

## KILBURN VALE ESTATE – CHRISTMAS NEWSLETTER – 2016

Dear Residents,

Here is an update of everything that has happened this year on the Estate.

### JANUARY:

- Contractors *mistakenly* - started work on the boundary wall opposite Farndale! Our TRA had to point this out to Camden and then the low wall by Holmesdale – *the correct wall* – was finally repaired.
- John Rutter (Consultation & Final Account Officer) wrote to residents informing them that Camden intended to dig up all the underground Pipework to renew and repair and requested the TRA to organise a meeting. Our TRA liaised with John Rutter and presented John with a list of questions prior to the meeting. Following this, John Rutter cancelled the meeting in February and the proposed work. It appeared that there had been a mistake – since Kilburn Vale does not have a Communal Heating System since 2011, this proposed work was not necessary.

### February:

- Our Grounds Maintenance Staff were regularly splattered with Dog Poo when cutting the grass. Some dog owners were not picking up after their dogs. This is not necessarily dog owners who live on the estate and could be people who pass through, believing they can exercise their dogs here. Camden responded by saying they would send out New Notices about dog fouling. If you are aware of anyone who behaves irresponsibly, please inform [kevin.murray@camden.gov.uk](mailto:kevin.murray@camden.gov.uk) (estates services manager).
- Camden started to “map” the estate. This is a form of getting every bollard, pathway, tree, building etc mapped onto a central system for reference in the future. We don’t know when this borough-wide project will be finished but in the meantime, you can refer to our Gridded Map of the estate if you
- Water Pipes on top of Bishopsdale were moved (lifted off the surface) due to continual leaks into one of the flats. It was established that more work was needed and this would not be charged back as it clearly had not been done satisfactorily beforehand.
- Re-cycling workshops: Students from Central St Martin’s School of Art joined up with Camden Council to come up with new ways to use design to encourage more efficient re-cycling. Workshops were held and all residents who attended received a shopping voucher as an incentive. Students worked closely with residents to understand what current barriers need attention in order to improve re-cycling knowledge and behaviour. A special thank you to those residents who allowed the students to visit them in their homes.

### March:

- Deana Taziny was appointed as new Ward Manager, taking over from Veronica Asahene who had been temporarily in the post. Deana met with the TRA Secretary who brought Deana up to date with various items on the estate.

- The Planters which had been requested at the front of Holmesdale were finally and beautifully installed. We waited a long time for these and they have gone a long way to improving the look of the estate from this aspect.
- Due to scaffolding and building works taking place on Belsize Road, the public Recycling bins were moved onto our estate. These were continually reported as it attracted several months of the local businesses dumping on our estate by these bins. Unfortunately, even when those bins were removed, some businesses continued to dump here. This was addressed when the TRA secretary contacted each business to explain that they are not permitted to dump here. Camden took up the issue from here and are still working on this. Please report any dumping issues to [gary.borg@camden.gov.uk](mailto:gary.borg@camden.gov.uk)
- “QUATRO” – developers who are transforming the building on Belsize Road to residential flats - wrote to all residents inviting them to attend a meeting with information of their proposal to re-develop the area in front of the Priory Tavern. Details of this are on the “Latest News” tab of our website – scroll down to the March 2016 entries.
- The TRA Secretary attended Central St Martin’s School of Art for the presentation on the Students’ ideas on how to address Re-cycling issues. Some great ideas were exhibited and we still wait to hear from Camden if any of these will be taken up as part of the way forward to encourage more people to re-cycle PROPERLY.
- Despite, Camden doing a big “push” on Re-cycling, many residents are STILL making fundamental mistakes. Please be aware that you can ONLY put proper biodegradable bags full of food into the BROWN recycling bins. Any other bags like Tesco/Sainsbury’s etc WILL CONTAMINATE the whole bin which means that NONE of the contents can be re-cycled. We are lucky because we do not have to pay for our biodegradable bags. You simply order them by calling 020 7974 6914 or ordering online using this link <https://contact.camden.gov.uk/environmentservices/orderequipment/orderequipment.jsf;jsessionid=3GMpt9yQzxetyjS-b4de7Gxh> – They are FREE! Everyone should have a caddy in their kitchen and get the bags for free from Camden.

#### April:

- Dog fouling letters were delivered to all residents reminding them to pick up after their dogs – this problem needs to be monitored. Most people are very considerate but Camden need you to report anyone who does not take their responsibility seriously.
- Parking & Sheds department sent out letters reminding those who rent a Parking Bay, to park in their allotted space. If not, tickets will be issued. Please be aware that someone tried to introduce an “unauthorised” parking bay and painted in a No7 and parked there – between Wharfedale and Farndale. This is NOT an official space. If you do not rent a specific Parking Bay, you or your visitors cannot park on the estate. You can apply to rent a space by calling Ann Martin 020 7974 5559.
- The TRA Secretary ordered a report of the Mobile Patrol charges. This cost jumped from approx. £100.00 to over £4,000.00 in just four years!! As we write, this department is still getting answers to the secretary’s questions and we hope to have some clearer information in the new year.

#### May:

- It was discovered that Maestro Properties Ltd who own a building which backs onto the grass area to the side of Lorton House, illegally put in a door to their wall which opened out onto Kilburn Vale Land and erected a metal staircase/patio. They cut down our Nature Area and put out plant pots. This was all done with NO permission or authorisation from Camden. Camden instructed them to reinstate as it was, by 31<sup>st</sup> October. The owners have removed the pots and metal structure but so far (as we write) the paving slabs are still there

and they have installed a “Juliet” balcony to the door. If you have any concerns about this you must contact [joel.levy@camden.gov.uk](mailto:joel.levy@camden.gov.uk) – Maestro Properties Ltd converted their building into some flats there and their entrance is on Kilburn Place (top end of the back of M&S and other shops). One of our residents has expressed an interest in creating a Play Area for children in this space. If you have any concerns, do write to Joel.

- The TRA AGM was held. Esther, Flaminia and Chloe were re-elected as Chair, Secretary and Treasurer. The DMC Rep is Deana Adaoui. Deana Taziny (Ward Manager) officiated.
- At the very end of May, work finally started on the boundary wall opposite Farndale House. This wall belongs to the private gardens of the houses on Priory Road. This took 2 months. Unfortunately, the owner of one of the houses has incorrectly installed metal poles on “our” side of the wall. These should be on “his” side but he is being quite stubborn and has been very rude to some of our residents. The Legal team are dealing with this issue.

#### **June:**

- The Gerda Lock on the barrier gate between Holmesdale House and “Bird In Hand” pub was broken. Residents are reminded that ALL emergency services have the appropriate keys to enter these gates at any time. The only “open” vehicular access is via the drive entrance by Wharfedale House. Vehicles of all sized use this entrance and are encouraged to do so. Having finally got our other barrier gates locked appropriately, we have had less illegal parking and joy riding on the estate as well as dumping. This was subsequently fixed.

#### **July:**

- Shockingly, a resident’s shed was broken into in order to replace it with a new, door. Unfortunately, Parking and Sheds department did not think to contact the owner of the shed!! This was completely unacceptable and when challenged, they wrongly said that the TRA had requested this. This is not true. The TRA did not request this and the individual was made to apologise to the TRA. Camden dealt with this very badly indeed and the resident made an official complaint.
- The TRA secretary met with Justin Hunt’s replacement Sharon Calvey as Head of Estate Services, at the 6 monthly check-in meeting. We are encouraged to have someone so efficient, reliable and pleasant to deal with, in this role. The TRA are hopeful that matters will be addressed more quickly and effectively resolved now.
- Several residents of Lorton House continued to complain about the noise and light pollution from the build at the back of Boots Store. Despite the TRA continually putting them in touch with various staff members at Camden within Environment Dept and others, as we write, no licence has been produced which would explain what the working hours and other terms of this work were agreed. This has not been satisfactory. The residents of Lorton have suffered a lot of disturbance since February of this year. It seems that this work will be finished by Jan/Feb 2017 but Camden should still be able to produce the documents retrospectively to prove that the developers complied with noise/disturbance regulations.
- The TRA secretary requested that the “in-house” window cleaners put a note through her door when they are on site to clean the communal windows as many had complained that this task was not being done. Despite the cleaners being due later in the year Aug/Sept time, no note was delivered. This will be looked at again.
- TRA Secretary again requested for the rules and Hiring Guidelines of Sycamore Hall to be produced. Since our TRA & RTA reformed in 2010, our Secretary has been requesting for the guidelines as to the Hiring of Sycamore Hall to be updated and clarified. It is the TRAs understanding that the Hall belongs to the TRA. This is the case across the borough. Naturally, the hall is to be shared with other local groups but it is the only way for the TRA to earn some funds. The TRA have been uncomfortable about renting out this space until certain issues are smoothed out and established formally by Camden. During the last few years funds earned from the hiring of this space during the day have gone to the “Sheltered Housing” pot. The TRA has not received any funds. Camden Council are looking into this in

greater detail as a borough-wide issue as they are very aware that these rules need to be cleared up and the funds must go to the right body.

- Many residents complained that the Waste Refuse and Recycling was “getting out of hand”. The TRA referred this to Kevin Murray – Estates Services Manager as it became apparent that our Caretaking Supervisor was not fully cognisant of the appropriate refuse/waste and recycling processes and procedures, confusing the issue rather than resolving it.

#### **August**

- At last, the correct height of Pole was erected which has the “Kilburn Vale Private Estate” sign, at the entrance to the estate by the “Bird In Hand” pub. When this was originally installed, a much shorter pole was erected which was dangerous as it caused an obstacle at head height!
- Veolia dealing with a lot of dumping on our estate from neighbouring businesses – again!
- TRA were informed that the build at the back of Boots was taking longer to deal with as Boots had asbestos in their building which had delayed the project.
- The TRA Secretary hi-lighted a mistake in the Service Charge Adjustment. Leaseholders in all blocks had wrongly been charged for the KMS door entry fob upgrade. The secretary asked Camden to reimburse all leaseholders except those in Farndale for whom this was a correct charge.
- The Tenant Participation Team at Camden asked the Secretary if she would consider rolling out the idea of the Kilburn Vale website to other TRAs so that they too can have their own.
- After the success of Bishopsdale getting funds “written back” to their accounts as they had been charged for unsatisfactory work on the roof, Representatives of Farndale, met with Chris Fallon of Camden to go through the repair charging queries for Farndale. This will take some time and is on-going but we hope it will be resolved in 2017.

#### **September**

- Emergency Exit Signs added to both barrier gates. The old ones had been taken off a couple of years ago as they still had “Kilburn Vale Co-Op” on them, from when the estate was a Co-op.

#### **October:**

- The RTA AGM was held. Esther and Flaminia were re-elected as Chair and Secretary. Graham Cole was elected as Treasurer and Dan Zimmerman was elected as Vice-Chair.
- After months of waiting, metal numbers were added to all the Bin Store Doors. We have 13 of them on site. This will make it easier to identify if reporting a broken/damaged door or if a collection has not been done properly. Residents/caretaker can quote the Bin Store Door Number when reporting.
- The TRA Secretary managed to meet with Mary McGowan of the CEO office at Camden. The secretary was able to give Ms McGowan an accurate overall picture of various services and individual staff members who do not appear to be delivering the level of service that residents from Kilburn Vale expect and are entitled to. As you can imagine, there was a whole range of issues which are currently frustrating residents. Ms McGowan promised to take these seriously and start to investigate various services. If you have a short paragraph or comments that you would like to be passed on to the CEO Office, please email these to [flaminia@f5ivepresents.com](mailto:flaminia@f5ivepresents.com) – the secretary is compiling a list of comments to hand over to the CEO in the new year.
- Jenny Dodge has taken over from Georgina Georghiou as Housing Officer until at least March 2017. She met with the TRA Secretary who brought her up to date with things on the estate.

#### **November:**

- The TRA secretary managed to get the Service Charging department to write back an amount of almost £300 to all Bishopsdale leaseholders due to over-charging which had been pointed

out in August. The CEO was made aware of this unnecessary delay. No less than 33 emails exchanged before this could be rectified!

- The TRA has been approached by someone who would like to run a Mother and Toddler group at Sycamore Hall. The TRA are keen for this to happen and are sure that there will be many of you interested in this. The TRA are doing all they can to get this set up for the New year. News of this and any other groups/classes will be advertised on the website.

**December:**

- The DMC (District Management Committee) meeting was on 8<sup>th</sup>. Our secretary was asked to give a talk about the website we have at Kilburn Vale – this was delivered and there was immediate interest and excitement from other TRAs who would like to receive a workshop on this so that they too can set up a website for their estates.

**For 2017:**

- After many complaints about the Parking & Sheds Dept this year – we look forward to working with Ann Martin who has taken over this department. Camden have informed us that there are bigger and wider discussions around the parking issues in the borough so it will be interesting to hear what improvements may come along to ensure that non-authorized vehicles park for free on our estate.
- We hope that the Guidelines for Hiring Sycamore Hall will be established early in 2017 and that we will be able to have more classes/groups taking place there for our residents.
- Veolia will be targeting the local businesses in Belsize Road to ensure that they are fully aware of their responsibilities regarding refuse/recycling and don't dump on our estate.
- Once Farndale have got satisfactory responses to their repair charges queries, we hope that Ribblesdale can then meet with Camden to query theirs.
- The TRA are due to have a second meeting with Julian Coutts of Mobile Patrol to get a much clearer understanding of exactly HOW this service is quantified and charged. Residents were very unhappy to see that the cost had jumped 22 times in 4 years with no visible difference.

Please remember to check the LATEST NEWS tab on our website: [www.kilburnvaleestate.org.uk](http://www.kilburnvaleestate.org.uk) as this is the quickest way of knowing what's going on and keeping up to date.

We wish you all a very Merry Christmas and Prosperous and Healthy New Year.  
Thanks and good cheer to all!!

Flaminia  
TRA/RTA Secretary  
Kilburn Vale Estate