

Leasehold Forum Meeting

28 October 2025

Minutes

Present: Faith Elsegood, Housing Management Team Leader (Home Ownership)

Julie Hood, Housing Equalities and Engagement Facilitator

16 Leaseholders

Apologies: 6 received from Leaseholders

Julie Hood opened the meeting and welcomed everybody. City of York Council Officers introduced themselves.

Julie reminded the meeting that:

- although you are sitting in your home you are in a meeting; please do not do anything you wouldn't do in West Offices e.g. eat
- that everyone is in the meeting for their own reasons
- to treat everyone with respect at all times, this includes staff, attendees and any organisations present/discussed in the meeting.
- let others raise their issues
- Housing issues are the only issues staff may be able to change, they have no influence over other CYC departments e.g. Council Tax, Parking etc
- if it is suggested that your issue will be investigated outside of the meeting do not continue to discuss it
- no items will be discussed in any other business unless they have been sent 7 days prior to the meeting, under any circumstance.

Alterations to Leasehold Properties

Faith Elsegood, Housing Management Team Leader (Home Ownership)

Faith reminded Leaseholders that if they want to make any improvements to their home they need to ask for permission as stated in the lease.

Leaseholders should contact the Leasehold Team by email housing.leaseholder@york.gov.uk or phone 01904 551550 option 4, option 4

The team will give advice as to the process. Depending on the proposed improvements the planning department and/or a building services surveyor may need to be involved.

Before any work starts written permission needs to have been given from the Leasehold Team.

This is to make sure the fabric of the building and other residents are safe and protected.

Permission will not be unreasonably withheld. If permission is not given the reason will be made clear.

If a Leaseholder has had work done without realising permission was needed it can be given in retrospect. Please contact the Leasehold Team by email housing.leaseholder@york.gov.uk or phone 01904 551550 option 4, option 4 who can advise appropriately.

Permission would be given within 10 working days where possible.

Updates

Faith Elsegood, Housing Management Team Leader (Home Ownership)

Faith gave a summary of the Leasehold Reform Act. This has not been passed into law yet but is expected to be.

The aim of the Act is to strengthen Leaseholders rights by:

- Making it cheaper and easier to extend the lease by removing the marriage value. This becomes a factor when the lease has less than 80 years remaining
- Increasing the lease term to 990 years
- Changing the qualifying criteria
- Making sure the lease on new leasehold flats is 990 years
- Removing the presumption that leaseholders will pay the costs when challenging the Freeholder
- Improving the transparency of service charges

Faith and her team are working to improve the transparency of our service charges

Any Other Business

Four items of any other business have been received:

Insurance

The current insurance under protects the flats and would like to see what we can do about modernising the insurance to include more perils and ideally Home Emergency cover as well.

Response: Faith is investigating (with our insurance department and procurement) options for increased Leasehold insurance cover. This will be included as an agenda item for the next meeting.

Capping a chimney

A request to cap a chimney was made. We do not cap chimneys due to the possibility of increase damp and mould. However, a request for a pepper pot to be installed has been made.

Parking

A local shop tenant is allocated 1 parking space. They allow one of their employees to park on the garage forecourt (address provided)

A council tenant has left a car parked there for several months and it has not been moved, they also rent one of the shops and uses this allocated space for his car.

I think it is unfair that they are parking for free when anyone else has to pay for on street parking or rent a garage

Response: To be addressed outside of the meeting as this is an issue specific to one area.

Lease extension

A request was made by a Leaseholder to ask if anyone who has gone through the process of extending their lease would be willing to chat through the process.

Response: The process for extending a lease is set in law and undertaken by our legal team. Leaseholders are advised to seek independent legal advice and to have a solicitor.

Currently the leaseholder needs to have lived in the leasehold property for 2 years. This is expected to change in the Leasehold Reform act.

There is a cost to extending the lease. The Leasehold Advisory Service have a calculator which can be found on their website here

<https://www.lease-advice.org/calculator/>

The Leasehold Team can let you know how long is left on your lease. Contact them by email housing.leaseholder@york.gov.uk or phone 01904 551550 option 4, option 4.

The process is done through statutory notices which all have timeframes that must be kept.

The surveyor needed is not a market valuation surveyor. The purpose of this survey is to let the leaseholder, and the City of York Council Legal department know the cost of the extra years.

Some Leaseholders present offered to share the names of the solicitors and/or surveyors they have used. They will send the contact details to Julie who will share them with any Leaseholder who contacts her and asks for them.

As there was time at the end of the meeting it was agreed that other items could be discussed.

Renting a Leasehold flat

Can a Leasehold flat be rented privately?

Response: This depends on the terms of the lease. Permission is needed from the Leasehold Team, please contact them by email housing.leaseholder@york.gov.uk or phone 01904 551550 option 4, option 4 Permission will not be given for short term lets e.g. Air B&B

Signage

The signage for some flats is very poor. Can they be renewed, is this a repair?

Response: Julie and Faith will find out if this is a repair. A full response will be sent to the individual Leaseholder

Open Housing

This is quite difficult to access and navigate. If there are queries, should these be reported now or when the service charge bill is sent?

Response: if leaseholders need help to register or log into Open Housing the Leasehold Team can help. Please contact them by email

housing.leaseholder@york.gov.uk or phone 01904 551550 option 4,
option 4

Raise any queries when you find them. This will help to make sure the service charge bills are accurate.

Next Meeting

A date in January 2026, to be confirmed.

Agenda items

Insurance