

High Rise Living Group (HRLG)

Meeting Minutes



Wednesday 23 April 2025 from 10.30am to 12.30pm.

Hybrid meeting (In-person and online meeting).

Item	Description
1	Introductions and apologies Apologies received from: MS, MM, AT and GS. LA the new Resident Liaison Officer was introduced. Everyone agreed for photos to be taken. Photos will not be published without permission. Minutes and matter arising (actions/recommendation) Minutes of the previous January 2025 agreed with one amendment. SB - on page 5, bill has gone up by £4 per week not as reported from £4 to £7. No matters arising from minutes or actions/recommendations.
2	Update on recycling trials ME - Waste and Recycling have been making 2 changes to recycling. Where possible the change to the mixed recycling is up and running. We've had a good response, we judge success on 2 things, quality and quantity. We hope recycling demand will increase and if so we will add more recycling bins and move a general waste bin away. Quality success is encouragingly good. It needs to be no more than 5-10% non-recyclables tolerance. People inspect it, when we tip it. It can be "rejected" if not good enough and we have not had that happen yet. Kudos to the residents and everyone's participation. It's been a good success and hopefully as time goes on, we can expand that further. The other trial is going to be the communal food waste recycling bins. We are installing next week at six locations. The bins will be installed and we will put out communication about when to start using them. We will deliver rolls of bags and small food bins for inside the property. Hopefully that will be as successful. We have a food waste recycling bin in Hawley Square. Even without direct engagement, it's having a good quality uptake. Approximately 10 -15 residents engaged in the first week and hopefully that will expand further. Bins will have a big sign saying food waste on it. We're doing this to meet legislation. By this time next year as a council we need to offer food waste collections to everyone, so it is part of that scheme and the six locations have been picked as a trial just to see if the methodology of having one central location works. From what we've seen so far, we're fairly confident it will. SB - I'm worried the black bags for dog waste will be put in the food bin, we only have 1 bin and it's not for dog waste but people use it for a dog bin and they might start using the food one. ME - Black bin correct for dog waste, we'll have to trust the food bin will be used correctly.

	MJ - The blocks identified for the food waste recycling trial are Invicta House, Brunswick Court, Turner Court, Royal Crescent, Lancaster Close, Appledore Close. SB - So they would have a trial first on all of those and then when you come to it you get it right. ME - I think the important thing to minute is, we are saying trial. It's not a trial to say yes or no to having food recycling because that needs to happen. It's more a trial of the way we do it. To learn from these 6 locations and if there's things we can change before we go out and buy hundreds of these bins, we've trialled six of them. SB - So you can see the bad points and the good points? ME - Exactly, so the trial is not to see if it will happen, because it will, it's more so to see how to best roll out food waste collection. CP - Concerned about the smell, are they emptied once a week? Are they fully enclosed? ME - Yes they'll be emptied once a week and are fully enclosed nestle bins with a chute function. You don't see the waste and it will reduce the smell. We will also clean where required. SH - Concerned about the food waste bin and heat waves, maggots forming in food waste bins, what will be done? Once a week might be ok but by 2 weeks the smell and maggots and hygiene will not be ok. Maggots and hygiene are what I'm worried about. ME - Large bin housing, with a 360L bin within that. They will be emptied once a week and as long as the collections are regular and the bins being used properly within sealed bags without exposure to air, if it happens then the bins will be cleaned. ME Leaves meeting at 10.53am
3	Refurbishment and Retrofit Programme update ● Building Safety Regulator (application update) ● Site set up and scaffolding ● Resident information event OR - At your last meeting we let you know that we were asked to withdraw the BSR applications for a number of reasons and were preparing to resubmit the application for Harbour Towers. We have now submitted applications for three of the five blocks; Harbour, Trove and Kennedy for BSR to assess. PM - So when are you going to start this, is it this year or next year, 10 years later? It seems to be dragging on and on and on. CP - Unfortunately, we can't do certain work until the BSR gives us approval. PM - You shouldn't have told us in that case until you had gotten the approval, it wouldn't be so upsetting that way. OR - I appreciate that. When we met last time we talked about the possibility of putting up scaffolding and starting to remove the cladding as we do not need BSR approval for this. We are going to go ahead and start putting up scaffolding at Trove and Kennedy from June. PM - What about Harbour Towers? OR - Harbour Towers was originally going to be first, but we need to close the road to get our site set up into Harbour. For this reason we have decided to start at Trove and Kennedy first then move onto Harbour. PM - But you knew that before you started didn't you?

	OR - We knew that but we needed to provide a specific date in order to apply for the permission to close the road. It takes time for the permission to come through. Out of the 5 sites, Harbour Towers is the only one where road closure is needed. Trove and Kennedy don't have that same constraint. So we can start there first. PM - So you're talking next year then? OR - Not for Harbour Towers. Staner Court will start in January as it's the last on the programme. PM - There is a lot of building work going on over there at the moment. OR - The new build site is there at the minute so for us to be working on top of WW Martin would not be good. JB - It's a nightmare living there. OR - We are exploring an alternative point of access, not through the main entrance. JB - People trying to get out in the morning with their children when the workmen are trying to park, and they shouldn't be parking there. OR - I understand the issues, at least there will be no overlap for Staner Court with WW Martin. To summarise, we are moving ahead at Trove Court. Scaffolding will be starting in June, we are going to have an event in May, so anyone can come and talk to us and ask questions. We are working in the background on some information that will go out to residents that will contain FAQ's and updated timelines etc. MJ - We're putting together an information pack for residents that we can distribute to residents at the event on Wednesday the 14th May. When Oscar talks about site setup and scaffolding going up, that's going to have a huge impact on residents. It would be useful to hear from you what information you would want to know? The information pack we create this time for Trove and Kennedy will be adapted for the other blocks. PM - As long as it's safe and we can still park. MJ - PM, I'm interested to hear what do you mean by safe? Is it the scaffolding you want safe? PM - Yes, is it safe and wont be climbable compromising safety? OR - Yes, It's going to be alarmed and checked regularly. Mears are currently working on a door restriction device that will stop anyone being able to open their balcony door. PM - But I have got sliding doors. OR - I have raised that some people have windows that open inwards and sliding balcony doors. Mears are working on a solution. SB - What they did last time is they put a scaffold pole against the window, so you could open it for fresh air, but you couldn't get out. They had problems with the opening of the doors because it was the first time and my door was a wooden door and it opened inwards. The only way they could restrict access was to put a scaffolding pole across it but you could still climb under it. They tried different things but they never worked. OR - It will be more substantial than that this time. The new doors will be locked until the scaffolding has been taken back down. SB - For those not wanting anyone to be able to come in they can lock those doors from the inside, and use the windows for the air to keep it safe from criminals. MJ - Thank you SB, PM you also mentioned parking. PM - Yeah I know it's a nightmare anyway because we only have a small car park, but if the work vehicles are going to park there too, what room is left for the
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	residents? OR - At Harbour Towers the site set up, once in place won't impact the car parking space. We have to crane it in but our intention is to try and use the green area, we'll take up some of the car park to do this. PM - Why can't you use the green area at the back? You did this when you did the work to put the heating in. OR - We will be using that area as well, we need more space than before. We'll be using both areas. At Trove, we will have to close off all parking spaces outside Kennedy House. SB - We have the garage section fenced off for people to park, can this space be used instead and then you wouldn't have to use as much space on the top car park outside Kennedy. OR - The parking spaces in front of Kennedy are for poles and to maintain 3.5 meter distance for KFRS vehicle access around the scaffolding. CP - KFRS will visit and access and adjust the service for when the scaffolding is up. I'm talking to them about the safety aspect of making sure that they can still access the block. SH - Scaffolding Kennedy house, you will have trouble as the windows are all different, in out left and right, some of the installations are confusing and some all open. OR - In terms of variations Mears will survey each flat individually before the works to identify the door/window variations. SH - Okay. Thank you. CP - Working time? When will they start and end each day? OR - Hours of work will be 8am-4pm or 9am-5pm. I will double check and report back on that one. SB - Did you say 8am-4pm? That's when people are coming and going and you will have a problem, it should be 9am-5pm so there is leeway. OR - Understand and will confirm work times. We will avoid peak times of 8-9am and 3-4pm for our own deliveries. SB - Kennedy House a lot of cars park out the front and stay there until 12pm and they double parked as well you will have a lot of trouble there. OR - Residents will still be able to use the car park at the back of Trove. SB - The Waking Watch has moved lorries before and told them not to part there because of the fire brigade so hats off to them. ACTION - MJ to include working start and finish times, scaffolding security, window/balcony door openings in the information booklet for residents. OR - It will take 12-16 weeks to put up the scaffolding on each block. SB - Concerned due to the length of time the work will take and further delayed by cold weather and cladding off the block. OR - Should be September time. CP - Hopefully by the time we've done the scaffolding, we should have an update on the process of the BSR applications and be able to program putting up the new cladding. MJ - What questions would you have about the removal of cladding? SB - Will there be any dust? JB - They have been up for years and must have collected a lot of muck on it, ours has.
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	CP - You may remember we took samples of the cladding. It's not overly dusty because you've still got the original building underneath so it's probably going to be when they actually cut into the render, but that's not that thick. So there will be a little bit, but not loads. SB - I would suggest in a letter, a reminder a week before, or fortnight before, when cladding comes off so we can keep windows shut till after 5 pm. ACTION - LA to include articles in the newsletter to tell residents when cladding is coming down and to keep windows closed during working hours to avoid dust. OR - So overall project duration - scaffolding to finish and scaffolding down - 18 months per block - 6 months of that is just scaffolding going up and back down. OR - Ideally we'd do concrete repairs and install new cladding rather than strip all and then put up cladding. SB - Do it 2 floors at a time. CP - We can't put up the new cladding until BSR approval is received. We can take off but not put new cladding on. SB - Just a reminder from when they take the windows out can they please plug the old holes because i had a flood in my front room for 10 years from upstairs. CP - Yes, we have that action captured on prev mins and actioned. SB - You might get noise complaints. JB - So it will be next year for Staner? Will the building currently underway be finished by the time this starts? OR - I met with the new build team recently and can confirm that the new houses have been correctly set out, in line with the plans. JB - they're really close to the tower block and I know someone on the fire brigade they have said there are concerns from them that they are too close. CP - I'm in regular contact with Kent Fire and Rescue and their building safety team, who are different to the fire crews. I can confirm that that's not what they're feeding back to me. What you have heard is not correct. JB - 2 fire engines came, one waited out on road and one came in, the fire engine hit one of 3 big black poles, and since people have hit them more, it's the lorries at 7:30, cars are still there, cars have been damaged, someone is trying to get out and in and it will get smashed up again. CP - We are looking for an alternative route to access the site. JB - I want to know who put the bin outside my balcony - smell, flies, it means people are walking near my balcony, and people still park along the other side, it's unnerving, thank you for the parking chain but they are still parking on the other side of it. ACTION CP to feedback, the issue with the bin and parking at Staner to the team who are overseeing the new builds. PM - Will the scaffolding affect the cherry trees on the side? Will they be taken down? There were 3 before the last time scaffolding was put up and 1 was taken down. The trees were planned years ago in memory of 3 sisters who lived in the block and current residents may take issue if any more are removed or damaged. OR - Shouldn't need to, we will clarify. ACTION - OR to check to see if the cherry trees at Harbour Towers will be impacted by works. MJ - Are there affected / connected family members to 3 sisters that we can
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	communicate directly to should that be the case? PM - No / don't know. OR - LA, the new Resident Liaison Officer was introduced to the group. She has taken over from Louise.
4	Building Safety Update: Mandatory Occurrence Reporting CP - Thanet District Council is the 'Accountable Person' for building safety. As such we must have a Mandatory Occurrence Reporting (MOR) process. This is a process we must have in place to collect and report a defect or a concern raised that could cause the spread of fire to the building, a structural failure or any other prescribed safety matter. We report defects or concerns that meet a set criteria to the Building Safety Regulator (BSR). These are generally incidents that cause or could cause the spread of fire or a structural collapse For example: If the fire alarm system were to break down and I couldn't get it repaired for a day or so. I would report that because there is no longer a working fire alarm or a partial fire alarm system. When reporting this to the BSR, I have to explain to them what mitigation and what I'm doing to stop the spread of fire or a structural collapse from happening. Within 10 days of reporting the incident we must provide the BSR with a full report, telling them what we've done, what's happening, and keep them updated until that incident is closed. Residents can report safety concerns to us. At the moment residents can use the online building safety enquiry form or email buildingsafety@thanet.gov.uk. We investigate reports to establish if they fall within the criteria and we need to report them to the BSR. as a MOR. SB - Issues with smoke detectors, I have only 1 the other 2 are heat detectors - if there is a fire I've got 2 heat detectors but only one smoke alarm. CP - You'll only have a heat detector in your kitchen because general cooking smoke would constantly set it off. For this reason we don't put smoke detectors in kitchens, instead kitchens have heat detectors. How can we communicate it to residents? CP - We must let the residents know when we have reported an incident to BSR. Do you think using the newsletters to do this is a good idea? We are also considering changing the online enquiry form to enable people to report incidents or concerns to us and set out the process we will follow. Do you have any other ideas? SB - Letter box in the flats for suggestions hand written for complaints - check once a week. CP - We could place a paper collection point for fire safety purposes and there is a risk of vandalism and reports need to be processed quickly not once a week. SB - What about allowing it to be anonymous? CP - We could consider the person reporting to be anonymous, but we may need more information. We can make it clear that we wouldn't name where the reports came from. MJ - So there is currently an online form for residents to raise any concerns that they have. And I think what Claire is suggesting is that we utilize that form and give it more advertising that if residents want to and tell us about concern or anything

	that they've spotted, this is how to do it or they can call us, we suggest using that for fire or structural safety reporting. We can monitor it and receive it faster. We would be able to see what date and time the person reported the matter and we can record what has been done. CP - Criteria for MOR include, product failure, faults in design plans, failure of critical fire safety measure, AOV fire alarm system, dry risers etc. If it's reported and we can fix it straight away, we can and will. We want residents to help us keep them safe by reporting anything they are concerned about to us. SB - There wasn't anything about being anonymous in the newsletter MJ - We could create a QR Code or online form with examples and anonymous would work SB - Yes. MJ - Is the newsletter the best place to give feedback to residents? SB and SH - Yes and provided examples of content. CP - Residents, staff and contractors can report any concern, we will determine if it falls under (MOR) but I want to know either way. MJ - Plain english term for the form may be helpful as mandatory occurrence reporting may be off putting. SB - Any even small concern about safety, including fire or construction safety - use this form, can be anonymous, so we can check it out and fix ACTION - CP and MJ to update website and current Building Safety Enquiry form to enable people to report fire and structural safety concerns. Promote MOR using the monthly newsletters with a short URL and QR code. New lift controls for KFRS CP - We have fitted a new call panel to lifts to assist KFRS fire fighting. This panel is for their sole use and enables them to control the lift in the event of a fire. SB - Give more notice if the lift is going to be out. Got a letter the day after the last time. MJ - Lifts information was in last month's newsletter so plenty of notice this time.
5	Any Other Business: Kent Fire and Rescue Service exercise at Staner Court 3 June CP - KFRS will carry out a practice run in the evening of Tuesday 3 June. Residents will see lots of fire engines arrive. They will use the Waking Watch flat and an actor. They are keen to understand everything in order to keep you safe KFRS will also announce this kind of exercise on social media to let wider residents know it is just an exercise. We want to give residents advanced notice so as not to worry anyone. This may be cancelled if they called out. They will also do a similar exercise at Invicta House. The date for that has not yet been decided. Access to independent advice/information MJ - There are sources of independent advice that we are happy to share with anyone. For example; Housing Quality Networks Resident Network, You can attend webinars, get the latest news and stay up to date with new legislation. The BSR has a residents' panel. You can subscribe to receive HSE's BSR e-bulletins. CP - BSR information is also going up on noticeboards. ACTION - MJ to send links to everyone to consider signing up to HQN Resident Network and HSE's BSR e-bulletins.

	Access to digital equipment to support member MJ - We want to support those who want to access information or the meetings online. To support this we can provide digital equipment. For example a chromebook. Future agenda items MJ - Mobility scooter policy will be discussed at the next meeting. This will impact high rise residents. PM - Charging? CP - Option in there for discussion at the next meeting. MJ - Important to give CP insight from residents point of view it will be invaluable. Other: SB - Is it possible, between Trove Court and Kennedy House, we have recycling bins on one side and on the other there is a concrete triangle. Motorbikes and bikes there, could we move it for plants and flowers? People plant flowers and it's presentable, they put pots in parking spots. Can we help them out so they can put plants there? MJ - This is something to consider once scaffolding comes down. JB - Staner Court on the ground floor, the sign for flat 3-5 is not in the right place. You have to go past the lift door. People get in the lift not realising the flats are on the ground floor. The sign needs to be moved to this side of the door please. ACTION CP - to arrange for a new 'flats 3-5' sign to be put up so that people coming into the building can see it. ACTION - MJ and SH to discuss formally joining the group. MJ thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 12.13pm
	Date of the next meeting - Wednesday 23 July 2025.