

TRA Chairs meeting minutes Thursday 22 June 2023
Civic Suite, Catford town hall, Catford Road

Chair Darren Hartley (TAROE trust)

Lewisham Homes Staff:

Alys Exley-Smith **Community Relations Manager**
 Clare Hopkins **Head of Housing & Communities**
 Jake Sowe **Assistant Community Relations Officer**
 Jon Kanareck, **Director of Resident Services**
 Martin Ryan **Head of Environment**
 Sarah Wilcox-Jones **Director of Repairs**

TRA Chairs:

- Anna **Clement & Pendennis**
- Candice **Fiveways**
- Clive **Somerville**
- Jessica **Crossfields**
- John **Daubeney Tower**
- Kevin **Kender**
- Megan **Jerningham court**
- Norma **Somerville**
- Shirley **Kender**
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Observers

- Julie Littlejohn **Lewisham Tenants Fund (administrator)**
- Leslie Channon **TAROE Trust**

1	Welcome, introductions and apologies (Darren Hartley, Chair)
1.1	Chair (Darren Hartley) welcomed everyone to the meeting, and thanked Lewisham Tenant's Fund for their support to fund it, and their time.
1.2	Apologies: Cllr Sophie Davies Cllr Luke Warner Cllr James Rathbone Cllr Hillary Moore Cllr John Muldoon Emma Mills – Head of Home ownership & independent Living Nathan Thompson - LBL Environmental services
2	Declaration of interests (Darren Hartley, Chair)
2.1	Kevin Stearns resident of Lewisham Homes and Resident Board member
3	Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising (Darren Hartley, Chair)
3.1	It was agreed the minutes of the last meeting were a true and accurate record.

4	Action points (Darren Hartley, Chair)
4.1	Somerville estate has notice boards, but they need repair. Somerville's housing officer confirmed with the TRA that there is no budget available for estate noticeboards at the moment within Lewisham Homes.
4.2	Alys suggested there may be other funding options to support a TRA noticeboard to promote opportunities to residents, this has been funded elsewhere for TRAs.
4.3	Bence House TRA to have strategic meetings with the asset management team. Building safety manager has requested the meeting with Bence House, introductions have been made, but no meeting has taken place yet.
4.4	An update on the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system could be an option for a future agenda item, there is no real update currently as it is still in the process of being developed, it was agreed it could be considered as a future agenda item once implemented.
5	Feedback on topics discussed in previous meetings (Darren Hartley, Chair) Repairs update (Sarah Wilcox-Jones, Director of Repairs)
5.1	<p>Sarah. In September 2022, we launched a repairs improvement plan to address post-pandemic and post-Brexit challenges in services. There were 171 actions in total, with 58% completed and 21% in progress. We experienced a 70% turnover of management staff, but now have a strong replacement team. Some improvement resources were used to cover losses, and 41 new staff, including 7 customer services managers, were hired through a recent recruitment campaign.</p> <p>We faced issues with business contact methods but have plans to move to the council's telephony system to prevent outages. The average call wait time has been reduced to 6 minutes from the previous 40 minutes to 2 hours. Internal emails are being answered within 2 working days, portal emails are being answered within 1 working day and communal repairs are being answered on the same day.</p>
5.2	Clive. Is there a way disabled people or people who can't use the telephone or email report their repairs in the office?
5.3	Sarah. We are not planning on opening the front desks for face-2-face repairs. We do have open days and tenants can report via housing officers through visits.
5.4	Kevin How many repairs officers are likely to move over to the council?
5.5	Sarah Operatives, who are currently on our payroll, will TUPE (transfer) over to the council.

5.6	Megan How is it best for TRA Chairs to interface with repairs and get updates?
5.7	Sarah We now have a service called Locale like Deliveroo where residents can track the operatives and provide feedback following completion of repairs. You can also arrange for an estate walk-around with myself.
5.8	Clive enquired whether Locale provided a reference number. Sarah confirmed it does provide a reference number.
5.9	John enquired whether details of Locale had been communicated to residents.
5.10	Sarah confirmed it has been promoted to residents through the newsletter and agreed to additional promotion including in the next newsletter with a quote from a resident on their experience of using Locale.
5.11	ACTION An article in the next resident newsletter about using Locale, with a quote from a resident on their experience using Locale.
6	Refuse collection/ Fly tipping (Martin Ryan, Head of environmental services)
6.1	Martin Refuse collection and fly tipping are a joint endeavour going into the council. Design of block waste disposal is different across estates. Domestic refuse collection is separate as blocks were built before recycling was introduced. We want to keep recycling as uncontaminated as possible. Recycling is collected once every week and domestic is collected once every two weeks. The surrounding areas and behaviour of people disposing of waste is different across the blocks as well. Anything out into a waste bin or a chute will need to be collected once every week or two weeks by the councils refuse teams. Black bags in recycling bins are likely to be rejected, which can affect the whole blocks recycling. This is why we are taking a more holistic approach to refuse collection across the borough.
6.2	John cars park on the double yellow line outside Daubeney tower which prevent the refuse vans from parking, it's an issue being repeatedly raised and it's not been addressed, we are wondering if there is a way you can find a resolution.
6.3	Clive. We have collection points at Somerville, but they aren't being used for bulk waste.
6.4	Martin The lines can be blurred when it comes to bulk waste and fly tipping, which is why we do not advertise bulk waste collection sites. Martin offered to do a walk about
6.5	ACTION: Environmental services and LBL's enforcement to visit Jerningham court and Somerville for a walk about with the TRAs.

6.6	The following update was provided by Nathan Thompson in relation to questions asked by TRA chairs in advance of the meeting, and provided by Martin Ryan at the meeting in Nathan's absence
6.7	<p>Significant issues being experienced with waste / recycling / rubbish / fly-tipping.</p> <p>Crossfields Estate is located within the new Deptford Ward. The ward is a major fly tipping hotspot for the environmental crime team. From April 2022-March 2023, <u>203</u> fixed penalty notices were issued within the Deptford ward. <u>11%</u> of those fixed penalty notices were issued to Crossfields Estate Residents for waste found on the Crossfield estate, Creekside and Deptford Church Street.</p>
6.8	<p>Specific issue identified related to issues experienced at Crossfields. Some of this is under a railway arch which would relate to public spaces, but most of the issues relate to on the Lewisham Homes estates.</p> <p>Evidence of fly tipping is mostly found for household waste left next to rubbish and recycling bins in the form of uncontained black bags and cardboard waste. The Enforcement team do realise that issues can sometimes arise from late refuse collections resulting in over production of waste. When this occurs proportionate alternatives to fines and prosecutions are considered with every incident treated separately depending on the circumstances.</p> <p>The best way to deal with fly tipping on estates is to communicate with residents through more signage, leaflet drops and engagement. The Enforcement Team can be contacted via their email Envirocrime.enforcement@lewisham.gov.uk if a witness wanted to report a fly tipper.</p>
6.9	<p>Jessica our bin is open air at Crossfields, residents have been given fly tipping Penalty Notices (FPN) for fly tipping if their address is on an envelope, and they have taken the brunt for the offence they haven't committed, who should be contacted regarding this?</p>
6.10	<p>Jessica requested a walk-around with Martin (environmental services) on Crossfields.</p>
6.11	<p>Martin Fly tipping is easy to get away with. It can be enforced by CCTV if vehicles are involved. There is a direct telephone number you can contact regarding FPNs, they will look at each case individually.</p>
6.12	<p>Kevin the Fix my street app is useful. You take a photo of the rubbish, then Lewisham Homes, or the council will respond within 7 working days.</p>
6.13	<p>Jessica a single piece of mail can cause fines, and the residents can either just pay or fight it in court. As there is parking available in Crossfield's anyone can do it. We don't know where our large bulk waste and collection spots are.</p> <p>ACTION: Find and share with TRA Chairs the point of contact for Fly tipping Penalty Notice Team and link to fix my street app</p>

	<p>ACTION: Arrange walkabout on Crossfields with environmental services team.</p> <p>ACTION: Improve engagement with residents (signage, leaflet drops, communication) on flytipping.</p>
7	Update on transition (Jon Kanareck, Director of Resident Services)
7.1	<p>Jon Lewisham Homes is going back into the council in October, work streams have been put together by the council and Lewisham Homes to ensure the transition is smooth. We are working with the IT team in the council to transfer the call centre by the end of July.</p> <p>There is a housing select committee, which has oversight of the housing matters. It is highlighting homelessness and issues around housing management, there will be discussion on how the TRA chair meeting, resident scrutiny committee and leasehold forum and will feed into it.</p> <p>Gillian Douglas is the new housing executive director. Gillian is due to join 11 September. Two director roles are out for recruitment, closing date July 20, those roles should be appointed to by August.</p> <p>There may be some transition issues for the 1st or 2nd week October as around 350 computers and 200 phones will need to be transferred over. We are still working on the new CRM system to replace Capita.</p>
7.2	<p>The Defect period for new builds last for 12 months, which means the contractor is still responsible for any significant repairs. At the end of the 12-month period repairs responsibility comes in house. We are in discussions with Sarah to look at a company that covers defect repairs, to take away from our repair's operatives.</p>
7.3	<p>Clive The repairs that were visible were done really well on our block, it's the ones that you couldn't see that weren't done correctly. We have pipe sticking out from the balcony, it goes nowhere and hangs out.</p>
7.4	<p>Sarah If defects are structural than they will be covered under the NHBC which is a 10-year warranty, you can pursue a latent defect process, which means its outside of the normal 12-month defect period but there is a structural defect still which will be covered. It will still sit with my team to go out and inspect before it goes to the contractor.</p>
7.5	<p>Jon David Lowry who is the head of the development could be invited along with Martin to come out and inspect.</p>
7.6	<p>An update was provided by David Lowry (Head of Development, Lewisham council) and provided by the Chair:</p> <p>Somerville: There've been 24 defects reported since handover in March. Nothing has been reported about the drainage system. There have been</p>

7.7	<p>a few leaks from under sinks etc, and a common issue regarding the temperature regulator to the bath HW, but nothing indicating outlying poor quality.</p> <p>The main issues have been the door entry system and north core lift, both of which are sub-contractors responsibility, Schindler and Alphatrack. Mike (project manager) is also liaising with Lewisham Homes' defects lead on the weekly defects reports for the new home.</p> <p>There have been no drainage issues reported, a request was made by David for more information from the TRA on this.</p> <p>Jon communal repairs sometimes don't get reported, there are also several contractors that have gone bust. Which is a challenge for the development team.</p> <p>ACTION: To invite David Lowry (Head of Development) to a walk about at Wellington close with Somerville TRA</p>
8	<p>Leaseholder billing / major works (Jon Kanareck, Director of Resident Services)</p>
8.1	<p>Verbal update was given on behalf of Emma Mills (Head of Home Ownership): In advance of any major works all residents can expect to receive some form of non-statutory communication. This might be a meeting or a letter to talk to you and invite comments about proposed works. Once the non-statutory consultation is completed; statutory notices are sent to leaseholders providing an estimated cost of their share of the works.</p> <p>At the moment we bill leaseholders once the works are complete and when the final account has been approved, However, going forward we are going to re-introduce billing for major works on an estimated basis. Bills will be sent to leaseholders where we have completed the statutory consultation about the works and costs and once works begin. We will ask leaseholders to pay 90% of the estimated costs. Details of how to pay will be included with the estimated bill. Bills will be adjusted once the final costs are known, and a breakdown of the final cost will be sent to leaseholders along with a notification of the adjustment. The advantages of doing this are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is good practice. • Leaseholders are more likely to raise issues at the time the works are taking place and whilst contractors are still on site. • There will be no delays in billing.
8.2	<p>Leaseholders - Annual Service Charge bills In accordance with the terms of the lease, annual estimated service charges are sent to leaseholders before 1 April each year. Charges are due annually in advance on 1 April. We ask leaseholders to either pay in full or arrange to pay by instalments by 28 April each year.</p>

	<p>We then send a statement of actual cost around 6 months after the end of the financial year. This shows leaseholders how much we actually spent delivering services and shows the difference between the estimated and actual costs. The difference is then included with the following years estimated costs. For example, the estimated costs for 23/24 were issued in March 2023. The actual costs statements for 23/24 will be sent to leaseholders by 30 September 2024. The difference will be included in the bill sent in April 2025 for the year 2-24-2025.</p> <p>More information can be found in Section 6 of the Lewisham Homes leasehold guide on website https://www.lewishamhomes.org.uk/your-home/leaseholders/useful-documents/</p>
8.3	<p>Jon we had a number of contracts that were procured from 2011, the way those contracts were delivered made it difficult to put out individual costs, because the way the work orders were placed it. We have re-procured and the new contracts, so over the next few years any catalogue of major works will be built on estimates at the point when the works are undertaken rather than waiting until the final account. If you wait over an 18-month period for the work to be complete and then to get billed, they can be issues you have had during the works themselves. You also get a longer period to pay once the work is complete and it's based on a 90% of the final bill. For leaseholders there are payment plans for leaseholders to pay over a period of time.</p>
8.4	<p>Darren Are variable service charges in place across the board?</p>
8.5	<p>Jon Yes, we have audited accounts every year, in respect of those. This year the leasehold service charge increase rate was capped.</p>
8.6	<p>Jessica will the estimates be more accurate. We had a long process of challenging the last major works final cost at Crossfields. which went from 12k per flat to 2k if we are paying on the 12k, what happens with that?</p>
8.7	<p>Jon you get it back plus interest, the new contracts are built differently this time, they are done on a specification. I would hope that with the restricted amount of money available on the capital programme, they will get first preference before Capital investment needs. There will be some time before Crossfield's returns for the programme.</p>
8.8	<p>Megan Can we proactively ask for some conversation regarding specification of works at Jerningham Court?</p>
8.9	<p>Jon the programme has almost been agreed we have been in discussion with the councillors, that block does have a real need</p>
9	<p>Contractor's charter (Darren Hartley and Jon Kanareck, Chair and Director of Repairs)</p>
9.1	<p>Darren residents have been talking about coming together to make their own Contractors Charter to cover things that contractors need for their inspections</p>

	such as ID badges, appointments ect. This is to prevent fraud and people posing as contractors as there has been bad experience with previous contractors.
9.2	Sarah I have rolled a contractor charter out in previous jobs, it sets out an expectation for the resident and the contractor. The charter is rolled out in three ways, one from what I expect from my own staff, either operatives or contact centre staff, for example operatives to turn up in as clean clothes as possible and use shoe coverings. Show ID as standard and explain what job they are there to do. It's also for our contractor to adhere to as they are working under our banner, it also sets our expectations from the residents for example if they can't make an appointment then call us to say. As more legislation is made the charter will be added to accordingly
9.3	Darren this will apply to all tenants and residents will have possibility to feedback into.
9.4	John It was raised through Daubeney TRA, our residents have experienced some bad practice. it's taken us 3 weeks to legitimise the contracts, even when it done, they send us a bad flyer with the contractors and Lewisham Homes logo on there. Something needs to be laminated and put up on the notice boards.
9.5	Darren suggested 10-point plan covering things like ID badges, uniform timing etc. could be useful.
9.6	Kevin Is there a commitment for LBL to carry this forward?
9.7	Sarah It's part of the council manifesto, so it would be very bad practice if this was to not continue.
9.8	John we have a tenant who is keen to contribute to the charter.
9.9	Sarah Yes, they can email me.
9.10	Jessica is there any way we can feedback regarding the contractors are?
9.11	Sarah residents can feed back compliments and complaints of contractors and staff through our customer relations team (customerrelations@lewishamhomes.org.uk)
9.12	ACTION: TRA members to feedback and encourage other residents to feedback on the charter to Sarah Wilcox-Jones
10	Lewisham Tenant's Fund (LTF) update
10.1	Julie We have social media now both Facebook and Twitter.
10.2	TRAs can apply for a marketing and admin grant which is a minimum of £330 and based on the number of residents within the TRA. You can apply if you are marketing yourself as a new TRA, or relaunching.

	You can find more information on our website.
11	Date of next meeting and agenda setting meeting
11.1	TRA Chairs 19 October 2023
11.2	Date of agenda setting meeting for October meeting:
Meeting closed 8.30pm	

Accompanying information/ links to information discussed in the meeting:

- Respect for All Charter: <https://www.taroetrust.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Taroe-Trust-Respect-for-All-Charter-all-pages.pdf>
- Video of our 'Extent of Furniture Poverty' webinar: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mhww87fRjA>

ACTION LOG

Reference	Item	Lead	Due date	Update	Status	most recent update
22/6/23 (9.13)	TRA members to feedback and encourage other residents to feedback on the charter to Sarah Wilcox-Jones	AES	15/9/23	Completed		Details were sent with minutes and in resident newsletter
22/6/23 (11.2)	Agree date for next agenda setting meeting	AES/ DH/ TRAs	15/9/23	Completed		Agenda setting meeting date has been agreed and communicated
22/6/23 (7.5)	To invite David Lowry (Head of Development) to a walk about at Wellington close with Somerville TRA	AES/ DL	31/7/23	In progress		Awaiting more information from Somerville TRA, as requested from David Lowry. September 2023: Chased up David Lowry, no response.
22/6/23	Environmental services and LBL's enforcement to visit Jertingham court and Somerville for a walk about with the TRAs.	MR/ LBL enviro team	19/10/23	In progress		3/10/23: Chased enviro. services for an update Sept 23: Enviro services agreed to look into issues raised
22/6/23 (6.9)	Find and share with TRA Chairs the point of contact for Fixed Penalty Notice Team (flytipping) and link to fix my street app	AES/ MR	31/7/23	Completed		Contact enviro team directly to query FPNs via enviocrime.enforcement@lewisham.gov.uk or 0208314 2170 The landline is often busy and a record of

						any mitigation is best responded to by email. Fix my street information: https://lewisham.gov.uk/myservices/environment/street-cleaning/report-a-problem-with-a-street
22/6/23 (5.10)	An article in the next resident newsletter about using Locale, with a quote from a resident on their experience using Locale	SWJ/ Comms team	08/23	Completed		27/07/23: We featured something in both the June and July resident newsletters on Locale. These are the articles online linked to: https://www.lewishamhomes.org.uk/successful-launch-of-text-message-system-for-resident-repairs/ https://www.lewishamhomes.org.uk/customer-satisfaction-has-risen-for-resident-repairs/ We will continue to do regular updates in future.
30/03/23 (5.11)	A meeting has been proposed by Bence TRA to discuss the Bence house blueprints with the building safety team.	Building safety team (BST)	Sep- 23	Completed		This meeting has taken place with the building safety team and Bence TRA
22/06/23 (6.10)	Arrange walkabout on Crossfields with environmental services team.	Environmental services teams	Dec-23	In progress		4/12/23: Environmental services teams at the council are arranging this with Crossfields residents.
22/06/23 (6.13)	Improve engagement with residents (signage, leaflet drops, communication) on fly-tipping.	Environmental services teams	Dec-23	In progress		4/12/23: Plans for engagement with Lewisham residents on waste disposal and flytipping are being discussed with relevant council teams.
Long term actions						

30/03/23 (7.4)	Portal doesn't reflect correctly the repair you requested, it does not give description of the repair it just states the repair is done, can this be changed?	Director of Repairs	Mar-24		Green	The portal is not linked to any of the systems currently used by LH, this is in the process of being changed and the new Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system will link with the appropriate systems which should make real time repairs updates possible.
28/09/23	Sarah WJ to speak to IT to see If portal can include reporting communal repairs on other buildings (eg TRA reporting)	Director of Repairs	Mar-24		Amber	Possible for the future but due to the A365 launch, server move and staff shortage IT aren't doing any non-urgent projects and this wouldn't fall into that.
30/03/23 (4.9)	Update on CRM implementation	Director of Resident services	Oct-2023		Green	This is due to take place at October's meeting.