**Queensland Road Residents Association**

**22nd May 2018**

**Apologies: Becky Anderson – Chair**

**Attending:**

**THE RA NEXT YEAR, RECRUITMENT AND AGM**

Posters publicizing the AGM, date and roles to fill have gone up in all blocks, and the single homes on ground-level. Posters advise that people can email their self-nominations by 10th June to be read out, if they are able to attend the AGM in person. Posters in English plus 3 key languages identified by Islington Council’s survey (Arabic, Bangladesh and Turkish, plus a note in Somalian).

Natalie uploaded all this year’s minutes to Facebook due to continuing problem accessing our website, and put April’s minutes in progress up on the noticeboards.

**The Constitution**

Will need reviewing asap before our AGM, both to include the minimum roles we think we need to operate, and to discuss the scope of the Residents Association. We cannot operate in the way that tenants expect us to: we are unpaid and voluntary. Many requests are for help liaising with Newlon because Newlon have not satisfactorily dealt with a problem when approached directly by the tenant: security, maintenance, anti-social behavior etc. We don’t exist to chase Newlon to fulfil their duties.

David Mason at Block 42 emailed Newlon regarding security of bicycles, broken crockery, children playing noisily and unsupervised, and questioned Newlon’s responsibility to foster community and provide secure bicycle parking (all the bicycles in their block had the tires deflated). Emailed reply from Catherine Hodgson in Newlon’s Estates team at Newlon was unhelpful and sharply steered responsibility away from Newlon towards David finding somewhere else to store his bicycle, and to contact the RA about creating a sense of community. This appears to be a shrugging off of responsibility from Newlon onto the RA (an unpaid group of 4 core volunteers) and neesd to be discussed further with Harsha Amin, Newlon’s Community Engagement officer.

**TRANSPORT**

**Parking**

Natalie received confirmation of Islington Council’s parking plans on 4th May. Very late notice as the Council were about to pass legislation 2 weeks later. Frustrating as Natalie has been liaising with them about improving parking in our road since November 2016. The Council sent 700 leaflets out publicizing their plans last year, but many of us didn’t receive one. Only 71 out of 700 responded, 66% in favour.

Natalie and Viv made a petition rejecting the proposal under the grounds of:

* Unsuitable siting on Co-op delivery lorry underneath bedroom windows outside Tower One (grounds of noise and Health & Safety)
* **Scheme to include a few bays for residents parking mean that other residents in Islington for zones IS-E can park in our road BUT Queensland Road residents cannot!** Risk of increased pollution and traffic as drivers trawl for a few spaces.
* No difference in the parking provision on the south side of the road.
* Evening parking will be a free-for-all, but **very few spaces will mean increased traffic all night**.

**44 signatures gathered over 3 days – thank you everybody!** Petition taken to a meeting with Liz and Khatri and Peter Hazzard at Islington Council on 17th May. Surprisingly positive meeting: they agreed to review:

* Designated parking bay for Co-op lorry in Benwell Road (with the exception of match days).
* Limited Loading times to be set, restricting the Co-op deliveries (discussion of 10am-6pm but TBC).
* Moving the loading bay outside Tower One entrance to further along the road so that it’s not underneath bedrooms or the glass canopy, not blocking the dropped kerb, and can be shared with Tower 3 residents.
* Review of the disabled parking provision and use on the south side of Queensland Road, and if the residents there would also benefit from pay and display parking.

The council have agreed to work with Natalie and Viv to get a better plan that suits more people before going ahead with their plans. Having already gone through formal consultation (via the 700 leaflets) they are not obligated to do this. Natalie and Viv will gather, publicise and present other tenant’s views and make sure that all views are presented as impartially as possible.

**Cycling**

**We are looking for a volunteer to:** ask Newlon about installing Sheffield bike racks, which will double space in our crowded bike store (Tower One). How are the other blocks doing for cycle parking?

Post-meeting update: David Mason in Block 42 has been emailing Newlon asking for better, more secure bicycle storage following the risk of damage to cycles near kids playing football, and the intentional deflating of all the bicycle tyres recently. Newlon Estate Team’s response was that their provision was adequate, and at own risk. Discussion ongoing as Newlon have a responsibility to provide us with secure storage, especially as their building planning permission was partly dependent upon us being a car-free development, and Islington’s focus on encouraging cycling.

**PROMOTION AND COMMUNICATION**

**Website: minutes, links, domain name and hosting**

* Can Lizzie give us an update on her problems accessing the Wix site, or should we ask her to hand over the passwords along with the login problem and find someone to take it on?
* We need to change the name to [**www.queenslandroad.co.uk**](http://www.queenslandroad.co.uk)which has already been bought, and pay £34 for Wiz upgraded hosting
* Islington Council meeting minutes to add to our website
* Add link to the gardening website (if not already done)

**Noticeboards**

* Natalie has put up a poster to recruit a volunteer from each block to be the other resident keyholder for noticeboards. A neighbor at number 10 has already agreed – Natalie needs her contact details from Becky’s March meeting notes
* To do: Natalie to put up contact numbers of local handy tradespeople:
  + - Liam ­– plumber 07585 773 254
    - Richard ­– carpenter 07903 096 957
    - Nelson ­– decorator 07741 144 661
    - Violetta ­– cleaner 07715 379 542

**SOCIAL EVENTS**

Natalie put up details about the Big Lunch on Sunday 3rd June, a few likes but no takers for organising it, which is a shame as it was a perfect opportunity to bring the community together.

Natalie bought some hot water containers so we can be hospitable and make a cup of tea/coffee at meetings. Natalie to check with Anna our Treasurer about budget and reimbursement.

**SECURITY AND NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH**

* Becky’s letter to Newlon about security issues, update?
* Continuing thefts, people encouraged to report to the police.
* Suggestion from last meeting to have a cycle group to liaise with Newlon as we need more cycle racks, better security in Block 42, etc. Laura Roughan has already suggested this on Facebook and has cc’d in the RA email address. Good initiative.
* We need a volunteer to: arrange a bicycle tagging session with Met police via Neighbourhood watch officer
* We need a volunteer to: Put on Facebook and/or noticeboards that Islington Council organize a Dr. Bike service, the cost would be £50 per hour (minimum three hours, £150) but sometimes the council will fund it if the event is open to the public and fits in with their timetable. [**https://islington.coordinate.cloud/courses/dr-bike-sessions/**](https://islington.coordinate.cloud/courses/dr-bike-sessions/)Contact: Owen Powell, Assistant Cycling Officer, T: 07793 218168   
  E: [Owen.Powell@islington.gov.uk](mailto:Owen.Powell@islington.gov.uk)

**OUR BUILDINGS**

**Monthly Joint Estate Inspections**

Vanessa and Alex are admirably continuing the Estate inspections for Towers 1 & 3 – check for updates  
To do: Natalie to promote this on the FB groups and encourage a volunteer for each block. It is in residents’ own interest as it gives them a chance to point out maintenance problems in communal areas, in person to Newlon. Contact detail for Newlon is Dan [surname?] his email: [getinvolved@newlon.org.uk](mailto:getinvolved@newlon.org.uk).

**5-year planned building maintenance**

Lizzie with her architectural background has flagged up that this is a big subject affecting all residents.   
**We need a volunteer to:** Ask Newlon if there is any news on this? Can we suggest items to improve and who do we contact?   
  
Suggestions from Natalie based on previous tenant’s issues include:

* Repair/replacement of the HIU interface units in our flats (several are beginning to leak/break)
* Fixing defective plumbing in all flats, as many tenants have the same problems
* Smoked glass on our lower ground floor entry doors to improve security
* To ask for glass around exposed railings-only balconies (Health & Safety risk in part-buy flats)
* Cleaning of the exterior windows above ground floor has never been done
* More and better cycle parking
* Refresh painting in hallways
* Deep carpet cleaning
* Exterior repairs
* Improvement of ventilation/air conditioning

**UTILITIES: HEATING, WATER, LIGHTING**

**Eon Heat Tariff**

Any update on this from last month? Query is ongoing with Tim Bryant at Newlon, asking Newlon to publicise our tariff settings again to residents, plus to query a recent letter from Eon. Becky is liaising on this. Elisabete Cidre has been waiting for an answer from Tim for a while and asked for our help (usually Tim is prompt at communications with us).

**Water and insurance**

Flooding from the HIU water heating units is increasing. One person in block 34 has been flooded 3 times. Other tenants suffered damp bedding, black mould on walls etc all winter. Newlon said tenants are responsible for insurance for their contents. Query as if this is a common problem it’s the system/model at fault. Also, the service charge covers building insurance.

The RA cannot fight this cause, but it can encourage others to co-ordinate a challenge to Newlon.

To do: promote the discounted Contents insurance with Thistle, negotiated by Newlon. See <https://www.newlon.org.uk/residents/insurance> and [http://www.thistlemyhome.co.uk](http://www.thistlemyhome.co.uk/)

**We need a volunteer to:** ask Newlon/Eon to schedule maintenance on the units, considering the flood and/or fire risk (the water dripping make the electricity malfunction in one person’s flat)

**STREET, LITTER AND ENVIRONMENT**

**The Cleaner Islington App**

**We need a volunteer to:** Promote the Cleaner Islington app on our Facebook group.

**Street litter and environment**

* **To do: Natalie** to also write to the houses next to the restaurant about dumping rubbish.
* **Karshan** volunteered to contact residents in Hornsey road dumping their rubbish bags outside, was he able to do this?
* **To do: Natalie** to follow up with Arsenal about our letter to them about:
  + Maintenance schedule for the green eco roof with a photo proving there is access via a hatch.
  + Flower areas around the trees outside the Co-op, as a communal gardening initiative to involve children from Queensland Road
  + Asking Arsenal to spray-clean the road to remove dripped tar, chewing gum and dark clean corners where some fans urinate
  + Asking if there is a community fund we could apply to for match-funding towards more play equipment in the communal garden.

**Green roof maintenance**

**To follow up:** Becky and Natalie wrote to Arsenal on 18th April asking for a maintenance "Schedule for works” (see previous paragraph).

**Air pollution**

The letter sent to Arsenal on 16th April 2018 included a request asking Arsenal to buy street signs that remind coach drivers on match days to turn off their engines. This is to reduce pollution from fumes entering our flats, and reduce noise. If we cannot get a quick decision on this, Viv Buffard has suggested we buy our own (they are about £70).

**Noise pollution**

Big progress on the noise from the Co-op, see previous Parking section.

**AOB**