

Meeting between the LCILRA and Ballymore Asset Management 3 August 2020

Present: Diane Young, Dan Dewhirst, Fan Wan, James Dawes, Arek Kielbowski

From Ballymore: Dan Cross, Justin Kent

Apologies: Neil Blanchard, Mel Henson, Clem Lee

Diane Young gave an explanation of the new committee structure (including subcommittees not represented at meeting)

Diane Young explained the following:

“Inevitably, the interests of the residents and Ballymore will sometimes be in conflict but we’d like you to work with us to make sure that these are as few as possible.

Residents have bought into the vision that Ballymore has brought to life on the island and to a large extent that has been fulfilled. However this is no longer a development but our homes and increasingly a community.

We want to feel involved. Two major things that can help that. One, actually involving us in decisions before they are taken. The other is communicating better.

Some examples – the pop-up pub that just sprang up one day with no warning or consultation. Many have been dismayed at the way that the pub looks. As it is not in keeping with the aesthetics we would expect for Trinity Square. The new metal plaques that have appeared in each doorway – no apparent reason for them to be there. [Dan Cross explained that they are there at the request of the Fire Brigade to assist them with finding apartments in an emergency.]

The email about the Picture House temporary closure. The use of unforeseen circumstances is strange – why not just say the equipment has developed a fault? It’s too cryptic and we would like to be kept more in the loop. Whenever there is a communication void, people just get angry or make stuff up to fill it.

We say this not because we want to complain but because we care about where we live and how it feels to live here.

We want to keep the values of our property up, we want it to be an attractive place to buy or rent. That is so much easier if we have a great working relationship with Ballymore as opposed to that which evolves in other developments. We want you to be the best property managers and we can help you to attain that.

We are also very interested in what is going on outside the boundaries of GLH and LCI.

It’s with all of this in mind that we have re-organised our committee into a series of subcommittees Diane Young explained each one briefly. Not all of the sub committees are

represented at this meeting because they relate more to matters external to the island but we would like to find a way to keep you up to date with what those groups are working on too.

All of our groups are operating with the best interests of the community here and nearby and also we are very keen to focus on being eco-friendly in all activities in the groups.

Local developments – This sub-committee is looking at the plans for Orchard Wharf, the opening of the River Lea walkway, S106 monies, the Limmo Peninsula development. We also plan to have a map of all the local developments that residents should be aware of and press for improvements in air quality. We'd like to have a separate, more detailed meeting with you regarding these important issues.

Charities – we want to be contributing to the wider community and supporting local charities through fundraising and support in kind

Community – all the arts organisations and businesses that cohabit with us on the island, plus Harmony House links, the radio station, the gardening group, the business group, the creative group.”

Agenda:

Service charges – Diane Young noted that the 2018 accounts have finally been sent to Nick Thompson (head of the service charge committee). After initial perusal, NT feels there is insufficient information.

DAN CROSS replied that he and James Dawson are now putting proper commentary together which is currently 14 pages long. They are having a meeting on 6th August to progress it. Head office has to agree and print which will take at least one week.

For the 2019 accounts – DAN CROSS has done initial comments. He was unable to give any idea of the date we might get full information until after the meeting on Thursday.

DAN CROSS agreed to do a service charge explainer session by zoom or in persona and to have a service charge surgery.

Sports

Daniel Dewhirst indicated there were no specific issues on the gym but noted that gym communications had improved a lot.

Daniel Dewhirst suggested the sports sub-committee has Input into gym instructor recruitment. Currently too much overlap with the skills of the team, rather than bringing in new specialists.

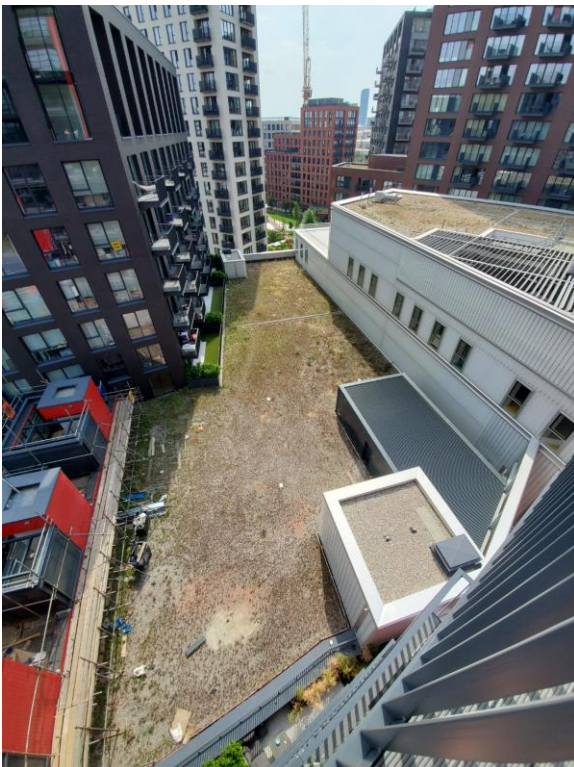
Daniel Dewhirst outlined a suggestion to add outdoor training equipment. He has already Diane Young had talks with Steel Warriors, a charity that melts down knives taken off the streets of

London and makes them into gym equipment. This is both affordable and supports a community charity <https://www.steelwarriors.co.uk/>. Daniel Dewhirst said there would need to be discussion on location and how it would be funded. In terms of funding, Parkour Generations might want to get involved. It was suggested that some of the metal hoop sculptures could be replaced. Daniel Dewhirst also asked if residents could have more input into the equipment in the gym. For example there is interest in an abductor/adductor machine. DAN CROSS replied that all equipment is leased on a 5 year deal so the LCI equipment is coming to the end of its lease soon so there is an opportunity coming up. DAN CROSS also said there may be an option to swap some items in the GLH gym. DAN CROSS agreed to provide a list to the LRA of what is planned.

Living experience

Fan Wan thanked DAN CROSS for providing plans for traffic measures but said that more information is required. DAN CROSS noted that the road past Harmony is now open but they are not advertising the one way system yet because the road between the film school and Java road is going to be closed for a while and the traffic will all go past Harmony. With regard to speed bumps and other traffic calming measures, and signage, Roger Black, the design chair for Ballymore is touring on 7 August Friday to check aesthetics. It was noted that a big issue is lack of speed bumps by Echo. DAN CROSS explained that this is because of ongoing work at the townhouses but once those works are completed by the end of this month the speed bumps would go in. Diane Young requested that security ask people to switch off engines on the island as many are left idling beside the postroom.

On the subject of Lyell Street specifically, Ballymore are looking at softening up Lyell Street with furniture, which should also help with motorbikes speeding down that route.



Fan Wan made a proposal that there is a private residents' area of the roof of the ballet car park for private garden space for herbs, vegetables and possibly bee hives. *(see photo left)* DAN CROSS said they would look at the safety aspects of this. It was also fed back that the rooftop gardens are unsightly across the island. DAN CROSS admitted that their approach to this had not worked and that Ballymore are looking at how they can be redone. Some work will start on this from next month.

The subject of composting was raised and it was noted that a previous experiment on this had not worked but with a gardener now on site, there could be an opportunity to try again.

Fan Wan noted that residents have been campaigning with Royal Mail to get a post box on the island. DAN CROSS said that BAML had contacted Royal Mail 3 years ago about this but were turned down. However he did suddenly receive contact from them in the last two weeks so it looked like the residents' efforts were having an impact. He will keep us posted (!). Ballymore are also looking at a parcel sending service from the postroom using a service called Express My Stuff. This service is high end, reasonably priced and is cost neutral (Ballymore does not pay or get paid). There is an option that packaging may be purchased too.

Diane Young mentioned that the litter bins are few and far between and are often full. There is no option for sorting out recyclables either. DAN CROSS agreed to look at getting more and including a sorting option if the right aesthetics can be found. He also agreed to review the frequency of emptying the bins.

Diane Young also asked if litter picking could be done early in the mornings especially at weekends as the litter from the night before is often flying/lying around until almost lunchtime.

The litter just beyond the vehicle gateway was mentioned. The construction team do litter picks two or three times a week, but DAN CROSS agreed that they would extend their litter picks towards the flyover underpass.

There was discussion about security. DAN CROSS explained there is mostly always a team of six including – one in control room for cameras and alarms, overnight, one person on main entrance, one on building patrol internally, one should be visible presence, one to respond to any incident. The island has electronic patrol systems where there are points in each building and externally where the security officer takes an electronic pen and touches in so patrols are recorded. Regarding lift security – one option is to retrofit cameras, or could a cheaper option is to install dummy cameras. An expensive option is to put in security access to the lift and that is not really practical. Can we repair the scratches in the lifts? JUSTIN KENT said they had tried that and it doesn't work that well. Suppliers charge a lot to repair or replace whole panels.

It was asked whether security liaise with the police re eg drug dealers. DAN CROSS explained that residents need to phone individually to the police about these matters as when Ballymore do it, the police are replying that they have had no complaints from residents. DAN CROSS also recommends that residents contact the local ASBO (anti-social behaviour) unit.

The ongoing issue with cigarette end disposal from balconies was brought up. JUSTIN KENT explained that every time there is a complaint, people in the apartments above get an email.

Another issue about smoking on balconies was discussed. While it was recognised that this does cause a nuisance to some people, as many people rent and are not allowed to smoke in their apartments, this is difficult to resolve.

Diane Young requested that Ballymore provide some security explanation and instructions for residents.

DAN CROSS confirmed that the wood planks around the perimeter on the east and on all promontories are going to be replaced. This cost will not be on the service charge.

Fan Wan asked about the possibility of street food stalls, both external and for the growing number of makers on the island. It was suggested she contact Jennifer Ball at Ballymore.

Special interest – children and parents

James Dawes asked if security could address the purposeful revving of engines by some motorists and DAN CROSS agreed to brief the staff.

James Dawes asked about plans for a decent play area for children. DAN CROSS explained that there is a play area by the second parking area planned. James Dawes has been forwarded the plans.

DAN CROSS said that there is also potential for softplay in the community centre that is being built. This also has a multi-functional space. Diane Young requested that Ballymore seek input from residents re the community centre. DAN CROSS mentioned that at the request of the mayor some years ago there is a prayer space on Friday for those of Muslim faith. This will be in a multifaith area.

DAN CROSS also mentioned that the postroom is about to be extended and the management suite will move into the Grantham bike store.

James Dawes asked about balconies – why do they have balconies without any means of stopping water going through to the balcony below? How are residents supposed to clean? James Dawes expressed concern that children have been subjected to cleaning fluids coming down on them from higher flats. DAN CROSS said this was a matter for the construction arm of Ballymore.

Property issues

Arek Kielbowski asked about fire certification for our cladding. DAN CROSS confirmed that the certificates have been issued this week and passed on immediately to residents who had requested them for mortgage purposes. Residents can obtain one by emailing Dan Cross.

Diane Young asked for an update on the cooker hoods complaint and explained that the next step for the residents' pressure group that had formed was to involve the ombudsman. DAN CROSS said that seeing this item on the agenda he had asked for a better resolution from Simon. The matter has gone to John Mulryan and the financial director and the UK director of construction. Simon is asking for a statement as has gone on far too long. Diane Young suggested that nothing less than a response from the Mulryan level would be acceptable. DAN CROSS agreed.

Arek Kielbowski brought up issues with corridor lighting in Grantham, Modena and Defoe where there are inadequate sensors. Grantham also has a light that is stuck on. DAN CROSS requested a list of apartments/corridors and said that maintenance will have a look.

Social

The residents are keen to be the managers of the content in the Picture House and have identified a survey system that is inexpensive and will allow us to do that. The cost is negligible and we request that it is added to the service charge. DAN CROSS said the lease conditions would have to be checked as they would be charging residents for something not in their direct control. DAN CROSS asked that NB send him information and costs. Diane Young pointed out that the LRA could fund this otherwise. DAN CROSS said that this is something that may be able to be managed via the forthcoming island app (see below)

Communications

It was noted that Ballymore have now agreed to send an email to help recruit members to the LRA and MH confirmed that this email is being drafted

Other topics

Retail units. Sainsburys – Ballymore have completed their internal fitout. Sainsbury's fitout time is 5-6 weeks but DAN CROSS could not confirm when they would start. Whiteboxing of five other units has been done, read Diane Young for move in. Three tenants are lined up but Hej Coffee has pulled out of their planned unit in Meade.

Diane Young asked if it was possible to have an LRA storage area and DAN CROSS said that maybe this could be accommodated in the bike stores in the car park.

JUSTIN KENT gave us a quick tour of the island app which is almost ready for launch. It looks very impressive.

Next meeting dates

Monday 7th September 6.30pm

Monday 5th October, 6.30pm

Monday 2nd November, 6.30pm

