

Repairs Service Review Group

Weds 12th December 2007

1pm – 4pm

Minutes

Present:

June Phillips
Margaret Valleley
Peter Valleley
Diane Howls
Rose Price
Sylvia Hemmings
Freda Clark
Carol Bird
Tom Williams
Wendy Jones
Eric Jones
Lorna Wooding
Mrs Elizabeth Barnfield
Greta Ashford
Stacey Ashfield
Doreen Gower
Shirley Baldwin
Stephen Sheehan Property Services Manager
Angela Williams Property Services Administration Officer
Julian Hyatt Building Services Manager
Sue Atfield Repairs Administration Assistant
Audrey Gummery Cust. Involve. Administration Assistant
Helen Greenway Customer Involvement Officer

1. Welcome

Helen welcomed everyone to the meeting and gave a brief overview of what the meeting would be about.

Actions

2. Gas Safety Bulletins and Reminders for Gas Servicing

The group had previously helped to shape the look and wording for the Gas Safety Bulletin and the three reminders that are sent out to tenants who are due for Gas Servicing and Annual Safety Checks.

Since then, the Company's corporate branding has been changed and all communications and public information needs to be amended in line with this.

Stephen reminded the group what the previous flyers and information looked like and then compared these with the new ones that were being developed.

The group unanimously agreed to accept the Gas Safety Bulletin and the first and second reminders. However, some of the group had reservations about the image being used on the third reminder, which was a grave yard – depicting that by continually ignoring previous reminders about the importance of having a gas safety check, they could be putting themselves and their neighbours in danger. They thought the image could potentially upset some tenants who received it.

Suggestions were put forward to amend the image to an ambulance with a paramedic and a stretcher.

**Helen to advise
Communications
Officer**

Stephen said that once the last reminder had been redesigned, they would be sent out to the group via the post, with a freepost envelope, to sign off the design.

**Helen to send
out**

3. Voids (Empty Properties) Challenge Day Feedback

Stephen asked the tenants who had volunteered for the recent Voids Challenge Day to feedback their findings to the group.

At the Voids Challenge Day, the volunteers went to view 2 properties that were ready to let and one property that had just been handed back to us. This allowed the tenants to see what properties can be like before our trades people go into to bring it up to a lettable standard.

Armed with the list of standards that the group helped to set, they inspected the two properties that were ready to let, comparing each standard with what they saw in and around each property.

Richard Weaver Court – 1 bedroom Sheltered Housing flat

The tenant inspectors found no problems with this property and all said how good the standard was.

Kilvert Road – 2 bedroom temporary housing flat

The tenant inspectors found a couple of snags when reviewing this property. A couple of the window sills were loose, the manhole cover outside was damaged and they thought that one of the

kitchen wall cupboards was mounted too high on the wall. Julian Hyatt, the Building Services Manager for Voids, stated that the first two problems had been fixed. He also said that when the kitchen was due for renewal under the Improvement Programme, that the cupboards would be placed lower on the wall.

All four volunteers agreed that the standards of both properties were good and the service standards were being met.

Four tenants were then asked to volunteer for the next round of Void inspections, which was due to take place in February. The volunteers are:

- Carol Bird
- Mr Williams
- Margaret Valleley
- Peter Valleley

The group decided that they liked the idea of viewing properties that had just been handed back to us, so this will form part of the Voids Challenge Days from now on.

4. Tailoring our services for vulnerable customers

The group was split into three teams. Each team appointed a Team Captain who would lead their team in a game. The Captain's job was to consult with their team to identify who they think are vulnerable customers. Once they had finished their list, they would then ring a bell and read out the different vulnerable groups they had come up with.

The team who had the most groups on their list would win a prize.

Each vulnerable group that was suggested was then written up on a flipchart. Each team was then asked if the identified groups should be kept and recognised as a vulnerable group or crossed off the list. This resulted in the following list:

- Elderly tenants (including non-sheltered housing)
- Minority Ethnic Groups (BME)
- Vision Impaired
- Hearing Impaired
- People with other physical disabilities / long term illness
- People living in remote (isolated) areas
- People who have been discharged from hospital
- Young tenants (teenagers)
- Care leavers

- People with Mental Health issues
- People with learning disabilities
- People who can't read or write
- People who have been discharged from prison
- People who have severely disabled children / adults at home
- People who have different religious beliefs
- People suffering from domestic abuse
- People suffering from ASB
- People who have been burgled

Stephen thanked the group for their suggestions and said that he and Helen would work on these to design ways in which we could tailor the Repairs Service accordingly and feedback to the group at the next meeting.

Stephen & Helen

5. Rechargeable Repairs

Each of the three teams were given two lists of what could potentially be classed as rechargeable repairs – one for Responsive Repairs and one for Voids (empty properties).

Each team leader was tasked with going through their lists with their team, asking them which items should be rechargeable and which ones should not.

At the end of this exercise, Stephen asked each Team Leader to feedback to the other teams, stating which items they thought should be taken off the rechargeable repair list.

These were:

- Sweeping chimneys
- Changing smoke alarm batteries
- Going out to show a tenant how to use their heating controls
- Changing tap washers – for vulnerable groups only

There was a question mark over changing strip lights. Although this is classed as a light bulb, the group had reservations about making this rechargeable for everybody, due to the awkwardness of the size and shape.

They also agreed not to bring in a minimum service charge for repairs.

This resulted in the remaining items on the lists being accepted as rechargeable repairs. These can be viewed under **Appendix 1** and **Appendix 2** attached to these minutes.

5.1 **Recharging the tenant**

Stephen then asked the group how we would go about carrying out the rechargeable repairs, ensuring that we do get paid by the tenant for them.

The group unanimously agreed that we should ask the tenant to sign an agreement up front, stating that they agree to pay and then carry out the repair.

They were keen for a price list to be drawn up so that the tenant could see how much it would cost before they signed the agreement.

Stephen also agreed to explore options for insurance to cover rechargeable repairs

6. **The meeting finished at 4pm.**

Helen will contact the volunteers for the next Voids Challenge Day in the New Year to arrange a mutually convenient date.

Helen to contact

She will also liaise with Stephen to confirm the date for the next Service Review Group meeting and write out to the tenants to invite them. These dates will also be published on HHL's website under the Customer Involvement Diary of Events.

Helen to carry out