



# Southwark Group of Tenants Organisations

Bells Gardens Community Centre,  
19 Buller Close, London,

Campaigning for Housing Rights and Council Homes

SE15 6UJ

## Minutes of SGTO Group Meeting Held on Wednesday 28th July 2021, by Online ZOOM

**Staff:** Amanda Carey, Ahmed Kabba, Silvia Rahim, Rita Edmond and Jack Lewis

**Present: 27**

### **Welcome and Introductions:**

Cris welcomed and thanked everyone for their support/kind messages, whilst attending to Ian's funeral.

Jack Lewis was introduced as the new Campaign & Research Officer for SGTO.

### **Guest speakers:**

**Ian Brinley** - Community Premises Officer for Southwark Council, manages the TRAs in dealing with compliance, covid and getting halls up to a suitable standard and the general day to day running.

**Jack Gooding** - Southwark Public Health (new since September) working on covid response, dealing with schools, businesses, any kind of venue or settings, and Service Manager for the local contact tracing services for the NHS.

### **Halls reopening: – and the expectation of TRAs**

**Jack Gooding** gave a presentation which covered statistics and policies relating to Covid.

*(SGTO has circulated this presentation to members, but can send again upon request)*

Figures stated that Covid cases have decreased across the borough, although it is still high compared to London as a whole. Decrease is believed to be due to vaccinations, despite being out of lockdown and people already haven had the virus. However, many cases are in the lower age range, due to being not vaccinated and social activity.

**19<sup>th</sup> July** – all social distancing measures removed, rules of 6, different households all removed.

BUT, if anyone tests positive for Covid or identified as being in close contact with those, you have a legal obligation to self-isolate for 10 days.

**16<sup>th</sup> August** – planned by Government regardless, those 'fully vaccinated' exempt from self-isolating, counts 14 days after 2<sup>nd</sup> dose

Businesses, workplaces or venues do not have to implement any social distancing rules for workers, customers and not instructing people to work from home, if they can. However, employers must promote health & safety requirements, risk assessments and reasonable steps to manage risks.

Continue to display QR code, not a legal requirement, but helpful

If displaying any Covid symptoms, people should refrain from participating in any event, even if mild symptoms: High temperature, new or persistent cough, loss of or change in taste or smell.

**Ian Brinley** added that regulations have been released at short notice from the Government in terms of rules, so are having to second-guess what is going to be proposed

**Covid hasn't gone away, so main points are:**

- To be sensible, stay safe, take it slowly
- Cleaning regime which is recorded
  - one way system
  - ventilation
  - maintain social distancing
  - sanitisation
  - does event need to be indoors if open space available
  - signage
  - reduce time of events to 9pm
  - reduce numbers for capacity (usual amount divided by 3)
  - and do not allow alcohol, QR code.

People feel apprehensive about going into a group environment, so it will be pleasurable for everyone if not overcrowded.

Council risk assessment is being reduced from 21 pages to 6, this is being worked on at present and will be made available once done, along with the checklist for everyone to follow.

The plan is to have all compliance checks completed over the next two weeks, to make all premises safe to use.

Ensure that any hand sanitiser is stored securely in a safe place as this is highly flammable.

**Q. Bouncy Castles & other hired items** – what are the rulings on allowing and who is responsible?

Previously down to supplier to supply public liability insurance, which would not have covered virus.

**A.** When you hire your hall, you are hiring the space that is safe and that is what the hirer is signing for. If there is a third party involved, they must provide a risk assessment and therefore the duty of care is on the provider and a responsible person should be present at all times, (the hirer, or someone they nominate). The hirer must take responsibility for any injuries etc. if the company do not provide staff to cover event.

It could be argued either way, that if something happens, virus is spread, it could be down to the hirer or the person hiring. This means that you could be held responsible or not, depending on legal activity, as to who the ownness falls upon, be that if someone contracts Covid or another injury during an event. To mitigate this, you would need to show this in your hire agreement contract.

Basically, it is down to the hall/community centre and the hirer as to how much risk they are willing to accept in terms of a hire agreement and whether they wish to abandon certain activities for the immediate future; but this is down to committee choice as to what they want to and not accept.

If you deem it to be a risk, then you can decline, as this is a local issue and not governed by government guidelines, and you have every right to enforce anything necessary in your particular area/environment.

## Liability

QR code, sanitise stations, etc.

Q. Someone contracts virus = where do we stand:

A. You are not liable, providing you have made hirer aware that ownness falls on them and not yourself.

Any third-party organisation you are hiring from will have their own public liability insurance

**QR codes** – it is ideal to register your location for the QR code, who will then send a unique code and poster that can be printed and made available for monitoring.

It is not compulsory, but certainly helps the NHS in observing where areas are proficient and how it spreads.

Public Health Southwark : How to create a QR code: <https://www.gov.uk/create-coronavirus-qr-poster>

Have poster on wall stating this is a Covid secure premises, pledge is to clean regularly, capacity reduced, regular update meetings to ensure premises are safe.

## Events: -

Q. staff have to be there for duration and with them being volunteers, who does it fall upon when they are simply opening and closing for events to take place?

A. There needs to be a standard hire agreement that covers all this and to work with SGTO in compiling, so everyone knows what is and isn't accepted.

This is an ideal opportunity to start from scratch and get policies and procedures in place across the borough.

Proposed **9pm curfew**, so no music or interruption to surrounding neighbours., **no alcohol**, as directed by council.

A simpler and easier generic hire form is being produced and will be made available once completed

Q. Capacity: how many can we have

A. You can judge from original capacity and if you are going to use alternative exit to make it one way, make that known to hirer, as it is their responsibility (original capacity divided by 3 gives new recommended capacity)

## Ventilation & Supervision/Observation:

Q. By having to open doors and windows for ventilation, that will impact on the neighbouring environment

A. That is why we are proposing a time limit of 9pm, so it doesn't affect the neighbouring properties.

Q. How can doors be open when fire doors, as that just reduces one problem and causes another.

A. As long as they are fire exit doors and not fire doors, Fire doors must remain closed

Q. If the centre is not manned for the duration of an event, who is responsible

A. This is a situation that needs to be discussed further, perhaps with SGTO to make things clear to hirers

The committee for each venue can instigate their own rules, in that they can enforce entry to those double jabbed, can provide proof of a negative test or insist on face coverings. The only issue is trying to police it, as some will challenge and who is going to argue the point. The majority of people will comply, as it has been the way of life for the past 18 months, but there will always be the odd one, who pushes the boundaries.

*Make sure that your rules are clear and concise so they are easy for people to understand and follow.*

## **Previous questions sent for answers:**

Throughout Covid-19 Tenant and Resident Associations have responded.

They always do when crisis hits.

We outline what TRAs expect from Southwark Council for us to reopen our halls to enable TRAs to continue providing much needed services to our community.

1. **There should be a check list for halls and an action plan** created by Southwark Council so TRAs can comply and keep people safe. This check list should be followed by all TRAs so we are all operating equally.  
These checks should be carried out by Southwark Council and the burden should not be on TRAs. This should be available to TRAs before we are expected to open so we do not get ready and then told we cannot open; we need to know what the criteria is first.  
Checks should go on record.  
*This is being completed and will be made available*
2. **The above check list should be on Southwark Council's website** and shared with SGTO to put on their website so people have a point of reference. TRAs should also receive the information directly.  
*As soon as it is published, it will be put on website*
3. **Southwark Council should create a dedicated webpage on its website for TRAs** the webpage should include information relating to halls and Covid-19 and include information on the impact of insurance and halls bills.  
*There is a dedicated webpage for TRA's, but it needs updating*
4. **Southwark Council should create template risk assessments** and include who people can raise questions with at the council and direct contact details – email and telephone number for those not online  
*This is being produced and will be made available from a 21-page document to 6 pages soon*
5. **A timeline of how quickly the council can come and inspect our halls**  
When halls were being used as polling stations the turnaround was very quick to get them inspected and deep cleaned. We expect the same treatment and a clear timeline.  
*The council officers are working tirelessly on producing guidelines and forms that everyone can use. Once completed, this will be made available to all through various networks. Complete application and risk assessment, send in and Ian will respond as soon as he can.*
6. **Some TRAs would be interested in phased openings**  
TRAs may be interested in phased openings meaning that long term groups can return to halls first and one-off bookings can start at a later date. Would the council work with TRAs who wish to take this approach?  
*It is up to the hall committee how they want to phase bookings, there is no defined time, it is down to what makes them comfortable and how they want to arrange bookings, best to take things slow*
7. **Financial support, advice on deep-cleaning, HR support /training with risk assessments; free /bulk purchase of PPE resources; guidance on hall lettings to private/community, what insurance should be in place, community info on what should happen if someone using the halls becomes COVID positive.**  
*Can look at this in around 3 months to see the state of play with TRA's and what assistance they may need*
8. **Step-by-step guide on what we need to do and when** -A timeline of actions  
*This is being updated and will be forwarded when complete – LBS*

**9. What safeguarding information/guidance is available for members with regards to reopening of TRA halls.**

Information is provided in answers above, anything unsure, please let us know so we can source answers for you

**10. Is there a general information on any cautionary measures the council will be offering TRAs to get the halls reopened?**

Question answered above, but please inform if you have further concerns.

**11. People are generally concerned about going back to normal routine.**

It is appreciated that people are feeling concerned, so each and every hall/community centre can operate their own regime in terms of allowing events back into the premises, all is individual and how quick or slow they want to make it.

## **Any Other Business**

### **SGTO AGM:**

We are planning to hold our AGM in September, so will be looking to receive nominations for Board Members. Information will be circulated in due course.

### **TRA's**

It has been a tough time, over the last 18 months, so we would like TRA's who are struggling to contact us and let us know what issues they have and to see if there is anything that we can do to assist in getting things back up and running.

### **Questions From Nick:**

**1. Estate Services Satisfaction** - Scrutiny Committee discussed estate cleaning in October. They completely missed the fact that Southwark have satisfaction with estate services listed as a KPI in the cleaning SLA. Yet they have no survey in place to collect this information. I've raised this with Gavin Edwards and no response. Cris is aware of this and said she's had a conversation with Gavin but not heard anything.

This is the issue: Southwark claim that they use feedback from residents to monitor performance on estate cleaning and it's published as a KPI in the SLA. This is simply un-true because they do not carry out any feedback surveys and have no way of reporting feedback from residents.

Can SGTO put some pressure on the council to do what they already claim to be doing?

Cris had sent concerns raised by Nick to Gavin, where Nick confirmed that he has still not received a response.

**ACTION:** Cris to phone Gavin to remind him that he was given the email from Nick and that a response is required.

**ACTION:** Nick to compile a letter highlighting issues and send to Cris to forward onto the Council.

**2. Yes to Fair Redevelopment group and invite to join the mailing list.** A month ago, I sent an email with the link for people to register if they are interested in the group to [info@sgto.org.uk](mailto:info@sgto.org.uk). My understanding is that SGTO could use their TRA contact list to distribute the link. Heard nothing since then. Is this going to happen?

It was agreed that the group could email SGTO details for their next meeting, and SGTO would circulate that information to their membership.

**Meeting Closed at 9pm**