

Transcript: City of London Repairs & Maintenance, Meet the Contractor Event - Chigwell Construction

25 March 2025, 6pm

Jack Nuttall:

OK. Well then. Good evening, everyone. Thank you very much for joining. First and foremost, apologies for the technical issues we've had with setting this meeting up. A number of people who were registered for this event have since dropped off and likely won't join us due to the delays, we've restarted now at 6:00, I think we'll be happy to run till seven. So apologies for that and I suspect we'll probably do a separate meet the contractor event after this and I think hopefully some more people will join us.

So thank you very much for joining. As I said, this is our meet the contractor event with Chigwell Construction.

So my name is Jack Nuttall. I'm assistant project manager in the city's housing department, and I've led the procurement for this contract. So, I'll just give a quick brief and some housekeeping just to bring everyone up to speed before we carry on. So for the past 18 months, we've been going through necessary process to instruct and procure a new repairs and maintenance contract to replace the existing contract. That is with Wates due to expire on Monday.

So Chigwell performed best in this procurement exercise and have subsequently been awarded with the contract and we've had very positive experiences with them so far with the mobilisation which has been in place since January and we're very glad to be introducing them to you this evening.

So it should be a fairly simple introductory meeting, so we're going to start with some introduction and go around those joining us on the call and have a brief presentation from Chigwell just to introduce himself to you.

And then we're going to have an open discussion for any questions from any of those for you on the call, you'll see that the cameras and microphones have been disabled. That was just to avoid any potential disruption. But when we come to the questions portion, if you have a question, feel free to either raise your virtual hand on the ribbon at the top of the screen or pop something in the chat or the Q&A function and we'll get round to it.

And this meeting is being recorded just for the purposes of sharing those who are unable to attend. So we'll try and reach out to as many of those people as possible

and as said, we're aware that the technical issues that have taken place. So I'm almost there, but so the purpose of this meeting is to get a high level understanding of Chigwell's approach and equally to relay that again what residents want to see from the service and what they should expect. All questions are welcome. We can't directly respond to any questions regarding live repairs on this call.

The best port of call for that is to go to our repairs desk or we put in their details in the chat in a moment to refer to.

But without any further ado, firstly I'll introduce you to Bev if you want to take it away.

Beverley Andrews 3:10

Thanks, Jack. Good evening, everybody. My name is Bev Andrews and I'm the head of repairs and maintenance at the City. I joined the City about six months ago now back in September and quite a lot of my time actually has been spent procuring this new contract alongside Jack and then mobilising the contract from January.

With Chigwell and just to reiterate what Jack has said, I think it's been a really positive experience so far working with Chigwell.

The mobilisation has gone really well and we're in a really good place for Tuesday when the contract starts.

Before I hand over to Chigwell to introduce themselves and to do their presentation, I just really wanted to acknowledge the feedback that we've received from residents about the repairs service and your experiences with the repairs service particularly, you know, over probably what is quite a long period of time now. And I do acknowledge the fact that some of those experiences have not been overly positive. And I do want to say that this is something we do plan to address through this new contract.

Just very briefly to touch on some of the improvements that we are looking to implement.

Particularly fewer delays and more repairs completed on time. We've streamlined our repairs priorities and we've set some realistic time scales so that we can actually deliver what we say we're going to deliver.

We think they should also reduce the need for cancelling and rescheduling appointments and so we have our operatives attending appointments as agreed with you and as planned, we think we'll have some improved communications between ourselves and Chigwell and with residents. I think importantly Chigwell are going to be co-locating with us at the Barbican Estate Office. So we're all working together as one team that should really help with quicker decisions, just better communication all

rounds and quicker problem solving.

We expect more repairs to be fixed on the 1st appointment and with fewer repeat visits.

Chigwell will be directly arranging and confirming appointments with residents, really, to ensure that we get the right trade with the right skill set out on that first attendance and with the right amount of time allocated for the appointment. And finally improved quality standards so both City of London and Chigwell we will be doing a percentage of quality inspection across a broad range of our to ensure that standards are met and that repairs are actually fully completed.

And just finally, we're also introducing quite a comprehensive range of performance metrics, more than we've had previously and so that should help us to ensure that all the different aspects of the service are being delivered as we would expect them to be. So, without further ado, I'm going to hand over to Chigwell to introduce themselves.

James, do you want to take it first?

James Davies 6:23

Yep. So my name is James Davies. I'm the contract manager for both Barbican and HRA.

Tom Walker 6:31

I'm Tom, I'm an assistant contracts manager alongside James over both projects.

James Davies 6:41

Yeah, it's a short presentation. I'm not going to bore people with death by PowerPoint, but it's just to give a slight overview of who we are as a contractor and what the services we will be providing to you. So as they've said, we have a dedicated on site team that is co-located in the Barbican Estate Office and is down by the contact centre. This means that we will be on site at hand to deal with any problems that come in and quickly and efficiently, so myself and we have two contract administrators who will be phoning the customers to book an appointment to deal with queries etcetera, Jack.

So who is Chigwell? Firstly, we're a family run business, and we pride ourselves on delivering high standards, competitive prices and most of all great customer service. Predominantly, we are a repairs and maintenance contractor, but we do have other services that we provide out and we pride ourselves on having our own teams and

not using subcontractors. We prefer to give a fix all service.

What we pride ourselves in is long partnerships and as I say, we have a number of contracts where we have what we call long term clients. So Shepherds Bush Housing 14 years, Wenlock Barn 10 years and we're in our second term with Mount Green Housing Association and we then we do have other clients that we have not one contract but after they've on boarded another contractor we've then gone back in again to do it.

The great thing about long term contracts is that we build relationships not only with our clients so with a customer base and it becomes a very much a resident led service and that's sort of familiarity of having a contractor consistently delivers for their clients.

So the interesting thing is, is we understand that, you know, Golden Lane, historic listed Grade 2 building. Myself, I've been on the contract now for six weeks familiarising myself with what this entails, and we've been working with the incumbent contractor to ensure that we know the materials that have been used. We've been sort of working with the City of London to understand the supply chains we need, the labour resource we need and making sure that all our teams, when we start on the 1st of April are aware of the restrictions of working and legislation of working on a Grade 2 listed heritage site.

Yeah. So, what we'll do for you. So, as I said, we don't use a subcontractors. Basically, we use our own in-house teams. We think this provides a much more tailored service. Also, we have much more control we can use core trades to deliver the service we want them to deliver.

We will also have a handyman person sorting out the whatever is that is required that person for the vulnerable customer.

In addition, where we get high volumes of work, we have also other contracts based in London. So, we can pull in resources as and when and we also have a subcontractor base for like specialist items, which we won't cover necessarily. We have dedicated supervision on sites and, we have a 24/7 365-day service call out service that's sitting outside of the core hours.

As I said, we have a dedicated team that will contact you to book appointments that will be on the phone as needed. We will provide you with appointment dates, first point of contact and will be guided by your preference of communication for reminders of those appointments.

We pride ourselves on first time so we try to ensure that we do the job first visit. If it can't be done at first visit, we will then tell you why we can't do it first visit and then we'll book that appointment in at your convenience to undertake that repair to complete it.

So again, we pride ourselves on I'm listening to what the customer wants and what the client wants and then delivering a service that we can ensure that it gives a high satisfactory standard.

All our staff, are inducted for specifically the City of London.

You'll know our staff because we're branded. Vehicles are all branded. Our staff will wear uniforms. We have a code of conduct and also they will have an ID badge.

So please, if they don't provide an ID, do not let that operative in because they will not work for Chigwell.

As I said, we have a contractor's code of conduct and also we will abide by the City of London's code of conduct and we will constantly remind our operatives of this behaviour. So please, if you see any of our operatives doing things they shouldn't be doing, we're happy to listen and happy to take them to task.

But I'll assure you that won't be the case, Jack.

Sorry, well as I said, one of our areas is we will do daily quality inspections. We normally sort of attend when they're undertaking work. So, they will ensure that they are carrying out work in in the correct and safe manner, they're wearing the correct PPE and they're doing work to the quality standard we expect them to do.

So you'll see supervisors showing up at your homes ad hoc.

We don't have the operatives when that's going to happen because we'd like to keep them on their toes so that we can deal with any issues. We have a training matrix that we're constantly updating all our contractors off to, sorry. So that would be anything from health and safety to asbestos awareness, working at height and any other thing that building legislation throws us. There is nothing that we don't encompass inside of the maintenance contract so.

If we can't it, we'll know someone who can. So we give a 100% tailored service.

So part of our social value commitment to the HRA and to this contract will be looking at apprentices schemes and we'll be looking for local apprentices.

We will look for also a workplace in the office, so not just out with the trades, but to give experience working back office.

I said work placements, traineeships, New recruitment on TUPE.

And we will host an event normally, within the first three months of go live that sits with our RLO and I basically take guidance from when they say the events are going to happen, but we look to do an event on estates. Our challenge will be there's 13 estates. So, we have to find somewhere collectively where residents can access that. We also do volunteering hours, so we will look at we can provide services and we will take guidance again from residents and City of London where it may be, we need to paint the a great area of fencing or an area that needs sprucing up and we will donate 8 hours so a day a year for staff to help out on these dates, and we can donate resources and equipment where required.

And that's it. Very short, and as I said, we let our service do the talking.

Jack Nuttall 15:53

Thank you very much, James. So now happy to open up to any questions I think has something put in the chat.

Yeah. So I think there's a couple of things in the chat. If anyone wants to pop their hand up, I can allow them to unmute and ask. So go ahead if you want that. Otherwise, I'll go to the chat.

So again, and so I should know, so apologies for any of those who joined midway through that call.

As I said, we had some technical issues and so we'll be sharing copies of the slides and this meeting recording publicly at the earliest possible opportunity. That was a question about getting a copy of the slides. So, we'll make sure that everything is made publicly available. After this, I can see it's Mercy that has their hand raised. I'll just bring you in Mercy. You should be able to unmute Mercy. Hope that's correct.

Mercy 16:57

Thank you. Can you hear me OK?

Jack Nuttall 16:58

Yep, loud and clear.

James Davies 16:59

Yeah. Pleasure to meet you Mercy.

Mercy 17:00

Amazing. Lovely to meet you. Thank you for the presentation. That was fantastic. I am a local counsellor. As is Anne. Who is on the call. And also Dawn and Gabby, actually, who's on the call. I just wanted to say we're really, really excited that you're coming. The community on Golden Lane and the Barbican is so engaged as I'm sure you've been told. So, it's really exciting that you're starting. I just wondered if I could ask about, inevitably, with the number of repairs you'll be doing, there might be a few residents who aren't satisfied, or maybe have some queries or follow up. What is the process for them getting back to you to say you've come in? I'm not completely satisfied with this repair. I want to want to talk to you about it. What is that process?

James Davies 17:46

So initially they would contact us as we co-locate, they can contact the repair service or they can contact us directly, either text, e-mail, phone.

Where a customer is unhappy about the repair either myself or Tom will be in attendance, so we will contact that customer. We will go and understand what the issue is and then we will put measures in place to rectify that and then we will ensure at the end of that that the customer is 100% satisfied with the rectification works.

Mercy 18:20

Fantastic. Thank you. And is there any what, how do you assess that the resident is happy with the repair you've done. Do you have a formal process for that or is it something you look at the end of a specific period?

James Davies 18:33

So there is a customer satisfaction, and I think that's driven by the City of London. So, I'll let Beverly sort of explain that one.

Beverley Andrews 18:41

Yeah. Thank you. Yeah. So basically, when a repair is completed, that should trigger a satisfaction survey to be issued.

Which I think will double check should come out through a text message. I think it can be received by e-mail as well. So that one is really around the repair that's been done, not so much to do with the services as a whole but for that last repair and it will ask some key questions to ask for satisfaction. And then we received those results back, we review them and obviously anything that's scored less than what we would expect you know we use that for feedback, trying to understand why somebody's not

happy, you know, does it need a call back is, is it something else to do with you know, the behaviour of the operative that we need to follow up on. So that is the method for the individual repairs. And then separately to that we do a broader satisfaction survey separately which looks a little bit more as of the service of the whole.

Mercy 19:45

Fantastic. Thank you very much. That's brilliant.

James Davies 19:48

And just to add to that, we are committed to meet and visit 100% every dissatisfied customer or complaint. So, they'll be a tailored on-site member of staff will come and deal personally with that meet with the customer and listen to what the dissatisfaction was so that we can understand how to put it right.

Mercy 20:13

Amazing. Thank you.

Jack Nuttall 20:20

I've got a question from Terry in the chat here saying I'm not sure if this comes under your department, but are there any plans to replace the windows on the York Way estate as the double glazing has blown? Bev, I don't know if that's one is potentially for you.

Beverley Andrews 20:39

Yes. I don't know that it's part of this contract. I think this falls more into our major work realm. I will double check that though, so if I can just take that one away.

James Davies 20:52

Yeah. So our remit would undertake ad hoc repairs on windows, not sort of full component replacements. But we would report back to the City of London, where windows were beyond economical repair. Or they were in such a state that whatever repair we did, we felt we could not do that sufficiently to fix the problem.

Jack Nuttall 21:19

So I don't know, Terry, if you had anything further to say on that, feel free to raise your hand. If you did, I'll give you a second if you wanted to come in on that. Otherwise we will go to Dawn. I'll just allow your microphone. There you go. When you're ready, Dawn. Dawn, are you able to unmute?

Dawn 21:46

Hi, James. Tom. Nice to meet you. I'm a counsellor. But I'm also a resident of Golden Lane Estate, so I've been on the back end of poor repairs for a long time, so just what I've picked up sounds like a breath of fresh air. Mine's a really easy question for now. But you said that residents can have a report through the for the repairs contact details or via you directly. Have we had that information sent out to residents or is that going to come? How will that be advertised so that everyone knows.

James Davies 22:21

Yeah, the reporting for the initial repair will be through the City of London's repairs desk. Once we make contact with you, then that's when you can engage back with us regarding that repair. So if you have any queries regarding the repair that's been raised by the City of London, we will then deal directly with yourselves.

Dawn 22:43

Yes. So just cut that layer out. That's great. OK.

Tom Walker 22:46

I'd be aiming as well to try and come out the best I can the first few weeks at least to come and visit and have a another looks over stuff if I need to.

Jack Nuttall 23:03

Bev did you want to jump in?

Beverley Andrews 23:05

Yeah, just probably to reiterate what, what James has said. So, yeah, so initial repair reporting is still through the usual channel by telephone or by e-mail to our repair service desk on the City of London contact details, as I say at that point we will log the repair. So, we will take the details of that. But I think the key changes at the outset is that we will hand so will pass that job to Chigwell. It will be Chigwell then contacting the resident, we're setting a target to within two working days to make that first appointment and we think that will really help to get that first appointment right with the right person going out, the right skill set, the right time allocated to that first appointment.

And really, it's in Chigwell's hands at that point so once they've, you know, received that job, they will take over the management of that.

There will be some interactions inevitably between ourselves and Chigwell. There might be some, some things that might need approval or they may need to ask our

advice, and this is where the co-location I think will really come into force because it will really help speed up that kind of communication. And I think just to reiterate on the last point about if someone was unhappy with the quality of the work, as I say, that can be reported through both channels. So to our service desk, you can log it in that way, in which case we'll generate a quality inspection to be undertaken or you could make initial contact with Chigwell.

But either way, we would make sure that that's registered in our system and we do the follow up action to that to make sure that it's closed out properly.

Dawn 24:46

Can I, just not to put a dampener on it, but some complaints that we receive are because of the help desk itself and I know that's the City. So I think we need to be. We need to work, you know, to make sure that any hiccups are smoothed because we won't want that to reflect on Chigwell, obviously.

We do get, you know, a few complaints about the actual helpdesk sorry to put a bit of a dampener on that.

Beverley Andrews 25:17

Maybe if I can jump on that one as well. I think as part of this mobilisation and taking on that sort of feedback, as you say, Dawn, it's not just specifically around the contract, it's about what we are doing as well as the City, the service that we're providing. So I think the mobilisation it's given us a really good opportunity to, you know, reflect on our processes and look at things that aren't working very well. So I can say, you know, it's part of this service improvement. We're really looking at this from all angles. So, from the point that somebody makes contact with us, you know that first experience when somebody picks up the phone, even how long are they waiting for their call to be picked up and what that experience looks like really all the way through the journey. So totally take that on board and that's an area that we're currently working on to try and bring some improvements in that area as well.

Dawn 26:14

Great. Thank you, Beverley.

Beverley Andrews 26:16

No problem.

Jack Nuttall 26:21

I can see that Nikki is typing the chat, so we'll give a minute for that question, but Mercy, so I think I can see your hands gone up. I'll just unmute. I think. Are you able to?

Mercy 26:33

Yeah. Is that? Can you hear me OK? Amazing. I just had another two questions, actually, which was it's amazing that there'll be a handy person around. When does when does that person start on the estates?

Beverley Andrews 26:48

Do you want me to jump in and take that one? Initially, you might add to it, James. So yes, there's part of the contract we have got provision for a handy person. I think we knew this was something we couldn't implement from Tuesday, from the 1st of April there was there was some other really core things that we got to get in place, get the basics right. But we have started to well, we've opened up a discussion about what the scope of that service might look like.

It's really important that we understand we have a clear definition of what that person would be doing and that we make sure that we, you know we get the most out of the service in terms of you know their productivity. We need them to be productive and you know doing as much as they can. So we've just kind of opened up that discussion internally. But I think this is something we can probably take some you know suggestions and feedback from residents on as well so that we can start to build the scope. But I think the intention you know, really, as soon as we can implement this, we will, but we just need to make sure that it's been defined at the outset. James, I don't if you want to add to that at all.

James Davies 27:55

Yeah, I think, I mean, it's important to tailor the service to what residents need? But that's not to say that that if anything is needed now that we won't act on it. So, if there are things that need to be fixed within the handyman service that we're not aware of. We will pick that up with our core operatives until we define what the looks like and what residents will benefit from that.

Jack Nuttall 28:28

Did you say you had another question, Mercy, or was that the one?

Mercy 28:32

I had another question, someone who's asked me to ask whether you're using Applewood. I don't actually know what that is, but I've been sent it. Does anyone know what that means?

Jack Nuttall 28:43

They were a subcontractor, under Wates, I believe.

Mercy 28:47

Cool, and I believe you said in the presentation that you don't use subcontractors. You you'll be using in-house teams. Fantastic. Thank you.

Tom Walker 28:53

Anything specialist that we have to seek out to the rest of the market, then we will of course consult and use appropriate people.

Mercy 29:06

Yeah. OK, cool. Thank you.

James Davies 29:09

Our main objective is we use fully employed Chigwell operatives. I think this allows us then to have more control over the service we deliver if they work directly for us. And we look to employ the best that we can and they go through a very, very stringent skill set matrix to ensure that they can undertake every repair that they deem to do efficiently and effectively.

So and we're constantly monitoring what they do and the services they provide. And we're always looking for feedback as well. So, we can only improve where we listen to the services that people are receiving.

Mercy 29:56

Fantastic. That sounds great. Thank you.

Jack Nuttall 29:59

Before I go to Terry, we've just got a question in the chat from Nikki saying will Chigwell be doing the repairs regarding the new heating system at Middlesex Street Estate. Bev?

James Davies 30:11

We don't do M&E so that that's that would be with the M&E contractor.

Beverley Andrews 30:17

Yes. Yeah, that's a great point. So, so we still retain our gas contract, which is separate with PSG for gas and heating and hot water and appreciate there's obviously with Middlesex Street in particular I think that there are some other issues around that. But yeah, that's a really good point. Just to reiterate that that Chigwell's scope here is our general repairs and maintenance. But it doesn't, it doesn't include things like gas.

James Davies 30:50

With my commercial head on though, we do have a gas servicing services, we do provide gas services just so you know, Bev.

Beverley Andrews 31:00

Look for the future.

Jack Nuttall 31:03

OK. OK, Terry. I'm just going to let you on one second.
When you're ready, Terry.

Terri 31:12

Lovely to meet you all. My question is just going back to the handyman. Part of it. Is there gonna be a handyman at every estate, do you think?

Beverley Andrews 31:22

We're starting off with one across the service. So, and that's what initially the contract makes provision for. For my understanding, as they've not been at the City too long, but I think this is a new thing for us. So at the moment we just want to sort of start small, if you like, make sure that we kind of get the service right, it may well prove itself that it we may need to expand it to something bigger.

But I think at the moment we just want to start small, get that sort of service working as we expect it, covering the right types of repairs and if it proves to be successful, then there's no reason why we can't look to, say, expand the scope of that over a period of time.

Terri 32:12

OK. Thank you.

Jack Nuttall 32:16

Were there any other questions I'll allow anyone to raise their hand or pop anything in the chat. I can't see anything coming through.

As we just give it a minute. But Mercy?

Mercy 32:28

Sorry, this is my last point. Actually, I've noted that 8 hours volunteering that you mentioned, which is amazing. There are lots of like local days run by GLERA, which is one of the residents' associations where they go around and get everyone together and everyone goes around the estate to kind of audit where the repairs issues are. I was just flagging that something that might be interesting as like a voluntary thing. So yeah. But yeah. Thank you.

Tom Walker 32:52

But we're open, we're open to any ideas whatsoever. We were speaking before with a few residents. My background. I used to be a professional tennis player. I've done a lot of outreach programmes and everything for kids getting into sports. So I'm thinking personally, maybe we can look to do something with the community in that sense, maybe something like that, something different perhaps? It's just an idea we are thinking about it.

James Davies 33:25

For us, we offer you the service, the 8 hours from our teams and our staff and you just put us to work where you want us to go to work.

Mercy 33:41

That's fantastic. Thank you.

Jack Nuttall 33:45

Well, if there's no further questions, like I said, I apologise that this meeting had to start a bit later due to the technical difficulties, but as mentioned, we will make every effort to share a copy of the recording this session, which I think have been very useful. Make sure that any other questions that we've received get answered and that consolidated document can go out to as many residents as possible. But I thank everyone for making the time this evening, attending and asking your questions. And I think we all look forward to Chigwell starting 1st of April, so thank you all very much.

Mercy 34:18

Thank you so much. That's great. Thank you.

Tom Walker 34:18

Thank you, guys. Thank you. Thank you everyone.

James Davies 34:20

Thank you. Lovely to meet you all.

Jack Nuttall 34:20

Thank you. Hi Steven.

Tom Walker 34:22

Thank you.

Note: Transcript has been edited for clarity and readability.