



MEETING MINUTES

- Purpose of Meeting**
1. Welcome and Introduction
 2. Presentation by the Customer Liaison Officer.
 3. Update from Members
 4. Actions from previous meeting
 5. Any other business

Date 25th May 2023

Venue The Hut, Old Ashby Road, Loughborough

Attendance:

Members	Janice Wright	Senior Citizens Forum (SCF)
	Phil Hudson	Fielding Court Association
	Craig Jordan	Ashby Road Estate Community Centre
	Dianne Lockwood	Chapman Street
	John Mason	Arnold Smith House
	Ireen Kennedy	Park Court
	June Bush	Thorpe Acre Community Association
	Stuart Wells	Fielding Court

Guests	Helen Kennedy	Customer Engagement Officer
	Andrew Everitt-Stewart	Customer Engagement Officer
	Emily Conway	Customer Liaison Officer

Apologies	Tracey Riley	Chapman Street Loughborough
	Mark Biggs	Thorpe Acre Community Association
	Gerry Ryan	Oxford Court Syston
	Trish Edwards	Staveley Court Loughborough
	Sally Ramalho	Principal Officer
	Wayne Bridges	Brook Street Shepshed
	Christopher Hipwell	Selbourne Court Loughborough
	Paul Maine	Chapman Street Garden Association
	Christine Maine	Chapman Street Garden Association



Meeting started at 1pm.

1: Introduction

2: Presentation from the Customer Liaison Officer

- This role sits within the Asset Management Team and falls under Repairs and Investment within Landlord Services.
- Asset Management are responsible for Capital Works (major improvements) to Council Housing. The budget for 2023/24 is just under £6.5M

The Asset Management Team is currently made up of:

- Principal Officer Investment and Programme Delivery
- Team Leader
- 4 x Surveyors
- Stock Condition Surveyor
- Two administration assistants
- Customer Liaison Officer

The contractors currently being employed are:

CLC	Major Adaptations
J Tomlinson	Kitchens, bathrooms, structural, major voids
Harmony	Fire Doors and Passive Fire Works
Bamfords	Communal Doors
Synergize	EWI surveys and loft insulation
J Wrights	Roofing, fascia's & soffits, and loft insulation
Ian Williams	Planned maintenance – external improvements, communal decoration
To be confirmed	Window and Door contractor – currently in mobilisation



Charnwood Housing Residents Forum (CHRF)

- Workstreams are split across Project Surveyors who manage the contractors on site and who carry out “demo day visits”, “work in progress” visits and handover inspections.
- The Customer Liaison Officer works across all workstreams, depending on where support is required most.
- Involved in setting up contractor processes, signing off tenant communications (letters/leaflets etc) and sending out initial introduction letters to tenants on the programme.
- Time is mostly spent on Major Adaptations, Kitchens and Bathrooms as this is often the most disruptive work being carried out, however if issues occur across other streams, would always visit or get involved to help resolve.

Customer Liaison Officer’s main responsibilities are:

- Ensuring effective liaison between tenants, leaseholders, and contractors, including contractor processes, tenant literature, monitoring complaints, customer satisfaction reports and spot checking open sites by visiting.
- Problem solving issues arising in relation to contractors working on site across all workstreams. This includes things like refusals, no access, decants, identifying and providing support to more vulnerable tenants receiving works.
- Major Adaptations including processes, programme, Occupational Therapist issues that are identified and facilitating feasibility decisions via the Adaptations Review Group.
- Complaints from Members of Parliament and councillor enquiries (some time is spent putting together information for freedom of information requests and Housing Ombudsman cases)

Monthly customer satisfaction reports are produced for J Tomlinson (Kitchens and Bathrooms) and CLC (Major Adaptations). This includes inputting the data for the following Key Performance Indicators:

- Time in Property (number of days work has taken to complete against the target)
- Right First Time (zero snags identified at handover inspection)
- Overall Customer Satisfaction

Performance data – March 2023

Stream	Target timescale	Average days in property	Customer Satisfaction – overall (MLAP 95%)	Customer satisfaction – keeping you informed	Customer satisfaction – time taken
Kitchen	10	23	100%	100%	80%
Bathroom	7	21.5	100%	75%	60%
Level Access Showers	10	41.4	100%	100%	100%



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- There have been some teething problems with both contractors.
- J Tomlinson have stopped opening new work on site to catch up and close out properties. They have had some serious issues with their subcontractor, but they are working hard in the background to put something more robust in place. They will be opening again once they are confident that they can deliver the programme.
- The Asset team are working hard to support them and the tenants on site experiencing the issues.
- On a positive note, tenants are extremely happy with the work once it has been completed. Overall satisfaction has been high.

Adaptations – waiting times.

Number on the programme – 120 (as of 17/05/2023)

Adaptation type	Number on programme
Level access showers	71
Over Bath Showers	24
Internal alterations	5
Ramps and external alterations	17
Hardstanding	3

- As you will most be aware, we had a backlog of adaptations going into the contract with Fortem. This backlog was never completed. Unfortunately, lockdown and subsequently ended the contract with Fortem, has meant that the backlog has increased over time. This is the total number of OT recommendations on the current programme (backlog and new recommendations).
- CLC are slowly working their way through the programme. It was a challenging start, but they seem to have turned things around since the issues at Christmas. The figures for March are affected by some historic open properties. Performance is expected to improve over the coming months.
- Tenants are also really pleased with the completed adaptations work and overall customer satisfaction for March was 100%.
- It was explained that the job is challenging at times, but extremely rewarding, and that complaints are often turned into compliments.

Questions asked by members (answers are in italic):

- **Question submitted prior to the meeting via email:** How are the contractors progressing with the adaptations especially the major ones as I know there is quite a lot of work for them, and from my last enquiry there was a lot of work in progress. *See above figures for the answer.*



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- Will the number of contactors slow work down compared to having one major contractor? *No, this should not be the case as multiple contracts are being run at the same time. In theory, we hope that this will increase the number of works being delivered.*
- Should contractors be using tenants bins on site to dispose of their waste during jobs? *No. Any issues like this should be reported to the contractor immediately, or Charnwood Borough Council.*
- How long are the new contracts? *The contracts with both J Tomlinson and CLC are 2 years (with the option to extend for a further 2 years).*
- Is there a penalty built into contracts for running over target times? *Kitchens, bathrooms and major adaptations are monitored by Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) which monitor “time in property”, whether the property was handed over “right first time” (zero snags at handover) and “overall customer satisfaction”. Where the contractor fails to meet the minimum level of acceptable performance for one or more of these KPIs, there is a financial implication.*
- Did Charnwood Borough Council investigate the capabilities of contractors sufficiently? *The procurement process is extremely thorough and rigorous. If anyone would like more information about this process, they would need to speak to one of the managers as the Customer Liaison Officer was not involved in the process this time.*
- Has Charnwood Borough Council failed tenants by appointing the wrong contractors? *No, it is early days and there will always be teething problems at the start of any new contracts. The team are working closely with the contractors to ensure that performance improves and all issues on site are being escalated up through the relevant managers. The completed works being delivered are of a very high standard and overall satisfaction levels are very high.*
- If the current Customer Liaison Officer had not been on maternity leave, would they have been involved in the procurement process. *Yes, potentially. The Customer Liaison Officer has been involved in the procurement process for previous contractors.*
- Can these minutes be shared with senior managers to show tenants concerns. *Customer Engagement will investigate doing this.*
- Can tenants visit and inspect works that have been completed? *It would be difficult to arrange for a group to visit someone’s home. It may be possible to visit a void but it would depend on timescales as we wouldn’t be able to hold up a property being let. Customer Liaison Officer to investigate this further.*
- The chair asked that the fact that tenants are happy with the work completed but not the length of time work is taking be pointed out at the next Housing Management Advisory Board by a member who sits on this committee.
- Were targets discussed when J Tomlinson attended the next Housing Management Advisory Board. *The HMAB member and Customer Engagement Team confirmed that they were.*



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- Were any kitchens or bathrooms completed at all in April? *No major adaptations were offered for handover in April. (Added into the notes following meeting - 12 standard bathrooms and 14 kitchens were successfully handed over in April).*
- Why does the contractor not complete a kitchen installation within 5 days with a qualified kitchen fitter? *The contractor runs a programme to deliver the works, as multiple properties are being worked in at any time with different trades attending on each day. When this is set up properly, it is very effective. The Customer Liaison Officer confirmed that if there is ever any consultation required on this process, we will ask the group to be involved.*
- Are contractors entering properties and leaving them with nobody working in them before the work is complete? *Yes, there have been issues with this due to resources of subcontractors.*
- Are Occupational Therapists recommendations done through Adult Social Care at Leicestershire County Council? *Yes, although some cases are referred to the Lightbulb Team for assessment. There is a waiting list for assessments.*
- Is this process the same for sheltered courts? *Yes, all requests for Occupational Therapist assessments go through Adult Social Care at Leicestershire County Council.*
- Is sheltered looked at as a whole scheme or individual properties with regards to adaptations? *When schemes are being refurbished, this would be a consideration. For instance, level access showers were installed throughout at Riversdale Court. However, if someone requires an adaptation within a sheltered scheme, they would need to contact Adult Social Care for an assessment.*
- Does the Customer Liaison Officer work with tenancy support? *Yes, if there are issues that are identified where tenancy support is required. The Customer Liaison Officer will visit some works in progress weekly or daily if that support is required. However, the responsibility for communicating daily with customers is down to the contractor.*
- When a plan is developed for an adaptation, how easy is it to then change that plan if needs be? *It depends on the type of adaptation. If changes are needed to be looked at, these would generally go back to the Occupational Therapist to sign off.*
- Are voids being worked on too? *J Tomlinson are completing some major voids. However, the Customer Liaison Officer is not involved in this stream of works.*
- Are fire doors being inspected now Harmony have been appointed? *Yes, Harmony have started to survey and install fire doors.*

3: Update from Members



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- **Park Court, Loughborough**, the bins are still a problem and are not being emptied in the bin store for numbers 25-30. Is there any help available for gardening at Park Court? *Customer Engagement to look at available help schemes. Also to chase up the bin problem.*
- **Riversdale Court, Birstall**, they held a Coronation Party which was very successful.
- **Ashby Road Community Centre**, The Sea Life Centre trip that is being planned is now open to all tenants. The garden to the rear of the Hut is currently being redeveloped and landscaped.
- **Arnold Smith House**, the cleaner has recently retired, and residents held a party to say thank you and presented her with various retirement gifts. However, there is a general apathy within to court towards social events.
- **Chapman Street Loughborough**, nothing to report.
- **Fielding Court Loughborough**, planning has been given to erect the gazebo purchased with money donated by Leicester City Football Club., this should be finished within the next couple of weeks.
- **Thorpe Acre Community Association**, they held a coronation party which was a success. They hold coffee mornings every Friday, the new committee is now in place following their AGM.

Customer Engagement update:

- An update was provided on the Tenant Networking Event 2023.
- An update on current proposed Tenant Bids was given. Brook Street Landscaping has been suspended due to current anti-social behaviour problems at the site.
- The Communal Cleaning Inspection project is ongoing and being reviewed currently. A training session was held on 24.05.23 and was very successful.
- Tenant Court visits are now complete and were very successful.
- Customer Engagement will be arranging a social event at an upcoming meeting to be confirmed, to thank all attendees for their continued commitment.
- Members were reminded that Customer Engagement are available to advise and help.

4: Actions from previous meeting

Actions for Customer Engagement:

1. To talk to the housing officer for Park Court about replacing the existing bins with Eurobins. *The bins at Park Court are kept within bin store areas, the bin store areas are not large enough to keep euro bins in. Our department and Housing have been monitoring the ongoing issues here and the last time I*



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checked these stores (2 weeks ago) rubbish levels were low and manageable and our contractors were okay to collect the bins. Having 240 & 360 bins makes it much easier for Monday Cleans or G&S Services to service the area and clear if needs be. If we put in euro bins, I do think that it will encourage more waste which will become unmanageable.

2. To liaise with the Chapman Street Garden Association to see if we can help get things restarted. *Customer Engagement have emailed Paul Maine, the Chair of the association to offer help.*
3. Pass on information about the Tenant Networking Event when it is confirmed that the Town Hall is available after the recent fire. *This is being publicised on all platforms.*
4. A CHRF member would like to become a Communal Cleaning Inspector, Customer Engagement to arrange. *They attended the training on the 24th May and are to become a cleaning inspector.*

ACTIONS For the Contract Officer:

1. To add the ASB reporting form to the reporting page. *This has been requested and will be added 20.04.23.*
2. Look into a permissions form so that customers can get someone else to fill in and submit online forms with their permission. *This is ongoing.*

5: Any other business: None stated.

Actions:

Customer Engagement actions:

- Look into the possibility of sharing these minutes with senior management to express tenant's concerns. *Customer Liaison Officer to investigate.*
- Review the performance of contractors in 6 months' time to see if figures are improving. *Customer Engagement have arranged this with the Customer Liaison Officer.*
- Look at possible volunteer help for gardening at Park Court Loughborough.
- Chase up the bin problem at Park Court, bin store 25-30. *This is being monitored by the contracts officer.*

Actions for the Customer Liaison Officer



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- Investigate the possibility on tenants inspecting some finished works.
- Investigate these minutes being shared with management.

Meeting Closed At; 3:00pm

Next Meeting; Committee Room 2, Southfields main building, Southfields Road, Loughborough 1:00pm on the 22nd June 2023