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Central East Local Housing Forum Highlights Report



10th December 2020



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Asset Management

Due to the second lockdown, the Repairs Service has moved to offering the following service:

- Emergency and urgent repairs
- Void property refurbishments
- Housing adaptations emergency repairs and urgent installations
- Emergency and urgent fire safety works
- External communal inspections
- External communal repairs at a reduced capacity
- External handyperson works
- Customers with repairs, works or claims that are unable to continue are being called and updated.

Asset Management continued

- Communal / Emergency Intelligent Lighting Installations are progressing as follows:

PECKHAM RYE, 145A-D & 147C,NUNHEAD Works in progress

PECKHAM RYE, 147A-B,NUNHEAD Works in progress

PECKHAM RYE 153 A-C Works in progress

PECKHAM RYE 149 A-B Works in progress

PECKHAM RYE 149 C - 151 A-C Works in progress

TAPPESFIELD ROAD – Start date to be confirmed

SASSOON HOUSE, Works in progress

BLACKTHORNE COURT Start date to be confirmed

ADYS ROAD Start date 7.12.20

BLANCH CLOSE Works in progress

PENNACK ROAD Complete

Asset Management continued

- Lift refurbishments at Walkingscroft House and Crane House:
Walkingscroft House: Lift works completed and returned to service.

Crane House: Lift (No.3016) works completed and returned to service with the works to the 2nd Lift (No. 3017) due to be completed and returned to service by the end of November.

Wickway Ct: The lift works (Lift No.3106) are due to commence on 7th January 21

- Works to the underground mains at Brimmington are on site and due to complete in Sept 2021, as are QHIP works on the Acorn Estate. Heating works at North Peckham and Gloucester Groves Estates are due to begin early next year. A number of other QHIP schemes are now in design and looking to start early in the next financial year.
- Consort Estate, surveys and design works are underway to undertake Fire Risk Assessments, installation of LD2 smoke and heat detection systems to properties that have a secondary means of escape. Works will be undertaken ahead of the main QHIP project for Consort estate.

Customer Experience

- All face to face services (Peckham Service Point, Homeowners Service at the Blue and Bournemouth Road), remain closed due to COVID 19 restrictions. This situation will be reviewed following any lifting of lockdown and advice on resuming public services.
- The Contact Centre is presently taking emergency repairs calls only. The service is also running a COVID 19 hotline providing advice and assistance to residents. It is also assisting with the Test, Track and Trace service, calling those who have been identified as coming into contact with someone with COVID 19.
- Registrars service continues to register births and deaths but ceremonies have been suspended due to COVID 19 restrictions. The Coroners service is conducting jury inquests at Tooley Street where safe distancing can take place.
- The Homeowners Service continues to support homeowners and receive RTB applications despite the current closure of the Market Place office.

Communities

The online panel of residents was launched at an inaugural event on 13th October. The panel consists of over 500 residents who have told us that they are willing to participate in discussions with the council around issues they are specifically interested in. The panel is now up and running, with a task and finish group on leaseholder service charge statements its inaugural project.

- The council's new Getting Involved Grants programme (GIG) was re-launched in September 2020. These project-specific grants are for community organisations, aimed at promoting cohesive communities. The council received 20 applications from various groups across the borough, and a total of 17 projects have been awarded funding. The funding awarded covers projects ranging from £450 to £5,000.

For more information contact resident.participation@southwark.gov.uk or visit the council's website at the following link:

<https://www.southwark.gov.uk/housing/housing-getting-involved>

Resident Services

Officers have continued to engage with residents to provide support and assistance where hoarding issues have been identified. In addition to this, officers continue to carry out general tenancy management casework as appropriate.

Bonfire night – officers carried out patrols of our estates on 30/10/2020 - 31/10/2020 and 4/11/2020 - 5/11/2020 and were extra vigilant ensuring that any build-up of bulk refuse and combustible items were removed swiftly by our cleaning colleagues. This was coordinated with Cleaning Contractors, Anti-Social behaviour Team, Fire Brigade and the police.

Weekly estate visual audits have been ongoing to ensure that all communal areas are kept clear and not obstructed in the event of an emergency and residents need to be evacuated. Officers also continue to do their monthly estate inspection independently.

Reports of Antisocial behaviour complaints is still on the increase as previously reported. Reports is mainly regarding neighbour noise nuisance and domestic noise which can be attributed to the fact that more residents are working from home as a result of the pandemic.

Anti-social behaviour and grounds maintenance

Anti-social behaviour

The Anti social behaviour unit continue to manage cases of behaviour including drug use, neighbour disputes and other behaviours that affect communities I partnership with the Police and other agencies. We have also worked closely with vulnerable residents who have required additional support in respect of mental health and well being.

Stats since April 2020 -

12 x premises closure for disorder.

5 x Notices of seeking tenancy possession for most serious behaviours.

2 x Injunctions

1 x Acceptable behaviour contract offered.

Grounds Maintenance

In terms of routine maintenance on housing estates the teams are currently concentrating on leaf removal which should be completed by early December, in addition we are also continuing to deploy grass cutting teams as due to the unseasonably mild weather the grass is continuing to grow on most estates.

Exchequer Services

- There has been some improvement in the COVID-19 related rent arrears position since that reported at AHF in September – and an even bigger improvement in service charge collection among homeowners
- These improvements followed the relaxation of COVID restrictions over the summer, an upturn in the economy and resumption of limited recovery action for unpaid rent and service charges by the Council
- The impacts of the new COVID restrictions from earlier this month are still unknown but are not expected to be positive
- Numbers of tenants claiming Universal Credit continues to rise and the rate of increase has accelerated since October

Exchequer Services continued

We still expect to see overall collection levels for rent and service charges to be significantly down on last year (2019/20)

- Government imposed restrictions mean that no evictions are likely to take place until next year – the Council will only seek to evict those with persistent arrears that pre-dated the pandemic
- We will shortly commence a procurement process for new insurance and garage maintenance contracts. We will be seeking homeowner input into the procurement of the insurance contract.
- We are considering whether to carry out a survey into impacts of COVID pandemic for tenant and homeowner household income, employment and earnings and whether these have affected residents' ability to pay bills. Any survey would take place in the new year and we would welcome residents views on this.