

NLA Open meeting: Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2109

Venue: The Mash Tun Norwich

### Notes of Meeting

About 45 Leaseholders attended. There were several apologies.

Jon Neville-Jones (Chair of NLA) welcomed all Leaseholders, introduced the committee and the meeting. The following was discussed:

- The purpose of Norwich Leaseholders (NLA) was outlined: NLA want NCC to adhere to the Nolan Principles and to be a voice for leaseholders, who, for whatever reason, cannot be heard on their own. NLA wishes to be a respected voice. Although NLA are willing to support leaseholders, the committee members are voluntary and cannot take over the individual home owners' responsibilities.
- Current issues include poor workmanship, lack of warranties that have been charged for and the ongoing problem that lighting in common parts have been charged for, and in spite of a ruling made by Tribunal against Norwich City Council 6 years ago, the money has still not been refunded in full.

JNJ advised all Leaseholders to follow guidance including:

- Keep all paperwork/ letters from Norwich in relation to charging and consultation. Warranties and Completion Certificates issued by Norwich should be kept and passed to future owners as relevant.
- Keep a dated record of any discussions had about concerns.
- Ask at an early stage of the consultation what warranties will be provided.
- If a Leaseholder wishes to complain, the complaint should be about a specific wrong such as instances of incompetence or workmanship, with evidence to back this up. A general "rant" will achieve little.
- NLA is not willing to help people avoid payable bills. They may help in obtaining a fair bill, but all "fair" bills are payable. This may take several years after the initial consolation papers have been received.
- Leaseholders should assume that from when costs are advised before work starts, there will eventually be a bill that has to be paid. It would be prudent for homeowners to plan how the bill should be paid once work completed.

Individual cases were discussed. In particular concern was voiced that due to lack of ongoing maintenance, the structural integrity of some buildings has been damaged. The overall result is that major refurbishments are necessary when ongoing maintenance would have been the sensible and cheaper option

The time lag between tendering and projects starting has resulted in further damage. On one project cost increases of 50% were cited after tendering. JNJ suggested a request to re-tender could be made.

Post Grenfell fire safety was discussed. NLA takes the position that they support Norwich's efforts to ensure safety is given priority. However one instance was discussed where a local Government Inspector has certified one fire door as safe, while Norwich refutes this. The advice is to involve the local Fire Officer.

Normandy Towers have fire doors in place. However one door was patched with thin ply many months ago and Norwich appears unwilling to ensure it is replaced. Advice: ask the local Fire Officer to comment. If deemed unsafe, provide this evidence to Norwich.

If a homeowner's opinion concerning their property is not shared by Norwich: a good general principle would be to get an independent professional report to comment and advise on appropriate action. This can then be presented to Norwich if it supports the homeowners view and contradicts Norwich's opinion.

NLA apologised that the venue The Mash Tun was not easily accessible to all Leaseholders and that the poor lighting on the stairs was a potential hazard. NLA will seek in future to arrange the meetings in a central location that is comfortable and accessible for all to attend.

NLA thanked members for their support and attendance.