

## Haringey Leaseholders' Association Committee Meeting

**Meeting held on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> August 2020 online by Zoom (hosted by LG)**

In attendance

Sue Brown, Chair (SB)	Nick Martin-Clark, Committee Member (NMC)
Michael Hardy, Committee Member(MH)	Kevin Mann, Committee Member (KM)
Peter Gilbert, Observer (PG)	Lloyd Grandson, Committee Member (LG)
Barbara Fenning, Committee Member (BF)	Margaret Clapson, Treasurer (MC)
Lincoln Grandson, Observer (PG)	Arthur Taylor-Nottingham, Committee Member(ATN)
Grace Lungu, Committee Member (GL)	

The meeting was opened at 7:10 pm

LG was adopted as Secretary unanimously.

Apologies:

M Blasebalk

Minutes of 3.2.20

Agreed for accuracy

Matters arising

LIF: With regard to the Teams meeting of the new leaseholder group SB had been asked not to pass on minutes so would only roughly describe. SB had not been able to connect to Teams. A week later Tracie Downie phoned SB up and went through everything with her and has included her comments in the minutes. The new leasehold services manager was there, Nehal Shah. HfH want to re-organise. SB has asked for an organigramme but due to the flux none has been provided. Any future meeting is likely to be on Teams but maybe Zoom. SB has not yet had minutes.

HLA cards: SB paid £150 to have a design. Then £150 more was needed to complete the order. SB had approved the design but cards had not yet been printed. SB can't take delivery. MC agreed to take delivery. SB to get back in touch with the printer. NO AGM date need as this is a general thing. Green and white should be the colours.

Treasurer's report

There is nothing to pay out although NMC has a cheque from 27.11.19 for £56.27. NMC will send cheque to MC. NMC also has bills from 17.4 newsletter cancelling AGM and the phone number renewal. As of 2.8.20 the balance was £8,086.61. We should ask about the recognition grant.

HfH removing leaseholders' windows rights

Mike Bester had sent a letter removing the rights. We must fight this. SB had sent a letter but HfH hadn't answered the questions. On 20.7.20 SB wrote to HfH and they wrote back asking

for a meeting earlier than the week beginning 24<sup>th</sup> August. Although we had got back to them they went ahead and took their decision without any further consultation with us. ATN asked why they had rushed.

NMC said the new point in HfH response was the point about a 'major incident'. This had not been consulted over. SB said the risk was in fact higher with a single contractor. NMC said the new reason raised insurance questions. This needed to be explored.

PG said some leaseholders had paid in advance in March 2019 for fire doors but still no work had been carried out. ATN said that there had been a lack of some doors & this could be the problem. ATN said kitchens and bathrooms could also be a fire risk but leaseholders were allowed to install them. MH said there was a difference between internal and external work in a lease.

MH said HfH could have a registered interest written into the contract / guarantee. MH said landlord can be a party to a contract. The contractor could sign an undertaking.

ATN asked if faulty windows had actually caused a problem in a known case. MH said they could be 'over-managing' the risk, being overly cautious in a post-Grenfell environment.

MH said costs varied randomly.

BF said she had started paying for her fire door from 1.5.19 but no work had been done. SB said some doors had been done in her block. MH said he'd been aggressively pursued and had had to agree monthly instalments. SB mentioned a £35k bill that had recently been received by a leaseholder.

MH suggested asking if there is still room for negotiation. SB said she would write another letter. ATN asked if she could call for a meeting. NMC said the Council had to approve the policy. It was agreed to write to Nehal Shah and Tracie Downie. NMC said that Councillors should be written to. NMC to draft a letter and consult with committee.

NMC said there was an extra problem with contracts for doors. Manley Murray should be included in the email. A list of names should be assembled along with bullet points. There should be a formal, standard, letter and then individual ones.

KM raised q about whether new contractors would lead to increased costs.

## HLA AGM

The practicalities of a zoom AGM were quite daunting. ATN said some people could contribute by chat. The host can control who can talk. You need a licence for a longer meeting. LG has a licence for up to 100. NMC said it might be hard to get people to turn up. ATN said it could be re-run if necessary. Risk of HfH attacking HLA if meeting was poorly attended. NMC asked about people without internet who might feel excluded. PG said constitution was neutral. 'Raise hand' option could be used for voting. Concern about kids being in the background. There was a need to agree on roles. How to advertise? Could we get on HomeZone? NMC said that needed to be checked with HfH. BG said older people can be surprising. KM asked if HfH could contact people to see if they could go on Zoom.

Date of AGM to be early October. An evening could work. How to contact everyone? There was a need to approach HfH. SB said she would ask Reda about HomeZone. It was agreed to aim for evening of Monday 5<sup>th</sup> October.

### Information Tribunal

The hearing was down for the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> of September but the other side were raising objections.

### High Rd West

LG said Damien Tissier had a meeting with them about a month ago. The Council were going ahead with the regeneration hoping to start in 2022. LG said he had decided to sell his flat to the Council and move on. After that he will no longer be a leaseholder though he will stay in Haringey. LG said a price offer had been made. GL asked if there was room for renegotiation. The price that the developer was selling new-builds for (500 Whitehart Lane) was 1 bed - £176k, 2-bed £230k, 3-bed £262k. The asking price to leaseholders for a 1 bed was £325k, for a two-bed not known, for 3-bed £532k. The Council was buying 12 flats for Council tenants. The price being offered to LG would not cover a 1-bed in the new developemtn. The mayor's charter had not helped and didn't mean anything. LG had attended a meeting with the mayour in January but there was little that could be done. BG said she was part of Citizens UK and had fought for a West Indian community centre to be given as 100% affordable housing. Spurs were part of Citizens UK so BF had felt frustrated. The effort had been successful.

Damien Tissier had also been working with TA residents.

LG said he wouldn't have sold before 2021. PG asked if it was worth contacting Ejiofor. LG said DT had approached him but it was like talking to a brick wall.

Meeting closed at 9:23

MINUTES FROM ON-LINE CONSULTATION RE WINDOWS AND DOORS THURSDAY 9<sup>TH</sup>  
JULY

HfH officers present: Manley Murray (Deputy Head of Major Works), Claude Pascale (Fire Safety & Asbestos Manager, Mike Bester (Leasehold Services), Paul Cox

About 40 leaseholders

Sinead Burke: Windows and doors subject to different fire regulations. Concerned that HfH do not show and understanding. The major fire risk for windows is panels under windows in high-rise properties. There must also be an alternative means of escape. It is not true that leaseholders are unable to demonstrate compliance. A certificate can be requested for the fire doors. When HfH contractors install windows the same problem arises. Building control provides a guarantee.

CP: Issue is not so much leaseholders not being able to comply but economies of scale.

MM: At Grenfell the fire got behind the window frame. Leaseholder contractors cutting corners could be a problem. If a number of leaseholders do their own windows it becomes difficult. The new guidance on fire safety imposes an obligation to do what is 'reasonably practical' to mitigate risk. Anastasia Marangou: Wants her windows replaced because she doesn't feel safe with the current ones. Wanted to know when Cabinet would take the decision. Answer was in November.

Jane King (Connaught Lodge): Problem with front door not being secure.

Timothy Ireland (Wightman Rd): Has installed better quality windows than UPVC. Main concern was what was being done to cover other kinds of fire risk such as lack of compartmentation in street properties.

CP: Too expensive to do compartmentation work internally on street properties. Proposed to install block-wide fire alarms in communal areas for street properties. These only react to fire. The Fire Order says that communal areas are a priority as they are a means of escape.

MM: If windows have been installed correctly and meet required standard then, unless there is cause for concern, it is not now proposed to pull out the windows. (NB This was a change from the original proposal following feedback from leaseholders in the two earlier consultation meetings per MB.) Automatic Fire Detection is proposed for communal areas. No Fire Risk surveys are planned for properties that do not have a communal area.

Lucia : Unreasonable not to allow leaseholders to change poor quality windows. HfH act slowly. Children could fall out. Also it was a shame to lose out on government grants for improving insulation that were offered to home-owners. Some windows were dangerous.

MM: Problem is lack of contractual relationship with 3<sup>rd</sup> party contractor. One point that had come up in the previous meetings was the possibility of a list of approved contractors. (MB said HfH were considering this along with idea of treating windows and doors separately.)

Hemut Feder: Charging leaseholders who had already obtained permission was unreasonable.

MB; HfH would not seek to recover costs. Problem was that there was no direct control for HfH, no contractual powers, not trying to criticize leaseholders' contractors.

Miss Horsefield: What's next stage:

MB: Write to everyone who attended the on-line consultations.

Mr Delgado: HfH's new fire doors are not an improvement as they are not as thick as the previous ones.

MM: We have legal redress against our own contractors. There is no direct contact / contract with 3<sup>rd</sup> party contractors. The liability remains with Haringey Council as freeholder. HfH need to control the work themselves to meet fire safety requirements. If leaseholder did it themselves an inspector would need to be present the whole time. With a direct relationship HfH can make a contractor remove a window to inspect that the filling-in had been done correctly. There was a problem with the financial consequences of asking a 3<sup>rd</sup> party contractor to do this. What if they had done everything correctly? Who would meet the cost?

#### ADDITIONAL NOTES:

I (NMC) 'raised my hand' and was given a chance to speak. I made points on behalf of the HLA that the consultation so far had not included the financial loss to leaseholders from making the change and that the results as presented were misleading. I said HLA was concerned that Councillors could be misled and that this could lead to a challenge.

I said that no detail had been provided on the Health & Safety regulations or the changes that had prompted this reversal of policy. I said it was an over-reaction and that HfH had not thought through carefully enough whether / how to ensure control without a contract. I referenced Sinead's comments from the beginning.

Barbara Tierney informed me that Lorna Reith had been present at one of the earlier on-line meetings.