

# Luxborough Tower Residents Association

## Minutes of Zoom meeting with WCC Estate Office Weds 20 Oct 2021

LTRA Mike Kostyn (chair), Nick Vinson (vice chair), Andrew Hughes (secretary), Anthony Styant, Alex Reid, Irwin Nazareth (observer)

WCC Dalya Charif Housing Services Manager, Liz Waine Area Services Manager, Deborah Maxted Lift Contract Engineer, Betim Shehu Compliance Manager, Mitin Patel Head of Estate Services, Karim Carrington ASB Case Manager

Apologies: LTRA Jennifer Grimshaw, Denise Atkinson Hines, WCC Gavin Ridgewell Senior Client Programme Manager (and submitted texts later)

- Bins - location changed with some unhappiness. Where should they be? /How many of each type? How to stop stuff accumulating on the ground? Discuss and confirm draft text

- A lot of discussion and a touch of mayhem when some kindly resident dumped a whole pile of rubbish in front of a garage. We think we have found a compromise position for the bins, but there are complications. **WCC organised a follow up meeting and we agreed the solution – on a temporary basis whilst we see how it works. A letter to be distributed to all flats, possibly with a translation into Arabic**
- Mitin explained the small size of the slot on the bins – to minimise cross ‘contamination’ of rubbish – eg. non recyclable waste in a recycling bin
- **LTRA asked for lids that open, and a listing of when rubbish is cleared** (two separate collections (eg mattresses and white goods)

- Cleaning. Follow up to walk around NV had with Michael Stewart, Estate Services Manager May

NV still **waiting for feedback about cleaning of lifts**  
Internal lights have been checked. **External lights to be checked next week**

- CCTV door bells. WCC to report on progress

There is a process. Existing ones shouldn't have been installed without a prior application. On review **WCC has decided these are inappropriate and have to be removed**. Thank you.

- Heating switched on. Can it be run slightly warmer? / Usual question, what is the plan for the temporary boiler. / The heat exchangers were going to be serviced this summer after 2 years at least. Does the build up of dust constitute a fire risk? WCC to comment, particularly in the light of the University's latest planning request: 'erection of gas flues on north elevation of the building to facilitate a new plant room containing gas boilers'

- Heating temperature to be followed up by reviewing individual flats' heater performance. AH said that he thought the boiler itself ran cool at times
- Heat exchangers confusion. WCC say they aren't serviced because there is asbestos in the lining. AH and others remember them having been serviced annually going back for years. **WCC to clarify**
- The 'temporary' boiler. GR later submitted this comment. The temporary boiler is planned to stay in position until a permanent stable heat supply can be secured. The university did have plans to replace their boilers but the legal issues around the lease have not allowed this to happen. The university are now exploring options to relocate their heating sources outside of the Luxborough tower basement (hence the recent planning application re new boiler flues)

- We all received letters about the University seeking planning permission for new gas flues. Some residents are anxious about these flues seeping dangerous gases across our building and balconies. If so, do follow the information on the letter to lodge your objections

- Leaks - meeting with WCC and improvement in leaks protocol. See notes of meeting. Will this convert into better settlement of leaks? Communications to be improved

AH had distributed the notes of the meeting in advance. There was a sense of improvement in WCC response to major leaks. But NV reminded us of an extreme case which was not handled well. Communication is vital. **There will be another meeting in February** to see whether the intentions have been enacted in practice – though, of course, we hope there won't be any leaks to practice on

- Lifts - long delay in getting repair. What is the future for current lifts – what is the long-term planning for maintenance, replacement? WCC to comment

- 3 week delay for fixing L247. Apologies from WCC. Processor went from WCC to Precision to manufacturer. Was thought to be fixed then faulted again
- NV pointed out the poor communications from WCC. Good practice would have been to focus on residents with disabilities to inform and offer help. **WCC to consider**
- Possible replacement of lifts in 2023-24. New lifts have more speed, improved reliability and also features such as improved fire protection. WCC have ordered a survey of the lifts: L247 faulting too often. **WCC agreed that when the time comes LTRA will be involved in detail of new lifts** – eg. no synthetic voices
- NV pointed out **faulty call button light at floor 20 for L247**

- Major Works. Process currently with lawyers. WCC have agreed independent surveyors to assess what work needs doing. Two named surveyors have been agreed and we have started working through the detail of their working guidelines. WCC to comment

GR later supplied this comment: as far as we are aware the Lawyers representing the Leaseholders and the Council have agreed in principle (but not signed) to the Terms of Reference for the Expert Witnesses. The next stage is for the agreement to be signed and the expert to inspect Luxborough Tower, in order to ascertain what works needs to be done (which is disputed by some leaseholders) We expect it to be a slow process as the evidence will need to be gathered from the experts, and then discussed / negotiated between the parties.

- Parking - still seem to be spare spaces? Brief WCC comment

Car park seems quiet, but WCC report only 1 void. **WCC to do another sample audit**

- Redevelopment of play space. Plans finally agreed and builders on site soon (end of October?). Compromises made as costs escalated, but security fence confirmed. Work cabins may be on Luxborough site for just 15 weeks - rest of the time inside their perimeters. Communications with builders via notice board and website. Up to date notice from WCC?

Told that all agreements are now in place. Awaiting information from Graham Soars as to when start will happen. Now notified Wates will be on-site **from 8<sup>th</sup> Nov. Meetings with LTRA before then.** Will insist on high level of communications as to progress

- Window cleaning. LTRA asked for a change to the cleaning regime, but ... the problem is that after 50 years of cleaning the external face of the windows, with the operator safely attached to a safety bolt, someone has decided that this technique can't be used, with the pole method only

applied up to the fifth floor. We can't understand the logic of this. The abseiling replacement method is much more expensive, and surely more scary? Any further WCC comment?

Mitin joined the meeting on mobile phone. He explained the changes to Health & Safety that had led to the changes. NV challenged and asked for more information. **Who had cleaned the windows previously and would they pick up the contract now? And photos.**

- LTRA membership / accounts. Membership mostly static because of pandemic. Accounts waiting for WCC to pay last year's grant. A healthy bonus when O'Shea did repair work to the Chiltern Street flats and used our carpark for scaffolding. Update for meeting, plus sad news of one committee member. NV has since put a copy of the Guardian's obituary of Michael King on the notice board

Current membership from Oct 2019: individual members 88 / flats represented 64 = 56%  
Current accounts: LTRA £ 1,395 / Other £4,544 (thanks to O'Shea) And thank you to WCC staff, particularly Dalya

- AOB  
Anti Social Behaviour

Karim joined the meeting. The local police and support staff will be making a 'sweep' of the area to coincide with the clocks changing and darker evenings. Best to be visible. LTRA just looking forward to the security fence going up.

Clear corridors. Tripping hazards and all sorts of stuff left in corridors. More of it since Estate Inspections stopped? Any follow up from the Estate Office

WCC H&S staff visit once a month. Cleaners on site every day. So there are checks. **Could maybe be more emphatic about not allowing stuff left in corridors.**

#### Benches

NV replied:

I think the bench you are referring to was bought, without consultation, by a resident and placed in position without request. This bench is not part of the re-landscaping project where benches have been designed and positioned with much consultation a few years ago. As far as I remember it was agreed to keep it until the works start and then donated to the Baker Street Gardens ( their words not mine). Personally I have not seen the position of this bench at present but I will go and have a look. I don't think we need to add any secluded places for any kind of Anti Social behaviour. So we will follow up with WCC on this

#### Why are meetings not held in the meetings room

WCC staff can only be involved in Zoom meetings, and the meetings room has no wifi. So, we meet in a wide corridor with plenty of ventilation, where we can get 3 laptops working