

## MEETING MINUTES

### Senior Citizens Forum

- Purpose of Meeting**
1. Welcome and refreshments.
  2. Warden Services performance
  3. Landlord Services update
  4. Tenant Bid Presentation and Customer Engagement Update.
  5. Court Enquiries
  6. Future Agenda Ideas

**Date** **Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2024 at 10:00am**

**Venue** **Aingarth, 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
Gwenn Burley	Babington Court, Rothley
Janet Bodycott	Babington Court, Rothley
Joan Crowson	Beresford Court, Shepshed
Carol Bird	Beresford Court, Shepshed
Christine Godfrey	Beresford Court, Shepshed
Jonah Nyabader	Beresford Court, Shepshed
Judith Harris	Durham Road, Loughborough
Stuart Wells	Fielding Court, Loughborough
Phil Hudson	Fielding Court, Loughborough
Janet Godwin	Grays Court, Barrow Upon Soar
Carole Merryweather	Grays Court
Andrew Sutherland	Martin Court, Anstey
Jo Barfield	Martin Court, Anstey
Janice Wright	Riversdale Court, Birstall
Roger Woolley	Riversdale Court, Birstall
Steve Gamble	St Pauls Court, Syston
Jean Brutnall	St Pauls Court, Syston
Margaret Sutton	St Peters Court, Syston
Margaret Jacobson	St Peters Court, Syston
Terence Breed	Dudley Court, Sileby
Sheila Breed	Dudley Court, Sileby
Mick Appleyard	Sorrel Court, Mountsorrel

**Apologies** **Bellinda Mitchell** **Arnold Smith House, Shepshed**

## 1: Welcome and refreshments

Everyone was welcomed and all representatives introduced themselves, it was commented on how nice it was to see everyone from each court.

## 2: Warden performance

A review of the warden services monthly performance shows the following results:

- Percentage of support plans completed on time 99.16%
  - This was due to 2 customers being in hospital/long term respite.
- 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 98.26%
  - This was due to 2 customers being in hospital.
- Percentage of pull cord repairs completed 100%
- Percentage of equipment repairs completed 100%
- Percentage of customer satisfaction surveys completed 100%

It was noted that there have been 2 newly appointed wardens who have had to be trained and are doing very well in their new roles however this hasn't affected performance

## 3: Landlord Updates

### Strategy for Sheltered Accommodation

All attendees were provided with a copy of the Strategy for Sheltered Accommodation, which is for information only, there is a lot of work still to be done with regards to the courts however this strategy will go to Cabinet on the 7<sup>th</sup> of March.

Fielding Court had serious issues with hot water and the roof, and we originally thought it would be simple to fix, however it was discovered that pipe work needs replacing and there is a lot of asbestos, the cost of both to put right was going to be around £500,000.00. Fielding Court isn't fit for purpose in the current day and so it is uneconomical to do the work. Every resident in block A had to be moved out and a decision is having to be made at Cabinet whether we decide to close block A or spend the money. We then have the question with what we do with block B, however a survey on this block needs to be completed first. Residents will be consulted when a decision is made. The Purdah period is until the 15<sup>th</sup> March where residents can ask questions on the decision made, after this, we will then go ahead.

It was asked if the work at Fielding Court will take president over St Michaels in Thurmaston however this won't be the case. St Michael's has been empty for 3 years and it went to Planning this week which was approved, so we are going to demolish the building and build 9 bungalows which all will be in the sheltered scheme. The next stage is to write out the specification for contractors and we are hoping to start the work at the end of the summer

2024 and be ready for next March. Residents who were already resident at St Michael's may get first refusal if they want to move into the new complex. All details for this can be found on our website.

The Strategy mentions other courts Babington, Sorrel, Martin Court, and St Peters where there are a high number of empty flats. This is being addressed as we recognise that there is a high-level presence of bedsit accommodation and the small size of the dwellings which are not lettable.

It was advised that all residents who are affected will receive full support throughout the process and any comments can be made to Peter Oliver, Director of Housing and Wellbeing.

## **Digital upgrade**

Upgrade to the Lifeline service has been completed at Sorrel Court, Arnold Smith House, Beresford, Dudley and Babington Court and hopefully Aingarth, Grays Court, St Peters and Riversdale will be completed by the end of May.

It was advised that Martin Court and St Pauls won't get a hard-wired unit and Durham Road will use pendants, these courts are not cost effective but there will be no change to the service provided.

Work will then commence on private bungalows and flats, and the platform that answers the calls.

We have been nominated at the ITech conference for an award for good relation we have had with the contractor who has fitted them, and this is thanks to the wardens and staff who have worked well with the upgrade. There is an increase in the alarm charge, and the courts that have been completed will see this in their service charge, however courts that have not been finished will be charged next year. Screens have been fitted which show messages to the resident's and are displayed near the entrances, and this has proved to be a success.

It was commented that there was a power surge at Arnold Smith House which sent false messages however we are aware of these and are currently sorting this out with the contractor.

All forum members were thanked along with all the residents for their cooperation as it is a major worry taking out the alarm whilst modifications were being made.

## **Utilities**

There has been an increase overall by 10% for electric and gas however these are the current charges nowadays and we have no control over this. Nevertheless, we have been very mindful of the increases, but we must balance out our budget. The Laundry maintenance contract is coming up for renewal and we have been looking at other contractors and by doing this we may possibly reduce the maintenance costs by 30%.

It was commented that at Martin Court, 2 communal showers have not been working since December 2023 and in block B the washing machine also isn't working and that this was unsatisfactory. It was explained that there has been an issue with legionella, and we are trying to resolve this. The washing machines we believe that there is an issue with the

water pressure so we are looking into adjusting this which could be a consequence of the legionella. It was pointed out that it is more important to deal with the legionella issue for the health and safety of our residents than having a working washing machine when there is already one available in the other block.

It was advised that complaints can be raised through our website or by telephone and if the complaint isn't resolved then it will go through to the next stage of the complaint process. Wardens do try to resolve such issues and work with teams inhouse to get issues resolved however it was explained that the wardens have no more power than the residents and their role is to support the residents, so we encourage residents to report repairs online or by telephone.

It was acknowledged that residents are unhappy they are paying service charges for items that are not working and the length of time it takes to get them repaired so this will be feedback to Peter Oliver.

## **Contractors**

Hopefully the new laundry contract will be completed and signed in the Summer, we have chosen a local company, and we are hopeful that the cost will be less than it has been for the last 5 years.

We are renewing our window cleaning contract, and we are currently sourcing quotes from contractors. The new contract will only be for one year as we need to get an idea on what is happening to the Courts and tenders will be determined on 60% quality and 40% price. It was mentioned by a member that there are some complaints about the current window cleaning however these should be addressed with the warden or the cleaners.

We have a new Head of Landlord Service, Janet Glass, who is very experienced, knowledgeable and cares about our tenants. We will organise for her to come to the Senior Citizen Forum to introduce herself hopefully in June - **ACTION**

## **Update on Flooding works:**

The floods that happened in January some properties were affected in Syston. We have moved people out of St Pauls who were affected and are in process of being decanted to temporary council accommodation. Some residents at St Pauls Court have moved temporarily to St Peters or are staying with friends or family. Our insurance loss adjusters have been out on sight at St Pauls, however the indication to repair our affected properties could take up to 9 months before people can move back in. All residents who were affected have been commended on how well they have handed the situation. Managers are meeting every week to provide and receive updates on the current situation.

It was asked by the Forum how we can prevent this from happening again. There has been a pamphlet distributed in Syston which states that the Environmental Agency are responsible as the brook is classed as a river. Locals want flood gates installed and everyone agreed however if there are any concerns then residents must get in touch with Charnwood Borough Council to receive support and updates.

It was stipulated to the Forum how important it is to have contents insurance and this can be done through Charnwood Borough Council and details can be found on our website:

[https://www.charnwood.gov.uk/pages/home\\_contents\\_insurance](https://www.charnwood.gov.uk/pages/home_contents_insurance)

## 4: Tenant Bid Presentation

It was explained how the Tenant Bid is voted and that we have a vote in March and in September. The voting at the Charnwood Housing Resident Forum will take place on the 14<sup>th</sup> March 2024.

Tenant bid funding is there to improve the environment and community in which people live and residents can apply for the funding through the Customer Engagement Team, who will then work with our contractors and Asset Management team where necessary.

There were 2 completed bids last year as follows:

- Babington Court received a new shed and an extension to their existing decking.
- Arnold Sith House had glazing fitted in their gazebo.

### March 2024 Bid Applications:

#### ***Babington Court Rothley***

To purchase 4 benches and 1 table to use within the new decking area and gardens.

**Cost: £1,580.00**

#### ***Beresford Court, Shepshed***

To erect a garden shed near block a with a concrete base.

**Cost: £3,919.00**

#### ***Beresford Court, Shepshed***

To purchase 2 garden benches for block A and 2 garden benches for block B

**Cost: £1,340.00**

#### ***Riversdale Court, Birstall***

To purchase 1 raised flower bed

**Cost: £615.00**

**Total Cost of Applications £7,454.00**

The overall annual budget is £30,000.00 which is split into the general housing fund, which is £15,000.00, the Senior Citizen being £12,000.00 and a contingency of £3,000.00.

It was explained to the forum that we currently have 6 applications for the general housing fund with a total potential cost of £15,775.00. Therefore, this is an overspend of £775.00 and it was asked if this overspend could be taken from the Senior Citizen fund which has been underspent by £4,546.00.

**All agreed the money can be transferred over to the general housing fund.**

## Customer Engagement Update

An update to the forum was provided as follows:

6 Month tenant court meetings are commencing in April 2024 and will continue through to May.

We are holding a pop-up roadshow in Shepshed on the 21<sup>st</sup> March where the Tenancy Estate Team and Anti-Social Behaviour team will be in attendance amongst other officers. This is from 10am until 2pm at the Shepshed Town Council Offices.

We are also holding other pop-up roadshows in Birstall on 8<sup>th</sup> July, Thurmaston on the 12<sup>th</sup> August and one towards the end of the year however this date is to be confirmed.

We are holding a pop-up event in Thurmaston on the 24<sup>th</sup> April for local residents to attend and we will have the tenancy and estate management officer in attendance.

The garden competition is now open and can apply online or paper form. Applications need to be in by the 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2024 and judging will take place between the 22<sup>nd</sup> July and the 26<sup>th</sup> July

Our Annual Tenant Networking event is on the 13<sup>th</sup> June at the Town Hall.

The Tenancy and Estate Management Estate Walks are taking place on the 15<sup>th</sup> May at Warwick Way, 19<sup>th</sup> June around Tuckers Road, 19<sup>th</sup> September around Shelthorpe area and 15<sup>th</sup> October in Quorn.

We have a creative competition currently running and is due to close on the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024.

We have funded 22 Community Initiative fund Community Initiative fund applications with a total cost of £5551.87.

We continue to hold monthly Charnwood Housing resident Forums and quarterly Editorial Panel's.

## 5: Court Enquiries

All attendees were asked if there were any issues within their courts, however they were invited to raise issues at their forthcoming tenant court meetings which are commencing in April.

**Dudley Court:** The guttering needs replacing however Charnwood Borough Council do have a programme of repairs to guttering's so a date can be sought.

Parking is an issue at the court however it was explained that this is a common problem and there is little we can do. We do have land however to convert into car parking spaces would be too costly.

**Arnold Smith House:** An update on the scooter store is required and this will be investigated.

**Beresford Court:** There has been new doors fitted and a ramp from the communal lounge and this has recently been completed, this has been a great success.

There is a large amount of moss on the roof and gutters so investigations will be made to see what is happening.

**Sorrel Court:** Queried the scooter store as worked has seemed to have stopped, however work regarding this will be updated when known.

**Aingarth:** The main entrance is still an issue with vehicles blocking the entry, County Council will not allow double yellow lines and Charnwood Borough Council have done as much as they can.

**St Pauls:** It was asked about the storage of items for the residents affected by the flooding, and it was explained this is currently under discussion with our insurance company.

**Riversdale:** Guttering issues so this will be updated along with the other courts.

**Durham Road:** The community spirit seems to have diminished so the Customer Engagement Team will work with the residents.

**Grays Court:** Gardening work has recently been completed and was commended. There has been a water leak outside flat 2, this has been reported and a visit made however we need to investigate for an update.

**Babington Court:** Will raise at Tenant Court Meeting

**Field Court:** Will raise at Tenant Court Meeting

**Martin Court:** Will raise at Tenant Court Meeting

**St Peters:** Will raise at Tenant Court Meeting

Concerns were raised with the length of time it takes to carry out repairs, so this will be put forward to the repairs team.

## 6: Future Agenda Ideas:

### Community Initiative fund:

This funding is to help social exclusion and can be applied for up to 3 times a year with a maximum fund of £250.00 per application. The application needs reviewing to make it more exclusive to everyone and more fit for purpose. We want to encourage this funding to build communities, so it needs to be more open and flexible.

### New Head of Landlord Services:

To meet the new Head of Landlord Services Janet Glass

### Digital Inclusion project:

Many people feel they are digitally excluded so recourses will be shared within the forum in where to seek help and advice.

**Meeting Closed At; 1:00 pm**

**Next Meeting; Babington Court Rothley Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> June 2024 at 10:00am**