**Housing 21 Resident Voice**

**Environmental Awareness Group**

**Date: 10 September 2025**

**Chair: Dean Doerr -** Property Improvement Manager

**Attendees:**

**Residents**

DD, TLMR, DL, ID, JT, AA.

**Housing 21 representatives**

Dean Doerr (DSD) Property Improvement Manager - Sustainability, Chloe Plowman (CP) Senior Sustainability Data Analyst, Antony Walker (AW) Head of Retirement Living – Southwest, Katrina Wilcox (KW) Head of Marketing and Communications. Tracy Jones (TJ) Head of Operational Development- Extra Care.

Apologies: Lucy Nixon (LN) Resident Communications Manager, Amber Crick (AC) Resident Engagement Coordinator

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| **Agenda item** | **Summary of discussion** | **Actions agreed**  |
| Update on actions that came out of the last meeting | **Resident Recycling Education and Engagement:** Chloe, Tracy, Dean, Katrina, and several residents discussed strategies to improve recycling rates among residents, focusing on educational campaigns, resident-led videos, and addressing barriers such as council collection inconsistencies and contamination issues.* **Barriers to Recycling:** Participants, including CP, DL, and ID, highlighted significant barriers to effective recycling, such as councils refusing to collect contaminated recycling, inconsistent bin colours and collection methods across schemes, and employees or cleaners mixing recyclables with general waste. These issues were identified as common across multiple schemes, not isolated incidents.
* **Resident-Led Educational Content:** TJ and TL suggested leveraging resident-created vlogs and short videos to promote recycling best practices, as these have proven effective in other campaigns. The group agreed that short, engaging, and possibly animated content (such as using a teddy bear or animated pizza box) would be more impactful than traditional materials.

**Universal and Localised Messaging:** CP and DSD discussed the need for both universal recycling messages (e.g., washing out containers, handling pizza boxes) and localised guidance due to council-specific rules. They proposed linking residents to a government website where they can enter their postcode to find local recycling information, and adding these resources to the Environmental Awareness Group page on the Housing 21 website. |  |
| Terms of Reference (ToR) Final Review | DSD will circulate the final Terms of Reference documents following the meeting for final feedback. | Circulate the terms of reference for final review. (DSD) |
| Creating material on the website to celebrate the good. | Tracking and Celebrating Progress: KW and DD suggested creating mechanisms for residents and schemes to capture any activity relating to environmental awareness, such as an online form or dedicated email, and celebrating achievements internally and externally. This would help maintain momentum and recognise positive contributions. | Create an inbox / online form for the website for Environmental good news. Agree how this is actioned and managed. (DSD / Resident Comms Manager Lucy Nixon)  |
| Educational resources for tackling waste. | Following on from the recap of the last meetings progress notes it was evident that those who are not as engaged with environmental initiatives could potentially be jeopardising the efforts of those that do. Also, the varying councils will make it difficult to improve recycling efforts in a uniform way. What we can try to do is to inform residents who are less engaged with environmental initiatives to just use the general waste rather than contaminate the recycling if they are unsure. Battery Recycling Initiative: DSD mentioned a battery recycling scheme independent of local councils, where residents can order a free collection box. DD confirmed he had ordered one for Belsize Court, and the group agreed to promote this through newsletters and the website, with LN and AC supporting communication. | Website Resource Updates: Send new recycling and environmental resources to LN for inclusion on the environmental group web page, and ensure the page is kept up to date. Material to support “if you’re unsure use the general waste”. (CP & LN)Resident Recycling Awareness Campaign: Send the link for the free battery recycling box to all relevant parties and ensure information is included in the court newsletter and on the website. (DSD, LN & AC) |
| Heat network regulations, heat agreements, summer switch off. | Heat Network Regulations and Communal Heating Management: DSD, ID, CP, TL, AA, and others discussed upcoming heat network regulations, the challenges of communal heating systems, and the need for clear policies, fair cost allocation, and effective communication with residents Regulatory Changes and Heat Agreements: DSD explained that new regulations will require the organisation to act as a registered energy supplier, this is likely to include new heat agreements with residents and introduce stricter controls and possibly metering for communal heating systems. This will necessitate clear policies and contractual agreements.o Balancing Resident Needs: ID and TL highlighted the difficulty of setting a single temperature for communal heating due to varying resident needs, medical conditions, and building designs. The group discussed the importance of flexibility, with options for individual heaters or air conditioning where necessary to bring individuals temperatures up to where they personally need them. Residents have moved into our buildings expecting this level of comfort, the alteration would likely be a change to the tenancy agreement or possibly a separate agreement.o Cost and Efficiency Concerns: TL raised concerns about communal electricity and water costs, The group agreed on the need to monitor and control communal area costs to ensure value for money.o Communication and Policy Development: Tracy and Dean stressed the importance of clear communication with employees and residents about heating standards, responsibilities, and the rationale behind changes. They agreed to develop and disseminate guidance that balance comfort, cost, and environmental considerations. | We are awaiting further news from Ofgem, we are keeping this matter in review. (all ongoing)Check with the legal team to see what the approach would be. (DSD)Produce some simple group wide guidance on expected temperatures for communal spaces. This can be applied to communal systems or individual heaters settings. (DSD) |
| Employee and Manager Engagement in Sustainability | TJ, KW, CP, and ID emphasised the importance of educating employees, especially Housing Managers and Cleaners, about sustainability and recycling, while recognising the challenges of training overload and the need for centralised support.o Employee Education Strategies: TJ and KW proposed incorporating sustainability topics into existing meetings, coffee mornings, and smart TV displays, as well as offering optional training sessions or slides for interested staff. The aim is to raise awareness without overburdening employees with mandatory training.o Engaging with Local Managers: TL, A, and TJ discussed different approaches for engaging schemes in environmental initiatives , such as resident champions and centralised resources to support sustainability efforts.o Centralised Support and Communication: ID supported the creation of expert central teams to drive sustainability initiatives, rather than relying solely on local managers. The group agreed that centralised resources, clear communication, and regular updates are essential for effective implementation.o Promoting Environmental Awareness: CP suggested increasing the visibility of environmental content and green initiatives across the organisation and through social media, newsletters, and the website to foster a culture of sustainability among employees and residents. | Establish materials and links that we want to promote and focus on routes that do not rely on additional compulsory training for Housing Managers. (CP + LN & AC |
| Environmental Seminar | • Environmental Seminar Planning and Participation: DSD, KW, TJ, and several residents coordinated attendance for the upcoming environmental seminar, discussed hybrid participation options, and agreed to share experiences and feedback to shape future sustainability initiatives.o Seminar Logistics and Attendance: DSD confirmed the seminar date, offered travel and accommodation support, the group encouraged both in-person and online participation to reduce environmental impact. Several residents expressed interest in attending.Sharing Resident Voices: TJ suggested that participants introduce themselves and share their motivations for joining the sustainability group during the seminar, to ensure resident perspectives are heard by executives and other stakeholders. | DL, MR and AA would like to attend. Transport and accommodation are to be agreed. Possibility of a video link for the rest of the group to be explored. (DSD) |
| Date for next meeting | 5 November 2:30pmIn future agendas for these meetings should track progress on commitments and other successes to evidence the groups impact. | (DSD) to circulate a calendar invite for the next meeting.  |