

Castle Rock Edinvar Housing Association (CRE)

Tenant Forum meeting held on Thursday 25 March 2021, using Zoom

Attendees

14 tenants from:

21 Forth Street, East Lothian (x1)
Market Court, East Lothian (x1)
Muirpark Gardens, East Lothian (x1)
Drum Court, Edinburgh (x1)
Shore Road, Edinburgh (x2)
48 Inverleith Row, Edinburgh (x1)
Norton Park, Edinburgh (x1)
Fountain Court, Edinburgh (x1)
Toddrick's Wynd, Edinburgh (x1)
Fortune Place, Edinburgh (x1)
Salisbury View, Mid Lothian (x1)
Crystalmount, Mid Lothian (x1)
Ross Glen Court, Mid Lothian (x1)

CRE Staff

Anna Matthews, Team Leader	Maria Mucha, Service Coordinator
Michelle Swan, Tenancy Advisor	Beverley Bell, Service Coordinator
Robert Beattie, Service Coordinator	Mark Ryan, Service Coordinator

Agenda

- Sound Space with Angeliki Gkini
- Moving out of lockdown and how this affects services
- Stair cleaning and ground maintenance feedback
- Lift maintenance
- Rent increase 2021
- Winter snow and ice contingency plan
- Any other business (AOB) and plans for next meeting

The Sound Space Project

The meeting started with an introduction to our new Community Music Worker Angeliki Gkini who is a music teacher and music therapist.

Sound Space is an exciting new project open to all tenants and abilities. The project offers a chance to join in with musical activities such as learning a new instrument, singing and even just talking about music.

No previous experience in playing an instrument is needed. If you are interested, but don't know what instrument you would like to learn the tutors can also advise.

Currently meetings will be held over the various online platforms such as Zoom, and meetings can be from 45 minutes to an hour of musical engagement.

For more information or to book please contact thesoundspace@placesforpeople.co.uk or 07917492507.

<https://www.castlerockedinvar.co.uk/get-involved/local-news-and-events/>

Information can also be found in the Castle Rockers [podcast episode number 44](#).

Update on services during lockdown

Repairs

We are still only completing emergency repairs only.

The pandemic is being closely monitored and all Scottish Government guidelines will continue to be followed. The current guidelines is that from 26 of April Scotland will move into tier 3.

There could be a return to the routine repairs from this date but this is a proposed date only with no guarantee.

There is a backlog of non-emergency repairs which will be addressed first. We will send out an update nearer the time with information on the various services and the return to staff onsite.

Opening of communal lounges

We are following the Scottish Government guidelines on communal spaces.

The lounges will remain closed for the foreseeable future. There has been no proposed date when these will open again. It is most likely to be one of the very last services to return and when we are in lower tiers.

We understand and recognise how important these facilities are, but the main priority must be the safety of our tenants.

Lift maintenance

Lifts are serviced every two months by the company Classic Lifts and also every six months by Zurich which is our insurance contractor.

There has not been an increase in lift maintenance. This is possibly being noticed more due to an increase in communications and the fact more people are spending time at home and so are noticing the activity.

Essential maintenance

Upgrades to heat and smoke alarms in the amenity developments are currently taking place with some developments already completed. This is to bring properties in line with new legislation.

Existing smoke and heat alarms will still be maintained in the meantime.

Six retirement developments are still due to have their integral fire alarm systems replaced. The new systems are quieter and only sound in the area that the alarm is triggered in.

Anna will enquire if there are any proposed dates for the remaining six developments and the Service Coordinators will update tenants in these developments.

Grounds maintenance and stair cleaning

There are no changes and these services are running as normal.

We have received good feedback about the cleaning that is provided by SCS.

The Spring/Summer schedule will be starting for grounds maintenance. This is provided by Continental and they attend most sites every two weeks in these seasons. Good reviews were received at the meeting about their recent visit. We will pass this on and specifically for Market Court.

Rent increase

Rents for 2021-22 increased by 2%. All the information can be found on our website here:

<https://www.castlerockedinvar.co.uk/get-involved/latest-consultations/>

<https://www.castlerockedinvar.co.uk/about-us/news/2021/rent-review-2021/>

There was a rent consultation prior to the increase that was communicated using email or and the welfare calls. Anyone that did not received the email should let us know and we can check the email address and that your marketing preferences are correct.

Winter snow and ice

After recent periods of bad weather there were a few incidents and the level of gritting has been criticised. A staff working group has been set up and discussions are taking place to improve this going forward. Jennifer and Anna are part of the working group and tenant feedback has been part of the discussion. One example is to increase capacity by bringing in contractors.

A revised policy will be put in place by October 2021 and this will be communicated to tenants. This will include who to contact in an emergency if your area is badly affected by the weather.

Priority for snow and ice clearance is given to retirement and amenity developments, along with CRE offices.

Any other business

Market Court is due to receive new solar panels and some tenants feel an upgrade to their radiators is more of a priority. It was explained the budgeting for this is separate and the priority for the heating upgrades is replacement boilers. Tenants are advised to raise any issues with radiators as an individual repair through the Customer Service Centre. The Service Coordinator will be able to assist with this.

Car park signage was requested for Market Court to prevent misuse of the car park. The Service Coordinator is taking this forward.

It was asked why CRE no longer provide the booklet that gave planned upgrade information for the coming year. Anna confirmed she didn't know but would find out and ask if this is something CRE can do again as many tenants agreed it was a useful document.

The prevalence of scams was highlighted, with one tenant offering to help. Other tenants came forward with various offers in ways they could help others. Tenants are advised to speak to housing staff if they have concerns or to report concerns to the police. Trading Standards can also assist <https://www.tsscot.co.uk/latest-scams/>

CRE Rockers podcasts with Police Scotland are available which discuss avoiding scams. All episodes are interesting and very informative and can be found here <https://castlerockers.libsyn.com/> or also available on most apps and smart devices (Alexa, iTunes, Amazon Music etc)

There was agreement that the forum needed some sort of way to connect tenants who have offered their skills and knowledge with others in need of advice or help. This will be discussed further at the next meeting as this was a positive idea that we all agreed could work well.

There are new customer involvement groups being created across the Places for People Group. There will be a recruitment drive along with more information that will be available soon. Anna will bring more information about this to the next meeting.

If you have any ideas or would like to raise an issue at the next forum meeting you can get in touch with David Grant, Forum Chair by emailing him at **david.grant@btinternet.com**.

You can also contact the team at RetirementHousing@castlerockedinvar.co.uk or call 0131 657 0600, option 3.