

# Minutes

Leaseholder Forum

9<sup>th</sup> July 2009

17:00 – 19:00

Boardroom, 14 Hounds Gate



**Present:** Sam Else (SE), Jon Short (notes), Bethany Gajic (work experience), Ann Gardner (AG), Jennie Bellamy (JB), Sheila Thwaites ( ShThw) (Vice-Chair), Sandra Stones (SS), Audrey Davies (AD), Carol Tomkiss (CT), Richard Holland (NCH RH)), Robin Stalvies, Billy Pollock (BP), Keith Bradbury (Tenant – Winchester Court KB), Graydon Peacock (NCH GP), John Broomfield (NCC), Steven Walters (NCH – Asbestos), Ian Perry (NCH Estates & Caretaking Manager), Eddie Johnson-Flint (EJF)

**Apologies:** Simon Temporal, Jean England, Iris Yu, Alison Roberts, Kate Bowley, Anna Rogers, Val Cleaves, Stan Bellamy, Ennis Peck, Matt Whittaker

	Items	Action
1.0	<b>Welcome</b>	
	ShThw opened the meeting, thanked all for attending and everybody introduced themselves.	
2.0	<b>Minutes of the Last Forum Monday 18<sup>th</sup> May 2009</b>	
	<p>Chris Bailey from StreetScene attended the Forum in March and has now provided a response to all the queries raised. SE handed around a document produced by Chris for all to read at leisure. (This will be sent out with the Minutes to all those unable to attend). Chris also provided a current list of all the StreetScene supervisors and their contact numbers for Leaseholders to use. SE advised all in attendance that if they have any further queries then these should be directed to Chris and StreetScene directly. The contact details for StreetScene were provided to facilitate this.</p> <p>Page 2 – SS mentioned that some of the paintwork in Newark Crescent was flaking off. SE advised that as far as LRRT were aware all the queries regarding the painting had been resolved as we had heard nothing further since they were raised so assumed this to be the case. SE advised that we would follow this up.</p> <p>Page 3 – Digital switchover – GP reiterated that they were replacing the existing communal aerial..</p>	<b>LRRT</b>

	<p>AG was under the impression that there should be one aerial, one property – GP asked which area of the City she lived (Bestwood Park) – GP advised that the contractors are not in her area as yet.</p> <p>AG said she was told by a Supervisor from the Customer Services team that they don't need a new box if they already have their own aerial – and that they could opt out – GP was interested to know who had told them this as this was not the case – AG could not recall who told them this GP is to look into this.</p> <p>JB said that she had been called a liar by her neighbours as she had showed them all the information she had received at the last Forum regarding the aerial and people didn't believe her. GP said that the contractors weren't in her area (Wyton Close) either at the moment and he would also look into this and provide more of an explanation if required.</p> <p>BP said that Brightmoor Court hadn't had a communal aerial for at least 10 years – GP explained that the term communal aerial was used loosely to refer to any connection used by all flats to access audio visual equipment and the new facility would be needed if residents wanted to have TV in future.</p>	
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Re-tendering of CCTV/Door Entry Maintenance contract</b>	
	<p>GP handed around a timetable for the re-tendering of the contract (which will be distributed with the Minutes). The current contract expires in March 2010.</p> <p>GP advised that a letter would only go to those Leaseholders who currently benefit from the CCTV and Door Entry service.</p> <p>KB asked if they would need a new fob – GP said this would not be necessary as their existing fob would work – it is only the maintenance contract which is up for tender not the actual door entry mechanism itself.</p> <p>KB stated that at Winchester Court – there was recently a power down on their system and there was a message coming up – GP took down the details and will look into this.</p> <p>AD said she doesn't understand why they are paying for maintenance as they don't get any and she has never seen anybody provide any maintenance. GP said he could provide dates of when the Door Entry system at Newark Crescent had been checked. SE said that we could include this with the service charge information.</p>	

	<p>GP said that the maintenance contract covers blocks with metal doors – those at Newark Crescent are wooden but the contracted company would still make regular visits to ensure the system was working correctly. Both SS and AD said that the doors bang when they close – GP said that the door closure mechanism may need some adjustment – he took a note of this and will look into it. AD reiterated that nobody has been to maintain the door entry system at her block in the 12 years she has been there.</p> <p>ShThw said there are 141 properties on Newark Crescent so surely somebody would see them when they came to maintain the system.</p> <p>JB said that on Wyton Close they only see people when the residents phone up to complain that the door entry system isn't working. GP said that the operatives actually have to be on site to do any work there as they physically have to remove the sim card type machinery to check it is all working and this cannot be done remotely.</p> <p>Newark Crescent leaseholders in attendance said that the door entry intercom system there is not maintained. GP reiterated that he can provide evidence of when they went out as the operatives have to provide log sheets detailing when they visited the blocks and what they did.</p> <p>GP said that it is a fully inclusive service and if the system breaks then it is fixed. Leaseholders get charged extra when damage occurs as a result of vandalism.</p> <p>SE said Leaseholders should check their building insurance as they may be able to make a claim – SE will check with NCC what is covered by the blanket insurance policy as NCH do not administer the insurance scheme.</p> <p>John Broomfield said that the entry door panel on the blocks serves all the properties in the block and if the system is faulty but not vandalised then any work required would be covered by the monthly fee Leaseholders pay.</p> <p>KB said that he recently completed a form which he got from the Wardens regarding the alarm system – GP said this was probably from Nottingham On Call which was a separate part of the Company and was not related to the door entry system.</p>	<b>SE</b>
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Caretaking &amp; Cleaning Update</b>	
	<p>IP addressed the Forum and advised that a full Vision Management System survey had been undertaken across all the high-rise blocks. He advised that the tenant inspectors were also</p>	

being utilised to check the standard of caretaking provision provided. IP said that in June 19 of the 21 high-rise blocks were deemed to be of a 2 \* standard and the aim of the service was to get 16 up to a 3\* standard by December 2009.

IP said that the tenant inspectors look at the Estates as a whole and a separate team of Tenant Inspectors was being set up to concentrate on the low-rise blocks and a Vision Management survey would be sent to residents of low-rise blocks in October 2009..

Communal windows – window cleaning is done either annually or in 6 month cycles.

IP said he wants to meet with residents across the City to find out what service residents expect from the Caretaking service. He had been to Kingston Court today (9 July) and is going to both Winchester & Woodthorpe Court on 17 July to talk about the service as some negative comments had been received from residents in those areas which IP intended to follow up on. Both EJF & KB were shocked that anybody had made any negative comments about their Caretaker (Winchester Court) as in their opinion he is marvellous, and does a wonderful job and was 101% perfect. EJF said the fact he lives in the block means he takes extra pride in his work as he has to live there and all the residents hope that when he retires whoever replaces him maintains his standard. IP thanked EJF and KB for their comments but advised he had to follow up on the comments he had received.

SS mentioned a number of incidents which had occurred around Newark Crescent – mainly when some debris was thrown over the fence from Newark Avenue and was there for several days before it was removed. This occurred over the Bank Holiday weekend in May. Both ASB & StreetScene had been informed but they pay for weekend cover but the debris remained until after the Bank Holiday weekend. SS also mentioned that litter is not picked up at the backs of flats 1 – 65 Newark Crescent.

IP said that all Caretakers have a log book where they detail all the work that they do.

AD wanted to thank StreetScene for the good work they did on the backs of her flats but wanted to know if this standard would be maintained? IP said that StreetScene and Caretaking were separate departments so it would be best Leaseholder follow this up through StreetScene directly.

CT asked in Newark Crescent need to have weekend caretaking cover. IP said he would work out how much it costs to provide

	<p>weekend cover and will feed this back through LRRT.</p> <p>Terry (the Newark Crescent caretaker) spent a long time doing the floor in their block (20 – 36) and then some operatives built a new kitchen for one of the flats in the corridor which ruined the floor and all the hard work Terry had done. IP said that the Caretakers have a difficult job and they have to be encouraged to report incidents and IP said they do challenge people if they feel they are causing a nuisance/ or doing something which they shouldn't be doing.</p> <p>IP advised that all vans have an identification number and all Caretakers have mobiles for lone-working. IP said that weekend over-time is available one week in five and the number of people required has been reduced to 10 from 16. IP has been working closely with ST on service charges to make sure Leaseholders are invoiced correctly for the service they receive. IP will work out some figures regarding the cost of weekend caretaking and get these to LRRT. IP did mention that any Caretakers who volunteer for weekend overtime get paid time and a half on Saturday and double time on Sunday.</p> <p>SS asked whether the tenant inspectors will be able to walk through the blocks to see the backs of them which is often where the problems arise. IP said that he will ensure that from October all the tenant inspectors will be able to enter the blocks to carry out a fuller inspection.</p> <p>EJF asked what qualifications these Inspectors had in order to do the work – IP said that first and foremost they were tenants who lived on our Estates and they received training from the Business Improvement Team based at Hounds Gate. ShThw asked how Leaseholders could become part of the inspection team as she was sure there were some Leaseholders who would be interested – SS expressed interest in doing this. IP said he would be working closely with Gemma Atkinson from the Business Improvement Team regarding this and would find out.</p>	
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Asbestos Checks</b>	
	<p>Steve Walters from the Asbestos Team addressed the Forum, his remit is to manage the control and removal of asbestos in domestic dwellings across the City.</p> <p>Savills have been commissioned to survey all properties across the City and will be ensuring all properties have both an energy proficiency certificate and where possible an asbestos survey. SW advised it was envisaged that the asbestos surveys were due to finish in June next year.</p>	

	<p>The asbestos survey is a free service which has been offered to Leaseholders but so far there has been no take up. Steve passed around examples of the Asbestos Survey which included Newark Crescent – SW advised that asbestos can be found in artex , floor tiles and surface panels as well as other areas – during the survey, samples are taken which are sent off to the lab to identify whether they contain any asbestos and either a positive or negative result is obtained. SW said there are some types of asbestos which anyone can work with, but if asbestos is found in insulation boards then a licensed contractor has to be used to remove it. Nobody should be told to remove asbestos themselves.</p> <p>AD said there was some asbestos in one of the communal doors in Newark Crescent and they were told to apply gloss paint to the offending area which they did and no further problems have been encountered.</p> <p>There is no requirement in the Lease for domestic properties to have an asbestos survey. SW has taken control of removing all the asbestos from across the City using a licensed contractor.</p> <p>RH advised that the Void Lettings Team print off a copy of the asbestos report and place it in the tenancy handbook to make new tenants aware.</p> <p>SW asked if all attendees had received a letter making them aware of the free asbestos survey – some of those in attendance said they had. ShThw and JB said that they had not received a letter yet.</p> <p><b>Update: 10 July 2009 JB rang to advise she had received her letter, JS made SW aware and also provided a contact number for ShThw. SW was to contact her directly regarding this.</b></p> <p><b>Update 17 July 2009 SW rang ShThw who confirmed that the letter had been received. No further action required.</b></p>	
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Update from Leaseholder Manager</b>	
	<p>SE updated all the attendees on LRRT activities.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Service Review – Management Charge – A report is currently being considered by the Director of Finance with the proposed options. This also needs the agreement of NCC Finance Department. Once agreement has been sought a second review will be arranged with the Leaseholder Forum and then City-wide consultation will then be carried out to all leaseholders.</li> </ol>	

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Service Charge Module – Currently reviewing the process and are working to implement a new module on the existing Housing System where all leaseholder details will be stored and the service charges will be generated from this new module from September 2009. Leaseholders will receive their service charges through the new module for 2008/2009 and the estimate for 2009/10 in September 2009.</li> <li>3. Leaseholder Training has been held for all staff at the Repairs Contact Centre last week and is being held in September for the Customer Relations Team and the Depot staff asap at Harvey Road. Area Offices will also be arranged in due course. A training day on Leaseholder Awareness has been booked through T&amp;L Involvement Team and takes place on 25 August for any leaseholders who are interested in attending. – SE said that the training sessions so far had gone well; the Repairs Contact Centre staff were keen to learn and were very receptive.</li> <li>4. We are continuing to keep Leaseholders up to date with the quarterly newsletter. The next edition is due out in September 2009.</li> <li>5. We are increasing the data we hold on leaseholders and are actively carrying out profiling to increase this information so we can continue to ensure that we meet all the needs of our leaseholders. Alongside this we recently asked you to complete a financial survey. The purpose of this is to assist the LRRT in ensuring that we can offer enhanced payment options to leaseholders for service charges and major works. These results are currently being analysed and a report is being compiled to NCH Management for their consideration to improve assistance financially for leaseholders in the future.</li> <li>6. The annual Vision Management Survey has been issued to all leaseholders and the LRRT will be analysing the responses during July/August. The results will be shared and discussed with the Forum at the September meeting.</li> <li>7. The LRRT has re-established the Nottinghamshire Benchmarking Group now known as the 'Midlands Benchmarking Group'. The purpose of this group is to share best practice with other local authorities (currently there are around 12 members) and to benchmark our services against one another to compare how we are performing. NCH are hosting the next meeting which is due to be held on 27<sup>th</sup> August.</li> </ol>	
--	---	--

	<p>SS said that she get lots of debt advice leaflets which upsets her as she is not and never has been in debt and that we NCH are putting her in debt by sending all these bills to her. SS sees it as an insult.</p> <p>It was decided that in future we would not send any leaflets out but would mention their existence in the newsletter and in any other NCH publications and place the onus on the Leaseholder to contact us directly if they require more information about the service.</p> <p><b><u>Any Other Business</u></b></p> <p>EJF mentioned that the drainage system at Winchester/Woodthorpe Courts was very slow and was potentially a major health problem. SE advised that we would chase this up as she recalled the pictures EJF had provided at previous Forums which showed the state of the pipes at Winchester Court.</p> <p>EJF also said that the Fire Service would be unable to get to the back of Winchester Court if there was a fire and there is only one staircase to each block.</p> <p>RH said that NCH had recently appointed a Fire Safety Officer based within the Health &amp; Safety Team and part of his remit was to carry out a fire assessment of all high rise blocks. LRRT would approach the Health &amp; Safety Team and get them to visit Winchester Court and make recommendations.</p> <p>EJF said he was prepared to take the matter higher if nothing was done.</p> <p>ShThw then thanked all for coming and reminded all those in Attendance of the dates for the next Forum.</p>	<p><b>SE/ST</b></p> <p><b>LRRT</b></p>
	<p><b>Date of next meeting: Monday 21 September 2009</b>  <b>Time: 5.00 pm</b>  <b>Venue: 14 Hounds Gate</b></p>	