

**Elektron and Switch House Tenants and Resident Association
13 November 2012 Meeting minutes**

Attendees:

Acting Chair – Paul Wick

Acting Secretary – Geeta Kasanga

Acting Treasurer – Marta Diaz de Cerio

Other residents from Elektron, Proton, Neutron and Switch House

Management company staff: Tony Ulasi, Lulu

Item	Discussion	Action points
1. Welcome	Paul Wicks chaired the meeting and welcomed everyone	-
2. Resident association: next steps to formalise it	Geeta provided a brief: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Quick option to request the freeholder to recognise the RA Simultaneously to pursue the option of securing recognition from the Resident Association Panel. This would require 60% flat owners to sign an authorisation to create the RA.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Acting officers will liaise to organise collection of more signatures in due course - Attendees requested to help with collecting signatures in the near future.
3. Clarification of area owned by the development	<p>Given the upcoming Cube development at Newport Avenue, there is concern amongst residents about the space around Elektron towards the East India DLR station.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tony clarified that technically there is no space to construct another building. The land beyond the trees belongs to the DLR, and has the Barclays bikes, so unlikely that there will be a proposal for new construction on this site. - Tony Ulasi has stated that the Elektron development ownership of the land ends where the bricks change colour, a bit after the 2 steps from the Elektron building. After that, the land belongs to the DLR and cannot be built - we need proof of that in writing. We need the plans of the Elektron land in writing with the drawings (it may be in the lease). <p>There was also discussion on the status of Blackwall Way.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tony clarified that Barratts states that they have completed all works on the road, but 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tony to provide confirmation and details of the ownership of the land around Elektron, including any drawings to confirm ownership of the land.

	<p>Tower Hamlets returns it back to Barratts stating that the works are not satisfactory. Therefore, there is some remedial work expected.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Parking permissions might again be revised – allowing 1 permit per flat until Tower Hamlets take back control of the street. - The plan is to open it to only the bus 277, and have bollards to allow its use by local residents. 	
4. Cross-rail insurance of the building	<p>Paul informed everyone that the Crossrail plans run right through the four buildings contrary to the initial belief that it ran more under the East India DLR station</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This raises huge concerns regarding insurance of the building in case things go pear shaped. - Tony provided reassurance that Crossrail had conducted all necessary surveys of the buildings; which will be continually assessed every step of the way. - There was concern regarding who provides permissions and the process involved: the freeholder (Estate and Management) provides the necessary permissions, with the management company facilitating this process. This kind of issues form part of what is called Issues of consent and Peverel can only act as a facilitator only. - Crossrail has sent the paperwork to the freeholder of Elektron. Tony explained that cameras will be in place until 2017 to measure any movement and check the structure is sound. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tony to provide all the related paperwork. - Tony to initiate / request Camilla (?) to comment.
5. Ward panel meeting	<p>Geeta represents the RA at the meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It is important to be involved and allows direct access to the local police. - Two issues already discussed: the damage / theft of cars parked on Aspen Way and the theft of sofa from the reception at Proton Tower. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Geeta to continue to participate in the meetings of the Ward Panel.
6. Lift door on 6 th Floor – cost	<p>The lift on the 6th Floor of Elektron was damaged recently by a resident. While the resident is known, it would be the word of the concierge against the resident according to the police.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tony clarified that it would cost about £6,500/- to replace the lift door. The insurance is picking this up. The excess would increase with the number of claims; the cost of replacing the lift door might or might not have an impact on the premium. The only cost so far is £250/-. - Tony is exploring options to install cameras in the lift. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tony to confirm total cost and its implications on service charge. - Tony to provide details of costs of installing cameras in the lift.
7. Actual / budget –	<p>There was a long discussion on the details of the budget / service charge levied. The main points:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tony to provide contact details for Margot Lewis at Barratts for any

<p>explanation of increases / decreases</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tony explained that property management is not an exact science, so the figures are calculated to approximate usual expenditure and account for exigencies. - Management has been trying to cut costs: for instance, use less manpower to get the job done. More things have been added to the role of handyman; cleaning products are being purchased using the company credit card (£500/- limit) to ensure that the best deal is secured. - The management fee goes up every 6 months by £2/3 per person goes up according to inflation; which is very competitive. - Insurance premiums have not gone up – this depends on the number of claims. We have had vandalism from the beginning. - Tony mentioned that leak claims have increased: upon enquiry / concerns regarding the increase in issues related to leaks, he clarified that Barratts had contracted each set of 5 or 6 floors to different plumbing contractors. Therefore while some floors had a good plumbing system in place others were not that straightforward and often missed a small component like washers etc. These are being rectified in-house as far as possible. - Tony also confirmed that the building warranty from Barratts has already expired in 2010. However, Barratts is keen to resolve any customer complaints even 5 – 10 years later. He advised that residents should take pictures of the damage / problem site and send this as evidence to the Barratts office to redress. - Questions were raised on the increase in concierge costs: Tony explained this was mainly due to temporary cover for sick leave. Sick leave for instance cannot be estimated in the budget and therefore led to an increase when temporary cover needs to be arranged. - Question was raised regarding increased Employers national insurance, which according to Tony was already factored in during the past years. - Management had to re-budget the salaries to reflect a 2.5%-3% increase. This was questioned in this climate. Tony replied that the salaries are in general quite low. - This raised concerns / comments about reducing staffing levels but not cutting back on quality of service / support across all the buildings. - Tony mentioned the other main expense is related to ink and consumables. - There was discussion of ways to reduce costs whilst ensuring that the security of the 	<p>complaints.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Residents to take photographs of any damage / issues as evidence to forward to Margot. - Tony to provide further details of the salaries / ink, paper other consumables (which should be at similar levels as in previous years). - Tony to provide details of costs of installing more cameras / staffing options at Proton / Neutron including different shift patterns. - Tony to ascertain contact details of Genesis. - The ESH RA to arrange a meeting with Genesis in due course. - In conjunction with management, the ESH RA to liaise and engage with Genesis on a regular basis - The RA in consultation with the residents of Elektron, Proton and Neutron to highlight the areas for CCTV. - Residents to be provided details of what to do (possibly anonymously) if they spot someone leaving their rubbish in common areas / vandalising etc. in an attempt to identify culprits.
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	<p>development / vandalism can be prevented: including installing cameras in lifts, changing staff shift patterns to best cover all the common areas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tony mentioned that the staircase area behind the reception is now covered with a camera, allowing the concierge to immediately engage a resident doing something untoward. - There were tail-gating concerns expressed by residents, especially in the buildings with no 24 hour reception. - There were also huge concerns expressed regarding the social housing floors: the state of the floors / common areas with residents often leaving rubbish in common areas, creating a fire hazard. - Tony clarified that the camera recordings are kept for 30 days. If there is an incident, the recordings are transferred onto a CD for future reference. He mentioned that the cameras are a costly option, and further that it requires a dedicated member of staff to watch the cameras / recordings which is not feasible. - Adiola from Genesis has left and the details of the replacement contact person are unclear. - Timo, resident in Proton, mentioned that Genesis stated that a result of a survey recently conducted with residents confirmed that they did not want a camera in the lift. Timo and other residents from Proton are not aware of this questionnaire. - Timo also mentioned that he is in contact with a local councillor regarding the continuing unresolved issues with Genesis and mentioned that Genesis receives funding from the council. 	
8. 'Trance' movie contribution to service charge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tony confirmed that the contribution was £5,000/- to the last financial year and £2,000 to this financial year. - Much lower than expected. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tony to market the development for more filming / promotional events with a hefty contribution. - ESH RA to help Tony.
9. Refurbishment of common areas / Gym	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Neutral Tower is due for a complete refurbishment in Jan 2013 as per the terms of the contract, i.e. to refurbish the buildings every 5 years. The plan is to redecorate internally – including gym equipment. - Regarding the gym equipment: it is cheaper and easier to renew the lease with Motiv8. They go out and check for the best deals and provide this service for free. The new equipment will be similar but more modern. The aim was to arrange a like for like cost 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tony to provide the advice / breakdown suggested by Motiv8. - Tony to explore if the TV could be heard only through sockets on the machines. - Tony to respond to the questions

	<p>but with more features resulting in no additional costs to the service charge.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This resulted in a long discussion on the sinking fund: Tony confirmed that there is about £500,000/- in the sinking fund. It is maintained as a separate Trust, Switch House & Elektron Trust Management Trust Fund Account, so in case the management company goes into administration, the money in this Fund is safe and returns to the residents who are the shareholders in this fund. He stated that there are at least two signatories required for signing checks out of this Fund, however, these details will be provided later. - Residents understand that this figure (or the contribution charged through service charge) is fluid as planned / unplanned expenditure is incurred. - The following were the main queries / concerns: - What is the limit of the sinking fund? What figure (however approximate) do we need to maintain as a threshold (safety net) for a development with specific number of flats? - This contribution to the sinking fund has to fall down or drop down at some point. - There was concern that a flat owner who sells the flat will not be able to retrieve / enjoy the benefits of his / her contributions to the sinking fund. - There has to be a general formula (however approximate) that is used to calculate the yearly contributions to the sinking funds based on predictions of planned expenditure. - Tony clarified that the Schedule 1 is for all expenditure items related to a specific building; Schedule 3 relates to all expenditure items in the areas shared by the entire development, i.e. gym. - Tony mentioned Section 20 which relates to refurbishment questions. 	<p>listed regarding the sinking fund: access, interest – who has access to the interest and how is it offset against the main contributions to the sinking fund or service charge, who are the signatories, maximum figure that is required to be maintained, the formula used to arrive at the overall figure and individual yearly contributions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tony to provide yearly statements for the sinking fund to all residents or make available on the RA website.
10.Optical fibre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Residents questioned the charge of £10/- per year per flat being charged by the freeholder as admin. This is not levied when BT / Sky etc. Packages are installed, so how does the fibre optic service differ? - Tony explained this is a consent issue and the lease allows the freeholder to charge for services that go through his properties although as a RA, once established, we may challenge this. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This will be raised with the freeholder in due course.
11.AOB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recycling bins – residents were concerned that there is a high level of contamination, and the number of recycling bins is low in comparison to the refuse bins. - Meridian lights – Tony clarified that Barratts mentioned that there was a light bulb issue which is being resolved. The blue cover is temporary protection and is meant to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lulu/Tony to confirm if one or two recycling bins could replace the refuse bins. - The details of how the process of

	<p>peel off in due course.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tower Hamlets is now charging for removal of bulky items: £15/- per 3 – 4 items but the resident has to call and pay for this service directly. The management company cannot call on the resident’s behalf. - Other options for removal of bulky items considered: hire a van (but too expensive), a full skip costs £275/- plus VAT which is an expensive option. - An altruistic option would be for one resident to commit time / drive down to the recycling centre with the items for free. - The more feasible option in comparison is for the ESH RA to manage this process directly. 	<p>paying for removal of bulky items would work best needs to be worked out. The ESH RA will discuss this and perhaps manage this directly in the future.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Geeta to check with the council if there are any charities that can collect items that can be reused directly for free.
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ITEMS PREVIOUSLY DISCUSSED

1. Clarify building insurance: What is covered and who to contact - Not discussed.
2. List of responsibilities of concierges, cleaning lady and handyman. Lulu has provided this information.
3. CCTV - Big items breakdown of costs and what is being done about it.
4. Communication with social housing association - Anti-social behaviour in Neutron Tower. Some of the neighbours explained issues they have. We talked about the door from the balcony which has finally put back after Tony pressured Genesis due to the risk it meant for all neighbours if it fell from the balcony.
5. Proton lifts lights: Not discussed although Lulu has previously said there are issues with the transformers and in any case is OTIS' responsibility.
6. Water issues - regular lack of hot water: Not discussed.
7. Garage door extremely noisy: It has fixed not long ago but a few days later it was noisy again. Lulu mentioned that since new magnetic xxx were installed to make the doors safer, this door has been noisy and it seems tricky to fix although the handyman will look further into it.
8. Spotlight at Elektron entrance leaking water: This will be looked into.
9. Excessive water in car park: Not discussed.
10. Repeated item, it is the same as 8.
11. Wind turbines: Not discussed.
12. Meridian light: The one on the floor is working and the one on the building is not working yet due to a transformer issue.

13. Meter readings - electricity and consumptions breakdown available: Not discussed.

OTHERS:

1. Handwritten book for complaints and suggestions: Not discussed.
2. Update refuse signs - Specially now that free picks up are no longer available for most of us.
3. Car blocking car exit: Not discussed.
4. Cleaning costs - Are they subcontracted?: Not discussed
5. Sofa theft: We asked if they would be replaced. Due to the excess it may not be worth it.
6. Others: A neighbour mentioned that the London City Airport website provides info about when each flat (the ones that have registered) will get installed the air vents: the company details are:

Granville Noise Insulators Ltd

Alison Glover, tel 0208 361 3151 or 0203 581 2089

The website link is here: <http://www.londoncityairport.com/AboutAndCorporate/page/NoiseAndTrackKeepingSystem?AspxAutoDetectCookieSupport=1>

Contact details for Acting Officers:

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