

Your Home, Your Say

Annual Leaseholder Consultation Forum

Minutes 26th November 2020

Present:	<p>Leaseholders: Diane Best, Matthew Emmerson, Martin Barrass, Martin Johnson, Darren Tarrant, Mrs Summers, Dominika Martin-Sulewska, Anna Sanchez</p> <p>Officers: Sandra Farmer, Carol Amos, David Greening (item 2), Lynn Thomas (item 3), Anthony French (item 4) Emily Watts (item 7), Megan Barker, Lucy Dumbrell.</p>
Apologies:	Stan Best
Copies:	<p>City Homes</p> <p>Leaseholders - webpage</p> <p>Via Teams – copy of recording available to view</p>

Diane Best welcomed everyone to the first leaseholder meeting held via Teams and introduced officers. Apologies from Stan who would normally chair the meeting. Diane is the elected leaseholder representative on the Housing Scrutiny Committee.

Emily Watts outlined the general rules to be followed during the meeting.

	Agenda item	Action
1.0	Minutes of Last Meeting (16.10.2019/2019)/Matters arising	
1.1	Item 1.1 Electrics to communal areas. This will be discussed in the meeting today – Item 3.	
1.2	Item 7.2 Fire doors – the Council are looking at providing a service to supply and fit Fire Doors for leaseholders by our contractors. This item will again be picked up in Item 3.	
2.0	Housing Services update – David Greening, Head of Housing	
2.1	<p>David has come along to today's meeting with a brief to talk about how we have managed our housing services during the pandemic. In Housing management, we have adapted to run our services online.</p> <p>The Independent Living Facilitators support both tenants and private residents and have carried out approx. 500 visits per week.</p> <p>Sheltered Housing has been a particular problem as there are shared communal areas that have had to be closed.</p> <p>Our extra-care services at Ditchburn Place are a very protected environment, made slightly more complicated by a new contractor that has taken over the provision of care earlier this year.</p>	

	<p>Issues have included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Isolation issues – checking residents are getting the services they need • Adequate PPE and new cleaning requirements • Home working and keeping staff safe <p>Working from home. Supporting staff and keeping them safe. Reviewing visits with pre-visit checks, zoom calls with residents, visits in emergencies only, door-step visits – looking at innovative ways to interact.</p> <p>Mandela House has remained open for face to face interviews for appointments in certain circumstances only.</p> <p>Other issues have been:</p> <p>Managing the risk in terms of repairs – internal or external; Continuing to allocate and relet homes; Income collection – both rent and service charge collection rates are down due to the affects on the economy and individuals; Right to Buy timescales have had to be extended due to the valuation inspection and legal delays; Housing management – there is a backlog of cases in the courts for issues of evictions where a tenant may be causing problems due to their behaviour and people are being impacted if they are living in these difficult circumstances The Arbury Road office has had to be closed – due to the restrictions on the office space and this has inconvenienced customers. Homeless/rough sleeping. The government initiative of ‘Everyone Inside’ meant an increase in homeless applications</p>	
2.2	<p>Estate Improvement Scheme</p> <p>This has been running for 20 months and is a 5-year programme making various estate improvements e.g. bike storage, solar lighting, bin storage, re-surfacing of paths, car parks, fencing and fire safety. The main aims are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To drive down crime on estates; 2. To give a visible improvement to estates, strengthen communities and improve health and safety. <p>If any leaseholder has any suggestions for schemes for their area/estate, please email Emily Watts at:</p>	
2.3	<p>Resident-involvement@cambridge.gov.uk</p> <p>Safer Streets</p> <p>This is in conjunction with the Police. Money has been obtained from the Home Office to improve security in West Chesterton and Arbury areas – in particular the replacement of front doors to improve security. Residents in these areas should have already received a letter and leaseholders can also take the opportunity to get front doors replaced.</p>	
2.4	<p>Questions:</p> <p>Martin B (leaseholder) – Asked who certifies the work and</p>	

	<p>that work is carried out to the council's satisfaction. He said he had been invoiced for £12000 for fencing work that had not been completed?</p> <p><i>Lynn Thomas advised that a proportion of all work is checked by the surveyor on site. She will find out which blocks and repair he is referring to and get back to him after the meeting.</i></p>	LT
<p>3.0</p> <p>3.1</p> <p>3.2</p>	<p>Repairs and Maintenance Update – Lynn Thomas, Head of Assets and Maintenance and Will Barfield (Asset Manager)</p> <p>3.1 Replacement Fire Doors. Lynn Thomas wanted to make leaseholders aware of a new service provided by the Cambridge Home Improvement Agency, which assist older and vulnerable people. They may be able to help with the costs of a replacement Fire Door for leaseholders, where they have been advised that their front door fails the current regulations. Details can be found on Appendix 1 of these Minutes. Letters will be sent to those leaseholders who may be in receipt of these benefits and who have been asked to replace their front doors.</p> <p>Full power point – Appendix 2</p> <p>3.2 Planned Works 20/21 Will Barfield, Asset manager attended and said that the current budget for works is £19 million – and this does not include day-to-day works. There are 2 main contractors: TSG – mainly do internal works, although they also do electrical works; Fosters Property maintenance – mainly external works. The key areas of work are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving energy efficiency; • Structural works – as most of our blocks are now over 50 years old; • Communal parts – entrance doors, door entry, floor coverings; • Electrical testing – including emergency lighting, identifying priority areas; • Fire Risk Assessments; • External painting – gone from 14-year cycle down to a 7-year cycle of painting; • Street lighting – replacement LED lighting • Estate Improvement schemes. <p>The impact of Covid initially meant that works stopped from March to June 20. External works resumed in June and internal works (kitchen and bathrooms) resumed in September.</p>	All see attached

3.3	<p>Structural works and concrete repairs There are a number of areas where the blocks are ageing, and major works are required. Leaseholders either have or will shortly be consulted via a Section 20 Notice: Hazelwood & Molewood Close Blocks in Bermuda estate Hawkins Road, Ekin Road, Sackville Close Hanover & Princess Court South Arbury maisonettes Fanshaw & Davy Road</p>	
3.4	<p>Landlord Electrical installations – replacement A programme of work is currently being developed.</p>	
3.5	<p>Fire safety improvements A programme of Fire Risk Assessments will be commencing on 1.12.20. Initial works include: Fire alarm system – Kingsway (following the recent fire) Hanover & Princess Court A fire door replacement programme for flats, sheds and bin stores, to bring blocks up to the latest standards. Installation of emergency lighting.</p>	
3.6	<p>Questions: Can the council provide a timeline of the Fire Safety Inspections which are due to start on 1.12.20, so leaseholders can see when their block is being inspected (David Tarrant was the leaseholder querying this). <i>Lynn Thomas will provide the programme to the leaseholder query.</i></p>	LT
3.7	<p>Martin asked if all the front doors that were fitted were safe and complied with the building regs when they were built and whether the Fire Doors being updated is a desirable/improvement or whether legislation now says they have to be upgraded? <i>Lynn Thomas will provide the detailed statement from the Compliance manager on the new legislation;</i></p>	LT
3.8	<p>Mrs Summers at Edgecome was querying the cost of the plinth at Edgecome – which builders have told her is over-priced; she says she has had a number of S20 Notices since she purchased the property in 2014 and it is no longer affordable. Should she be concerned about the pending Fire Safety Inspection? <i>Mrs Summers was advised to put her observation regarding the plinth in writing.</i> <i>Will Barfield will check if there is any further planned work on the next 5-year programme; should she be concerned about the Fire Safety inspection for her block?</i> <i>Lynn Thomas will clarify which blocks would be affected by the new fire safety standards.</i></p> <p>NB If any leaseholder is interested in changing their front door they should email the council in the first instance as this is a structural alteration to: leasehold.services@cambridge.gov.uk</p>	WB LT

4.0	Building Cleaning Tender – update Anthony French, Streets and Open Spaces	
4.1	Anthony has been Project Manager for the re-tender of the building cleaning contract, following the council's tendering process. There are 5 lots that went out to tender: Communal buildings; Public toilets, Housing Building cleaning, Car parks and Window cleaning.	
4.2	There is currently one contractor - Churchill. For housing, the contract is being split into Building Cleaning and Window Cleaning – so two separate contractors.	
4.3	In September, the Council were in a position to make an award in principal to the successful bidder. During the leaseholder consultation period, Pinnacle (the successful contractor for Building Cleaning) decided to remove themselves from the process.	
4.4	The Council have now re-assessed the bids, and the contracts will now be awarded to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interclean – who were the 2nd successful bidder for building cleaning Lot 3; and • Hi-spec for window cleaning. A new Section 20 consultation will be coming out to leaseholders next week. Due to these delays, Churchill Cleaning will now continue until the new contract starts on 1 April 2021.	
	Questions:	
4.5	A leaseholder asked if the decision is based purely on price? <i>Anthony advised that the contracts are first assessed for Quality and value under certain criteria, and then price.</i>	
5.0	Housing Scrutiny Committee Update – Diane Best	
5.1	The last meeting of HSC in person was January 2020. The March meeting was cancelled due to Covid and all meetings since have been on-line.	
5.2	The following issues are of interest to leaseholders: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • January 20 – This was the annual budget setting. The admin charges for leaseholders was set. There was also the procurement of the Mace contract – which is the major planned work for areas including Ekin Road, Hawkins road, etc • June 20 – gave updates on the review of the estates and Facilities service review; • September 20 – Planned works update including fire safety, which is becoming a big issue. 	
5.3	The elections for tenant and leaseholder representatives were held in July, so the September meeting was the first meeting of the group. Diane is also consulted by the Housing Development Agency – who are recommending proposals for new housing. The next meeting will be in January 2021 and which will focus	

5.4	<p>on the budget review.</p> <p>All the committee information is available to view on the Council's website. Diane and the other representatives can be contacted by e-mail at: Hsc.residents@gmail.com</p>	
6.0 6.1	<p>Resident Inspectors update</p> <p>Diane advised that due to Covid19 restrictions, resident inspectors have only been able to safely inspect their own areas. Any residents interested can volunteer. Email Resident Involvement if you are interested, training on what to inspect will be provided: Resident-involvement@cambridge.gov.uk</p>	
7.0 7.1 7.2 7.3 7.4	<p>Resident Involvement Update – Emily Watts</p> <p>Resident Involvement has been challenging as previously most meetings were to be face to face. We are responding to the challenges and now most meetings take place online. Devices have been provided to residents to allow them to access meetings online if they did not have them.</p> <p>A Tenant and Leaseholder satisfaction Survey is currently out with residents. So far, 14% of leaseholders have responded. It is very helpful for residents to respond and have their say about how they want services to be provided. The results will be out in December/January and further focus groups will take place to look at the results in more detail. If any leaseholders are interested in being further involved, please contact Emily.</p> <p>Resident Involvement also produce the Open Door magazine 3 times per year. Again, any leaseholders who would like to take an interest in being on the Panel influencing the articles included, please contact Emily.</p> <p>The next Resident Panel will be in 2021 and will be looking at the Council's Policies and Procedures – to give residents the opportunity of being involved.</p> <p>Website: https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/resident-involvement Emily Watts can be contacted at: Resident-involvement@cambridge.gov.uk</p>	
8.0 8.1	<p>Leaseholder Questions/Answers</p> <p>There were no questions received in advance of the meeting.</p> <p>Electric vehicles. Martin asked what arrangements the Council are making to provide electric charging points for</p>	

	<p>blocks of flats seeing as the government have just announced they are bringing forward plans to switch from fossil fuels. It may be a problem across Cambridge, but if you are in a flat you may not be able to park an electric car directly outside. <i>David Greening suggested that the Environmental Health or Commercial Services departments will be looking at this and we will find out details that will be fed back to leaseholders.</i></p>	EW
8.2	<p>Secure cycle storage. Martin asked about cycle storage on his Fison Road estate as this is an issue. <i>Sandra Farmer will discuss with the Estate Champion, with a view to surveying the area for possible inclusion of storage on the estate under the Estate Improvement Programme.</i></p>	SF
8.3	<p>A leaseholder asked who should answer queries about the exterior of the flat block? <i>This would be Lynn Thomas. Please send any question to Emily Watts at the email address above and she will forward the query on.</i></p>	EW/LT
8.4	<p>Martin advised that due to Covid, with more people working from home, there has been a problem with the bins getting full more often – who should this be reported to. <i>Streets and Open Spaces deal with this 01223 458282</i></p>	
9.0	Future Meeting Date:	
9.1	<p>The next Leaseholder Consultation Forum will be in October or November 2021. Look out for information on the date in Open Door and on the Council's leaseholder webpage.</p>	

Appendix 1

Leaseholder

Dear Leaseholder

REF: FINANCIAL HELP TO FUND FIRE DOORS

Cambs HIA is a council service that helps older and vulnerable people to adapt or repair their home.

Our new policy enables us to fund improved housing conditions and remove certain home hazards, improve security, and improve energy efficiency as well as completing certain repairs and improvements.

The City Council is actively replacing fire doors for tenants and offering leaseholders the opportunity to pay for these from their contractor. Leaseholders who are in receipt of the following benefits or on a low income may receive financial help from the City Council through a Special Purposes Grant to pay for the replacement of the fire door. This work will be completed by Cambs Home Improvement Agency (Cambs HIA).

The relevant benefits are as follows:

- Universal credit
- Income Support,
- Income based Job Seekers Allowance
- Working Tax Credit with gross income less than the current level set by the Department of Work & Pensions
- Housing Benefit,
- Guaranteed Pension Credit,
- or child tax credit with a relevant income less than the current level set by the DWP
- Council tax support

If you would like our help and support to apply for this grant and complete the works on your behalf, please contact Cambs HIA on hia@cambshia.org or ring 01954 713330 for further advice.

Also, if you are an older or disabled person, there are also other grants available to adapt your home. If you would like more information about this, please contact Cambs HIA. These grants are usually means tested using different criteria to that above and so even people with savings may be entitled to financial help.

Yours sincerely

Cambs HIA

Cambs Home Improvement Agency works in Cambridge City, Huntingdonshire and South Cambs
Home Improvement Agency works in Cambridge City, Huntingdonshire, and South Cambridgeshire
Tel: 01954 713347 or 01954 713330. Fax: 01954 713234.
Website: www.cambshia.org E-mail: hia@cambshia.org

Help from the CHIA

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Help from the CHIA

A letter containing this detail is going to be sent to all leaseholders very soon

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Website: www.cambshia.org

Repairs and Maintenance update

Will Barfield, Asset Manager
Estates and Facilities

Planned maintenance - scope of work

- The annual programme is £19m of planned work
- Most work delivered by two main contractors under long term contracts
- Internal works – TSG Building Services
 - Kitchens , Bathrooms, Disability Adaptations
 - Electrical works, smoke detectors, heat detectors
 - Heating and boilers, M+E plant servicing and maintenance
- External works – Foster Property Maintenance
 - Roofing
 - Structural works
 - Doors and windows
 - External painting and repairs
 - Floor coverings, hard surfaces, paving

Current issues

- Improving energy efficiency to flats and houses
- Structural works to ageing blocks of flats
- Works to communal parts of blocks of flats – doors, floor covering, stairs, access control
- Electrical testing of landlords electrical supplies and works required to electrical supplies feeding flats
- Works arising from fire risk assessments
- Improved to external painting cycle
- Street lamp column and communal lighting replacement
- Estate investment schemes

Impact of Covid 19 on planned works

- All work (apart from statutory testing and other emergency work) stopped between March – June 2020.
- External planned work resumed in June 2020
- Some internal planned work resumed in July 2020
- Kitchen and bathroom replacement work restarted in September 2020
- Higher than usual “no access” is having impact on delivery of programme of works.
- Some delays on materials

Structural works and Concrete Repairs

- Blocks in Hazelwood and Molewood Close
- Blocks in Bermuda Terrace (Spencer/St David's/Gibbons/Daniel/Burgess/Cooper)
- Hawkins Road Estate maisonettes
- Ekin Road flats
- Sackville Close
- Hanover and Princess Court
- South Arbury Maisonettes and flats
- Fanshaw and Davy Road flats

Landlord electrical installations replacement

- We have carried out electrical safety inspections of landlord electrical installations serving blocks of flats.
- Many of these are old and in need of replacement
- A programme of work is being developed
 - Hawkins Road estate
 - Edgecombe flats
 - Kingsway flats
 - Hanover Court
 - Prinness Court

Fire Safety improvements

- Fire alarm system installation at Kingsway flats, Hanover Court and Princess Court
- A fire door inspection programme – all flats and store sheds
- Opportunities for leaseholders' doors to be installed by the Council's contractors.
- Installation of emergency lighting in communal areas where required following fire risk assessment