

MINUTES FROM RESIDENTS MEETING 10TH MAY 2006.

Many thanks to Richard Ashton for his outstanding work as chairperson prior to my election last night.

Last night's meeting was purely to form a new committee for the Gresse Street Residents. (G.S.R.) This wouldn't have been achieved without the support from Richard. Now I have been elected I can assure you that I will continue to make progress on your behalf. If you have any questions or points to raise then please come to our next residents meeting where everyone is given the opportunity to talk.

1. Formal introduction from Richard Ashton.
2. Introduction from Chris Howard.
3. Election of new chairperson.
4. Election of new deputy chairperson.
5. Election of new secretary.
6. Election of new committee members.
7. Any other business.
8. Report by chairman.

Richard Ashton introduced himself to the residents and in turn introduced myself as the nominated to fill his shoes. I was seconded by 4 other residents, then it was put to the residents at the meeting to vote. Of the 13 other residents who attended, all 13 voted me in as chairman.

I then introduced myself to the residents and took over the proceedings for the meeting. Councillor Penelope Abraham also attended as an independent witness to the proceedings.

Next we voted for a deputy chairperson, and I forwarded Mr D Beech as a nomination. This was seconded by Richard Ashton. The residents voted, and again all 13 were in unanimous decision.

Thirdly we voted for a secretary for the committee and Pamela Munro was elected by the same principles as above.

No other committee members were elected or forwarded.

I opened the 'new' meeting by giving a report to the residents on my work behind the scenes as a resident. I started the report on the subject of the building works being carried out at number 15-19 Gresse street. (the old Birkbeck college) I explained to the residents of my liasing with the building firm (Overbury) and how I have managed to obtain a cleaning service from them as a goodwill gesture to us

I also suggested that I should continue in my efforts to try to obtain some form of compensation from Overbury in relation to the continued noise, dust, dirt and general inconvenience we have had to suffer whilst work has been carried out. I will give an up-date at our next meeting.

At the last residents meeting which was attended by members of Camden Council, local police and community police, and a local councillor a number of issues were raised relating to subjects varied as communal cleaning to lighting to security. The minutes of this meeting have never materialised to us the residents, so the minutes from this meeting will not be forwarded on to Camden Council as a result. (Fair's fair!)

Anyway, at this meeting the main points raised were as follows;

1. Can we apply from the district funds? This is for monies to help the aesthetics of our block.
2. Should we apply to the federation for tenants and residents associations? (T.R.A.'s)
3. The ongoing problem of whether we have the correct cleaning of our block and whether there are any guidelines as to if one cleaner is enough for a block of our size? Also, is our cleaner (Stephen) doing enough? A lot of us didn't think so.
4. The constant problems arising from residents leaving their rubbish outside the front door. Why do residents persist in this activity and what can we do to put an end to it?
5. Cleaning of our communal rubbish rooms. This is a strong issue that most of the residents identified with. We all appreciated that Stephen's job is tough and maybe he didn't get enough time to clean our rubbish rooms as often as he should, but I've been here a year and not once has the rubbish room on my floor been cleaned. Emptied, yes. Cleaned, no.
6. Washing being dried over balconies. It is against the leaseholders and council tenants conditions of tenure to hang washing over balconies, but still people persist.
7. Where are our blocks gas metres located? If you move into a property and you need to access your metre for whatever reason, where are you likely to locate your gas metre?
9. Nighttime rubbish collections. On Gresse street at night there are night time/early hours refuse collections. Can we change the collection times so we are not disturbed anymore than we need to be?
10. Also, on the note of noise at night, we seem to be having a lot of glass collections from the surrounding public houses. Can a letter be drafted up on behalf of the residents to try to keep the noise to a minimum during the early hours of the morning in line with noise policy and general goodwill to residents?
11. Can the residents finally get some answers from Bill Sheppey in relation to the front door costs they endured almost two years ago? Can an itemised bill for the new security door be drawn up and given to the residents who had to pay out £250.01?
12. Surely, any rebates that were due two years ago must be paid back to the residents soon?
13. Our lifts seem to be breaking down on a more regular basis now than they ever did. The lifts are now 25 years old, and most residents feel that they are either in need of a major refit/overhaul or be replaced. This block contains a lot of disabled residents who feel isolated if they have no means of getting outside by choice when the lifts are out of order. Is this a breach of the disability discrimination laws maybe?
14. As Prudential own the front forecourt to our building, we wondered if they are interested in helping us to try to improve security for us all. Would they be willing to assist in trying to improve security for us all in this heightened state of security?
15. E.R.D. was mentioned in the meeting also. External redecoration. Who is responsible for the redecoration of our balconies and is it about time they were done?

Also, it was commented on that some balconies had plaster cracks, which are quite visible. Can these balconies be looked at by a site surveyor/engineer for our block?

16. I, as newly appointed chairman closed the meeting by saying I will pursue as much letter writing to the relevant departments as possible before the next meeting. Date and time to be confirmed, but probably within the next 2 months.

17. The on going problem of people parking unlawfully on our front forecourt was addressed. I opened the discussion by stating that we have a white van which continues to park on the forecourt each evening. We all know that he is not a resident but still he continues to try to fool us into thinking he is working at number 12. (A note on his windscreen saying 'working at flat 12') Not only is it dangerous for the residents in wheelchairs or whose mobility is affected in some way, but also for the seriousness of fire safety. We recently had a fire in the underground car park from Freemantle television studios, and this was heightened by the fact that the emergency exits could have been blocked on the forecourt.

At the last residents meeting, Mr Patrick Bonner, patch manager for Camden Council, agreed with us that he would try to get in touch with Prudential (who own our front forecourt) and try to liase with them on the pursuit of introducing bollards to the forecourt to stop people parking there.

We are still waiting for any updates from Mr Bonner. I will draft a letter to him requesting any updates. I have also contacted Camden Council on the residents' behalf in trying to re pave the front pavement which is cracked and uneven due to the cars/vans crossing it to gain access to our forecourt.

I have also contacted Camden parking enforcement and am awaiting their reply as to the enforcement parking restrictions and ticket type that can be enforced regarding vehicles passing over a public footway.

I look forward to the next meeting and thank you all for attending this fruitful and seemingly productive meeting.

Mr Chris Howard