



Minutes

LEASEHOLDER FORUM

Date: 15 July 2025

Meeting details: Online (via Zoom)

Key Officers Present: Julie Mckay (JM) James Bannerman (JB) Francesca Carroll (FC), Laura Pilkington (LP), David Maggs (DM)- Minutes

1. Welcome, housekeeping and introductions

JM welcomed everyone to the meeting and the officers were introduced. It was discussed that individual issues that Leaseholders have should be raised via the following email addresses:

- leaseholderenquiries@bristol.gov.uk
- james.bannerman@bristol.gov.uk
- julie.mckay@bristol.gov.uk

Independent Leasehold advice can be obtained via the Leasehold Advisory Service:
www.lease-advice.org

2. Action Points and updates since the previous forum (April 2025)

None

3. Damp & Mould (D&M) Presentation by Laura Pilkington (LP), Response Repairs Service Manager)

LP noted there are 3,432 open cases (79 of whom are leaseholders).

Some aspects of the performance statistics on D&M need to be reported to the Regulator for Social Housing (RSH).

The Service triage each case especially in relation to the type of building as some are more prone to D&M than others, and re the vulnerability of residents. The Triage matrix is a regulatory requirement; BCC uses a 1-15 scale where 15 is most severe case. Two Routes 1. Significant Hazard 2. Emergency Hazard. We only get 1-2 emergency ones (a score of 14 or 15) per week.

A significant development for the management of addressing D&M issues will be the enacting of "Awaab's Law" [Official title: "Hazards in Social Housing (Prescribed Requirements) (England) Regulations 2025"] on 27 October 2025 which covers both D&M and other hazards.

The roll out of the scheme under the law will only be partly launched this year. For Year 1, the focus will be on D&M and emergency hazards, then the scope will expand in future years.

The regulations only apply to social housing tenants, i.e. leaseholders not included in the scope– but BCC would still deal with D&M if its caused by the envelope of the building.



However, BCC is not usually responsible for condensation in leasehold properties except in certain circumstances e.g. where there has been a major leak in the building which has increased moisture levels.

D&M can be reported by resident or any staff member or contractor. There will be strict timelines for taking action in emergency and other cases (see attached slides).

Questions: None

2. Leasehold Reform & Consultation Update - (Julie McKay - JM)

- LR Ground Rent Act – No Ground Rent on new properties. It also stops if you are extending your lease on an existing leasehold.
- LR and Freehold Act- received Royal Assent but still waiting for main aspects to be enacted because secondary legislation to be aligned and several freeholders across the Country have challenged the changes. There is a court hearing in next couple of weeks. Once we have an update we will bring to the Forum.

The Act does the following:

- Lease extensions will extend to 990 years (Currently extensions are for 90 years for leasehold flats). Already have new right to extend lease immediately, whereas previously there was a two-year waiting period.
- Service charges to be more transparent and there will be an end of commissions on insurance premiums.
- Simpler resales system for all leasehold property not just social housing. Social Housing leaseholders can go to a first-tier tribunal – freeholders will also be able to challenge service charges but need to use the small claims court.
- Current consultation on Decent Homes Standards that will include private landlords – over 600 of leasehold properties are sublet – so these leaseholders will be required to comply. It also applies to those renting.

Consultation ends 10th September. JM outlined the main changes to the Standard. The revised standard means landlords must provide at least three of the essential facilities. In addition, they will need to meet a minimum energy efficiency standard, provide programmable heating and the property must be free from Damp & Mould.

- Act updates Collective enfranchisement making it easier for the freehold to be obtained by the leaseholders, subject to meeting the criteria.

ACTION: This will be a topic for next Forum meeting.

- **ACTION: We will resend the presentation from 2024 on leasehold extension.**
- **ACTION: We will send out BCC contents insurance details** – link to the relevant section of the Councils website: [Home contents insurance for council tenants and leaseholders](#) Please note: BCC Leaseholders who have sublet are recommended to



obtain Landlord's Insurance – the building insurance policy with the Council won't cover their tenants and actions.

- **ACTION: We will provide details on ways of reporting repairs:** Online form or phone in – JM noted reports of long waiting times for the phone to be answered. Link to relevant section of the Council's website: [Report a repair](#) where you can access an online form. This is the quickest way to report a non-urgent repair. Alternatively you can dial 0117 9222200 option 1 for emergency repairs only and option 2 then option 1 for standard repairs.

3. Housing Management Board update (David Maggs gave details as Ben Hanrath, Leaseholder Forum Representative had to leave the meeting)
The Board is going to be replaced by a Resident and Community Panel made up of 14 tenants and leaseholders, 3 Reps from Voluntary & Community Sector Organisations who support tenants and 3 Subject Specialists. Following a citywide consultation, a meeting is taking place on 17.7.25 with interested tenants and leaseholders to discuss the details of the Panel. One of the key functions of the Panel is to be a link between tenants and leaseholders and the Homes and Housing Delivery Committee. Final decisions on the functioning of the Panel will be made by the Committee. One of the Forum participants suggested that VOSCUR is involved in asking groups if they would consider being involved. The Bristol Older People Forum should also be considered.

4. Service Standards (JM)

JM led an interactive session in which residents discussed the draft Home Ownership standards presented. Service Standards explain what we do and the expectations and timescales for our responses. They also look at how we communicate and also the responsibilities of leaseholders.

Leaseholders present worked in three online groups. The key responses to what JM had outlined were:

- a. Improve Section 20 notices – they currently have vague timescales, and the letters read as though they not written for human beings. Leaseholders would like better communication of all that is going to happen in your block and timelines and amounts for what they will need to pay when. JM advised that these are standard templates but the use of Frequently Asked Questions can be included to help explain the S20 Notice.

JM advised that a Forward Maintenance Plan (FMP) is being worked on which includes following up on the BCC commitment to give FMPs for 5-, 10-, and 30-year periods including likely timing for big expenses. This will help leaseholders plan when large costs are likely to be due to help plan for the payment of these costs.

- b. Linked to a (above) JM noted that a lease is a contract – some have old covenants. In those the 3rd schedule covers what is in the service charge. Newer leases mention paying for improvements – not just replacements of say a roof. An improvement would be a new insulation/cladding that was not part of the original design – if not in the lease we can't charge for improvements
- c. Improve general comms on repairs – including progress reports.



- d. Provide a more detailed “Welcome pack for new leaseholders” including “What am I paying for in my service charge?” and a list of who and how to contact people for specific issues.
- e. Clarity on the Complaints process for ASB/resident issues
- f. More information on Service charges estimates and actuals, for example caretaking is done as tiered costs -depending on the block service.
- g. Many charges are based on rateable value which takes into account the size of your property. We do produce an FAQ that goes out with service charges give more information.
- h. Leaseholders are welcome to attend the Summer Housing Forum at 6pm on July 29th 2025

ACTION: BCC will send out the previous presentation on Section 20 consultation again.

5. Future ‘hot topic’ ideas for the Leaseholder Forum in October 2025
In addition to collective enfranchisement (as above), suggestions were:

- Building Insurance (October)
- Pets within flats
- How we allocate our social rented homes
- Buyback
- Parks service

Via the Chat the items that were asked for were:

- Pets within flats
- Leasehold Buybacks

6. Any other business
None

7. Date of next meeting 14 October 2025 6pm-8pm

Questions that were asked via the chat function during the meeting:



Question	Response
Can you tell me who our buildings insurance is with please?	It's with Protector – link to the relevant section the Councils website: Council leasehold building insurance
If I extend my lease will it be extended for 90 years or will it be added to my existing years of 80?	It will be 90 years on top of any remaining lease. In effect you lease term will be increased from 125 years to 215 years
Is there an easy way to find out how long is left on our lease?	Your lease term is set out in your lease, but if you email us with your details, we can confirm that for you
I've extended my lease in 2023 will the further lease extension to the lease be automatic or will I need to reapply and go through the same process again	You will need to reapply for a lease extension again, this will not happen automatically.
Just to confirm that once we extend the lease - will the ground rent change	Yes – the ground rent will no longer be charged following a lease extension.
Is there any way I can move from leasehold to freehold	This will be a topic for our October 2025 Forum but in the meantime more information can be found out about the eligibility and process via the Leasehold Advisory Service: Buying the Freehold of Flats - The Leasehold Advisory Service
When double glazing was renewed, I had to get the Contractor back to adjust the balcony door, which did not lock. When the Contractor left, the council repair team dealt with it. OK for a while only. Couple of weeks ago I unlocked the balcony door - it won't lock, AGAIN!! Basically, inherent faulty installation. What do you suggest?	James Bannerman took the details and will make contact with the leaseholder directly to discuss this problem.
There was a letter sent to us regarding roofing checks and possible costs that may be incurred as a result. Can you let us know a bit more about that because the information sent was quite vague. We'd like to know when we will get more solid information so we can begin saving and preparing for potential maintenance costs.	This letter was a Section 20 Consultation letter where the Council are entering into a 'framework' (partnership with a contractor) that will carry out roofing works across Council homes. If you are due to have works carried out to your block then additional consultation will be sent to you when the works are being assessed.
I have outstanding works to my flat and would really appreciate your help on this as we don't seem any further forward – thanks so much for your help.	Julie McKay has reached out to this leaseholder to provide updates on the issue impacting the leaseholder.