

**Chair:**

Jon Kanareck (JK) – Lewisham Homes, Director of Resident Services

**Lewisham Homes Staff**

Emma Mills (EM) - Head of Home Ownership	Sarah Wilcox-Jones (SWJ) - Director of Repairs
Glenda Omogbai (GO) - Home Ownership	Jez Morris (JM) Customer Experience Project Manager
Yvonne Lemonius (YL) – Home Ownership	Yogesh Vadgama (YV) -Head of Stock Investment

**Guests:**

10 leaseholders attended the meeting.

<b>1</b>	<b>Welcome, Introductions and Housekeeping</b>	
1.1	JK opened the meeting Apologies: no apologies noted.	
1.2	Attendees introduced themselves.	
<b>2</b>	<b>Minutes and Summary from last meeting</b>	
2.1	EM amendment to 6.6 caretakers are not carrying out small repairs. & 6.7 should say historic not pre-historic.	
2.2	A leaseholder has waited 11 months for a new Front entrance door (FED) the appointment to install the door tomorrow has been cancelled today.	
2.3	A leaseholder said her front door has not been surveyed and no one has responded to her messages since before Christmas.	
2.4	<b>Action: YV to follow up on Shellens door installations and update the two leaseholders who raised concerns.</b>	<b>YV</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Action log</b>	
3.1	<b>Item 10:</b> YV there is a significant amount of work to do on housing stock with ex-decorations programme. We are only carrying out cyclical decorations if we are doing other work on the block. Due to rising costs and the priority is building safety and fire safety rather than the ex-decorations.	
3.2	A leaseholder: Basically, there will never be a programme as there will always be other priorities. This impacts on quality of life, mental health, and well-being as the appearance of the building deteriorates. It seems like will never be a budget for cyclical repairs.	
3.3	A leaseholder: is there any portion of service charge for a sinking fund? EM previous consultation with leaseholders resulted in no appetite for sinking funds. Our leases do provide for this; however, it would increase service charges. The results from the last consultation were that leaseholders prefer to put in a savings account and gain interest.	
3.4	JK sinking funds work better in 100% leasehold blocks, as it comes from housing revenue within the block, it is easier when all units are leaseholders.	
3.5	<b>Item 14 and 27:</b>	
3.6	A leaseholder: were supposed to get an update on the 5-year programme by end of March.	<b>EM</b>
3.7	YV, we drafted the first 2 years by the end of March, this has been approved by LBL. The next step is to draft up to 5 years 2027 this needs to be approved by LBL and will be covered under item Major Works item agenda.	
3.8	A leaseholder asked about the cyclical programme.	

3.9	<p>YV there has never been a programme of cyclical works for painting, repointing, etc. JK there was a 5-year program, this slipped to 7 years and then so on. Cyclical works are dependent on the budget, and in the current climate it has been difficult to commit to this.</p>
3.10	<p>A leaseholder: his Victorian period property works were carried out was to replace chimney pots with terracotta pots which in good condition. When asked for evidence I was provided photos of a different property. The chimney stacks seemed fine. This reduced the aesthetic of the building and then I was asked to pay for this.</p>
3.11	<p>JK asked YV with the number of questions received whether we would share the survey with leaseholders, they would like to see the stock condition survey, and is there any information that can be shared?</p>
3.12	<p>YV short answer yes however, it would be time consuming as the format is not user friendly. We did provide information for an enquiry into Dacre's estate, and it is not easy to navigate or interpret the data. The stock condition survey is not a report that leaseholders would be familiar with, it's a giant database with estimated dates for various properties. Tailoring this for specific properties can be done but it is time consuming. The stock condition survey was carried out in 2019, and reports were produced in early 2020.</p>
3.13	<p>JK we will have to revisit the stock condition survey on a rolling programme, every 5 years this will be done.</p>
3.14	<p>JK: Can the stock condition survey be summarised for leaseholders?</p>
3.15	<p>YV: Why are people asking to see stock condition survey? Is it because they just want to know what is going to be done and when? If people want notifications in advance of when the work is going to occur, we can work on the online portal to provide information about the 5-year programme.</p>
3.16	<p>A leaseholder: previously submitted a FOI request for all historical survey for her terrace before going to court but what was provided didn't help.</p>
3.17	<p><b>Item 29:</b> EM Fire door inspections will be £22 per leaseholder annually under building safety regulations.</p>
3.18	<p>A leaseholder: When will I get the new door and when will the inspections happen?</p>
3.19	<p>JK assumes 12 months from the installation.</p>
3.20	<p>EM whether you have a new door or not the case would be to check the doors annually, under the building safety Act. To follow up with the Building Safety Team.</p>
4	<p><b>Planned Major Works update</b></p>
4.1	<p>YV capital works programme up to 5 years, is updated every year. The aim is to publish this to make it available on the website for leaseholders.</p>
4.2	<p>The gap between what we need to do and what the Council can afford to do is getting bigger, so cyclical works are being delayed, including structural, damp and mould works. We have a limited amount of money for cyclical work, but an ever-increasing demand to keep people safe directed from the local government.</p>
4.3	<p>YV: 2023-2024 programme has been drafted and approved and will be put on the website. This 5-year programme will be finalised by the end of April 2023. However, this will come with a health warning and be subject to change due to ongoing changes, such as revisions to the Building Safety Act.</p>
4.4	<p>YV: the Tragic death of Awaab Ishak who died due to the condition of his home highlights the need for all landlords trying to do all they can to avoid such occurrences. This has an impact on the availability of funds for improvements. Door entry systems or lights are reasonable requests, but we are not in normal times, decisions are made with the Council</p>

	on works. We are doing works that are the utmost priority, the regulator and Government set the priorities.	
4.5	A leaseholder: everyone understands public services are squeezed but, there is a budget that comes from rents/service charges. The Major Works and Asset Team must take into consideration leaseholders' concerns and the works to be carried out. I am disappointed that of last year's budget, 75% was spent on mitigation and legal fees. This could be spent on what residents want and keep expenses for leaseholders to a minimum.	
4.6	YV: valid point. We have been procuring work efficiently over the last 10 years and it's hard to decide what work we should do. We try to program works in a logical way to reduce costs but then works may be done earlier, i.e., to use scaffolding for multiple works.	
4.7	A leaseholder: Has a small terraced top floor flat, there have been several repeat applications for windows. Every time I contact them, they say only fireworks are being done. Why are you not selling the freehold? As a freeholder we could do the work ourselves. My EPC rating has expired if it was under D would have been eligible for an insulation grant spoken to by Jenny Chaplin.	
4.8	YV there are over 5000 leaseholders and 120 property blocks occupied by 100% leaseholders, the Council are not keen to do this. You could undertake the work yourself, as a leaseholder as you may be available to get private funding.	
4.9	JK you will need to write in to ask for landlords' permission.	
4.10	YV there's various grant funding available to housing associations, local authority, and private sector. A £3.1 million pounds bid was successful, and we have to match this, there are different rules dependent on who is applying for the grants.	
4.11	A leaseholder: A one size fits all approach to carry out major works is not ideal. I received notice of estimate which was £30k, this covered replacement to windows replaced 4 years earlier.	
4.12	A leaseholder: Roof which was replaced 2 years earlier is getting replaced again, with no consultation. When painting your own hallway, special paints should be used. For example, a small access corridor to paint two walls exceeded £1k, measurements were done wrong of my hallway. These issues have been dragging on for years and I am not sure what the solution is.	
4.13	JK: These issues have been raised for 2 years, YV can we visit Martin and come to a resolution?	
	<b>Action YV &amp; JK to arrange visit EM to provide contact info.</b>	<b>YV &amp; JK</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Repairs Service Update</b>	
5.1	SWJ - Since June 2022 we have been working on improvements to the service, especially the customer journey. In September 2022 we identified requirements around repairs and what was not going well. We have not invested in building, leaking pipes and ingress, especially in high rise blocks.	
5.2	In October 2022 a repairs specialist joined. We completed a mini restructure and lost some repairs managers, operatives left, and we subcontracted work. In January/February 2023 recruited to vacancies, but still have 9 vacant posts. Our re-launched plan to take us up to September 23 focuses on a damp, mould and leaks specialist team. Focusing on controlling costs and the difficulty for residents to get through to the Repairs service.	

5.3	A leaseholder (see 4.5) mentioned mitigation of legal fees, however, it was 75% of the disrepair budget was spent not repairs as a whole. Looking at legal cases, our in-house paralegal has a resident repair role to avoid legal routes.	
5.4	A Leaseholder: I was charged £80 every 2/3 years for fire inspections, £120 for electricity inspection, and on the same bill there were 3 items for putting up fire safety items, £150 x 2, £80 for other signs. What contract is this? Who approved it and was all done on the same day? I received a patronising email from Repairs stating £75 x 2 is £150! This is an outrageous charge for a sign and then we must foot the bill.	
5.5	SWJ David James is dealing with this. We have a legal obligation to put up the signs, the contract that allows a contractor to charge leaseholders £75 per sign, Leaseholder: 130% mark up to actual cost of the sign.	
5.6	SWJ The contractors have a schedule of rates for every job. We need to look at the schedule of rates used to see whether these have been coded correctly.	
5.7	JK the difficulty of schedule rates is priced as a single item, including time travel etc, but this is not then offset on the other items included at the same time. It is a term contract; I can understand the frustration.	
5.8	SWJ we will look if it has been coded correctly by the national housing schedule of rates.	
5.9	JK these contracts are then tendered to find the most suitable contractor.	
5.10	<b>Action SWJ to speak to David James.</b>	<b>SWJ</b>
5.12	A Leaseholder: similar experience at Bence House, they used glue and ruined the communal doors, it is unreasonable to charge £75 per sign. The Budget raised 75% of repairs used in litigation we want the council to be more proactive than reactive, some residents are dealing with leaks for months. I have experience firsthand of the lack of communication between the leak detection team and repairs team.	
5.13	The leak detection unit is fantastic, especially Darren and Kevin. They are so knowledgeable, however, there are some junior plumbers who don't know and misdiagnose the issue which causes delays and hardship for residents dealing with leaks. We don't have blueprints of the building so juniors get confused. They should use Kevin and Darren to train other new plumbers.	
5.15	SWJ difficult to retain skilled staff, they have been used to train apprentices and new starters on more complicated buildings. The £23 million spent on the repairs budget, averaging 5000 repairs every month hence in house paralegal, we would rather compensate our residents to avoid this.	
5.16	A Leaseholder: Leaseholders cannot report individual repairs on the online system i.e., leaks especially from tenanted property, we cannot report as individual it is reported.	
5.17	SWJ we are upgrading our systems.	
5.18	A Leaseholder: I agree with disproportion of costing on the contract item rates especially when split by few people. We are usually on hold for 1 hour for repairs, and receive unprofessional dialogue, lack of empathy. For instance, an unauthorised occupant had broken into flat, this should have been emergency, but I was told there was not a locksmith for 2 weeks. I chased this daily and then had to replace the locks myself. On top of that I then received a threatening letter that I breached my terms of lease!	
5.19	SWJ should have been raised as emergency repair as security risk. There are lots of new starters and need for training.	
<b>6</b>	<b>Billing Major Works on Estimates</b>	
6.1	EM: Reintroducing estimated billing. Advantages: longer time to pay, issues raised in real time whilst contractors still onsite, leaseholders are more likely to raise issues if we were paying for the bill as works were underway.	

6.2	The estimated bill will be 90% of the amount on the Section 20 Notice of estimate. An adjustment will be made once final costs are known.	
6.3	Former leaseholder, there's been no update on the Tribunal application for the Pepys Emergency Works, it's been more than 18 months.	
6.4	EM: application is still on hold.	
6.5	JK: Government are debating on recharging leaseholders for fire safety works and the Council are considering the decision once there is an update, we will let you know. A discussion on whether to go to the Tribunal is still being had.	
6.6	Former leaseholder: We want to go to Tribunal so we can tell our side of the case.	
6.7	JK good point on communication. <b>Action EM to provide an update.</b>	<b>EM</b>
6.8	A leaseholder: Some people are not receiving the major works bills until 1 year later; this is an issue.	
6.9	EM under historic contracts Breyer/Mitie there has been years of delay, under the new contract's bills should be sent no later than 6 weeks after the works are signed off.	
6.10	A leaseholder: how would process be with billing, consultation and sign off.	
6.11	EM: good points consultation process now doing more informal communication before statutory notices go out, i.e., meetings so we can get feedback before any scope is agreed.	
6.12	Before signing off we will ask for a block representative and do pre-meet before signing off with contractor.	
6.13	YV the Building Safety Team are sending monthly newsletters and an electronic letter last one April to high rise blocks. Over the next few months, the team will invite residents to a meeting to meet the team.	
<b>7</b>	<b>Any Other Business</b>	
7.1	JK: We are also covering the same agenda items. Do remember to put forward any items you would like on the agenda. Given the numbers of attendees has reduced I suggest we have move to quarterly meetings.	
7.2	Leaseholder: it is clear the biggest theme is communication in many areas, from major works and repairs and Lewisham Homes. I would like to keep it every 2 months.	
7.3	Leaseholder every 2 months especially given everything given on.	
7.4	JK closed meeting at 20:28	
	The next Leaseholder Forum meeting will be held on – Thursday 15 <sup>th</sup> June 2023	