

Alice Shepherd & Oak House RSG Minutes 26th Sept 2022 7:15pm

Residents Present:

Sharon Holmes – Oak House
Ashley Lowther – Alice Shepherd House
Nadia Mahmood – Alice Shepherd House
Cynthia Owusu – Alice Shepherd House

Others Present:

Maggie Phillips – Chair, St Johns TRA
Leila Arefani – One Housing – Regeneration Manager
Mynul Islam – One Housing – Project Manager
Shaun Simpson – One Housing – Regeneration Officer
Sofia Chekdouf – One Housing – Regeneration Coordinator
Mike Tyrrell – Residents Advocate

Independent Tenant and Leaseholder Adviser – Open Communities

Ray Coyle
Murselin Islam

Apologies:

Jane McGregor – Alice Shepherd House
Jen Pepper – Open Communities

1. Welcome & Introduction

1.1 MT welcomed everyone and chaired the meeting.

2. Minutes of the Meeting held on 28th March 2022

2.1 Accepted as true record of the meeting.

3 Matters Arising

3.1 None

4 Minutes of the Meeting held on 25th July 2022

4.1 Accepted as true record of the meeting.

5 Matters Arising

5.1 None apart from next agenda item regarding appointment of Open Communities as ITLA.

6 Independent Tenant & Residents Advisor Introduction - RC

6.1 RC introduced himself, MI, and Jennifer Pepper (could not attend due to be on leave) from Open Communities. RC informed ITLA's role is to ensure residents' voice have been

heard during various stages of the regeneration project, that various stages of the project is influenced by residents views, coordinate feedback to all residents inquiries and help residents to ensure promises made on the offer document are kept.

6.2 RC and MT said it is important to have a base in the estate for regular meetings and drop-in sessions and build the working relationship with residents. Indoor facility/void property will be better choice due to winter closing in and it needs to be accessible to facilitate people with mobility issues/families. Marquees/tents are only ideal for warmer months.

6.3 LA will be finding a solution within few next weeks to keep the momentum. It is also important for residents to have someone to go to following the housing needs visits. MT will meet RC to brief further on these issues later in the week.

6.4 AL made a suggestion to help create a one bedroomed flat that can be uses, if OH use the two bed vacancy in Alice Shepherd House to rehouse an overcrowded family in the block.

7 Housing Needs Visits Report - LA

7.1 LA at present discussing the working methods/structure of drop-in sessions with RC so that this may allow residents to drop by for Housing Needs assessment as well or they can request the presence of ITLA during individual appointments or even after the appointments for further advice if they wish so. **This arrangement should be in place within next couple of weeks.**

7.2 NM suggested that residents should be given options of coming to drop-in sessions or to make appointments to go to office on certain days/time of the week. RC agreed and suggested that it will be best use of time if appointments that requires ITLA presence are organised with enough notice to RC.

7.3 RC informed he will be attending all RSG meetings, design sessions and events whereas MI and/or JP will be attending the regular drop-in sessions. A newsletter from **ITLA will be going out to residents within couple of weeks** to introduce Open Communities and if the venue and timing of the drop-in sessions can be included then it will generate interest from the residents to get involved. LA will follow up.

8 Appointment of JV Partner - LA

8.1 Timeline of the project was presented to the meeting. LA explained various timelines and associated parts of the project with different colour schemes. The timeline projection has been divided into 4 main sections that include appointment of joint venture (Autumn 2022- Summer 2023), design of new homes/blocks/estates (Summer 2023- Summer 2024), construction works including demolishing (2025-2030) and 121 discussions with each household throughout the project (Autumn 2022- Autumn 2024).

8.2 AL was disappointed for lack of explanation of the various colour scheme of the project timeline and asked whether this could be put in as plain text with each heading for better understanding. LA and MT explained the timeline of the project and the

meaning/representation of various colours and **confirmed that explanation will be added as well as there will be a written list of works with timescale**. NM said she is fine with any format of the project timeline.

8.3 MT wanted to know whether the 1-year period for appointing the JV reflects the current shortage of labour, shortage of materials, build cost inflation, possible drop in house prices, and rent increase that not matching inflation. LA added there are chances for delays due to all of these issues those MT mentioned.

8.4 OH is also in the process of JV in Tiller Rd project where bidders/developers came back to renegotiate the 1st cost estimate to reflect current market conditions. For long term projects developers always worry about price volatility that might put them in loss at the end which may delay the initial JV process. Tiller Rd project is a learning source and experience will help to make progress with this project.

8.4 AL informed that another option for RSG could be to consider having one JV partner for both projects which will save time. NM asked whether this may compromise the quality of the project. LA replied JV partner will have cost saving in terms of logistics, storage, labour, economies of scale and in terms of One Housing, there will be savings from appointment process. Quality assurance needs to be covered by the JV contract. MT added there is always a risk that JV partner would want to revisit the costing and lack of flexibility around budget may lead to quality compromise, as a result the role of the RSG would be to query the any changes to design and quality that are suggested.

8.5 SH wanted to know which JV partner has been appointed for Tiller Road. LA replied they are two companies who are interviewed but no appointment has been made yet and are in the final negotiation stage. Residents are very much involved in the appointment process and have their preference. The tender has been submitted on the government website and anyone could have bided for the project.

8.6 NM wanted to have access to the detailed bids that is available for public viewing for Tiller Rd. LA said she will find out whether it is possible to give the details as bid came in as private and confidential.

8.7 SH advised that residents should be kept informed of any changes of the timeline of the project. Some residents are saying they will be moving out next year. NM informed some residents have been told they will be moving within a year as soon as the ballot is done.

8.8 MT suggested these issues should be addressed by a newsletter and **LA informed there will be a newsletter within next few weeks**. AL suggested that a rough idea of timeframe of the project should be published in the newsletter to give residents some direction, it does not need to include later stages of the project but at least what is happening in the next two years in plain English. LA agreed.

9 Decant Booklet Draft - LA

9.1 LA explained how Common Housing Register works in Tower Hamlets with residents subject to decanting will have higher priority for re-housing after emergency cases. Oak

House will be given decant status without waiting for planning permission as this is part of 1st phase of the project which may take couple of years to fully decant.

9.2 SH, AL and MP disagreed to this decanting process. They reminded that OH had said that they would look at what could be done for residents who wish to move away from Alice Shepherd House to be given same decanting status as Oak House residents. MT added that the thinking behind this was to create space in Alice Shepherd House so that residents from Oak House can have option to stay locally.

9.3 **LA will check on the process but also informed** that Council will not give that status to Alice Shepherd House at this stage of the project. AL disagreed. NM added there are other housing association tenants who are moved around without going to council's Common Housing Register, how that is possible?

9.4 MT suggested One Housing Lettings Team need to find out all the mechanism and various scenario outcomes of Common Housing Register to have answers to all of these and then explaining these to residents will take away all the rumours/confusion regarding decanting process. AL added without this flexibility of decanting for both houses the regeneration project will be delayed if residents don't want to move out of the area and prefer to stay local for all the right reasons. **LA will try to set a meeting with Common Housing Register to find out more. MT offered to join the meeting.**

9.5 **A guide to decanting a tenant- MT requested all to read and provide feedback at the next meeting.** MT and RC looked into other best practices and think this is a good quality document but what matters is whether residents find it easy to understand or not. All to provide feedback in the next meeting.

10 Landlord Offer Monitoring Report – LA

10.1 MT informed that we had asked for this to go to the steering group every month so that it can be monitored as to whether the promises been made are being kept. This is first draft of this tracker document. LA added this tracker document is mainly based on design aspect of the project that also includes various issues from the Offer Document. AL said underground refuse system has problems that residents did not think of at the beginning but now realising many practical issues learned from other sites. These will be discussed later at the design stage and this tracker document will help monitoring design stage progress as well.

11 Any Other Business with OHG Officers Present

11.1 **One Housing will send a residents newsletter within next few weeks and will introduce Open Communities followed up by Open Communities own introductory newsletter.** NM requested extra few copies of the newsletter and Offer Document so that she can use them explaining what is happening with the project to her neighbours.

12 Any Other Business without OHG Officers Present

12.1 RC is happy with any type of void property for drop-in sessions, but it needs to be easily accessible. MT explained that only a one bedroomed property would be accessible, hence AL's suggestion needs to be pursued.

12.2 Hard copy of the minutes of the RSG meetings will be distributed within ten days of the meeting to all members.

12.3 AL said residents and herself will be scrutinising every aspect of the project as they live here, and this is their home, and they are paying customers for OHG. RC added this is where Open Communities comes in to help the community to get involved, help to monitor, and scrutinise the works by developer and OHG and design the estate.

12.4 RC was advised that residents had concerns from the Exhibition 5 about the design of blocks and reduced view of the river hence the two designs on page 7 of the offer document.

12.5 MT advised that at present both options have separate private for sale blocks because of concerns about buy to let.

12.5NM is worried whether she will have guarantees for 3 bedrooms property by the time project finishes as her daughter will be in the age group that qualifies for separate bedroom. RC informed this largely depends on the timing of the project and how housing registration/decanting process handles the projected situation. A feature of both options that is attractive to residents are the top floor as terraces.

13 Date of Next Meeting

13.1 The meeting dates, the 4th Monday of the month for the rest of 2022 are:

- Monday 24th October 2022
- Monday 28th November 2022
- Monday 19th December 2022 – 1 Week Early due to Christmas

14 Meeting Close

14.1 Contact Details

- Residents Advocate – Mike Tyrrell – 07958 225416
- Independent Residents Adviser – Ray Coyle – 07932 06650