

# Senior Citizens Forum

## MEETING MINUTES

- Purpose of Meeting**
1. Actions from previous meeting
  2. Warden Services performance
  3. Tenant Bids
  4. Digital Upgrade
  5. Court Enquiries
  6. Future Agenda Ideas

**Date** 8<sup>th</sup> March 2023

**Venue** Fielding Court Loughborough

### Attendance:

Sally Ramalho	Principal Officer
Helen Kennedy	Customer Engagement Officer
Andrew Everitt-Stewart	Customer Engagement Officer
Pauline Greaves	Aingarth, Loughborough
John Mason	Arnold Smith House, Shepshed
Bellinda Mitchell	Arnold Smith House, Shepshed
Gwenn Burley	Babington Court, Rothley
Janet Bodycott	Babington Court, Rothley
Joan Crowson	Beresford Court, Shepshed
Judith Harris	Durham Road, Loughborough
Edwin Fryer	Fielding Court, Loughborough
Phil Hudson	Fielding Court, Loughborough
Janet Godwin	Grays Court, Barrow Upon Soar
Phil Hudson	Fielding Court, Loughborough
Andrew Sutherland	Martin Court, Anstey
Janice Wright	Riversdale Court, Birstall
Roger Woolley	Riversdale Court, Birstall
Joy Braker	St Pauls Court, Syston
Liz Harris	St Peters Court, Syston
Janice Spriggs	St Peters Court, Syston
Terence Breed	Dudley Court, Sileby
Sheila Breed	Dudley Court, Sileby

<b>Apologies</b>	Jean Brutnall	St Pauls Court, Syston
	Robert Cadman	Martin Court, Anstey

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## 1: Actions from previous meeting

- Grays Court in Barrow Upon Soar finds there is a lack of community spirit so the Customer Engagement Team will work with the residents and promote engagement.
- Arnold Smith House, the question had previously been asked about the increase in energy costs, and it was explained that from April 2023 onwards it has been indicated that electricity prices will rise by 100% and gas by 200%, and that currently there is uncertainty about what help the government will offer if any for businesses. It was explained that individuals who are responsible for paying their own fuel bills are eligible for government help, but tenants who pay through their service charge will fall under different regulations as their energy is supplied through Charnwood Borough Council and so is classed as a business supply.
- Martin Court, the showers have been repaired. The issue of the stair lift that was removed was discussed and it was explained that this will not be replaced, however the reason for removal is unclear.
- Dudley Court's fire procedure is different to other courts however it was advised that a review is being undertaken of sheltered courts fire procedure and a fire drill is being considered.
- At Riversdale the hedge is scheduled to be completed week ending 10<sup>th</sup> March 2023.
- At St Pauls the rust on the drying line has been removed.

## 2: Warden Services Performance

A review of the warden services monthly performance was presented to the meeting showing the following results:

- Percentage of support plans completed on time 99.7%
- Percentage of support plans checked 100%
- Percentage of support plans completed satisfactorily 100%
- Percentage of visits matching agreed schedule on support plan 100%
- Percentage of pull cord tests completed on time 100%
- Percentage of pull cord repairs completed 100%
- Percentage of equipment repairs completed 0
- Percentage of customer satisfaction surveys completed 100%

## 3: Tenant Bids

It was explained how the Tenant Bid is voted and we have a vote in March and in September. We ask the Charnwood Housing Resident Forum if they would allow the general underspend to go towards to the Sheltered Court fund, the CHRF agreed to this.

### General Budget Fund

Brook Street

- Landscaping

**£15,000.00**

£4,300.00

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<b>Remaining Budget</b>	<b>£10,700.00</b>
<b>Sheltered Court Fund</b>	<b>£12,000.00</b>
Aingarth	£1,400.00
• Landscaping	
Remaining Budget	£10,600.00
Remaining funds for Housing and General Contingency	£21,300.00 £3,000.00
<b>REMAINING BUDGET</b>	<b>£24,300.00</b>

## **ALL SCF MEMBERS WERE IN AGREEMENT TO THE AINGARTH BID**

Application passed today, the order will be raised in the next financial year and work to start as soon as possible.

### **Further points discussed:**

- All completed and new bids were discussed.
- It was suggested that the summary be presented at court visits to keep tenants informed.
- It was explained that due to maintenance issues gazebos will no longer fitted as part of this scheme.
- Bids can be split into separate parts if the cost may be restrictive, this is going to be the case at Arnold Smith House for the gazebo glazing, this will be completed in 2 stages.
- A question was raised about negotiating quotes, however this is not allowed once a quote has been submitted, also where bids are obviously too large for the bid fund they will not be considered.
- Bids will be monitored after completion on a regular basis and Customer Engagement will complete consultations with tenants on the impact of the work.
- Bids can be applied for throughout the year.
- There is no maximum number of bids per area, however if a court has had a bid already and would like another, areas that have not had any funding will be considered first.
- Arnold Smith House asked about replacing window boxes that were initially installed when the property was built, Customer Engagement to investigate this and see if that would fall under repairs or would be a new bid.
- St Pauls asked if the wooden seating attached to the raised beds would be a repair or could it be part of a bid, it was suggested that it was put in the bid application, and it would then be discussed withing the council.
- Dudley Court asked if a bid could be used as a one off clean for the garden and patio area, it was explained that G&S would carry that work out and the residents should talk to the warden to organise this.

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## 4: Digital Upgrade:

- A contractor has been identified, and the contract is about to be completed.
- All equipment will be similar to what is currently installed but with enhancements
- Digital noticeboards will be installed, and wardens will have the capacity to message all individual properties with any information. This will also mean that if any warden is off sick, the stand in warden can keep in touch with tenants.
- There will be an 'I am OK' button on the new equipment so that if a tenant is going to be out, the warden will know they are OK and it will save them visiting.
- The new system will mean the door replacement programme can be informed. Older, failing systems will be replaced first. The contractor fitting these will train Charnwood Borough Council staff and will visit courts to show tenants how the equipment works. Whilst the work is being done interim equipment will be supplied so that the service remains constant and the work should take around 2 weeks per court.
- Lifeline are currently meeting with suppliers and looking at new equipment. St Pauls is still in discussion, as the equipment may need to be slightly different.
- It was explained that no more analogue systems will be installed after April 2023 and that all analogue systems will become obsolete in 2025.
- It was asked if every property would have a new system fitted and this was confirmed.

## 6 Handyman for sheltered courts.

Historically there has been a general maintenance person for sheltered courts and this was funded from the repairs budget and served both tenants and Charnwood Borough Council. The Council is now looking at the feasibility or reinstating this scheme however a study needs to be carried out into the viability of this. The criteria will need to be set in house, the budget and who will pay for different services need to be decided.

It was asked if members had suggestions for services that they might require under this scheme:

- Changing tap washers
- Garden maintenance, cleaning paths, sweeping up debris, clearing leaves.
- Cleaning out light fittings
- Jet washing patios
- Painting/maintenance of benches and garden furniture
- Clearing out guttering
- Maintenance of drying areas
- General maintenance, curtain rails and similar issues that tenants struggle with

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- Scooter rooms cleaning and maintenance
- Laundry room maintenance

It was then explained what would be involved in the consultation process:

- The hours that the service would be available.
- Some tasks would however be tenant's responsibilities and this would be made clear.
- Some of the services will be paid on a service charge.
- This would cover all courts so needs to be chargeable, however it would need to be worked on a rota basis and be dependent on contracted hours.
- There will need to be differentiation on tasks, if they are repairs, or ongoing maintenance and all tasks will need to be completed properly.

**Members were asked to vote on if they were willing and think other tenants would be willing to pay for the scheme on their service charge, or if they would like the investigation into the feasibility of this to be shelved.**

**The vote was unanimously in favour of going ahead with the feasibility study.**

It was suggested that this be added to the agenda for all upcoming tenant court meetings.

A point was also made to clarify that it is not the job of the Customer Engagement Team to report issues for individuals, this is their own responsibility. Issues must be reported online and bypassing the contact centre is unhelpful as issues need to be logged correctly. Also, the warden is the first point of contact, and they must be contacted first and kept informed, otherwise this undermines their position. If the warden is unavailable, then the Lifeline system is there for assistance.

Customer Engagement is there to support and facilitate however the role is expanding and so there is not always time for individual issues.

The Contact Centre number was given out and it was explained that the Lifeline service is for warden and out of hours repairs too.

The new repairs handbook is in production, and it was asked if this could be put in all communal lounges once completed.

## **5: Court Enquiries:**

- St Peters Court Syston, a defibrillator has been donated by the family of a tenant who sadly passed away and has been installed at the court with a commemorative plaque beside it.
- Durham Road Loughborough, No issues.
- Dudley Court Sileby, no issues.

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- Grays Court Barrow on Soar, no issues.
- Fielding Court, Loughborough, it was pointed out how efficient the contact centre is now.
- Arnold Smith House Shepshed, it was asked why tenants have to go through the bidding system to move within their own court and why the transfer system is no longer in place. It was explained that the system must be completely transparent, and all properties must be available to all tenants and prospective tenants. The reason for there no longer being a transfer system would be investigated.
- Aingarh Loughborough, no issues.
- St Pauls Syston, are wifi boosters still being fitted in communal lounges? It was explained that they have been fitted in all but 4 courts, however the equipment is available for this and will be installed imminently.
- Martin Court Thurmaston, it was asked why the patio furniture has been installed in a different place to the original set, Customer Engagement will ask the Warden leader about this and report back at the court meeting.
- Riversdale Court Birstall, no issues.
- Beresford Court Shepshed, no issues.
- Babington Court Rothley, no issues.

It was pointed out that tenants must always be vigilant as to who they are letting follow them into courts.

## 6: Future Agenda Ideas:

- This year Charnwood Borough Council has been able to donate £5000 to Age UK thanks to a donation from a not for profit organisation called EEM. As a result of this Age UK would like to attend a future Senior Citizens Forum meeting in order to explain more about the services they offer and their organisation.
- Could funding for John Storer House by Charnwood Borough Council be added to a future agenda.
- Could heads of departments attend the Senior Citizens Forum as they do for the Charnwood Housing Residents Forum and discuss their departments and roles.
- The guttering at courts was raised as a future issue but it was explained that this is being looked at as a maintenance issue so will not need to be added.

A final question was asked about there being only 1 resident at St Michaels Court Thurmaston, and it was explained that this resident will be rehoused as soon as possible, as the complex is due for demolition and bungalows designated for older people will be erected in its place.

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***Meeting Closed At; 2:00 pm***

***Next Meeting; Beresford Court Shepshed Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> June 2023 at 10:00am***