

ORWELL RESIDENTS GROUP MEETING MINUTES

6pm - 8pm Monday 26th February 2024

Crane Hill Lodge

1.0	Apologies	Mike Warr Maggi Miller John Greig Cheryl Greig	
	Residents present	Mary Ager (MA) Jackie Millar (JM) John Burman (JB) Val George (Teams)	
	Staff present	Michelle Lunt (ML) Sarah Parramint (SP) Alice Moore (AM) Kate Nudds (KN)	
2.0	Minutes from last meeting	ML read through the minutes from the last meeting, all understood and agreed	
3.0	Kate to talk about Houseproud Pledge	<p>Kate is our new Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Coordinator.</p> <p>The HouseProud Pledge is a scheme that all social housing providers can sign up to, to demonstrate their commitment to LGBTQ+ resident equality and support. It has been developed by HouseProud and the University of Surrey in association with residents, staff members and sector leaders to address the issues raised by the findings of 'No Place Like Home?', the largest study ever undertaken to understand LGBTQ+ experiences of social housing with Stonewall Housing being selected as the delivery partner.</p> <p>The home is of central importance to LGBTQ+ residents, because it should be a place where people can freely express their sexual orientation and/ or gender identity without fear or prejudice. Sadly, despite recent changes in equality laws, LGBTQ+ residents continue to experience discrimination in their everyday lives, including in relation to their housing. The research found one in five gay men reported modifying their home in some way (e.g. moving pictures or books) to hide their sexual orientation from a visiting repair operative or housing officer.</p> <p>In particular, the pledge tackles the issues of resident trust and demonstrates our commitment to LGBTQ+ equality and support.</p> <p>We (Orwell) are working to deliver on three core commitments which helps foster engagement with LGBTQ residents and helps achieve Pledge Pioneer status initially and then potentially in the future</p>	

		<p>working with involved residents to co-design projects and achieve a higher level of accreditation (Pledge Plus) working hard to bring residents from all communities together to stop the feeling of being unsafe in their homes and neighbourhoods.</p> <p>ML is working closely with Kate with this project.</p> <p><u>Questions</u></p> <p>JM: What does this have to do with getting a flat?</p> <p>KN: We don't do anything different when giving someone a flat but looking at the research and reports, we just have to start somewhere, whether it be disability, LGBTQ+, ethnicity etc.</p>	
<p>4.0</p>	<p>KPIS Update – Alice</p>	<p>AM went through the KPI's, paying special attention to;</p> <p>Rent arrears Under target as normal, in numbers this equates to about £600.000 in arrears which is still less than half of our customers being in arrears. A lot of arrears are from schemes that claim housing benefit, so this falls a few days later than rent day. The care charges section hasn't been updated but there are usually delays in these being paid.</p> <p>Void days- EC not updated as yet but GN is higher than should be at 64 days as the average length of time before let, which is far too long. We welcome the voids scrutiny to assist us with bringing this down.</p> <p>ASB Not a target because we don't have more than 10 cases, 7000 residents that's quite low. We currently have 8 cases, 2 of which are classed as high risk (impact on victim)</p> <p>TS- We have 2 officers, both new recruits in the south & north areas. They receive referrals every month and record how many have engaged and been supported through process. The 85% target has been achieved, there are still so many that need additional help.</p> <p>Complaints This is usually 20 but it is currently at 30, mostly about Aaron Services. Due to being stuck in a contract with them for a period of time, we are trying to work to gather the data on complaints and customer feedback to try and improve services. Hopefully from this it will improve. They do a lot of work for other housing associations and seem stretched.</p>	

		<p>VG- highlighted that their complaint was about lack of communication, which is regularly mentioned in our reports.</p> <p>We try to solve Complaints at stage 1 and aim for 85% so they don't need to be escalated. We have one case that has gone to the Housing Ombudsmen, which although we encourage has the potential to be more than last year (2).</p> <p>Compliments 14 have been logged from surveys, direct contact etc and we like our staff to be appreciated for what they do. JM- The Orwell site should highlight this too, too many negative things on there.</p> <p>Compliance This is the same every month, less than 100% is when we are unable to gain access, but we don't stop trying to do all safety assessments (elec certs etc)</p> <p>Repairs service We aim to do this within 21 days and we're currently at 33 days with ORS, the contractors have achieved this in 15 days. Currently have 4 disrepair claims (taking Orwell to court) VG- will disrepair claims be shared? AM- there is a legal confidence but can look at historical ones.</p> <p>Our Sheltered scheme will be changing the name to housing for over 55, as sheltered gives the impression that someone is there all the time.</p>	<p>Action- compliments to be shared on socials, website etc.</p> <p>Action- Possibility of sharing historic disrepair claims</p>
5.0	<p>Tenant Board member pack review and feedback</p>	<p>We didn't get as many people applying as it's such a big commitment but we're going to interview in May.</p> <p>ML: Gave the Tenant Board member pack to the ORG and asked them to read through and read it as if you were not part of the ORG, what would you not understand, what would you leave in or take out.</p>	<p>Notes to be shared in due course.</p>
6.0	<p>New engagement platform review and feedback</p>	<p>CT ran through the new digital platform website that will be launched on 21st March, aimed at engaging customers and giving them a platform to answer surveys, polls etc as well as fun activities and competitions to share and get others involved with Orwell. There will be a £250 draw for anyone who registers within</p>	

		<p>We have access to guestbooks, ideas board, upcoming dates, the option to follow projects and more, including enter the best pet competition.</p> <p>She also showed the ORG the CHAT and ORG section, where we aim to use this site for viewing documents and limit the use of paper surveys. This will save time on being typed up and also making them fully legible.</p> <p>VG- Postal option? ML- Whilst we don't want to leave people out, this is a digital platform and those who join will join through a link. Family/friends can join on their behalf. JM- Suggestion of library computers to access.</p> <p>JB- Questioned that not everyone is able to have a pet to enter the competition. ML- The pet policy will be posted with this.</p>	
7.0	Customer Service response times	<p>AM- Currently Orwell's agreed service standards on how quickly we respond, we'd like to know if these are still reasonable, or do they need to change?</p> <p>Currently phone calls, aim to respond in 30 instead of 20 secs as before, we're trying to encourage people use app and go online to make payments and report repairs etc.</p> <p>JM- 5 calendar days response should be brought down to 3 working days, there needs to be immediate acknowledgement via email and texts with an automated response "thank you for your email/text etc with a ref number)</p>	
8.0	Confirmation of 2024 Incentive Tenant Board pack	<p>The incentive will stay at £750; this was reviewed last year, and we took into account the cost of living and issues.</p>	
	Look at diary dates in April for the first regulatory review of our consumer standard (The	<p>ML Will update, the CIC review is in May</p>	<p>ML to send out date- mid April possibility</p>

	Safety and Quality Standard)		
	Chrome Books – what we will need them for going forward.	<p>ML- We will be running a Chromebook session on the next meeting to fully understand how to utilise them to their full potential in preparation for the launch of the website.</p> <p>As CT previously stated, we aim to use this site for viewing documents and limit the use of paper surveys. This will save time on being typed up and also making them fully legible. The EHQ website will send you automatic updates via email when projects are amended, which means the Chromebooks will be used a lot more.</p> <p>Please bring your Chromebooks to the next meeting so we can assess any errors you have encountered, please make notes on the run up to this session.</p>	
	<p>Date and time of next meeting</p> <p>CHAT -Date and time of next meeting</p>	<p>25th March 2024 CHL 6-8pm</p> <p>Saturday 13th April 2024 CHL 10AM -12PM</p>	