

CROMWELL TOWER HOUSE GROUP (CTHG)

DATE FOR YOUR DIARY:
AGM and Christmas Party 29th November 2018 7pm

Minutes for Committee meeting 29 Oct 2018 19:00 in the Podium Room

Committee Members: John Tomlinson (Chairman) Jane Northcote (Secretary) Laurance Jones (Treasurer) Alan Budgen Frances Calman (Membership Secretary) Christopher Gorman-Evans Julian Hale Mike Bristow	City of London Barbican Estate Officer: Luke Barton Luke.Barton@cityoflondon.gov.uk
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1. Welcome

On behalf of the Committee the Chairman welcomed the following potential Committee Members as guests for this meeting:

Preneeta Mann, Tom Flanagan, Tim Cox, Iain Connor

2. Apologies for absence

All Committee Members were present.

3. Minutes of the last committee meeting

The Minutes of the previous Committee Meeting, 26 June 2018 were approved by those present and signed by the Chairman.

Matters Arising from previous Committee meeting, 26 June 2018 (for details please see the minutes: www.cromwelltower.org)

4. Fire Safety

a) *Will our flat front doors, and the surrounding area, be replaced or not?*

Following the fatal fire at Grenfell Tower, a sample of Barbican Tower front doors and surrounds were tested for fire resistance. Luke reports that he is still waiting for the formal written report stating the results.

We understand that the doors and surrounds are sufficiently fire resistant for the stay-put policy to remain valid, and so the flat doors and the surrounding area will not be replaced. In this case, internal redecoration scheduled for earlier this year can go ahead. This will be confirmed only when the formal written report is received, and a course of action approved by the Barbican Residential Committee (BRC).

b) Fire Risk Assessment – report from Frankhams July 2018

The City of London, as Landlord, initiated an independent Fire Risk Assessment. This was done by Frankhams in January 2018. They examined the inside of a selection of flats. The report was published on the [City of London website](#) in July 2018 and comments invited. Actions from this assessment included: inspection of car parks and removal of items (complete), removal of items left in communal areas including lift lobbies (ongoing), removal of fire extinguishers (complete), and recommendations for

- a survey of the PDA (plumbing) lockers, and
- a survey of compartmentation.

Both these surveys are complete. Mike McGee, a former senior Barbican engineer, surveyed the PDA lockers and actions were undertaken by the BEO to remove flammable items. CheckMate have completed their survey of compartmentation. This checked that flats are isolated from each other, so that fire and smoke do not travel from one flat to another. Alterations made to flats have the potential to compromise this isolation, for example by knocking holes into the plumbing ducts. Where problems were found, flat owners have been contacted. The Landlord's approval process for checking proposed building works has been made more robust, to ensure that no future refurbishments will breach compartmentation.

5. Electric Car Charging points

This is a trial, funded by the City of London “Low Emission Zone” (LEZ). There are charging points in the Cromwell 03 car park and elsewhere on the Estate. Please contact the BEO (Luke Barton) if you wish to use one.

6. Arts Centre events

Christopher Gorman-Evans reported from a quarterly meeting between representatives of certain House Groups and the Barbican Association, with the Barbican Centre. The next event which may involve use of spaces outside the Centre is the “Sound Unbound” event in May 2019. No information is yet available as to whether this will affect Cromwell Tower residents. The Centre will communicate further, via these quarterly meetings, as its plans advance.

7. Rubbish outside the front door – 01 level – Cromwell Place

Paul, our cleaner, has now cleared the alleyway between the bin store and our lobby. The bin store doors are kept closed. Luke has asked the Porters to prevent people from leaving shopping trolleys in this location: Waitrose does not collect them.

8. Items left in lift lobbies

Following his monitoring and actions, Luke reports that residents now keep the lift lobbies clear. He continues to monitor. He is still, on occasion, finding

shopping trollies in communal areas of the Tower, and reminds all residents to take their shopping trollies back to the supermarket.

9. Bikes on Cromwell Place fences

The railings along the Beech Street side of Cromwell Place have recently been repainted, repairing damage that is to some extent caused by bikes being chained up there. Bicycles left locked to the iron fences of Cromwell Place will be removed with bolt-cutters. Luke will remind the porters that they should call the BEO to initiate this action.

10.Plants and Planters on Cromwell Place

The large planters near the road in Cromwell Place have a tendency to dry out and look bad. Luke reports that the planters are watered on Mondays and Fridays, and more frequently in hot periods. There is no budget from the Landlord to provide self-watering planters.

We currently have two small planters, one each side of the front door. Some residents would like to have additional small planters, two or possibly three more, one in front of each pillar along the front façade. The Landlord has no budget for this. They cost £1200-£1500 for each small planter, that is about £12-15 per typical flat, per planter.

Action: The Committee will ask the AGM if House Group Members should be balloted to see if they are willing to pay for this via the service charge.

Action: Luke will ask the Open Spaces team to confirm that they would water and maintain such planters bought by residents.

11.Art in the 01 Lobby

Thank you to Alan Budgen, who organises this programme of art displays. After the current exhibition by Neelu Patel, there will be an exhibition of photographs from a local photographer.

12.Freeview problems

Problems with the TV service provided by VFM were reported at our previous meeting. VFM has now engaged a different sub-contractor for customer service. Residents should no longer be asked for credit card details when they report a problem.

13.Committee Members

If the four potential new Committee Members listed above wish to stand, they will be proposed for election at the AGM.

OTHER BUSINESS

14. Membership Lists and Registered Tenants Association return to the City of London

Cromwell Tower House Group is a Recognised Tenants Associations (RTA). This recognition gives us the ability to make representations to the City of London, our landlord.

Cromwell has an opt-in membership system: people join the House Group. Many other House Groups in the Barbican have an opt-out membership system: residents and long-leaseholders are deemed to be members unless they state otherwise.

After a discussion, the Committee reached a consensus that we should consider moving to an opt-out system, and also take the opportunity to modernise the constitution of the House Group. Such a change needs approval from a general meeting of the membership of the House Group.

Secretary's note: Members of the Committee looked in detail at this issue after the Committee Meeting. It will be discussed at a future Committee Meeting, and then specific changes proposed to a Special General Meeting of the House Group Members. 21 days' notice will given of this Special General Meeting and all House Group members will be invited.

15. Light Pollution

A house group member wrote to John Tomlinson asking the house group to take up the issue of light pollution around the Barbican in the evening and overnight. John has asked the member to email Luke with his concerns, also Jonathan Poyner in the Barbican Centre. The City of London has also recently issued a Lighting Strategy, which includes measures to address light pollution.

16. Ongoing concrete repairs and people appearing unannounced on the balcony

The notified time-window for concrete works has long passed. But people are still arriving on the balconies without notice. The work appears to be ongoing.

We asked Luke to note and feedback the following comments:

- a. Can we please have an updated timetable of works: when will they end?
- b. It is unacceptable for people to appear unannounced on the balcony. This is a security problem and an invasion of privacy. For all future works, and for the remainder of this contract, we asked Luke to ensure that operatives buzz up before appearing outside our windows.

17. Health – do we want a defibrillator in the Tower?

A defibrillator is a device that gives a high energy electric shock to the heart through the chest wall to someone who is in cardiac arrest (“heart attack”).

The British Heart Foundation website says:

There are many defibrillators available in public places such as train stations, shopping centres, airport and leisure centres. These defibrillators are often known as public access defibrillators (PAD) as anyone can use them in an emergency.

There may be a case for keeping such a device in Cromwell.

We understand that there is a defibrillator in Lauderdale Tower.

Action: We will ask Lauderdale Tower about the arrangement, and consider consulting the London Ambulance Service if this is a good idea. A volunteer is needed to take this action forward.

18. Security and the lift lobby doors

The inner door from the main entrance to the lift lobby is locked when a temporary porter is on duty. This heavy door is hard to manage for those in wheelchairs or with push chairs, although the porter often helps. So there is a suggestion that we could consider a fob-operated automatic door. There is one in Shakespeare. The cost of such a door, and its ongoing maintenance, would be borne by Long Leaseholders via the service charge.

Action: The Committee agreed to raise this at the AGM and see what the level of interest is, before taking any further steps. The cost for the Shakespeare door was around £8000 or about £80 per typical flat, although this figure needs to be confirmed.

19. Noise from Finsbury Square and elsewhere

Alan Budgen has identified a source of noise which has disturbed residents in the Tower. It comes from the roof terrace of the Montcalm on the North side of Finsbury Square. Islington Public Protection team will investigate. If you are disturbed by noise from the Finsbury Square area, please contact Islington: 020 7527 7272.

If the noise comes from the Jugged Hare, the Brewery or other local venues in the City and their patrons, the people to call are the City Environmental Health team. Their number is 020 7606 3030, staffed 24 hours. After the event, email publicprotection@cityoflondon.gov.uk.

The greater the number of residents that complain about a noise disturbance, the more likely it is that the local authorities will take action.

20. DATES

The AGM and Christmas Party are in the Podium Room on:
29th November 2018 starting at 7pm

The next Committee Meeting is 26th March 2019, at 7pm in the Podium Room.