

ECLA Newsletter

Edition 2: November 2019



Ealing Council Leaseholders Association

The association is run by a team of volunteer Leaseholders.

Our aim is to represent all leaseholders across Ealing Borough.

Our Committee has made tremendous effort to get a better understanding of the issues of most concern for Leaseholders and a better insight into Ealing Council's proposals and Services for its Leaseholders.

To make this happen, we have been meeting as a team each fortnight to discuss our plans with close liaison with the Council's Homeownership Services. We anticipate that once established and effective communication channels are in place, the frequency of meetings will reduce.

ECLA Newsletter

You will have seen our recent Newsletter update introducing our current Committee and progress to date. This accompanied the invitation to attend the ECLA Forum on 30th October 2019.

Our main objective for the association is to have better communication and transparency between our Council and Leaseholders on the main issues that concern us:

- Service Charges
- Major works and regeneration
- Repairs and Maintenance
- Fire Safety

ECLA plan to hold local roadshows in the coming months and the AGM in May / June 2020.

We also have plans to work with other Residents Associations in Ealing, to form a much greater understanding of all residents concerns and create a more cohesive community.

We're a small team with big ambition, but our success depends on the ongoing commitment and effort from tiny proportion of Leaseholders. **Leaseholders who feel they could contribute to our efforts please get in touch via the ECLA webpage email.**

Feedback from ECLA October Forum

There was tremendous take up of the offer to have face to face contact with Council teams, indicating a clear desire for these opportunities going forward.

Those who weren't able to see someone in the time available were invited to leave a summary of their query and contact details for response from the appropriate team.

Forum Overview

Regeneration - Councillor Peter Mason

Lead for Housing/ Planning/ Transformation gave an overview of the Council's pledge to build 2,500 new homes with the Private Sector and outlined the Council's priorities:

- Affordable housing based on area demographics and on income
- Reinvest money from building new homes to build more affordable homes.
- They estimate that they will have more leaseholders due to this regeneration.
- Look at car parks, community centres and land usage
- Communicate and ballot residents on regeneration plans where the proposal is to redevelop an estate with the aim of achieving 100% consensus and approval

Leaseholders expressed concerns about:

- The trend to build more high rise blocks in village park – eg Beech gardens. Cllr. Mason advised he would refer to Acton Councillor to respond
- Lambourn Close – disruption to roads, no deliveries, closure of access road which was not explained. Cllr expressed regret and agreed to investigate with Leaseholders from Lambourn Close
- Standard of new builds vs the old blocks. Older constructions were far more substantial and leaseholders wanted like for like. Cllr Mason stressed the importance of a ballot as a solution and the onus on the council to offer a good deal.
- Newbuild equity share. Leaseholders vacating their properties and moving to newbuild properties wanted to own 100%. Currently they are sold a share equivalent to the value of their existing property with the Council retaining ownership of the remaining share. Cllr Mason advised that leaseholders can exercise their right to vote against the regeneration however the Council is required to consider values.
- Copley Close – Communication about the regeneration to the steering group and residents is lacking. Cllr Mason did not know about this but would contact the relevant councillor.
- Estate Buckingham Close – Perception that the Council is running down the estate and there is not even any recycling provision.
- Why do we keep building high rise flats rather than houses. Cllr Mason cited green belt restrictions and lack of space means the option is to build up to maximise land use.

Homelessness - Councillor Peter Mason

- Homelessness is increasing in the Borough in part due to
 - Benefits system changes
 - Eviction from private rental sector
- Council want to avoid providing temp accommodation in B & B
- Changes to Lambourn Close, Borders Walk, Academy Gardens providing modular homes are in progress
- Better quality of construction

Fire Safety – David Rowson

- Newly appointed to the role with a background with the London Fire Brigade and public and private sectors in Fire safety
- Priority to review Council's existing housing stock to identify priorities for action.
- No properties in Ealing Council stock have been found to have Grenfell type cladding
- There is a programme to review and update Fire Risk assessments and any required shortfalls identified will be addressed.
- All leaseholders should ensure they have working **smoke alarms**. This is mandatory for landlords

- Keep communal areas clear to reduce fire risks. Leaseholders reported a lack of storage facilities impacting on storage for buggies, mobility scooters etc
- Plans to create Residents forum for fire safety – letter to go out to residents before Christmas– independent chair – resident recommendations through the chair.

Repairs and Maintenance – Synthia Campbell

- Fault reporting procedures have changed. All faults must be reported by telephone
- New Contractors MCP have been appointed for repairs and maintenance. The overlap between the outgoing contractor will need close monitoring to ensure jobs don't get lost in the transition.
- Changes in procedures and team structure are being implemented. Faults must be reported by telephone as there is no longer an email facility
- QUEST - collect data – on performance. More phone lines are required. Changes to the way surveyors are chosen and basing of the contractor in Perceval House should improve efficiency.
- The Repairs Handbook has been reviewed for reissue to residents and future core group meetings will include resident representation
- Aim: Accountability and increased customer satisfaction (right first time!). A theme of increased resident involvement.
- MCP's Bradley gave a short introduction on this family run business. Their pledge is to have 'multi-trained' operatives who are 'flexible, honest and focused on the customer'. Operatives will carry commonly used parts and fittings to improve the speed and standard of repairs. Bradley gave assurances that the new management / operations would not be affected by the number of MNM employees retained under the TUPE rules with the new contract.

ECLA - Going Forward

We apologise to Leaseholders who have tried to contact us by email in the past. Due to technical problems, you had no response other than an automated reply. We have now resolved these issues.

Our main priorities now are:

- To update the ECLA website to reflect procedural changes and provide guidance on reporting procedures using links to the main Council webpages
- Provide a route for Leaseholders to engage with us to volunteer for the Committee, share feedback on ECLA events and communications and suggest future topics for discussion at upcoming events
- Arrange roadshows and the ECLA AGM
- Liaise with the Council's Resident involvement Team to give a greater voice to Leaseholders and report back through the website or ECLA Newsletter

Do keep an eye on the ECLA webpage for more news.

Thank you for your support.

