



Performance Advisory Group (PAG)

23 July Board Room 4th Floor Barnet House

Main Meeting 6:30pm until 8:30pm

Present:

John Davies	(JD)	Chair Person
Aruna Bhatt	(AB)	Vice Chair
Elizabeth Fitzgerald	(EF)	Member
Eleanor Beyer	(EB)	Member
Norah Fallon	(NF)	Member
Maxell Doku	(MD)	Member
Aletah Drake	(AD)	Member
Adanna Oji	(AO)	Member
Angela Shine	(AS)	Member
Amlan Ghoshal	(AG)	Member
Carol Douet	(CD)	Member
Deborah Beckford	(DB)	Customer Engagement Co-Ordinator
Havanna Palmer	(HP)	TBG Apprentice
Laura Giles	(LG)	Head of Strategy & Policy
Ryan Bolton	(RB)	Head of repairs & estates
Jacky Nelson	(JN)	Housing Manager Leasehold Team
Washington Ainabe	(WA)	BH Board Member

Item	Title	Action
1	Apologies and welcome Apologies received from Hazel Introductions were made around the table	
2	Minute Approval All agreed the minutes were a true reflection.	Minutes to be published on website

3	Matters Arising DB to have a meeting with RB and SC to discuss actions from PAG meeting in June and report back to members	Action																																							
4	Complaints performance 2017/18	Action DB to send out presentation to members																																							
4.1	Stage 1 complaints The significant increase in the overall number of complaints can be attributed to the large increase in the volume of complaints regarding the Gas and Repairs services – Repairs increased by 28.3% from 2016/17 to 2017/18 and Gas complaints increased by 50.8% from 2016/17 to 2017/18. The overall upheld figure increased as we saw more Gas complaints being logged with the number of Gas complaints upheld being between 80% - 90% every quarter. As more Gas complaints were logged and more upheld, this has pushed the overall figure up each quarter and year.																																								
4.2	Stage 1 by service area The table below shows that the majority of complaints received come from the Repairs and Estates service area; this coupled with a high proportion of upheld complaints has a significant influence on the overall performance for the organisation. Generally, the percentage of upheld complaints was low across other service areas; it should be noted that due to the low volumes of complaints in areas excluding Repairs and Estates, at service level each complaint has a significant weighting and therefore influence on the service’s % in time and % upheld performance. <i>Figure 5: Stage 1 complaints performance by service area</i>																																								
4.3	<table><tr><th rowspan="2">Stage 1 Complaints</th><th colspan="3">Year-End 2017/18</th></tr><tr><th>Due</th><th>% In Time</th><th>% Upheld</th></tr><tr><td>Repairs & Estates</td><td>1,070</td><td>99%</td><td>73%</td></tr><tr><td>Housing Options</td><td>75</td><td>92%</td><td>7%</td></tr><tr><td>Customer Experience</td><td>15</td><td>73%</td><td>40%</td></tr><tr><td>Housing Management</td><td>84</td><td>73%</td><td>17%</td></tr><tr><td>Property</td><td>47</td><td>91%</td><td>34%</td></tr><tr><td>Sheltered / Supported</td><td>5</td><td>100%</td><td>20%</td></tr><tr><td>Central Services</td><td>1</td><td>0%</td><td>0%</td></tr><tr><td>Total</td><td>1,297</td><td>96%</td><td>63%</td></tr></table>		Stage 1 Complaints	Year-End 2017/18			Due	% In Time	% Upheld	Repairs & Estates	1,070	99%	73%	Housing Options	75	92%	7%	Customer Experience	15	73%	40%	Housing Management	84	73%	17%	Property	47	91%	34%	Sheltered / Supported	5	100%	20%	Central Services	1	0%	0%	Total	1,297	96%	63%
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4.4	Where the high number of upheld Gas and Repairs complaints raises the average across the organisation, likewise but on a more positive note, strong in-time performance for the high-volume complaints service areas of Gas and Repairs significantly influences Barnet Homes’ overall performance against the target of 90%. The lower in-time performance for other service areas will be reviewed and measures will be identified to																																								

	improve performance	
4.5	<p>An increase in the number of complaints for the year was seen across a number of service areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major Works complaints increased by 18% (from 42 to 47). • Neighbourhood complaints increased by 41% (from 33 to 56); • Sheltered Housing complaints increased by 33% (from 3 to 5). • The Rental Income Team increased by 38.5% (from 13 to 18) • Gas complaints increased by 35.9% (from 381 to 594) • Repairs complaints increased by 28.3% (from 353 to 453) <p>There were also decreases in the number received in some services from 2016/17 to 2017/18:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Options complaints decreased by 24.2% (99 to 75); • Leaseholder Services complaints decreased by 42.9% (from 14 to 8); • The Contact Centre decreased by 31.8% (from 22 to 15) 	
4.6	<p>Although we have seen an increase in the overall year's complaints upheld for a number of service areas, the Gas and Repairs services are the biggest drivers in both numbers received and percentage upheld. Despite the increased number of complaints received, Gas and Repairs continued to perform strongly against our in-time target.</p> <p>Whilst activities to improve performance and reduce the number of complaints have been ongoing throughout the year, focused work is underway within teams to analyse trends, identify root causes of complaints, and implement lessons learnt. Commentary is not yet available from each service area below; however, updates may be provided where available in the PAG meeting as part of the summary presentation.</p>	
4.7	<p>GAS</p> <p>Key causes of Complaints</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High volume of missed /rescheduled appointments • Poor scheduling function • Lack of investment in resourcing <p>Improvement measures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fortnightly complaint meetings to look at root causes • Suitable allocation of resource in new contract – including additional back-office staff • Mears requested to plan for additional resource on winter breakdown service 	

4.8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly contract meetings including assessment of complaint performance <p>Impact on new contract</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unusually large number of repairs and services to complete • Nearly 1,000 needing annual service <p>Repairs</p> <p>Key causes of complaints</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of resources and issues finding and retaining quality staff • Missed appointments • Delays • Scheduling issues <p>Improvement measures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer journey mapping – identified scheduling issues • March / April 2018: formal request to address number of complaints, including review of scheduling function and resources. • Tool box talks to improve customer care and communication with residents • 24 hours' notice to reschedule appointment • Weekly meetings from July to review complaints 	
4.9	<p>Neighbourhood Housing Team</p> <p>Key causes of complaints</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resourcing issues <p>Improvement measures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment drives ongoing • Cover arrangements made for empty patches and to respond to complaints 	
4.10	<p>Rental Income Team</p> <p>Key causes of complaints</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resourcing issue <p>Improvement measures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service review underway to improve performance and 	

	review processes, targets, and objectives – including complaints handling	
4.11	<p>Housing Options</p> <p>Key causes of complaints</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Condition / suitability of temporary accommodation • Delays in assessing applications • Poor customer service <p>Improvement measures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compliance programme for Temporary Accommodation inspections • Review of TA function • Performance monitoring • Mystery shopping • Training 	
5	Stage 2 complaints	
5.1	<p>In 2017/18, Barnet Homes received an increase in the number of complaints escalated to Stage 2, from 51 in 2016/17 to 63. This was in line with the increase of complaints received at Stage 1; however, performance improved slightly with Stage 2 complaints as a proportion of Stage 1 complaints decreasing from 5.4% in 2016/17 to 4.9% in 2017/18.</p> <p>Complaints are escalated to Stage 2 where the complainant is not satisfied with the response at Stage 1, and there is evidence that the issues have not been resolved. Despite the higher number of complaints to deal with, Stage 2 complaints handling improved with an increase of responses in time from 84% the previous year to 95% (achieving target performance) in 2017/18, and a decrease in the proportion fully upheld from 47% to 29%.</p> <p>The highest volume of Stage 2 complaints was received by the Repairs service, with 19 (a reduction of 17% from 23 in 2016/17). Housing Needs also experienced a 63% decrease in the number of Stage 2 escalations, with 3 in 2017/18 compared to 8 in 2016/17.</p> <p>The increase in Stage 2 complaints compared to 2016/17 was spread across a number of service areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mechanical and Electrical (+5), • Rental Income (+3), • ASB (+3), • Sheltered Housing (+3), • Voids and Lettings (+2), • Emergency Accommodation (+2), 	

<div>6</div> <div>6.1</div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neighbourhood (+1), • Property Management (+1), • Contact Centre (+1), • Major Works (+1), • and Robert Heath (district heating system) (+1). <p>Decreases in Stage 2 escalations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Needs (-5) • Repairs (-4) • Leasehold (-1) • Morgan Sindell (-1) <p>Stage 3 complaints</p> <p>In 2017/18, Barnet Homes received a total of 3 Stage 3 complaints, all for the Housing Options service. This was a reduction of 67% compared to 2016/17 when 9 complaints were escalated to Stage 3.</p> <p>It should be noted that LBB removed their Stage 3 process on 1 July 2017 and we introduced a Stage 3 Panel for Housing Options complaints and sign-off by a Head of Service of the Stage 2 response letter. This may have contributed to the decrease in complaints and we will monitor this to see if it continues to have an effect.</p> <p>Improved results in 2017/18</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •67% fewer Stage 3 complaints (down from 9) •LBB removed Stage 3 review of Housing Options complaints in July •BH introduced Stage 3 Panel with Head of Service Stage 2 sign-off 	
<div>7</div> <div>7.1</div>	<p>Ombudsman</p> <p>9 cases referred to Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman / Housing Ombudsman (vs 6 in 2016/17)</p> <p>However, largely positive results</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 4 cases declined by Ombudsman - 2 cases no fault / no maladministration 	

7.2	<p>- Awaiting decision re. one complaint</p> <p>Found failings in ASB handling, that are being addressed through process review (financial settlement £200)</p> <p>Found a failure re. issuing homelessness decision, but no further remedy due to BH apologising for faults</p> <p>Continue Complaints Service Development Plan, which includes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting teams with analysis & lessons • Further strengthening complaints reporting • Developing more trend analysis • Publishing information about lessons learnt <p>Continuing actions already implemented including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly quality assurance checks • Monthly review of performance <p>Major Works</p>	
8 8.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barnet currently has 8 lease types. These reflect the evolution of the standard lease since 1980 when the RTB act was enacted. • It is a requirement of the lease for the freeholder (Barnet) to manage and maintain the building / estate, and for the leaseholder to contribute to them doing so. • Leaseholder contributions are defined within the lease as block and estate percentages which are based on the rateable value of the property. • This loosely means that if the block has 10 similar sized properties each will contribute 1/10th towards the total cost of any works or services, regardless of how many units are sold. 	

	<p>It is a common misconception that leaseholders subsidise tenants – they do not</p>	
9	<p>What constitutes major works service charge?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anything that requires statutory Section 20 leasehold consultation-cost per property £250 plus • This could be ad hoc responsive repairs or planned programmes of work • Ad hoc repairs aren't generally too much of a bone of contention as leaseholders can see or experienced the need for the works • This isn't always the same with planned programmes of works 	
9.1	<p>Major works planned programmes</p> <p>Planned work breaks down into two categories</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cyclical programmes-external repairs and redecorations 2. Health & Safety programmes including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electrical rising mains and emergency lighting replacement • Fire safety risk assessment related work • Cold water storage – legionella systems • Lift work 	
9..2	<p>Exceptions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deed of variation – normally relates to windows and doors • Repairs only leases – pre-1990 don't allow for improvements • Elements of no benefit – not to be taken too literally ie. Roofs 	
9.3	<p>Major works consultation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any works where the unit cost will exceed £250 requires Section 21 consultation • Failing to consult may mean that we cannot recover more than £250 per unit (emergency dispensation applies) • Long-term partnering agreements – 2012 to 2020 for main works and services • Only one stage of consultation needed – qualifying works under a qualifying long-term agreement (Schedule 3) 	
9.4	<p>The consultation process – schedule 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notice of intention – of works to be carried out under a long-term partnering agreement (For larger planned work we generally go above and beyond the statutory requirement and send a pre-notice of intention letter) • The NOI which is usually accompanied by a breakdown of estimated costs must 	

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify the proposed work 2. Advice what consultation schedule is being used 3. Describe the works 4. Explain why they are necessary 5. Invite observations 6. Give a date on which the consultation will close 	
9.5	<p>Consultation terminology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘Observations’ • Dictionary definitions – remarks, comments, opinions, thoughts • Often misconstrued as an invitation to object, to influence or stop • Does serve as an opportunity to seek more clarification, better understanding • 30-days allowed for responses after which the consultation is closed and the works are instructed 	
9.6	<p>Tendered works</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are now tendering some programmes of work which involve a more complicated consultation process (Schedule 4.2) • Stage 1 – Notice of intention (our intention to procure a contractor to deliver a specific programme of works) • Notice includes <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Description of the works 2. Reason for the works 3. Indicative costs 4. Invitation to nominate a contractor (including the qualifying criteria) 5. Date on which the 30day observation period closes • Once the consultation closes we go out to tender • When t consultation closes we go out to tender <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Details of contractors that submitted a tender bid 2. Details of the contractor we are proposing to award the contract to 3. If available a breakdown of estimated costs 4. Date on which the 30-day observation period will close 	
9.7	<p>Breakdown of estimated charges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The charges are broken down by block and then individual leaseholder contributions <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A provisional charge is sometimes included – this is for elements of work that are either uncertain or where the costs are uncertain 2. A contingency fee – this allows for works that are not identified until works start on site • Any or all of these charges are removed at interim billing if they are not used 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The administration fee – this covers our costs in delivering the project – Staff, offices, equipment, printing, postage • Another misconception – it suits BH to do unnecessary works or to over specify works – we are a non-profit making organisation, although we are entitled to recover our reasonable costs 	
9.8	Billing/Invoicing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start of works – we start to incur costs long before the works start on site. We therefore invoice leaseholders for 90% of the estimated costs when we start work on site • An opportunity to make contact to discuss payments/enter into a payment plan (resident leaseholders only) • Interim invoices when practical completion has been achieved (this can be a credit account adjustment) • 2.5% prompt payment discount 	
9.9	Payment Options <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The lease specifies payment on demand however in 2009 when the decent homes standard programme was nearing completion, the first <i>extended payment options for major works</i> policy was ratified by the Housing Committee • This was significantly improved upon and signed off by the Cabinet Resources Committee in February 2015, recognising the financial burden placed on leaseholders by major works charges • The current policy allows resident leaseholders to consolidate major works charges and spread payment over a period of up to 10 years interest free (depending on the total debt) 	
9.10	Florrie's Law <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formally known as the Social Landlords Mandatory Reduction of Service charges • We often get asked about this law introduced onto the statute books in August 2014 after the tragic death of 93-year old Florrie a Newham leaseholder presented with a bill for £50K • The law requires a £15K cap in London and a £10K cap elsewhere for major works in any rolling 5 -year period BUT this only applies if the works are grant funded 	
9.11	The first Tier Tribunal <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaseholders have recourse to the FTT (formally the leasehold validation tribunal) to challenge major works – the necessity, the cost and their liability • But the FTT do not/cannot deal with leaseholders ability to pay • The FTT will want assurance that all efforts have been made on both sides to reach an amicable outcome, this includes mediation and arbitration. 	

10	<p>Members Update</p> <p>JD updated the members about the new gas contract with Mears. He said that the problems with the back log left by Robert Heath had now been ironed out and that they had reached 100% with the safety checks. For new installations they were using sub-contractors so as not to fall behind.</p> <p>AB, EF attended the mystery shopping training and along with AS were taking part in the MS exercise. DB said that once all the information from this exercise had been collated she would be holding a focus group in September with all the residents who took part to discuss the experience and identify where the gaps are in and devise an action plan to make improvements. DB said she wanted to think about forming a sub-group to monitor this progress. This also ties in very nicely with a bigger piece of work being undertaken by service areas across TBG to map the customer journey, so there might be more working coming up in the future in relation to this</p> <p>AS, AB and AG attended the review of the fire safety doors and were still not 100% satisfied that the customers views were being taken into account. DB suggested that they wait to see what the report said and the recommendations were.</p> <p>AB and AS attended the Digital Workshop organised by LBB, they said they enjoyed it and DB said she would distribute the feedback from LBB to all members once she had received it.</p> <p>DB told members that the date for the PAG summer social meal was 16 August and for members to confirm their attendance</p> <p>AB reminded JN that she was the service champion for the LH team and that she hadn't been called upon in a while to be involved with anything. Could she please have an update.</p> <p>AOB</p> <p>DB told members that the date for the PAG summer social meal was 16 August and for members to confirm their attendance</p> <p>Date of next meeting</p> <p>Monday 4 September 6.30-8.30pm Board room 4th floor Barnet House</p>	
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