

# CHALCOTS WORKS GROUP (CWG) MEETING NOTE 20 May 2020

## Attendees

Paul Urquhart (PU), Nigel Rumble (NR), Cllr Steve Adams (SA), Cllr Tom Simon (TS), Cllr Meric Apak (MA), Hasan Shah (HS), Mandy Ryan (MR), Paula Schofield (PS)  
Astrid Kjellberg-Obst (AKO), Matt Jenkins (MJ), Cllr Luisa Porritt (LP): Oonah Lacey (OL)

## Apologies

Mandy Ryan (MR),

## 1. Quality Inspectors

1.1 Following questions raised at the recent Major Works webinar and in email communication from CWG members it is clear that it would be helpful to have a discussion to clarify understanding and expectations regarding the role and responsibilities of the Quality Inspectors. The feedback has indicated that a number of resident representatives would like to see Michael Bennett brought back to support the major works contract. AKO explained that the work that was covered by Michael Bennett previously for phase 1 and phase 2 will for the next phase of works now be managed and delivered by the five Quality Inspectors supporting their dedicated block. All Quality Inspectors are highly experienced with contract management and technical experience. The meeting was reminded that Michael Bennett has retired. AKO advised that as Project Director she was capacity building her team to deliver the major works and was confident that the Quality Inspectors will be able to address any technical issues required and be able to resolve any issues in a timely manner. It was suggested by MJ that Mike Bennett with his expertise and knowledge of the blocks that he would be a unique asset and act as a supervisor for the Quality Inspectors. Cllr Apak pointed out two key issues, would Mike Bennett be available and can we bring him in and who else would have the equivalent knowledge and expertise. AKO confirmed that she did not feel that there was a gap but if there was would be looking to see how that could be managed. Cllr Steve Adams confirmed support for Mike Bennett on the basis that he was continually asked for advice on plumbing and waste and suggested that Andy Hardwick be asked to nominate someone to be the contact to cover these additional issues. AKO supported the concept to have a named repairs contact but would ensure that needs would be met and any perceived gap covered. NR contributed to the discussion that Mike Bennett was previously the technical expert but as he is retired is unlikely to want to come back but stressed that there was a need for a contact person/s on site to deal with technical issues. Responsibility and appointment of the Works Project Team rests with the Project Director and at this stage it is felt that the technical support for the works is well served by the five Quality Inspectors.

## 2. Works pipeline update (Webinar presentation)

- 2.1 AKO shared slides, 6,9,10 and 11, which were used at the post Cabinet decision update webinar to highlight and reconfirm the current Major Works status and planned activities, which will be now developed and agreed.
- 2.2 AKO pointed out that at this time it was not possible or appropriate to give any timelines for planned activities to take place because detailed work has only been able to be started following Cabinet decision last week. AKO stressed that she was not going to make commitments where work items require support from other teams until confirmation on target times are confirmed. Cllr Apak explained that when timescales have previously been missed due to the failure of others AKO has as a professional accepted the blame even though it was not down to her failing to meet the agreed timelines, and requested that the CWG be patient at this time.
- 2.3 HS confirmed that he understood the situation and that he felt that it was reasonable to say that targets will be missed and we understand.

2.4 It was confirmed that security on site will not be scaled down until all fire stopping works are completed and the scaffolding has been removed. AKO updated on the fire stopping works completed and the current status and thanked the Quality Inspectors for their hard work to achieve only 23 properties across all five blocks needing fire stopping works of which 10 are void and currently being worked on and 10 which are occupied with residents and plans are in place to complete post Covid 19, with a remaining 3 under review by Camden.

2.5 Cllr Simon questioned the situation around CCTV and security on site. Regarding CCTV it was asked would security remain on site until the CCTV issues are resolved. A request was made to understand the trigger points to pick up CCTV failures and how to resolve this. It was reported that Cllr Simon has been trying to get CCTV issues resolved at Dorney for some 12 months

2.6 Cllr Porritt confirmed that issues around CCTV is frustrating Councillors and residents. A further question was raised around releasing void properties to meet the housing need of residents. AKO confirmed that the larger void flats have had fire stoppage works completed and were being offered to residents on the estate where over crowding has been an issue. It was requested that Councillors be kept updated on void turnaround times.

2.7. HS advised that CCTV cameras at Burnham in the basement are not working. He stated that a new company had been appointed in January and was unsure of the work and timescales for dealing with failing CCTV cameras. It was noted that blocks are experiencing higher levels of anti social behaviour as a result of CCTV cameras not working.

2.8 AKO informed the meeting of her previous experience with CCTV and would be looking at ways to enhance and improve the approach and use of CCTV on the Chalcot's.

### **3. Webinar Window Designs format and TRA representation**

3.1 Cllr Apak explained that he had floated an idea at the webinar event that as it is likely over 100 residents could want to attend the event that an offer is made to the TRA Chairs to nominate a resident representative from each block to attend as a panellist with the experts to ask questions directly on behalf of residents following the presentations on the window designs and info graphics. Also it was explained that due to managing all the experts being on site, there would be one webinar to cover the window designs only. A way forward could be to schedule a pre meeting for the resident representatives to collate questions in advance of the Webinar which would be shared with the experts prior to the meeting so all questions are able to have answers at the event.

3.2 HS questioned whether the Resident representatives would be CWG members. Cllr Apak explained that we would write to all TRA Chairs and invite them to attend themselves or appoint a representative to be a panellist . Letters will be going out next week. NR confirmed that it was appropriate for the TRA to agree and nominate the person to represent their block.

3.3 HS expressed concern that the Webinar events were allowing the opportunity for residents to make negative comments about TRAs and this should not be allowed. Cllr Apak explained that he was monitoring questions put forward using the Live Chat facility and that any such matters were solely for the TRA to investigate and resolve and would not be discussed at a webinar event.

### **4. Responsive Repairs Covid 19- access to responsive repairs service**

4.1 The CWG welcomed Andy Hardwick and Scott Reed to the meeting.

- 4.2 The invitation to attend had been extended to address CWG member emails and concerns regarding roof leaks and CCTV
- 4.3 Andy explained that he was currently working on developing a window repair schedule with AKO.
- 4.4 The meeting was advised that following a Camden restructure that Andy was now responsible for repairs and in the process of arranging meetings with contractors.
- 4.5 Andy advised that CWG members should not be sending requests for repairs direct to officers but to report repairs using the Contact Centre only. It was explained that if repairs are sent to an officer there is the potential that they might get lost. Please only use the Contact Centre as this is the only way to make sure that repairs are recorded correctly and do not get missed.
- 4.6 HS raised the CCTV issues recorded above.
- 4.7 Andy advised that operatives should pick up CCTV issues as it makes sense that breakdowns are reported this way. Andy agreed to investigate and feedback to AKO.
- 4.8 There were questions around the timescales for managing CCTV breakdowns and it was agreed that these would be checked in the contract and shared with residents. Information to be passed to AKO
- 4.9 It was confirmed that only emergency repairs are currently being completed but it is hoped that the scope of repairs can be expanded shortly as the Government relaxes restrictions.
- 4.10 A question was raised whether broken window handles are considered an emergency at this time. It was stated that only if the window cannot be locked that it would be considered an emergency repair at this time. It was confirmed that at least 2 officers review a request to determine whether a repair request is considered an emergency.
- 4.11 Repairs to windows and the use of absailers is being developed with AKO at the moment
- 4.12 Scott Reed suggested that service agreements could be shared with residents. To be passed to AKO
- 4.13 HS shared an issue at Burnham experienced by a resident regarding a side restrictor being broken in a child's bedroom and the issue reported to the Contact Centre. The advise by the Contact Centre was to lock the window. It was confirmed that the correct advice had been provided during lock down to lock windows in this circumstance. It was agreed that HS would email flat number to check current status with the window.
- 4.14 It was confirmed that the way repairs are delivered is changing due to a new management team and ethos and that residents must use the Contact Centre to report all repair issues. The CWG thanked Andy and Scott for attending the meeting.

## **5. Future Engagement – the new way forward**

- 5.1 AKO introduced the need for a new wider future engagement approach for all residents. It was noted that it is clear in email exchanges that currently the needs of the CWG are not being met and that of officers attending the CWG. The tone of emails is dismissive and there is a need to ensure that engagement is inclusive, respectful and professional.
- 5.2 OL gave an overview of the way forward, which extends beyond the role of the CWG and TRAs
- 5.3 The CWG were asked to consider a new way of empowering the CWG due to the following:
  - a) The CWG is a major works only group
  - b) There has been requests for wider estate issues to be included such as caretaking, cleaning etc. and so as to facilitate the requested wider remit to consider a change of name to Chalcots Residents Group – this does not change the number of resident representatives attending but widens the scope of the group.
- 5.4 There was confirmation that Camden will continue to use webinars and zoom meetings as appropriate. Hence the consideration of offering resident representatives where appropriate a panellist role.
- 5.5 Information that affects all residents will be shared with all residents through information sharing webinars which could be followed up with zoom meetings for more detailed discussion open to the CWG and other interested residents.

5.6 A number of Camden facilitated user or task and finish groups will be offered to all residents to participate with and appointment of residents will be through an agreed process developed by Camden.

5.7. Details on the new Camden Resident Engagement Framework will be shared with residents through a webinar and is not subject to approval by the CWG or TRAs.

5.8 Cllr Apak stressed that following the Cabinet decision it is essential that we get wider involvement so that all blocks are consulted and that there is a menu of opportunity offered to all residents.

5.9 Cllr Porritt stated that she was glad that there was recognition that the CWG is not meeting the needs of members and Camden and the issue around accountability. It was reconfirmed that the CWG is an advisory group and not a decision making group. Cllr Adams questioned the need for wider engagement but it is important to recognise that works is an important issue but there is a wider role for engagement to keep residents involved, help capacity build and make Chalcots a place where engagement is innovative and includes community investment.