

High- Rise Living Focus Group

Thursday 19th March 2026

Minutes of Meeting

Attendance:

Residents: TW (Chiltern), DW (Beaver Tower), RW (Longbow), CD (Nicholson House), LP (Nicholson House), BA (Barringtons), LP (Barringtons), KD (Cecil Court), MHW (Grampian), BR (Grampian), MS (Malvern), IW (Chiltern), RS (Blackdown), MR (Cecil Court), CC (Nicholson House)

Staff –

Kevin Hazlewood, Director Property Services - Chair (KH),
Clare Williams, Building Safety Manager (CW),
Sarah Gallagher, Resident Engagement Team Leader (SG),
Sue Rickard, Resident Engagement Assistant - Minutes (SR)

Members are reminded of the Glossary – please highlight any technical words or phrases used that you feel would be helpful to add for the benefit of readers outside the Group.

		Action
1	<u>Welcome and Introductions</u>	
	Attendees were welcomed to the second meeting of the High-Rise Living Focus Group. Members of the group were reminded that their attendance had been recorded and asked for their consent for photographs of the meeting. Kevin Hazlewood chaired today's meeting. Clare Williams introduced her role as Building Safety Manager , outlining responsibilities in relation to high-rise building safety and engagement with the Building Safety Regulator	
2	<u>Apologies</u>	
	No apologies were received.	
3	<u>Declarations of Interest</u>	
	There were no declarations of interest.	
4	<u>Minutes of the Last meeting</u>	
	The minutes from the last meeting were acknowledged as a true record. Draft Terms of Reference The purpose of the Terms of Reference (ToR) was explained, including: ○ Purpose and scope of the group ○ Meeting frequency ○ Chairing arrangements ○ Decision-making and follow-up Residents were advised that the ToR is a working document and requested that they put	

	forward comments and suggestions from their experience, to shape the Group and future meetings. Resident feedback: A Resident Member suggested that the remit of building safety is two-dimensional and requested it be broadened, to reflect the 'living' of the Group name. Following discussion, Residents requested that the ToR be expanded to cover: ○ Quality of life issues in high-rise living (e.g. noise, refuse arrangements, windows, maintenance). A proposal was put forward to increase representation, to be at least one person per block. ○ Proposal accepted to amend wording to "a minimum of one resident per tower block", allowing additional representatives where available. Agreed actions: Draft ToR to be revised to: ○ Broaden scope beyond safety while retaining statutory requirements. ○ Amend resident representation wording. Revised ToR to be re-circulated for feedback and brought back to the next meeting.	CW CW
5	<u>Progress Update – PEEPS</u>	
	The Building Safety Manager provided a verbal update on the landlord's duty to identify residents requiring assistance during evacuation: Door-knocking and letter drops were completed across all high-rise blocks and approximately 70 residents have requested a call-back to date. Fire Safety Manager (Graham Hart) is following up and undertaking the assessments. Individual Person-Centred Fire Risk Assessments (PCFRA) are developed and, if the Resident agrees, shared with Essex County Fire & Rescue Service for them to use in case of emergency. Measures include training, assistive devices (e.g. vibrating pads), and designated places of relative safety. Key points: • Participation is voluntary for residents. • Residents who believe they were missed are encouraged to contact the Fire Safety Manager. • Duty commenced April 2026; officer team confirmed readiness.	
6	<u>Communications and Engagement</u>	
	A discussion was held on how to improve resident engagement and awareness. There was input from around the table with agreement on the importance of the following points: ○ Work is needed to overcome previous 'broken promises' – make sure to complete the actions agreed to. ○ A visible staff presence and weekend engagement is important, so that Residents can put faces to the names. ○ There is a desire for clearer communication and feedback loops. ○ Use of social media platforms.	

	- Information screens on new door entry systems. - The new Voicescape messaging technology (targeted resident communications) was mentioned and the Representative for Malvern commented that the communications via text when both lifts were out recently (18 February) were really helpful. SG informed the Group that following this use of Voicescape for the first time, Resident Engagement had run a survey of Malvern Residents to discover their feedback. There is a Capital Project to replace the Door Entry Systems underway across high-rise blocks. Barringtons has been completed. A couple of Representatives expressed concern that the programme may be cut before it is finished. KH reaffirmed that all 15 high-rise blocks will be completed. Actions: - Increase promotion of resident engagement strategies. - Consider weekend and on-site engagement events (roadshows / meet & greet sessions). - Feedback on engagement methods to be reported back at next meeting.	CW
7	<u>Resident Engagement Strategy</u>	
	The Building Safety and Resident Engagement staff provided an Overview provided of: - Corporate Resident Engagement Strategy. - High-Rise Resident Engagement Strategy (now published). - Block-specific engagement approaches. Strategy focuses on engaging before decisions, and giving due consideration to the comments and concerns of the Residents, not simply informing them of what's to come. Resident feedback: - Strategies welcomed but residents noted limited awareness. - Request for clearer promotion at block level and easier access. Action: - Strategies to be further promoted across high-rise buildings and via digital platforms.	CW
8	<u>Compliance Update – Big Six Plus</u>	
	The Building Safety Manager gave an overview of the regulatory compliance areas known as the 'Big Six': - Fire safety - Asbestos management - Structural safety - Electrical safety - Gas safety	

	○ Water hygiene (including Legionella) Asbestos registers were reported as being up to date. An overview was given of the work to procure to get up-to-date structural and in-depth fire information to contribute to the Building Safety Case Reports. Cecil Court is the first. The on-site element is complete and we await the expert reports. The water supplies to the blocks have regular testing regimes in place for water hygiene. The external wall systems for all the blocks have been assessed and no combustible has ever been fitted to them. Resident feedback: • Report was considered helpful. • Request for: ○ Inclusion of lifts in future reports. ○ More detail on upcoming works. ○ Updates provided on a six-monthly basis. Agreed actions: • Big Six Plus report to be expanded and refined. • Future updates to include lifts and planned works. • Six-monthly reporting agreed, with interim issues raised as needed.	CW
9	<u>Public Consultation</u>	
	The Group was informed of a current government consultation regarding construction product regulation. Because of the closing date for this consultation being too close, there was not time to make a Group response. Residents informed they may submit responses individually. Agreed action • Link to the consultation to be emailed to the group after this meeting.	SG
10	<u>Any other Business</u>	
	Residents raised issues relating to: ○ Fly-tipping delays (identified as a fire risk). ○ Nicholson – communal laundry facilities; capacity and maintenance. ○ Lift misuse and cleanliness. ○ Noise, windows, draughts, and soundproofing. Staff acknowledged concerns and agreed these issues impact resident safety and wellbeing. Actions: • Specific issues to be followed up by relevant service teams. • Fly-tipping response times to be reviewed and reported back.	CW CW

11	<u>Date of next Meeting</u>	
	The next meeting to be held on Thursday 17 th September at 11:00am in Committee Room 1.	SR

Key Outcomes from Meeting (to be completed in meeting)

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