

**Chair:**

Alan Wake (AW), Independent

**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 (LS) – Consultation Team Manager  
Yvonne Lemonius – Collections Manager  
Seun Adegbite – PA to Directors

**Guests:**

18 leaseholders attended the meeting

**Apologies:**

Mark Newstead – Director of Property Services & Safety

<b>1</b>	<b>Welcome and Introductions</b>	
1.1	AW opened the meeting at 18.33 and welcomed everyone. He introduced Lewisham Homes staff and thanked everyone for attending.	
<b>2</b>	<b>Minutes and Summary from last meeting</b>	
	Previous minutes: <u>Item 3</u>	
2.1	AW advised a meeting was set up at the end of March to discuss leaseholder involvement and agendas. Only one leasehold was in attendance.	
2.2	A leaseholder stated they didn't receive the invite and only found out about the meeting through the action log a week prior which was too late. She advised of the confusion as information is sent via different email addresses.	
2.3	AW advised responses were received from a few leaseholders whilst some hadn't received the email. A date has been set for the next Pre meeting for the 7 <sup>th</sup> June so leaseholders can chase for an invite if not received.	
	<u>Item 4</u>	
2.5	A leaseholder provided positive feedback on the latest newsletter which provided information on service charges. He highlighted the improvement in presentation and the piece which encouraged leaseholders to join the forum. He suggested providing information to explain changes in amount from previous figures.	
2.6	He questioned the ongoing request for the timescale for the major works schedules. This has been discussed and requested on many occasions. He asked when this will be provided? This should be a recurring agenda item.	
2.7	JK expressed his sympathy as the forum was assured this would be available in January. He has been in communication with Mark Newstead – Director of Property Services, who advised the delay is partly due to the agreement of funding and budgets from the council for this financial year. Additional costs were incurred last year due to Health and Safety, building safety and repairs matters which has affected the available funding. The council will not agree the spend post July this year. He apologised as this hasn't been communicated adequately.	

2.8	A leaseholder advised he understands budget constraints, but it would be useful to have a broad idea of when things will be done on a normal cycle.
2.9	AW advised concerns have been shared with Lewisham Homes, a response which reflects what JK stated was provided by Deji Head of Stock Investment in the action log.
2.10	A leaseholder questioned why no timeline has been given to fire emergency works nor have any costs been agreed with leaseholders. This information is needed by leaseholders with some being unable to sell their properties and mortgage lenders refusing to lend without it. People's life's have been put on hold.
2.11	A leaseholder highlighted major works discussions were previously had with Matt Smith before he left. Guarantees were given but nothing came out of it. The same questions were asked with no responses or emails explaining the delays.
2.12	JK advised Lewisham Homes are aware of the current issues and the difficulties in planning without the program. There is a credibility issue with this being a primary issue. Mark Newstead is also aware.
2.13	AW advised an updated should be provided by end of May, early June at the pre meeting.
2.14	A leaseholder questioned whether the 10-year planned programme will affect funding? JK advised the plan is based on priority needs and the annual programme. The team is roughly aware of works to be done. There has been an increase in works and materials with schemes becoming more expensive.
2.15	JK confirmed Building Safety is prioritised over programme works. Cost expectations from the Government is still unclear. But some information should be provided by the team.
2.16	<b>Action</b> – JK to ask a separate question about Building and Fire Safety works
	<u>Item 5</u>
2.17	AW highlighted the issues for future agendas being communication, maintenance, planned works, caretaking and service charges.
2.18	A leaseholder questioned who composed the questions on the caretaking survey. She noted the questionnaire did not consider the feedback from this group. Leaseholders have always said they want what they pay for.
2.19	JK advised the service hasn't changed over the years. It was raised at a previous resident's forum to reduce weekend working. A mixed response was given and raised questions on how to provide a different service. He advised discussions from this group have not been dismissed and have been taken into account. He highlighted a small number of leaseholders take part in the survey, but other residents also need to be involved. Further discussions will be held to consider costs and what it means to the wider resident base. The outcome of the surveys will be discussed prior to decisions being made.
2.20	A leaseholder advised this has been discussed a number of times but with no communication no why things haven't been done.

2.21	JK advised monthly surveys are carried out on how the service is going internal and externally and is happy to share the metrics involved.	
2.22	A leaseholder noted the discussions had in the forum should have formed the basis of some of the questions asked? She advised some questions were leading. Improvements have been suggested such as better equipment but the only suggestion on the questionnaire was to remove weekend cleaning. This does not show a receptiveness to this forum.	
2.23	A leaseholder questioned who checks to make sure caretaking is done to a good standard and whether there are set tasks they should be doing? JK advised supervisors / managers carry out inspections over a 4-to-6-week period and provide scoring. Information on this has previously been provided.	
2.24	AW advised this forum has had extensive conversations about this issue. This should still be on the wider agenda and action log.	
2.25	A leaseholder highlighted the views of some leaseholders are not representative of everyone in the group. Caretaking has sometimes been good and sometimes bad but on those occasions had contacted the caretaking manager and the problem was generally resolved.	
<b>3</b>	<b>Action log</b>	
3.1	AW advised the action log is published on the website and updates on issues raised noted.	
3.2	EM advised actions from today's meeting will be added.	
<b>4</b>	<b>Lease extensions – a basic guide</b>	
4.1	AW advised there is not much he can do about the position of Lewisham Council. He can provide independent thoughts about extensions.	
4.2	He advised the law commission included clear instruction to investigate ways lease extensions became easy to access and cheaper. Other suggestions were that other options should also be looked at for leaseholders. Research and consultations were carried out with suggestions that extensions should be cheaper, longer, and easier to access.	
4.3	It was also promised that legislation would be delivered which would allow for 990-year lease extensions, a standard method and the abolishment of marriage value. This kicks in when there is 80 years or less left on a lease.	
4.4	There has been uncertainty with some leaseholders on what they should do at certain times.	
4.5	He advised of the lack of clarity in the position of landlords and freeholders about protecting their position.	
4.6	He noted three categories of advice he would give to leaseholders: - Leases with longer than 85 years to run have the time to wait and see the outcome of legislation.	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Leases which have 80 – 85 years remaining should seek independent and specialist advice</li> <li>- Leases under 80, where marriage value would apply, waiting can be positive due to the abolishment of marriage value</li> </ul>	
4.7	AW advised he will be happy to have independent conversations, but he can't influence the position of Lewisham Council.	
4.8	A leaseholder questioned whether leaseholders could have a summarised report. AW advised he has a slide show.	
4.9	A leaseholder questioned whether extensions could be carried out collectively to save costs? AW advised this may be something to look into and may come out in legislation.	
4.10	A leaseholder questioned when the legislation will be passed? AW advised there have been talks of it being in the third session of parliament which may be next year.	
4.11	A leaseholder advised he has recently gone through the process and there were small savings by processing more than one application at the same time. He questioned how many leaseholders may not be aware of this issue. Comms could be sent out in next years' service charge newsletters.	
4.12	AW advised if a lease is below 80 years, marriage value kicks in. This can involve thousands of pounds and is the difference with a few months. This should be pointed out when re - mortgaging	
<b>5</b>	<b>Further engagement options</b>	
5.1	AW questioned if the group had ideas of methods which can be looked into. The surgery has been a success and has affected the number of issues being dealt with.	
5.2	A Leaseholder advised of the success of this forum and surgery. She highlighted the lack of a platform for leaseholders to discuss issues before the forum. She asked if Lewisham Homes can assist with the organisation of this, like the help provided to TRAs. She also heard from some residents that TRAs are not for leaseholders. She noted the Lewisham tenants fund is there to provide help and support to residents.	
5.3	JK advised TRAs embraces both tenants and leaseholders, some even have more leaseholders than tenants. There are also chairs who are leaseholders. Tenants provide funding for the Lewisham tenants fund and not leaseholders hence they would not sponsor leasehold events. He is willing to discuss the creation of another group but noted that it may fragment this current group.	
5.4	AW advised the forum is establishing itself well but there may be other methods of engaging with others.	
5.5	JK advised of the previous discussion of a conference and questioned whether this would be a good idea. The agenda can be led by leaseholders. AW advised this can be discussed in the next pre meeting. He encouraged the group to share ideas going forward.	
<b>6</b>	<b>Any other business</b>	

6.1	A leaseholder advised the Council has not collected recycling for over 3 weeks. They have stated this is due to the shortage of trucks. Bins are full and not healthy.	
6.2	JK advised of the national issue with HGV drivers. <b>Action for action log</b> – JK to liaise with Martin to the council to prioritise estates	
6.3	A leaseholder questioned the plans for ground maintenance and ways of making areas more environmentally friendly. JK advised the team do try to work to a sustainability strategy. There is still a way to go. <b>Action for action log</b> – JK to think about how to share sustainable information	
6.4	A leaseholder advised of the lack of bulk waste signage and the issue with private renters not being aware of how to dispose of waste. <b>Action for action log</b>	
6.5	A leaseholder questioned Lewisham Homes plans to install electric charging points for cars. There aren't enough charging points in the area and those close are very expensive. <b>Action for action log</b>	
6.6	A leaseholder advised caretaking has improved but there is a long way to go. There is now a sign sheet which is filled out every week. She asked if this could include a tick sheet and also a requirement for the supervisor checking to also sign.	
6.7	JK advised there are several issues which should be covered within the outcome of the survey.	
6.8	A leaseholder advised sweeping has improved but asked how to escalate things beyond Lewisham Homes. She asked if a Council representative could join this meeting? JK advised there are channels for escalation, complaints process, Councillors who are local representatives. This is clear on the website.	
6.9	A leaseholder advised of the 45mins wait to log a repair over the phone and a lack of understanding of communal facilities within flats. JK advised of the high turnover of staff within the contact centre and advised the Home Ownership team is available to help with these issues. Leaseholder to send details to EM.	
6.10	<b>Action for action log</b> – Phone waiting times & lack of knowledge of communal repairs	
<b>7</b>	<b>Date of next meeting Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> July 2022</b>	
	Pre meeting – Tuesday 7 <sup>th</sup> June 18:00 Forum – Tuesday 5 <sup>th</sup> July 18:30	

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 20.30

The next Leaseholder Forum meeting will be held on: Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> July 2022 Location: Zoom Meeting