



# World's End Residents' Association

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## Minutes of the WERA Committee Meeting held on Tuesday, 15<sup>th</sup> of May 2007 at 7pm in the WERA Clubroom, 16 Blantyre Street

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| <b>Present:</b>       | Margaret Grayling (Chair)<br>John Rendall (Treasurer)<br>Caroline Fairchild<br>Monica Boholst<br>Maggie Byrne<br>Joy Laven                                    | Jules Montero (Secretary)<br>Marye Kenton<br>Eryl Humphrey Jones<br>Nigel Palmer<br>Robert Taylor |
| <b>In Attendance:</b> | Paul Williamson (RBK&C, Community Learning)<br>Robert Rush (RBK&C, Asset Management)<br>Gary Riley (RBK&C TMO, Area Housing Manager)<br>Police Sgt. Tim Otway |   |
| <b>Apologies:</b>     | Flora Levi<br>Cllr. Mark Daley  | Cllr. Maighread Simmonds  |

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### 1. Apologies

The above apologies were accepted.

### 2. Flashpoint

The Committee members and guests – Paul Williamson and Robert Rush – introduced themselves.

PW and RR began by describing the background to the proposed development of Flashpoint – that the plans for the new school had led to the closure of Ashburnham adventure playground and that the Council had received £400,000 of Section 106 funding from the Lots Road development, a portion of which had now been made available to develop youth facilities in the area.

A proposal had been prepared for the development and expansion of Flashpoint. The proposal was expected to cost approx. £500,000 although only about £200,000 of funding had been secured to date. PW and RR proceeded to describe the proposed development with the aid of a rough plan. PW and RR noted that Flashpoint currently operated during weekday afternoons and catered for approx. 34 children aged 5-11. The proposal would increase the space available by 60% and allow Flashpoint to cater for approx. 50 children. The proposal also included the installation of additional play equipment in the surrounding play area at a later date. PW and RR noted that the proposals would be “scaled down” if all the required funding was not secured.

The following issues/concerns were noted:

- Whether any additional funding would be made available to operate the facility. It was noted that there were existing funding issues at both the Youth Club and Flashpoint.
- That the proposed expansion of the Flashpoint building would encroach significantly upon the garden below Ashburnham Tower and “close-in” on the tower. There was concern that the mature trees in the area might be damaged by the expansion or have to be removed. It was noted that the plan did not indicate sufficiently well where the expanded building would be situated in relation to the tower or surrounding garden space, or the space it would occupy.

### Actions

- That it was essential that the estate's residents, and particularly those living in close proximity to Flashpoint, were properly consulted before the works progressed any further.
- That any new development should be in the spirit of, and sympathetic to, the existing architecture of the estate. The recent door replacement works were cited as an example of how the architectural integrity of the estate was not being properly maintained. It was however noted that the current Flashpoint building was the result of a previous expansion in the early 80s and that this first expansion had been carried out in a reasonable manner.
- That many recent developments had deviated from the original plans once the works were underway and that, as a result, what was finally built was often not what the RA had previously agreed to – the World's End Piazza was cited as the most recent example.
- That there were a number of existing problems with security at Flashpoint – e.g. children would often climb onto the roof of Flashpoint – which the Committee expected to be addressed as part of any development.
- That the arrangements under which both the Youth Club and Flashpoint operated and the relevant buildings managed needed to be clarified. In particular, concerns were raised with regards to the manner in which the buildings were rented out to third-parties.

It was suggested that the next step should be for PW and RR hold a Public Meeting to consult the estate's residents. PW and RR said they would take the comments, suggestions and concerns on board and that they would consult WERA again once the plans had been developed further.

The meeting thanked PW and RR for attending and they left the meeting.

### 3. **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as correct.

### 4. **Matters Arising**

#### *Actions from Previous Meeting*

Item 3.1 (previously item 4.1) – JM confirmed that an amended letter had been sent to Gordon Perry with regards the security letter recently sent to the estate's residents.

Item 3.1 (previously item 4.2) – GR stated that FW did not believe that she had promised to drop off a sample of a letter granting a resident permission to keep a dog on the estate the day after the last meeting. A number of Committee members disagreed. MG noted that GR had now supplied a copy of a sample letter. MG then read the letter out to the meeting.

Item 3.2 – JM had proposed further dates and the meeting with Gordon Perry, Ian Twyford and Alasdair Manson had eventually taken place on the 30<sup>th</sup> of April.

Item 5.5 – JM had emailed Ian Buckingham the Committee's current issues and questions with regards the Piazza works.

Item 5.6 – the traffic barrier to Alexander Passage was still unlocked. It was noted that the lock was broken and that a repair was pending. It was also noted that there were no working lights in much of Alexander Passage.

Item 11 – JM had informed everyone of the date and time of the meeting with Gordon Perry in advance of the meeting on the 30<sup>th</sup> of April.

#### *Other Items*

Several Committee members expressed concerns with regards the Piazza works, in particular with regards the granite "seats" and the lack of bollards between Edith Yard and the Piazza. GR noted that there was also a question as to whether SITA would be able to drive on to the Piazza to empty the bins from Dartrey Tower. JM said he would bring these issues to the attention of Ian Buckingham and request a copy of the final plans for the works.

JM

GR noted that the area below Berenger Walk was unsuitable for use as a bike workshop due to the presence of wooden cladding, which would render a workshop a potential fire hazard. GR suggested the Committee consider using the space for a “youth shelter” instead. After some discussion it was agreed that GR and Sgt. Otway should investigate this suggestion further and put together a proposal for a “Youth Shelter” for the Committee to consider. A number of Committee members stated that they still believed that there was a need to provide a space for bike/scooter owners to work on their bikes as they were otherwise doing so in wholly unsuitable parts of the estate, such as in front of block entrances and inside the car park.

#### 5. **Area Housing Manager’s Update**

GR said that he had given JM a number of items in relation to the recent fire inspection of the clubroom prior to the meeting. These included emergency evacuation instructions to be displayed on the clubroom. GR said he would drop off a First Aid kit and the full evacuation plan later in the week.

GR stated that a number of initiatives to tackle anti-social behaviour had recently been carried out in conjunction with the Police and that these had proved quite successful. He expected further initiatives once the new Police office on the Piazza became operational.

GR handed out some information concerning the “mosquito”. This was a 78dB high-frequency sonic device which had been used to deter youths from loitering in public spaces. Sgt. Otway noted that the device would not be on all the time – it would be switched on for short durations as needed or on a schedule. GR noted that there were some questions that needed to be addressed before the device could be deployed on the estate (as the estate was a high-density residential area rather than an open public space). GR said he planned to visit a site where the device was currently being used and that it was hoped that all the outstanding issues would be addressed shortly.

GR said that he had discussed the ongoing dog problem on the estate with the dog warden and that the warden had indicated that he did not believe the problem could be addressed without a dog toilet facility on the estate. Members noted that there were two dog toilet facilities in close proximity to the estate – one in Roper’s garden, the other in Westfield gardens – and that responsible dog owners would not have any problem using either. Members generally objected to the installation of a dog toilet on the estate, noting that the irresponsible dog owners, who allowed their dogs to foul the walkways and gardens, were unlikely to make use of any such dog toilet facility and that, in addition, there did not appear to be any suitable sites for such a facility on the estate in any case.

A number of Committee members noted that the TMO’s recently issued dog policy was wholly unsuitable for any kind of high-rise, high-density housing – it did not limit the number of dogs which could be kept on a property (despite the fact that no properties had their own private garden space) or specify which breeds were suitable. It was noted that some of the breeds present on the estate were not only unsuitable but also potentially dangerous (e.g. an Akita was known to reside on the estate). It was noted that these issues had been brought to the TMO’s attention prior to the introduction of the new dog policy but they had clearly not been taken into consideration.

#### 6. **Police Update**

Sgt. Otway handed out the latest crime report for the estate and ran through the items listed.

Sgt. Otway confirmed that the works to the new Police Office were now complete, but that as the works on the Piazza had not yet been completed, they had been unable to move in and begin using it as their base of operations. The Piazza works were expected to be completed in June and his team would move in to the office immediately afterwards. Sgt. Otway also noted that the office was far smaller than originally expected and that it was possible that it would only be able to accommodate a single ward team – that of Cremorne – rather than the two teams originally envisaged.

EHJ noted the recent incident where two cars – an Audi and a BMW – had been broken into and vandalised in the estate car park. Fitzpatrick’s had left the pedestrian gate next to the vehicle entrance open all day, which had allowed someone to enter the car park and break into the two cars. It was noted the estate’s caretaking staff were aware of the incident.

JL asked Sgt. Otway about the tenancy audits carried out in other boroughs. Sgt. Otway noted that housing officers in other boroughs were often set a target of auditing ALL of the properties on their patch and that this was often carried out in conjunction with the Police. It was noted that the Committee had been advised at the meeting with Gordon Perry that the TMO aimed to audit 20% of the housing stock every year, although no-one present could recall ever taking part in such an audit.

**7. World’s End ARB**

JM noted that the World’s End ARB was scheduled to take place the following Wednesday, the 23<sup>rd</sup> of May, and asked Committee members to suggest any works they thought suitable for ARB funding.

**8. Use of WERA Clubroom**

JM told the meeting that there were two outstanding requests to use the WERA clubroom: one from the Chelsea Community Peace Project, who wished to use the room for a children’s class on Saturday afternoons between 12.30pm and 2.30pm; and one from a third Al-Anon Families Group, who wished to use the room on Wednesday evenings between 6.30pm and 8.30pm. JM explained that both requests were on hold pending the supply of a copy of the clubroom’s insurance policy, as well as guidance with regards to the use of the room by groups with children, by the TMO.

**9. Purchases**

The following purchases had been tabled prior to the meeting:

- The purchase of a digital camera for the RA for approx. £130. This was approved.
- The purchase of an A3 laminator for approx. £40. This was approved.
- The purchase of a large clock for the clubroom for approx. £10. This was approved.

**10. Meetings Attended**

*Meeting with Gordon Perry, Ian Twyford and Alasdair Manson*

A special Committee meeting with Gordon Perry, Ian Twyford and Alasdair Manson had taken place on the 30<sup>th</sup> of April. JM stated that he had not received any further correspondence from the TMO with regards to the votes of no confidence and the other issues discussed at the meeting

*Neighbourhood Conference*

MG, JM, MK and JL had attended the Neighbourhood Conference held on the 1<sup>st</sup> of May at the Town Hall. JM noted that that ongoing housing stock review had been the main item on the agenda but that no new information on the issue had been presented to the meeting.

*Walkabout with Sgt. Otway*

MG and JR had carried out a brief walkabout of the estate with Sgt. Otway on the 4<sup>th</sup> of May.

**11. Upcoming Meetings**

JM referred the meeting to the upcoming events and meetings listed on the back of the agenda.

**12. Any Other Business**

JL noted that the Trust was sticking notices to the notice boards with staples. JM stated that he had asked the Trust to refrain from doing so in future.

NP asked that any news or information about the TMO’s proposed “security workshop” should be distributed to all Committee members as soon as it was known and that all Committee members be allowed to attend and participate. This was agreed.

**13. Date of Next Meeting**

The time and place of the next meeting are: Tuesday, 12<sup>th</sup> of June, at 7pm in the WERA Clubroom.

The meeting then closed

..... Chair