



Tenants' Forum Newsletter

**April — June 2023
Issue no — 11**

The Tenants' Forum (TF)

17th April 2023

Living with Water – Community Coordinator



Lauren Murtagh from Living with Water delivered a presentation on work they are carrying out in Hull to support residents with flooding issues.

Officer shared that Living With Water aims to help build understanding across Hull and the East Riding about the threats and opportunities water brings to our region. It is a partnership between Yorkshire Water, Hull City Council, East Riding of Yorkshire Council, the Environment Agency and the University of Hull – all of which play a role in managing water in Hull and the East Riding.

In Hull and East Riding, several sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) are being planned to help manage the area's flood risk. SuDS improve water quality, water quantity, amenity and biodiversity

How do SUDS work?

When it rains heavily, water runs off hard surfaces, such as buildings, roads and pavement and into drainage and sewer systems, which are sometimes not large enough to cope with this additional influx. SuDS slow the water flow and channel it away from drains and sewers.

Examples of SuDS are water butts, rain gardens, wetlands, ponds & basins, permeable paving, green roofs and swales

Following is the link of video about Living With Water

<https://livingwithwater.co.uk/projects/sustainable-drainage-systems-suds>



16th May 2023

Enforcement of the Tenancy Agreement. Operations Manager Neighbourhoods and Housing

Chris Todd attended the Tenants' Forum to deliver a presentation on "Enforcement of the Tenancy Agreement and Update on Area Housing"

Officer shared that a Tenancy Agreement is a contract between the tenant and the landlord, it could be written or verbal. The Tenancy Agreement gives certain rights to both the tenant and the landlord.

He provided information on following points:

Tenancy Sustainment – 2022 – 23

- The Tenancy Sustainment team supported 1172 Council Tenants covering 2185 different issues, in the 2022/23 financial year
- Obtained £537,150.56 in unclaimed benefits and £286,868.21 in local grants from external charities
- Through the Housing Support Grant and Tenancy Support Scheme supported 719 tenants with £97,181.27 to assist with clothing, food, utilities, and household goods
- Officers also verified 1052 New Claims for Universal Credit for new tenants.
- This takes the total number of Council tenants claiming Universal Credit up to 9654



Income Collection – 2022 – 23

- End of Year arrears figures was £3,059,219 which is a 99.13% collection rate for the year
- Overall increase of £351,202 compared to the previous year
- Average arrears are £335.00
- Currently the Top 100 highest arrears cases represent £341,145
- The Council evicted 11 tenancies

People, places and Partnerships

- Since the introduction of Routine Tenancy Visits the team have completed 862 visits.
- The visits are uncovering a number of issues regarding hoarding, alterations to the property, incomplete repairs, untidy gardens and unknown health issues



High Rise Team – 2022 – 23

- Since the introduction of the High Rise Team, they have completed 78 Routine Tenancy Visits.
- Of the 78 visits there has been 49 onward referrals for additional support through partners.
- Since October 2022 the team have submitted 39 requests for priority moves and 5 downsizing direct lets.
- The High Rise Team have been working closely with partners to resolve some of the problems within the blocks.
- Plans are in place to hold a minimum of 4 Pop-ins/surgeries on each site annually.

Officer responded to the issues raised by the Forum and also provided update on previous issues as well.

21st June 2023 Performance against Business Plan Performance Manager Neighbourhoods and Housing

At the beginning of the meeting the Chair resigned from all the Tenant involvement Activities apart from his local Tenant and Resident Association. The Vice Chair, Secretary and a General member also resigned from the Tenants' Forum Committee only. One of the General Members of the Tenants' Forum Committee decided not to resign from the Tenants' Forum Committee after consulting with her neighbours, friends and family members. She mentioned that the Forum needs to remain strong and continue the partnership and that change and improvement will only happen by working together. She suggested to continue the meeting as normal. All the members unanimously agreed to continue with the meeting.

Geoff Bradley informed the Tenants' Forum that Housing officers now give a full service update to Communities Culture & Leisure Overview & Scrutiny Commission (CCL OSC) every 3 months. He also shared that feedback from today's Forum will feed into these updates.

Officer delivered a presentation on six monthly updates on progress against 5 business plan objectives of the Housing Service.



Focusing on Customers Experience

- ◆ Wait times for customers ringing the Council on 300300 remains a concern
- ◆ To help this council is improving the online experience for Housing callers who are happy to go online
- ◆ New mobile phone-based app “myHousing” is due to go live late September.

Putting residents first and meeting their needs

- ◆ Head of Access and wellbeing recently met with the Tenants' Forum Committee to outline and discuss a number of ideas to address the homelessness situation in Hull.
- ◆ The top priority for the whole Neighbourhoods and Housing service is to reduce relet time.
- ◆ The relet process is complex, many teams across the service playing a role in improving performance.

Safety, sustainability and climate change

- ◆ The Regulator of Social Housing contacted many social landlords, including HCC, early this year for information on how they are tackling damp and mould.
- ◆ The Regulator is now asking similar questions around gas and electrical safety, which we welcome.
- ◆ Building safety remains a key priority - we have a large programme of activity to ensure we can provide satisfactory updates to the Building Safety Regulator.
- ◆ To help we have a specialist consultancy - Ridge Consulting - working with us until September.

Strengthening Hull's neighbourhoods and communities

- ◆ Since we last came to the Tenants' Forum we have added performance information from the low-rise flats benchmarking to our quarterly updates to Scrutiny.

Investing in modernisation and organisational development

- ◆ The Regulator of Social Housing will soon begin regular inspections of all social housing landlords, including us.
- ◆ We are focussing on the key improvements we need to deliver in preparation.



Tenants and Residents Associations (TARAs)

The TARAs are carrying out face to face meetings and have been actively feeding issues from their members to the relevant service areas, carrying out local area walks and litter picking and block walks to improve the kerb appeal of their areas.

Committee members have been in regular contact with the Tenant Participation Team, who support them in finding a resolve to the issues/concern they may raise.

If you think your area would benefit from having a tenant and residents' group and there is enough interest in your community, give the Tenant Participation Team a ring to discuss this further.

Bayswater Court TARA

The committee members have continued to feed in any issues that are brought to their attention on behalf of their members through meetings. They have representation on the main groups in the tenant involvement structure including the Multi Storey Living Group, Estate Management Project Group, Designated panel and the Tenants Forum.

The communication channel continues to be a fantastic communication tool and is being updated every week with information relevant to the block.

The group have been busy, they continue to hold Bingo in the pop in 3 times a week and coffee mornings. Now the weather is warming up residents have been enjoying the communal garden. Residents have been working hard to keep the garden tidy and look forward to this year's annual garden competition.

In May the TARA was successful in securing funding from the ward budget to fund a garden Coronation party for King Charles the 3rd. This was a great day for the residents and well attended.

Now into June the TARA held a pop in meeting with local Councillors and Housing to discuss issues in the block. The Highrise team are making plans to hold regular meetings along with other agencies to provide updates and work together with the residents.

Tenant and Resident Associations (TARAs)



Bayswater residents enjoy meeting together and an impromptu BBQ in June saw a great turn out for residents to meet in the garden.



Charterhouse TARA

Group members are actively involved in local area walks and litterpicking, they have also attended the Estate Management Project Group, feeding in their local concerns for the area to the wider work streams of the Council. The wider audience of the group are kept informed by local newsletters regularly produced and hand delivered.

The community allotment situated on Aldbro Street is growing well with all spaces for individual spaces now taken. This has produced some home grown produce for everyone to sample and enjoy. In the coming year, the membership hopes to be expanded and children are also welcomed to get involved.

Great Thornton Street TARA

The GTS TARA committee met regularly to discuss the issues relevant to the blocks and to plan activities.

On 16th June 2023, GTS Committee arranged their Annual General Meeting to elect new committee. All the present members of the committee elected unopposed. GTS Committee welcomed new member to the committee. Chair also presented end of year 2022 – 23 report. Following are the members of the GTS Committee: -

Peter Doncaster – Chair
Julie Murphy – Vice Chair
Sana Benali – Secretary
Joan Shepherdson – General Member
Paul Wells – General Member

GTS Committee hold their regular meeting for all the residents of Great Thornton Street. The Ward Councillors, Neighbourhood Coordinator, Housing Officers and Anti-Social Behaviour Enforcement Officer attended the meeting and provided update on the issues which were raised at the previous meetings.

All the members of the GTS Committee did litter picking around GTS to keep the area clean and collected 14 bags of rubbish and recyclable. They also carried on working in the communal garden.



Tenant and Resident Associations (TARAs)



The Chair and members of GTS committee regularly attend Multi Storey Living Project Group, Customer Access Focus Group, Neighbourhood Management Group and the Tenants' Forum to raise the issues and keep residents up to date on the information received from these meetings via GTS Facebook and newsletter. GTS Chair also provided regular updates on the progress of GTS TARA at the Tenants' Forum.

GTS committee can be contacted via Facebook or email

[Great Thornton Street Estate TARA](#) or <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gtstara>
agreatthorntonstreet@gmail.com

Hutt Street Pop-In

Members of this group are keeping up to date with local area issues, by feeding into the Neighbourhood Management Project Group, they are also giving their group and a wider audience updates on what work has been carried out to alleviate the issues in their local area and Citywide. Group members are also actively carrying out litterpicking on a regular basis to clean up their street, so far this quarter they have managed to collect 9 bags of rubbish and have carried out numerous local area walks.



Muswell Court Pop-in

The new Muswell Court TARA committee members have been getting involved with the main groups in the tenant involvement structure including the Multi Storey Living Group, Estate Management, Publication and Communication and the Tenants' Forum.

The group have started organising some new activities in the Community Room. Their weekly bingo has been a success so they plan to continue with a quiz night soon. Funds have been raised for future activities.

Tenant and Resident Associations (TARAs)



In May the TARA was successful in securing funding from the ward budget to fund a garden Coronation party for King Charles the 3rd. This was a great day for the residents and well attended.



The communal garden is starting to come along nicely. Tenants and Residents have been busy, weeding, trimming and tidying. In June they joined forces with the help of tutors from Wilberforce College to invite students to collaborate with tenants at Muswell and assist in the garden. This was a great success so will continue with future dates to be confirmed.



They have also held a pop in meeting with local Councillors and Housing to discuss issues in the block. The Highrise team are making plans to hold regular meetings along with other agencies to provide updates and work together with the residents

The TARA are keen to continue to apply for further funding to provide equipment and furniture that can help with activities to bring the community together.



Oakington Garth TARA

Members of the TARA have been keeping up to date with local area issues, by feeding them into the Estate Management Project Group, they are also giving their group and a wider audience updates on what work has been carried out to alleviate the issues in their local area and citywide. Regular newsletters are produced by the TARA to keep everyone up to date on relevant information, they also hand deliver these around the Garth. The group are carrying out local area walks, reporting any issues they find.

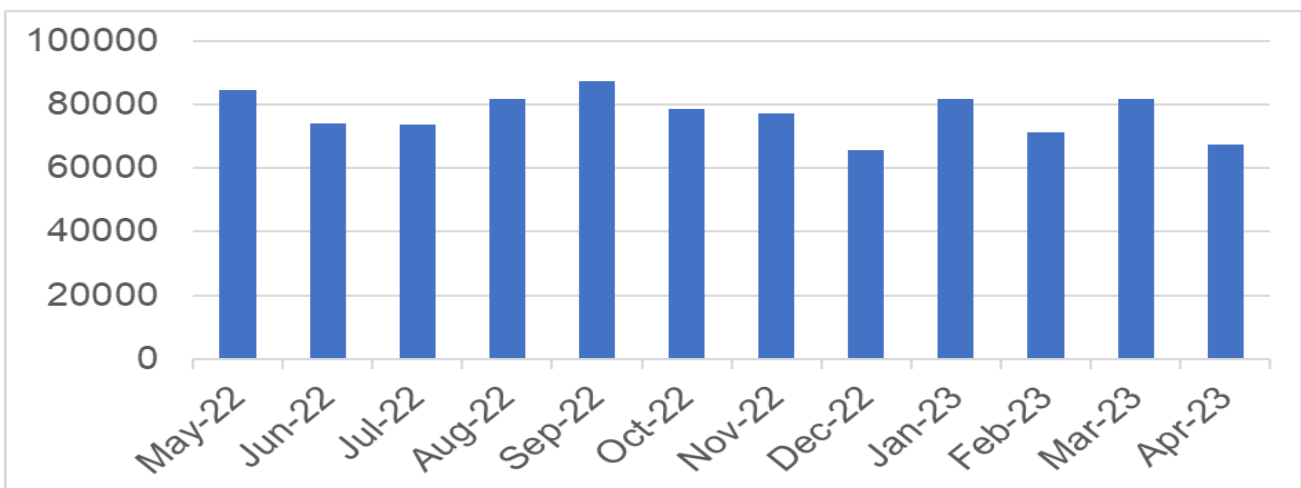
In December the group were awarded over £3.8k from the Winter Warmth Grant funding sponsored by Fortem, Efficiency North and the Council. This was spent on slow cookers and bedding and was well received from the residents who live in the area.

Customer Access Focus Group

The Customer Access Focus Group met in June and received presentations from the Customer Operations Manager and the Business Insight & Quality Manager.

Contact Centre Total Inbound Calls

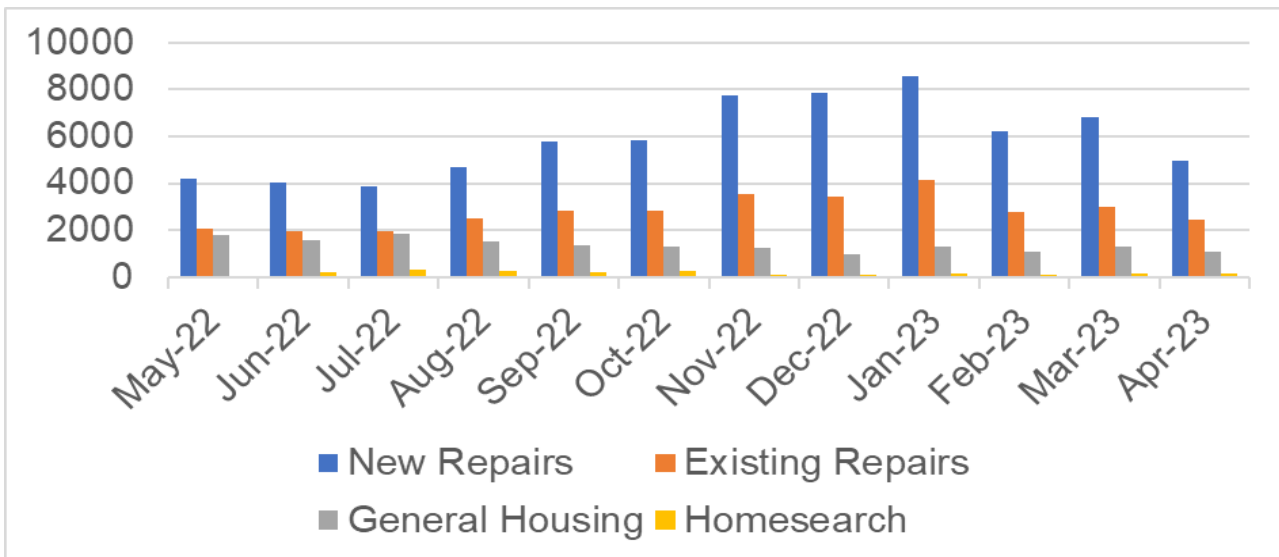
The number of inbound calls continue to decrease. There is a seasonal increase in March due to Council Tax letters being posted out, however, overall the number of calls are starting to go down compared to previous years.





Contact Centre – Housing Calls

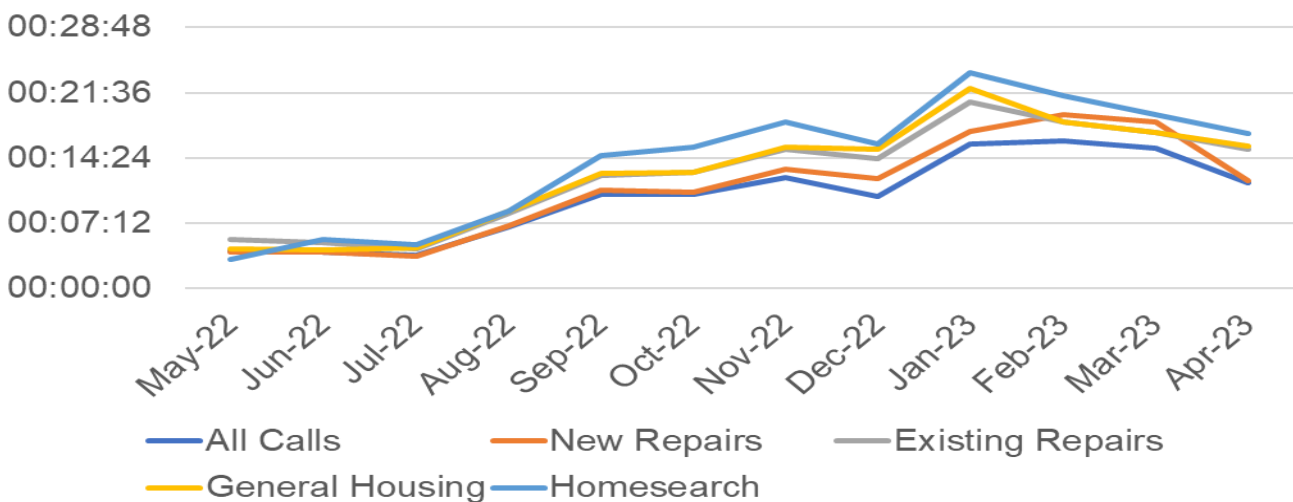
New figures were presented to the group relating to Housing calls. Existing repair calls seem to be higher than others, however Housing are trialling the use of SMS messaging for repair updates.



Contact Centre – Average Wait and Handle Time

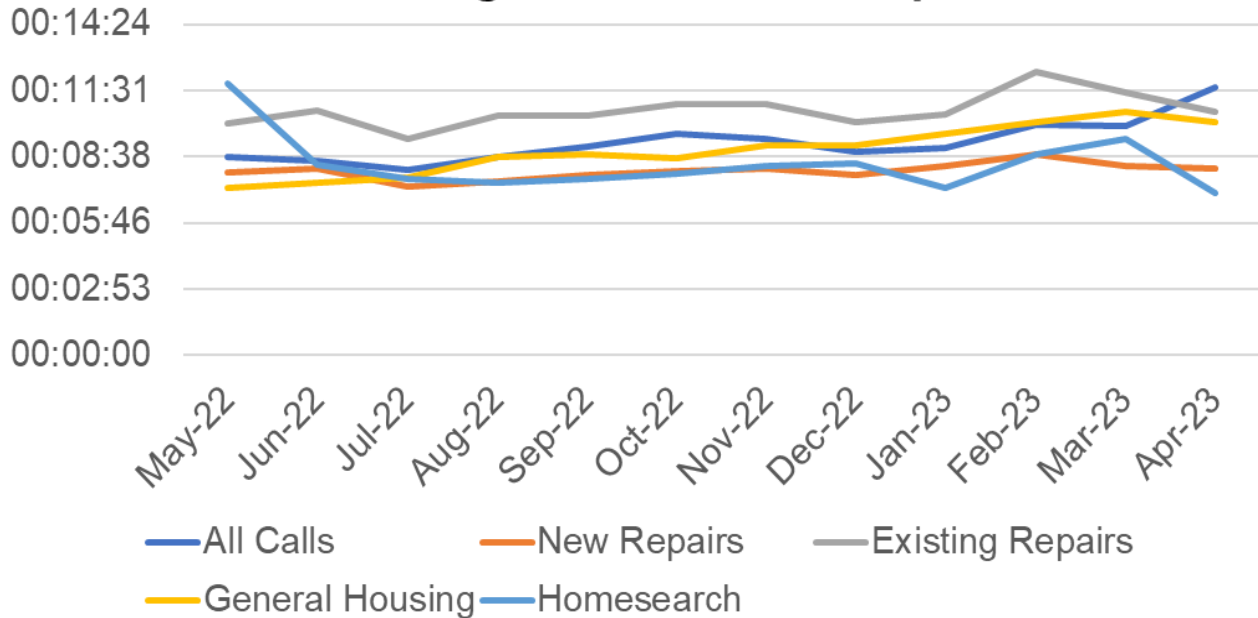
The average wait time has been gradually decreasing since January 2023. New advisors are due to join the Council shortly which will assist in reducing the wait times further. Housing calls appear to take longer to answer, however 79% of advisors are now trained on Housing Repairs. Call Handling times remain mostly consistent, with a slight increase across February and March 2023.

Average Wait Time Graph





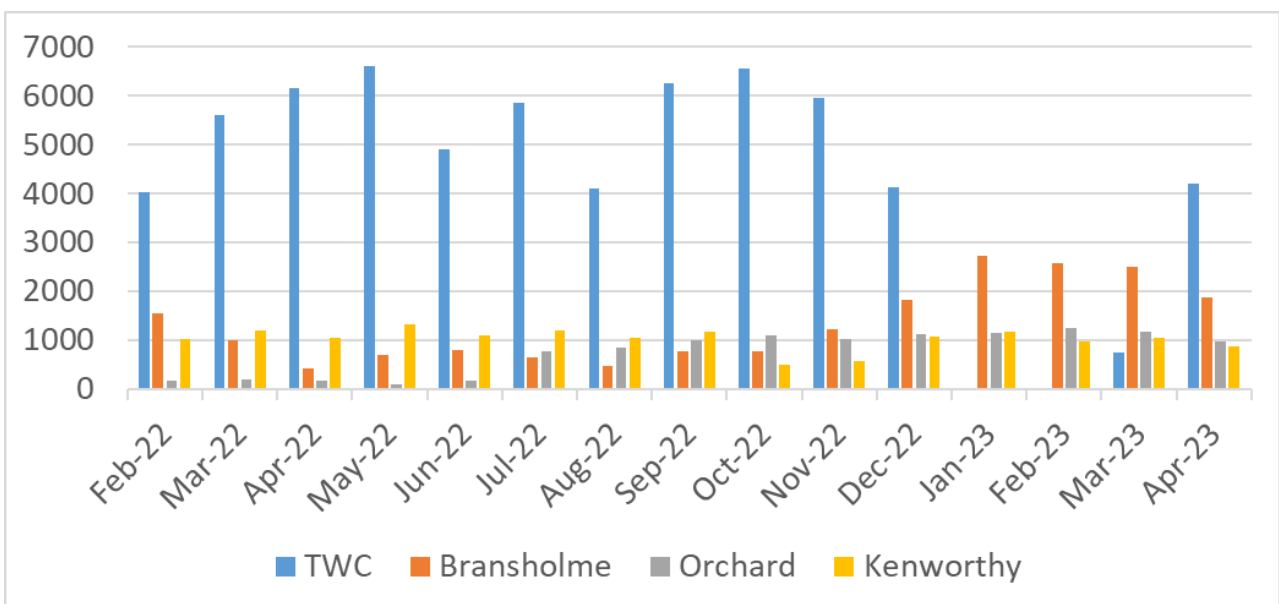
Average Handle Time Graph



Update on the CSCs

A new data capture form has now been implemented at all 4 Customer Service Centre sites- The Wilson Centre, Bransholme, Orchard and Kenworthy. Data is captured via the form and is linked to SharePoint. This allows managers to see how each site is performing and what types of questions are being asked.

Customer Service Centres Footfall Graph



April 2023:

The Wilson Centre: 4192
Bransholme: 1875
Orchard: 954
Kenworthy: 863

Website and Improvements

Website usage has remained mostly consistent over the last 12 months.

Since the last update, LiveChat has been expanded to cover additional pages, and around 100 queries are received a day through LiveChat. In addition to this, the Council have also implemented a new Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system, which allows customers to raise service requests quicker and easier on the website. When a customer calls the Contact Centre, the advisor will now see a pop up of the customers' details (provided they have called before). This will reduce the time taken to search for the customer and will allow for more time to be spent dealing with the query.

A new website is due to go live in October, and further improvements will be made to the "myAccount" system to make the process of raising service requests quicker and easier for customers.



myHousing Development Work

Since the last update, the NEC "Engage" app has been branded "myHousing".

This is to join the other suite of “my” services that the Council currently offers (including myAccount and myLibraries). The myHousing app will be available for download from the Apple App Store and the Google Play Store, and Phase 1 of the new app will be an exact replication of Housing Online.

The group are always on the lookout for more volunteers to get involved. If you would like to get involved, or would like to see what goes on, feel free to get in touch with the Tenant Participation Team!

Estate Management Project Group

The group is meeting up every 6 weeks. From April to June 2023, the Service Level Agreement for Streetscene and Citysafe which was worked upon by Officers and tenant representatives is now fully implemented. The group is monitoring the respective SLA's through meetings with Officers from Streetscene and Citysafe to gain a better picture of service provision and results.

Estate Management Issues

The Officers and the group discussed a wide range of issues affecting the City, with flytipping and rubbish still being the topic of conversation. Officers also have provided the group and wider audiences with an update of what data has been collated this quarter. Also, with the Area Housing Teams and Neighbourhood Co-ordinators collating information, this has given a better picture of the issues in the City, and how we can determine what action to take. At the present time the percentage of issues graded by using the national Housemark Scheme grading system was 26%, this quarter it is 6.1%, which is still a very big improvement and has continued at this rate for some time.



Local Area Walks and Litterpicking

Our Local Area Walks programme is going from strength to strength with the

intrepid volunteers out and about weekly and monthly, checking areas for a wide range of issues. The Local Area Champion programme has 91 participants, who are happily recording issues at their own pace and reporting them to Officers. Here is the April to June 23 summary of what has happened:

Local Area walks this quarter

Number of assisted Local Area walks carried out = 20

Number of solo walks carried out = 13

Service requests raised this quarter

Number of assisted service requests raised = 55

Number of solo service requests raised = 30

Untidy garden letters sent out = 6

Tidy garden letters sent out = 39

Litterpicking

Again, the momentum for this activity is growing with more people than ever wanting to carry out this activity. So far this year we have seen a massive increase in individuals and communities litterpicking in their areas. This has created some great community spirit and help build some strong friendships along the way. The data collected is also being fed into the Council's climate change agenda.

Bags of litter collected during litterpicks in the city = 483

Number of bags of litter to recycling = 33

A day in the life of a litterpicker – Graham Pettigill



Graham joined the Hull Tenants' Forum in July 22 and has quickly got involved in improving his area by litterpicking and carrying out local area walks.

From April 2023 he has so far collected 41 bags of rubbish which is a great achievement and through the walks he has reported numerous issues.

A day in the life of a litterpicker – Kathleen Elvin and Sharon Leese

This litterpicking duo have been long established in their respective areas, making sure that their patches are clean and tidy.

Kathleen has collected 69 bags of rubbish and 22 bags of recycling.

Sharon has collected 11 bags of rubbish



Hull's Hidden Gems and Community Spaces

Whilst walking around the city, carrying out local area walks assisted or unassisted, volunteers have come across some “hidden gems” and great community spaces, where people have created an oasis in a concrete jungle. Officers have started to plot these spaces, around the city to get a better understanding and to encourage others to do so. These can be old grass verges, unloved and abandoned, or raised beds that have not been used for a while.

Hull's Hidden Gems and Community Spaces



Multi Storey Living Project Group

In April the group met for their monthly meeting and welcomed some new members. Guest speaker, Chris Dearing, regeneration manager gave an update on current demolition plans for the 3 Boothferry high-rise blocks. The group were able to raise their issues and concerns and Tenant Participation (TP) officer gave updates and feedback.

Several group members are not only Block Champions for their own flats but also are involved in carrying out Benchmarking inspections though out the city. This has resulted in some positive outcomes and brought attention to areas of concern.



In the last 3 months The TP officer has met with MSL members to Benchmark 3 different areas of the city. Results have been recorded on Housemark, Photo book which is monitored by the performance team



Multi Storey Living TV Update

Following on from the pilot at Bayswater Court, the MSL TV Communication Channel is being trialled at all 3 blocks at Great Thornton Street as part of a further pilot. The system went live on Monday 19th June. The benefit of the TV

Communication Channel is that we can share useful information regarding the block and the surrounding area, and if there was an emergency and residents needed informing quickly, the TV Communication Channel allows for this to be done.



Publicity Project Group

From April 2023 to June 2023, the group have continued to hold regular meetings face to face and have been finalising the Summer edition of the Hull Housing News, due for release in early July 2023.

The group have looked at the following articles:

- ◆ Community Hubs
- ◆ Security Tips and Advice
- ◆ Mutual Exchange
- ◆ Downsizing to a smaller property
- ◆ Cost of Living Support



Publicity Project Group



- ◆ Universal Credit
- ◆ Cheaper online connection packages (such as KCOM Flexi)
- ◆ Quit Smoking
- ◆ Kings' Coronation Roundup

The group are always on the lookout for other volunteers to join the Publicity Project Group. If you are interested, please get in touch with the Tenant Participation Team. We hold meetings in person, however we are also able to host meetings virtually so you can attend from the comfort of your own home!

As the meeting was closing, C Rogers commented that the TP Team do an amazing job and they work really hard. All present agreed.

Designated Panel

The Designated Panel is currently undertaking Scrutiny Review of the Complaints Procedures.

The panel met for the initial meeting on the 5th of June 2023 where guest speaker Iain Dixon presented the panel with the Hull City Council Housing Ombudsman Self-Assessment. The panel started the process of reviewing the document on the 12th of June. Next Designated Panel meeting is due to take place on the 18th of July 2023.



Chiltern Primary School “Chat and Choose”

Every month Officers from Tenant Involvement attend the monthly “Chat and Choose” at Chiltern Primary School. It is open to all families of the school and gives them a chance to network and pick up 6 items for £1 from the school



store. Whilst the Officers are there, families and individuals can speak to them about housing and area issues and in some cases join the Housing Opinion Panel to make a difference to the Housing Service. On average 30 people attend these events regularly.



“Coffee Club” at Christopher Pickering School



At the beginning of April 23, TP Officers attended a Coffee Club at Christopher Pickering School, where families and individuals were able to have a chat and purchase items from the school shop. Officers were on hand to advise individuals on housing issues and how they could get involved in shaping the Housing Service.

Pets Permissions Policy Research Survey

Hull City Council is currently reviewing its approach on how we manage pets in Council properties. We recognise that there are many benefits to a person that pet ownership can bring, however we are mindful of the fact that residents have the right to peaceful enjoyment in their home. As part of this research, we sent a Microsoft Forms survey to all Council tenants and leaseholders in both high and low rise flats across the city, and if we didn't hold an email or a mobile number, we sent out a paper copy. In total around 5000 unique individuals were contacted. We had an amazing response to the Pets Permissions Policy survey receiving 888 responses, which is roughly 18% of all people we contacted. We are now looking through these responses and analysing the answers provided.

Feedback 10th Edition



I have just read the 10th edition newsletter and it looks brilliant -well done .bob.

Robert Banthorpe

Very informative, I love the multi-cultural event at GTS with residents and tenants showing clothing from their culture to others from different cultures.

Emma Warwick
Head of Service (Business Development and Change)

A good newsletter packed full of information

Craig Smith

Feedback

Your views, suggestions and feedback are very important to us and help us to improve the Tenants' Forum, Tenants' Forum Facebook and Tenants' Forum Newsletter. You can provide us your views, feedback and suggestions via:-

01482 612010

Please leave a message



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Hull City Council Housing



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