

ORWELL RESIDENTS GROUP MEETING

MINUTES

6pm - 8pm Monday 30TH October 2023

Crane Hill Lodge

1.0	Apologies	John Greig Cheryl Greig Beryl Latania Val George Jack Trigg	
1.2	Residents Present	Mary Ager (MA) Mike Warr (MW) Maggi Miller (MM) Jackie Millar (JM) John Burman (JB)	
1.5	Staff Present	Sarah Parramint (SP) Michelle Lunt (ML) Simon Bennett (SB) Claire Townley (CT)	
2.0	Minutes from last meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We welcomed Cheryl to the ORG• We announced that the garden competition has now finished and since then Mr Plant Geek chatted with CT about our All Round Garden category to announce the winners on our socials. Ross from our Comms team kindly went out and met the winners to capture their gardens, interview them and present them with a certificate. We can't wait for the footage to be posted!• The KPI's hadn't been updated but they will be available on the website as always https://www.orwell-housing.co.uk/about-us/our-performance/• Dawn from development joined us and spoke about how far we've come and discussed next steps.• SP gave an in-depth report on the Estates Survey, since then CT has gone through each survey to locate any further action required with department and also completed compliment forms so the staff's efforts are given the recognition that they should.• Alice advised that we have a vacancy for a tenant board member and went through the advert. https://jobs.theguardian.com/job/8625011/board-member	

<p>3.0</p>	<p>Sarah/Simon/Jack – Estate Services Final Conclusion</p>	<p>SP – nearly 4000 customers were sent the survey and we received 708 completions (18.2% response rate). Satisfaction with all aspects of the estate services has declined compared with previous results in 2021, 2018 and 2016. The main areas of concern were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of knowledge • Staff not visible • Not enough hours for the job • Poor standards/consistency • Areas missed or uncared for • Communication needs attention <p>The report will remain within Orwell until 9th November when it will be presented to the Executive. SB is working on a “You said, we did” document to be circulated with the service charge letters and which will also be published on the Orwell website. After that, the full report can be shared with ORG members.</p> <p>ML- We started with it being a small project, we did it properly by going out to the estates and also reaching via all formats of communication and the response was quite overwhelming.</p> <p>SP went through the action plan and SB shared what changes had been made or in the pipeline for Estate Services. SB spoke of the proposed/carried out changes over the last few years and following the survey.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information on areas to be maintained, Orwell/tenant responsibilities and costs will be available in a variety of formats. This will be published on the website, new tenant handbook/information pack, noticeboards using UV coating to protect from sun fading and in writing (if applicable) whilst recognising that hard copy information can go out of date quickly, easy read information if required. QR codes will link straight to the information. • All correspondence will be acknowledged so the tenant knows its been received. • The service charge is reviewed annually and adjusted according to travel, vehicle fuel, time, and non-productive time etc. • Ensured that the shift times are compulsory (8am-4pm and 3:30 on a Friday). We will be looking at extending the hours for current staff from 37 hours to 40 hours per week to provide increased capacity. • We have just carried out a recent audit of the teams’ qualifications which are all up to date (painters repairs, voids, 	<p>MW- adaptations email address</p> <p>SB- Will action MM garden query</p> <p>ML- Will send report to ORG</p>
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cleaners, gardeners and caretakers). We encourage them to go on improvement courses.

- We are an organisation making strides for environment issues, within the last few years we have moved to battery rather than petrol equipment (blowers, trimmers, hedgecutters) which has been a positive change for the team as they cause low vibration so no risk assessment required.
- We now recycle 95% of our green waste, streamlined the rotas to reduce travel time and fuel used and used at least 80% native species when re-planting. When removing a tree, we always replace with 2 trees, which are native if possible.
- We will identify further sites where re-wilding may be possible and undertake consultation with tenants in those areas. The plants we use on our estates are selected because they suit the changing environment and attract wildlife. A list of these will be made available on the website with a QR code.
- We ensure that workers use their fuel and time wisely, e.g if a job was in Felixstowe we'd use those already in Felixstowe.

What we cannot do and why

- We used to allow tenants to take responsibility of their areas, but these areas were left to deteriorate due to loss of interest, moved and also if the tenant passes away.
- We do not cut hedges during March and September due to the 1981 Countryside and Wildlife Act; we will however cut back overhanging branches on footpaths or roads.
- As we are getting up to 100 new properties a year, before these are on the market they require gardening, window cleaning etc, we worry that we may have to tell the development team that we can't do this anymore.
- Different service levels, we want to keep standards the same across the sites consistently.

Waste Management

- Fly-tipping is taken seriously and we send out flyers and ask housing officers to report it. We encourage tenants to report it as its in everyone's best interests, it goes onto the service charge to be removed and in some cases can be hazardous to health. Once we know who has committed the offence, we give them 48 hours to remove it. Sometimes environmental health have to get involved. SB has seen 5 convictions, with the highest fine being £15,000.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unfortunately a high percentage is where people that aren't tenants, flytip. • The number of bins allocated to an estate is decided by the local council. Where there is a particular problem and it is clear that the number of bins does not reflect need, we will work with the local council to obtain further bins. We will carry out an audit of the condition of bins annually and then request replacements from the council. Where tenants have identified a particular need for a specific bin i.e., bottle bank on their estate, we will work with the local council to implement this. If this is not possible, we will provide information to tenants about the options available in their local area. Information about recycling is available on your local council website. We will also publicise information on Orwell's website and app including links to the various district council's websites. <p>Further analysis of the responses will be carried out to identify any issues that are specific to certain areas.</p> <p><u>Questions for SB</u></p> <p>Do we have CCTV on sites? <i>We don't have it on all sites, just if there is a high crime, drug area we consider it. We don't manage our CCTV so if anything is reported we then forward to an external company to provide and this goes to the police to review.</i></p> <p>Do you do visual inspections? <i>Dan and jack will pencil in at least a week a month to check sites.</i> MW- Dan and jack have been thorough with Lincoln court inspection.</p> <p>SB - Feels strongly that we should shout about what we have done and we don't do this even though our accomplishments can be far greater than others. This has been by the most information out of a survey, the actions that are taken away we can improve on and make a difference moving forward.</p> <p>ML- We have to be honest and communicate and do what we should be doing and telling why we're not doing certain things.</p>	
4.0	KPIS Update – Michelle	ML shared the KPIs and included; Arrears – Within bracket of current rent arrears (2.5), including the care arrears as before due to taking on of new facilities in Essex and payments moving across, but we are now out of the red (1.6). ASB - higher risk cases (2) are how they impact the person.	

		<p>Tenancy sustainment- (57%) There has only been one eviction this year. The low percentage shows that they have dropped out of the programme. Hopefully because they have come out the other side and don't need to engage with us anymore. But this could also be possibly mental health issues so they reach out again. A new Tenancy Sustainment staff member has now joined Viv.</p> <p>Complaints- resolved at stage 1 (88.2%) Feedback from CHAT, template letters have been amended showing more professionalism, empathy and taking more notice of timescales</p> <p>Asset compliance- We strive to achieve regulatory compliance, showing that we aren't taking any risks and are doing things correctly. Our target is 100% and we are nearly on track. If we can't get into properties we have to follow the correct channels and eventually have to go through the courts to gain access. A person's circumstance could for example be that they have been in an abusive relationship and they don't want a male in their home.</p> <p>Repairs response time- target 21 days and currently at 36 days. We are in the process of reviewing our processes, including finding a middle ground of 21 days and emergency. Our appointment times are currently AM & PM and school runs, we find that some repairs aren't allocated enough time to complete the job, therefore distressing the customer. If they complete the job they're late for the next. All day and evenings are being considered as it would take away issues, the evening appointments will be offered as we appreciate that an all day appointment would not be suitable for everybody.</p>	
5.0	TPAS refresher – Claire	<p>CT contacted TPAS to make an introduction to TPAS video. MA & JM are members.</p> <p>As they're wrapping up the year, it seems there are no webinars on the website for 2024 yet.</p>	CT to send video and Complaints session
6.0	<p>Any other Business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Induction what would that look like – Update from you! 	<p>It was discussed that ORG members didn't receive an induction, even though documents state that they should.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What would you want from it? • What would have been helpful to you when starting? <p>We will be sending out a survey for content suggestions before 27/11.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey with suggestions to ORG before nov 27th • What would have been helpful when starting? <p>MA - Board member used to come to meetings.</p> <p>SP- suggested the following as possible content ideas: structure of Orwell, diversity, knowledge of number of properties, who lives there and access to IT.</p>	<p>Together with tenants webinar 06/12</p> <p>ML to put info out on board- 13th</p> <p>ML to send vouchers in nov</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • December Board – Scrutinises to be talked through (anyone want to join) • December ORG Meeting • Update on development scrutiny -ideas taken forward. • Consultation on repairs appointment times • Email re webinar from HNF 	<p>JM- Recruitment- breakdown of staff by department</p> <p>The board will meet am on the 13th December and may like some representation from the ORG to talk through the scrutinies we have undertaken either through a small presentation or to be there to answer any questions. If this is something you would like to do if needed, please let me know.</p> <p>We don't usually do meetings in December but we would like to see you on 11th December for a Christmas gathering for a chat and a drink as a thank you so we can talk about next year of what our 2024 scrutinies will be.</p> <p>The majority of you would like your physical shopping vouchers on the November meeting, please let us know what vouchers you would like before this meeting as they take time to order in advance.</p> <p>The amount is pro- rata for meeting attendance.</p> <p>We will be carrying out a survey via text and email for those who have moved into a new home in the last 12 months. From this we hope to set up a focus group to find out what people want included in the Home User Guide. Dawn has asked for the guides to be looked at and pick out the best, which will involve the ORG at the next meeting.</p> <p>A survey will be sent out tomorrow via SMS and email to approx. 3,600 general needs and shared ownership customers who we provide a repairs service for to ask their views of current and proposed appointment times. Comms will also mention the consultation in the weekly newsletter and publish it on the website and SM.</p> <p>Please see separately in your Influencer emails as I will forward the original</p>	
7.0	Date and venue of next meeting -	<p>27th November 2023</p> <p>6-8pm Crane Hill Lodge</p>	