

Deputation by Maitland Park Hall Tenants & Residents Association

Good Evening Council Members, I, Kirsteen McDonagh, DMC for Maitland Park TRA, come before you today to bring to your attention Maitland Park Estate Community Hall.

It would be an understatement to tell you how difficult it has been for our committee to operate without a Community Hall, there was an existing hall which was knocked down due to the council rebuilding new homes in the area; with the promise that a new hall would be built on the same land and once the works were complete, this would be given to the TRA, we are a large estate with 500 homes, and our TRA have been unable to provide any activities for our community. There have been many residents who have questioned why we are not using the hall, this has proved very difficult to answer.

Both the Chair and the Secretary have had a meeting with members of the Council (Steve Downes, 21st March 2024) to discuss the hall, they were told that Camden was hoping to grant access, but the council were still looking for a Commercial Operator or possibly a Community Operator, which currently they still have not found. We were told that when they do give us access it would be for Committee Meetings, then possibly to have Tenant & Resident Meetings, but not to hire out or to use the hall in the capacity that it was originally built for.

We are a completely new TRA and have had to build our team from the ground up, there has not been a TRA in this community for over 4 years, it has not been easy working out of our homes and communicating through a WhatsApp group. We have managed to put together a Community Event, which is taking place on 10th August 2024, this is the first and only event that we have been able to provide for our tenants and residents, due to it being summer time so it is being held outside on the estate grounds. I know that our committee members are concerned with our residents losing all faith in us, and what we are trying to achieve here within our community.

We care very deeply about our estate and the people that live here, we are very lucky to have such a rich and diverse community on Maitland Park, sadly due to all the years that we have not had a TRA, we have lost community spirit, we are fighting to implement change on this estate, to gain the trust of our tenants and residents, we want this to be a safe space for the children that live here to grow up in, for the environment to be a place where children can thrive, to bridge a gap between the elderly and the young, as in so many communities it can sometimes feel unsafe for a lot of the older generation. There are so many areas in London that are not considered safe spaces, and we are trying to create a community, where we can bring everyone together. We strongly believe this can be done, we have all worked tirelessly, given many hours out of our lives to do as much as we possibly can, sadly there is nothing tangible that our tenants and residents can see. We are so close to September now and have our AGM nearly upon us, to attend that and still not have a community hall, will be so very hard to explain to our members why after a year, we are in exactly the same position that we were when first started.

Thank you.