that have been breached.  
How are these works audited ?  
If unauthorised work is conducted, this should not be paid for by Residents.

Requested from Bill Henderson: to find a satisfactory & time-efficient way for Newlon to send  
us a monthly report on current repairs Via CRM (reported/on-going/resolved). This is noted  
as featured in every computer system that manages customer data, and is industry standard.  
Nora requested if a representative from Newlon could attend our meetings quarterly, Bill said  
this could be possible.

Vivienne raised concerns about the varying quality of repairs, especially corner protectors  
around the buildings, comparing 1, 3 & 34. Requested from Bill Henderson: to look into the  
corner protectors. Karshan noted that where a repair was not done satisfactorily the first time,  
we should not have to pay for the second repair.

## **Communal television systems**

**RA Question :** £60 000 cost on average.  
Please can you explain this cost ?  
How often have contractors come out ?  
How many repairs have been carried out over the past 3 years ?

Query of why we are paying for this year on year, now the building is constructed. Requested from Bill Henderson: a copy of invoices.

### **Roof and Man Safe systems**

**RA Question :** Why are ManSafe systems checked monthly ?  
Can this be checked bi-annually ?

Query why these are paid every month. Legally they are only needed to be checked yearly. Requested from Bill Henderson: to find out if we can get this changed to annually to reduce costs.

### **Managing agent charges**

**RA Question :** Cost is charged as buildings insurance in previous Service Charge Item.  
We can confirm that the cost is duplicated.  
We require an audit of this cost

Various Queries revolving around this charge. This charge is paying Newlon for managing the building. Natalie questioned if this was what rent was for. Bill answered that rent (if paid) is towards the construction costs of the building, payment for which is an ongoing loan repayment. Clarification as to what this cost is and why we are paying for this on an ongoing basis is required.

### **Drainage and water pumps**

**RA Question :** Duplicated cost as per Water and Hygiene Service Contracts Service Charge Item 24835 amounting to £12 000 per year.  
Please can you explain this duplication of cost?

Requested from Bill Henderson: a copy of invoices to query Why costs are duplicated (see Water hygiene service contract above as well as being listed in the concierge duties)

### **Management fee (insurance)**

**RA Question :** Please can this cost be explained?  
As we are paying for Individual, Itemised services, why are we paying Newlon a duplicated cost for these services.

Question as to why we are paying buildings insurance twice. Once in this section and again further down in Buildings insurance (accounting code- 24010).  
It was pointed out that we have a 5 year guarantee that is run via BLP (Arsenal). We shouldn't have Buildings insurance listed on this section. Requested from Bill Henderson: to investigate duplication of costs (potential refund to tower 3 alone of £9,000)

### **General Service Charge query:**

We were £16,000 in credit for the years 2014-15. A further £6432.00 was surplus for block 34, which has not been refunded.  
This hasn't been carried over and deducted from the charges for 2015-16. Requested from Bill Henderson: to investigate.

Note that our new service charge statements are due at the end of September. Vivienne made a strong case that if we could consult with Newlon and see drafts before they are sent out, we might be able to solve issues that have to be questioned and fixed 6 months / a year later. Requested Bill Henderson looks into and discuss this with his team

Bill Henderson was presented with a spreadsheet of costs duplicated in all previous years' Service Charge Statements that has been issued to all households within the Queensland Road development.

Bill Henderson confirmed that the duplication of costs was unjustified, and incorrect as Service Charge items.

Bill Henderson is to provide clarification on the duplication (double charging) of costs and the effect on following Service Charge Statements.

**Summary:**

Special mention has been made by the Residents Association to express how very grateful we are to Bill Henderson from Newlon and Samir Singh from Arsenal for attending. We appreciate that some of the items requested may take time/work to obtain, others less so. Although for Bill to provide them in one batch would be preferable, we can see that it's not practical and would delay some issues that could be resolved quickly. Bill will be consulted separately on this matter.

After Bill's departure, Nora suggested that we identify key issues as priorities, in order to work efficiently and positively with Newlon. These were:

1. Water testing answers (health issue)
2. Extraction systems (fire & safety issue)
3. Concierge (cost issue)
4. To get a process agreed for reporting on repairs from the CRM system (maintenance)
5. To work with someone from Newlon on a quarterly basis to discuss and plan costings and contracts (rather than query them retrospectively). (cost issue)