

## **INTRODUCTION OF CONTRACT CLEANING TO BLOCK OF FLATS IN MACKWORTH.**

Report of the Director of Derby Homes

### **SUMMARY OF REPORT**

- 1.1 At its meeting on 12 June 2003 the Local Board requested that consultation be carried out with residents living in blocks of flats in Mackworth to gather their views regarding the introduction of contract cleaning.
- 1.2 Consultation with residents has now been completed and this report gives appropriate details and analysis of the outcome.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 The Local Board is requested to recommend to the Derby Homes Board the contract cleaning of the following blocks:  
  
Knightsbridge: Nos 6 – 16 + 18 – 28 + 54 – 64.  
Aldwych: Nos 2 – 12 + 14 – 24 + 26 – 36 + 38 – 48.  
Finchley Avenue: Nos 66 – 76.
- 2.2 The Local Board is also requested to note that flats at Drayton Avenue cannot be included in the contract cleaning scheme because there are only two flats in each block.

### **MATTER FOR CONSIDERATION**

- 3.1 Communal areas in some blocks of flats have suffered from considerable neglect, which resulted in significant increase in the number of complaints received at the Mackworth local housing office.
- 3.2 It is a condition of tenancy for both tenants and leaseholders to keep the communal areas clean and tidy. Due to a combination of factors such as staff time, lack of evidence and ineffective legal remedies it is often difficult to enforce this condition of tenancy, which further compounds the problem.
- 3.3 Gradually deteriorating communal areas have now started to impact upon the popularity of these flats among prospective tenants to the point that these are proving difficult to let despite the fact that Mackworth is a very popular area.

- 3.4 The condition of some communal areas have reached the point where professional cleaning is a must to reverse the situation because cleaning of these areas is beyond the scope of an average person / household.
- 3.5 It is in our interest to take further steps to ensure that communal areas are kept clean and tidy at all times. This will hopefully improve the popularity of these flats, which in turn will help to speed up their allocation with minimum rent loss.
- 3.6 The existing contract cleaning specification is attached to this report at Appendix A. If the Local Board agreed to introduce contract cleaning to flats in Mackworth, then it is proposed to adopt the specification.

## **CONSULTATION IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 During week commencing 23 June 2003 a letter (Appendix B) was sent to residents of all blocks of flats in Mackworth highlighting the issues relating to the communal areas and invited them to vote on their preferred option. They were given two weeks to respond.
- 4.2 At the end of two-week period, it was noted that the response rate was low. As a result personal visits and telephone contact were made, during week commencing 21 July 2003, to non-respondents to offer them further opportunity to express their views.
- 4.3 I am satisfied that the consultation has been carried out appropriately and all efforts have been made to seek the views of as many residents as possible. The results of the consultation are given in Appendix C.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The cost of contract cleaning per block of six flats is £10 for a fortnightly clean. This means £0.83p per week rent increase for each tenant or leaseholder.
- 5.2 All tenants and leaseholders in receipt of housing benefits would be entitled to claim additional housing benefits to cover the increase in their rent. This would be proportionate to their existing housing benefit entitlements.

## **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 Section 105 of the Housing Act 1985 states that we must consult with our tenants and leaseholders on any changes in management or maintenance of their dwellings.
- 6.2 Introduction of contract cleaning in flats will be a local condition of tenancy and Section 102 of the Housing Act 1985 requires us to serve rent variation notices giving 28 days before implementing any changes.

## **PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

7. None arising from this report.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

8. Residents will directly benefit from clean and better communal areas and it would also resolve long-standing feud among some residents.

## **EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

9. All residents will equally benefit.

### **Contact Officer**

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