

**ORWELL RESIDENTS GROUP MEETING  
MINUTES**

**Monday 17<sup>th</sup> June 2024 6pm - 8pm  
Crane Hill Lodge**

			<b>Action by</b>
<b>1.0</b>	<b>Attendees</b>	Mary Ager (MA) John Burman (JB) Val George (VG) (TEAMS) Jackie Millar (JM) Maggi Miller (MM) Michelle Lunt (ML) Sarah Parramint (SP)	
	<b>Apologies</b>	Cheryl Greig (CG) John Greig (JG) Mike Warr (MW)  Hopefully there will be three new members joining us at the July meeting.	
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Minutes from last meeting</b>	The minutes of the meeting held on 20 <sup>th</sup> May 2024 were agreed.	
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Repairs survey</b>	<p>SP explained that communication within the repairs process is the area that customers regularly feel dissatisfied with. A “deep dive” was carried out reviewing feedback from the May surveys, formal and informal complaints and in-depth interviews with dissatisfied customers. The following was evident cation:</p> <p><b>The underlying values of customers:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Customers place value on the interaction with the operative attending their home; the way they explain the problem and solution, understanding of customers’ individual needs and circumstances, attitude and respect shown to the customer and their home.</li> <li>• Customers are generally very forgiving and understanding, even the ones who have experienced very poor service and have ongoing complaints. They are still able to see the positives in the service whilst being frustrated by the lack of communication and action.</li> <li>• Although customers know that repairs are carried out by external contractors, they feel their service reflects on Orwell as the landlord.</li> </ul>	

### Issues with the survey questions:

- It is difficult to identify from the current questions, exactly where in the process communication breaks down i.e., with Customer Services, at handover to a contractor or after booking.
- Customers don't necessarily interpret and respond to the questions in the way we may be expecting. For example, the customer can view communication after booking as being solely the responsibility of the operative, not the administrative/planning function.

### Communication within the repairs process:

- Staff (customer services and operatives) are generally given positive feedback. There are the odd occasions when customers are unhappy with individuals, but these are rare.
- A general feeling that when issues are reported, nothing gets done. This could be that we are failing to record jobs and then acknowledge and keep customers updated with progress.
- Failing to keep customers updated with progress.
- There appears to be a lack of communication between departments/contractors about the job details. Materials are not available for the scheduled appointment and operatives/contractors lack knowledge of the scheduled repair.
- Follow up appointments seem to get lost. Its unclear from the research whether these have been recorded and are awaiting an appointment slot or just forgotten. Customers are having to chase to find out rather than being contacted by Orwell. Contractors are then just turning up without prior notice.
- Lack of clarity on occasion about the repair timescales i.e., emergency or urgent.
- There appears to be some miscommunication between contractors saying one thing to the customer and another to Orwell. This leads the customer to expect a service that isn't going to be delivered.
- Last minute cancellation of appointments is frustrating for customers who have taken time off work or waited in all day to be present. There were also examples where customers hadn't been informed that the job had been cancelled.
- Customers can feel communication is affected by the length of time they are having to wait for an appointment. Interestingly, a couple of people said they would be happier if Orwell was honest about repair times and the reasons. However, blaming Covid for ongoing issues is wearing thin with customers.
- Information about vulnerable customers can be lost in the process. An example was given for a vulnerable customer who cannot be present when an

		<p>operative/contractor attends to ensure the safety of both parties. Adequate notice of a gas servicing appointment was not given, resulting in a family member having to re-arrange his schedule to attend.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• External contractors are not informing customers of appointments or giving prior notice of ETAs (N.B. not sure if this is something they do?)</li> <li>• ORS are not always letting customers know about ETAs.</li> <li>• One customer stated that the contractor (Aarons) refused to pay to park in the public car park opposite, instead asking the customer to sit by his van to ensure he didn't get a ticket. The job was 3-4 hours long.</li> <li>• Customers evidenced missed opportunities to carry out work when properties are vacant/void for months on end. Work then has to be done when the customer is resident, causing issues for both the vulnerable customer and any operatives attending.</li> </ul> <p>The ORG were asked for their views on the two survey questions relating to communication and gave the following suggestions for how we could amend the questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How easy was it to book the repair?</li> <li>• From booking until completion of the repair, how satisfied were you with any further contact with the operative/contractor?</li> <li>• How satisfied were you with the attitude, respectfulness and communication shown by the operative/contractor?</li> <li>• What could we have done to improve the repairs service provided? – wording to replace “Review”</li> </ul>	<p><b>ML to discuss at the monthly repairs meetings</b></p>
<p><b>4.0</b></p>	<p><b>Videos for comms</b></p>	<p>The Comms Team have produced a video explaining how to sign up and use the Orwell App. The following feedback was provided on the video by members of the ORG:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The voice isn't clear enough – enunciate more clearly, slowly, and louder. Maybe a female voice would be better as statistically people listen more to a female voice. Some thought it would be better to use a voice they know i.e., Ross for consistency and trust as Customers have been listening to him for over a year. Or a child to suggest its child play?? A choice of male or female voice would be ideal.</li> <li>• Orwell Customer Services number was rushed. Maybe repeat the number? And put the contact details on screen.</li> <li>• Remove the sentence “Contact the Housing Officer” from the end.</li> </ul> <p>How to use the app:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any time the contact numbers are mentioned, these should be shown on screen.</li> </ul>	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Length of time is fine but the demo/voice-over is too quick so the recording will need to be longer.</li> <li>Jumped from rent to repairs too quickly and not enough time to properly review the content.</li> <li>Voice over is too fast.</li> </ul>	
<b>5.0</b>	<b>KPIs</b>	The KPIs for May are not yet available because it's too early in the month. ML reminded the ORG that performance data is available on the website.	
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Voids scrutiny</b>	<p>ML and SP explained the system used to manage voids and demonstrated Filemaker. The information has been transferred onto individual property spreadsheets to record the estimated dates versus completion dates to try to identify where in the process the delays occur.</p> <p>Mary is scheduled to inspect the properties at St Catherine's Court and Davey Place. Maggi has been allocated the property at Drift Court and Val/Mike have been allocated the property at Levington Court. Those attending inspections will be asked to complete an inspection form which will be compared with the Void and Repairs Inspectors version to see whether customers see different things. To bring the void story to life, photographs will also need to be taken.</p>	<b>Maggi and Val/Mike to confirm availability</b>
<b>7.0</b>	<b>Repairs Standard</b>	ML was unable to find a definitive version of the Repairs Standard in time for this meeting so will schedule for a future date.	
<b>8.0</b>	<b>Housing Management scrutiny</b>	<p>It's time to hit the re-set button on the service provided by Housing Officers as they are pulled in all directions and the job has become more complex. Mental health issues and dependency on Orwell is increasing.</p> <p>ML and CT to attend the HM meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> June to find out from Housing Officers what their role involves. We want to know what is taking up their day and what would they like to be doing that they don't currently do due to time/resources.</p> <p>After that we will survey customers to find out their top five priorities from the housing management service.</p> <p>Neighbourhood champions will come on the back of the scrutiny. Clarity will be needed on the role before it is implemented.</p>	
<b>9.0</b>	<b>Any other business</b>	The Consumer Standard Reviews are to be held on 8 <sup>th</sup> and 15 <sup>th</sup> July at 11am in CHL	

		<p>Mary recommended "Silent Earth" by Dave Goulson to the Estate Services team.</p> <p>Everyone passed on their best wishes to Mike for a speedy recovery.</p>	
<b>10.0</b>	<b>Date and venue of next ORG meeting</b>	<p>Monday 29<sup>th</sup> July 2024 6-8pm CHL</p>	
<b>11.0</b>	<b>Date and venue of next CHAT meeting</b>	<p>Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2024 10-12pm CHL</p>	