

Resident Steering Group Meeting for Alice Shepherd House & Oak House

Monday, 24 April 2023

St John's Community Centre, Glengall Grove, E14

Attendance

Residents:

Jane McGregor [JM]
Nadia Mehmood [NM]
Sharon Holmes [SH] – via Zoom
Habib Ahmed [HA] – via Zoom

One Housing Group:

Leila Arefani – Regeneration Manager [LA]
Shaun Simpson – Regeneration Officer [SS]

Residents Advocate.:

Mike Tyrrell [MT]

ITLA:

Ray Coyle, Chair [RC]
Stephen Moore, minutes

1. Welcome, introductions and apologies

1.1. RC took the Chair. Apologies were received from Ashley Lowther.

2. Minutes of RSG meeting of 27th March 2023

- 2.1. Re: 3.1 – LA confirmed OHG will be at the event on 26th April until 6.30pm. MT and RC will then meet with tenants and record their queries/concerns and questions and pass them to OHG to respond to. MT asked if the next newsletter will contain the Q+As - LA confirmed it will. JA said we want to put it all in writing so everyone can see the answers to all the questions.
- 2.2. SH said she does not remember it being said at the meeting that OHG would not be present after 6.30 even though it is in the Minutes. RC said his memory is that MT and he were at the event after 6.30, and without OHG present. JM said OHG hasn't done what the residents asked for, which is to hold it indoors.
- 2.3. LA said their experience has been that turnout has not been as good where events have been held indoors before. OHG has a large marquee with heating and lighting and some of the boards from the exhibition, as well as the model that was used at previous events, and that this generated a lot of conversation. LA said it is too late to change the arrangements for this event now but for future events if the RSG prefer to hold it in the 50p Club, that is not a problem and they can do that in future.

3. Matters Arising

- 3.1. Re: 3.5 (Action – OHG to provide the RSG with a draft of the newsletter) COMPLETED.
- 3.2. Re: 3.6 (Action - RC to provide opening times of drop-in sessions.) COMPLETED.
- 3.3. Re: 4.6 (Action – A summary of the Housing Needs Assessment to be provided for the next meeting.) COMPLETED.
- 3.4. Re: 5.6 (Action – Add to the Action Plan that an early conversation is required with the successful Joint Venture partner on the position of any community centre facility.)

ACTION: RC to add this.

4. Update from OHG and Questions from Residents

Appointment of JV Partner

- 4.1. LA said 8 or 9 applicants submitted an Expression Of Interest. Over the last 5 or 6 weeks they have been scored and 4 parties have been shortlisted. These 4 have been formally told today that they have been shortlisted and LA can share their names with the RSG once they acknowledge receipt.
- 4.2. JM asked what happens if a shortlisted candidate drops out of the process – would OHG select another from the unsuccessful group to replace them in the shortlist?

ACTION

LA to check this with the JV procurement team.

- 4.3. LA said she could invite the person who runs the JV process to attend the next RSG meeting.
- 4.4. MT said it is important to get across our message before the interviews, on the linear layout and the views etc. LA suggested inviting Sabba Choudhury and Carlos Delgado to meet with RC and MT at one of their weekly zoom catch-up sessions.

ACTION

LA to facilitate SC and CD to next zoom catch-up

- 4.5. NM asked if OHG could produce a couple of presentation slides that provide a basic understanding of the JV process and timeline and the kind of questions that are asked. LA said there will be different questions and some will be produced by the procurement sub-group. MT said the guidance for candidates at interview should be followed re numbers invited.
- 4.6. MT said there will be a number of sub-questions to the main ones and that these will touch on finance among other things. He added that the homes in Balfron

Tower have been done up and all 130 units are still empty. He suspects they may be sold as a job lot and the new owner will rent them out if they are not being sold individually. If not, this raises questions about raising the funds on the Alice Shepherd and Oak House site to build social homes through the private sale of other homes in the development. RC said we need to explore this at the interview stage.

- 4.7. RC asked if residents will be offered a site visit to each of the candidates as part of the procurement process. LA added that if there are 4 shortlisted parties, do they want to visit 4 sites? JM said it might depend how close they are. MT said if the interviews don't start until June, it could be done.

ACTION

LA to pursue this with JVP candidates

Venue for drop-in sessions

- 4.8. SS said Flat 31 Alice Shepherd House can now be publicised as the drop-in venue for residents. RC said OC will start the sessions this coming Wednesday, 3rd May. Times are 1.30pm-3pm and 6.30pm-8pm.

Housing Needs visits report

- 4.9. SS said 44 of 59 visits have been completed in Alice Shepherd House, and 9 of 9 in Oak House. 15 remain outstanding SS is going to be contacting them over the next 3-4 weeks. LA said there are some people who do not respond. NM asked if it would help to determine who the 15 are and encourage them to use the weekly drop-in sessions at No31.
- 4.10. LA said at the moment OHG are asking questions to get information. The Housing Needs visits will continue through the procurement process and after the JV partner is appointed. They are not going to hold residents to their answers now as their circumstances may have changed. However there will be a time when OHG has to draw a line in terms of the detail of what is required by those resident returning to the new blocks.
- 4.11. SS said, currently, 22 of 68 tenanted households are classed as overcrowded across both blocks although this figure could change when all the interviews have been completed. 12 households currently have adult children and, again, this figure may change. LA said adult children may or may not be in overcrowded homes – it depends on Tower Hamlets' rules on age, gender etc.
- 4.12. SS said there are currently 8 underoccupied households. LA said they would be reprovided with the same size property, but OHG might have conversations with them about whether they want to downsize. NM said these might be 2 or 3 bed homes where the children have moved on.

Landlord Offer monitoring report

4.13. RC said the key to this is good communication and monitoring as residents' requirements could change through the process. At the end of the day, people are losing their homes and that is what we have to bear in mind. LA said the Landlord Offer gives protection and MT/RC are both well aware of what is protected.

4.14. Re: flooding at No.48 Alice Shepherd House, NM said the tenant is still not back in the property and that it is easy for people to fall through the cracks re repairs and maintenance and we cannot allow this to happen. MT said this has been taken up with Housing Management but they didn't respond positively, and that's why it is being brought up here – to see if the regen team could put some pressure on. SS this should have been dealt with last week and he would look into it.

ACTION

SS to follow up and check if work has been completed to No.48 Alice Shepherd House and ask if the tenant might want to move to another flat.

4.15. A resident wanted to know if leaseholders are able to request a property with more bedrooms than they already have? LA said that when we get into the detailed design stage they will get into conversations with individual leaseholders about whether the finances work out for the JV partner, whether they have enough equity in the property, and so on. It will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

4.16. The current working draft of the newsletter was presented to the RSG – this will be published a week after the next meeting.

4.17. MT asked if a decision on the planning application was still due in autumn/winter 2024? LA said Sabba Choudhury is off ill so she cannot check if there has been any slippage or delays in the programme, but that the current dates are still in place with a decision to follow in early 2025.

Action

LA to update the timeline

4.18. RC asked if leaseholders will be allowed to stay on the estate as long as possible if they are struggling to save for a deposit for a new home? LA said if their preference is to move somewhere else and they are worried about their equity, OHG can have those 1-2-1 discussions with individual leaseholders. There are 3 resident leaseholders in Oak House and a mix of 9 (resident and non-resident leaseholders in Alice Shepherd House. There is also 1 non-resident leaseholder (Genesis). The occupant will be treated as an OHG tenant.

4.19. JM asked why there were no Coronation decorations put up by OHG, and no community events planned? LA said it's not her team who provides this but she will pass on the comment to OHG. NM said there is a community chest fund but that usually goes to existing organisations. JM said it would be nice to see some bunting up and invite everyone to come together.

5. AOB with OHG present

5.1. RC asked if there will be food provided at the consultation event on the 26th. LA said there would.

6. AOB without OHG present

6.1. MT said the question to JV partners about the surpluses that will be need to pay towards the reprovision of the social housing is a really big issue.

6.2. He advised that Mount Anvil are organising an exhibition in July for one of their developments on the Island that contains options for a stepped terrace along the block and it would be good to keep an eye on this design to see if it could work for this project..

7. Date of next three meetings

- Monday 22 May 2023
- Monday 26 June 2023
- Monday 24 July 2023