

LWRA

NEWSLETTER -SPECIAL

April 2020

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - POSTPONED

The RA was due to hold elections and the AGM on 25th and 26th March. When the nominations closed on the 5th March 2020 nine residents had nominated themselves.

There are 15 seats on the committee, so since there were fewer nominations than the number of seats, there was no need to hold an election. The outgoing committee stood down on 26th March and the new committee has taken over and elected the officers:

Chair – Abbas Dadou

Vice Chair – David O'Connell

Secretary – Michelle Active

Treasurer – David Ward

This process would usually take place at the AGM however due to COVID-19 and following government advice the AGM has been postponed until further notice. As soon as it is safe to do so the AGM will go ahead.

The nomination statements of the new committee members are at the end of this newsletter.

COVID-19 – Response

We are working closely with Age UK, Volunteer Centre K&C, Foodbanks, RBKC, Public Health, WLCCG and other local partners including Bay20 to set up distribution centres in order to distribute food and essentials to our older and vulnerable residents should this service be needed over the coming weeks. If you find yourself in difficulties or become aware of a neighbour that may need assistance please email info@lancwestra.com and we will put them in touch with the relevant organisations. If you are able to volunteer during this time please contact the Volunteer centre to register <https://www.voluntarywork.org.uk/>. They will ensure all volunteers are trained and supported during this time.

The RA have also taken the decision with immediate effect to close both the Lancaster West Community Centre and the North Kensington Resource Centre.

Link to government website on COVID-19 latest info <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/homes-england-coronavirus-covid-19-updates>

ANNUAL REPORT

Community Centres

Lancaster West Estate Community Centre

In July 2019 the RA signed a management agreement with RBKC to take over the running of the community centre on Station Walk. Since taking over the centre the RA asked RBKC to refit the kitchen and replace the flooring both of which have now been completed.

Several organisations asked to use the centre to run projects and it was agreed that if the project could directly benefit the residents then the space could be used.

The Notting Dale Community Champions run a weekly group **Baby and Me** which is a music session for mothers and babies and has been extremely well attended alongside their baby massage sessions. Age UK had the champions have also run a great chair-based exercise for our older residents, this session rotates between different centres every few months.

Eunicia Harding and the team from **RISE**: Eleanor, Prisilla & Rhumel, have been running an after school club three days a week since September which has over 20 children registered. The club is currently funded by the People's Health Trust. This club is unique in the area as the children are collected from three local primary schools, on arrival receive a home cooked meal and snacks. The children take part in a variety of activities which include, Homework club, arts and crafts, music dance, one to one support, reading sessions and meditation. The club has been supported by some wonderful resident volunteers including Natasha Gordon who was involved with the forming of RISE after the Grenfell fire tragedy, Omagh Gommari and parents Bashara and Daniella.

This month Eleanor and Rhumel have said goodbye for new pastures and we thank them for all their hard work. The team have welcomed Marlon who is a youth worker with years of experience, and we know he will be a great addition to RISE and the afterschool club.

We would also like to take this opportunity to thank Eunicia and the team for their outstanding contribution to the children on the estate; and congratulate them on their success in receiving funding from the Grenfell Project fund which will see them take over the afterschool club from September, with the intention of running five days a week. We wish Eunicia every success with her new venture.

The community centre has also been used by several residents for family functions, a home school group, Grenfell Recovery college, Grenfell United and Grenfell Trust since last August and all have praised the centre for being such a lovely venue.

North Kensington Resource Centre

Over the last few years, the centre was used solely by the LWCN Stay and Play service. At the request of residents the RA started to run two projects at the centre with Jacquie Haynes on a Friday.

Stretch with Jax is a group of residents meeting for a very informal stretch session every Friday morning followed by Breakfast club funded by the People's Health Trust where residents can have a healthy filling breakfast prepared by Jacquie and our Community Development Co-ordinator Fiona.

We have also used the centre as a base for a new music session, which is open to residents of all musical abilities and are over the age of 16.

Jacquie Haynes continues to use the centre as a base where she regularly supports residents around housing and many other issues.

The centre is also used by residents for bible study group and will be used by a men's social group once a week in the coming months.

As of Monday 6th April the centre will return to the full use of the Lancaster West Residents. If you have any ideas for activities you would like to see please contact Fiona who will be happy to look for funding to support activities. The centre is also due to be painted w/c 13th of April, however this may be postponed due to the current situation with the COVID-19 outbreak.

Both NKRC and LWECC are available to residents to use and can be booked by emailing info@lancwestra.com.

The RA has temporarily closed both facilities as of 19th March in accordance with Government advice on COVID-19, until further notice.

Community Events

Family Funday

Over 350 residents attended and enjoyed a variety of fun activities including arts and crafts, bouncy castle, good food and music. We also had the wonderful Mr Bubbles perform his magic show and balloon modelling. Residents had the opportunity to let the RA know what they would like to see introduced on the estate at the new community centre.

Summer Camp

A very successful Summer Camp was held during the first two weeks of August for children aged 7-11 years. This was run in partnership with Lanc. West Rise Youth Group. Over 35 children enjoyed trips to the park, ice skating, bowling, a wonderful community brunch at the Curve and much more. The two weeks ended with a party where the children performed a dance they had learned over the 2 weeks.

Black History Month

Residents Eunicia Harding, Michele Active and Fiona our Community Development Co-ordinator worked together to hold a wonderful afternoon of storytelling, music and poetry to celebrate Black History Month. Local BME business owners also had the opportunity to promote their business in the indoor market that ran alongside the event. Over 120 residents of all ages attended and enjoyed a Caribbean meal prepared by Eunicia, Michelle and Fiona and an outside caterer.

Halloween

The RISE team and the RA worked together to give children a truly spooky evening of scary games and fun. Over 20 children of different ages attended. The children all received a glorious cauldron of goodies to take home at the end of the evening.

Christmas 2019

Once again the RISE team, the RA and parents held a wonderful Christmas party for over 30 children, which included a very special visit from non-other than Santa himself, who once he had delivered his festive surprises stayed for a dance with the children and adults.

At the North Kensington Resource Centre Jacquie Haynes and Fiona threw a party for our older residents, which included an afternoon of music, laughter a buffet lunch and maybe a drop of very special punch. Alongside their Christmas gifts our fabulous community gardener Robert Pereno presented each resident with a plant accompanied by a beautifully performed poem.

Temporary Accommodation

The state of temporary accommodation is a national disgrace. The RA has this year attended several meetings to support individual cases as well setting up a Temporary Accommodation sub-committee. We arranged for delegates from the Archbishop of Canterbury's housing commission to visit the estate. At an open event in Clement James they met with local TA residents and visited a number of homes to see for themselves the condition that some TA residents are forced to live in. We organised a meeting chaired by the Bishop of Kensington for residents to meet with RBKC and Notting Hill Genesis to discuss the failings to properly support our TA residents and several actions have been agreed upon moving forward.

We have also negotiated that residents in TA will have their repairs dealt with by W11 Neighbourhood Team where possible.

If you are experiencing difficulties or would like to attend the TA sub-committee meetings please email info@lancwestra.com and we will assist where possible.

Refurbishment

Back in July 2017 the Council committed to making Lancaster West a “model for social housing in the 21st Century. Finally, there is a major part of the money available for them to keep their promise. More is still needed as was identified by RBKC in costing the needs identified in the Books of Ideas produced in April 2018.

In July 2019 the RA was pivotal in negotiations to secure an extra £27.9 million to add to the £30million promised by the Government and RBKC. There is enough money to ensure that ALL Council tenanted flats on the estate can be done up to a high specification. There will be new windows, fully controllable heating and improved water pressure (both hot and cold). Also new kitchens and bathrooms.

More money will be needed to provide an energy system which would ensure that all our bills can be reduced, disabled access can be improved, and the common parts can be made attractive and welcoming. The RA is working alongside the W11 Neighbourhood Team in seeking funding from BEIS and there are projects that have received some funding to evaluate ideas that would best suit the estate.

We will need to continue to fight to ensure that everything is delivered, and that the process is carried out sensitively. This means that all possible help will be sought from the Council to minimise any disruption.

Leaseholders

We all know that the current situation will have enormous impact for all of us.

Specifically for leaseholders the government have promised that all people affected by the Coronavirus situation will be able to apply for a three month mortgage holiday. We have asked the council what help they will be offering to those affected and Kim Taylor-Smith has stated that they are working on what they can do. The RA has started a new section on the website for all residents at <https://www.lancwest.com/information> and we will be providing specific information for leaseholders as soon as we have any details.

We recently wrote to Doug Goldring, the Council's Director for Housing as many of us have received demands for enormous monthly sum to settle Service Charge bills and threatening legal action if they were not met. He has responded that they have paused sending any further letters to those in Lancaster West as the tone and manner of the letters is completely wrong. We will be working closely with the Lancaster West team to find a better way to deal with this. It is also obvious that many of the bills are wrong, indeed some leaseholders have been paying the charges all along by direct debit. We would urge all residents in the Walkways to check your bills closely, ask for a full statement of accounts and check that the discounts have been applied correctly. It also seems that the charges may have been too high.

Doug is looking into this and we will let you know when he reports back. However, this may take a while with things as they are.

As nothing can be seen as certain at the moment and it looks as though the situation in London may be already far worse than the rest of the country. We will continue to press the council with the injustice of charging us when we have suffered so much. Now more than ever we need support from the council, not penny-pinching.

If you aren't on our mailing list, please go to:

<https://www.lancwest.com/leaseholders> and fill in your details.

If you wish to be on the WhatsApp group and aren't please email your mobile number and details to leaseholders@lancwestra.com

Financial Report

When the new committee took over the RA accounts last year, there was £4,241.27.

To help run each of the projects run over the last year, the RA applied for funding from a number of local organisations. Below is a summary of the income and expenses for each of the projects.

Family Fun Day

Total Funding: £4,975.00

Total Expenses: £4,650.65

Total Remaining: £ 324.35

Summer Camp

Total Funding: £3,600.00

Total Expenses: £2,813.54

Total Remaining: £ 786.46

Black History Month

Total Funding: £250.00

Total Expenses: £500.00

Total Remaining: £-250.00

Xmas Party

Total Funding: £500.00

Total Expenses: £403.12

Total Remaining: £96.88

People's Health Trust / Greenshoots

Total Funding: £7,000.00

Total Expenses: £4,746.62

Total Remaining: £2,253.38*

***The remaining balance will be spent on current RISE afterschool club and Coffee Mornings**

A full financial report will be available at AGM when we are able to hold it.

New RA Committee Members

Michelle



My name is Michelle Active. I live in Testerton Walk. I've lived in North Kensington all my life. Born in Ladbrooke Grove in 1963, moving to Acklam Rd then Silchester Estate when the Westway was built. There I grew up before moving to Camborne Mews in 1994 then finally The Walkways in 1999.

In those days the estate was not the best. I moved next door to a crack den, which was interesting to say the least and with the help of the police & the rest of my neighbours it was finally closed down.

Things began to improve on the Estate, and it was becoming no longer a no-go area, but I must admit I became a little bit apathetic to living conditions on the estate. I was a working single mother for most of it and just kept my head down and let things ride, someone else will do it kind of attitude I never even attended an RA meeting until after the fire.

I started attending the regular RA meetings and over the months I saw the numbers decline and the community cohesion beginning to wane. I began to realise that apathy was no longer an option for me.

I listened to residents sometimes complain about the RA and say things like "why aren't they doing enough " and I must admit I sometimes thought the same, but how can I judge when I'm not in their shoes, so when they asked for co-opted members I decided it was my time to do my bit, and joined the RA in 2018.

I took a break at the last election due to personal reasons and re-joined late 2019 as I felt I still had a lot to offer.

I've worked in libraries, television research for the BBC and I've been working in education for the last 26 years, and don't have any special skills as far as housing, government or council knowledge but I have learnt a lot about these over the last 2 years, and I have volunteered my time on many RA and resident led projects and events over the last 2 years, and have built relationships with some great people on the estate who I now consider friends. I am committed to doing what I can when I can to make the estate a better place to live for now and in the future.

For things to change and improve, we must all do our bit, and I'm willing to do my part not just for me and mine but for all of us.

Thank you.

David



Hi, I'm David O'Connell and I've been a resident on the Estate with my partner for over 6 years and I've also been a member of the Lancaster west RA for the past year. We've been working hard to bring the estate back together, get projects off the ground and to do the best for all our residents.

The new community Centre is up and running and is providing a useful resource with the after-school club and activities for mothers' and babies. We are in the process of getting back full use of our resource centre after being used as a temporary home Grenfell Nursery immediately post fire.

There are still many ongoing issues with the refurbishment and issues of heating, noise and problems with bills from the council and I will continue to do my best to help all residents.

We will continue to fight to make sure that people pay for the tragedy that has blighted all our lives. To continue to fight the council and to keep them honest.

I have also set up a Leaseholder sub-committee and chair regular meetings.

David O'Connell

Barandon Walk

Rueben

My name is Reuben and I live in Clarendon Walk. I have lived on Lancaster West for many years.

I am passionate about our estate, and I would like to help shape our future. It is really important to me that the residents are listened to and have a clear voice to represent them.

I am nominating myself as I feel I have the time and the skills to help the RA in the coming year to really engage and deliver what the residents want. I am well known locally and have been fighting for our residents over many years.

Moving forward I want to ensure that RBKC are held accountable particularly in their promise of a refurbished estate (including ongoing repairs, heating issues etc).

We the residents of Lancaster West deserve to live in safe , healthy homes and I am committed to seeing this through.

Many thanks.

Reuben

Maria

I would be honoured to nominate myself as a committee member of the Lancaster West Estate Resident Association.

Please allow me to introduce myself. My name is Maria Escudero-Barbaza and a resident of 19 Upper Clarendon Walk for the last 20 years. I am currently an incumbent elected committee member and would like to request your vote once again to be re-elected to our Lancaster West Estate Resident Association. This would allow me to continue helping in supporting our residents as a grassroots organizer and facilitate guidance as a leader in our community by shaping the future of our Estate through mutual cooperation between landlord/tenant relationship.

The skills that I have developed during my 19 years as an active collaborating committee member of the Estate Management Board (EMB), Tenant Management Organization (TMO) and the actual Lancaster West Estate Resident Association were unselfishly shared with the residents. These primarily concerned coordination, undivided assistance and attention and extending vital transparent information with mutual respect and careful attitudes towards their needs.

Robert



My name is Robert Halbert-Pereno of Morland Hs. A resident since 1996. Over the years I have Volunteered as a Gardener around the estate & attended many Resident association meetings. I have previously run a Yoga Group in the Community Centre.

Currently, I am improving areas of greenery by adding bulbs for the Summer, such as Tulips and Iris. I am nominating myself so to ensure our environment including green issues is high on the agenda. I want residents to get involved in Gardening for its health benefits. We all need to spend more time outside. I have started doing some gardening with some schools and am DBS checked.

Recently I successfully put in a bid with The Social Fund for £5000 for a Project I have set up: A PLANT FOR EVERY HOME. I want to donate a Plant to every home on the estate, to connect with them as to the importance of having Plants in our home to help with pollution. Plants, flowers, trees, are the lungs of London.

There will be two open days where the residents can come and collect their plants, or I can come to them. Plants equal oxygen. Plants are beautiful.

I have always been passionate about everything I do and always loved this Estate. I want to help wherever I can. I am an optimist.

I meet residents daily and I really want to ensure there is a wide and varied group of individuals representing our estate.

Yours sincerely Robert.

Abbas



My name is Abbas Dadou, I have lived on Lancaster West Estate (Clarendon Walk) for 8 years. I really like the Estate, the community and its residents who are all like a family to me, (without exception).

Due to my involvement with LWRA, I have learnt a lot and probably the biggest lesson for me is that we together in Lanc West form a community family who ultimately have one common goal. Better living standards for all, including:

1. To have decent housing.
2. Having a new reliable district heating system
3. Ensure regular maintenance and repair so that all homes are comfortable to live in.
4. To ensure all residents benefit equally and fairly from the refurbishment that we all deserve.
5. To have a pleasant outdoor environment that meets resident needs' including areas to socialise, and green initiatives that address pollution.
6. To make sure our voices are not only heard but also our input and requests are implemented.
7. To build a positive and energetic environment that addresses residents' concerns and our shared traumatic history.
8. To build an estate that we can be proud of and are happy to live in and above all we feel safe in our own homes.

To achieve all the above and more requires facing many challenges, which we can overcome if we move forward together as one community.

In comparison to many residents who have lived on this estate from day one and beyond I still feel I am new, I have heard the history directly from residents and have watched documentaries on how this estate used to be and I am determined that we again return to that feeling and sense of a united caring community.

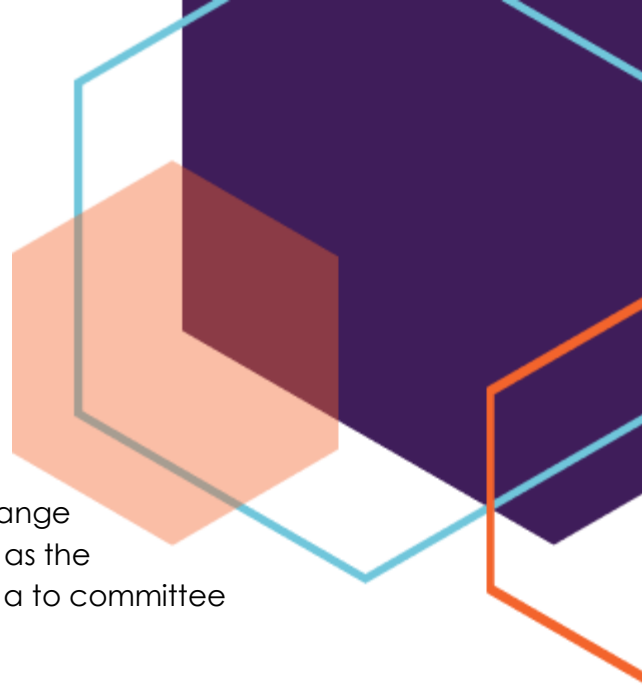
It was always the community who stood up against racism, poverty and discrimination and out of that came Notting Hill Carnival, Shelter, better social housing, Notting Hill Trust and the North Kensington Law Centre. This community never has never stepped back, they have always fought hard for their rights. Changes were made and history was written.

We should follow the same path. This estate has been subject to 40 years of neglect, under resourcing and has been under maintained in order to make it viable for a regeneration programme in order to demographically change the makeup of our estate. It has been my honour to serve as the Chair during this past year and I hope to be re-elected as a to committee member in order to continue to help rebuild our estate.

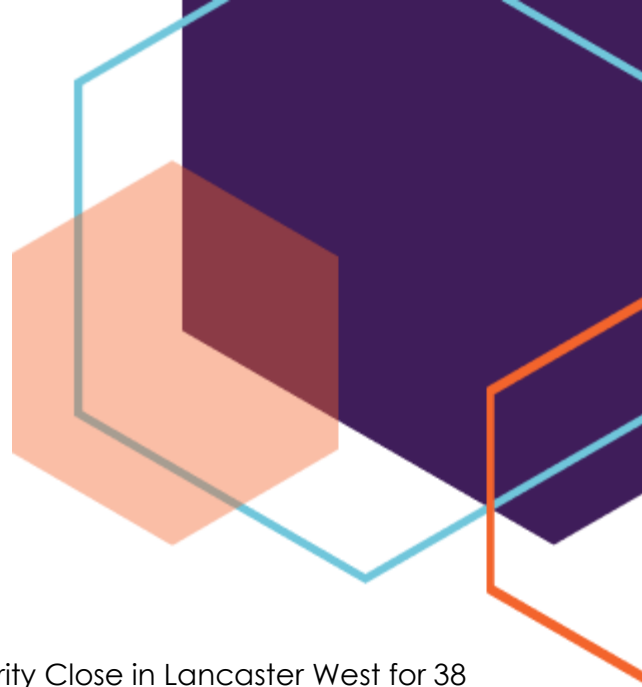
Our estate has been through 4 major re-constructions within the last 7 years, where residents had to put up with major disruption and pollutants. We have all witnessed the most horrific atrocity during the peace-time history of this nation. All this has happened under the watch of people who had duty of care towards us. We have been through a lot and face so much more in the coming years, but we continue to fight for Lancaster West and every resident on our estate.

Kind regards

Abbas



David



My name is David Ward. I've been a proud resident of Verity Close in Lancaster West for 38 years –my whole life. I was born here and grew up here so I care deeply about what happens on the Estate and its community. During the past year I have been privileged to serve on the committee as the Vice Chair, and am proud to have been part of many of the achievements; including being part of the team that helped to almost double the amount of money for the refurbishment project. This means that we can do even more to improve our homes.

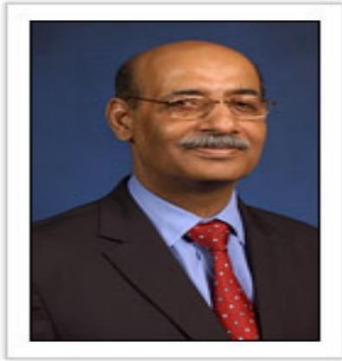
Lancaster West is a great place to live and has an amazing community. I am nominating myself again to be on this year's committee because I want to continue the great work that's been started in the last 12 months. I know there is more that needs to be done:

- Continuing the fight for our neighbours who have been in "Temporary" Accommodation for an unacceptable amount of time, and to improve the condition in which they are living.
- To continue lobbying the Council and Government for more funding for the Refurbishment, so we can improve our homes even more.
- To work close with, and scrutinise, the W11 Neighbourhood team and RBKC to ensure that the funds aren't squandered, and to ensure that residents get the refurbishment that they want and deserve.
- To help support resident led activities in our two community centres.

Having worked for two large corporations most of my professional life, I have gained the skills necessary to be part of the committee: Working as part of a team, prioritization, organisation, communicated with people at all different levels, keen attention to detail – ensuring that stuff gets done.

I hope that you will vote for me and allow me to continue helping and supporting our wonderful community.

Mushtaq



My name is Mushtaq Lasharie of Testerton Walk, I currently serve as the Chairman Third World Solidarity.

Position and Organisation

1. **Elected Councillor** Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea 1992 - 2010
2. **Deputy Mayor Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea** 2003 - 2004
3. **Founder of Third World Solidarity**- successfully running for 33 years.
Aims and Objectives
 - Promote peace, justice, tolerance, Work towards democracy,
 - Community cohesion and Promote interfaith.
4. **Jhok Aid**, Charity- Third World Solidarity Project.
 - Educate and look after the welfare of disabled, handicapped and orphaned children in villages of Pakistan.
5. **Trustee St. Clements Community Project**, (1983- 2016) UK charity
 - Promote education for disillusioned children,
 - Promote literacy amongst the asylum seekers and migrants,
 - Promote and help children from under privileged background to seek positions in Universities throughout Britain.
6. **Director** North Kensington Opportunity Centre, (2000 – 2010) UK charity.
Aims and Objectives
 - Train, Educate and advice unemployed members of the community in North Kensington.
7. Conferred as Honorary Alderman by the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea on 19/01/2011
8. Awarded Commander of the Order of the Most Excellent British Empire (CBE) by Her Majesty The Queen on 10/06/2016

Miles

I have lived in Testerton Walk on Lancaster West Estate since 1993. I am an artist designer who lives and works here. Like many residents I struggled to get the TMO to carry out the most basic repairs and maintenance over many years.

I care about the Estate and was trying to raise awareness at the RA in the year before the fire of the terrible condition of the block entrances and signage on the Estate, both of which have still not been resolved nearly four years later.

Since the fire there have been many changes, but it is important that we residents seize the opportunity to have the Council deliver on its promise to make Lancaster West a "model for social housing in the 21st Century".

In my professional work I have led projects in partnership with Highways Agency, TfL London Underground, Network Rail, various architect practices. I have experience in art and design, in planning and delivering community-led projects and working with diverse partner organisations on large scale projects.

As such I believe I may have some of the necessary skills to help guide the upcoming improvement works on the Estate for the benefit of residents within the LWRA.

Regards

Miles Watson