



Residents Task Force

Estate Inspection Report Queens Cross Neighbourhood

22 February 2017

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1. Introduction

This report outlines the findings and progress of a tenant led inspection carried out by members of our Resident Task Force (RTF) on Wednesday 22nd February in the Queens Cross Neighbourhood. The inspection took place in an area with mainly tenemental housing stock in an area which is in high demand.

Six members of our Resident Task Force (RTF) were in attendance with representation from across three of our four neighbourhoods; three residents were from Queens Cross neighbourhood, one was from Woodside and two were from Dundasvale. Residents were accompanied on the estate inspection by three members of staff: Housing Officer, Technical Officer and Policy & Performance Assistant.

2. Background and Context

Tenant led inspections provide an opportunity for residents to monitor and review services provided by the Association and to hold us to account. The estate inspections also provide a forum for local issues of concern and for issues to be actioned and progress reported back to participants.

Estate inspections are now regularly undertaken by RTF members as part of our resident scrutiny activity. The Scottish Social Housing Charter emphasises the importance of tenants being actively involved in the scrutiny of their landlord's performance and for landlords to more closely understand tenants' priorities and needs and to be held to account by tenants.

The Scottish Social Housing Charter has a specific outcome on estate management. It states;

“Outcome 6: Estate Management, anti-social behaviour, neighbour nuisance and tenancy disputes

Social landlords, working in partnership with other agencies, help to ensure that: Tenants and other customers live in well maintained ***neighbourhoods, where they feel safe.***”

This **outcome** covers a range of actions that social landlords can take on their own and in partnership with others. It covers landlord action to enforce tenancy conditions relating to estate management and neighbour nuisance, to resolve neighbour disputes, and to arrange or provide tenancy support where this is needed. It also covers the role landlords can play in partnership with others to address anti-social behaviour such as noise or refuse pollution by working with the local council.

The main focus of this scrutiny activity was on estate management which addressed residential parking problems, communal repairs issues and some environmental waste concerns. Neighbour nuisance, resolving neighbour disputes, and tenancy support were not assessed.

3. Residents Task Force

Terms of Reference

Terms of Reference have been established for the RTF which states that members are independent of our frontline services and supported in their role by the Association.

Code of Conduct

A Code of Conduct has also been established, setting out rules and expectations for members.

4. Tenant Led Estate Inspections

Tenant led estate inspections involve residents taking part in the review and assessment of the delivery of housing services, estate management and repairs and maintenance service.

Estate inspections typically involve a physical inspection of an area and an assessment of what appears to be working well and what aspects of a service could be improved.

Tenant led estate inspections look at an area's local environment, anti-social behaviour, crime and vandalism and internal communal areas of the properties managed by the Association.

Any issues raised by members are noted and agreed at the end of the inspection.

A follow up report and action plan are then produced and agreed with members.

5. Queens Cross Neighbourhood Inspection

We invited all members of our RTF to attend our sixth tenant led estate inspection of the Queens Cross Neighbourhood and six residents were able to make it on the day.

Date: 22 February 2017

In attendance: Jean McPetrie, Resident Task Force Member
Marie Anderson, Resident Task Force Member
Tommy McKean, Resident Task Force Member
Moira McCafferty, Resident Task Force Member
Anne McCurley, Resident Task Force Member
Rosemary Taggart, Resident Task Force Member
Michelle Carrigan, Housing Officer
Richard McLean, QCHA Technical Officer
Jacqui Mills, QCHA Policy and Performance Assistant

Areas Inspected: External environment of perimeter of 4 Cromwell Street
Internal environment of perimeter of 4 Cromwell Street
External environment of Back court at 4-10 Cromwell Street
Internal environment of 12 Napierhall Street
External environment of 12 Napierhall Street
External environment of 12 Napierhall Place
External environment of 26 Burnbank Terrace
External environment of 230 North Woodside Road
External environment of 23 Burnbank Terrace

External environment of 289A & B Napierhall Street
External Environment of 230 Napierhall Street

Queens Cross neighbourhood has a diverse mix of housing stock from new build to tenemental properties and is a popular choice of locale for residents seeking accommodation with the Association. This neighbourhood accounts for the largest proportion of our housing stock.

A combination of buildings were inspected, which incorporated an inspection of our performance in maintaining and providing a service in terms of secure door entry, stairwells, communal lighting, lifts, communal walls, downpipes, drying areas, landings and other communal areas.

Members were keen to inspect the internal closes at Burnbank Terrace and Napierhall Street. Both the Housing Officer and Technical Officer in attendance were able to answer questions raised by the group in relation to housing and repair issues. They were also able to point out external areas which were the responsibility of Glasgow City Council to address.

Duration of Inspection: 1.5 hours

Findings: A report on issues raised by Resident Task Force members is included as Appendix 1.

Feedback: Members rated the neighbourhood at the end of the inspection. The group were really impressed with how well the area is maintained by the Association and when asked to '**rate the estate**', rated it as **excellent** overall. This exceeds the standard rating options available, highlighting just how well maintained the area is.

6. Scrutiny Findings and Recommendations

What the Resident Task Force liked:

- Having the opportunity to view housing stock in other neighbourhoods and ask housing and technical staff questions about the neighbourhood.
- Members thought it was good that residents were aware of the designated bulk uplift points in their neighbourhood and made use of these.
- Members liked the external and internal environment at Burnbank and Napierhall Street. They particularly liked the seated patio areas in the back courts and felt that these were well designed and maintained by the Association, providing a good communal space for residents to enjoy.
- Members liked the notice boards displaying emergency contact details within the ground floor foyer at Burnbank Street flats and thought this would be useful to have on display within the foyers of all multi storey properties.

Issues of concern and recommendations

A full action plan with issues highlighted by members is attached as Appendix 1 of this report. In summary members were concerned about the following:

- Members raised concern about residential parking at Napiershall Street with only eight parking spaces available. A couple of residents from another estate have been parking their vehicles in the car park – one of the vehicles is permanently parked there as it has a flat tyre and another is taking advantage of a broken bollard allowing them access to a space to park. The Association is aware of the problem and are currently sourcing quotes for replacement bollards.
- The internal walls within the close at 12 Napiershall Street were blackened with dampness. This was in stark contrast to the internal close walls at a similar styled property at Burnbank Terrace where the walls were white. The Technical Officer advised that he would seek solutions to this problem and report back on progress.
- Members highlighted that there was no signage to inform visitors that the stairwell to block A also leads to the entrance for B block. There is no other access route to block B which could cause confusion for visitors. Quotes for signage have been obtained and will be installed.
- The back court ramp at 12 Napiershall Street was covered in moss which was a slip hazard. Members raised this as a concern and the Technical Officer advised that he would arrange for a power wash.
- A resident who was not part of the scrutiny group approached to enquire if the Association has any plans to address the problems with Japanese Knotweed at 26 Burnbank Terrace. This has been fed back to the Head of Asset Management and Technical Services to provide an update on progress.

The full Action Plan is attached as Appendix 1 and provides updates on the issues raised by members during the inspection.

7. Evaluation and Review

Following the neighbourhood inspection, an action plan was drafted and approved by members in attendance. Some of the issues raised have already been addressed and updates provided in the action plan attached. (See Appendix 1)

Members felt that the neighbourhood was maintained to a high standard by both residents and the Association and was a desirable neighbourhood to reside in. However, the main issue of concern for the group was the limited parking and broken bollards at Napiershall Street. Delivery vans are blocking the entrance and exits to the back court and previous attempts by the Association to address this have not been successful.

Overall, members were engaged with staff throughout the inspection and keen to learn about the local neighbourhood and inspect any problem areas within the neighbourhood. They found little fault with the neighbourhood and gave the area an “excellent” rating.

8. Next Steps

This report will be distributed to RTF members who conducted the resident led inspection at Queens Cross for comment.

The report may be used as part of an update on tenant scrutiny activity and will be visible to staff and the Board of Management.

Eight members of RTF will be attending a meeting of the Resident Task Force on Thursday 9 March. Audrey Murphy, QCHA Customer Services Manager and Tracey Wilson, Tenant Participation Manager, North Ayrshire Council will be guest speakers at this meeting. This is in response to members requesting clarification on the role of an Estate Caretaker at recent meetings and also showing an interest in the scrutiny work of North Ayrshire Council at a recent TIS Event.

An evaluation report on the discussion held by RTF and the Customer Services Manager on the Estate Caretaking Service will be devised following March's meeting.

There will be an estate inspection of the Dundasvale neighbourhood on Wednesday 15 March at 10am. A subsequent report and action plan will be drafted and circulated to members for approval.

9. Acknowledgements

We would like to express our gratitude to members of the Resident Task Force who have given their time generously to support our scrutiny activity.

Thank you also to: Housing Officer, Michelle Carrigan and Technical Officer, Richard McLean for their participation.

Resident Led Inspection Progress Report – Queens Cross Neighbourhood

Date and time of Inspection: Wednesday 22 February 2017, 10am

Area Inspected – Cromwell Street, Burnbank Street, Burnbank Terrace, Napiershall Street, Napiershall Place, North Woodside Road

Action No.	Issue Raised	Action	Update/Status –	Timeline and target	Responsible Officer
1.	4 Cromwell Street, Loose slabs at back court on the left hand side of building.	Raise work order to secure the two loose slabs.	Line raised 463329	Complete	Richard McLean, Technical Officer
2.	4 Cromwell Street close, TV cable box open and electric wires exposed.	Seal wiring and secure TV box in the close entrance	TV company contacted to advise repair required. Reported to the TV cabling company but they have advised they do not have the resources to repair this at present. Housing Services will continue to pursue.	In progress	Michelle Carrigan, Housing Officer
3.	4 Cromwell Street, collapsed fence to be reinstated.	Check if line already raised for this and if not raise work order.	Line raised - 463384	Complete	Richard McLean, Technical Officer
4.	4 Cromwell Street, Remove old sticker from window at close	Raise work order for estate caretaker/ handyperson to	Line raised 463333	Complete	Richard McLean, Technical Officer

Appendix 1

	door entrance.	remove sticker			
5.	Members noted there were multiple items for bulk uplift on pavement at back of Cromwell Street	Housing Officer advised that this was the designated area for bulk uplift. Wednesday is the cleansing department's bulk uplift day and these items were in the correct place to be uplifted.	Housing Officer will check that the items have been uplifted next time she is in the area. Housing Officer calling out Thursday am.	Complete	Michelle Carrigan, Housing Officer
6.	Cromwell Street, back court, mattress left out on pavement.	Housing Officer advised that this will be removed by the cleansing department and is likely to have been pre-arranged.	Housing Officer will check that the mattress has been uplifted next time she is in the area. Housing Officer calling out Thursday am.	Complete	Michelle Carrigan, Housing Officer
7.	One member queried whether the Ivy on the wall at the back of 6 Cromwell Street could potentially cause dampness.	Technical Officer advised that the ivy was unlikely to cause any damage to the property.	No action required	Complete	Richard McLean, Technical Officer
8.	Street, moss is covering the fencing along 4 to 10 Cromwell Street.	Raise work order to clear moss from fencing	Removing moss may cause more damage than good. I will get a quote for replacement		Richard McLean, Technical Officer
9.	12 Napiershall Street, moss along the close floor which is a slip hazard for residents	Raise works order to remove moss from close landing.	Line raised 463327	Complete	Richard McLean, Technical Officer

Appendix 1

10.	12 Napiershall Street close entrance, cracks along the floor at door entrance.	Raise work order to restore the flooring.	Line raised 463328	Complete	Richard McLean, Technical Officer
11.	12 Napiershall Street, close requires repainting. Paintwork chipped and walls blackened/ dampness.	Raise work order to repaint close.	Richard will speak to Technical Officer, Steven Ferrie on his return to work 1/3/17 to agree on action. Richard will attend close inspection with Mick Wooder, Technical Officer for Cyclical Maintenance 12 April 2017.	Ongoing	Richard McLean, Technical Officer
12.	12 Napiershall Place; parking issues – only 8 parking spaces available. A resident from another estate is illegally parking their car in a space reserved for residents. A shop owner also advised that he has been given authorisation to park his car in the carpark but cannot park due to this resident.	Housing Officer advised that the matter has been previously reported to police and discussed with solicitor, TC Young but the Association has been advised that if we place letters on the car and this is marked or damaged and the owner complains to police this could result in the staff member/Association facing criminal charges. Further discussions with TC Young ongoing. The Association is currently sourcing	Photo sent to the Police with car parked over yellow lines. They advised that residents should complain at time this occurs. It is not a priority but they will note it and, if possible, send someone to investigate New bollards installed in march 2017 which should prevent illegal parking.	Complete	Michelle Carrigan, Housing Officer

Appendix 1

		replacement bollards			
13.	26 Burnbank Terrace, a resident approached the group to enquire if anything is being done with the over grown bedded area with Japanese Knotweed.	Housing Officer advised that there is a project to address this.	Requested update from John Boyle on progress. Peter O'Brien, Head of Technical Services is working on a project to tidy the garden beds and address any issues with Japanese knotweed as part of cyclical programme.	In progress	Jacqui Mills, Policy & Performance Assistant
14.	230 North Woodside Road, bin area overflowing with litter.	Housing Officer advised that the bin area has recently been cleaned by cleansing but a new metal gate is being sourced to help maintain the bin area. Check if timescale for this.	Housing Officer is pursuing this. Awaiting a quote for metal gate. Discussions ongoing about the best way to proceed.	Ongoing	Michelle Carrigan, Housing Officer
15.	23 Burnbank Terrace – members were impressed with the condition of the close and the notice boards providing emergency contact details. It was suggested that this would be useful at Dundasvale.	Feedback to Communications Manager and Customer/ Housing Services Manager to query if noticeboards can be installed at DVC close entrances.	The Customer Services Manager advised that the reason the numbers are not displayed at Dundasvale and are at Burnbank is that at Dundasvale every customer has a direct line from their homes to the caretaker and a lot of customers also have the office landline phone as well. The site also has an estate caretaker stationed in the reception 24/7 that customers have access to. Burnbank does not have GDX system, the staff are out constantly cleaning	Complete	Jacqui Mills, Policy & Performance Assistant

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			therefore their mobile numbers and the repairs line etc have to be on display where customers can phone and contact them.		
16.	289A & B Napiershall Street – no signage to inform visitors that the stairwell leads to entrance for B block. No other route for access which can cause confusion.	Query if signage can be arranged to advise visitors that the stairs lead to Block A and B.	Reported to Communications Manager for consideration. To be discussed by Communications team at their next meeting for action.	Quotes for signage obtained with view to installing sign. Ongoing	Jacqui Mills, Policy & Performance Assistant
17.	230 Napiershall Street, back court lamp post cover removed and wire cabling exposed.	Report to GCC.	Reported to GCC. Service request 1056078.	Complete	Jacqui Mills, Policy & Performance Assistant
18.	12 Napiershall Street, ramp at back court is slip hazard as covered in moss.	Raise line for power wash.	Line raised.	Complete	Richard McLean, Technical Officer

1. Overall Neighbourhood Rating: All six resident task force members in attendance at the inspection rated the condition of the neighbourhood as **EXCELLENT**.