

Lewisham Homes Staff:

Jon Kanareck (JK) – Director of Resident Services
 Emma Mills (EM) - Head of Home Ownership & Independent Living
 Glenda Omogbai (GO) - Service Charge & Sales Manager
 Lynn Seymour - Consultation Team Manager
 Aga Szpurek (AS) – PA to Directors

Apologies: Mark Newstead (MN) – Director of Property Services & Safety

Guests:

22 leaseholders attended the meeting
 Lynda Hance TPAS

Chair:

Alan Wake (AW), Independent

1	
1	Welcome and Introductions
1.1	AW opened the meeting at 18:30 and welcomed everyone.
2	
	Minutes and Summary from last meeting
2.1	AW advised the group about a fairly extensive action log from previous meetings which will now be closed at this stage as it has become too unwieldy. He added there are three main strands in this action log that will have to remain there. These issues are;
2.2	• The actual disparity between the quality of the work performed in terms of leaseholders' views and what Lewisham Homes provides, as well as the specification of the work to be performed.
2.3	• General Communication
2.4	• Service Charges and transparency
2.5	AW assured the group the action log is being monitored on an ongoing basis.
2.6	AW said a target date of January 21 has been set to clear everything off from the closed action log. After that, a new, more effective action log will be created where more strategic issues will be added. The new action log will also be monitored on an ongoing basis via the Leaseholders' Forum.
2.7	A leaseholder questioned if a date had been set for the publication of long-term capital plans and other major renovations. If so, this could be added as an item on the agenda for the next meeting.
2.8	AW suggested it would be a good idea to have someone to look after the chat and write down comments to add any new issues that arise in the chat to the new action log.
2.9	A leaseholder raised an issue of not receiving minutes of previous meetings as well as other correspondence from Lewisham Homes. Emails from LH were also found in the spam folder. He suggested this could be due to a technical issue that might be related to the service provider LH uses to send the emails.
2.10	Action: EM to check with IT department if there is anything they can do to stop this from going to leaseholders' spam inbox.

2.11	A leaseholder questioned if there were any updates regarding the refund on cleaning services.
2.12	AW advised that a refund issue has been added to the action log, but an update is not yet available.
2.13	Action: AW to check for any updates regarding the refund.
3	Lynda Hance – Tenant Participation Advisory Service(TPAS) - feedback
3.1	Lynda presented a report of her observations from the last meeting. The presentation will also be made available to leaseholders along with the minutes.
3.2	Lynda advised the group on TPAS, which supports and promotes tenant engagement and empowerment across England. She trains people in effective meetings and their effective conduct. Lynda was asked by Lewisham Homes to review the forum, how it is run, whether it adds any value to the experience, and whether it actually helps.
3.3	Lynda advised the report contains three general and 25 very detailed observations. Lynda suggested recording meetings would be a good option for more leaseholders to see them, and a pre-meeting or surgery before the forum could also be arranged to address specific issues.
3.4	Other suggestions from Lynda are: minutes to be sent in two weeks, there should be more focused on the agenda, the agenda should contain fewer topics to allow for more interactive discussion to improve the structure of the meeting, LH should respond to the issues raised in the Forum, an alternative software for a larger group meetings should be considered. Also the agenda, speakers and timings to be agreed by the Chair.
3.5	Lynda added there could be a potential conflict between the role of an advocate and the role of the Chair, this should be reviewed.
3.6	Leaseholders thanked Linda for the presentation. They found it very motivating and informative and would like the report to be added to the minutes.
3.7	A leaseholder proposed a portal where leaseholders could log in at a later date and view minutes, the agenda and newsletter. Action points can also be added to the portal to see if they have been completed or to check their progress.
3.8	EM advised the group all documents regarding Leaseholders' Forum, such as minutes, agenda or newsletter can be found on Lewisham Homes website.
3.9	https://www.lewishamhomes.org.uk/your-home/leaseholders/leasehold-forum/
3.10	EM added that the action log would also be added to the website as well as Lynda's report.
3.11	A leaseholder questioned who sets the agenda and how it is set.
3.12	AW advised the agenda is being set by himself (Chair) and Lewisham Homes based on comments posted in a recent forum.

3.13	A leaseholder suggested it would be a good idea to set a part of the agenda based on priorities that leaseholders consider urgent to discuss. She added leaseholders could have a short pre-meeting prior to the forum set up by the Chair, where the topics on the agenda could be agreed.	
4	Environment update	
4.1	JK advised that environmental services need to be reviewed, especially in terms of quality and frequency of work. This should take place between January and March. He added that residents will also be involved in this process to see how people feel about the services provided by Lewisham Homes and how those services should change and be more efficient.	
4.2	JK advised at the moment LH provides a seven-day service in some areas. The responsibility of caretakers and the behaviour of residents should also be taken into account.	
4.3	JK added as part of the consultation a survey would be conducted by an external company to support the outcome. LH would like to involve as many residents as possible in this particular consultation. Findings will also be made available to leaseholders.	
4.4	JK advised that in the event of any problems with the caretaking services, the environmental team would be happy to arrange a visit to the estate or block for a walkabout with residents to check the quality of the service provided.	
4.5	A leaseholder raised an issue of the quality of the major works that were carried out on the estate. She added very cheap materials were used to fix the problems in the kitchen and the bathroom.	
4.6	JK informed the forum that new contractors have been procured to ensure the quality of the service.	
4.7	A leaseholder raised an issue regarding bin area of the estate. The bin chamber where the bins are kept is very smelly. This should be looked at and a broader upgrade plan developed.	
4.8	JK advised LH currently is looking into it and have started installing new bin containerisation areas. He added the cost of this will be quite high so at the moment there is a programme of 24 replacements of these areas to try and improve them.	
4.9	JK said the asset management team would also be involved in the major work process to make sure all issues were picked up, such as flooring, which is one of the urgent work to be done as the caretakers find it very difficult to clean.	
4.10	A leaseholder raised an issue of walkabouts. She said there seems to be a communication gap as leaseholders had not been informed of the last walkabout (Pepys Est).	
4.11	JK advised the walkabouts are established through tenants' and residents' associations.	
4.12	A number of leaseholders have expressed concerns about the cleaning services provided to them. They would like the service to be improved as they pay for it, but the quality and delivery of the service are not good enough.	

4.13	JK assured leaseholders that the standards will be met by LH, but they need to be reviewed so that everyone is clear of what these standards are.	
4.14	AW added that wider and longer term estate planning and the associated costs will also be added to the action log.	
5	Service charges 2022/2023	
5.1	JK advised that the report consists of two parts. The first concerns an increase in rent, the second is service charges. He also added that leaseholders are invited to comment on the report which will then be feedback to the Major in January. He added the service charge review will continue from April next year.	
5.2	JK advised the inflation rates as of September 2021 were CPI 3.1% and RPI 4.9%. The rent increase this year is 4.1 %. He added the overall increase to service charges is 4.09%. There has also been a 2.75% cost of living increase to staff costs, which has directly affected the large areas such as the cost of caretaking, grounds maintenance, sweeping as well an increase in fuel.	
5.3	JK added the significant area of increase is in energy costs in communal heating and lighting, this equates to 84% of the increase.	
5.4	JK advised that the queries posted in the chat will be dealt with by Environmental Team.	
5.5	A leaseholder raised a concern regarding paragraph 3.1 of the service charge report.	
5.6	Action: JK to clarify the paragraph 3.1 with the finance team.	
5.7	A leaseholder questioned how the numbers in the “amount column” of the report were calculated.	
5.8	EM advised the figures were calculated uplifting last year's estimate which would be based on the previous three years.	
5.9	A leaseholder questioned, what is the difference between ground maintenance, repairs and maintenance - building and repairs and maintenance - technical.	
5.10	JK advised the repairs and maintenance to the building would be the communal repairs. Repairs and maintenance technical would be related for example to door entry system or lifts and the ground maintenance relates to the service on the ground such as cutting grass or bushes, cleaning the leaves.	
6	Any Other Business	
6.1	There was a discussion about gas boilers that will no longer be installable in the future.	
6.2	A leaseholder questioned whether LH would introduce a capital programme supported by central government to replace the old boilers. He added that it would be good if LH made a strategic decision on how best to deal with it.	
6.3	JK advised that LH is conscious of the impact of what the current stock is doing to the environment. There is also a joint asset management strategy that is currently going through the Council. At this point there is no clear message from the government regarding gas boilers.	

6.4	JK informed the forum that the Head of Strategic Asset Management, Brian Burton has now left Lewisham Homes.	
6.5	EM advised that 105 members have registered to receive correspondence and of those 70 opened the agenda and 68 opened the minutes. That's around 67% opening rates. She also added that the software Lewisham Homes is called sendinblue	
7	Date of next meeting	
7.1	AW advised the date of the next meeting to be confirmed.	
7.2	AW thanked everyone for their patience and commitment and wished everyone a Merry Christmas.	

The meeting closed at 20.33

The next Leaseholder Forum meeting will be held on 8th February 2022
Location: Zoom Meeting details to follow