



**PBHA Forum**  
**Minutes: Wednesday 18 February 2015**



**Present:** 15 Tenants and Participants, Andrew Tyers (Dep CEO), Mandy Mansfield (Participation Officer)  
**Apologies:** M Mulheron  
**Chair:** P Caffrey  
**Minutes:** Mandy Mansfield

## **Agenda**

1. Ground Rules and Introductions
2. Matters Arising from last meeting
3. Rent Consultation
4. Premises update inc. new joinery premises
5. Legard Leaving Party – Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> March and Cake – design for top
6. Committee Rules proposal
7. Stella’s Memorial – Saturday 28th February 2pm
8. Expert Patient taster class at Isledon – Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> March 2.30pm
9. Date of next meeting
10. AOB

## **1 Ground Rules**

The Chair reminded the forum that everyone ought to treat each other with respect; not to shout or swear, to listen and not talk over people, and to allow others to have their views by speaking for no more than five minutes. The forum then introduced themselves.

## **2 Matters Arising from last meeting**

- **Site Visit** – Places available on Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> February, leaving Stamford Works at 2.30pm, for a 3pm visit.
- **Over 50’s Club** – The launch is on Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> February from 11am-2pm at Isledon Canteen. There will be soup and sandwiches, and the opportunity to socialise and discuss what type of activities to do in the future. The club will be held once a month.
- **Name of New Building** - Following consultation and taking people’s views into consideration, although Kingsland Works was most popular on the survey, many did not like ‘Works’. The name of the new building will be **Kingsland Hub**. Those present felt ‘Hub’ is a more appropriate name.

## **3 Rent Consultation**

### **Increase of rent using Government Formula of 2.9%**

Andrew asked whether the increase of rent using Government Formula of 2.9% is affordable to those who are working (most people are covered by Housing Benefit). It was pointed out that this doesn’t reflect inflation, and it was clarified that the formula is based on The

Consumer Price Index of the previous September. One person said that the older properties should be fixed up as they are cold and damp. Another stated that communal areas are very cold, and that gardens are not being properly cleared. Another said that repairs are not being done very well. If this is the case, tenants should use the Complaints Procedure.

It was pointed out that if PBHA does not increase rents, services would need to be cut. The forum asked for more financial detail of what the rent income is spent on. Some things rent covers include repairs, staff, garden maintenance, as well as contributes to work schemes, VCS and hubs, for example. One person asked, as a Housing Association, shouldn't it be spent on the houses, and who decides where the money is spent?

Andrew suggested this can be brought to the next Forum, when more detailed figures are available. Generally, people felt the rent increase is reasonable as long as PBHA ensures it deals with the above issues.

### **Removal of phones in communal areas**

This had been raised at previous forums, and especially as most people have mobile phones. Removing them would save people in shared houses £1.25 per week in service charge. One person pointed out that they are useful for calling DSS 0800 numbers, but otherwise, the forum agreed that they should be removed.

### **Removal of TVs in shared communal areas and stop providing TV licenses**

This will reduce service charge not covered by Housing Benefit, by £1.66 per week. It was pointed out that TV licenses provided to shared houses do not cover a TV used in individual bedrooms. As many TVs in communal areas do not work or have been removed over the years, the forum was asked whether they watched the communal TVs. Do they want to keep the current system, or pay for their own license? The forum was split on this issue, with some people wanting PBHA to continue to provide the license, and others, hearing that their own TV is not legally covered, wanted to pay their own license fee.

### **Cleaning Materials in shared flats**

Very few people have been coming to collect cleaning materials from Legard Works and Stamford Works. It was felt that even less will do so after the Office move. The proposal to stop offering cleaning materials from April was discussed.

Most people buy their own cleaning materials cheaply. However, it was pointed out that some people are not very good at keeping communal areas clean. PBHA staff will support those individuals who need additional help keeping these areas clean.

### **Fuel Charges**

The charge for people in shared accommodation is £10 per week, and it is proposed that PBHA keeps this the same. It was pointed out that the cost of fuel has actually gone down. PBHA have negotiated a new contract with SSE to keep fuel charges at the same as previous years.

The current system for splitting fuel charges equally in self contained accommodation is being reviewed, as people's usage vary. It is proposed that when people use less than

average, they are charged less, and when they use more, they are charged more. However, those in self contained accommodation will be encouraged take responsibility for paying their own bills.

## **General Comments**

One person pointed out that PBHA no longer supplies certain items to people with new tenancies. However, some older tenants are entitled to items such as a kettle or iron, for example. There is some confusion as to what people are entitled to and the type of tenancy they have. It was suggested that PBHA put in place a system that clearly shows what type of tenancy people hold and what they are entitled to.

## **4 Premises Update including new joinery premises.**

Stamford Works is closing on 13<sup>th</sup> March, and Legard Works is closing on 7<sup>th</sup> April. There will be a 3 week gap where tenants and participants can not access the new building, as works are incomplete. SW staff will be seeing tenants in their own homes. PBHA is installing a WIFI in Clissold Road's front room and staff will also meet tenants there.

PBHA has secured a new creative industries premises to house joinery and art classes. The building is 5 minutes walk from the new premises.

## **5 Legard Leaving Party**

The leaving party is planned for Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> March from 1pm-4.30pm. There will be food, a live band and DJ. People will be asked to contribute to a memory book by writing how they feel about Legard Works and bring any photos. There will be a few short speeches, and we will possibly be filming some of the event. There will be an information stand about the new premises, with maps and transport directions. When asked what we should have on the top of the cake – all agreed 'Farewell to Legard ' is appropriate.

## **6 Committee Guidelines Proposal**

The current committee introduced themselves (Precious Martini-Brown, Patrick Caffrey, Tyron Sembu and Carol Cameron.) It was clarified that the purpose of Tenant's Committee is to be available for tenants to bring confidential concerns or complaints about PBHA services, to set the Forum Agenda, to explore and develop new projects for participation, such as Over 50s Club, and to report and be responsible to the PBHA Forum

Following some confusion recently, when it was unclear whether a person stays on the Committee indefinitely, the Committee propose the following guidelines for being a committee member.

-that the Committee is comprised of four PBHA Tenants, with at least one from each borough.

-Each person should commit to a minimum of 6 months. After 6 months they can chose to stay on or stand down.

- Each person needs to be available to attend monthly committee meetings. If unable to attend, inform other committee members or Participation Officer.
- Each Committee member to regularly attend PBHA Forum, undertaking duties to help facilitate this, such as Chair, or assistance with catering, e.g.
- Should personal circumstances prevent a person being involved, with agreement of the rest of the Committee, they be allowed a period of 2 months 'time out' from duties. After the two months period, the person can either return or agree to step down from the Committee.
- When a space on The Committee becomes available, it will be advertised at The Forum and in the Rising Star. The Forum agreed that these are reasonable guidelines.

### **7 Stella Marange's memorial**

This has been organized by Stella's family and PBHA tenants. The memorial will have food and cakes. A special plaque and rose bush will be planted in Isledon garden. The memorial is on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> February from 2pm. All welcome.

### **8 Expert Patient taster class at Isledon**

A Health and Wellbeing taster run by Camden and Islington NHS is being held at Isledon Hub on Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> March at 2.30pm.

### **9 Date of next meeting**

The next Forum will be held at **Clissold Road on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> March at 1pm**. Precious and Mandy will organise sandwich lunch at 12.30pm. A taxi will be booked for Isledon residents to attend.

### **10 AOB**

This year's Pride celebration to be on next month's Agenda.