

NORTHWOOD HALL

Residents Association

Minutes Northwood Hall Committee Meeting

11 Feb 2017

Present: Val Hall, Mary Openshaw, Michele Freedman, Barbara Wyllie, Gwyneth Isbister, Kate Calvert, David Mazower

Apologies: Sharon Breen, Gerald Leach, Jo Moody

Cleaners

There seem to be more cleaners than necessary in the common parts of Northwood Hall. This is because the previous contractors were on three months' notice and are working this out, even though Marianne has now started as the on-going cleaner for the block.

Feedback from Drop-ins

As the manager, Mr Maunder Taylor, has been holding regular meetings to discuss big picture issues, so since his appointment the RA has been holding alternative drop-in meetings to help residents with specific queries.

Issues which have been raised are problems with the way residents are disposing of rubbish, delivery vans using the front door and passenger lifts, and misuse of parking as well as problems with heating and hot water.

It was agreed that the RA would draft a leaflet to be distributed to all flats to remind residents of house rules on rubbish, parking and deliveries.

The RA will also produce notices for the bin rooms to remind users of how the rubbish is handled in the block.

Regarding parking, until the arrival of the heating contractors parking was monitored at no cost to residents by a company called MET. The RA will write to Mr Maunder Taylor to ask that this be reinstated.

The problem of poor lighting to the lower rear car park was also raised and it was agreed that the RA should write to Mr Maunder Taylor to ask him to arrange installation of better lighting to improve safety and security there.

The most commonly raised complaint however has been on the subject of the new heating and water supply, problems including low water pressure in some flats, lack of sufficient hot water to run a bath in a reasonable time, boiler shutdowns, and excess water use each time starting to run hot water eg for washing up.

When there are breakdowns, Parker Bromley have to arrive from Kent to deal with them, causing further periods without hot water or heating. It is not clear who will be responsible for this after their contract finishes.

It was noted that the materials used throughout have been the cheapest available (the thermostat is an example) and that, especially as the scheme was altered from the original design, it may not be capable of handling the additional flats now joined to it.

There was discussion of the idea, raised by some residents, that the continued use of the old system by some flats was causing problems. However, it was explained that this has no effect on users signed up to the new system. Hot water to flats on both the old and the new systems rely on the new boilers, but that is the extent of the contact. The requirement of the new system to pump water through much longer lengths of piping however may be a reason for failures in the new system, particularly now that more flats have joined it, putting it under more pressure.

Legal Case

In the High Court last week Mr Maunder Taylor was obliged to undertake not to cut off the hot water from flats which have not yet been attached to the new heating and hot water system. There will be further hearings as the case progresses.

Service Charge Demands

Mr Maunder Taylor has made a request to the First Tier Tribunal to alter the demands for payment of service charges. To date leaseholders have heard nothing back on this which indicates uncertainty over whether the current demands are legally payable.

Questions

If members have questions they should send them to committee@northwoodhall.co.uk and the RA will do their best to obtain answers.