Crescent House Residents' Liaison Group (RLG) Meeting 25 July 2024

Date:	Thursday 25 July 2024 from 6.00 pm – 7.00 pm	
Venue:	**Community Centre at 6.00 pm.**	
Attendees:	John Muldoon	Your Shout (Chair)
	Nick Condon	Project Manager
	Jacqueline Swanson	Leaseholder/CoL Resident Comms
	Five Leaseholders	
	Three Tenants	
	Colin Davis	Studio Partington

This is the eighteenth official meeting for the Crescent House Residents' Liaison Group. The meeting's agenda will be:

1. General introduction
2. Presentation from Colin Davis, Project Architect at Studio Partington (allow 30 mins with questions)
   a. Over-heating modelling
   b. Louvre Design Work
   c. Planning conditions discharge
   d. Ironmongery
3. Tender update
4. AOB

If you are unable to attend in person here is a Teams link.
Click here to join the meeting
Meeting ID: 358 608 386 824
Passcode: zH8FXn

If you are unable to attend at all, let us know and we will record your apologies.

Summary Notes

Apologies: Cllr Dawn Frampton, Cllr Ceri Wilkins

1. General introduction

   A potential new member (Leaseholder) attended for the first time

2. Presentation from Colin Davis, Studio Partington

   a. Over-heating (to include b. Louvre design work)

Crescent House is particularly susceptible to over-heating, particularly in the summer. Causes of over-heating in homes:

- Urban heat island. Building homes in the centre of cities increases the risk of over-heating, because of the number of hard surfaces which absorb the heat.
- Air conditioning used on neighbouring buildings discharging hot air.
- Orientation of a building. Crescent House has a large south and south-west facing façade, which is heavily glazed which means that over-heating risks are all increased.
- On dense urban sites where there is lots of noise, people are less likely to open windows.

Glazing

The single glazing in CH is a big issue, particularly on the south-facing facades and also in the top-floor east facing flats.

However, a change from single-glazing to vacuum-glazing makes a significant improvement. The single glazing in CH at the moment lets about 90% of the sun's radiation into the flat, with vacuum glazing this would be around 53%. There is a type of vacuum glazing that only lets around 33% of the sun's radiation in, but this type however only lets around 50% of the daylight in. Single glazing lets around 90% of daylight in, with vacuum this number is around 80%.

Thermal Mass

The thermal mass within the building can be both a good thing and bad thing. The concrete frame and the solid masonry construction is good at absorbing heat during the day, and it will release that heat again at night. In flats where it is possible to cross-vent the airflow at night and thus get rid of that heat, the thermal mass can be a good thing. However, where this isn't possible the thermal mass can actually be a bad thing because it is just radiating heat back into the flat at night.

Ventilation

There are different ventilation mechanisms. First is purge ventilation, which is rapid ventilation of smells and heat. This includes opening a window to bring in fresh air to remove heat and smells. Some of the flats are good for this. About 2/3 of the flats are dual aspect, so they can be cross-ventilated. The other 1/3 have good purge ventilation but not cross ventilation, as they are not dual aspect.

Background ventilation is a constant supply at a much lower level of fresh air into the homes. Most of the flats in CH were designed with some form of mechanical ventilation in the original design in 1962. The existing background ventilation is now complicated by the energy improvement measures that are being made to the flats improving the air tightness of the homes, there is an increased risk of condensation and moisture in the air which reduces the amount of general air infiltration. This means the amount of background ventilation has to be increased.

Building regulations have been updated in the last few years to recognise that if energy efficiency improvements such as vacuum glazing are being made, then there has to be a better provision for background ventilation. This is why the new demand ventilation system has been settled on for CH. The ventilation system pulls fresh air form outside through a trickle vent.

It is important to improve the air tightness to a point where the mechanical ventilation system works well with pulling air out from all parts of the flat, which is why we have an issue with the louvred windows in the top floor flats (see below)

Louvre Design Work

The reason for the removal of the Louvred window, is that even when it's closed it's very leaky. This means that the ventilation system, if it's installed in the bathroom, will just be pulling air from the louvred window and won't be pulling air from the rest of the flat.

However, as a result of a desire for secure cross ventilation, Studio Partington were asked to review options of what to do with the louvred window. From that review there was no straightforward cost-effective alternative.

Overheating Modelling

A new piece of work is being undertaken to assess the likelihood of overheating in CH using the TM59 methodology. This will report the number of hours in a year that a particular space will overheat. This will measure the number of the hours that the bedroom space will be over 26° Celsius during the night, from 10pm-7am.

To put into context, in a new build the expectation would be that this figure would under 1% of those hours. This will never be achieved in CH due to the constraints mentioned above.

However, the impact of the new glazing on the flats when it comes to overheating, can be measured using this system. The impact of any change to the louvred window can also be measured. This will quantify the work that is being done. All scenarios will be

measured for, including single glazing, the louvred window and the existing extract system. The tests are being done now, with results expected in the next couple of weeks.

The pilot flat along with an interior corridor flat on each of the first and second floor are being modelled.

'Summer Measures' Campaign

A Summer Measures campaign, similar to the Winter Measures campaign, is under consideration and will be informed by the results of the overheating modelling.

c. Planning conditions discharge

There have been three documents submitted to the planners. More detail was required for the rendered soffits and there is now a full package of detailed drawings and a sample of the finish. The Project Team has also provided a detailed method for the repair work, which is exactly as per the pilot flat and is almost the same document that was submitted as part of the pilot project works. They have also partially discharged the condition that covers the material samples. This includes things like the translucent glass below the bookshelf, the white glass to the spandrel panel, the roof finishes, etc.

d..Ironmongery.

The ironmongery has not been submitted yet, as part of the material samples. A CH leaseholder has provided two handles for reference but the ironmongery specialists are finding difficulties to identify the existing ironmongery because there are no makers marks, just a code number. Basically, it is not made any more and so the specialist is working up proposals for creating a replica but also sourcing a more off the shelf replacement as close as possible to the original, with adaptations if required.

3. Tender update.

The tender was published on 5 July. There is no way to ascertain at this stage how many contractors are likely to respond however there have been a number of questions and a request for additional time. This has been granted and the tender return date for the first SQQ stage is now 13 August.

The whole tender is a very complex document. The City of London legal have suggested that a measured term contract is used as opposed to a JCT building contract.

The Measured Term contract enables the Contractor to take possession of individual flats to undertake the work and then when the work is completed practical completion can be granted and the flat handed back to the resident and they take back responsibility for it.

It also means that if there is a problem with one flat, and effectively it's on the programme to be done next and it can't be done next, it means you don't instruct that flat, you instruct another one, which doesn't give the contractor the ability to be able to claim a delay.

The measured contract is not that different from a standard contract, it just gives you that ability to work piecemeal as opposed to as one site, which is a definite advantage.

The named window contractor has confirmed that they can provide the right quality of tradespeople to undertake work in six flats at a time.

One of the problems which we will have is that, whilst there is a contract value that is clearly defined at the beginning of the contract, you won't really know how much that contract is going to cost until you've gone into each flat and you've done the work. This is because you don't know how much work needs to be done in each flat.

The first stage of the tender process is for contractors to prove their capability and their experience on doing similar types of projects. If 10 contractors prove their credentials, then you have the ability to reduce it down to 5, and it's only those 5 who go through to the next stage. The first stage of the tender is therefore to reduce the number of tenderers down. If the number of contractors are being reduced to 5, then it is vital that the 5 are the best 5 that can be found. On 13 August the number of Contractors tendering will be known.

4. AOB.

The Project team are hoping to have the preferred contractor from the tender process approved at the Children and Community Services committee in January 2025. The report will have to go to Members before Christmas, which means that the Section 20 statutory resident consultation notices will have to be issued at the beginning of November to allow comments to be included in the report.

For a current estimate of costs contact Home Ownership (City of London). They have been provided figures by the Major Works Team. However, figures do need updating. The Project Team are working towards a meaningful leaseholder meeting for the Autumn for an update on apportionment of costs - what is recoverable, what isn't (betterment etc).

The person replacing Jason as Head of Major Works Housing is starting in mid-October. The role no longer includes overseeing the Barbican which now has a separate team.

Other questions sent in by one of the RLG members will be answered by email.

What happens if there are no viable responses to the tender?
There is a possibility that if the right quality of contractor cannot be found, the contract can potentially be split into three. We already have named specialist window contractors, but a main contractor and a roofing contractor would have to be found. This could potentially make the process more manageable and increase the potential that a smaller contractor can be found who we can negotiate with and form a better ongoing relationship.

As all the work has to be done at the same time this approach, if necessary, should not increase costs.

RLG resident members have asked to increase the frequency of the CH RLG meetings. It was agreed that the next CH RLG would be 22 August 6 pm in the Community Centre and monthly going forward.