Performance Information March 2023

1. General

The arrival of new recruits has contributed to a positive atmosphere and we have stopped the hemorrhaging of the staff team. The director and staff get-together has contributed to improved morale. It will take time for in-coming managers to establish themselves and for residents to start noticing the improvement. We still have more recruitment to do, but we are in a better place to tackle the considerable challenges we face.

In the first three months of 2023 the priorities for the senior management team have been to:

- Recruit, as per the January 2023 staffing reconfiguration decision by the Board
- Induct and support new staff
- Work to ensure that Building Safety Act requirements are met
- Accelerate the delivery of major works and manage the consequence of the contractual issue affecting Lawson Phase 2.
- Budget set for 2023/4
- Produce homeowner estimates for 2023/4
- Commence data cleaning, especially with regard to responsive repairs, to give in-coming manager clear sight of the issues that they are managing
- Tackle long-term disrepair and damp cases.

2. Recruitment

Our current focus is on recruiting a Deputy Manager, Project Manager- Major Works and Building Safety and Client Officer.

The jobs we have to advertise are JMB Manager, Office Manager, Resident Engagement and Governance Officer, RSO- Homeownership, Admin Officer (temporarily filled), Estates Cleaner, Repairs Operative and Resident Services Manager (currently there is an acting-up arrangement in place).

3. Building Safety Works

The safety of JMB residents is our highest priority. We need to be undertaking the following activities:

- Maintain a building safety log (Building Safety Officer)

- Comprehensive fire-safety survey of blocks over 18m[1]. Southwark is leading, we are undertaking the homeowner consultation for the surveys (Southwark/ Homeownership Manager)
- Arrange the major works and notify homeowners of recharges when the above reports are received (Property Services Manager/ Homeownership Manager)
- Commission health safety works to the communal electric supply in blocks (JMB Manager/ Property Services Manager)
- Commission emergency lighting replacements in blocks above 18m (JMB Manager/Property Services Manager)
- Consider the extension of emergency lighting to other blocks (Building Safety Officer)
- Accelerate the uptake of smoke alarms and internal electrical tests (Property Services Manager/ Building Safety Officer)
- Provision of carbon monoxide detectors to tenants (Contracts Coordinator)
- Provide fire safety information to new and existing residents, with particular emphasis on blocks above 18m (Resident Services Manager)
- Engage with residents in blocks over 18m about building safety issues (Resident Services Manager/ Resident Directors)
- Create and up-date a comprehensive building safety data base, including the golden-thread of works undertaken (Homeownership Manager/ Building Safety Officer)
- Up-date the JMB's emergency plan (Building Safety Officer)
- Inspect front entrance doors. Blocks above 18m are a priority (Resident Services Officers)
- Monthly inspection of communal fire doors and fire exit routes (Estates Upkeep Manager/ Resident Services Officers)
- Inspection of intake cupboard/ boiler room doors (Estates Upkeep Manager/ Resident Services Officers)
- Ensure maintenance arrangements are in place for fire safety equipment (Building Safety Officer)
- Identify residents who may have difficulty leaving in the case of a fire and ensure that this information is contained within PID boxes for blocks over 18m (Resident Services Officers)
- Complete tasks identified by the Southwark fire risk assessors (Building Safety Officer/ Contracts Coordinator)
- Remove combustible items dumped on our estates (Estates Upkeep Manager)
- Complete Person Centered Risk Assessments for residents who may have difficulty leaving in the case of a fire. This last one is a moral, rather than legal obligation (Resident Services Officers).

Southwark Fire Risk Assessors generate a fire safety task list. The official number of tasks to be tackled are:

[1] Our blocks above 18m are Peveril, Simla, Burwash, Nashe, Symington and Joyce Newman

- Critical -0
- High -11
- Medium- 66
- Low-94

The actual number is lower, but a data up-date exercise needs to be coordinated with Southwark. Also major works issues need to be separately categorised.

4. Mandatory gas checks

Currently there are 27 of 1,049 tenancies for which a gas check has not been done in the past 12 months, which is a mandatory requirement. 98.5% of properties are compliant. 100% has to be the objective. The Resident Services team is contacting residents on their patch to arrange appointments. In addition, with help from our heating consultant, liaison arrangements between the JMB and OCO have been tightened.

5. Major works

The start of year budget was a very ambitious £6.293m at which time we were in a good position to deliver. We will spend £2,053m this year representing 32% of the budget. Good performance is expenditure of 90% plus. However, smooth major works delivery is really hard to achieve, because of the complexity of delivering major works particularly in the current erratic economic construction climate.

Several schemes were successfully delivered including lifts at Simla House, (just completing) and Symington House; door entry scheme to Simla & Burwash House and water tank renewals at three blocks on the Lawson Estate.

Comprehensive external works at Lawson Estate phases two and three and Hamilton Square external works are progressing. Final consultation is ongoing before the tendering of the comprehensive Symington House electrical works and final negotiations regarding conservation issues are being progressed to commence works at Trinity Street, which has been delayed.

The bathroom renewal contract is delayed because the consultant has been slower than we hoped to survey residents' homes. This has impacted the ability to produce a sufficient volume of work to allow the contractor to maintain a continuous, seamless run of work.

We are recovering from the failure of the initial contractor to deliver Lawson phase two works that was a substantial project. Works have now resumed by an alternative contractor and is progressing at pace on site to complete August of this year. This fully committed scheme will be circa £3M in value that will impact the reserves that in addition to the other projects being progressed will produce a rapid dent in the level of reserves in the first half of the new financial year.

A successful outcome to the on-going recruitment for a fixed-term Project Manager will enable the dedicated focus on project site delivery whilst simultaneously allowing the briefing and pre-contract development of further project to allow continued momentum.

The consequence of the delays on delivering major works and an underspend on the staffing budget, resulting from our recruitment and retention problems, is that when our 2022/23 accounts are closed we will have added to our reserves.

6. Planned preventative maintenance/ small project works

At the same time that we have not been able to deliver major works at the rate we hoped, we have planned preventive maintenance/ small project works projects that we can deliver, but are not funded. A well-planned programme will reduce responsive repairs spend, increase safety and improve the visible appearance of our estates.

Examples include[2]:

- Roof top guttering clearance on our blocks up to four stories high, with pitched roofs. A programme happened this year (Estates Services Manager)
- Mapping services on our estates (water, gas, electricity, electricity, foul water), so that we can respond to urgent situations more quickly Building Safety Officer)
- Checking estate, block and individual stop cock arrangements, so we do not have to deal with corroded stopcocks in an emergency .We are going to start checking stop cocks when undertaking repairs in tenants' homes and void works (Responsive Repairs Manager)
- Checking communal roof access, ladders and roof spaces. Access and working arrangements that were designed in the 1930s when blocks were built are no longer deemed to be safe (Responsive Repairs Manager/ Estates Upkeep Manager)
- Clearing and repairing balcony drainage (Responsive Repairs Manager/ Estates Upkeep Manager)
- Starting to tackle trip hazards (Estates Upkeep Manager)
- Delivering TRA initiated works (Estates Upkeep Manager)
- Starting to replace cracked communal glazing (Estates Upkeep Manager)
- Providing estate signage, where we are concerned that a blue-light crew will struggle to find an address (Estates Upkeep Manager)
- Playgrounds/ ball courts- all of our playgrounds are aged and are in poor condition (Estates Upkeep Manager)
- Refuse collection arrangements (Estates Upkeep Manager)

[2] There is a need to upgrade aged communal lighting across much as the JMB. There is a debate about the timeframe that the Government will require housing providers to upgrade to LED lighting. It is proposed to deal with this a major issues issue, because the cost will overwhelm a planned preventative maintained programme

- Investment in machinery to make estate cleaning and gardening more time-efficient (Estates Upkeep Manager)
- CCTV upgrades (Estates Upkeep Manager)
- Communal window cleaning, where the windows are not accessible by our cleaners, Cluny estate and Falmouth road are examples (Estates Upkeep Manager)
- Clearing debris from pigeon netting (Estates Upkeep Manager)
- Notice board upgrades (Estates Upkeep Manager)
- Deliver Greener, Cleaner and Safer funded gardening works (Head gardener)
- Private garden clearance for vulnerable residents (Head Gardener)

The 2023/4 budget proposal is to allocate a start of year reserves release of £100,000. This will not of course allow us to undertake all of the work described above, but it will allow us to start works and prepare for a further reserves released later in the year.

As identified by Finance Subcommittee a much more structured approach to delivering small project works is required

7. Repairs

Kelvin, our new Repair Manager, is focused on strengthening the in-house team and tackling our long-term disrepair problems. We currently have 72 repair cases that require intensive management[3]. The number of damp cases that we are recording has risen steeply, consequent on a project we did with London Metropolitan University and the publicity about the child who died in Rochdale, with the coroner identifying damp as the cause. We have a heavy concentration of damp cases on the Elim estate, consequent on the wall insulation being poor and the incidence of fuel poverty and overcrowding being high. The Responsive Repairs Manager and Resident Services Manager will be meeting regularly to progress these works for these 72 families.

The anticipated end of year spend on legal disrepair cases, largely on solicitors' fees, but also on compensation payments, is £134,954. We are working to manage cases better and reduce this amount, as the money can be better spent doing repairs. The Housing Ombudsman has helpfully stated that tenants cannot refuse entry to us to do repairs when a legal action has been issued. However, we are not yet confident enough to suggest a reduction in this budget; no-win-no-fee solicitors are having a big impact. In addition, the advice from the Housing Ombudsman is to compensate any tenants who experience disrepair, rather than just respond to legal action claims.

When we order repairs, we set a priority time, dependent on the urgency of the repair. Below is the percentage of completed repairs completed within the priority

[3] Our criteria is legal action, leak from one property to another, resident is complicating resolution; cause is difficult to diagnose and damp.

time during the first three quarters of the year (1.4.22-31.12.31). The good performance criterion is 95% plus. Only one of our providers, B&G windows, is currently meeting this performance criterion. Further investigation is required to work out if there is a genuine performance problem or a record keeping issue.

Contractor	Number of repairs	Completed within the priority time
JMB DLO	1,864	81%
GAMs General Builders	226	56%
Grout Electrical	551	86%
B&G windows	279	95%
Drainclear	291	88%
Bridgewater roofing	24	67%[4]

We have been phoning up residents who have had repairs completed this financial year and the feedback is very good.

	No of calls	Satisfaction
Contractors [5]	99	100%
JMB in-house team	118	100%

The greater challenge is to make sure that no jobs get 'lost in the system'. We are doing an end-of-financial year reconciliation of open jobs, not completed within the priority time to identify repairs that may have glitched.

8. Heating

OCO is generally a reliable contractor and their senior management are responsive to resolving problems. The JMB staff involved in repairs administration reported a noticeable spike in contacts from residents dissatisfied with the heating service in February 2023. With a couple of cases of seven/ eight calls being required to resolve a heating problem.

Our consultant has flagged up the problem of inadequate maintenance of communal boiler rooms. In recent weeks, we have had a concentration of heating breakdowns affecting the Kipling estate low-rise blocks. We are working with our consultant and contractor to understand what is happening.

Southwark is moving to residents directly reporting and progress chasing repairs directly with an OCO contact centre. We are considering the same. We add no value to the routine progress checking of whether an engineer is on route. A reduction in calls will allow us to focus on our own repair administration.

Performance information for this financial year is as follows:

[4] The problem maybe that JMB staff could have been quicker at agree quotes. We are checking this

[5] GAMs general builders, Grouts electrical, Bridgewater roofing, B&G windows, APS Drainclear

Task	Inspections/ phone calls	Who	Satisfactory
Servicing	Inspections -131	Consultant	99.3%
Responsive repairs- individual	Inspections -152	Consultant	89.5%
New appliances	Inspections -8	Consultant	87.5%
Communal heating plant room	Inpections-8	Consultant	54%
Responsive repairs	Phone calls -56 Quarter 3 only	Contractor	100%
Right first time		Contractor	90%

9. Tenant satisfaction

Eighty-six tenant conversation visits were undertaken. 70% of tenants said that they were satisfied with the service that the JMB provides. Only 8% said that they were dissatisfied with the service- this is extraordinarily low.

10. Rent collection

The Resident Services team has had a blitz on rent arrears, with vacant patches being covered within the team. The good performance criteria is 100% of rent due collected within the year. We will either achieve this or get very close.

We paid Southwark Law Centre to do outreach work in the JMB office for tenants with complex money advice or welfare rights issues. Most of the residents who benefited would not have found their way through the conventional referral route.

11. Service charge arrears

The total homeowner debt, factoring in major works agreements is £796,419. The Homeownership Manager has stepped across to cover arrears collection on two Resident Services Officers patches that have been vacant. The RSO team is now are full capacity. There has been an emphasis on training existing and new team members. The Homeownership Manager estimates that around £280,000 of these arrears are ‘soft’ and with increased and more informed activity, this amount could be collectable within the first half of the next financial year. Finance Subcommittee has been considering additional support for homeowners facing high bills, in the context of significantly increasing building costs.

12. Resident Services

The immediate priority of John, the acting team manager, has been to stabilise the team and induct two new starters. John’s priority for 2023/24 for Resident Services

Officers is to conduct a Tenant Conversation Visit with all of the secure tenants on their patches.

13. Void performance

Our void turnaround performance has been awful since 2020. The average void turnaround time is 94 days; good performance should be 28 days. As the measure used is the average turnaround times for properties let, the JMB's performance will stay poor for the first quarter of 2023/4 as aged voids are flushed through the system, however the turnaround time for recent voids should dramatically reduce.

We had a dramatic increase in the number of voids, the number of voids tripling in the past the two years. This year's increase has been a consequence of twenty JMB residents moving into Joyce Newman House and other JMB residents benefiting from a move into the homes they vacated. The consequence of a high number of void and a slow turnover is rent loss of £90,000.

A second significant factor is gas and electricity reconnections. Dealing with multiple companies is incredibly frustrating. The council has sourced a company to act as an intermediary, which we hope will make a difference.

Thirdly, there are internal processes especially with regard to repairs turnaround times that we are working to tighten. The challenge to Kelvin is to integrate at least 10 voids into the in-house team's workstream, both to help with void turnaround times and reduce contractor spend.

Fourthly, the Council's Housing Solutions team, who do allocations, has been badly disrupted by Covid and staff turnover. Andy is seeking a meeting with the Housing Solutions Manager to explore how pre-Covid working relationship can be re-established.

14. Telephone service

The new phone system allows analysis of the number of callers and dropped calls. The analysis has highlighted call hot-spots in the office. The Repairs and Resident Services Managers will be working to spread calls more evenly around the staff team and to improve residents experience when phoning the JMB.

15. Equalities

The CV of an excellent candidate for the role of co-opted director is being presented to the Board. If accepted, he will help to make the board membership more representative of the ethnicity profile of our tenants.

Equalities best employment practice will be an element of the directors and managers' away day.

We have had no record of tenants approaching us for support with domestic abuse. Whereas according to the 2020 crime survey 1.6m between 16 and 75 years old experienced domestic abuse. This suggests that there is an under-recognition of the problem within the JMB. The Resident Services team will be receiving training on recognizing and supporting residents experiencing domestic abuse.

16. Director and staff development

There has been an emphasis on training for the Resident Services team, because they are our resident interface. The formal training is:

- CIH[6] – homeownership management
- CIH- hoarding
- CIH- resident engagement
- Mental Health First Aid
- Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance- recognizing and supporting residents facing domestic abuse

Another resident managed housing organisation, Phoenix Community Housing Association has offered us access to their CIH accredited courses, which two directors and two staff members are likely to take advantage.

The Resident Services team and technical officers have received fire safety training. Two directors also joined us. The chair and managers are booked on further fire safety training in April 2023.

A director and manager away day is being planned for May 2023. The content is:

- Roles and responsibilities of directors and senior managers- Anthony Collins solicitors
- Objective setting
- Equalities- best employment practice. Trainer to be identified

17. Estates Upkeep

Cleaning standards are always subjective. Work has been done to produce a more detailed cleaning specification to be used for estate inspections. We have also agreed to score separately the general appearance/ upkeep of an estate and the cleaning standard, as these are two different matters.

The delivery of our deep clean programme in 2022/23 was to an extent frustrated by vacancies, the hosepipe ban and the absorption of the new block, Joyce Newman House, into our cleaning schedule. However, the following deep cleans were delivered:

[6] Chartered Institute of Housing

- Simla and Burwash external clean- at the request of the TRA
- Simla, Burwash and Marklake bin chutes- during the fly crisis
- Falmouth road block
- Simla internal - post major works clean
- Kipling low rise
- Crosby- post major works clean
- Whites –post major works clean.

The Estates Upkeep Manager and Responsive Repairs Manager have been tasked with combining the resources of their teams for a communal balcony drainage cleaning programme in 2023/4.

A weekend cleaning health and safety inspection has been introduced and has meant that we could respond to our hot spots more effectively.

The Estates Services Manager managed the guttering clearance programme and other minor works, within a small budget, in 2022/3.

18. Gardening

We have been awarded a CGS grant to upgrade Meakin estate. This will be JMB managed.

Also, substantial investment for Tyers (run via Southwark) but with cooperation and JMB input through Jillian Houghton (project manager)

Through the BSRA, extra funds for Whites Grounds and Snowsfields, (via CGS funds) this will not involve JMB in the first instance,

CGS money for Kipling estate, managed by Clive Shaw, with our help, when asked for.

Outstanding money to spend on Symington/Falmouth/Lawson, full cooperation with Debbie Walsh on this one.

Wonderful resident involvement on Crosby, Hamilton, and Lockyer (Karen, Anna, and Kathleen) extra funds to be spent on Crosby Row for a food growing space.

There is a drive to turn our machinery electric. So, this year's new machinery budget will be based on that. No more harmful chemicals, we will buy electric strimmers for weed control. We also wish to make our presence less intrusive in terms of noisy, petrol machinery that disrupts people who work from home.

Our plant estate budget will be used to improve the neglected spaces.

17. **Complaints/ members enquiries**

The Housing Ombudsman and Social Housing Regulator are giving effective complaints handling a higher profile.

The JMB is very good at answering complaints and members' enquiries promptly. We need to do more work to ensure that all of our staff team can provide a consistently good quality response.

We also want to improve our tracking of complaints by routing all complaints through our complaints@leathermarketjmb.org.uk email address.

18. **Resident Engagement Strategy**

The focus on the activities above has meant a slow and ad hoc approach to scheduling subcommittee meetings. We will introduce the systematic approach agreed in the January 2023 Board meeting for the financial year 2023/4.

We have not received any TRA feedback on the TRA governance paper presented to the Board in January 2023. Therefore, we are delaying consideration until the May 2023 Board meeting.

19. **General Meeting May 2023**

We are working towards a General Meeting in May 2023. Members have commented that they did not really understand the constitutional changes proposed. They would appreciate the opportunity to debate the changes in the less formal atmosphere of a TRA meeting. Therefore, all TRAs are asked to debate the changes in advance of the General Meeting.

The other comment is that our Annual General Meeting and General Meeting was largely people on the top table talking and a couple of members dominating the discussion. Therefore, we want to organise a town-hall meeting that gives members that chance to raise issues of concern. If we have questions in advance, this will give us chance to provide fuller answers. In addition, it will give members who are intimidated by talking in large meetings the chance to ask questions.

Anthony Collins Solicitors have been commissioned to provide advise on how we structure the meeting.

20. Making better use of technology

The immediate priorities for our Operations Manager are to:

- Introduce hand-helds for the repair team
- Up-date the rent arrears automation
- Load codes for the new repair contracts
- Commission a new server

- Extend on-line payment options

The developmental work planned over the next eighteen months:

- Customer relationship management: this allows contacts with residents to be tracked, minimizing the chance of repair and other service requests going missing
- Electronic document management: this will standardize how documents are stored making them easier to find and changes of staff less disruptive
- Estates working and repair reporting on-line
- Asset and building safety management: capturing all critical information on our IT system.

These initiatives will require the diversion of staff from normal duties to undertake system design and testing and data cleansing and compilation activities. The Operations Manager is working to quantify the short-term consequences for our services.

Footnote: More detailed performance information is contained within the quarterly report to performance subcommittee, which is also distributed.

In addition, a structure chart is included to aid an understanding of staff responsibilities.

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