

Panel Meeting
23rd January 2025 – 11am
Hollywood & Teams

Present:

Megan McGlinchey, (AHM and Chair)
Jennifer Cuthbert, (CIT Manager and Co-chair)
Joe Galbraith, AHM
Ursula Maye, AHM
Aaron O'Prey, AHM
Natasha Guthrie Dunne, AHM
Andrew Han, Corporate Services Manager
Stewart McClean, Assets Manager
Jonathan Herdman, Assets Manager
Michael McCormick, Assets Manager
Ashleigh Mulgrave, Tenant Engagement
Lesa Kelly, Tenant Engagement
Taylor Long, Communities Officer
Samantha Collins, Business Support
Bobby McConnell, Tenant Board Member
1x Longlands Road
1x Foyle Fold
1x Laurel Hill Gardens
1x White Glen
1x Glenravel Fold
1x Garvaghy
1x Rathain Fold
1x Glentoran House
2x Cromlyn Fold
1x Carrickblacker Fold
2x Spafield Fold
1x Scrabo Fold
1x Lisavon
3x Sherbrook Close
1x Tonic Fold
1x Ballyvarnet Lodge
1x Millbrae Fold
1x Shoreside
1x Mill House
2x Blaris Fold
3x Butterfield Lodge
1x Fruithill Fold

Apologies:

John McLean
Claremont Court
1x Knock Road
1xCantrell
1x Valley Fold
2x Fletcher Lodge

1.	Welcome and Introductions Megan introduced herself as one of the Housing Managers for Independent Living and Chairperson for today's Meeting, Megan explained that everyone should have received in advance of this meeting a copy of the Agenda, the November easy read scorecard, previous minutes and housekeeping guide. This is a public forum, and we would like to remind everyone that we are unable to discuss any personal or staffing issues due to GDPR. If you have a first-time repair that needs to be reported, please call the office or report after the meeting. Megan gave a round of introductions of Radius staff.	
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	Apologies were received and noted.	
2.	Communities	
a	Update on Communities Key Performance Shared on screen the Communities, Assets and Corporate Services Scorecard for November 2024. Voids sitting at 1.09% with our target of 1.6% Radius continue to promote our hard to let schemes through various marketing incentives which include long term void properties within general needs getting a fresh coat of paint and carpeting, redecorations in schemes, hosting opening days, and working closely with local stakeholders that include NIHE and Simon Community to view the properties and see the benefits of living in social housing. Rent Arrears are sitting at 10.28%, our target is 10%. Our rent arrears have increased just slightly over our 10% target to 10.28%. Our Income Management Team and Welfare Advice Team have been working extremely hard to support our tenants with benefit advice during some difficult times to maximise their income and help them reduce their arrears. We would normally see an increase leading up to Christmas in our rent arrears, our income team continue to work hard to meet this target and signpost any individuals who are struggling financially to our Welfare Advice team. Relets are sitting at 40 days, our target is 35 days. This is a joint target with our Assets colleagues to meet our target of reletting properties within 35 days. Communities and Assets work collaboratively to reduce these figures. Transfer Assessments Are sitting at 99.30% and our target is 100%. This is a rolling target and our staff are working hard to ensure transfer assessments are carried out within 21 days to support tenants who have requested a transfer to another Radius property or another Social Housing provider. A member asked why it can take longer for some properties to be relet? Megan explained that there can be many reasons such as difficult to let areas, older properties not as appealing as newer houses just built, major works ongoing that can take longer to redecorate to a liveable standard and that is one of the reasons as to why the void target is over, as previously stated Radius are working closely with a number of stakeholders that include the NIHE, Social Services, Simon Community, third sector organisations to promote the benefits of living in social housing. Stewart McClean Assets Manager reiterated that unfortunately due to the state/condition some of the properties are left in after an individual has moved out, it can take thousands of pounds and a long period of time to bring the property back up to a lettable standard, compared to some properties that are sitting void for a long period of time and a fresh coat of paint etc can make the property more appealing for tenants to move straight into. In normal circumstances Radius	

	would not be in a position to paint and carpet all properties before new tenants move into them. A member asked in regard to the Radius working with stakeholders such as the Simon Community, as landlords how can they determine if individuals are suitable to live in sheltered schemes for over 55's when many have mental health issues and have drug/alcohol dependency. Megan explained that Radius must follow the NIHE Common Selection Scheme when allocating property to individuals on the waiting list. Radius work closely with external stakeholders, for example if someone is looking to move into one of our over 55 schemes it is important that the scheme is suitable as its independent living, in some circumstances Radius can inform the NIHE that an individual is not suitable to move into those schemes. Unfortunately, there may not be stakeholder involvement when an individual is on the NIHE waiting list and Radius as landlords are not aware of other reasons why an individual should not move into a sheltered scheme. Radius Tenant Board Member Bobby McConnell joined the discussion and explained as part of his role as a tenant on the Housing Policy Panel he and other tenants on this panel are working closely to lobby to the NIHE and the DfC in regard to how the Common Selection Scheme is unsuitable and needs radical changes. Megan commented that at times the way the Common Selection Scheme works can put pressure on social housing landlords and Radius are delighted that there is an opportunity for tenants to voice their concerns and as landlords we are regularly encouraging local MLA's and local government lobbying to make changes to the way the scheme works. <i>Tenant Engagement Update</i>	
b.	<i>Tenant Satisfaction Survey</i> Radius will be carrying out a Tenant Satisfaction Survey and have organised a company called Service Insights Ltd to undertake the market research via telephone calls, 10% of tenants will be randomly selected with Service Insights starting to make the calls from January to end of March. Findings from the survey will be gathered into a report and made available to Radius in April. <i>Repairs Service Improvement Group</i> Tenant Engagement will be holding a Service Improvement Group (SIG) on Repairs, starting with an information session on Tuesday 18th February at 11am. Details of this group will be advertised in the upcoming Radius Mail Newsletter and on our social media platforms, if you would like to take part in this (SIG) or for more information, please contact Lesa or Ashleigh. <i>Community Chest</i> The Community Chest Grant will be closing in March. Ashleigh stated that if you know of a group or scheme within a Radius community interested in applying for funding speak to your Scheme Coordinator/Housing Officer or Tenant Engagement.	
c.	<i>Tenant Board Member Update</i> Bobby Mc Connell, Tenant Board Member explained the Housing Policy Panel which he is a member of along with Mary Smith and tenants from NIHE and other Housing Associations will be participating in a meeting with the DfC and NIHE to voice concerns over a number of issues including: The allocation of housing and the suitability of those moving into sheltered properties due to their complex	

	needs, concerns over ascendancy which affects those who are made homeless as the property they are residing in but not the named person on the tenancy and the named person passes away. Bobby also noted that the Radius Board are dealing with construction issues, rents been reviewed and looking at the current service charges. Radius has forgone increasing service charges for a number of years and covered these charges, unfortunately due to the increase in costs of repairs, staffing costs, national insurance contributions, service charges inevitably will have to be increased. Staff will be working closely with the Radius Welfare Advice Team to support tenants who will be impacted.	
3.	Corporate Services	
a.	<i>Update on Complaints Key Performances</i> Andrew Han, Corporate Services Manager reported that Radius has received 119 formal complaints up until end of December 2024. This is slightly lower than from December 2023. 91.3% of complaints received have been responded to with 36% of complaints now been upheld this financial year. Andrew commented saying that contractual issues that include tenants not knowing who the contractors are being sent to their homes can led to a complaint, the length of time it has taken for a repair to be fixed, within the communities department complaints can be from the length of time it takes for someone to be get a housing transfer to anti-social behaviour issues, with care services receiving a low number of complaints in regards to the Call Centre and Connect 24 but thankfully these are very uncommon. The complaints with each teams' learnings are reported to Senior Management regularly to ensure we can learn from our mistakes.	
4.	Assets	
a.	<i>Update on Assets Key Performance</i> Repairs The response repairs team aims to complete 91% of emergency and urgent repairs within target and 90% routine repairs. Emergency (94.33%) with Routine (87.57%) and Urgent repairs just below (91.56%). Inspecting Work Radius aims to post-inspect 10% of repairs at a value of £1000 As of November 2024, 95.89% of repairs over £1000 have been inspected. Safety & Risk The aim is to have Gas Safety Risk Assessment targets sitting at 100%. In the November Scorecard the following: • <i>Gas Safety</i> 99.99% • <i>Fire Risk</i> 98% • <i>Legionella</i> 100% Stewart explained the figure for routine repairs is not at target, this is down to a number of reasons; one example is a routine job to replace a door is logged as a routine job but due to the requirement of particular doors especially fire doors they cannot be manufactured and delivered within the 4 week routine timeframe meaning the job does not be completed and target is not met, another reason for not meeting our target is one of our contractors was underperforming for a period of time, Radius have worked closely with this contractor over a period of months to increase their key performance indicators and thankfully there has been an	

	improvement, when these figures are reported next quarter this figure will be much better, we will continue to monitor the figures ensuring to hold our contractors accountable for the services they deliver to our tenants, the Assets team are continuously working on improving these figures and improve satisfaction for our customers. Another issue identified which has impacted jobs not been completed on time is contractors attending jobs and identifying that extra work is required but not logging the additional jobs that are required to complete the job, the issue does not be identified until the tenant phones the office to ask why the job still hasn't been completed, Radius are continuing to work closely with the contractors to ensure all jobs are logged properly. <i>A member asked if when the tenant portal is ready will there be a function to log repairs?</i> Stewart responded that yes in time this function will be available to allow tenants to log repairs jobs themselves. <i>A member stated at a recent visit to repair a job, the contractor was not one of the known contractors that Radius use.</i> Stewart confirmed that contractors should present ID when attending jobs, wear contractor's logo uniforms, vans should display the Radius Logo as per their contractual obligations. Stewart agreed to follow this up during the monthly contractor meetings but stated that some contractors subcontract jobs out to other contractors if they don't have the availability/resources to complete a job within the timeframe so it can be difficult to monitor this unless tenants make us aware. <i>A member of the group asked what is the lifespan on the boilers?</i> Jonathan Herdman our Planned Maintenance Manager responded that this could differ from manufacturer to manufacture but it's approximately 12-15 years, when boiler servicing takes place yearly this identifies if a boiler is deemed up to standard to be maintained or replaced, this is also identified during the stock conditioning survey which takes place every 5 years.	SMcC
b.	Planned Maintenance Programme update Jonathan updated the group on the planned maintenance programme that has been drafted for the Radius Board, unfortunately we have no update on what has been approved for the upcoming year/s. The Planned Team currently have works ongoing and committed to £17m spend this year on fire & building safety, damp refurbishment, heating upgrades, lift replacements and redecoration programmes. In the last few years there has been a key focus on fire safety and building works, heating replacements and lift replacements, whilst this work is essential, we are seeking an additional £15m from Radius Board to be spent on internal decorations, windows, kitchens, bathrooms etc. This additional spend hasn't been approved yet but if approved will help improve the properties our tenants are living in.	
	Independent Living Breakout Room: Megan McGlinchey, Stewart McClean, Michael McCormick, Lesa Kelly, Samantha Collins, Taylor Long, Bobby McConnell, Foyle, White Glen, Glenravel, Rathain, Cromlyn, Carrickblacker, Spafield, Scrabo, Tonic, Millbrae, Blaris, Fruithill Megan asked if everyone was happy with the minutes from the last meeting? No outstanding actions	

Glenravel Fold Praise was expressed to Radius for sorting a serious leak in a timely manner before Christmas, but advised they were then left with no hot water for several days. SMcC explained that the reason for the delay was that both boilers failed within a week of each other and new boilers had to be ordered from England, agreeing that the time tenants went without hot water was not acceptable. SMcC will visit Glenravel Fold soon to speak to tenants and staff. As a learning the Assets Team are looking into putting measures in place to ensure this doesn't happen again.	SMcC
An activity schedule on what the grounds maintenance contractors are supposed to be carrying out during the summer and winter schedule was to be posted on the scheme noticeboard but hasn't yet been done. SMcC explained that the activity schedule is currently with our marketing colleagues with the aim of it been sent out to our Scheme Coordinators to advertise of the scheme noticeboards within the coming month. SMcC to follow up with Marketing. The member asked if the grounds maintenance contractors for Glenravel Fold could carry out the necessary pruning. SMcC to follow up on this	SMcC SMcC
Spafield Fold Contractors who attend to jobs relating to water/heating vice versa are not turning the water/heating system back on once job is complete. SMcC to speak with plumbing/heating contractors to ensure they are only working on the systems that they are they to fix. A member asked for a copy of the planned works that is due to take place in their scheme. SMcC explained that consultation hasn't taken place yet in regard to this particular scheme, and that Radius are not in a position yet in to inform this scheme what works will be taking place. Lesa advised that when a scheme is selected for Planned Works that the Assets Team work very closely with the Scheme Coordinator to ensure consultation takes place with all tenants and tenants are updated regularly throughout planned works taking place but at present Spafield is not at this stage.	SMcC
A member raised the issue that trees haven't been cut back by the ground's maintenance contractors. Stewart advised tree surgery is on an adhoc basis, expensive and not included within the regular grounds' maintenance contract, a job needs to be logged for this work to be carried out, depending on the price of the job approval is required by the Asset Officer/Manager and depending on the urgency/need for the tree maintenance to be carried out. SMcC will ask the Asset Officer for this area to attend the scheme to inspect if a job needs to be logged.	SMcC
Tonic Fold Would like to thank Radius for a recent job in changing the water tanks with minimum disruption for tenants within the scheme, Stewart to pass this comment onto the Servicing Team who carried out this work.	SMcC
Carrickblacker Fold A member stated that window cleaners are coming first thing in the mornings cleaning the windows when it's dark and aren't doing a great job. SMcC will speak with the contractors urgently to ensure they are attending schemes at a reasonable hour and encouraged tenants to report issues to scheme coordinators or phone the office if these issues arise. Stewart advised Radius will be seeking a new window cleaning contractor once the current contract ends.	SMcC

	Fruithill Fold Would like to pass on our thanks and appreciation to our gardening contractor Trevor and his team that are doing a great job. SMcC said he would be delighted to pass on this information and stated that since the grounds maintenance contracts have moved to smaller contractors for our Sheltered Schemes positive feedback had improved and Radius will be working closely in the coming months to ensure the activity schedule is carried out within schemes before the Spring Summer schedule starts in April time. Foyle Fold Praise was given to the attending contractor who fixed the schemes boiler within 2 hours. White Glen A member asked how they would organise a litter pick. LK advised she would liaise with the Communities Team to organise a litter pick in the Springtime. Coniston Close A member queried who is responsible for the roads in the schemes as there are several potholes and due to the works, that took place in a neighbouring scheme the condition of the road is much worse. SMcC advised it depends if its Radius responsibility or the Roads Service, he will speak to the Asset Officer for the area to find out who is responsible. Scrabo Fold A member raised that when they called to report a leak in their apartment on Christmas night, they weren't sure if they should be contacting a plumber themselves. Stewart advised the member that the responsibility is on Radius to source a tradesperson and not the responsibility of the tenants, in regards to accommodation Radius staff would have been asking the tenant if they had family to stay with overnight due to the link within their apartment, if a tenant hadn't family to stay with then Radius staff would ensure to find suitable accommodation such as the scheme guest room or find a room within a local hotel with costs covered by Radius. .	SMcC LK SMcC
	General Needs Breakout Room Jennifer Cuthbert (Chair), Aaron O'Prey, Jonathan Herdman, Ursula Maye, Joe Galbraith, Natasha Guthrie Dunne, Ashleigh Mulgrave, 1x Mill House, 1x Longlands Road, 1x Laurel Hill Gardens, 1x Garvaghy, 1x Lisavon Court, 1x Ballyvarnet, 2x Butterfield Lodge, 1x Mill House, 1x Shoreside, 1x Glentoran	
	Jennifer Cuthbert welcomed everyone to the breakout room at 31a and asked if there was anything anyone would like to share. Longlands A member of the group had a discussion with Assets Manager Jonathan Herman in regard to the windows and cavity wall insulation. Jonathan Herdman emailed 27/01/2025 Laurel Hill Gardens A discussion took place regarding items in good condition dumped in the driveway of an abandonment property. The items were sent to landfill rather than being donated to a charity or given away for second hand use. Jennifer responded that The Housing and Assets Team will reach out to the Community Investment Team (CIT) for contacts when they find themselves in receipt of items that are in good condition and should be donated to local voluntary / community sector organisations. The CIT can then advise of local contacts and have been asked to	JH

	attend monthly meetings with the Housing Team so these situations can be easily identified in future. Butterfield Lodge Members raised concerns about the cleaning contractors and how the cleaning is not up to standard. Jonathan explained that Radius are currently monitoring these cleaning contractors and working with them closely. Jonathan offered to pass this onto Stewart McClean who manages the cleaning contractors to investigate. Jonathan Herdman emailed 27/01/2025 A discussion took place regarding the removal of fire extinguishers from the building. Jonathan explained that after having received recommendations from Fire Safety First, Fire extinguishers be removed as tenants are not trained to use them. Depending on each building fire strategy, tenants will either evacuate or stay put, but if in doubt get out. Members advised staff that they had not had a fire drill at Butterfield Lodge in a number of months. Aaron O'Prey agreed to follow this up with the Floating Support Officer. Aaron O'Prey emailed 27/01/2025 Ballyvarnet Lodge A member from Ballyvarnet Lodge raised a concern regarding the oncoming storm, and that last year the roof terrace at the scheme was very badly damaged. The member asked what should be done if more damage is done tomorrow? Jonathan advised that if there is any damage done this should be called through to Response Repairs at Radius 0330 123 0888 Mill House Plaster coming off the ground floor wall. Aaron O'Prey has passed this onto the Asset Officer to inspect this to see what the extent of the issue is and what works are required. Bins – overflowing with rubbish, rubbish being put in the wrong bins and contaminated, and fly tipping taking place with abusive behaviour. Aaron explained that he is aware of these issues with bins at Mill House and are working to resolve this Aaron agreed to erect signage and explained it is hard to manage when being abused Front door – the trade button keeps breaking down. AOP passed this onto the Asset Officer to inspect this and follow up as required. Another tenant advised the member from Mill House this morning that someone is sleeping in a caravan in the underground car park. AOP agreed to call with Mill House to inspect this afternoon.	JH AOP AOP AO'P AOP AO'P
	Meeting End	
	Meeting ended at 12:30pm.	