



**Customer Working Group Meeting  
Meeting held on Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> October 2022 at 4pm  
at Knowes Housing Association's Office**

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**In Attendance:**

Mary Campbell  
Audrey McKie  
Erica Davidson           CEO  
Graham Bruns           Property Officer  
Amy Sweeney           Corporate Services / Compliance Officer

**Meeting Topic:**       Repairs

The group met for the second time on 20<sup>th</sup> October 2022. They had agreed at the previous meeting that they would like to discuss repairs. The group were provided with the Repairs Policy, Recoverable Repairs Policy and the latest performance figures from MJM Joinery one of the Association's main contractors.

Amy asked the group if there were any specific areas of repairs that they would like to discuss. The group highlighted the following areas.

**1. Lack of Communication from Contractors**

- The group said that they have experienced a lack of communication from contractors e.g. contractors showing up at properties to carry out repairs at different dates or times than previously arranged. They also highlighted that contractors have sent subcontractors to their properties to carry out repairs on their behalf but haven't let them know this therefore they haven't let them in because they didn't know who they were.

The group were advised that the contractors should be communicating clearly with tenants about what time and date they will be visiting the property and should also update them if they are sending out a sub-contractor. Graham advised that he will remind the contractors of this.

**2. Contractors – Not Carrying ID or Wearing a Uniform**

- It was highlighted that some of the contractors don't always carry ID, arrive in a branded van or wear a uniform that would make them easily identifiable for tenants which is a concern particularly for older tenants.

Graham advised that all contractors should be carrying up to date ID and have a presentable uniform however the expected standard may drop when subcontractors are sent out. Graham advised that he will contact contractors to ensure that they always have ID with them on their visits.

### **3. Customer App – Repairs Update**

- The group asked if the customer app could show timescales for how long a reported repair will take to complete because at the moment the app only shows the date that a repair was reported and basic notes.

The group were advised that unfortunately the app won't provide them with this level of detail. Graham advised that once a line has been sent to the contractor the responsibility then lies with them to communicate effectively with the tenant and to complete the repair within the expected timescales. The group were advised that they can call the repairs team if they ever have any concerns regarding how long a repair is taking to complete and they will chase this up the contractor. Erica advised that we will revisit the app in future.

### **4. Satisfaction Results**

- The group advised that they think that satisfaction levels would increase if there was more communication from the contractor and they provided tenants with regular repairs updates so that they don't need to keep chasing it up.

### **5. Job Timescales**

- The group advised that it would be beneficial if the repairs team got back in contact with the tenant if the timescale for a repair had passed and it is still outstanding.

Graham advised that the repairs team receive regular reports one which includes ongoing jobs. This allows us to identify when we need to get back in touch with the contractor to ensure that they contact the tenant and complete the job as soon as possible. The contractors are trusted to do this, and they should be following the necessary procedures and ensuring that the tenant is happy with the outcome.

- The group asked if the backlog of reactive repairs has been dealt with and if they are now actioned within the correct timescales.

Graham advised that the backlog has been dealt with and all repairs should be within the correct timescales.

## **6. Planned Maintenance**

- A discussion took place about planned maintenance. The group asked how many properties are still waiting on window upgrades. One of the members explained that they lived in one of the properties with wooden windows previously and during winter it was extremely cold. They expressed concern with this due to the cost of living crisis and people feeling the strain with gas and electricity bills. They asked if the cost of living crisis would change the Association's priorities in terms of planned maintenance.

Graham advised that almost all of the wooden windows in properties have now been replaced. He also advised that external wall insulation has been put in most of our properties and the Maintenance Officers will identify any properties that need thermal lining. Our contractor City Building also provide a quality service for any gas and heating issues.

## **7. Cost of Living Crisis**

- The group asked if the Association was able to obtain any funding to help tenants due to the cost of living crisis.

Erica advised that we have received a grant to employ a dedicated energy advisor to provide tenants with help and advice. She advised that we have previously provided fuel vouchers to tenants and we are waiting to hear back on whether we have received additional funding for this. We also have our Tenancy Sustainment Officer who can provide support to tenants. The group decided that it would be beneficial to include contact details for organisations that are providing support to people in the winter newsletter. The group also requested for an energy advisor to attend the next meeting. Amy to include information in the newsletter and to arrange for the energy advisor or the TSO to attend the meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> November to discuss what help is available.

## **8. CO Detectors**

- The group were advised that all properties should have CO detectors and when the boilers are serviced the contractor should check that they are working correctly and fit any additional detectors needed.

## **9. Rechargeable Repairs**

- The group agreed that it would be beneficial to include tips to avoid rechargeable repairs and alterations advice in the newsletter and to let people know that they can buy another fob for £10. Amy will include this.

## **10. Topic of Discussion for Future Meetings**

- Insulation advice

## **11. Date of Next Meeting**

- 10<sup>th</sup> November 2022 at 7pm.