

WHO REPRESENTS CRESSINGHAM?

We, the undersigned residents of Cressingham Gardens, demand that the current Resident Engagement Panel (REP) be disbanded, then reformed as a democratically-elected body. Residents on the REP should be elected by the community) **via** the Tenants and Residents Association (TRA) at a SGM (Special General Meeting).”

DEMANDS

- The current REP to be immediately disbanded, and a new REP formed by individuals democratically elected from the estate via a Special General Meeting (SGM). Councillors and officers co-opted as needed.
- A new and **independent** REP chair with the position to be advertised and appointment confirmed via a community vote, as above.
- The Independent Resident Advisor role to be immediately reviewed, and a 6-monthly rolling review instigated.
- Any terms of reference/code of conduct to be agreed upon by Cressingham Gardens residents.

CONTEXT

In 2012 residents were first consulted about the regeneration of Cressingham Gardens. 2 years later, Lambeth officers decided that 4 residents should be elected to a “project team” so that resident questions could be collected and asked by the team members. These 4 members were **democratically elected** at a TRA annual General Meeting (AGM).

In 2015 council officers decided on a new group called the Resident Engagement Panel (REP) to replace the “project team”. This current group is **unelected**. The TRA wrote a letter of complaint in late 2015 about this, which has been ignored by council officers.

A new “Terms of Reference” document has been circulated this month. It is a highly flawed document, including errors of fact and law that infringe on individual legal rights. The council is compelling current and new members to sign up to it, regardless of those errors.

For example, the terms state as an objective “To empower residents to have their say at every step of the process”. However residents are of the view that having a politician chairing the panel stifles this aim as they cannot be considered a neutral party.

In addition, representatives will be prevented from doing their job of accurately informing residents how “their say” has been had. This is because the code states that attendees **MUST NOT** “make...recordings...without the consent of all present” (so any member can veto any recording). In the absence of a recording, the REP is dependent on non-verbatim and potentially inaccurate minuting that may not contain the information residents require. This condition is also in conflict with the right (Equality Act 2010) of people with cognitive/sensory impairments to expect “reasonable adjustments” such as making recordings, and also the provisions of the Localism Act 2011 that allow recordings of ANY public meeting.