Our Second Annual General Meeting

Saturday 19th October 2024 Old Library Grahame Park 2PM to 3.45PM

AGENDA

## Introduction

Dear all welcome to our second Annual General Meeting. This agenda allows us the chance to review last year’s meeting points to see how far we have come and what plans we can make for the forthcoming year.

It is a lovely opportunity for existing loyal members in our original WhatsApp & Facebook group to meet those who are interested in joining.

We will continue to bring everyone under one roof via our consented membership forms. This strengthens core committee members to represent members raised issues and to work through our aims and goals.

This is a chance to introduce to newcomers and to reinforce with existing members, what a strong community, which started off as the informal resident group Little Strand is Ours have been able to achieve.

We did move up a few gears and proved to Barnet Council that this small corner of Grahame Park is a dynamic, strong, successful community which is about to release its voice and enact real change utilizing the tools of the localism act 2011.

Now we plan to branch out to the rest of Grahame Park because the collective voice is a strong and powerful one that will pave the way for real effective change decision led by the residents which will improve the lazy perception of the area largely driven by tired discriminative lazy council/developer rhetoric.

This is our second AGM as a Resident Association. There are minutes of the meeting from 6th June 2023 to review.

## Agenda points

 Given that this is our second AGM, there will be a report of the past year. the previous year.

 Our short statement of accounts has been updated to reflect that we have an official Lloyds Treasurer account set up last year. No funds have been spent from the treasurer’s bank account we opened with Lloyds Bank. The amount stands at £60

What is currently spent using external funds outside the resident association is for a website gptsra website plus associated email.

The cost 2023-2024 was £15.

**Re-Election of our committee members**

If everyone is happy, we can go ahead and re elect our existing committee members with a show of hands

In due course, we will need to consider and elect:-

* Services committee member
* Social and Cultural committee member
* Environment committee member

For the time being it will be easier to start Service charge/social/environmental committee groups.

# Meeting points

* **Free Membership for Resident Association linking onto housing revenue account (10 mins)**
* **Service charges (20 mins) :- estate management and lack of together with environmental and sewage issues.**
* **Parking incorporating school street (15 mins)**
* **Tenancies and leasehold (15 mins)**
* **Anti social behaviour (10 mins)**
* **Planning and Development – Neighbourhood forum (10 mins)**
* **Any other business**
* **FREE MEMBERSHIP:-** proposal to keep this as is, but investigate getting some funding via service charges
* **SERVICE CHARGES – THIS IS HUGE!**
* **NHG**  Their estate manager Alex, and Co Ordinator Lucy, has informed that NHG have been approached by regulators who it is believed are Ombudsman. They were very strict on what constituted a pass/fail of work. NHG were honest and told Heybourne Crescent residents that more needs to be done to fix problems. It was shocking to hear that ten-year-old buildings are already referred to as older buildings with more problems. This really does not bode well for regeneration or the expected onslaught of housing developments

**Barnet Homes.**

Under the Freedom of information Act we obtained details of service charges and how they are spent. This was what was missing:-

1. A complete zero percent lack of external grounds maintenance.
2. No receipts as requested
3. Why tenants pay rent and are treated with lack of basic respect awaiting inexcusable amounts of time for repairs, and in many cases having to navigate poorly maintained blocks.
4. Why leaseholders are being charged a fortune
5. Why Freeholders are paying for service charges and not seeing any maintenance or upkeep in the external communal area.
6. Why key workers have to suffer living under awful tenancies and why long term residents are forced to move out of a place they enjoy living in.

**We propose today for the first time that through a growing Resident Association we have a decisive role with members on boards and community interest groups and resident associations in how Grahame Park is shaped and maintained.**

**£33 million of housing revenue money that includes rent and service charges were spent on fixing flats that stupidly are earmarked now for demolition. This is not right or fair.***Not one. We are aware of very diverse range of service charges being forced onto leaseholders. Freeholders have agreements of pay in their contracts as covenants and restrictions. Tenants pay for the upkeep via their rent. We believe the severe charges have happened because the council Housing revenue account is in hundreds of millions in debt plus the full diversion of services solely to block maintenance and none to external communal estate areas. We believe this needs a steering group to look into services charged, to follow up FOI requests for receipts and to look into bringing cases to first tribunal.*

* **Anti Social Behaviour and the police services –** whilst there has been a notable reduction in crime across Grahame Park, we are hearing reports of increased supermarket criminal activity which puts local retail staff at risk. We are also hearing reports of the return of some people with drug issues wasted across greenspaces, play areas or defecating outside alleyways. I have reported this at the last police panel meeting.
* **Parking** – the challenge continues
	+ Residents are now prepared to request that estate-controlled parking zone exists for Grahame Park estate. No more public roads or parking. The roads are unsuitable for public access and the residents are suffering from lack of parking because of it.
	+ Residents will only accept any permit parking, that reflects a reduction in costs because such amenities is already paid via service charges and rent (latter is prescribed rights)
	+ We continue to fight for the stolen safeguarding promised during the council original consultation in 2017-2018.
	+ School streets exemption a letter from highways addresses the issue. It was unsatisfactory, that the council simply acted on assumption and usual stigma such that they did not realise NHG people with private permits, and Grahame Park residents with driveways, two categories that did not have a permit account and were initially refused exemption.
* **Tenancies** – Since last year, we have seen the council address tenancies and believe that some secure tenancy contracts are now in place. However, we are deeply concerned that some unsecure tenancy contracts were terminated in Grahame Park with residents moved elsewhere. The properties these tenants stayed in got fully refurbished and now are rented to Key workers on the most insecure contracts. We want to see more secure tenancies in Grahame Park and certainly more reasonable fixed terms. Plus going forward we feel the almo of Barnet Council has to be considered like other boroughs to return in house with residents paying Barnet Council directly. The rent can then go into a housing revenue account.
* **Planning and development** – These were exposed for the shambles it was in 2023. Going forward, we are now demanding that the council inform this resident association of every plan including housing and car parking bays that happens in Grahame Park at the same time they inform the councillors. We want full proper engagement. I will formally complain to the council that the communications on engagement of corner mead was absolutely appalling.
* **Steering Groups and Neighbourhood development Forum plan** – We actually created a steering group for Little Strand. It is slow but making inroads and progress regards engagement. We now want to start a few more steering groups because there are issues that need to be addressed. As well as service charges we need social and cultural group for young people and environment simply to protect the legacy of Grahame Park greenspaces and air quality

The neighbourhood forum idea in brief can now be presented to the association.

**Any other business:**

* **Public Transport** - Effects of Colindale Station closures and frequent signal failures. Whilst extra rail replacement buses have been put on, the issue of broken signals has not been addressed fully and is causing mayhem.
* **Facilities for young people** – Possible young person’s committee group to get more facilities on the Concourse redesigned for purpose use.

Notices of the AGM has been displayed on public notice boards in the Association’s Area and members were informed via Facebook, email, and WhatsApp. We have had to amend the venue and dates twice because of the lack of venues available this month.

Our thanks to Colindale community trust for the use of the local community centre.

Timetable of meeting

06.15 Introduction (*10 minutes)*

06.25 Free Membership (*5 minutes)*

06.30 Re election (*ten minutes)*

06.40 Service Charges (*20 minutes)*

07.00 Round up of anti-social behaviour (*ten minutes)*

07.10 Car parking (*15 minutes)*

07.25 Tenancies (*10 minutes may overrun)*

07.35 Planning & Development 10 minutes

07.45 Wrap up AOB

08.00 We must vacate the premises.