



# Minutes – Leaseholder Forum

Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> April 2024 – 18.30  
Microsoft Teams video conference

**Chair:**

Carol Hinvest (CH) – Director of Resident Engagement and Services

**Lewisham Staff:**

Emma Mills (EM) - Head of Home Ownership and Independent Living  
Glenda Omogbai (GO) - Service Charge and Sales Manager  
Lynn Seymour (LS) – Leasehold consultation Manager  
Yvonne Lemonius (YL) – Collections Manager and Legal Coordinator (minute taker)  
Peter Whittington (PW) - Head of Compliance Housing Service

**Guests:** Nigel Bowness (NB) Chair of Service and Performance Panel

**Meeting attendance:** Ian, Chiddy M (CM), Helen R (HR), Collet S (CS), Chloe K (CK), Megan A (MA), Diana S (DS), Dylan W (DW), Loist R (LR), Nigel W (NW), Rosie M (RM), Yen (TL)

**Apologies:** None

<b>1</b>	<b>Welcome and introduction</b>
<b>1.1</b>	CH welcomed everyone to the meeting.
<b>1.2</b>	All attendees introduced themselves
<b>2</b>	<b>Minutes of 13<sup>th</sup> February 2024 and Action Log</b>
<b>2.1</b>	Minutes agreed.
<b>2.2</b>	EM shared the action log and provided updates – see separate log.
<b>3</b>	<b>Service and Performance Panel</b>
<b>3.1</b>	<p>NB, the chair of the Service and Performance Panel (SPP) spoke about the role of the panel and invited leaseholders to become members. NB is currently a member of a number of panels and scrutiny groups including the national steering group on stigma in social housing and would like to involve leaseholders on SPP. NB mentioned that a number of professionals with a variety of backgrounds attend the SPP. CS, RM, CM and DW, expressed interest in being a member of SPP. NB confirmed the minutes and action log from the leasehold forum are included in the papers for SPP. NB said it's not an opportunity to deal with individual issues. NB encouraged leaseholders in attendance to speak to other leaseholders about attending the leasehold forum.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> <b>Names of interested members to be sent to Alys Exley-Smith</b></p>
<b>4</b>	<b>Fire Safety</b>
<b>4.1</b>	<p>PW, Head of Compliance, provided an update on Fire safety. The team have started the annual fire risk inspections for 24-25. Carried out by qualified company called Frankham's. Actions are logged on our compliance tool, True Compliance. Since January 2023 quarterly inspections are carried out on communal doors. This is to ensure they are compliant with fire safety regulations. Leaseholders will be notified if the front entrance door to their dwelling is not compliant and will be asked to</p>



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	<p>remedy the issues. We are in the process of recruiting a Fire Co-ordination Officer to assist with this process.</p> <p>MA Does this apply to dwelling that opens to an open walkway i.e., door or communal area?</p> <p>PW This depends on the dwelling and the position of the dwelling within the building.</p>	
<b>4.2</b>	<p><b>Bin Chutes</b></p> <p>HR Bin chutes have been replaced and are not fit for purpose, they are too small and not fit for purpose. Other leaseholders agreed.</p> <p>PW responded to say after inspection some seals weren't working and it's a fire risk if not replaced.</p>	
<b>4.3</b>	<p>RM said a third of the service charge costs for her building were in connection with unblocking the chutes RM had discussion with Martin Ryan (Head of Environment) previously re the possibility of closing the chutes. Following a survey of residents at Hawkins House, the majority of those who responded wanted the chutes left in use. RM said those who said they wanted them kept in use are the on residents who block them, and the survey was an in balanced judgement call.</p>	
<b>4.4</b>	<p>CM stated if chutes were replaced, and leaseholders were not notified then they cannot be recharged.</p> <p>EM clarified if Section 20 was not served for these works, then any costs incurred will be capped to £250 per leaseholder.</p>	
<b>4.5</b>	<p>CH on the Chute and fire risk point, this is a requirement under the fire order 2005 to be carried out regularly. Risk will be identified and ranked in order or priority and when they need to be completed. Smoke should not be able to escape form the chute hence the reason it is being done.</p>	
<b>4.6</b>	<p>CH said she will contact Martin Ryan about the bin chutes.</p>	
<b>4.7</b>	<p>CM asked who is responsible to look after front doors into communal place re the fire bill of 2021.</p> <p>PW advised that if a leaseholder's door leads into a communal area, it would be the leaseholder's responsibility. If it's a tenanted property, then the responsibility falls on the Council to rectify.</p>	
<b>4.8</b>	<p>CK Fire risk assessment will these be shared online?</p> <p>EM yes that's the plan but not until later in the year, we are hoping around October, in the meantime if you would like a copy, please email your request to <a href="mailto:hos@lewisham.gov.uk">hos@lewisham.gov.uk</a></p>	
<b>4.9</b>	<p>RA Chutes are regularly blocked and not closed properly what happens if this is a non-visit day by the caretaker</p> <p>PW if this the case it should be reported and a caretaker will unblock as this is a risk, they will need to be reported directly to the Environmental team generic inbox <a href="mailto:enviornment@lewisham.gov.uk">enviornment@lewisham.gov.uk</a></p>	
<b>4.10</b>	<p>RM are blocked chutes considered a fire risk?</p> <p>PW if they are sealed no</p> <p>RM what if they don't close?</p> <p>PW – in that case yes this would be considered a fire risk and the expectation is the caretaker should clear it.</p>	



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4.11	CH blocks over 18 meters tall are inspected by building safety managers two weekly inspections.  <b>Actions:</b> <b>CH to contact Martin Ryan re the bin chutes</b>	
5	<b>Future Agenda Items</b>	
5.1	Repairs New Head of repairs starts 2 May and will be invited to the next forum.	
5.2	CK it would be helpful to hear from repairs and good to understand the retro fit strategy.	
5.3	CH told the forum that LBL self-referred to the Regulator.	
5.4	RM – please explain exactly why LBL self-referred to the regulator, she was unaware until she attended SPP. Would like to understand the implications for leaseholders, their legal standing where does it leave us? we would like a better understanding. Why LBL self-referred to the Regulator and what implications are there for leaseholders?	
5.5	CH LBL self-referred in December 23 as it was clear after the transfer from Lewisham Homes that we were not meeting standards. We have overdue Fire risk actions, large volume of repairs as works in progress, significant no. of damp and mould cases, not answering telephones quickly enough, 17% of the homes we manage are non-decent (should be 100% decent) and the last stock condition survey was not recent enough. CH shared the link to the self-referral to the regulatory body <a href="https://lewisham.gov.uk/articles/news/self-referral-to-the-housing-regulator">https://lewisham.gov.uk/articles/news/self-referral-to-the-housing-regulator</a>	
5.6	MA decarbonisation strategies, she believes this is urgent and needs to be rolled out sooner. CH Can't confidently speak about decarbonisation fund but will reach out to Tania Jennings.	
5.7	RM Asked if there is a regulator for leaseholders. CH – no but fire safety and communal repairs impact on all residents regardless of tenure  <b>Actions:</b> <b>CH Invite Representative from repairs (New Head of Repairs)</b> <b>CH to contact Tania Jennings re decarbonisation fund.</b> <b>Self-referral to be discussed at next SPP and info shared with Leasehold Forum members.</b> <b>EM to update action log and send to Leasehold Forum Members with the minutes.</b>	
6	<b>AOB</b>	
6.1	No other business	
	CH – Next meeting is 20 <sup>th</sup> June 2024 – The chair wished everyone a good evening and said it was good seeing such a good turnout this evening.	

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 19:47

The next Leaseholder Forum meeting will be held on: Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> June 2024 18:30