

Minutes



**Nottingham
City Homes**
Supported Housing

Minutes of Sheltered Housing and Telecare Users Forum held on 09 March 2010 @ 2 pm, The Boardroom Hounds Gate

Present: L Mitchell – Chair, B Garside – Vice Chair, M Mutton – Masson Court, A Ambrose – Naburn Court, T Hill – Selhurst Court, S Sims – Keverne Close, J Foster – Keverne Close, J Gay – Keverne Close, S Beale – Stepney Court, S Carnelley – Gabor Court, D Hayes – Kersall Court, I Watts – Simone Gardens, B Kent – Simone Gardens, B Taylor – Kingston Court, P Brewer – Stepney Court, J Waugh – Stepney Court, G Burrows – Orchard Court, K Bradbury – Winchester Court, R Haywood – Duchess Gardens, O Attenborough - Benedict Court

NCH: Sam King – SHPM, Renate Atkinson – SHPM, Ian Rabett – Head of Health and Safety, Cheryll Rawling – Tenant and Resident Officer, Colin Simpson – Technical Officer (Lifts), Ben Chilvers – Rent Operations Manager

Apologies: Diane Burrup – Supported Housing Manager (NCH), Carole Donnelly – Tenant and Leaseholder Involvement Manager (NCH), F Griffiths – Garfield Court, Chris Broom – Kingston Court, Val Cleaves – Winchester Court.

1.0 Welcome Introductions and Apologies

1.1 Chair, Lynn Mitchell welcomed all Forum members to the meeting and apologies were received as detailed above. Lynn also apologised for not attending the previous meeting.

Action

2.0 Minutes of Last Meeting and Matters Arising

2.1 Some members still need to sign the code of conduct.
2.2 BT asked if Carl Cassidy would attend or someone from the gardening section. SK advised that Ian Perry would be invited to talk about garden maintenance and the garden section would be invited to attend at the same time.

SK

- 2.3 It was suggested that adverts be placed in vacant property windows. Although possibly a good idea, it would advertise the fact that properties were vacant and encourage vandalism.
- 2.4 Another idea was to give financial incentives for people to vacate large properties.
- 2.5 SK informed forum that a rumour was circulating that Benedict Court was to be sold off and that information had allegedly been given at Forum. SK stated that no decisions had been made regarding Benedict Court. BC volunteered to seek information regarding Benedict Court as he is currently assisting within Lettings.
- 2.6 Janet Storer, Chair of NCH Board has agreed to attend the meeting in July.
- 2.7 The minutes were checked and agreed by all.

BC

3.0 Ian Rabett – Head of Health and Safety

- 3.1 Ian introduced himself and explained he was going to talk about fire safety and improvements for the next few years. He then posed the following question saying it didn't need to be answered but was something for all to think about. If there is a fire, do you know what to do? Almost everyone answered yes. Ian then said go home, think about it, talk to your Scheme Manager.
- 3.2 A question was asked about the meeting point at Kersall Court as there were 2 signs with 2 different locations. This will be looked into.
- 3.3 Ian then went on to explain, if the fire is in your own flat you get out. If your in a larger scheme i.e. high rise and you hear an alarm what do you do? If its not in your own flat, close the front door and stay in the property. If its necessary to leave the fire brigade will assist.
- 3.4 We need to ensure the buildings are safe. Fire safety standards have changed and we need to improve standards within buildings.
- 3.5 A lot of work is to be done at Kingston Court checking/changing fire doors, checking/changing closers, possibly upgrading the glazing. Ensure it takes as long as possible for the fire to get from where it is to other parts of the building.
- 3.6 The work will be done on a risk basis and it is understood it may cause disruption. Most of the work will be in communal areas. If its likely to cause a lot of disruption it

SK/DV

will be discussed with Scheme Managers so they can inform you.

3.7 A flat at Stepney Court was raised as to get out of the lounge you have to pass the kitchen which does not have a fire door. Ian agreed to take a look. Other schemes raised were Ogdon Court and Gabor Court.

IR

3.8 It was explained that properties were built to meet a certain standard which they still meet however a property built today would have to meet today's standards.

3.9 It was questioned why the fire brigade had stopped someone from using a cooker.

3.10 The fire service offers a free fire risk service and makes recommendations. If there is an issue with a cooker or it is deemed not safe for an individual to cook, i.e. they have dementia, they will recommend they do not use the cooker.

4.0 Ben Chilvers – Rent Operations Manager

4.1 BC introduced himself and explained he was present to discuss the recent proposals regarding cash collection.

4.2 BC checked if everyone had received a letter, 1 tenant had not. Details to be passed to SK.

SK

4.3 BC explained the cost of processing payments

- 16p to process direct debit
- 45p to process post office payments
- £6 to process at the housing office which includes the cost of security, etc.

4.4 BC explained that the reasons for proposing to close payment desks were

- they deliver poor value for money for rent payers
- there are many cheaper and better options
- so that savings can be invested in a new Customer Service Centre.

4.5 BC explained that the reasons for proposing to stop rent collectors were

- Safety issues for carrying money
- Vulnerable people can pay where they collect their pension/benefits – less cash to carry.
- Numbers using the service has reduced.

4.5 consultation process

- All tenants were sent a letter asking for their views.
- A break down of respondents by area were given
- A breakdown on feedback received was also given

- The Equality Impact Assessment was discussed outlining the negatives and positives.
- Forum members were asked if anything had been missed and if they wanted anything else included.

5.0 Colin Simpson – Technical Officer

- 5.1 CS introduced himself and explained his role within NCH.
- 5.2 In June/July 2009, Nottingham City Council transferred maintenance of lifts to NCH. In January the call centre began taking calls for lift breakdowns.
- 5.3 All lifts maintained on a monthly basis. Response is 4 hours for standard breakdowns and 1 hour if someone is trapped. Length of time to repair is dependant on the problem. If a part is readily available the repair should be in 24 hours.
- 5.4 It was raised that the lift at Kersall Court broke down 3 times within 6 weeks. The fire brigade attended and let people out. The engineers then complained that as the system had been powered down they could not ascertain what the problem had been. It has now been all right for the past 3 weeks.
- 5.5 We have no control over the fire service. The default is for the contractor to attend within the hour. If they cannot attend the call is referred to the fire service. If someone is trapped the priority is to get them out.
- 5.6 It was asked if the number of people allowed in a lift could be reduced as it says 8 people but is very small. Legally we cannot change the notice however the lifts are deliberately small to prevent too many people going in at once.
- 5.7 Colin provided his e-mail address "colin.simpson@nottinghamcity.gov.uk"

6.0 Performance

- 6.1 Performance figures were read out by SK. It was noted that targets had not been met, however the changes in the way monitoring was carried out was explained and how it was being done more stringently.
- 6.2 It was pointed out a change should be noticed when the support plan is next carried out as it includes what you want to do and looks at aspirations.
- 6.3 The target for scheme inspections has been missed as it was bad weather and understandably tenants did not

want to carry out inspections.

6.4 LM said that if there are issues let us know, Its our Forum not Nottingham City Homes'. We need to take back control of the Forum.

7.0 Good News Stories

7.1 Congratulations were given to the gardening department who had spent 3 days at Kersall Court and made a difference.

7.2 It was stated that Stefan should be recommended for a medal as he is very good and doesn't miss a thing. He also provides assistance on the internet for tenants at Selhurst court.

7.3 It was asked that a 3C's box be placed in the boardroom. 3C's forms will be made available at the meetings rather than placing a box in the boardroom.

7.4 A tenant said she was happy with the Warden if they have one, however they can't organise anything as they are always called away.

7.5 It was explained by SK that we are undergoing a review which looks at how we work. It was also explained that if a person is off long term sick, it's not possible to employ a replacement. We also need to cover annual leave which staff are entitled to take.

RA

8.0 8.1 LM asked who was responsible for deciding which guest speakers to invite. SK responded that sometimes we are contacted by guest speakers requesting the opportunity. It is also a regular agenda item but generally suggestions are not made.

9.0 Date and Time of Next Meeting

Tuesday 11th May in the Boardroom at Hounds gate.