

## CENTURY HOUSE RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

### **Minutes of CHRA Meeting held on 23 October 2001 to discuss management of Century House**

The meeting was held in Flat 28 and started at 7.45pm.

Representatives of 15 flats attended: Judith Lockyer (Flat 1), Toby French (6), Lesley Stuart (8), David Hoon (10), Mo Zaman (12), Troy Coldrick (19), Ian Boyd (20), Robert MacCorgarry (21), Angus French (24, chair), Sofia Lardoutsou and Agni Mela (tenants, 26), Gareth Mitchell (27), Robert Knock (28), Jacqui Bromley (29), John Bradley (30) and Kiran Sohanpaul (32).

Apologies for absence were received from Penshurst Properties (7), Elizabeth Rea (13) and Jay Chelliah (22).

AF thanked Robert Knock for use of his flat and Lesley Stuart for publicizing the meeting, in particular to non-CHRA members.

We introduced ourselves. Some of us (AF, GM, RK, JB, JB) have been leaseholders since Century House was converted from an office block 13 or 14 years ago. We're all depressed about the state of the block, particularly as we believe it has so much potential. TC regrets having bought his flat a couple of years ago. Some have had their flats valued recently – at £85,000, for example, for a two-bedroom flat, but also at just under £90,000 for a one bedroom flat?! GM had agreed the sale of his flat but been prevented from selling by the freeholder who insisted he pay off alleged arrears of £18,000. Most took a long-term view about moving on: they expected it take several years to resolve the problems and wished to wait until Streatham was on the tube (which, presumably, would give a boost to property prices). John B wished to stay longer, until he retired.

AF updated the meeting on various issues. Please see attachment.

The meeting was unanimous about the need to replace the current managers. We quickly agreed that we should apply to the Leasehold Valuation Tribunal for the appointment of new managers [Another option, to exercise our right to buy the freehold, wasn't discussed. That option is be more complex, more expensive and would mean taking on liability for the freehold. Obtaining a management order does not preclude buying the freehold later.] A sub-committee consisting of Angus French (CHRA Secretary), David Hoon (CHRA Committee member), Ian Boyd (solicitor with some professional Landlord and Tenant experience) and Robert MacCorgarry (investor in problem properties) was formed to see this through.

It was decided to set a new subscription of £100 to establish a 'fighting fund'. Funds currently stand at approx. £1,500. The additional money should allow us to commission a survey of our block (to evidence lack of management and neglect as recommended by Comptons, solicitors – cost circa £1,500), to obtain further legal advice, to pay for the application itself and keep some reserve. Lesley Stuart volunteered to look after collection of subscriptions.

Internal redecoration is not anticipated for several years (not until after the external works are complete) though the common parts are in shabby condition. The meeting agreed to attempt some redecoration: a general clean-up, repainting of walls, removal of fraying (and unsafe) carpet (underneath which is parquet flooring). We should seek the managers permission to do this, persuading them that we will 'do a professional job', as legally it is their responsibility. Gareth Mitchell will pursue this and intends a series of weekend work events.

MZ asked whether the block was insured. TC asked whether his flat's payment for building works could be refunded. CHRA will pursue these issues.

The meeting concluded at about 9.15pm.

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