

**Meeting between Barking Reach Residents Association (BRRA), Barking Riverside Limited (BRL)
and Pinnacle Places
Wednesday, 1 April 2020 via videoconference**

Present: Pam Ross, BRL; Ken Webster, Senior Operations Manager, estates dept. BRL; Julian Barnett, Pinnacle; Pete Mason, chair, BRRA, and Venilia Amorim, treasurer, BRRA

Apologies: Nuno Amorim, secretary, BRRA

Started at 7.30pm

Cladding

Matt Carpen sent a letter to residents in February informing residents of fire safety measures that builders would take on their individual properties. The RA requested that BRL contact builders for an update on status, with regards with coronavirus situation, to be sent to residents directly as well as the RA.

The RA had written to Matt Carpen, cc Pam, on 2 March, thanking Matt for the February letter and detailing all the other flammable materials on the external walls of buildings on the estate – ACM cladding on Leslie Hitchcock House and John Miller House, and flammable decking on the balconies on those blocks and in Caspian Quarter.

Julian stated that discussions were on-going regarding Caspian Quarter and Adriatic.

Due to COVID-19 all construction works on the estate have stopped. Pete said the RA has been contacted by the press on this and that an article will be written in the Sunday Times. Pete said flammable cladding is still a fire hazard and should be treated as an emergency action and removed. According to government recommendations, this is the case and there is no lockdown on building companies that are removing flammable cladding.

Several residents from Samuel Garside House (SGH) are saying that the ‘juliette’ balconies will not be removed. Pete will send Pam documentation of planning permission which shows that these are to be removed and replaced with the same material as the main balconies. Pete asked that BRL put pressure on Bellway to restart the balcony replacement and replace the ‘juliette’ balcony wood.

Pam stated that Matt had been in contact with Bellway about them continuing their work and the situation was on-going.

While on the call, Venilia noticed the fire brigade had been called to SHG, following several posts on the residents’ WhatsApp group, of residents claiming to smell something burning. Pam contacted Debbie Cook at RMG. She later reported that there was no fire on site. The building’s waking watch team was to reset the fire alarm and that the fire brigade was still on site.

Heating

Ken said that an easy to use guide is being compiled for residents on phase 2 by L&Q regarding their heating systems. They recognised that the heating issue had not been communicated to residents as best as it could have been.

Julian said Pedley House and Lawley Mansions are handled by Pinnacle, while Rhodes Mansions is managed by L&Q.

Pete noted that L&Q had informed residents that they had commissioned independent engineers to look at the issues residents were facing in the respective blocks and requested that the reports be passed on to residents. Ken said he has yet to see the reports.

Ken added that to the best of his knowledge all residents have been contacted by L&Q regarding all heating queries, and that he was unaware of any residents claims not being dealt with.

Pete said that the warm weather had lessened the urgency of the issue, but Pam said that it was important that all issues were fixed now, rather than wait until the next winter.

There are still issues with heating and hot water on Ernest Websdale House – Pam has not had any emails from RMG about this, but Pete said residents continue to liaise with RMG.

Pete asked Pam about providing the ESCo contract between BRL and L&Q Energy, as promised at the February residents association meeting, since it may transpire that in future, through Right to Manage, the energy supply company could be changed by the residents. Pam stated that a resident from phase two had requested this and it would be supplied to them.

CIC

All residents that have applied to be on the CIC's learning forum have now received emails from John Swinney and Andy Schofield, the independent chairs, asking them to get in touch so that individual interviews can take place.

Pam is liaising with them in supporting residents on what they might need in terms of tech support.

Recognition of the RA

Pam said a separate meeting needs to be scheduled so that the RA and BRL speak with Cassandra Zinelli, partner at PM Legal Services, to discuss how to move forward with legalising the RA. Pete agreed to the meeting as long as the RA also presents their terms.

Fountain proposal

Julian said this is not a good time to be setting up fountains because of a potential recession, so it could be difficult to maintain fountains after the summer. He said that pump maintenance for a year could cost up to £1,000. The original proposal was to take up the offer of the Barking Rail Extension's offer of doing some community work, by paying for the establishment of fountains on the lakes. But the on-going maintenance costs was the issue.

Ken is looking at an alternative, talking to insect exterminators, considering ecology around the area.

Pam said there are still a lot of costs that BRL picks up that don't appear in the service charge.

Venilia suggested that BRE (Barking Rail Extension) would pick up some of the costs, since they volunteered to pay for the fountains.

Estate charge

Julian said the budget has been sent out to residents. He said that there are still a few residents that have not paid the service charge and he stressed the importance of residents to keep paying because non-payment affects the service that Pinnacle is able to deliver. Pete asked that the Residents Association be supplied with the summary and breakdown of costs of the service charge. This was not agreed. Pam said that Pinnacle/BRL need to deal with residents on a one to one basis when it comes to service charge disputes, especially now that some residents may be experiencing financial difficulties.

Venilia added that the RA never advised residents to stop payments, in fact it has always been advised for residents to contact Pinnacle directly if residents have issues with their service charges.

Parking control

PCM's appointment on phase 2 of the estate has been postponed to 1 May, because of coronavirus environment, Ken said.

Link Parking are still working, but Pam said that NHS or key workers should have exemption on parking tickets, unless they are creating a hazard. Julian to liaise with Pam and Link Parking on that.

Security

Pam said the CCTV system BRL thought to implement will become much more expensive than originally thought. BRL will need to review costs, so Pam said a CCTV system can't be promised for the time being.

School carpark

Pam spoke to the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham council about residents using the car park outside of school hours for free, Negotiations are ongoing over some legal documents. The school is worried that residents won't move their cars before 7am. Julian emphasised that the school carpark is currently open to residents after school hours and weekends for a small pay by phone charge.

Bollards/BBQ/Signs

Pam said this is on hold at the moment due to lockdown.

Animals

Pam confirmed that the dogs from a residence on Lawes Way have been rehoused and the wandering cat has stopped appearing at the school, since the Rivergate centre is now closed as well.

Pam thanked Southern Housing which did a brilliant job at working together with BRL and the tenant for this situation to be resolved.

Lighting on the pond area stairs

Ken said that BRL is waiting on quotes for lighting installations or fluorescent strips to be put across the steps of the pond area opposite the Rivergate Centre. He added that works will proceed soon.

AOB

Venilia mentioned some residents' dissatisfaction with the shop My Local for not enforcing social distancing at this time. Pam will address it directly with the shop owners.

Meeting ended 20.45pm