

FLAG public meeting 1 December

Present: Chris Vavlekis (Haringey Housing Head of Neighbourhoods), Suzanne Prothero (Haringey Housing Head of Leasehold Service); Lorna Reith (FLAG chair), Jeanette Sitton, Tui Lin, Quentin Given, Pamela Hasan (all FLAG committee members) and 18 other residents.

Apologies: Paul Collier, Vicki Ladizhinskaya, Kath Sim, Luan Malley, Sylvia Morgan, Melissa Carames Asorey, Annie Popoola and Pamela Curtis.

Lorna welcomed people to the meeting and explained it would be in two sections with questions relating to Neighbourhoods issues first and then issues affecting leaseholders for the second section.

1. Parking.

Chris Vavlekis said Wings still enforce estate parking, 9-11am Monday – Friday. The law was changed in 2012 to stop councils clamping vehicles on private land, and restricts Wings access to DVLA so makes it harder for them to pursue offenders. He said Wings are issuing an average of 9 parking notices a week on the estate, but had no evidence this was related to the car repair business. Residents were clear that they were not aware of any parking tickets being issued to the cars related to the repair business, despite them being parked for long periods of time with no permits. A report is going to Cabinet in January proposing bringing parking enforcement in-house and then after 12 months consultation issuing Transport Management Orders estate-by-estate to enable clamping and other enforcement. This would enable us to change hours etc of the scheme.

On the car repair business, the Anti-Social behaviour (ASBAT) team is gathering CCTV evidence and talking to the housing association that owns the 2 houses concerned. An injunction is one of the possible measures. An abandoned vehicle removals service is being re-established and could remove untaxed vehicles if they are not claimed.

More disabled parking bays can be provided, but not yet ones dedicated to a particular blue badge holder. Requests should be made to Yvette Codrington.

The Council will be consulting on a CPZ parking scheme for Jarrow Road in January.

Jarrow Road is not a housing department road so has to have a different parking scheme.

2. Garages

Chris Vavlekis said there were 500 people on waiting list across the borough. Priority would be given to residents on the estate but there is no power to evict people who have more than one, if they pay the rent. Garages are built to withstand fire and are not deemed a fire risk or inspected but if a garage is of concern, it can be investigated.

Rodents in garages? If entering someone's home should be reported to George Asiedu and they will be investigated.

Chris was clear that residents should get responses when making enquiries about garages but should use the generic garage e-mail. **Chris will send this through.**

3. Communal areas policy

Chris said new guidance is being written which will probably allow people to have flower pots etc outside their doors where not on escape route. On a recent visit the fire safety officer had not identified any risks from this. If people receive a warning letter, they should respond to the e-mail given. Lorna pointed out that no one ever got a reply from this e-mail address. Planters hanging over balconies which could fall on people are a different issue.

Chris will share the new guidance with us when available.

4. **Bulky refuse arrangements.**

Chris said that the long-promised leaflet about how to dispose of bulky refuse is ready and will be distributed in January. It will have translation options. Waste should not be left outside boiler houses but arranged with council staff. There have been prosecutions of fly-tippers on the estate, **Chris will give FLAG the information.** If you see someone dumping and there is a CCTV nearby, tell the council with dates and times.

It was suggested that towpath Gates 1 and 2 should have CCTV as there is frequent dumping. Where there are problems with contamination of communal recycling bins the Veolia outreach team can talk to people. 40-50% contamination is caused by plastic bags. Council is trialling different recycling bins that make it harder to put big items in.

5. **Lime Electric Bikes** – they do have tracking devices and should be collected within 48 hours. Maybe being left near post-box because that's the area limit. Can we get the estate designated an area where they shouldn't be left? **Chris to find out how this is done?**

6. **Towpath Gate 2** is very hard to open for people in wheelchairs. Noted the conflict between preventing small children getting onto towpath and enabling wheelchair users. But Council could tarmac area by Gate 2 making it easier. Chris suggested we make a formal application to have this done.

Graffiti should be reported to Love Clean Streets online and Veolia will deal with it.

7. **Towpath robberies**

Concern raised about this. Noted that Police had addressed the issue at our AGM in October, there is a dedicated robbery team which has had some success and reduced the incidence of robberies around Tottenham Hale. Details of the local police are on the FLAG website under FAQs.

8. **Green spaces consultation.**

Chris said working group is being set up to get representation and work with Council to come up with a proposal. Lorna emphasised the need to get on with this as delay was causing aggravation and delaying routine works.

Trees near Gate 1 need trimming (flats 36-43). Leaves are blocking drains. Chris advised to report trees to Yvette Codrington.

9. **Leaseholder issues**

Suzanne Prothero – Head of Leasehold section in council. They have a Service Charge team, a major works officer, income collection officers and right-to-buy and management teams. Management team are people who would respond if leaseholder is failing to do duty. They have a lot of vacancies but now trying to fill them, including customer service officers who can take general enquiries.

Best to use mailboxes rather than individual e-mail addresses for officers. **Suzanne will send through the email addresses to use.**

Queried why service charge has gone up 21% and grounds maintenance by 187%, Suzanne said there would be general increase in line with inflation but **she'd get back to us on these queries.** No major works are envisaged and if there were, there would be several years advance notice. Next year's estimated charges will be based on this year's actuals, not on this year's estimates, so should be more accurate, but things can go up (and sometimes down) year by year as different works are done.

Lorna said FLAG had recently got detailed breakdown on repairs charges and was analysing it for duplication etc. We will send this info out on e-mail and WhatsApp so sign up!

Section 20 notices are issued when the Council is letting a major contract for eg window repairs, bathrooms or electrics but this doesn't mean any works are planned on our estate. There is a process defined by government – first we get notice that a contract will be let; then estimate of costs; then notice that contract has been awarded. Resident leaseholders can be involved, and would be welcomed onto the panel. Haringey Leaseholder Association is involved, and its chair is a surveyor so knows the issues.

Cost of hogweed treatment? Yes this will be added to service charges like any other works.

Seeds from the weed cross the river from Thames Water land.

Who in Housing is responsible for analysing repair data and identifying systemic problems so they can be dealt with in an efficient way? This should be Asset Management team but – FLAG has not seen evidence this is being done. There is no requirement for annual stock surveys. Recent survey by Pennington's consultants was external only and won't pick up internal damp issues eg.

Noted that in some boroughs, leaseholders are allowed to replace windows and doors provided they meet standards.

A number of residents raised individual repair and other issues with Suzanne who agreed to follow these up and get back to people.