

## **Update on Service Improvement Groups & City Wide Groups**

### **1. Leaseholders Action Group**

Latest meeting minutes not yet agreed

### **2. Home Service Improvement Group**

Main discussion points from meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> March 2018

- Report from Core Partnership Group, Resident Inspectors & EDB Panel
- Windows replacement program for 2018-19, replacing at 365 approx properties
- Tyfoam replacement program & discussion on insulation across all stock
- Internal decorations program discussed
- Update on procurement for Housing repairs, planned maintenance and capital works with proposed timeline

### **3. Business & Value for Money Service Improvement Group**

Main discussion points from meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> January 2018

- Reviewed update of Universal Credit statistics
- Reviewed Budget Task & Finish Group summary
- Agreed plans to promote transport sharing among residents attending meetings
- Agreed action items for the coming year
- Discussed Partnership Core Group Update for Home Group

### **4. Tenancy & Neighbourhood Service Improvement Group**

Main discussion points from meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> April 2018 ( February meeting postponed because of snow)

- Tribute to Ann Ewings and her contribution to the group.
- Election of Vic Dodd as Vice Chair
- Speaker Emily Kenward , founder of Time to Talk befriending charity.
- Workshop planning on Isolation & Loneliness started
- Star Survey Satisfaction and presentation styles
- Dates for future meetings: 22 May, 28 August, 27 November

## **5. Involvement & Empowerment Service Improvement Group**

Main discussion points from the meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> March 2018

- Resident Involvement Budget update
- Review of Learning Programme for Tenants and Leaseholders
- Publishing new TRA Best Practise Handbook
- Planning TRA How to make the most out of your group? Event
- Planning next tenant-led Citywide Conference
- Reviewing group's Terms of Reference
- Designing group's Business Plan for next 12 months

## **6. Tenant Disability Network**

Minutes of January meeting attached

## **7. Seniors' Housing Action Group**

Minutes of 24<sup>th</sup> January meeting attached



## **Present**

Tony McCoy – Sloane Court

Martin Cunningham Central

Jason Williams Central

Chris ElShabba East

Lynne Bennett East

Muriel Briault West

Barry Kent North

Officers: Lily Storey Possability People

Sarah Potter Adaptations Manager

Rebecca Mann

Apologies Ann Packham West and Alison Gray West

## **Introductions**

Minutes Agreed

## **Agenda**

**Item 1 Possability People:** Lily talked about the work of Possability People who used to be known as The Fed. They encourage and bring together residents with impairments to help shape services and give support to them across the city.. Their work is largely around improving the accessibility of buildings throughout Brighton and Hove by working with residents and doctors and service providers alike.

The meetings are every 6 weeks and allow residents to have an input into shaping their services and bringing to light any problems that they experience as service users. They also provide benefits and advice.

They operate an open forum whereby any resident can go along and with any problems they might have to share with others and get support.

General discussion about the difficulties for residents with sight problems accessing the streets in the city due to the positioning of bollards and boards and tables and chairs.

(no further action) Lily said she would like to come to our future meetings.

## **Item 2**

### **Sarah Potter Adaptations**

Continuing loft and extension scheme in properties suitable to provide suitable adapted accommodation for residents who might be overcrowded and in need of adaptations.

Door replacement programme. Working with Property and Investment and Mechanical and Electrical to ensure that the doors are wide when being replaced.

Wash and dry toilets contract is now in place and they will be maintained through the contract. Residents should call Repairs if they experience any problems.

Bathroom adaptations agreement that when equipment is installed that contractors will make good any damage or replace any other items so that they all match.

New Home for Neighbourhoods – Adapts still continue to work with the new builds.

### **Item 3**

#### **Mobility Scooters**

Residents should contact Housing Customer Services if they're thinking of purchasing a mobility scooter and the council will try to accommodate them where they can but they can not be left in commonways.

The council is still looking for suitable places to provide storage.

**Item 4 Newsletter** – Becca has distributed them however probably better to print less in future. Please keep the newsletter stories coming in. Lily has also agreed to provide articles as and when.

Next meetings

19 March, 21 May, 23 July, 17 September, 19 November.

Meeting	<b>Senior Housing Action Group</b>		
Attendees	<p><b>Resident's</b> :Roy Crowhurst (Chair SHAG, Woods House), Diana Ward Davis (Sanders House) Ray Goble (Elwyn Jones Court), , Walter Sargison (Broadfields), Eileen Stewart (Somerset Point), Peter Picton, Steve Bowers (Hazelholt) Bob Spacie, Elizabeth Tinkler, John McCabe (Laburnum Grove)</p> <p>Jean Davis (Leach Court)</p> <p><b>Partners:</b> Mike Bojczuk (Older Peoples Council) Peter Lloyd (Health Watch) Jamie Roberts, Ash Jones, Peter Spink (East Sussex Fire and Rescue Services)</p> <p><b>Staff:</b> Peter Huntbach (Seniors Hosing Manger) Larissa Reed (Executive Director - Neighbourhoods Communities &amp; Housing), Hannah Barker (Resident Involvement Officer)</p>		
Apologies	John Merrington, Tony Brown (Evelyn Court)		
Venue	Leach Court	Produced by	Hannah Barker
Date Time	Wednesday 24 <sup>th</sup> January 2018	Minutes completed	11 April 18

A 1 minute silence was held in the memory of Becky Purnell and Ann Ewing.

## 1 - Update on actions from previous meeting

### General discussion on a range of issues

#### Decorating

- **Communal ways** aren't being done every 5 years as they 'should' be. Some look bad. Suggestion that standards are slipping as Mears contract is coming to an end. Set up a working party to look at this. **ACTION 1**
- Limited '**Discretionary scheme**' budget to support people who can't decorate their own flat; applicants can apply every two years for either;
  - Mears to decorate one room
  - Decorating materials for one room (friend or family member to do the work)
  - (No room more than every 10 years)

Discussion: chair took issue with idea that an elderly person would try to decorate and could cause self an injury.

- Laburnum Grove resident paid £900 to have whole flat decorated. Carers took bank card and pin to buy furniture. **A:** this issue was raised before with your ward councillor
- Flats should be in a reasonable condition. Group can look at the **Lettable Standard** – (sets standard for empty properties renovations conducted by contractors.)
- **Somerset Point** new decorating of low quality; no undercoat, new paint peeling.

Residents did some tidy up paintwork including one or two doors that are bad around letterbox areas.

Peter H: that sounds awful; service is paying for this work. Will look into it. **ACTION 2**

- **Laburnum Grove** guest room; Can residents do the decorating themselves? Fine as long as we look at health and safety with you and do a risk assessment. Peter can work with group to find funding for paint/ materials – Seniors Housing service has some budget. Also the community payback team do some works around schemes.

**ACTION 3**

- **Elwyn Jones (3 yrs) and Woods House (5 yrs)** common way decoration good standard. Suggestion that different contractors standards vary across the city.

**Repairs:**

- Somerset Point reported various issues with draft proofing, veranda doors.
- Larissa R: intends to look at repairs. Would like tenants to feed into discussion.
- Property & Investment team to talk to about repairs at next meeting. **ACTION 4**
- Spokes persons and representatives from schemes can also use the **'Reps Repairs Reporting procedure'** if they are dissatisfied (contact Resident Involvement Officer)
- Heating problems reported. This is very important to us and we will always be able to lend out emergency heaters. Call repairs helpdesk.

**Standards of Mears contract**

- Additional resource is being put in to monitor the contract; meeting fortnightly.
- Standards of satisfaction survey are still high. Resident: Interested to know what percentage have said repairs standards have gone down.
- We are looking at a variety of options for responsive repairs, planned and major works for future; splitting over 2 or 3 contractors, bringing some contracts in house.

<b>Actions 1</b>	Look into setting up a working party to look at decorating standards to communal ways	<b>Roy/ Peter</b>
<b>2</b>	Look into Somerset Point paint standards	<b>Peter H</b>
<b>3</b>	Meet with reps to move forward to support Laburnum Grove residents to set up risk assessment and funding to decorate guest room if they wish.	<b>Peter H</b>
<b>4</b>	Invite P&I to attend for repairs item next meeting if Roy wishes	<b>Peter/ Hannah</b>
<b>5</b>	Check install date of Laburnum Grove Shower (EDB 2016-2017)	<b>Hannah</b>

**2 Chairs Communications**

- **EDB Budget review** will be carried out. Chair reported reservations echoing west Area panel.
- **Q:** Resident question about **constitutions of Tenants Associations (TA)** with idea these be aligned with SHAG constitution. **A:** city wide groups like SHAG function differently entity; TAs sit within a framework of the Recognition Policy and Model

constitution. Leech Court to resolve TA constitution independently to SHAG.

- **News recently**, Sheltered Housing, Wokingham, reports of abuse
  - Brighton service have various functions in place to help prevent abuse:
    - Scheme Managers + daily call service, new equipment 'I'm ok' button. Every resident is accounted for at end of each working week. All staff trained up in safeguarding.
    - we promote health services, eg health watch & safeguarding
  - Chair pointed out mistaken public perception classifying residents as vulnerable. Peter, we always challenge perceptions when we can. The article is misleading.

**Q: re Studio flats conversions:** Confirm money no longer available to convert? Or what happens to that allocated £5M?

**A:** We only do them as and when they become empty, if they are large enough to be converted. The money will be reallocated to other things. **ACTION 6**

**Discussion point:** Buildings not fit for purpose. Many converted rather than purpose built retirement homes.

<b>Action</b>  6	Check if £5M for studio conversions is reallocated and to where?	<b>Hannah/ Peter</b>	<b>Due</b>
------------------------	--	--------------------------	------------

### 3 Fire Service

- **Fire evacuation procedures notices** are going up around the city, which is great.
- **Home visits** can be arranged for anyone who wants more fire safety about inside their home – people sometimes unknowingly put themselves at risk.
- **Stay Put policy:** Flats are 'compartmentalised' meaning that the walls and flooring are fire resistant for up to an hour. Unless a resident finds smoke is permeating through, then their safety is at risk.
- **Example:** If fire on 6<sup>th</sup> floor, whilst the crew set up (up to 15 minutes) we would clear neighbours either side, and we would knock on the door. People above would not be evacuated as protected by the concrete floor. If it was a windy day, where the fire might whip up around the side of the building, we might possibly. **Every fire is different and we take each on its individual case.**
- **Mobility scooter storage:** Issue across seniors and general housing. Should it be a separate store room where they can be charged? Can't be in common ways nor inside blocking internal access/exit. Council looking to renovate storage areas at the moment?
  - Common ways are to be sterile for safety of residents and fire service.
  - Scooters and other obstructions will be removed.
  - We ask residents to store mobility scooters outside of building, not in communal spaces, unless specifically fire risk assessed. Such as Rose Hill.
  - Some people and we refer them to ESFRS for safe storage.
  - Residents must ask our permission before purchasing one. There is not



always a safe storage option. Same a car/ motorbike.

- Encouraging shop mobility hire a scooter. (Residents comment – very expensive.)
- **Q:** If I set off alarm off with a toaster, Care Link Call checks if I'm ok. If I don't answer, how long would it take before fire service got there **A:** 4 or 5 mins.
- **Q:** Regarding a storage cupboard with radiator pipes, gets very hot, is it a fire hazard? **A:** Not enough heat is transmitted by hot water for fire risk. Also, we wouldn't advise you to store large amounts of flammable inside a flat.
- **Q:** Are the 2 layers of plasterboard between each flat enough fire resistant? **A:** Plasterboard is used because it is fire resistant. Also often a fire safety barrier is sandwiched between.
- **Q:** Somerset Point fire escape route with open slated window, could it draw a fire dangerously? No, from description difficult to assess, but sounds like the corridor is a safe area. We can arrange a visit to look at the area and explain. But this is another reason why don't want people to leave flat as it compromises a safe exit entrance for fire service.
- **Q-** Should communal kitchens have an extinguisher? **A:** Extinguishers and fire blankets are ONLY installed if users of kitchen are trained to use them; people have been badly burned if not trained. Get out of the area and let Fire Service deal with it. Don't tackle it yourself.
- **Q:** How often do they get checked? **A:** They have dates tagged.

### Peters Update

- Good to see new representatives here at the meeting
- **Fire safety policy signs.** Let us know if you haven't seen them, we might need to put more up. Often in lobby for visitors advice.
- **Brookmead** now have people moving in. Invite soon to have a look.
- **Homing in article** pull out about Seniors Housing. Have had people wanting to come to an open day. Residents say is a nice place to live.
- **Q/A** – Resident inspectors can go into empty flat if all essential work been done
- **Red cross first aid training** for residents –3 different schemes took part. Very successful. Focus on older people common sense issues basic advice; e.g. what to do if someone has heart attack or seizure. Can run it anywhere. Red Cross happy to come out. Speak to your Scheme Manager to arrange.

### Lettings – Allocation plan–

- Allocations review – James Crane – is aware of issues including studio flats. He is waiting for a political steer from Housing Committee.
- **Discussion: studio flats.** Some 20/25 people were told they could transfer after accepting a tenancy. However, the policy changed a year ago. BHCC see those people as being 'adequately housed'. James Crane has said he would take the issue to Housing Committee
- Seniors Scheme applicants are being randomly proportioned between homeless or council transfers
- Out of 650 people applied, 15 were registered homeless; the vast majority of applicants are home seekers. Also transfers, as 200 Council tenants want to come into Seniors Housing.

**Chair** : some reservations. Re 30%/20% worries. Doubt people will apply for studio flats, when they would be giving up a 2 bed house. Homeless people will end up with them. And they will likely be male. **A-** one of benefits of random allocations, fair way of allocating.

- **Q-** are people vetted for suitability for a scheme? Or provided with support access?  
**A-** yes, re support: organisations and transitional support, especially around homelessness. Trailblazer & team of staff to support into accommodation.
- **Q-** concern is length of time support takes or carries on for. If have a problem tenant, amount of chances, effects other tenants. **A-** each application is assessed. There are some that are turned down because of a history of inappropriate behaviours. Not risk free. New tenants on an introductory tenancy – easier to end.
- Built into Tenancy Agreement is now a commitment that if tenants will take up support offered if they have a need
- The ASB cases we have currently active within the service are existing long standing tenants. Larissa has asked directorate a review of way we manage ASB. Bringing different teams together. Eg Ginny & Daniel, Complex needs, community

team and noise disputes.

- **Discussion:** 1 in 4 of us will experience a **Mental Health** issue at some point. Many people in schemes have and are living perfectly well. Some minority have mental health breakdown and will work with services. Also the issue of mental capacity – getting older and living longer. Issue around dementia, perhaps need to do more to work with other intervention training so we can flag it up to get help and support. Pressure on Adult social care, psychiatric nursing service, money is not enough for staff equipment training.
- Has to be a need to move. If you are a single person adequate housing is either one bed or studio flat.

### New Tenancy agreement

All tenants will have received a new tenancy agreement.

**Q- If you live above the first floor have to have soft flooring.** Does the Scheme Manager check? Is there help for residents who haven't got money for carpet? **A:** Some charities eg salvation army. We have to work sensitively if we do enforce. We are happy to have a conversation. They should speak to scheme manager we will try to find.

**Q- Have other scheme had cleaners hours cut down?** The new tenancy agreement states homes must be in 'reasonable condition' (where it used to say 'good') is that why?

**A –** Changes to cleaning are not to do with tenancy agreement. Contract with Enviro – costs the same but have to reduce what we do. E.g. some communal lounges were vacuumed every day regardless of whether they needed it

**Q- but cleaning hours are reduced?** **A –** There is a specification cleaners have to adhere to. **ACTION:** Ask Enviro for some comments

**Action**

**Peter to ask Enviro for some comments about Laburnum Grove**

### AOB

#### Leach Court

- Travellers and homeless people reported as using washing machines.
- Car park spaces paid for being used by non-residents. They are in touch with Car Parks & Garages

**Question from Chair:** Service charge (cleaning / scheme managers) costs will be going up approx. 2.5% – are we getting Value for money? Please discuss with your residents; issue will be on the next agenda.

- Peter can provide a breakdown of the £20. Some things are out of our control; eg rents are being pushed down by national legislation. Laundrettes / utilities heating costs.

**Q:** Is it possible to have internet in communal lounges, it can help bring community together. **A-** This idea was raised at a council meeting in November, with the idea to extend councils 'Link free WIFI'. There has been lots of controversy concerning data protection and passwords. Yet to be resolved. Housing officer David Guthrie ICT involved.

### Section 3 – Suggested future items

<b>1</b>	Security Issues in schemes (apologies it might have been on this agenda)
<b>2</b>	Lettable Standard – suggested in discussion (agenda 1) that this is not set suitably for Seniors housing. Peter said we could look at this again.
<b>3</b>	Capital works and decorating of communal hallways – Property & Investment could attend to look at this with the group.