



**Customer Working Group Meeting
Meeting held on Thursday 11th May 2023 at 6pm
at Knowes Housing Association's Office**

In Attendance:

Members

Mary Campbell
Audrey McKie
Lynne Spence
Alexis McGhee-Kasravi
Ellen Morris

Staff

Amy Sweeney	Corporate Services/Compliance Officer
Graham Burns	Property Officer
Ethan-Craig Adamson	Administrative Assistant

Meeting Topic:

The group met at Knowes Housing Association's office at 6pm on 11th May 2023. This meeting seen the arrival of some new members. The group agreed at the previous meeting they would decide on new topics of discussion on the day. As such, an agenda was written to guide the meeting and include variety within the conversation.

1. Apologies

- Apologies were received from Rosemary Marshall.

2. Preferred Communication Methods

- Amy started the meeting by asking the group about their preferred communication methods. The group agreed that they preferred a text message approach for immediate communication and that the newsletter was a good method for general information.

Following on from this the customer portal was discussed. Group members that make use of the system explained that rent account balances on the portal can be inaccurate when the app is being updated. Some members of the group asked how they could access the portal. Amy explained that there is a link via our website and the app is available to download from Apple App store or Google Play.

- The group highlighted that they were more likely to respond to surveys through text or online opposed to a paper survey that requires them to return via post. The immediacy of a text or online survey was agreed to have a higher chance of response from the group as the survey could be completed and the response would be sent instantly. A group member did suggest that 'Survey Monkey' could be a suitable alternative to our current paper method.

Out of Hours Phone Message (Morning)

- The group discussed the out of hours phone message. One member highlighted that they have previously tried to contact Knowes between 8am and 9am but they could not get through to anyone. They advised that after trying numerous times they were able to reach a member of the repairs team. The group highlighted that this should be followed up as it is important to know where to contact in the case of an emergency and some tenants may not use the website, or know to look there for contact numbers.
(Followed up with Erica during a team meeting – Erica explained that Knowes out of hours service is not covered by WDC after 8am. She advised that if someone is in the office earlier than 9am they will try to answer the phones. She advised that we have 2 hours to attend the call for an emergency repair and make it safe.)

3. What Community Activities would Benefit Faifley?

Dogs Trust Event

- Amy asked the group if they thought that another Dogs Trust event would be beneficial for the community. Amy gave some background on the previous event held at Sky point and the value it brought to the community. The group agreed that this would be a great idea and even suggested its importance with the increase in pets throughout the lockdown period. The group also suggested alternative groups including 'Cats Protection'.
- The group also suggested that additional bins around the Faifley area could help reduce the amount of dog fouling.
(Followed up with Erica during a team meeting – We will contact the Dogs Trust and see if we can arrange another event like the previous one. We will also contact the council and suggest for more bins to be put in the area.)

Drop in Café

- One member suggested that a drop in café where all residents are welcome would be beneficial for the community. They advised that this would help to tackle loneliness and help with mental wellbeing.

Knowes HA Annual Bus Trip

- Amy informed the group that Knowes were bringing back the annual bus trip for over 60s this summer. The group were happy to see community activities coming back post Covid and suggested a similar day trip for parents and children to attend the beach.

(Followed up with Erica during a team meeting – Erica advised that this may pose issues due to the small staff team and increased responsibility due to children being involved. We will revisit this again at a later date.)

Bike Sheds

- Amy asked the group if they thought it would be beneficial to install bike sheds in the area. The group agreed that bike sheds could help reduce fire hazards within closes, and potential bike theft. It was also suggested that it may encourage more people to start cycling. Amy explained that we are planning to apply for funding for this when it next becomes available.

Toy Bank

- The group discussed introducing a toy bank for unused toys. It was pointed out by a group member that the Faifley Parish Church already has a similar arrangement called 'Faifley Upcycling'. Faifley Upcycling is open every Tuesday between 10am and 12am and they will accept donations of clothing, toys, household furniture, electrical goods and many more. The Recycle Room in Clydebank will also accept these donations.

Community Garden – Grass Area Located Near Swallow Road

- The group discussed the secret garden and if there was a possibility for a patch of land near swallow road to be transformed into a communal area. It was explained that all the residents (tenants and owners) would need to agree to this before it could go ahead.

New Position – Community Officer

- A member of the group also suggested that the Association should consider recruiting a Community Officer to focus solely on engaging with the Faifley community and arranging activities. A discussion took place regarding this suggestion. Amy advised that community projects would fall under her remit and Ethan-Craig will also be involved with this. The group were advised that although having an additional person to focus solely on this would be beneficial, unfortunately due to the size of the Association we do not have the resources to facilitate this.

4. Would you be interested in a Community Walkabout?

- Amy asked the group whether they think that introducing a community walkabout would be useful. There wasn't much feedback provided on this

question. Amy will include information in the newsletter to see if there is any interest.

5. Customer Engagement Strategy

- The group were provided with the Customer Engagement Strategy. The group were advised that this is reviewed every 3 years. The group were provided with a copy of the strategy to take home with them so they could look over it in their own time. Amy advised that the Association is open to feedback regarding this so we can incorporate any suggestions/changes when the strategy is reviewed.

6. Repairs and Maintenance Concerns

- The group were eager to discuss the cyclical work Knowes HA have planned for the coming year. Graham advised the group of the maintenance programmes that would be carried out over the year. Graham explained that Covid-19 had impacted suppliers, and this is still an ongoing issue which has affected the timescales of the window programme. Suppliers estimate an 18-month waiting time for new windows. Graham did explain, that despite this, other contracts – bathrooms and kitchens – are getting back to normal and should be running on time as expected. Therefore, this means that we can expect a full bathroom renewal for properties on the respective cycle and early stages have already begun for this. Graham also advised that we will be installing electric showers in all void properties and any properties under the bathroom contract.
- Energy companies were also discussed during the meeting. One member suggested that it would be worthwhile for Knowes to link up with other Associations in West Dunbartonshire to install dual fuel meters for tenants and to work with an energy supplier to provide an affordable tariff for customers. Graham explained that although this is a good idea, unfortunately it would be difficult to execute for various reasons such as customers being locked into energy tariffs, and the scale of the project. Amy advised that some energy companies offer a social tariff for customers. We will be including information about this in our next newsletter but people should contact their energy supplier for more information on this.
- The group thought it may be beneficial to include a list of upcoming contracts on the website along with the cycle that each address fall under.
- The group were also informed about the upcoming plans for new build properties to be created at Abbeylands Road consisting of houses and flats.

7. Topics for the Future

- The meeting concluded with compliments and recognition for the contractors who have been working tirelessly to assist tenants of Knowes HA mentions included MJM and John Fulton. The group agreed that we should reflect on the topics discussed at our next meeting which will be in 3 months' time, date still to be confirmed. Finally, the group agreed for the minutes to be put onto the website.