

Partners' Residents Open Forum Meeting 18 January 2024

Partners' staff: Katrina Dalby, Service Improvement and Engagement Manager, Michelle O'Toole, Complaints and Communications Manager, Ibrahim Awad, Home Ownership Team Leader

Islington Council Representative: Ross Treseder

6 resident attendees

Discussion Item	Response if applicable	Actions
Action points from last meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Following the last meeting, Stacey Payne has confirmed that residents in receipt of benefits can apply for a reduction of 50% on bulky waste collections. Full details are available here: Islington Council bulky waste costs and items collected Partners to add details of bike hangers/other solutions to TORT letter. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Include articles in Partners Gazette from last meeting: Cartoon imagery may help – sometimes pictures are better than words at communicating a message. Maybe Partners could team up with a local school and run a competition for children to design a poster which could be displayed in the communal areas, reminding residents about the importance of keeping them clear. 2. Explain the reason for the policy in Partners Gazette. 3. Remind residents not to leave e-scooters etc charging overnight as they are a fire risk. 4. Focus on the specific addresses that have the most issues. 5. Tackle each issue on a case-by-case basis – be creative and flexible. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share storage information – bike hangers cost £110 per year. You can request them here: www.islington.gov.uk/roads/cycling/cycleparking Update on leasehold s20 notification – 3 leaseholders signed up. Will promote in Gazette going forwards. 	

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<p>Updates from Partners:</p> <p>Partners' Christmas Party</p> <p>The party took place on the 6 December, and we felt that it went really well. The mayor + 35 residents attended. Partners requested feedback from those at the Forum who attended.</p> <p>Partners Gazette</p> <p>February Gazette is in production. If anyone has any ideas for articles, please contact Katrina Dalby.</p> <p>Cyclical Decorations</p> <p>This year's provisional cyclical programme is available and on our website. A resident asked how the programme is devised.</p> <p>Leasehold notification sign up</p> <p>3 leaseholders have so far signed up to receive email notifications when a section 20 or FA has been posted.</p>	<p>Residents' feedback included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great the Mayor attended and was able to chat with residents. • Partners staff should introduce themselves to resident's, some staff did but not all. • Water, napkins, cutlery should be on the table. • Have a display of photos or any interesting info. • Maybe a 'come talk to me Partners' table. • Think about including a chair swap/chance to mingle so people can meet and chat to other people, not just those on their table. • Consider wine to accompany lunch. <p>A resident suggested information on fibre broadband.</p> <p>During the meeting a resident was unable to find the programme on the website. Partners to add it to the news page. The programme largely follows the original refurbishment schedule. We plan work so that we complete whole roads at one time, though this isn't always possible. Every property has a cycle of Cyclical Decorations every 5-7 years.</p> <p>A leaseholder commented that a PDF of the documentation would be good as it makes it easier to read the small writing. They asked if page numbers could be added.</p>	<p>KD to add programme to news page.</p> <p>Partners to explore adding page numbers to the documentation</p>

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<p>Scaffolding/Repairs</p> <p>Residents raised concerns regarding the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How do Partners decide when a property will receive cyclical decorations? 2. How are the properties surveyed? A resident was concerned that their survey was a desktop exercise and that the process should be a dialogue rather than just going ahead. 3. Residents want to minimise the frequency of scaffolding. It doesn't always feel necessary. When scaffolding is up could Partners carry out surveys etc to inform the ongoing condition of the building, when cyclical work would be beneficial etc, rather than waiting until something goes wrong. 4. Why are scaffolding costs so high? Once you have a relationship with a company you should be able to negotiate lower rates. 5. Why have repair costs increased so much? 6. Can't drones be used to investigate repairs rather than always needing scaffolding? 	<p>Partners response:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The programme largely follows the original refurbishment schedule. We plan work so that we complete whole roads at one time, though this isn't always possible Every property has a cycle of Cyclical Decorations every 5-7 years. Partners must decorate the outside of the buildings every 7 years but there is some flexibility when the programme is delivered. Over the course of our 30-year contract leaseholders won't pay for any more cyclical work than is planned in the contract. Leaseholders are subject to a £10k cap on their bills over a rolling 5-year period. 2. Initially a ground-level survey, considering the repair history of the building and the surveyor's knowledge of similar properties is completed and this information is used to complete the section 20. We are unable to carry out a detailed survey until scaffolding has been erected and all elevations and roofs can be thoroughly inspected. As such provisional sums and contingencies are included to cover the eventuality that these works are required once the detailed survey has been completed. Without including these contingencies, we would have to keep issuing additional S20s for any new works found during the detailed survey, after the scaffold has been erected. The likelihood is that the final bill will be lower than the section 20 amount, however if we don't make this allowance, then potentially the whole process is elongated, there is more paperwork and delays and more disruption is caused to residents, with scaffolds standing for longer than necessary. If no such works are required, then there will be no recharge in the final account. 3. When the scaffold is in place for Cyclical Decorations every 5-7 years, we do carry out a full building condition survey of the external envelope, including the roof, brickwork, and windows. If we see defects, we repair them and a judgement call is made on any renewal of an item such as the roof, based on the repairs' history for the last few years and whether the Building Surveyor believes the building component has reached (or is reaching) the end of its lifecycle. However, given the type and age of 	

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<p>7. A resident recently had scaffolding up at her home and wasn't told what work was going to be completed or updated afterwards to say what was done.</p> <p>8. Partners scrutiny panel looked at the scaffolding experience a few years ago. A resident suggested we revisit the recommendations and ensure that they are being followed.</p>	<p>buildings we are dealing with this does not guarantee there will not be further issues in between cycles of cyclical decorations and putting another scaffold up cannot be avoided.</p> <p>4. Having value tested the market we believe the agreed rates for the scaffold is very competitive and is reviewed annually by our Commercial Team. Scaffolding is procured against set charges depending on size/style and does not vary according to the length of time which the scaffold will be in situ. As such there is no financial penalty for the scaffolding being up for a longer than expected, should there be unforeseen delays on site.</p> <p>5. We don't believe costs have increased other than in line with UK and industry inflation costs. If residents have any specific examples, we can investigate further.</p> <p>6. We do not have the requisite permissions to fly over 'a congested area' as defined by the CAA and would have to employ someone who did. Costs vary but when we last investigated this it meant that in order to use a drone to look at a building a S20 would have to be served. We are also aware that images captured would have to comply with data protection rules which could result in protracted problems if images were obtained of people and/or personal property without permission.</p> <p>7. We have a communications process which should ensure that all residents in a block are kept up to date with a repair which affects all residents. As suggested in question 8 we will review the recommendations from the scrutiny review of scaffolding to ensure that they are being followed. If residents are ever concerned about what work is being completed at their home, they can contact our Repairs Team for an update on enquiries@partnersislington.net or call 0800 587 3595.</p>	
<p>Contract</p> <p>A resident asked whether they could see a copy of Partners contract with Islington Council.</p>	<p>The links to the contract are in the green shaded section towards the bottom of this page:</p> <p>Partners for Improvement, TMO and TMC repairs Islington Council</p>	

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Grenfell Tower A resident asked why Rydon are still working on the Partners contract when they have been implicated in the Grenfell Tower tragedy.	Rydon are a Partners' sub-contractor and deliver Partners Repairs service. Rydon's performance is consistently good and always meets our contractual service standards. The Grenfell tower inquiry is ongoing.	
Fibre Broadband A resident expressed concern about the proposed phasing out of copper cables and the installation of fibre in the next 12 months. A variety of providers have been installing fibre in his road, but because the wayleaves haven't been agreed with Islington Council, council tenants and leaseholders are unable to sign up to it. The resident has been in touch with the council to get an update on the situation but has not had a significant response.	Islington Council have provided the following update: Wayleave agreements are now in place with three providers, and these allow for installation to all council stock, including street properties managed under the PFI contract. Residents should have been, or will be, written to directly by providers when the equipment and connections are available in their areas. Most street properties won't require the submission of cable installation plans (unless it's a particularly complicated install). As such, providers should be able to complete installations without the need for recourse from the council. The council has a web page with further information on this matter, including a paragraph specifically regarding street properties: Broadband Islington Council Queries on this matter can be directed to IslingtonBroadband@islington.gov.uk	
Open Forum Feedback In advance of the meeting a draft letter was circulated. Partners want to send the letter to residents who haven't reported a repair in the last 3 years. The purpose of the initiative is to ensure that residents' homes do not have any repairs issues and that the person doesn't require any additional support. The Forum were asked for their feedback on the letter.	Feedback included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the beginning of the letter explain who we are and that we are responsible for keeping the homes in a good state of repair • Say that we will bring ID with us when visiting • Don't use the word inspection as sounds harsh and frightening • Say how Frank will be contacting them – email phone letter? • Give the option to contact Frank to book their own appointment • Include how to report repairs so people can be reminded how to do it if they don't know • Say what window will be available for appointments – Mon-Fri 9-5 etc 	Letter was updated to reflect residents' feedback – thank you

Date of next meeting – Thursday 21 March 2024 – Online