

Partners' Residents Open Forum Meeting 21 September 2023

Partners' staff: Katrina Dalby, Service Improvement and Engagement Manager, Ibrahim Awad, Home Ownership Team Leader, Paula Redpath, Head of Repairs Operations

3 in person resident attendees

Discussion Item	Response if applicable	Actions
Action points from last meeting	<p>How to extend your lease Gazette Article – An article updating leasehold related fees featured in the last Gazette and we didn't want to overload it with information specific to leaseholders. An article about extending leases will be in the next edition.</p> <p>Thank you to the residents for their feedback on the sign-up packs from the last meeting. This has been shared with the relevant teams.</p> <p>The Housing Team have found that there is information regarding the local area on the Council's website for each property in the borough. The Housing Team will add the link to the Sign-Up pack cover sheet for sign ups.</p> <p>Leasehold Packs - as suggested, we've requested a copy of the Council's sign-up pack and once we receive it we'll cross reference the information with what's included in our pack.</p> <p>Property Sale update – Islington's Clienting team are aware of a few issues in this area and the delay seems to be with Islington's Legal Team. They have raised the issue with the manager of the responsible team and are awaiting feedback for how this can be improved. We'll keep following up and update residents.</p>	<p>Include article in December Gazette</p>
Updates from Partners: Complaints Panel		<p>Bring action plan to a future Open Forum meeting</p>

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<p>Partners have emailed the existing Panel asking for volunteers to be included in the next review. If anyone else is interested in getting involved, please let me know. Completing the review takes up about an hour of your time every 6 months.</p> <p>Partners Christmas Party</p> <p>The Party is booked for 6 December – if anyone would like to attend, please contact Katrina.dalby@partnersislington.net to book a place. The mayor has confirmed his attendance and we have extended the invite to a few of our local Councillors too.</p> <p>Partners Website</p> <p>We have added a new repair reporting tool on our website www.partnersislington.net. When you use the site, please share any feedback via enquiries@partnersislington.net.</p> <p>Annual Service Planning</p> <p>We're starting work on our next annual service plan. The plan sets out our priorities for the year ahead and any improvements we want to make. I will share a draft of the plan with you when it's available, but please start thinking about what you think our priorities should be for a discussion at our December meeting.</p> <p>Resident Survey</p> <p>Islington Council are currently conducting a satisfaction survey which includes Partners residents. Around 160 tenants and 70 leaseholders are being included. We have</p>		

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<p>shared the contact details of all Partners residents with the council and they have selected a sample to call.</p>		
<p>Section 20 & Final Account – Improvement Opportunities</p> <p>A resident attendee raised concerns about the receipt of section 20's and final accounts. He identified 3 points of weakness in the process:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Has the item been posted 2. Has the item been delivered by the Royal Mail 3. Has the item been received by the resident <p>The resident suggested that we review the process to understand how big an issue non receipt of documents is and consider improvements that could be made to ensure leaseholders received notices.</p>	<p>HiMail</p> <p>Partners Home Ownership Team use an electronic business postal system called HiMail. Staff upload letters to a portal and HiMail, print and post the items. The system enables staff to send letters when they are not in the office. Once a letter has been uploaded staff can check the progress of the item, when it was sent and if it has been returned.</p> <p>Legislation</p> <p>Legislation says that 'we must consult' anyone who is liable to contribute to costs and we must be able to evidence that we have served a notice on their contact address. The minimum requirement is that the notice is posted to the resident. We can check with HiMail that an item was posted, and we rely on the Royal Mail to deliver it. We understand that this isn't foolproof and agree that it would be beneficial for us to investigate additional options which could improve receipt of notices.</p>	<p>Partners to investigate how we could improve the S20 and Final Account letter process. Consider whether email could also be used and whether leaseholders could be given the option to opt into emails</p>
<p>Re-charging leaseholders</p> <p>It was noted by attendees that they had heard positive feedback regarding the kitchen replacement programme, and asked whether leaseholders could be considered for a new kitchen if there were any left at the end of the programme.</p>	<p>We don't carry out work inside a leaseholder's property. Under the terms of the lease, leaseholders are responsible for their kitchens. An additional complication of carrying out work in a leaseholder's property is re-charging them. We don't have a mechanism in place to recharge leaseholders. This was a challenge for the Council's fire safety team who are carrying out works to the communal areas. The Council think that they have overcome this issue and have a way of allowing leaseholders to opt into receiving a new door and being re-charged by the Council.</p>	<p>Partners to check whether fire detection work will be carried out in a specific leaseholder's property.</p>
<p>Scaffolding</p> <p>A resident raised concerns about the conduct of scaffolders working on behalf of Partners. They cited instances of swearing, causing damage and noise.</p>	<p>Staff and sub contractors should not behave in this way. Our site teams sign up to a 'site code of conduct' which is re-iterated to staff and sub contractors regularly. We try to have a Partners' supervisor on site as much as possible, especially when scaffolding is being installed or removed.</p>	

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<p>They noted that some teams are better than others, and asked when the contract with Griffin is up for renewal.</p>	<p>We have tried other scaffolding contractors and have found that Griffin are the best. They provide a good service which they will tailor for our requirements. Griffin's owner meets regularly with Partners managers and takes personal responsibility for the actions of his staff.</p> <p>Scaffolders work in 'gangs' and we try to limit our use to the same 2 gangs so that we can easily monitor performance and quickly deal with any issues that arise.</p> <p>We have a card system in place. If a member of staff does not follow the code of conduct, they receive a yellow warning card. Examples of this are swearing and not following guidance on PPE. If they repeat an offence, they are issued with a red card and are no longer allowed to work on Partners properties.</p> <p>If residents have concerns about the behaviour of scaffolders, they should immediately contact Partners on 0800 587 3595 or enquiries@partnersislinton.net so that our Repairs Team can act quickly to deal with the issues.</p>	
<p>Leasehold Reform</p> <p>A leaseholder mentioned leasehold reform which has been suggested will be in the King's speech in October. There is suggestion that you will be able to extend a lease to 999 years. It isn't expected that this will cost significantly more than the current extension costs. Extending to 999 years will give leaseholders more security.</p> <p>It is recommended that if your lease is for 85 years or less, you should apply for an extension. If a few leaseholders are considering applying for an extension it is worth considering sharing a solicitor and applying together.</p>		

Date of next meeting – Thursday 16 November 2023 – Online