

**WOODBERRY DOWN COMMUNITY ORGANISATION
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**Minutes
Tuesday 25th November 2025
7 pm Zoom Meeting**

Attendance

Adrian Essex, Omar Villalba, Oonagh Gormley, Gita Sootarsing

Visitors included

Roda Hassan

Section 0 - Introduction

0.1 Welcome / Apologies for absence

Leonora Williams, Ameera Hassan, Hilary Britton, Gloria Obilana

Section 1

0. Minutes of meeting 11th November 2025:

0.1 The minutes were checked for accuracy and accepted.

1. Matters Arising / Action Tracker:

- 1.1. Roda confirmed that all attendees for the upcoming Christmas dinner have been finalised.
- 1.2. Adrian highlighted that he sent the information regarding the £500 funding application for the Friends of Woodberry Down, however they expressed that it was too much paperwork and trouble to complete the application.
- 1.3. The group also discussed the cycling initiative "Pedal Power," which Adrian noted that Radhika from NHG had promoted to residents.
- 1.4. Oonagh raised concerns about the definition of cyclical maintenance, emphasising the need for clear distinctions between routine repairs and planned capital replacements for major items, which she believes should already be scheduled and listed. Omar also noted that there is a separate category for planned preventative maintenance.

ACTION: Adrian asked Oonagh to seek further clarification from NHG on the definition of cyclical maintenance and what works it includes.

- 1.5. Roda reported that the NHG presentation from the Social & Economic team has been moved to the December Board meeting.
- 1.6. Adrian updated on the NHG's progress, referring to the note he circulated following his meeting with Jada. He noted that she will issue a revised version

of the grid, which will be included in NHG's report to the WDCO Board and will contain more detailed timelines.

- 1.7. Adrian also confirmed that the split household email has been sent to Cllr Nicholson for review, and a formal response is awaited.

ACTION: Roda to send the email addresses of the RA representatives who attended the Board and provided their details.

ACTION: Oonagh to arrange a meeting with the RA representatives to prepare for the upcoming meeting with NHG.

- 1.8. Oonagh is taking responsibility for contacting informal RAs and arranging a meeting at Skyline.
- 1.9. Adrian noted that high level service charge figures will be prepared by Jada for January.
- 1.10. Omar raised concerns about the delayed installation of CCTV in the social blocks, which is now two months behind schedule.
- 1.11. Omar also suggested, at the previous meeting, conducting site walkabouts of different phases to gain a better understanding of estate issues, proposing to begin with Phase 8.
- 1.12. The Executive members discussed the request for a copy of the PDA and Hackney's response, with Roda offering to share the response with the Board. Omar suggested using ChatGPT to analyse past Board minutes to identify key issues and to generate questions to ask regarding the PDA. Gita raised concerns about confidentiality and the appropriateness of uploading information into ChatGPT.

ACTION: Omar to input the minutes into ChatGPT and report back with AI-generated questions.

Major Topics

2.1. **Temporary Accommodation (TA):** Omar reported on the update from Cllr Etti, he noting that all 62 Woodberry Down TA residents were successfully contacted, and the number affected by increased rent charges has now reduced to 39. Of these, A total of 23 households have received assistance through the Temporary Accommodation Charges Support Fund, with £100,807.13 provided to Woodberry Down residents to date.

2.2. **Winterfest Chair speech:** The group discussed the content and delivery of a speech for Winterfest, with Adrian confirming it would be around 2 minutes long.

2.3. **Frequency of Board Meetings:** The Executive Committee discussed the frequency of Board meetings. Gita suggested moving to quarterly meetings to improve attendance and overall effectiveness, while Omar argued in favour of retaining monthly meetings to maintain accountability. The discussion also highlighted the need to clarify what constitutes a WDCO issue and the importance of partners providing regular progress updates.

2.4. Roda cautioned that moving from monthly to quarterly meetings could be difficult to reverse if the change proved unsuccessful. The group agreed that, rather than focusing solely on attendance, efforts should be made to strengthen Board

engagement by identifying members who wish to contribute but may feel unsure about their role and how to participate effectively.

2.5. Adrian and Omar emphasised the need for greater accountability from partners particularly NHG and Hackney and suggested adopting stronger project management practices, including a more comprehensive dashboard with key dates. Adrian noted that Roda has been working on creating a Board dashboard.

2.6. The Executive noted ongoing challenges with tracking progress and key dates across reports and projects. Adrian proposed reviewing the Hackney report to extract and consolidate important deadlines and tasks. The team agreed that although written updates provided before Board meetings have improved, there may be a need to consider establishing a part-time Project Management Office function to manage workstreams and timelines more effectively. The Executive Committee suggest that this could be factored into next year's WDCO budget.

2.7. Roda noted that this support function is the responsibility of the ITLA, and that Hackney would be unlikely to fund a role already covered by the ITLA's remit. Adrian added that many Boards and organisations struggle to attract volunteers unless roles are remunerated.

2.8. Adrian also highlighted recent improvements, including new documents and tools created by the ITLA and the Chair such as consistent action chasing, inclusion of action updates within the minutes, the action tracker on the website, and the new dashboard concept currently being explored. He noted that WDCO is developing positively and will continue to improve. Adrian will review his previous notes to Hermione regarding ITLA procurement and the brief.

ACTION: Adrian to review previous notes to Hermione regarding the ITLA procurement and brief, and provide an update.

2.9. **What is and what is not a WDCO issue:** Adrian asked whether the various issues being raised by email, such as the parking matter, should be considered WDCO issues or handled outside the Board. Oonagh noted that she feels the Executive is having to deal with many matters that should instead be addressed by the Resident Associations. The Executive discussed challenges faced by Resident Associations (RAs) in their interactions with NHG. Omar highlighted the importance of WDCO's leverage in getting issues resolved, while Oonagh expressed frustration with the ongoing difficulties in dealing with NHG. It was agreed to arrange a meeting with NHG to discuss the RA proposals and address persistent concerns. The group also recognised the need for a clear escalation process for RAs experiencing difficulties with NHG.

2.10. Omar noted that he is only able to escalate issues and make progress when he has the necessary leverage. He acknowledged that he can address some of these matters without involving all Executive members, provided he can utilise WDCO's position to apply influence effectively.

2.11. The team agreed to arrange a meeting with NHG to discuss RA proposals and address ongoing issues. They also identified the need for a clear escalation process for RAs facing difficulties with NHG. Adrian mentioned that Oonagh would arrange a meeting with residents to discuss RA proposals.

2.12. **WDCO Office lease:** Adrian explained that WDCO is currently using the office space on Seven Sisters Road (Unit 2c Rowan). The previous lease has expired, and Hackney has raised concerns that WDCO could potentially establish squatter's rights if it continues to occupy the space without a formal agreement. When WDCO first took on the office seven years ago, William and Geoff signed the lease on behalf of the organisation.

2.13. Hackney has now provided a draft lease and initially suggested that Adrian should sign it. However, he was advised that doing so could expose all Board members to personal liability should anything go wrong. Adrian therefore discussed alternative options with Hackney, including the possibility of entering into a licence agreement instead of a lease, which Hackney had agreed to explore.

2.14. Hackney have since suggested that WDCO consider becoming an incorporated organisation, which would limit personal liability for Board members and make the lease arrangement more straightforward.

2.15. Adrian noted that while incorporation is a significant and potentially positive step, it represents a major constitutional change. It cannot be rushed to meet a lease deadline. Any decision must be properly considered, fully consulted on, and agreed by WDCO members. Discussions with Hackney are ongoing regarding the office, and will continue.

2.16. **Woodberry bloc:** Gita expressed frustration about the lack of progress and communication, particularly regarding marketing materials that did not align with the development's nature-focused selling points. She noted that she had requested to view the units before promoting them, in order to better understand the available spaces, but has not received any response.

2.17. **AOB:** The group agreed to prioritise business support issues, blog topics, and social media strategy for the next meeting.