

# NORTHWOOD HALL

Residents Association

## Minutes of the Meeting held on 3 July 2014

Present: Mark Blacklock, Val Hall, Jo Moody, Gwyneth Isbister, Gerald Leach, Mary Openshaw, Sandy Webster, Michael Wieder, Leena Bedri, Grace Dempsey, Michele Freedman, Araripe Garboggini, Lesley Pearson, Belinda Stow, Philip Whale

Apologies: Kate Calvert, Anna Rose

### **Mugging at NWH – please be vigilant**

An elderly resident was mugged on her doorstep on 26 June. Thankfully she was not hurt but she was extremely upset and left in shock. She managed to get to Mary's flat and Mary spent three hours with her to offer moral support and liaise with the police, her family and doctor. The police response was rapid and excellent but unfortunately there was no sign of the perpetrator on the CCTV. No building can be completely secure but **please, please, please be extra vigilant and do not leave doors open or allow strangers into the building. Of course you cannot slam the front door in someone's face – especially when there is a stream of people coming in from the W5 bus – but you can ask the person behind you to show you their door fob as bona fides. A genuine NWH resident will appreciate your vigilance and not take this amiss. It is up to us all to work together to keep our home secure.**

### **Weekend porter**

In response to the mugging and the need to enhance security with more human rather than electronic surveillance, Deborah (who could not attend the meeting but sent a message) asked if we could revisit the idea of having a weekend porter. Residents at the meeting expressed concern about having to pay extra wages when the service charge demands are already very high to pay for the building works and it was agreed that we would start by asking for greater vigilance by residents.

### **Locks on internal doors**

Belinda asked if we could investigate having locks on the internal NWH doors to restrict the movement of someone who has gained access via an open external door. Cost and fire door requirements are issues here and again we will wait and see how increased vigilance works.

### **Update on building works**

The Directors reported back to the committee having met with Andy Payne of CBG (the mechanical and electrical consultants) and Canonbury the day before. CBG had spent a considerable time (at the request of Directors) to finalise new pipework runs and to bring enhanced drawings to the meeting. The original plan as sent to all leaseholders saw the flow and return pipes for the hot water leaving the boiler room and running along the lower ground/ground floor corridors and then rising vertically to serve the other floors. However, the problems encountered when drilling a sample riser (e.g. last month's gas leak from an unexpected pipe) mean this plan has been scrapped. Andy said that running pipes along all the corridor ceilings was the only feasible method. This would involve bringing the supply up from the boiler room through the bin rooms, branching along the sixth floor corridors or over the roof, going down the fire escapes and branching into each corridor. There will also be a change to the new cold water supply system. The original plans saw the cold water pipes running alongside the existing ones in the ducts with separate runs serving the kitchens and bathrooms. However, asbestos has been found at the bottom of the ducts and it is wise not to disturb this. Consequently there will be one cold water supply to each flat entering with the hot water.

The final corridor height will necessarily be lower although the three new pipes (flow, return and cold water) will be as tight to the original ceiling as they can be, and an architectural covering can be developed as part of the internal redecoration works. This will clearly cost extra and it was suggested that Canonbury instruct an expert on this aspect as new ceilings will also have to contain new lighting and be vented as there are also gas pipes. There is a re-fashioned mock-up of the pipes and its preliminary covering on the first floor outside flat 1-8. Pipework can enter the flats at a higher level or at floor level. There will be an isolation outlet in the corridors for each flat.

On the subject of continuing flat surveys, some of committee reported that these were still unsatisfactory in that conflicting advice had been given. For example, one resident had been told that her heat exchanger would have to be installed near the ceiling in her living room. If any resident is not happy with the outcome of the survey, please contact Canonbury. The Directors made a note of this item to report to Canonbury. The surveys are 46% complete and a further 17% of flats have booked one. The Directors had also asked CBG to look into cheaper column radiators. Belinda mentioned that she wanted to keep her radiators and it was explained to her that it is not recommended to use original radiators with a new system and that she would have to pay to have them thoroughly cleaned and blasted before use. Even then, it would not be a guarantee that they would work sufficiently well. CBG uncovered an example of a white cast iron radiator costing £489.03 inclusive of VAT if one wanted to keep the aesthetic look of the original. Otherwise, there is a Zhender Charleston column radiator (600 high x 950 long) costing £468.00. There was some discussion about the size of the heat exchanger. Andy had looked into a model manufactured by Ideal Boilers which was being installed in homes on a new-build housing

estate. Andy will need to gather information on this smaller heat exchanger before we can say that it will be an option for us to have installed and he is confident that he can let us know about it before any works on the flats begin.

#### **AOB**

- **Graffiti:** As reported in the June minutes five garages and one junction box were sprayed but Deimus of Canonbury Building has managed to clean most of the graffiti off and only one garage door has had to be repainted.
- **BBQ:** people are still not considering the garden when barbecuing. Please try not to place your BBQ on the grass or in the sunken garden. There is always a residue after cooking and it needs to be cleaned. We will consider a larger barbecue area and individuals should ideally cook and take their food to their groups, rather than cooking nearby.
- **Noticeboard:** Mary suggested a noticeboard on the left-hand wall of the entrance lobby to prevent further paint removal where people stick up notices to delivery people and friends.
- **September social:** We are planning something sociable in the garden in September and ask here for any help with bringing extra chairs, tables, cloths, drinks, food and any other suggestions which would be most welcome. Deborah has kindly offered to coordinate this. Please email the committee with your ideas and offers to help or drop a note into 5-14.

**Next meeting: Wednesday 11 September, Flat 6-1 @ 20.15**

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