



**Repairs and Maintenance**  
*Service User Group*

**MINUTES**

<i>Meeting</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Location</i>
	28/03/2024	10:00	<b>Zoom</b>
<b>Attendees</b>			
<b>Residents</b>	<b>Councillors</b>	<b>Staff</b>	
Bob Boycee (B) Carrie (C) Chris Evans (CE) Halgan Dahir Halima Raghe (HR) Ihssan iPhone Jo Coomber (JC) Keith Hopwood (K) Khadija Rooble Kiin Michael Foley Mohamed's iPhone Negat Hussein Nigel Varley (NV) Pat Robinson (PR) Philomena (P) Other (Samsung) Other (Samsung) Shamso's iPhone		Bethan McKenzie-Kerr (BM) Miles Tilling (MT) Simon Rowland (SR) Ilona Marciniak (IL) Henry Murray	
<b>Apologies</b>		<b>Minutes</b>	
		Henry Murray	

**Agenda items**

- 1. Welcome & Introduction**
- 2. Safety (Fire Risk Assessment – FRA) – Miles Tilling**
- 3. Policy and practise (Bethan McKenzie-Kerr)**
- 4. Voids update – Simon Rowland**
- 5. Future agenda items**
- 6. Date of next meeting (30<sup>th</sup> May) and close**

<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Discussion Points/ Outcomes &amp; Actions</b>	<b>Actions</b>
1	<p><b>Welcome and Housekeeping</b></p> <p><b>MT welcomed attendees. Acknowledged members of Acorn in attendance.</b></p> <p>HR + others – Explained a series of issues with various blocks. Asked why Craig Cook wasn't in attendance. Asked why there had been a delay at St. Jude's. Expressed frustration with broken promises. Shared letter which detailed a series of demands from residents covering a range of topics around repairs, timescales and scheduled meetings.</p> <p>MT – Responded directly to statement made by HR and members of Acorn. Explained role as head of service. Advised Craig Cook wasn't scheduled to attend this meeting. Gave an update on St. Jude's. Advised that at a more comprehensive and detailed update will be given to residents towards the end of April.</p> <p>HR + others – Asked when Craig Cook will meet with them.</p> <p>MT – Advised they will engage with all resident groups in a structured way.</p> <p>HR + others – Asked why there hasn't been communication "for months".</p> <p>MT – Advised that there will be a face-to-face meeting to outline a comprehensive plan of works towards the end of April. Advised this will be noted in minutes.</p> <p>HR + others – Asked who will be at meeting.</p> <p>MT – Advised that service managers and other staff will be in attendance. Assured it will be well represented. Asked if HR had any further questions.</p> <p>HR + others dropped out of call.</p> <p>NV – Raised concerns with how meeting was being run.</p>	MT

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	<p>MT – Emphasised their role as chair of Service User Group and code of conduct .</p> <p>NV – Asked if staff can identify themselves and if staff should not “threaten” to close down meeting.</p> <p>MT – Agreed with first point but disagreed with second point and maintained that breaches to code of conduct warrant shutting down of meeting if necessary.</p> <p>NV – Asked for a future discussion on function of forums and suggested there was an imbalance with staff versus resident representation</p> <p>MT – Acknowledged that engagement and representation in forums could be better.</p> <p>B – Asked if Miles is implying that the regular attendees are not representative enough.</p> <p>MT – Responded no and expressed appreciation for regular attendees. Explained that often there are demographics less represented than others given the makeup of council residents.</p> <p>General discussion about limitations of representation and commitment to creating more engagement.</p> <p>CE – Expressed support for Nigel’s statement that disagreed with threat to shut meeting down made by Miles.</p> <p>MT – Again disagreed with point made and explained necessity to uphold code of conduct so meetings can stay structured.</p> <p>Back and forth about representations of organisations and appropriateness of response from MT about code of conduct.</p> <p>C – Expressed agreement with Nigel and Chris’ statement. Expressed opinion that the makeup of the meetings are often more white and middle class, in relation to representation at forums vs makeup of</p>	

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	<p>residents as a whole.</p> <p>P – Shared reasons they believe residents don't attend meetings, explaining that agendas often don't reflect the reasons residents might want to attend.</p> <p>SR – Advised they will take notes away about delivering more relevant information and assurance about the service and planning.</p>	
<b>2</b>	<p><b>Safety (FRA) – Miles Tilling</b></p> <p><b>Gave oral update on Fire Risk Assessments (FRAs).</b></p> <p>C – Advised using full wording before using acronym would be a great help.</p> <p>NV – Advised that BCC is legally obliged to provide FRAs to residents. Cited a 47% figure of non-compliance stated in FRA for Gilton House. Advised on potential legal consequences to BCC.</p> <p>CE – Advised they have been attempting to acquire FRA for their building for months. Advised on concerns previously raised about dogs in buildings and lithium-ion batteries.</p> <p>MT – Advised on FRAs being supplied but there is a process and time element to them being sent out. Advised on specific policies currently in process regarding lithium-ion batteries. Advised that Fire Service is supportive of sprinklers being installed.</p> <p>CE – Expressed concern with sprinklers mixed with lithium-ion batteries. Expressed concern with dogs.</p> <p>MT – Asked if dogs in high rise buildings could be noted as possible suggestion, subject to agreement for future meetings.</p> <p>NV – Advised on FRA request via BCC website. Asked why FRA requests take so long.</p> <p>MT – Advised that FRAs are being moved through completion phase.</p>	IL

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	<p>NV – Stated that works are internal not external.</p> <p>MT – Responded that they are aware of this and advised it is part of the ongoing work. Advised on new piece of software that will help triage workload.</p> <p>NV – Advised that there is a legal aspect and restated expressed opinion that failure to implement is a criminal offense.</p> <p>MT – Advised they have just outlined plan.</p> <p>P – Advised they never know who to contact about getting answers of very specific questions, and who is the boss.</p> <p>MT – Advised that Craig Cook is head of service but that the leaseholder services team would be best point of contact.</p> <p>IL – Advised on date of next leaseholder’s meeting and asked to take their details to be invited.</p> <p>CE – Advised they have taking cladding and other issues to the Ombudsman last August and they have still have not heard anything. Advised about Leaseholder Advisory Service. Advised that service charges will be raised by 47% and expressed concern with this.</p> <p>NV – Advised on 16-20 week timeline for small panels being installed on outside of cladding at Gilton House. Asked on why they are being installed.</p> <p>MT – Advised on conditions of planning applications. Advised that panels Nigel held up tend to have better longevity. Explained differences to other types of panelling.</p>	<p>IL</p>

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3	<p><b>Policy and Practice – Bethan McKenzie-Kerr</b></p> <p><b>Discussing access to properties and policy publishing.</b></p> <p>BM – Asked residents how they feel about BCC having to access property.</p> <p>NV – Advised on necessity for workable patches for housing officers. Suggested reinstatement of wardens that had good knowledge of their local area. Expressed opinion that good policies don't work when they don't have capacity to implement them. Suggested reason being the cut to funding by central government.</p> <p>BM – Agreed with points made.</p> <p>PR – Asked what tenancy agreement says about property visits/interventions.</p> <p>BM – Advised that there is wording in tenancy agreement about access to properties. Agreed that not allowing access to property could potentially put other tenants at risk when it comes to safety maintenance.</p> <p>K – Advised they have made four separate appointments for electrical visits but no one has turned up.</p> <p>BM – Agreed and acknowledged frustration. Suggested there should be better scrutiny for contractors to hit their targets.</p> <p>K – Advised that telephone number for contractors is a London-based number.</p> <p>IL – Advised they will take Keith's details and get them a direct response.</p> <p>P – Asked is it fair that hoarded properties are allowed to degrade the property and put other tenants' health at risk.</p> <p>BM – Advised they can get injunctions to clear and access properties. Agreed with point made about it being</p>	IL

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	<p>a mental health issue.</p> <p>C – Suggested timings for access and cultural reasons giving example of Islamic female tenants’ needs.</p> <p>B – Advised about lack of communication. Expressed belief it is the biggest issue with council. Advised that visit dates are suggested without discussion with tenants.</p> <p>JC – Advised on similar issue raised, where vulnerable tenant cancelled hospital visit for an appointment slot but five appointments were missed by contractors. Asked about plastering issue.</p> <p>IL – Advised they will make a note about contact for plastering issue.</p> <p>PR – Asked if there are statistics about how many appointments are not kept.</p> <p>BM – Stated yes and they can provide them in a future meeting.</p> <p>BM – Asked if residents want to see policies as they are written and if so how they would like them shared.</p> <p>B – Suggested that posting policies would be better than having to request them. Suggested that whatever easiest and most effective for the council should be the answer. Suggested sticking them on website.</p> <p>PR – Agreed with Boycee’s point. Asked how idealistic policies are and how much of policy is accepted as “law”. Suggested that there is often a gap between having policy and adhering to policy.</p> <p>C – Agreed that having policy on website is best option.</p> <p>NV – Suggested posting policy that includes brief summary/outline. Suggested including “BCC requires this of tenant” and “tenant requires this of BCC” with simple points explaining each.</p>	<p>IL</p> <p>BM</p>

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4	<p><b>Voids update – Simon Rowland</b></p> <p><b>Gave presentation of current void statistics, timescales, changes to process.</b></p> <p>B – Citing low figure on minor voids and expressed frustration with contractors taking 30 days to do minor works. Asked how council is allowing 30 days for what should take a lot less time.</p> <p>SR – Advised that 30 days is maximum allocated window but agreed that the clearance is not high enough.</p> <p>P – Highlighted issues with lack of control over contractors.</p> <p>SR – Advised they have 120 trained staff that carries out as much work as they possibly can with contractors filling gaps on top. Agreed they are pro internal workforce. Used this to segue into next slide about this topic.</p>	
	<p><b>Future topics for discussion</b></p> <p>SR – Raised Nigel’s early suggestion.</p> <p>NV – Advised on a general review of how meetings are conducted. Suggested tenant participation should be more localised. Suggested allowing tenants to make presentations. Suggested sending agendas in advance. Expressed opinion on “death by powerpoint”.</p> <p>C – Agreed with Nigel about having things like agendas in advance. Asked about physical walkabouts with tenants.</p> <p>NV – Suggested having meeting at Gilton House and that all would be welcome there.</p> <p>C – Asked if they could have a look at heat pumps.</p> <p>SR – Suggested they come down to training area to have a look at their heat pumps.</p> <p>JC – Asked if Boycee still does decorating [laughs].</p>	



<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b><i>Discussion Points/ Outcomes &amp; Actions</i></b>	<b><i>Actions</i></b>
	B – Stated that sadly no they are retired.	
	<b>End of meeting</b>	