

Minutes – Highbury Quadrant Tenants and Residents Association meeting

Date of Meeting:	2 May 2023	Time:	19.00
Location:	Birchmore Hall and Zoom		
Co-chairs:	Thomas Marks and Eike Sindlinger		
Attendees:	<p>CW, HA, NM, FS, DJ, OE, CK, LK, MH, SH, PG, SH, HO, RD, Suma Ward (secretary), Rachel Kneebone (committee), Nichola Lawrence (committee), Alec Hammond (committee), Peter O’Garr (committee), KS, MM, RW (via Zoom)</p> <p>Councillors – Ernestas Jegorovas-Armstrong, Benali Hamdache (apologies – Caroline Russell)</p> <p>Islington Borough Council (IBC) – Jade Fear (Estate Services Coordinator), Lydia Brown (s106 Monitoring Officer, Developer Contributions team), Keith Facey (Estate Champion - Highbury Quadrant), Matthew Homer (Waste Strategy Manager - via Zoom)</p>		

Summary of residents’ actions:

- Contact the Asset Management team at AssetManagementTeam@islington.gov.uk if interested in bike storage/pram shed/garage space
- Contact Julien at HQgrowingboxes@gmail.com if interested in allotment box
- Report any criminal behaviour (including drug dealing and illegal drug activity) to the police either via the [Met Police's online system](#) or by calling 101 (if not an emergency), giving as much detail as possible re: dates, times, individuals/vehicles involved as is safe to gather
- Report anti-social behaviour to Islington Council via their [ASB reporting services](#)
- View the caretaking updates at <https://docs.google.com/document/d/14KWc-Vw7Yr2qQg-FZOUplTBBV7nNn3d1F7YK0ActsCk/edit?usp=sharing>
- Contact Estate Services with any persistent caretaking issues at estate.services@islington.gov.uk and copy TRA in
- Contact TRA committee at highburyquadcommittee@gmail.com if interested in becoming part of the committee

Item	Action
<p>1. Welcome and Agenda</p> <p>Meeting chairs welcomed attendees.</p>	

2. Update on matters arising in previous meeting and recent activities

Cycle storage

Four new hangars installed - advised that possibly two spaces left; Peter O'G seeking updated list of who else wants bike storage - if more, further bid for funding via Thriving Neighbourhoods possible Resident raised query as to certainty that existing and new storage is actually in use - has contacted Homes and Communities but no response. Advised by Keith Facey that Asset Management Team have now taken over allocation of bike storage (as well as pram sheds and garage spaces) so **all queries related to these should be sent to AssetManagementTeam@islington.gov.uk**. Question raised as to whether contact point for requesting space could be put on hangars (and other relevant spaces).

Food Growing Boxes Community (allotment boxes scheme)

Boxes available so contact **Julien** at HQgrowingboxes@gmail.com if interested (boxes cost £10 per year)

Noticeboards

Jack M (committee member) working with Jade to install more noticeboards across the estate (currently paper-based noticeboards only present in five-storey blocks)

Playground and multi sport court area

Thriving Neighbourhoods bid for new surface for court and to update equipment not successful. However IBC Special Projects Team (led by Melody Walker) looking into updating equipment (as some wood now corroding) and possibly adding equipment aimed at toddlers/young children - TRA have been in contact and have offered support for this

Concern raised that tree house being used to take laughing gas (canisters seen in vicinity)

Anti-social behaviour

Suspected drug deals have been spotted taking place at Birchmore Walk/Highbury New Park area and near bus stop

Threshold for police action - six reports within two week period therefore important to **keep reporting suspected drug dealing/activity via 101 or [online Met Police crime reporting system](#) (if not an emergency) with as much detail re: dates, times, individuals/vehicles involved as is safe to gather)**

Resident had made report about drug taking to IBC ASB reporting systems and had been told that block letter would be sent out but nothing received

IBC also review persistent incidences over three month period based on reports made to [ASB reporting systems](#) - this was how Riversdene problems were tackled **so important to keep reporting** so that other services such as [ParkGuard](#) can be engaged

Also reports of joyriding around Highbury Quadrant and flytipping Jade working with Tenancy Services about specific issue involving resident - actions taken could include tenancy being revoked but only after following due process

Raised in AOB - people smoking in stairwell of 193-231 Highbury New Park (has been reported to police and ASB line) - whilst not a complete solution, advised that increasing movement in stairwells (if safe to do so) can help deter this

Wildflower meadows

<p>First area (nearest to Highbury New Park) is ready for planting - to have seeds stamping event with local children; other two areas to be worked on next year</p>	
<p>3. Caretaking standards</p> <p>More communication/collaborative working with Estate Services via quarterly inspections (open to all residents) and weekly bulletins from Jade - can be made public to residents</p> <p>Issues raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HQ maisonettes only have caretaker three days a week so some activities (such as washing stairs) not done - Jade reported plans to recruit to the part-time vacancy • 1-11 Birchmore Walk - had caretaker (John) who was excellent but then moved on and new caretaker not as effective (took four weeks to remove rubbish and not cleaning balcony/stairs - has been reported) <p>Jade highlighted that balconies (unlike stairs and lobby areas) are not covered by caretaking activities (are responsibility of residents) but should clear environmental health hazards such as fox faeces (note access to 1-11 Birchmore Walk difficult due to current door)</p> <p>Residents advised to contact Estate Services at estate.services@islington.gov.uk for persistent issues, copying in TRA</p> <p>Current caretakers - Mark, John, Yusuf, Roger, Alister and Peter (part-time Mon-Wed - looking to recruit to vacancy for Thurs-Fri) covering 8-4 or equivalent</p> <p>Question raised about what residents can expect from caretaking services and if not met, how can this be reflected in fees charged - Jade provides hours worked to Home Ownership who then provide charges (though unclear as to who manages this) - residents don't feel there has ever been any reimbursement</p> <p>Councillors have asked for letter to be sent out about what to expect from caretaking service</p> <p>Overall feeling from residents that voices are not heard and action not taken when raising issues; also some frustration related to quality of work undertaken in the stated hours; question also raised about the morale of the caretakers - residents wanted to be clear that feelings about the service were because we all care about the estate and want it to be at its best</p> <p>Keith Facey offered to organise a resident drop-in event (most probably 4-7pm at Birchmore Hall) where there could be representation from Home Ownership and other IBC departments such as Community Safety to enable residents to meet directly with key services - positive response in the room to this.</p>	<p>TRA committee to develop way of sharing caretaking bulletins without overwhelming communications - see residents' actions at the start</p> <p>Jade to confirm who in Home Ownership manages charging for caretaking in service charges</p> <p>TRA committee to work with Keith Facey to organise resident drop-in event</p>
<p>4. Bin storage redesign</p> <p>Funding from Thriving Neighbourhoods scheme will enable initial feasibility study to look at existing arrangements and options for enclosing waste bins (Highbury Quadrant unique because have internal recycling chutes but waste bins are outside - note question as to why these were configured in this way - aim had been to improve recycling rates and TRA at the time had been involved in consultation around this)</p> <p>Considerations will include aesthetics, hygiene, fire safety (enclosures would need to be secure and fire safe), capacity, location (needs to be</p>	

<p>useful but also practical), accessibility (issue with current bins) and design to deter flytipping and foxes To approach Groundwork to lead initial work Looking to make other Thriving Neighbourhoods bid to support Year 2 implementation work but will also look at other options (estimated £250K required) - aiming for completion by spring 2024 TRA keen for resident inclusion in planning - want this to be a collaborative approach between IBC, councillors. TRA and residents; question raised about what residents can expect from consultation - Matthew Homer currently not sure yet of details but will take steer from TRA; will also need to ensure Riversdene included in this activity</p>	<p>TRA committee to follow up with Matthew Homer</p>
<p>5. Birchmore Hall activities (including Summer Hello event)</p> <p>Scout meetings and dance classes taking place in the evenings (dance classes also on Saturday mornings) and Hartbeeps baby and toddler sessions on Monday mornings Line dancing lessons still taking place on Wednesday mornings Now have regular bike maintenance sessions (last Sunday of every month) being run by IBC Available for weekend party bookings but only until 8pm due to noise To trial circus skills workshop with performer (Dan Rose) from Winter Celebration event Music and picnic event (organised by resident John Sloboda) taking place on Monday 8th (King's Coronation bank holiday) Committee member Jude has loaned her piano; once ready to use. to look at how this can be utilised TRA committee looking to hold Summer Hello event on 9 July (note this is different from the date originally given at the meeting which has now become unavailable)</p>	
<p>6. Highbury Quadrant church redevelopment</p> <p>Developer only wants to meet residents during working hours so ward Councillors are door knocking to hear if residents do have any issues Letter with FAQs being sent to residents Councillor working with Lydia Brown on possible uses of community infrastructure levy generated by this activity - to discuss ideas with residents at drop-in session (possibly same one as being organised by Keith Facey)</p>	
<p>7. AOB</p> <p>Issues raised related to topics previously discussed in meeting included in those sections Nil new raised But more volunteers needed for the TRA committee so please come forward!</p>	

Next meeting: Tuesday 19 September 2023 at 7pm at Birchmore Hall/Zoom