

From: Section20 <section20@originhousing.org.uk>
Sent: 09 October 2024 10:01
To: Elizabeth Hancock [REDACTED] Section20 <section20@originhousing.org.uk>; Kevin C [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Subject: RE: 1-9 Spencer Way Windows

Hi Elizabeth – thank you for your reply.

Your opening comments have been noted and will be raised with the Project Manager delivering the planned window works.

Please see my responses below denoted (CR- highlighted Yellow).

Best Regards

Carolyn Reece
Home Ownership Manager

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From: Elizabeth Hancock [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, October 6, 2024 5:34 PM
To: Section20 <section20@originhousing.org.uk>; Kevin C [REDACTED] Mohammed Tozomul Karim [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Subject: Re: 1-9 Spencer Way Windows

Caution!
EXTERNAL EMAIL - This message has originated from outside of Origin Housing so please proceed with caution. It has come from [REDACTED] If you have any concerns (unknown sender, unusual subject, suspicious link or address or if something just feels wrong) do not click on hyperlinks or open document attachments, and delete the email.

Dear Caroline

I would like to add my observations about this Notice of Intention please.

I agree that the timeline of this is very important, as is good project planning and budgeting. Unfortunately we have had experience of this not happening in this building - most notably when we had roofing works in early 2023.

A job which lasted one day and a further day to inspect ended up with scaffolding up for a full four months, between January and May 2023. This was very inconvenient for us as residents, and the cost of the scaffolding came to around £12,400 - an unnecessary expense, which we were not warned about. It is therefore crucial that the window replacement project includes the following:

- Full consultation of residents as to when this is most convenient to carry out - both the project as a whole, and for each resident's convenience. Please be aware that some of us spend a fair amount of time working from home and/or studying at home, so we would need to fit any works around our working lives. (CR) Before the contractor is mobilised - the planned works team will contact all lessees to confirm programme start dates/ appointments for access to your homes.
- It's absolutely crucial that the project is planned well, and we have a full timeline of what is going to happen when. Also a full budget breakdown before the project is carried out, so we know approximately what it will cost. (CR) Once the tender process is completed; you will receive a further S20 Notice (Notice of Estimates). Which will provide indicative costs for the proposed works and give you an opportunity to comment on the costs.
- Staff at Origin need to be monitoring the work carefully, and ensuring that the contractor is accountable, so that the job is done on time, within budget and to a good quality. Again, this is something that Origin have not done in the past. Both the neighbourhood manager and repairs team need to work closely on this, and with the contractor. (CR) The project manager will closely oversee the delivery of works to ensure contractor performance/standard of works meet the measured targets as required under the terms of the contract.

Appointment of contractor - one of our residents made an enquiry with Warren's Windows, a local firm, a few months ago. I don't know if this is one of the firms you have had a quote from? The type of window frame they gave us information for, Eco Energy plus, looked good - good quality and energy efficient (Note I don't have any personal interest in this company): (CR) I can advise the project manager has received details of your nominated contractor and our procurement team will need to undertake financial health checks/due diligence before inviting Warrens Windows to tender for the works.

<http://www.warrenswindows.co.uk/>

- It is crucial that the new windows are durable and energy efficient - we want them to last many years to come, and help keep down our energy bills. Given the escalating climate crisis, we are going to see more extreme weather in the years to come (both high temperatures and high rainfall), so it is very important that our building is able to withstand these pressures. (CR) The specification of works will take into account the valid concerns you have outlined above – the window replacements will need to meet FENSA requirements. *The FENSA certificate provides proof your window installations comply with Building Regulations and are registered with the Local Council.*

Use of reserve fund - we understand that there is at least £30,000 in the reserve fund. From what we have been told, this reserve fund has never been previously used, since the flats were

built in 2005. So those of us who have lived here for several years (most of the households in this block) have paid thousands of pounds into this reserve fund without any benefit up until now. We therefore need you to confirm how much exactly is in the reserve fund, so hopefully this will cover the full cost of the windows. We certainly don't want to be paying extra service charges, when we have all this money in the reserve fund, and the service charges are so high anyway. (CR) I can advise the projected sinking fund balance as of March 2024 is - £30,485.21.

In the longer term, there needs to be greater transparency and accountability from Origin about repairs and maintenance work. We also need to have a discussion about the use of the reserve fund. We have previously been told this would only be used 25 years after the flats were built - no one consulted us about this policy. (CR) Unsure who advised you of the timeframe relating to the use of the sinking fund. The fund is available to offset costs of major works required to your building with the agreement of all lessees. However.. you also need to forward plan for the life cycle of various building components vs sinking fund collected; to enable good management and use of this reserve.

Please remember, this is **our** money, paid for over many years through our service charges. Our money is effectively paying the wages of the staff at Origin, and any contractors they employ, so we should expect them to do a good job.

We need accountability and a willingness to do a good job from both Origin and the contractor.

With regards

Elizabeth Hancock

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