**Present**: Neil Diddams, chair and WKHA; Mark Breathwick, vice chair and Medway; Brian Horton, SELEP; Dan Stone, Canterbury; Bethany Pepper, KCC; Joshua Arthur and Bal Chattha, Gravesham; Jason Amos, Consultant; Sally O’Sullivan, Thanet; Elspeth Brown, T&CH; Ollie Garsed, Rapport; Helen Miller KHG; Adam Reid, Thanet; Leanne Donald-Whitney, GCHA; Guest Speakers Mia Davis, TCH; Emma Sharman, Kensa;

**Apologies:** Kerry Elliman, WKHA; Dipna Pattni, GSE Energy Hub; Lisa Clarke, Clarion; Neil Sargent, GCHA; Owen Goymer, Clarion; Simon Lees, Ashford; Roy Catling, Folkestone and Hythe; Lucy Breeze, Golding;

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Reference | Notes/Outcome | Who | Action/Decision |
| Building Safety Cases | Mia Davis from Town and Country Housing shared a PowerPoint presentation on building safety case.  Building Safety Bill is still changing, with major changes on 5th April 2022, and it is expected to receive Royal Assent soon.  MD clarified that the scope is buildings of 18m or higher or 6 or more storeys in height only.  T&CH are piloting a tenants newsletter that aims to help residents understand how their home is built in an accessible way to help them understand why elements exist and how they work. They are willing to share this.  MD Fire doors will be inspected as part of the communal area inspections each year in higher risk buildings. They also inspect fire doors as part of their cyclical programme and that highlights those needing repairing or replacing.  MD The organisation itself could be the accountable person now the Bill has been changed. However, the role of building safety manager will still be needed, whether the title is that or another. This work will still be need to be carried out.  OG asked how TCH address the 2-4mm gap between fire doors and frames. Sometimes this can make it difficult for the door to close and many consider that is more important that the door is capable of shutting, even if the gap is a little more than 4mm in some places. MD T&CH and KFRS liaised and came to conclusion the gap must not be more than 8mm, yet with wear and tear, this can need annual adjustments as doors drop, etc.  MD Sometimes you don’t get 100% access so T&CH require a minimum of 10% of flat entrance doors and 100% of communal areas doors.  MD T&CH intend door knocking with the housing management colleagues for high risk blocks the week after the newsletter has gone out to build tenant engagement.  JA He also recommends home visits to help identify any higher risk flats and ensuring the fire door is suitable.  JA Primary authority status is a good way to work closely with the KFRS. | EB  JA | Forward newsletter to HM for circulation  Forward email about primary authority status to HM for circulation |
| Ground Source Heat Pumps | Emma Sharman from Kensa gave a presentation on Ground Source Heat Pumps, originally used for tenants to help them understand the systems. This included videos that we didn’t view at the meeting but can be viewed later.  Heat pumps take the energy/heat from the ground, compress it and use it to heat the home. It is extremely efficient, creating 3 times more heat than the electricity it consumes. Electricity is rapidly being decarbonised and is becoming a very low carbon energy source. Gas prices are rising more sharply than electricity.  The case study follows Gravesham’s plan to replace electric storage heaters from some homes and gas boilers at others, with GSHP. This aims to reduce the running costs from residents and increase thermal comfort. They used thermal stores for the hot water and Emma is happy for members to contact her to ask about these.  JA of GBC posted an invitation to visit the site with him and to contact him to arrange this in the chat function.  The works were done with the residents in situ. Kensa have never needed to decant, it’s much like replacing any other heating system.  Residents are briefed and the contractor aims to reduce disruption. Kensa worked with GBC to arrange a place for storage and welfare provision for contractors.  BP asked for projections on running costs. ES explained that for other projects they’ve seen a significant reduction in costs from both GCH and from storage heaters. These changes will change more as energy prices change.  ES said larger radiators were needed but not massively bigger.  JA could we have data on actual running costs, capital costs and grant funding if possible. Kensa can signpost on funding streams but each organisation would need to apply themselves.  JA GBC got £80K through LAD2 funding. SHDF is more fabric first focused and the project discussed here was heating based so LAD2 was appropriate. SHDF may change with each wave.  ES offered people may call her to discuss what they could offer.  Hot water can be a phase change battery thermal store or an unvented hot water cylinder. The phase change battery use about 1/3 of the size of a conventional water tank. It also removes the need for a discharge pipe and so reduces maintenance.  Ground source heat pumps bore holes can be used for 100 years. There are few moving parts and so reducing the servicing need and making replacements easy.  If you run radiators hotter the system is less efficient but can be used on slightly smaller radiators. Residents don’t necessarily want complicated controls so simple thermostats can be a good measures.  GSHP can be reversed and used to cool homes in the summer.  GBC are looking at specific blocks with outdated heating systems, so old storage heaters or GCH at end of viable life. They are also considering solar PV with batteries to drive the communal electrics. These costs normally reverted to GBC rather than the service charges to residents.  They have ensured that the fabric will be upgraded if needed but much work in that area has been done. |  |  |
| Update from Net Carbon Zero trial subgroup | The group are working with GBC on EnergieSprong and WKHA are working on a potential wave 2 SHDF application. Other organisations are welcome to join this.  Energy efficiency works create savings for the residents, not for the organisation, yet the organisation pays for the works. WKHA may consider whether there may be a comfort charge. |  |  |
| Quick fire issues and matters for next meeting | Voids costs are increasing at WKHA. No trends are clear.  Medway Council have also seen void costs increase for the last two years. They are looking at whether the void spec.  Thanet also seeing costs of voids creeping up and condition of homes being returns being poor. This can be connected with older residents being unwell prior to ending tenancy. It can also be about tenant behaviours.  Unheated homes are more likely to be colder and affected by condensation. | MB | Seek a speaker on voids and costs for June or Sept meeting |
| AOB & topics for next time | JA & BH Endotherm pilot suggests this is a useful project – hope to get a speaker on this.  JA requested we regularly pool ideas on energy efficiency and fuel poverty before the issue becomes worse from October.  Flow temperature analysis of heating systems can also be applied at annual servicing to aim to reduce running costs.  What advice should we be giving around room temperatures? ND aiming to do a cost analysis between 18-21◦C. Public Health England’s research in 2014 [Minimum temperature threshold for homes in winter (publishing.service.gov.uk)](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/776497/Min_temp_threshold_for_homes_in_winter.pdf) suggested a minimum of 18◦C.  The group was aware that some vulnerable people may need to choose between food, heat and rent.  **Topics for June;**  Voids – MBr seeking a speaker  Disrepair – AR from Thanet  Endotherm Pilot project - HM seeking a speaker  Addressing fuel poverty – ZAP?  KHG is running a free virtual Domestic Abuse Awareness virtual event with KCC on 20th June. Email HM to book a place.  Date of next meeting 27th June  The date for the meeting in September may be re-arranged. | HM | Seek a speaker from Endotherm June or Sept meeting |