

Meeting notes for Extra Care National Forum

Date: 9 January 2025

Time: 2pm – 4pm

Chair of meeting: Ian Devereux

Attendees: **Housing 21 Representatives:** John Simmonds (JS), Resident Engagement and Experience Manager; Alicia Wheeler (AW), National Health and Safety Manager; Tracy Jones (TJ) Head of Operational Development; Jamie Lindon-Lewis (JLL), Head of Extra Care Central

Housing 21 residents x16 Resident Attendees

Regulator representatives: Helen Williams, Sue Hartley

Title of agenda item		Summary of discussion	Actions agreed including assignments and deadlines
1.	Helen Williams and Sue Hartley	HW explained that herself and SH are attending the meeting and will take anonymised minutes. She explained that a privacy notice had been distributed. They are representing the Regulator of Social Housing (RoSH), an independent body, holding landlords to account in meeting the regulatory standards, which cover consumer standards, governance and viability. RoSH carry out routine inspections of landlords. Within the consumer standards (linked to attending this meeting) RoSH checks that homes are decent and safe, complaints are dealt with and that tenants are listened to and engaged.	
2.	Actions from last meeting	JS explained that a new model of engagement has been developed and is currently getting approved by Executive Team and Committees. Representation from the Disability Forum and the digital inclusivity group attended the meeting. The LGBTQ plus and REACH networks are going to send representation to this group shortly. All	JS to bring new model to next meeting

		<p>residents associations for whom we have contact details have also been invited.</p> <p>At the last meeting there was a request for a map of all resident groups which is included in ID's presentation at this meeting.</p> <p>Fire Safety was raised as a point of interest at the last meeting so Alicia Wheeler joined us.</p>	
3.	<p>Presentation from Ian Devereux</p>	<p>ID presented 'Growing in 2025'. The aim was to summarise what the group had achieved over the past year and look forward to aims for 2025.</p> <p>(Need presentation)</p> <p>Feedback from staff is that the information which is influenced by the group is really helpful. ID feels that the group is directly involved and able to challenge at the highest level.</p> <p>The Senior Management Team are increasingly coming back to the group to ask for their opinions and the group is taking a strategic look at how Housing 21 is managing the organisation and how this group relates to them.</p> <p>Communication has been identified as an issue to be addressed.</p> <p>ID introduced the challenges for next year and the presentation looked at where the forum would be having a direct impact on services.</p> <p>TL offered to act as chair of the Service Charge sub-group. This was accepted as a positive move forward by the group.</p> <p>The introduction of increased sub-groups will close any gaps and prevent information being lost.</p> <p>Many residents agreed with the focus needed on communication. In addition resident voiced how they valued being part of the group.</p> <p>A discussion took place as to how communication and reporting is developed between sub-groups, across, as well as up to the forum.</p> <p>The differing communication needs of residents was also discussed as an issue which needs to be considered.</p>	<p>JS and TJ to work with TL to establish group</p>

4.	Disability Network Update	<p>The Chair of Disability Forum presented to the meeting. There are 20 participants, a mix of EC and RL residents. She shared successes, including the development of blogs and involvement in policy development such as the Hate Crime and ASB policy.</p> <p>She also spoke about the need to encourage more residents to join. With reference to the newsletter, she suggested that local news can be less interesting than the national news.</p>	<p>The Disability Forum meetings to continue with a review of the year ahead in February. Additional H21 employee support to be invited by JS</p>
5.	Digital Inclusivity Network Update	<p>TL gave an update from the Digital Inclusivity Network. He presented some facts and figures from ONS, Age UK and the Good Things Foundation to demonstrate the digital divide and the extent of this in the general population and within the older generations.</p> <p>He then compared this to the situation in Housing 21, arguing that you can't just rely on the digital model to solve the communication issue. The current Housing 21 website is clunky and the Digital Inclusivity Forum has been involved in deciding on the new website provider. The contractor who really listened to residents won the contract.</p> <p>TL spoke about the ability to get over affordability in relation to digital inclusion by giving examples of organisations which provide tablets, data and SIM cards for permanent loan.</p>	
6.	Health and Safety Strategy	<p>AW spoke about the Health and Safety Strategy. A Communication and Collaboration piece is being drafted to discuss proposed initiatives and communication methods and other ways in which residents would like to be included. Looking at different months and focus for each of the months. The strategy is circulated with these minutes. There is also a Building and Fire Safety at Housing 21 Handbook.</p> <p>The residents discussed the possibility of a specialist interest group for health and safety. They also discussed the need for First Aid training</p>	<p>ID to speak to AW around the best</p>

		<p>at a local level and were assured that this was available to all care staff.</p> <p>Fire Safety – There is a policy to cover all aspects of fire safety. We have a Primary Authority arrangement with Cambridge Fire Authority and they provide assured advice and all fire services can see the details. We took the person centred fire risk assessments to them for input and approval.</p> <p>A discussion took place around the Stay Put policy which means that you can remain in your flat if the fire is in another area of the building. The buildings integrate compartmentation to enable this. A discussion took place with several concerns being raised, so a special interest group will be set up to address these concerns.</p> <p>All of our four high rise are retrofitted with sprinklers.</p>	<p>way to integrate health and safety.</p> <p>More discussion needed on fire safety. A special interest group will be set up by JS and AW</p>
7.	WhatsApp	<p>JLL and AH spoke about the project and the specific requirements needed.</p> <p>A potential provider has been identified and some initial conversations have been had.</p> <p>The project is working on principle that it is a one-way communication as an additional method of communication.</p> <p>Guidance and communications plans need to be produced.</p> <p>Residents shared their experiences of WhatsApp and text messages at their schemes and how they were administered.</p> <p>There were queries from the membership on the security of personal data and whether WhatsApp is a reliable host for protected data; whether Appello could be used to relay push notifications.</p>	<p>Demo to come to this group at the next meeting to gain views and opinions.</p> <p>All examples and concerns will be integrated into the project.</p>
8.	Heads of Service Update	<p>JLL spoke about the restaurants on Extra Care schemes which are run by third party providers.</p> <p>Last year some work was undertaken into understanding the issues around sustainability of</p>	

		<p>catering in schemes. Residents did not like the idea of linking the restaurants to a condition of tenancy. JLL explained that we remain committed to our restaurants so will work closely with individual schemes.</p> <p>There was a lot of conversation about the reliability of restaurant provision at schemes and also about the impact on the authenticity of Extra Care marketing, where it has been an expectation that operating restaurants are on site. There were many questions about the association between restaurants and service charge.</p> <p>Residents spoke about how the restaurant is integral to the Extra Care offer and the positive impact which usage of the restaurant has on the scheme. Others had experience of a less successful restaurant service.</p> <p>A discussion took place about the costs of the restaurant and the service charge and how they differed.</p> <p>JLL also spoke about learning from complaints and training and education is a clear priority. We will be looking at the Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM's) which are due to be released soon. The local manager will work to develop a coproduced improvement plan. The meetings will have taken place by the end of February. Local managers will be able to input the local action plans into the Housing Quality Standards App.</p>	<p>TSM results and action plans will be brought to the next meeting for discussion</p>
9.	Service Charge Update	<p>TJ stated that the service charge consultations have now taken place and budgets have been populated, obviously considering any quotes and choices by residents for local contractors. Final checks are being undertaken on the figures before they collate them with the new rent figures. Letters will be out to schemes from 28 February.</p> <p>We gathered feedback from residents on the new Service Charge guidance and it was really</p>	

		<p>constructive. They liked the FAQ's. Feedback included that residents really enjoyed the consultation meetings. All this was codesigned by residents and it's had a fantastic impact. Further suggestions include simplifying the wording on documents too.</p> <p>There will be more work on how we could further improve the communication letters that go out around the rents and service charges.</p>	
10.	AOB	<p>HW reflected on the discussions of the group and explained that they will use the information they have heard today to triangulate back to lots of other documents. She explained that they will be meeting Housing 21 staff and Board members in January. They will reach a conclusion on the grading in February and will have come to a judgement over March.</p>	

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