



Serpentine Court Steering Group

Tuesday 14th May 2024

Minutes

Residents: Danielle Slaymaker (Chair), Mercy Zvenyika (Deputy Chair), Cassy Elliott (Deputy Chair), Sebastian Power (Deputy Chair), Stacey Coleburt, Nadia Hardi, Mohamed Rohim, Jean Wallace, Clive Wallace, Mariee Wymer (observer – Locals of the Lakes Residents Association), John Pearce (observer),

Staff/Councilors: Zulf Awan (MKCC), Kevin Farrell (Tpas), Amanda Griffiths (MKCC), Lucy Tucker (MKCC), Nicola Watson (MKCC), Nicola Stribling (MKCC)

Apologies: Robyn Goodwin, Pauline Wright, Cllr Emily Darlington

	Action
<p>1. Welcome and introductions</p> <p>Danielle opened the meeting and welcomed everyone.</p>	
<p>2. Minutes of 12th March 2024</p> <p>Agreed as a true record.</p> <p>Matters arising – Rent Models: Zulf to request rent models for new-build homes and the Council Tax bandings and present to the next SCSG meeting. Carried forward and transferred to Amanda Griffiths – see item 3, below.</p> <p>Matters arising – Right to Return: Zulf to check if tenants who are moving out of Serpentine Court temporarily are being issued with licences that include a clause stating they have the Right to Return? See Item 3 below. Action transferred to Lucy Tucker.</p> <p>Matters arising – Item 3, page 2 – Regarding a tenant who had been forced to move during 2023 due to the condition of their home. Zulf reported that the Right to Return was operating from 5 December 2023, but he agreed to investigate the case. See Item 3 below, action transferred to Lucy Tucker.</p> <p>Matters arising – Item 7, page 4 - Zulf agreed to source the photos of the press release that included the SCSG/LERF members and to share them. He also agreed to use one of those photos for the next Serpentine Court newsletter. Completed.</p>	<p>AG</p> <p>LT</p> <p>LT</p>
<p>3. Allocations update – Lucy Tucker Head of Housing Operations, MKCC</p> <p>Introductions: Lucy introduced Amanda Griffiths (Assistant Director Housing & Support), Nicola Watson (Allocations Officer) and Nicola Stribling (Housing Allocations Team Leader) and explained their roles.</p>	



Lucy covered the following points:

Local Lettings Policy (LLP)

The policy is still in draft and with the Legal department for checking. It will be shared with SCSG once it is ready. The policy is specifically for Serpentine Court. Allocations will be based on information gathered from the Housing Needs Assessments and will include the tenants who have a Right to Return. There are 4 options for Serpentine Court Secure tenants: 1) Move to one of the new-build properties, 2) Move to another MKC building in the borough, depending on re-let supply 3) Move to a housing association property, 4) Sheltered Housing. **Action: LT to share LLP with SCSG.**

LT

Home Loss payments

Lucy stated the latest Home Loss payment (£8,100), which will be paid directly to each tenant.

Disturbance payments

Lucy reminded the meeting of the items that are covered under Disturbance payments. Nicola Watson will be the first point of contact for re-imbursments.

Housing Needs Assessments (HNA)

Nicola Watson presented the proforma that had been used in West Bletchley. She explained that she will be the dedicated Allocations Officer for Serpentine Court and took the meeting through budget sheets, choices of preferred area, considerations regarding school and work, affordability checks, care needs and help with planning the move. Nicola then explained the system for booking HNA appointments; the information she would have to check, and the information that housing associations would require and why.

Nicola assured SCSG that tenants would be given time to assemble information and will not be rushed. However, MKCC (and housing associations) does require certain evidence. She added that the HNAs will be used to identify adaptations for people with disabilities.

The HNA's can be carried out in tenants' homes or at Spotlight to suit. Much of the work will be carried out electronically and online, rather than on paper.

SCSG asked whether a Q&A sheet could be developed for tenants and posted on the website. Lucy agreed to do so. Action: LT

LT

Danielle commented that SCSG felt assured by what Lucy and Nicola had explained about the HNAs and how they would carried out.

Right to Return

Lucy confirmed that the moves were being recorded. She also agreed to check the licences for a Right to Return clause and report to SCSG.



The question was asked about a tenant who had been forced to move during 2023 due to the condition of their home. Would that person be given the Right to Return? Lucy confirmed that the Right to Return was operating from 5 December 2023 and agreed to investigate the case and report to SCSG.

Action: LT

LT

Rents and Service Charges

SCSG once again pointed out that tenants' needs some indication of the likely rents and service charges for the new homes. It was also pointed out that Nicola Watson was going to be asked this question when she is carrying out HNA's. It was further pointed out that tenants are being asked to make life-changing decisions about where they are going to live, and the cost of a home would be a major determining factor. Working families may struggle to pay the rent and service charges for one of the new homes and may have to look elsewhere. Amanda agreed to investigate the matter and report to SCSG. **Action: AG**

AG

Information & Policy Tracker

Danielle ran through the outstanding items on the tracker to check if all outstanding items had been covered. The following points were raised and answered:

Q: How long will a tenant have to consider each offer?

A: It depends on each property. For example, the availability of a housing association property on Newton Leys would be difficult to predict.

Q: Will tenants have any choice over the location they move to?

A: MKCC will collect data and consider the reasons why a tenant wishes to live in a particular location. Matters such as schooling, Special Needs, mental health and Caring would be considered. MKCC would need to understand the issues in more depth.

Q: At what point in time will tenants be asked to choose bathrooms and kitchens?

A: Graham is working on the timescales now and will report to SCSG soon.

Danielle thanked Lucy, Amanda, Nicola and Nicola for attending the meeting and answering questions and expressed her satisfaction with the arrangement for Nicola Watson to be a dedicated resource for the Secure tenants of Serpentine Court.



4. Project update – Rahul Munday, Development Manager

Rahul provided the following written report:

Key Achievements:

- Start on site – achieved 15th January 2024
- Ongoing infrastructure, utilities and foundation works and piling, along with some pre-cast floors.
- NHBC and Building Control continue to visit site regularly.
- Ongoing soil testing for contaminants.
- Watching brief where small asbestos tiles and asbestos lined water pipes have been found.
- Resident handbook distributed, micro site in place, communication with regard to road closures.
- Clerk of Works has commenced visits - average of two days a week.

Upcoming activities:

- Further Homes England funding draw-downs in progress
- S278 legal arrangements to be concluded this month.
- Supplier day being arranged for June.
- Tenant choice items and engagement being finalised.
- Some footpath closures are required to install and connect drainage – details to be advised.

Planned completion dates:

		183 new homes
Burnmoor Close	July 25	6 houses
Windermere Drive A3 site	July 25	8 flats & 8 houses
Drayton Rd	Oct 25	18 flats & 16 houses
Melfort Drive	Dec 25	21 flats & 41 houses
Windermere Drive – Blocks 11A & 11B	March 26	65 flats
Warren Park	Planned for-Feb 26, but works could extend longer	

All sites started at the same time and the project is currently reporting to be on programme.



5. Lakes Estate Renewal Forum

The next meeting will be held on Monday 3 June, 6.30pm, Spotlight.

6. Zulf Awan, Community Engagement Officer

Information & Policy Tracker: SCSG acknowledged that the outstanding queries on the tracker about Allocations had been addressed during item presented by Lucy Tucker.

Buckinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service: Zulf shared the following statement from Crew Commander O'Sullivan: 'The Service respond to a wide range of operational incidents every day. As a Service we try to provide our Firefighters with the very best opportunities to practice and develop their skills, making our community safer by being better prepared for dealing with incidents.

An important element of training involves carrying out exercises in unfamiliar premises, which prepares our Firefighters and Officers to be able to adapt to changing working environments; enabling them to select the most suitable procedures and equipment to resolve emergencies. Over the coming months, with your permission, staff from Buckinghamshire Fire & Rescue would love the opportunity to use some of the vacant properties in the Serpentine court area for training exercises.

We will only be on site during weekdays (excluding Bank Holidays) and between the hours of 10.00 and 17.00 to minimise any disruption caused by our activities. We will also be giving seven days' notice prior to use so that members of the community can be made aware of our intentions to use the site for training. On behalf of all the crews here in Milton Keynes, thank you to you, the Lakes estate refurbishment forum for working with us, and allowing us to be able to provide the best real-world training to our operational crews.'

SCSG agreed support the initiative.

7. Questions

The question was asked as to the future of the remaining Serpentine Court shops. Zulf confirmed that MKCC had commenced action to end the leases of Happy Shopper, the chicken takeaway and the pharmacy due to the poor condition of the units. LERF will be addressing the issue at its next meeting.

8. Any other business

None.

Date of next meeting: Tuesday 9th July 6.30pm – 7.45pm – via at Spotlight