



**Customer Working Group Meeting
Meeting held on Thursday 19th October 2023 at 6pm
at Knowes Housing Association's Office**

In Attendance:

Members

Audrey McKie
Pamela Gavin-Kwepile

Staff

Amy Sweeney	Corporate Services/Compliance Officer
Graham Burns	Property Officer
Ethan-Craig Adamson	Administrative Assistant

Meeting Topic:

The group met at Knowes Housing Association's office at 6pm on 19th September 2023. This meeting seen the arrival of some new members. The group discussed the Annual Assurance Survey Results and provided some feedback to the question structure and thoughts on the responses. This presented a valuable opportunity for new insight from tenants for future surveys.

Amy began the meeting by making sure that all members were provided with a copy of the previous meetings minutes, a copy of the agenda, a copy of the Annual Assurance Statement and description and a copy of the Annual Assurance Survey results.

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Lynne Spence, Alexis McGhee-Kasravi, Mary Campbell and Ellen Morris.

2. AAS Questions

Q1. *Are you aware that Knowes HA Has an Annual Assurance Statement Published on Its Website*

- A discussion took place, and it was suggested that some people are not interested in the statement, or they may not be fully aware of what the significance of the statement is.
- This led to the members suggesting that the next survey that we do we should consider posting on Facebook. Staff attending the meeting took this on board however, suggested that this could pose some potential challenges as people who do not receive services or are tenants of Knowes would have access to the survey making some of the feedback unreliable.
- A member also suggested that a useful way to boost engagement with the survey would be to list the prize at the start and to utilise phrases such as “Your chance to win!”. This may entice more people to respond to the survey.

Q2. Knowes HA provides adequate information on charter outcomes covering equalities; the customer/landlord relationship; housing quality and maintenance; neighbourhood and community; access to housing and support; getting good value.

- It was recommended by the group that we consider mentioning equalities last or maybe expand on what this includes within the question as people may have different views on what this means to them. It was considered that this then may lead people to respond differently to how they would if they had a fuller picture of what is meant by this.

Q3. Knowes HA Adopts an Equality and Human Rights based approach to its services.

- It was advised that we could look to reword this question so that people can easily identify what is being asked e.g., when you have needed extra support has Knowes HA provided this to you. Staff agreed that this would offer an easier method of understanding for those responding however, it would require further consideration as some people may interpret this differently and answer that they haven't been supported in areas that don't fall under our remit.

Q4. Knowes HA fulfils their duties as a landlord in regard to health and safety.

- The group discussed how tenants may perceive health and safety differently. Although the association may fulfil their duties as a landlord in terms of gas safety, EICRs etc, tenants may have personally experienced a safety issue which has affected their voting on the question even if it isn't necessarily relevant. For example, some tenants have experienced issues with close doors not closing properly and they worry about this. Consider rewording the question.
- Graham explained that unfortunately some people have damaged close doors in the past so that people without keys or fobs can access the close e.g.,

friends. Graham explained that if an issue like this is reported we will aim to fix the door as quickly as possible but unfortunately there is always a risk of it happening again.

Q5. Knowes HA provides me with adequate information on its work, services, performance, and future plans.

- The group agreed that the association should ensure that people are made aware of the website and Facebook as a point of up-to-date information.
- It was noted that the location of the stopcock can be different in each residence and that we should include information on stopcock locations in properties in the next newsletter.
- The group agreed it would be a worthy inclusion to highlight useful numbers in the newsletter and Facebook e.g., coming up to the winter - if you experience a leak out of hours, please contact West Dunbartonshire Council Building Services on 0800 197 1004.

Discussion took place – Group advised that a timetable of capital projects used to be included on website so people were aware when they would be getting a new bathroom or kitchen etc. whereas now, they don't give a timescale.

Graham explained that many projects were pushed back due to Covid-19 and a shortage of materials. He explained that even today we are still feeling the effects of this hence why we didn't want to provide people with timescales that we couldn't meet. However, once the kitchen contract commences, we should be up to speed with outstanding works.

The group did agree that a compromise of adding this information into the newsletter could help both the association and tenants by avoiding uncertainty. We could then outline to tenants who could expect to be included in the project and avoid disappointing calls.

Q6. Knowes HA uses a range of communication methods that accommodate different needs and preferences and ensure accessibility.

- The group discussed communication methods. The group agreed that it was beneficial that Knowes communicates with customers through a range of channels. The group mentioned that it would be useful if the app had more information on it e.g., helpful tips and a list of contact numbers so that tenants would be able to access this easily. The group were advised that staff don't have much involvement with the app however agreed it would be useful to discuss the app further and identify potential access to changing or including information.
- The group were advised that we also have a function on the website to allow the user to change the language to make it more accessible to all that may wish to use it.

Q7. Knowes HA is easy to reach via telephone and email and responds to my requests in a timely manner.

- The group advised the importance of the accessibility of emergency numbers for out of hours repairs.
- A discussion took place regarding the Citizens Advice Bureau. Amy advised that CAB are in Knowes HA's office every Friday however, if tenants wish to book an appointment, they must contact CAB directly.
- Ethan-Craig also advised that CAB are no longer working within the hours that they were before. The group advised that it would be useful to include this information along with the new hours of operation in newsletter and on Facebook and website.
- The group discussed the functions of different departments within the organisation. One member of the group noted that they believed that they should contact their housing officer to report repairs. The member was unaware that they could contact the repairs team directly by phoning the office.
- It was highlighted by the group that people may be confused about the role that each department plays, therefore we should detail in which circumstances you should contact your Housing Officer or the repairs team in our next newsletter.
- It was also highlighted by the group, that the telephone options have changed over the years and people may have memorised the old options which they still select and get passed through to the wrong department. It was suggested that it may be worth while to include in our next newsletter which options should be used for different requirements.

Q8. Knowes HA's Website is Useful, Accessible, and Informative

- The group agreed that the website is useful and informative and the people who selected 'neither agree/nor disagree' may have just reported this due to not having access to a laptop or computer to use the website.

Q9. Knowes HA Provides me with Opportunities to Participate and Provide Feedback

- A discussion took place re the repairs survey. The group advised that they used to receive a survey after every repair which they felt was too much and advised that we would probably get more of a response if we sent them out less frequently. The group advised that they have not received an email version of the survey. Graham advised this would need to be investigated as he was unaware that people were not receiving them.
- The group advised that they believe when people are satisfied with the service that they are receiving they may not feel the need to provide much feedback however if there is an issue there will likely be a higher response.

Q10. Knowes HA Publishes Adequate Information on Complaints and How they Influence Future Service Delivery

- A discussion took place re how complaints information is published. The group were shown the 'you said, we did' section of the newsletter which we have recently incorporated. The group agreed that this is useful.
- The group advised that they feel that Knowes provides a good service and that we do our best to help tenants.
- A discussion took place re how complaints are handled. We explained the importance of having evidence to support a complaint regarding a neighbour otherwise it can be difficult to tackle.
- The group said that they thought it was positive that the organisation had included more information regarding mould and damp for tenants.

Other Discussion

The meeting concluded with a discussion looking for an update regarding the cycling storage. Amy advised that the first part of our application has been successful, and she has arranged a site visit with Cycling Scotland to discuss this further.