



REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE SERVICE USER GROUP(SUG)

MINUTES

<i>Meeting</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Location</i>
R&M SUG	28/09/2023	10:00	Zoom
Attendees			
Residents		Staff	
Boycee (B) Carrie Chris Evans (CE) Chris Sweetham (CS) Jan Bohin Janet Browning John Whitman John Connolly (JTC) Michael Foley Nigel Varley (NV) Phillip Morris Rodderick Mills (RM) Tim De La Rew (TR) Tom Canter		Miles Tilling (MT) Mayowa Ademuyewo (MA) David Maggs (DM) Ilona Marciniak (IL) Henry Murray (HM)	
Apologies		Minutes	
		Henry Murray	

Agenda items

1. Welcome and Housekeeping
2. Actions from previous meeting
3. Safety (Fire Safety Update) – Mayowa Ademuyewo
4. The remedial cladding update – Miles Tilling
5. Updated Terms of Reference – David Maggs
6. Agree items for forward plan
7. Any other business
8. Date of next meeting (30th of November) and close

Agenda Item	Discussion Points/ Outcomes & Actions	Actions
1	Welcome (Housekeeping/ code of conduct)	
2	<p>Action points from previous meeting</p> <p>DM: gave update on “You Said We Did”</p> <p>MA: Gave update on drains</p> <p>NV: Advised the drain hasn’t been solved, that it is still blocked. Advised that contractors have said to them that the drain is “at the end of the contract” which they believed to be end of next year.</p> <p>MA: Acknowledged point that drain has not being fully repaired and that that is also roughly the information they have received and as such BCC is looking for a temporary solution in the interim. He would chase the camera inspection of the drain.</p> <p>MA: Gave an update on sprinkler installation and which estates will be the first for installation. Advised on new sprinkler update from Councillor Renhard which has gone out to all residents.</p> <p>NV: Asked what decided order of priority for sprinkler installation locations.</p> <p>MA: Advised one of the major factors was the cost of Wake & Watch, second being the state of the building.</p> <p>CE: Asked for clarity on where funding for Wake & Watch is coming from. Asked about collapsed awning issue at their building which has been outstanding for some time.</p> <p>MT: The Waking Watch costs cannot be reclaimed from central government. However funding is available to contribute to measures (such as alarm installation) which would permit the removal of the Waking Watch from buildings.</p> <p>CE: Advised their service charges have risen by £70 a month since last year, states they haven’t had an explanation as to the reason of this increase.</p>	MA

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	<p>JB: Asked for status on first blocks for sprinkler installation.</p> <p>MA: Gave specific details on installation.</p> <p>JB: Asked if Wake & Watch is in place at those blocks.</p> <p>MA: Advised Wake & Watch will be in place in some of the blocks.</p> <p>MT: Advised he is hoping to circulate a visual representation of update, on which buildings are having working done now.</p> <p>MT also gave an update on cladding removal and which blocks have had cladding removed and which blocks have had Wake & Watch removed because of cladding removal.</p> <p>NV: Advised on what they labelled “Gilton House Dilemma”, that cladding should be removed as quickly as possible, but if it is removed during the winter it results in considerable increase in heating costs for residents. Expressed wish for council to reduce time lag between removal and reinstallation, avoiding doing the work during the winter, and helping residents with increases of heating costs. Expressed belief that it poses a risk to residents who won’t put heating on as they can’t afford increases.</p> <p>MT: Advised that there are difficulties with programming removal and reinstallation as inspection of wall space where new cladding is to be installed is required and any problems have to be sufficiently addressed before new cladding can be fitted</p> <p>To second point, he acknowledged winter work is not desirable, but that priority is removing costs of Wake & Watch and removing cladding. Advised that often with programming, unforeseen problems arise leading to delays.</p> <p>Acknowledged third point of heating costs, expressed sympathy with this issue. Advised that residents who have existing extra installation (cladding) are in the</p>	<p>MT</p>

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	<p>minority and so making an argument for reimbursement to residents in the short period between removal and reinstallation is very difficult, when others do not have any extra insulation</p> <p>TD: Asked if contractors who are removing cladding have experience in the work, that they have done it before.</p> <p>MT: Advised on criteria for contractors, gave details on quality marking. Advised that cladding removal is also quite a new task for both landlords and contractors. Advised that before Grenfell, the cladding type required a specific type of removal, advised that BCC has never had this type of cladding and the industry is still learning how to remove the current type of cladding that is used removed.</p> <p>TD: Asked if that means Gilton House problems will be common going forward.</p> <p>MT: Advised that problems are building dependant, but that with each removal, BCC and contractors will be learning how to improve.</p> <p>NV: Asked if BCC has had legal advice on reimbursement for tenants for heating cost increases. Advised that tenants in his block don't accept the arguments from MT about tenants being without installation and that they may have to seek legal counsel.</p> <p>MT: Advised they are reasonably confident on their position.</p> <p>NV: Asked what will be done for residents who cannot afford to put heating on, whose health might be at risk.</p> <p>MT: Suggested that going into details on this point might be best suited to another forum. Advised that they believe the responses they have given are sufficient for this forum</p> <p>NV: Asked if their position has been approved by the full council.</p>	

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	<p>MT: Advised that up to this point is has been NV: Asked if this is a decision by officers or if this been officially approved by elected representatives.MT: Advised that this is within the statutory rights of the landlord to do such work and make such decisions and this is delegated to Officers as part of their management of the Service and wouldn't need cabinet approval.</p> <p>NV: Expressed concern of it being in breach of the Housing Act.</p> <p>MT: Advised that it falls under the rights of landlord to carry out essential maintenance. Advised that is best discussed in a future forum.</p> <p>B: Asked if approval process for contractors – by which contractors assure they have carried out such works successfully – is looked at in detail by BCC. Expressed belief that BCC needs evidence to show that previous works by contractors were successful by asking residents of buildings where works have taken place</p> <p>MT: Advised that council does ask for references from contractor from other authorities. Advised that key areas include tenant satisfaction surveys and that those surveys are carried out by third parties and not by contractors themselves. Advised that council ensures that that data is accurate.</p> <p>JTC: Asked if total price of contracting works for buildings would cost less than replacing entire blocks. Advised that in 2006 they were told that it was not financially viable to carry out improvement works for Barton Hill blocks.</p> <p>MT: Advised they do not recognise that statement. Advised council does make sure that a building is worthy of investment before carrying out substantial works. Advised that in the context of extremely high demand for social housing, inflationary pressures that these issues have been a feature in decision making.</p> <p>JTC: Asked if figures are available for total cost of maintenance versus refurbishment.</p>	

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	<p>MT: Advised that a piece of work on this specifically is currently being carried out.</p> <p>NV: Asked how many blocks of flats BCC has.</p> <p>MT: Stated BCC has 62 high rises.</p> <p>Back and forth of numbers of high rises with cladding between MT and NV.</p> <p>NV: Asked about total programme of installation for all residents.</p> <p>MT: Gave proposed future date for installations on all buildings but acknowledged it is a very optimistic timescale.</p> <p>C: Asked what can be done for Leaseholders who are unable to sell their property or reduced price of resale of their property because of cladding problems.</p> <p>MT: Advised very valid point to raise and explained this is why there is a current programme of cladding installation with high standards to meet requirements of mortgage lenders etc. Acknowledged that resale value is a national problem for those in cladding buildings.</p> <p>NV: Asked what proportion of Bristol's housing for over 60s is insulated and uninsulated. Asked if their question will be noted.</p> <p>MT: Advised this question will be included in the minutes and will come back with data.</p>	<p>MT</p>

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	<p>Updated Terms of Reference – David Maggs</p> <p>TD: Asked if this should be a consultation rather than a “top down” presentation from council to tenants.</p> <p>DM: Advised that there wasn’t a long lead time to get the Terms of References to tenants beforehand for this meeting. Advised the full version once revised*, will be sent out with the minutes and they would be an item on the agenda for any feedback for the next meeting.</p> <p>NV: Expressed belief that SUGs don’t work, that it doesn’t reach out to a wide enough constituency. Expressed desire for overhaul of tenant participation. Advised that ToR should have something in it relating to representation of residents through forums and Service User Groups.</p> <p>DM: Advised that SUGs are only a small part, but a very direct part, of overall resident engagement.</p> <p>B: Advised that use of “timely” in one of the slides is not specific enough. Expressed concern that “timely” is too ambiguous.</p> <p>DM: Advised that for longer programmes there would need to be a slightly different proviso.</p> <p>B: Asked about Acuity telephone survey and if the data of people asked is accurate. Advised they’ve never been called by Acuity.</p> <p>TD: Advised that it is very difficult to find people interested enough in the issues to join meetings like Service User Groups.</p> <p>NV: Expressed desire to get residents in their block involved, and make them aware of Service User Groups.</p> <p>B: Advised on people’s interest in certain subjects but not enough to keep coming to forums consistently.</p> <p>NV: Asked if there could be a formal review of tenant participation or extend democratic involvement of</p>	<p>DM – to be sent after Estates SUG on 26/10/23</p>

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	<p>tenants.</p> <p>TD: Asked about numbers on attendance, and sign-ups.</p> <p>DM: Advised tenant participation is reaching out to tenants after meetings asking why they couldn't attend, advised on other measures tenant participation carries out.</p> <p>NV: Expressed that their proposal for a review of tenant participation wasn't taken seriously.</p> <p>DM: Acknowledged NV's point and said that there had been a recent Review of Tenant Participation and that various changes were still bedding down. Some of the changes to the TsOR reflected this Review and advised it can be revisited.</p> <p>NV: Asked what other attendees think about their proposal. Proposal to pull together working group of tenants and council officers to review tenant participation.</p> <p>MT: Re-stated NV's proposal for clarity.</p> <p>DM: Stated ways tenant participation captures action points raised in meetings. Advised it's a new way of working and new to the area of engagement.</p> <p>MT: Advised that he is happy to put proposal to a vote to see if residents approve establishing a working group. Advised it would have to be a vote in principal and not a commitment for a material working group at this time, citing council resource requirement, authority to make such approvals. Asked if that makes sense.</p> <p>B: Asked if tenant participation could share responses to follow-up questions to attendees that don't show up as a way of improving interactions between residents and council. Raised example.</p> <p>DM: Agreed to do so. Advised on details of drop-offs between bookings for forums and SUGs and that it is something that could be shared.</p>	<p>DM – will do after data from a</p>

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	<p>NV: Expressed frustration that there won't be a vote on proposal.</p> <p>TD: Advised that tenants and leaseholders should meet without Council to come up with proposals first before proposal for a working group.</p> <p>MT: Expressed opinion that they think this would be more effective.</p> <p>TD: Acknowledged that NV is right that it is always the same people that turn up to meetings. Advised that finding people to give up their time and give their opinions is very difficult. Advised this was just as difficult twenty years ago.</p> <p>JTC: Advised that mental health is consideration when participation, asked if more informal meetings could take place such as "pop-up" in person meetings at blocks.</p> <p>JB: Advised that in their area, digital take-up is quite low.</p> <p>NV: Acknowledged TD's point of getting together first before making a work group, retracted his proposal.</p> <p>B: Suggested a hybrid meeting more often.</p> <p>MT: Acknowledged that is this a very good suggestion.</p> <p>JTC: Advised that consistency is important too.</p>	<p>few meetings is collected</p>
	<p>Future agenda items</p> <p>JTC: Raised issue of their heating being "restricted" at their building in Barton Hill.</p> <p>MT: Advised will get answer to them.</p> <p>DM: Suggested there could also be a broader issue of district heating raised as a future agenda item.</p> <p>NV: Can there be an item on looking at programme of</p>	<p>MT</p>

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	<p>insulating homes in Bristol long term.</p> <p>MT: Advised can invite energy and renewables manager to come and talk through energy & efficiency strategy.</p> <p>+++++</p> <p>Question in chat from RM. <u>NOTE This was dealt with, outside the main meeting</u></p> <p>“Good morning, I was sent this link in response to an email I sent to BCC regarding the repairs currently taking place in my home. Before the works in question commenced, I voiced my concerns to BCC about the lengthy period and disruption this is likely to cause. To go into all the fine detail of mistakes made along this journey would be to time consuming and more distressing than I’m already finding this process. The works were supposed to be from the 18th Sept - 3rd Oct, I made special arrangements with my employer and made alternative childcare arrangements to cater for this. After all the mishaps caused this work will now continue until the 25th Oct with a new start date of the 16th Oct. Which leads me back to my original questions that haven’t been answered, instead I get an email for me to Join us for Repairs and Maintenance Service User Group, 28 September 2023 at 10:00. Is there someone I can speak to or another group which revolves around repairs/ delays? Any advice is most appreciated thanks.”</p>	MT
	End of Meeting	