

## Tenant Communications and Support Group SQC Report March 2024

### Service Charge/Grounds Maintenance

Back in November 2023, the group decided to investigate grounds maintenance because of the service charge letter and the many tenant comments around grounds maintenance. Information was requested and provided, but missing how the properties were selected in an area. This vital piece of information was requested time and again over two months, but was never received. In light of reigniting tenant suspicions over service charges and because the group will be involved in the Service Improvement Framework working group, we have decided to halt our investigation at this time.

Recommendation: to follow legislation in providing information to tenants

### Alterations Policy

A scoping session was held in January 2024 and it was decided to look at both the policy over six meetings with subgroups looking at procedures and tenant facing communications. The task and finish sessions should start in March 2024.

### Rent Increase Letter

We met with the Rents and Service Charge manager on 15 December 2023 to discuss the contents of the letter to tenants regarding the rent increase. We were told we would receive the final draft of the letter and an explanation of why 7.7% was decided upon. We finally received an email from the Director of Finance on why the 7.7% in February, but we have not received the final draft of the letter.

Recommendation: To ensure meaningful engagement, tenant groups, alongside the Tenant Board Members, should also be involved in the work around the rent review, not just the drafting of the letter. Advising on a letter without context, is futile.

Recommendation: After consultation on letters, tenant groups should receive the final draft with any changes suggested or reasons why changes were not made, in a timely manner.

### Support

A tenant has reported having her gas capped. She rearranged her first annual gas safety appointment in January due to going through chemotherapy. She missed the rearranged appointment in February due to being in hospital having an unscheduled transfusion when she thought she would be available after receiving the scheduled radiotherapy. She arrived home late in the evening to a cold home without hot water for a shower after being violently ill after her treatment. Saffron did respond the next day and uncapped her gas. She was told this shouldn't have happened and that procedures were bypassed/ignored. The No Access Procedure Tenants' Summary as published on the Saffron website was not followed. How does Saffron ensure this does not happen again?

Response from David Hammond Heating Manager:

This was a regrettable incident and I spoke directly with the tenant last week once I was aware of the incident;

We have been working with this policy in place for more than 10 years and I believe this is the first incident where the strict procedures in place didn't work;

To prevent this type of incident occurring again I have re-issued the policy to the team and reiterated the need to follow the risk assessment procedure fully; I have also spoken directly with the team member who was involved;