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Ferry Lane Estate resident priorities for 2026 local election candidates

Ferry Lane estate is a vibrant community, which includes a mix of flats and houses, with the residents split fairly evenly between tenants, leaseholders and freeholders, with a proportion of private renters and a number of sheltered accommodation houses and two blocks managed by Sian housing association.

Ferry Lane Action Group (FLAG) is the recognised residents association for Ferry Lane estate, representing more than 700 properties and more than 2,000 residents of Ferry Lane estate.

Over the last few years there has been a marked deterioration in the quality of services received by residents from Haringey Council, with less regular Haringey attendance at FLAG meetings and less direct communication with residents on the estate. FLAG chair and other active FLAG members struggled to get traction from the council in addressing issues brought to the residents association, despite repeat chase ups and escalations. The confidence in the local authority being able to deliver the services residents pay for through their council tax, rent and leaseholder charges is at all time low, despite such charges being at all time high.

As FLAG runs a well used and popular WhatsApp community, with more than 200 members, who represent the whole range of residents on the estate, including representation from all types of residency and ethnic communities living on Ferry Lane, it used the platform to conduct a poll of residents priorities for the forthcoming local election, based on the most commons issues and complaints raised by residents to FLAG.

The key priorities and issues listed below are ordered by the number of votes received in the poll, from highest to lowest. It needs to be noted that the top priorities represent issues which are common to most residents, with other issues important to only specific groups receiving less votes, which explains the location of some of these in the order list.

As this election is regarded as wide open to a challenge from a number of parties in the borough, Ferry Lane residents would be interested in getting the view of candidates from different parties standing for elections in our ward (South

Tottenham), to help them make an informed decision on the 4th May of who to elect to represent us on the Haringey council.

We would share the responses provided via our WhatsApp group and mailing lists, which go to a high proportion of residents on the estate, who in turn disseminate it wider. This would also help candidates to focus their engagement with residents in the last days of campaigning and post election.

The specific points to be addressed by the prospective councillors are put in *italics* at the end of each query/ issue.

Ferry Lane Residents local priorities for elected local councillors:

- 1. Preservation of the estate and particularly its green areas - Ferry Lane** estate is unique in London in terms of its design and the proportion of the estate taken by green spaces. Residents are rightly proud of the estate with a vibrant nature group and community gardeners who adopt and care for some of the communal green spaces and newly planted trees. The quality of care received from the (very expensive) Haringey parking services has varied over the years, with little attention to resident preferences in terms of areas of bio diversity. Grass is mowed and trees are pruned at wrong times of the year or in areas, which were agreed not to be mowed. Promised new trees are not provided when intended and some planters on the estate are neglected, sometimes for years.

Residents want to preserve the green spaces of Ferry Lane through better investment, collaboration and preservation, including support for Green Flag Award application. They would like to have assurances that there are no plans to build on any of these spaces or increase the density of the estate, with support for improving and upgrading our playgrounds, introduction of murals, with resident participation and with the park and ground maintenance services provided to the estate conducted in collaboration and regular consultation with the local residents.

- 2. Leaseholder charges, particularly inaccuracies and insurance charges -** the leaseholder charges have doubled in the last four years, with the day to day repairs and minor works going up 600% in the last year alone. Insurance charges have also more than doubled in the last year, with insurance costs calculated on the basis of latest property valuations, in contravention of leaseholders' signed lease terms..

Multiple escalations and FOI requests revealed poor procurement practice, with failed procurements and charges to Haringey Leaseholders, which are more than double of other, neighbouring London boroughs.

The charges are often wrong, with no transparency on credits, even when Haringey acknowledges these are due to leaseholders due to wrong charges. Leaseholders are also often charged for services they do not receive, such as lifts, fire equipment and entry door systems, none of which exist on Ferry Lane.

At the same time the services received by residents saw marked deterioration (see item 8), with Leaseholder services hard to reach by email and never picking up a phone when called.

Leaseholders on Ferry Lane (which represent between 40%-50% of the residents in the blocks of flats on the estate), wish to see root and branch review of their charges, as well as more transparency and quality of procurements carried out by the council on their behalf, combined with a more responsive leaseholder service (considering leaseholders pay on average £300 a year for management of the leaseholder services). Leaseholders would also wish Haringey to revert to the original lease provisions regarding insurance charges, which were changed without consultation or agreement of the leaseholders.

- 3. Future of the retail park** - Haringey recently consulted residents regarding future plans to potentially rebuild the Tottenham Hale retail park as a residential development with smaller, independent shops and with major reduction in parking spaces.

The Retail Park is a vital source of jobs and well used by the residents, with the car park vital to the viability of its businesses, which rely on custom outside the local area. Changing the nature of retail park to smaller shops will preclude local residents without cars having access to shops such as B&Q, ASDA Living, Lidl and Boots. Adding additional residential units to the area, which is already high density, with the transport infrastructure already at capacity, is also a concern, without any concrete plans for Crossrail2, as the only way to enable further residential expansion without negative impact on transport options for the existing local communities. *Ferry Lane residents would wish the local councillor to represent and advocate their views on the retail park in the council.*

- 4. Support for independent businesses in local area and in new developments nearby particularly** - while the council suggest ambitious plans for the retail park, as per above, it does little to support and nurture local businesses in the empty retail units, forming parts of the development on Ashley Rd., Hale Village and the Argent/ Newlon development near the station.

Residents would wish to see the local councillors working with councillors in neighbouring wards and local entrepreneurs and communities to support access to these retail units to enable local residents to operate pop up and permanent shops, coffee shops and restaurants in these units.

- 5. Garage management** - All blocks of flats on Ferry Lane were built with garage units on the ground floor, with such garages not directly attached to the flats above them and available for rent to any resident on Ferry Lane estate, even if they move from the estate. Over the years many of such units are now rented as storage units by renters outside the estate, with local residents struggling to get garage tenancy, with many waiting for a garage for years. At the same time it is known what some garages are used unsafely with storage of flammable materials, such as large vats of cooking oil, or for running illegal businesses, such as a car wash. Despite the garage charges more than doubling in the last five years, the quality of the service

deteriorated considerably, with residents not receiving responses to their queries and vacant garages not emptied and reallocated to residents for months on end.

Residents would like the ward councillors to advocate for a root and branch review of the garage rental policy, with only residents being able to rent garages on the estate, with no more than one garage per resident, and with all garage tenants not living or owning property on the estate to be given notice to vacate the garage, with such garages reallocated to residents on the waiting list.

- 6. Retender of the parking contract/ Abandoned cars** - for a number of years the considerable number of open parking spaces on the estate resulted in abandoned cars being dumped on the estate, reducing the number of parking spaces available for residents. The situation was exacerbated by a local unlicensed car repair business, which brought and dumped cars in various states of repair around the southern part of the estate. In addition, the proximity to the new developments with limited and expensive parking options resulted in overflow of cars from their residents in addition to Tottenham Hale commuters.

Thanks to the efforts of an enforcement officer, working closely with a FLAG chair, this situation has improved, but only a proportion of the 50+ cars identified and reported on the estate have been removed with FLAG still receiving resident complaints regarding the illegal car repair business being operational and working late into the night.

The expanded parking scheme, which is expected to include expanded abandoned and/or unlicensed vehicle removal powers, is not due to go live until 2027.

All the above have a real impact on residents, many of whom are elderly and/or disabled being able to find parking for their cars near their houses. *The residents would wish the expanded new parking scheme, which was promised for years, to be brought into operation within six months of the election, instead of waiting until '27 for its enforcement.*

- 7. Policing of anti-social behaviour** - a number blocks on the estate have flats occupied by tenants and private renters with severe mental health issues and/or ongoing anti-social behaviour tenancies. This is reflected in very loud music playing at all times of day and night, inability to clean and maintain their properties, with vermin spreading from such properties to neighbours, and extensive use, and sometimes public selling, of drugs resulting in public behaviour issues and smell impacting neighbouring properties. Each of such properties impact 2-6 neighbouring flats and their residents, with Haringey Housing and anti-social behaviour teams not providing timely and effective enforcement to address these issues.

Ferry Lane residents would like the local councillors to be advocates for the multiple affected residents in such cases escalating issues with housing and anti social behaviour teams in Haringey council to find the solution appropriate for each case.

- 8. Fire door retender and assessment of need** - leaseholders in Ferry Lane flats were told that their entrance doors need to be replaced following a fire risk assessment, despite these being installed by Haringey as part of the Decent Homes work 11-13 years ago, at leaseholders expense, and with an understanding that these are fire doors.

Haringey were not able to provide any evidence showing that the doors provided have been tested to confirm they require replacement. As all blocks are built of brick and cement, with all properties having individual entrance doors, as well as balconies or gardens, it was also unclear why this is regarded as a priority or a risk to residents. In addition, leaseholders were told they will be charged £1,000 - £2,000, despite residents' market research showing that such doors can be sourced from the market at less than quarter the price. Although some flats don't have anyone passing past their doors in case of fire emergency, and therefore were initially told they would not be charged, now they are charged £2K for doors as well, without them being replaced.

Finally, resident FOIs revealed that the price of such doors in Haringey is more than twice that charged by other boroughs replacing similar doors, with the contract procured from a single supplier, as Haringey was not able to secure a competition for such a common provision.

Ferry Lane residents would wish the local councillors to demand for a testing of existing doors and a rerun of the competition for the doors, if a replacement is needed after all, to ensure that only doors which need replacing are indeed replaced, leaseholder only charged for a replacement of their doors only, if these are needed, as proven by testing, and that the price of such doors represents a competitive value for money.

- 9. Repair issues including time to respond and quality of repairs** - the repairs services received by leaseholders and tenants on Ferry Lane seen marked deterioration, with call outs, even for urgent issues, such as lock repairs, taking weeks, no action taken on damp and mould, difficulty setting up and accessing leaseholder accounts and the repairs line having an average waiting time of an hour. At the same time the related charges have gone up by hundreds of % over the last few years (see issue 2 above).

Local councillors should partner with their counterparts around the borough, representing large Haringey Run council estates, to conduct a root and branch review of the repair services and related charges to improve the quality of the services and ensure the charges reflect services provided

- 10. Lack of investment in Ferry Lane estate from neighbouring developments S106 contributions** - for the past 18 years the area around Ferry Lane has been transformed from low industrial to high density residential, with the addition of thousands of new housing units. While the residents welcome new neighbours and the area regeneration the building works have been highly disruptive to residents, with noise and dust at the front of the estate and constant disruption to traffic and transport. Despite the impact on the residents, Ferry Lane received no injection of funding or direct benefits from the developer S106 contributions, despite high levels of

need on the estate and a number of areas requiring investment, such as the local playgrounds, multi use play area and the local school.

Ward councillors are asked to advocate for Ferry Lane estate to receive direct investment to compensate its residents for years of disruption caused by neighbouring developments.

Another quick win, which have been brought up by residents over the years:

- 1. Renovation and ongoing management of the Multi Use Game Area (MUGA) and addition of an outdoor gym**

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lorna Reith', written in a cursive style.

Lorna Reith
Chair, FLAG