

KSW Resident Steering Group.

Minutes

Meeting Date – 4th Aug 2022 – 6.30pm - via Zoom

Residents	Initial	Others	Initial
Marie Batchelor - Kedge	MB	Ray Coyle – Open Communities - ITA	RC
Trina Morgan - Kedge	TM	Shaun Simpson - OH	SSI
Leanne Ward - Kedge	LW	Soundous Serroukh - OH	SS
Keeley Vincent - Kedge	KV	Mike Tyrrell – Housing Advocate	MT
Gemma Finch - Kedge	GF	Leila Arefani - OH	LA
Sachna Ali - Winch	SA	Rosie Holder - OH	RH
Lubo Kostadinova	LK	Mynul Islam - OH	MI

1 Welcome

1.1 RC welcomed all to the virtual meeting.

2 Apologies

2.1 Husnara Choudhury

3 Minutes of meeting held on 7th July 2022

3.1 Minutes were accepted as a true record of the meeting

4 Matters Arising

4.1 (5.4) Make progress with contacting lettings manager(s) at Riverside to help with decant process. LA has got the contact details of Barbara Whitrow??? - a Riverside lettings manager and will pursue this line. RC said he would continue to push Riverside on this in his role as ITA on their Blackfriars regeneration project.

(5.10) MI provided some initial graphics for the drop-in flat highlighting the decant position for each block. This information has been updated.

ACTION - MI will provide RC with the current graphics of the three blocks.

(5.12) MB asked for information on when the valuers will be calling to discuss leasehold valuations. MB said that the valuers had been in touch and that she was waiting to hear from One Housing now. COMPLETED

(5.14) At what point can tenants be sure OHG will pick up any increase in rent when tenants decant on a temporary basis pending their move back to the site ? LA said that this will be looked at on a case by case basis as circumstances are usually quite different. LA added that if tenants want to bid they should do so, then speak to the regen team to find out the situation with the rent differences. Tenant can then cancel the bid before the window closes if there remains an issue with the rent level. COMPLETED

5 Update from RH – lettings manager at One Housing

- 5.1 RH introduced herself and her role as managing the allocations team at One Housing. RH added that she deals with LBTH on a regular basis and is aware of the systems they use in the allocations and lettings process.
- 5.2 KV said that Poplar HARCA are allowing their decant tenants on Teviot Estate to view properties before they go on the LBTH letting web site. LA said she was only recently made aware of this. She added that LBTH has 100% nomination rights which means that housing associations have to pass all properties to the council to be allocated via the bidding site.
- 5.3 LA added that LBTH are the only council One Housing work with that has this arrangement as it is common practice for housing associations to be able to deal with situations such as regeneration/decant without having to go through the councils nomination rules.
- 5.4 KV said that three residents in Chadbourne Street have viewed properties with Poplar HARCA without the properties being advertised for applicants from across Tower

Hamlets. LA said that she would mention this to One Housing management but that Poplar HARCA appear to be breaking the rules on this and she could not see One Housing following this practice. One Housing can only do direct offers of their own properties if it is 6 months before the properties are due to be demolished. This is what is happening at Bellamy Close and Byng Street.

- 5.5 RH asked if these properties were in LBTH. KV said they were – one in Dod Street and two on the Aberfeldy Estate. RH asked how KV knew about this and KV said the three tenants are neighbours of her mum and the decant date for Phase One is Autumn 2023 and has to be Summer 2027. RH asked how KV knew that the properties had not been advertised. KV said it was stated by the local Housing Officer.
- 5.6 RH said that this was not good practice and it is not how the partnership between LBTH and housing associations works. She added that it needs to be looked into in more detail. KV said that two tenants have already moved in and a third is in the process of moving in. MT added that this is definitely happening as he is providing ITA services on the site and has seen it himself.
- 5.7 RH asked LA to get more information on these properties and she will be more than happy to look into it. MI said that someone will be in touch with Keeley for the detail of these tenants/properties. KV said it was unfair on KSW tenants as they are having to wait while tenants of other landlords are being decanted much quicker.
- 5.8 TM said that the person who showed her round the property in Teviot was from Poplar HARCA and he told her that they show their decant tenants round their properties before they go on the bidding list.
- 5.9 LA went through a short flowchart presentation on how the process should work when tenants sign up. She added that the two points at which delays appear to be occurring is;
- Tenants getting their bidding numbers

- Tenants bidding and waiting to see if they have been successful – especially when they are showing as number one on the list

RC added that tenants who are showing as No 1 on the list at the time of bidding can be 'overtaken' by other tenants who may have a higher priority who bid before the deadline. He also added that tenants who have handed in their notice of intending to leave a property can withdraw this notice so the property is not actually available.

- 5.10 LA added that problems can also arise with new-builds – where it can take longer than forecast to get a property fully habitable. If the property is not a One Housing one, then they have no control over these scenarios.
- 5.11 RH added that it can take longer than expected from when the advert runs to actual shortlisting. If there is a specific case where a tenant has been at No1 at the close of bidding, she could look at this and see if the tenant remained at No1 when the bidding closed. But the specifics are required in terms of the property bid on.
- 5.12 LW asked why herself and KV are both No1 for the same property. RH said that she could look at both bidding numbers and see what has happened. SSI said he would contact both LW and KV to get their bidding numbers as well as the address of the property.
- 5.13 KV said that she bid on a property which she didn't get but that it was then subsequently re-advertised. RH said that it could have been advertised incorrectly as this can happen sometimes. MI said that sometimes extensive repairs and maintenance are needed on a property and this can cause delays and also cause a property to be re-advertised.
- 5.14 RH said that getting some of the facts wrong when advertising a property can cause them to be re-advertised – especially if it has been advertised on the wrong floor. MT asked if a property will be re-advertised if it has been adapted for specific needs. RH said that if the shortlist had been exhausted it would go back to advertisement again.

- 5.15 RH added that, once an applicant has been offered a property, they cannot make other bids. Anyone can bid for an adapted property but those with a medical priority would be higher up on the shortlist. RC said that although Choice Based Letting is good in theory, there are communication problems with it in terms of being offered and accepting properties. MI asked if a property is under offer – will applicants be aware of this. RH said that LBTH are keen that applicants are aware of it and that viewings take place asap and applicants can then accept or decline the offer and go back to being able to bid.
- 5.16 RH added that it is good practice to have no more than three applicants under offer and that the viewing is carried out quickly so that a allocation is made and the other two applicants can go back to bidding. RH added that the three applicants view the property together as 'nominations 1, 2 or 3'. Nomination 1 would view the property first.
- 5.17 MT stated Poplar HARCA currently have a lot of new-build properties so they have the ability to show these properties to their decant tenants, unlike One Housing. Is it in One Housing's interest to push for showing their own void properties to their own decant tenant if no complaint is made to the Common Housing Register.
- 5.18 RH said that she has only become aware of what Poplar HARCA are doing and that this is not good practice. The first move would be to pass the details to LA and allow RH to run through the system and have the appropriate discussions re the Common Housing Register. More clarity is required in terms of the detail and the addresses at this point before any other action is taken.
- 5.19 RH said that she like working at LBTH and that they are a supportive council. As things get closer to the time when tenants have to move out, then everyone can do what they can to support the decant process for the residents of KSW.

6 Update from Housing and Qs from RSG

- 6.1 LA said that the final scoring for the Joint Venture partner is now taking place and the preferred option should be known next week. Work is ongoing to arrange a meeting with MB, LW, MT, RC and One Housing to confirm the preferred option before this is announced to the wider community. This meeting is likely to take place week commencing 15th August
- 6.2 RC asked if this meeting is likely to be next week. LA said that the decision will be with the Board at One Housing next week and that the meeting will soon after this. LA added that there are a couple of issues in each of the two bids that One Housing would like further discussion on and these will be ironed out over the next couple of weeks.
- 6.3 LW asked about a void flat in floor of Kedge House. KV said that it is flat 18 on her floor and that the marshals on the top floor have said this will be One Housing's regeneration office. MI said this looks like some mis-communication. There has been work carried out on the flat to make it lettable. It is not decided yet whether to board it up or move a guardian in to the flat.
- 6.4 TM asked about any progress on moving out of the borough as she has given One Housing information on the areas she would like to move to. MI said that they are trying to access information on the Riverside voids in those areas. He added that they are not getting much joy from other council areas on accessing their stock.
- 6.5 KM asked why residents were told early in the process that they can move out of London if they wished. MI said that it depends on the local authority area. He said that on another scheme they are working with another local authority of 'reciprocal' arrangements where they will offer a property if One Housing offers one of theirs in return.
- 6.6 KM said that the person from Poplar HARCA who showed her round a void property told her that moving out of London requires more paperwork and that One Housing

does not want to take this on. MI said that he would gladly do any paperwork if it meant getting tenants re-housed.

6.7 MT said that it was more about negotiation than paperwork – and looking for the ‘reciprocal arrangements’ where other councils are looking for properties in London for their tenants.

6.8 MT asked if Paul Handley at One Housing had progressed MTs suggestion that developing housing associations come up with a pool of properties across London and the South East for use in decant situations. Will the Chair of the G15 group of housing associations raise this? LA said that she would raise this with PH.

ACTION - LA to feedback on this as a way forward

7 AOB with OH present

None

8 AOB without OH present

8.1 MT said that it will make life difficult – in terms of decanting - if some housing associations are playing by the rules and some are not. LW said that she believes that One Housing are doing what Poplar HARCA are doing as there are a couple of properties in Alpha Grove which have gone to tenants without them appearing on the council’s letting list – one of which went to a decant tenant from Bellamy/Bing.

8.2 MT said that direct offers should soon kick in as the current projected start on site date is Spring 2023. Therefore Autumn 2022 is the start of the six month pre-start period from 1st September 2022

8.3 LW asked what would happen re adult children moving if Winch House was empty and it was found that Kedge House would be in danger from the new foundations for the Winch House replacement block. MT responded that they would see it as an emergency situation and get them moved out asap. The residents would leapfrog all other decants as they did in Claire House. MT added that this would be an

unprecedented situation – with a regeneration decant situation turning into an emergency decant situation.

9 Date of next meeting

Thursday 1st September 2022 at 6.30 via zoom.

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