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| **Empty Homes Deep Dive – Session 2**held on Tuesday 17 September – 10:00am – 12:00pmat Emperor House Board Room |
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| **PRESENT** | **IN ATTENDANCE** |
| Evelyn **(EC)**Angela **(AD)**Diane **(DC)**Stephanie **(SC)**Billy **(BC)**Michelle **(MW)**David **(DW)**Phil **(PH)**John **(JD)**Brenda **(BN)**Doreen **(DR)** | Lewis Walmsley **(LW)** – Customer Engagement LeadZoe Lambert **(ZL)** – Operations Manager (Empty Homes)Gareth Wynn **(GW)** – Repairs & Maintenance Manager - VOIDsMark Robson **(MR)** – Repairs & Maintenance Manager – VOIDsCraig Smith **(CS)** – Repairs & Maintenance Manager - VOIDs |
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| **PARA** |  | **ACTION** |
|  | 1. **Introduction – Empty Homes Deep Dive**
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|  | LW thanked all members for giving up their time to attend the second session of the Empty Homes Deep Dive. LW advised the purpose of today was to review the Lettable Standard as this required renewing. LW explained this was an opportunity for members to tell us how this could be improved. LW also advised we would review the survey which will be enrolled across the Local Housing Teams, ensuring we receive continuous feedback. LW delivered a brief presentation reflecting on the Sessions held across the City in August. This included:* 25+ customers scrutinising ready to let properties against the lettable standard.
* 17 ready to let properties visited, as well as 10 properties where keys were recently returned from a customer.
* One property identified which did not meet lettable standard (LW advised this has since been rectified).

LW provided photos of the good / the bad and also showed members the property conditions in which the empty homes team have to face.LW advised feedback from across the sessions were positive, however there was always ways we could improve and members recommended the following:* Closer links need to be made between Housing and Empty Homes Team. This includes:

Providing incoming customer with full transparency around any outstanding works.The two teams link together to understand the incoming customers circumstances (do they require support with decorating?).* Recycling is paramount – The group need to consider how we can ensure items left in a good condition can be distributed to those in need.
* Lettable Standard needs to be more detailed.
* Need to capture continuous feedback from incoming customers.

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|  | 1. **Exercise 1 – Lettable Standard**
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|  | LW advised the lettable standard has been in situ for some time and required a refresh. LW provided members with several lettable standard examples from other Housing Associations for reference. These can be found on the links below.* + - 1. <https://www.livin.co.uk/media/13442/lettable-standard-14pt-final.pdf>
			2. <https://www.homesplus.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/Lettable-Standard-Homes-Plus.pdf>
			3. <https://www.greatwellhomes.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Visual-Lettable-Standard.pdf>
			4. <https://www.futureshg.co.uk/media/1175/lettable-standard-offer.pdf>
			5. <https://www.cornerstonehousing.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Minimum-Lettable-Standard-jan19website.pdf>

LW requested members took 20 mins to review these documents and discuss changes which could be made which would benefit customers moving forward.After 30 minutes, LW took feedback from the 3 tables. **Table 1 (JD, BN, DR, CS)*** Adding photos would be beneficial, therefore customers can understand the condition in which the property will be let in. Key points only. [1]
* Add information on 28-day retention period. This is where any issues can be reported back to Empty Homes within 28 days of customer moving into property. [2]
* Depending on individual circumstances (such as age / disability) could we look at decorating for customers? [3]
* Could we add that gardens will be free from trip hazards and long grass / weeds will be removed. [4]
* Kitchen / Bathroom tiles to be free from paint. [5]
* Ensure verbiage is simple and easy to understand across the document [6]
* Window keys to be provided (where applicable) [7]
* Window restrictors to be provided on 2 storey buildings (where applicable) [8]

**Table 2 (PH, MW, DW, GW, MR)*** Adding photos would be beneficial (examples of good & bad). [1]
* Add retention period onto the lettable standard [2]
* Make descriptions more informative (electrical sockets etc). [9]
* Add where information of stop tap can be located. [10]
* Information within the lettable standard needs to be clearer. [6]
* Separate section required on cleaning / more detail needed.[11]
* Can the group values be shared within the lettable standard. [12]
* Could a section be added on recycling. [13]

**Table 3 (SC, AD, EC, DC)*** Add photos onto the lettable standard (kitchens / bathrooms) however we need to be mindful of the photos chosen. Do not want pictures of modernised areas as some customers will be waiting for this. [1]
* Gardens / Exteriors – More detail required on this. [4]
* Remove the word ‘essentially’ from under Garden and Exterior. [14]
* Add information on loft insulation within lettable standard. This is now topped up to increase EPC rating. [15]
* Path within garden area (where required) for washing line [16]
* Add a section on outbuildings (single leaf brick – not a liveable space. [17]
* Add a helpful contacts section. Include contact number / email address for Money Matters / Housing Benefits etc [18]
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|  | 1. **Exercise 2 – Continuous Feedback**
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|  | LW explained customers who have recently signed up to a property are sent a survey link to provide feedback on their experience. LW & ZL explained the uptake in the survey is minimal with only a handful of submissions completed every month and because of this, the team are receiving limited information on aspects of the service which can be improved. LW explained there will be a change in process, this will involve the Local Housing Teams contacting the customer and completing the survey with them over the phone, ensuring we receive continuous feedback. LW provided a QR code to members for the purpose of the exercise. LW asked members if they could review the current questions we ask customers and advise if any changes are required. This could include adding new questions to the survey. SC advised as part of the survey, we ask customers to ‘tell us the reason for their score’ as part of a follow-up question. SC explained there is not an option to provide a score. It was agreed to change this to ‘please tell us the reason for your choice’ [19] DR recommended we ask ‘is there anything Gentoo could have done to improve your experience’. Therefore, the group can continually learn what improvements can be made [20] GW recommended we ask ‘if there are any further concerns you would like to raise with us today’ [21]Members felt we should be contacting the customers within the first 28 days, therefore this falls in line with the retention period provided by the Empty Homes Team. [22]LW made relevant changes to survey as discussions were held and explained this would now be passed to Housing Team to action. The link to the survey can be found below:<https://forms.office.com/e/rpt4DpriCs> |  |
|  | **Next Steps** |  |
|  | LW thanked all members for attending and explained further communication would be provided when the lettable standard has been created. This was to ensure all members were happy with the end document.  |  |

**ACTION LOG**

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| **KEY** |  |  |
|  | Action completion overdue |  |
|  | Action ongoing and date not due |  |
|  | Action completed |  |

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| ACTION REF | DETAILS | RESPONSIBILITY | TARGET COMPLETION | STATUS |
| 17.09.24 [1] | Add photos to Lettable Standard on main areas of focus. | Zoe Lambert  | October 2024 | Photos added to lettable standard on the main areas of concern.  |
| 17.09.24 [2] | Add information on 28-day retention period to Lettable Standard. | Zoe Lambert  | October 2024 | Retention period added to lettable standard |
| 17.09.24 [3] | Depending on individual circumstances (such as age / disability) could we look at decorating for customers. | Zoe Lambert | October 2024 | We have added a sentence under the ‘decorative condition’ that this can be completed for those with exceptional circumstances.  |
| 17.09.24 [4] | Add Gardens to be free from trip hazards and long grass / weeds within lettable standard / More detail required round this section.  | Zoe Lambert  | October 2024 | This has been added under section ‘External Garden’ |
| 17.09.24 [5] | Add kitchen / bathroom tiles to be free from paint.  | Zoe Lambert  | October 2024 | This has been added within the lettable standard.  |
| 17.09.24 [6] | Ensure verbiage is simple and easy to understand within lettable standard.  | Zoe Lambert  | October 2024 | We have kept the wording as simple as we possibly can.  |
| 17.09.24 [7] | Add window keys to be provided within lettable standard. | Zoe Lambert  | October 2024 | This has been added within the lettable standard |
| 17.09.24 [8] | Add window restrictors will be present within lettable standard. | Zoe Lambert  | October 2024 | This has been added within the lettable standard |
| 17.09.24 [9] | Make descriptions more informative within lettable standard (electrical sockets etc). | Zoe Lambert  | October 2024 | Detail added to all sections of lettable standard compared to previous version.  |
| 17.09.24 [10] | Add where stop tap information can be located within lettable standard. | Zoe Lambert  | October 2024 | This information is located within a customers handbook, we cannot include this in the lettable standard as will be different in every property.  |
| 17.09.24 [11] | Separate section required on cleaning within lettable standard. | Zoe Lambert  | October 2024 | This has been added within the lettable standard |
| 17.09.24 [12] | Can the groups values be shared within lettable standard. | Zoe Lambert  | October 2024 | These are always subject to change, therefore will not be added to document.  |
| 17.09.24 [13] | Could we add a section on recycling within lettable standard? | Zoe Lambert  | October 2024 | Whilst team are looking at improving our approach, we do not have a process where items can be left in situ, therefore no reference to be made in lettable standard.  |
| 17.09.24 [14] | Remove the word essentially under ‘Garden and Exterior’ | Zoe Lambert  | October 2024 | This has been removed in new lettable standard.  |
| 17.09.24 [15] | Add information within lettable standard regarding loft insulation.  | Zoe Lambert  | October 2024 | This has been added within the lettable standard.  |
| 17.09.24 [16] | Add section on outbuildings (single leaf brick – not a liveable space). | Zoe Lambert  | October 2024 | Reference made to outbuildings in lettable standard.  |
| 17.09.24 [17] | Can we add that paths will be provided in back garden spaces? | Zoe Lambert  | October 2024 | We cannot always guarantee this depending on the type of property being let, therefore won’t be added into lettable standard.  |
| 17.09.24 [18] | Add a helpful contacts section within lettable standard. Include Money Matters / Housing Benefit. | Zoe Lambert  | October 2024 | Money Matters leaflet to be provided to all customers at sign up. It was felt as though adding this into another document would cause duplication.  |
| 17.09.24 [19] | Change wording within new home satisfaction survey. | Zoe Lambert  | October 2024 | New survey has been re-designed taking on all feedback.  |
| 17.09.24 [20] | Add question as per DR recommendation. | Zoe Lambert  | October 2024 | Question added into new survey.  |
| 17.09.24 [21] | Add question as per GW recommendation. | Zoe Lambert  | October 2024 | Question added into new survey.  |
| 17.09.24 [22] | Can we bring contact for the survey in line with retention period. | Zoe Lambert  | October 2024 | All customers contacted within retention period.  |