



## Partners Residents Open Forum Meeting 20 September 2018

Partners' staff: Simon Maney, Home Ownership Team Leader, Katrina Dalby, Service Improvement and Engagement Advisor

Islington Council staff: Sarfraz Khan

4 Resident attendees

Discussion Item	Response if applicable	Actions
<p><b>Home Ownership</b> As requested, Simon Maney, Home Ownership Team Leader attended the meeting to answer residents' home ownership queries. Questions were also submitted in advance and Partners response to these is detailed in appendix 1.</p> <p>A resident asked for scaffolding surveys and before and after photographs to be sent to leaseholders.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The information needed to issue a section 20 notice is achieved via a ground level survey and we have to make provision and contingencies for things we cannot see.</li> <li>• We don't send a more detailed survey to residents as the initial section 20 notice covers all the work that we intend to do. If a resident would like to talk to us about the work we're planning they can arrange an appointment with their site manager/surveyor, who will be happy to go through the detail with them.</li> <li>• The administrative burden of taking, transferring and issuing photos would not be practical. We do take general before and after photos, but these photos wouldn't mean much without interpretation, and are used for resolving challenges.</li> <li>• If a resident would like to know more about the planned work, we recommend</li> </ul>	

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	<p>that they make an appointment with the responsible surveyor who will be able to provide full details. Please contact us on 0800 587 3595 or <a href="mailto:enquiries@partnersislinton.net">enquiries@partnersislinton.net</a> to arrange this.</p>	
<p><b>Right to buy/Shared Ownership</b> Residents asked about buying options.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Right to Buy was introduced in 1980 and gives eligible social housing tenants the right to buy their home at a discounted rate. Over the years, discount levels and eligibility criteria have varied. From 6 April 2018, maximum discounts are £80,900 across England and £108,000 in London. Discounts increase in April every year in line with any increase in inflation.</li> <li>• You have the Right to Buy if you're a secure council tenant and have spent at least 3 years as a public sector tenant. The 3 years doesn't have to be continuous and you can add together any time you have spent as a public sector tenant. A public sector tenant is someone whose landlord is a public body such as a council, housing association or government department. Eligibility criteria also include having no legal issues with debt or any outstanding possession orders.</li> <li>• After completing a right to buy purchase,</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partners to contact resident regarding RTB information.</li> </ul>

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	<p>you are able to sell your home at any time, but if you sell your home within the first five years, the landlord has the right to ask for repayment of all or part of the discount. After five years, you can sell the property without repaying any of the discount you received. The amount you pay back also depends on the value of your home when you sell it.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You can find out more here:</li> </ul> <p><a href="https://righttobuy.gov.uk/">https://righttobuy.gov.uk/</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.gov.uk/right-to-buy-buying-your-council-home">https://www.gov.uk/right-to-buy-buying-your-council-home</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.islington.gov.uk/housing/council-tenant-services/right-to-buy">https://www.islington.gov.uk/housing/council-tenant-services/right-to-buy</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.islington.gov.uk/housing/private-sector-housing/home-ownership">https://www.islington.gov.uk/housing/private-sector-housing/home-ownership</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shared Ownership is where you buy a percentage of a property, usually with a mortgage, and pay a subsidised rent on the remaining percentage.</li> <li>You can buy a shared ownership home through a housing association. You buy a share of your home (between 25% and</li> </ul>	

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	<p>75%) and pay rent on the rest.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You can buy a home through shared ownership if your household earns £80,000 a year or less (or £90,000 a year or less in London) and any of the following apply: You're a first-time buyer, you used to own a home, but can't afford to buy one now, or you're an existing shared owner.</li> <li>If you're aged 55 or over you can buy up to 75% of your home through the Older People's Shared Ownership (OPSO) scheme. Once you own 75% you won't pay rent on the rest.</li> <li>You can buy more of your home after you become the owner. This is known as 'stair casing'.</li> <li>For more information about shared ownership go to: <a href="https://www.gov.uk/affordable-home-ownership-schemes/shared-ownership-scheme">https://www.gov.uk/affordable-home-ownership-schemes/shared-ownership-scheme</a></li> </ul>	
<b>Downsizing/Transferring</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If your home is too big for your needs you can consider downsizing to a smaller property.</li> <li>Islington Council operate a scheme that can help with this. Full details are available on their website</li> </ul>	

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	<p><a href="https://www.islington.gov.uk//housing/council-tenant-services/moving-home/downsizing">https://www.islington.gov.uk//housing/council-tenant-services/moving-home/downsizing</a> or you can call them 020 7527 4140 and choose option 3.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If you want to move home because you want to live in a different area or your home is too big or too small for you there are various schemes which may help you including transferring or a mutual exchange. Full details are available on Islington Council's website: <a href="https://www.islington.gov.uk//housing/council-tenant-services/moving-home">https://www.islington.gov.uk//housing/council-tenant-services/moving-home</a> or you can contact your Housing Services Officer at Partners on 0800 587 3595.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>TV Aerials</b> A resident asked whether Partners maintain TV aerials in properties.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where Islington Council installed communal TV aerials, Partners are responsible for maintaining them.</li> <li>Where aerials were installed by residents, they are responsible for any repairs.</li> <li>If a resident wants to install an aerial or satellite dish they must get permission first by contacting our Housing Services Team on 0800 587 3595 or <a href="mailto:enquiries@partnersislington.net">enquiries@partnersislington.net</a>.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partners to investigate specific issue raised at the meeting regarding a resident's aerial.</li> </ul>

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<p><b>Rydon</b> A resident asked whether Rydon staff carry out private work.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rydon are a large construction, maintenance and development organisation and you may see their staff and vans involved in non-Partners related work.</li> <li>• Full details are available on their website: <a href="http://www.rydon.co.uk/">www.rydon.co.uk/</a></li> </ul>	
<p><b>Scaffolding</b> A draft scaffolding information leaflet was shared with residents for their feedback. A resident raised concerns about a safety issue she'd seen regarding scaffolders.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partners are very grateful for the time residents have given in the production of the scaffolding information leaflet. This should be available within the next few weeks.</li> <li>• If a resident has any safety concerns when we are working at their home they should contact us immediately on 0800 587 3595 or <a href="mailto:enquiries@partnersislington.net">enquiries@partnersislington.net</a>.</li> <li>• All staff and sub-contractors receive regular health and safety training to ensure that they protect themselves and those around them. We also carry out regular spot checks to ensure that health and safety standards are adhered to.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Kitchens</b> A resident asked how frequently their kitchen would be replaced.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our PF11 contract with Islington Council lasts for 30 years and specifies that a kitchen should be no more than 20 years old. Therefore the properties which fall in PF11 will receive two kitchens during the period of the contract.</li> </ul>	



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Our PF12 contract lasts for 16 years and properties within this contract will receive one kitchen during the life of the contract.</li><li>• To find out whether your PF11 or PF12 visit our website or contact us on 0800 587 3595.</li></ul>	

**Date of next meeting – Thursday 15 November 2018 – Islington Town Hall, committee room 1**

## Appendix 1 - Leaseholder Questions

### 1. What is the process for dealing with a repair submitted by a leaseholder or tenant?

The process for reporting repairs is the same for tenants and leaseholders. Residents can report repairs via the telephone, in person or online. Our Repairs Team agree an appointment with the resident based on the response times for the category of the repair.

We have three timescales for repairs:

- Emergency Repairs – An emergency is a problem that could endanger the health and safety of anyone living in your home if we don't put it right. We will complete the work within one working day.
- Urgent Repairs – Urgent repairs are those that are needed to allow you to live in your home in comfort, for example a blocked bath or sink. We will complete an urgent repair within 3 to 7 working days.
- Routine Repairs – All other repairs are classified as routine, for example making good plastering on a wall. We will complete a routine repair within 25 to 28 working days.

An operative would attend as agreed and complete the work. If necessary any follow up visits would be booked with the resident onsite at the time of the initial appointment or the job would be closed down as complete on the system. If the Operative categorises any follow on work as 'large scale' the job would be transferred to our Major Repairs Team. They would be then be responsible for completion of the repair and would arrange for section 20s to be issued as appropriate.

### 2. How is the case monitored once an appointment has been made? I'm particularly interested in timeframes from initial contact to completion of the job.

As described above we raise a repair within the timeframes agreed in our contract with Islington Council. Full details are available on our website:

[www.partnersislington.net/tenants/repairs-gas-servicing-and-cyclical-decorations/](http://www.partnersislington.net/tenants/repairs-gas-servicing-and-cyclical-decorations/)

Repairs are monitored via our Repairs Team's system called Planet. The system is monitored by our Repair's Managers and if any repairs are overrunning the system raises an automatic flag.

### 3. What mechanism is in place to monitor a job once the leaseholder/tenant has raised a concern about the length of time the repair is taking or they are not satisfied with the standard of workmanship? From experience this is not handled well and I would suggest an appropriate officer is assigned to oversee the job.

When a repair is being dealt with by our Responsive or Major Repairs Team a resident can contact our Repairs Contact Centre on 0800 587 3595 for an update. Our Contact Centre should be able to give residents the information they've requested, however if they can't then they can contact the supervisor or surveyor dealing with the repair for more information and update the resident accordingly. If the repair is with our Cyclical Team, each resident is assigned a Resident Liaison Officer who should be their first point of contact for queries. If they are unable to help, they can contact the appropriate surveyor for the relevant information and update the resident.

If a resident remains unhappy with the progress of a repair they can make a formal complaint via the telephone, in person or online:

[www.partnersislinton.net/contact-us/submit-an-enquiry-service-alert-or-formal-complaint/](http://www.partnersislinton.net/contact-us/submit-an-enquiry-service-alert-or-formal-complaint/)

A Complaints Officer would be assigned to investigate the concerns raised and they would work with a Repairs Supervisor to gather information and take appropriate action such as completing a post inspection.

3. How does Partners ensure the job is completed and to an acceptable standard of workmanship?

Completing a long lasting repair which resolves the original repair issue is always our aim. All repair's staff are monitored and receive regular feedback and training to ensure that they are able to complete repairs to a good standard.

We have the following mechanisms in place to test the quality of our repairs:

- Partners Repairs Team randomly post inspect 10% of all repairs each month.
- The Partnership Team (SPV – special purpose vehicle) does a further sample audit and inspection of repairs in addition to this 10%.
- Partners Major Repairs Team post inspects:
  - 100% of jobs over £5,000
  - 100% of damp jobs
  - 100% of roof jobs
  - 10% of jobs under £5,000
- Those jobs under £5,000 that are not physically post inspected are evidenced through a desk top inspection of photographic evidence.
- Partners Cyclical Repairs Team post inspects 100% of their work and 75% are also post inspected by the Partnership Team (SPV)

5. Do the Council/Partners undertake inspections of tenant's homes to ensure the premises are being maintained to a good order? From experience, as tenants do not

report issues therefore the problem gets worse which increases the cost of the repair which is ultimately passed onto leaseholder. This would include gardens as well.

We do not carry out regular inspections of tenanted properties or communal areas for repairs purposes. As part of our programme of other visits to properties such as Tenancy Audits, Communal Area Risk Assessments, Electrical Safety checks etc. staff would look for repair issues and if any are identified they would report these to the Repairs Team.

Please be reminded that repairs in tenanted properties are not charged to leaseholders.

6. Would Council/Partners introduce an officer meeting to discuss a dispute about the final cost of works? I take the view this would save so much time, and not all tenants are confident to correspond in writing with the Council on such matters.

We agree that a face to face meeting is a good way to resolve disputes. We have a major works and service charge challenge process in place and the option of a meeting is built into this. Full details are available in our Service Charge Challenge Leaflet:

[www.partnersislinton.net/publications/major-works-and-service-charge-challenges-leaflet/](http://www.partnersislinton.net/publications/major-works-and-service-charge-challenges-leaflet/)

Hard copies are available on request.