



**BELLE ISLE  
TENANT MANAGEMENT ORGANISATION**

**BOARD MEETING**

**AGENDA AND PAPERS**

**Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> May 2023 at 6.00pm**

*Refreshments from 5.30pm*

**BITMOs GATE  
Aberfield Gate  
Belle Isle  
(With Teams Available)**

**Note:**

This is the agenda and papers for the Full Board of Belle Isle Tenant Management Organisation (BITMO)

For each item on the agenda there is narrative describing any issues and details of any recommendations requiring Board approval, where appropriate there may be separate reports attached as an appendix

Part A of the Board meeting and related papers are open to the public

Part B is reserved for matters confidential to the Board

***Board members who wish to discuss any area of the board papers that requires further information or clarification are welcome to contact Deborah Kelly (CEO) via Karen Hoole 0113 378 2182***



# **FULL BOARD MEETING**

**Meeting to be held on**  
**Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> May 2023**  
**at BITMOs GATE at 6.00pm**  
**(With online access available)**

*Refreshments from 5.30pm*

*WOULD BOARD MEMBERS PLEASE PASS ANY ITEMS FOR 'ANY OTHER BUSINESS' TO THE CHAIR  
BEFORE THE START OF THE MEETING*

## **Part A – Public Agenda Items**

- Apologies
  - Questions from the public
  - Issues raised by Board members for the agenda
1. Presentation – Leeds South and East Foodbank (page 5)
  2. Bitesize training – Policy development (page 5)
  3. Minutes and Matters Arising from the Board meeting held 30<sup>th</sup> March 2023 (page 6 and Appendix 1 – page 21)
  4. Operational Report (page 7 and Appendices 2, 3, 4, 5 – pages 31, 37, 43, 55)
  5. Finance Committee Report (page 12)
    - Capital accounts
    - Revenue accounts
  6. Other Scheduled Reports (page 17)
    - Retirement Life Report 2022-23
  7. Board Forward Plan – meeting dates and times for the coming year (page 18)
  8. Any other business (page 20)

## **Part B – Confidential Items**

Separate agenda and papers.

## BITMO Board meeting 25<sup>th</sup> May 2023 Executive Summary

Agenda item	Topic	Why is this important	What can BITMO do as a result	What are the Board being asked to do
<b>Presentations</b>	Partnership opportunities and Bitesize training	Strategic partnerships are a vital part of the forward strategy. Board training is essential for organisational development.	Enhance ways of working.	Review and assess.
<b>Operational Report</b>	Key updates to include expanded key performance indicators.	Board to be made aware of key developments in the operation of the organisation.	Continue to seek enhanced services.	Review, assess and challenge. Board is asked to approve recommendations.
<b>Finance Committee Report</b>	- Capital & Revenue Accounts 2022-23 - Community Fund update	The Finance Committee has reviewed activity and made recommendations in each of these areas	Adopt action plans to enhance services.	Board is asked to approve recommendations.
<b>Retirement Life Report</b>	Annual oversight report	Retirement Life residents are some of the most vulnerable on the estate and warden services are given where required.	Review and continue to enhance services.	Board is asked to review the report and raise queries and suggest improvements.
<b>Board Forward Plan</b>	To agree meeting and development event dates.	Required for good governance.	To ensure business is carried out correctly and to aid development of Board skills and experience.	Agree the current forward plan.

## Part A – Public Agenda Items

**Apologies:** To be reported at the meeting.

**Questions from the Public:** All BITMO Board meetings are open to the public. This part of the meeting is set aside for questions to the Board from the public. Time and venue of Board meetings are advertised on the web site. Minutes from previous meetings are also available on the web site.

**Issues raised by Board members:** If Board members have issues that they wish to raise that are not included on the agenda these should be discussed with the Chair **before** the meeting starts.

### 1. Foodbank Presentation

Wendy Dixon of the Leeds South & East Foodbank will give an overview of the work done by that organisation and ways in which it works with BITMO.

Board is asked to discuss and suggest potential ways in which we can improve our partnership, given BITMO's increased food offer and associated work with Manorfield Hall.

#### **Recommendation:**

Board is asked to receive the presentation, discuss and consider improved partnership working.

### 2. Bitesize learning – Policy development

Board responsibilities in terms of policy development.

This training session will examine the role of the Board in the instigation, review and approval of the range of policies needed to manage a Tenant Management Organisation of the type operated by BITMO.

#### **Recommendation:**

Board is asked to query, discuss, raise concerns and suggest any suggested additional areas to be reviewed.

### 3. Minutes and Matters Arising

In this part of the meeting the Board will consider the minutes and matters arising from the **Full Board Meeting held on 30<sup>th</sup> March 2023 (Appendix 1)**. The table below summarises some of the matters arising from these meetings and other issues that have arisen since.

#### Full Board 30<sup>th</sup> March 2023

Item	Update
Windmill Children's Centre	Support package proposed per Operational Report.
Belle Isle Circus Fencing	See Operational Report.
Repairs Cafe	To commence Saturday 20 <sup>th</sup> May in the GATE.
Training programme	Revised programme being constructed.

#### **Recommendation:**

Board is asked to APPROVE the minutes and Matters Arising not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

## 4. Operational Report

### Introduction

The purpose of this report is to provide a high-level update on BITMO activity in the last quarter. It sets the scene for the priorities we will be working on in the coming months. Performance information is presented together with a comparison between BITMO and LCC Tenant Satisfaction Measures which are part of the new regulatory requirement for social housing landlords. The paper also provides a focus on the way in which the community engagement work that we do through The Gate is developing following the re-establishment of the Gate vision and strategy.

Three policies are presented for approval: (i) A new Disabled Adaption Policy, (ii) a revised Domestic Violence & Abuse Policy and (iii) a revised Safeguarding Policy.

Board is requested to:

1. Discuss and comment on the contents of the report.
2. Approve the policies presented.

### Quarterly review

A report on Retirement Life work is given elsewhere on the agenda.

A full Human Resources annual report will follow in July, but it is of note that in the two months since the last Board meeting, we have continued to experience exceptionally high levels of sickness absence, with particular impact being felt in the repairs team.

### Belle Isle Circus

We are pleased to report that the enclosure of the Circus has finally been achieved and that there has been no damage to it so far. We are intending to carry out further target hardening works by installing boulders or bollards behind the fence at the south side where it has typically been accessed. Community Development staff have knocked on all doors to discuss with residents their views on both quick improvements that can be made immediately and long-term ideas if funding were available. We have twenty responses so far. Popular quick changes are bushes to attract butterflies and kids' games painted on the footpaths. Popular long-term ideas if funding becomes available include improved lighting and play equipment.

We will analyse the results and meet with Ward councillors and Public Health to discuss funding opportunities before holding a consultation event with Circus residents.

One survey that was returned had the following note ***“Fence around Belle Isle Circus has made a vast difference. Children are now playing on circus. It’s an absolute pleasure, community coming together and enjoying Belle Isle Circus. Big thank you to BITMO for a great improvement.”***

Through Bits & Pieces, the tenant email, the website, Facebook and letters, residents have been urged to call 999 if they witness sections of the fence being removed.

## **Community Engagement**

As previously reported a Repair Café is being established, the first session having been held on 21/5/23

Our Community Builder is now in post, and this strengthens our community Development approach considerably.

We are strengthening our links with partners who work in the area to make sure we are aware of and complementing each other's priorities and working in a collaborative way that maximises community impact. For example, we are now hosting Windmill Children's Centre staff to provide a Stay and Play session in the GATE and working with them to provide support to women and children in crisis.

## **Recruitment**

We currently have 3 people working on fixed term contracts providing cover for sickness absence and vacancies and are recruiting a fourth to provide support in the customer service team. We are recruiting to the posts of Maintenance Surveyor, Caretaker and Lettings and Tenancy Support Officer and Retirement Life Officer. When these posts are recruited to, we will review the fixed term contracts in place.



## Community Fund Working Group

A working party on the BITMO Community Fund met on 11 May, which looked at its aims, the categories covered and the spend so far.

Less than £10,000 was spent in the period 1 February 2022 – 31 March 2023. The budget is £70,000, and we are aware that there is a great deal of need in the community, so a clear aim is to increase the spend significantly in this financial year.

We agree that the information about the Community Fund needs improving - on the form, on the website and in promotions through Bits & Pieces, email and social media.

We will work up a package to support new and existing small businesses. This is likely to involve offering advice on how benefits are affected and funding for equipment and publicity following attendance at a free course run for small businesses by Leeds City Enterprise Partnership.

We will not extend the Community Fund to cover any other areas at this point but instead focus on processing all existing applications and promoting the Community Fund to bring in new applications.

### Support for the Windmill Children's Centre

Following the Children's Centre's attendance at the March Board a weekly Stay & Play session has been running at BITMO's GATE on Tuesday mornings, run by Children's Centre staff. We have allocated space for them to store their play equipment. Forty-three people attended the session on 16 May – twenty parents and twenty-three children.

There will be a baby massage course in BITMO's GATE for five Wednesday morning sessions starting 21 June.

In addition, the Board are asked to consider funding £580, made up as follows:

Two-hour Family First Aid course for up to fifteen parents. Provision of BITMO's GATE for free plus £80 for the training provider.

£500 for provisions for families with babies, to be released in two parts. Rough costs are shown below:

- Nappies £5 x 10 = £50
  - Formula Milk £10.50 x 5 = £52.50
  - Lactose formula milk £9.25 x 2 = £18.50
  - Feeding bottles set £22.99 x 2 = £45.98
  - Bib set £4 x 2 = £8
  - Muslin set £6.50 x 1 = £6.50
  - Baby socks set £8.50 x 2 = £17
  - Sleepsuits set £12 x 2 = £24
  - Baby vests £5.50 short sleeved x 2 = £11, £7.50 long sleeved x 2 = £15
- Total spend £248.48

## Key Performance Indicators Quarter 4 2022-23 – Appendix 2

Operational performance remains strong, but with challenges around the Mears contract. To support progress in this area a reporting mechanism is awaited from Leeds City Council on several of the key Repairs items. As previously reported the percentage of repairs being completed within target time is showing as very low and discussions with the main contractor have indicated that there may be an issue with recording in the contractor's systems.

It is positive to note that our records show that

- All BITMO reach the Decent Homes Standard<sup>1</sup>
- Rent collection remains much improved and in the top three within Leeds CC.
- Tenancy amendments, permissions and mutual exchanges are achieved on time.
- The number of empty (void) properties is low following considerable focus on this area. We expect the re-organisation of the lettings team to deliver further improvements in turnaround time over the course of the year.
- Fire, asbestos, water, and lift checks are completed on time.
- Green space and footpath inspections are completed and recorded.
- Complaints turnaround times had not reached target although current performance is much better and is being monitored weekly.

Areas that require further attention are the information that we provide to customers around service standards, the quality of repairs diagnosis and ordering, and communication with customers. Having such high levels of absence s making it difficult to work on these areas, but when we are fully staff these will be a priority.

### Policies for approval

Board is asked to approve a new **Disabled Adaptations Policy** (Appendix 3), which sets out BITMO's aim is to support people to who are disabled to continue to live in their homes with the benefit of reasonable adjustments, where it is practical to do so. Where it is not practical to do so because the adaptation required is structural, significant and/or not practical in terms of the best use of council housing stock, consideration will be given in the first instance to whether suitable alternative accommodation is available that would meet the physical and practical needs of the household.

It establishes that the work undertaken will be the most modest, practical, and cost-effective adaptation to meet the assessed needs of the disabled person whilst protecting the long-term viability of the asset. The work will be carried out by BITMO's retained contractor. Only if the work is outside the capability of the contractor, will it be offered by tender to suitably qualified and experienced contractors that are approved by LCC.

The policy makes clear that before extensive adaptations are carried out consideration will be given to whether suitable alternative accommodation might better meet the needs of the tenant and make best use of council stock.

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<sup>1</sup> We have recently received a void property requiring extensive work that does not meet the DH standard. This has led us to commission a comprehensive stock condition survey and improve our annual tenancy contact process with training being arranged for key staff.

Board is also asked to approve a revised **Domestic Violence Policy** (Appendix 4) which makes clear that we recognise high levels of domestic violence and abuse in our community that seriously affects individuals and families. We aim to work with victims to keep themselves safe and prevent and respond to incidents of domestic abuse in the properties we manage. We will provide support and resources for those experiencing it: We understand that domestic violence can be a complex and traumatising experience, and the support we will provide includes signposting to counselling and support services, assistance with target hardening, and legal remedies to remove perpetrators of domestic abuse from tenancies. We are victim centred and will protect the confidentiality and privacy of people reporting domestic abuse and violence to us. We aim to work with Windmill Children's Centre to provide direct support to people seeking to leave abuse.

A revised **Safeguarding Policy** is presented for approval (Appendix 5). It updates the previous policy clarifying responsibilities and the action all staff are expected to take to record and notify safeguarding concerns.

The proposed changes to the Domestic Violence & Abuse and the Safeguarding Policy have been reviewed by relevant personnel at Leeds City Council. We are also obtaining views on the Disabled Adaptations Policy from LCC and will report further at the meeting.

### **Recommendations:**

Board is asked to:

1. ACCEPT the above Report
2. APPROVE the presented Policies for:
  - (i) Disabled Adaptations
  - (ii) Domestic Violence and Abuse
  - (iii) Safeguarding

## 5. Finance Committee Reports

The following items have been reviewed and agreed by the Finance Committee on 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2023.

### 5.1 Capital accounts update

#### (i) Financial Year 2022-23

Scheme Title	2022-23	2022-23	2022-23	Notes
	Budget	Spent and Committed	Variance	
	£000's	£000's	£000's	
REACTIVE BOILER REPLACEMENT	0.0	0.8	(0.8)	
PLANNED BOILER REPS	150.0	254.3	(104.3)	1
RE-ROOFING OF SLATE PROPERTIES	275.0	224.7	50.3	2
OTHER ROOFS	10.0	6.9	3.1	
CHIMNEYS/CANOPIES	20.0	10.0	10.0	
MUTUAL EXCHANGES	25.0	0.0	25.0	3
FIRE RISK	100.0	0.0	100.0	4
LEGIONELLA	5.0	0.0	5.0	
TIMBER FRAMED PROPERTIES	175.5	155.1	20.4	5
Four Flat Blocks - ENTRANCES	0.0	10.5	(10.5)	
REACTIVE ELECTRIC UPGRADES	30.0	33.0	(3.0)	
DECENCY FAILURES	25.0	375.2	(350.2)	6
THREE STOREY BLOCKS	75.0	150.2	(75.2)	7
ADAPTATIONS	280.0	214.3	65.7	8
KITCHENS AND BATHROOMS (WTP)	125.0	201.4	(76.4)	6
PUBLIC FOOTPATH RENEWAL SCHEME	15.0	4.5	10.5	
UNADOPTED ROADS	15.0	5.6	9.4	
WATER SUPPLIES - HOUSES		1.5	(1.5)	
RE-POINTING SCHEME	50.0	12.0	38.0	9
EXTERNAL GRP DOORS	15.0	16.7	(1.7)	
FENCING	30.0	20.0	10.0	
BELLE ISLE CIRCUS FENCING	81.0	92.0	(11.0)	10
PLANNED ASBESTOS	30.0	17.3	12.7	
ENVIROVENT CONDITIONING	5.0	1.6	3.4	
BITMO VOID REFURBS	180.0	144.5	35.5	11
THERMAL EFFICIENCY	212.5	0.0	212.5	12
MISC		(15.3)	15.3	
ADHOC	25.0	16.5	8.5	
<b>Total</b>	<b>£1,954.00</b>	<b>£1,953.29</b>	<b>£0.71</b>	
		<b>99.96%</b>		

## Notes

1. Planned boiler installations was £100k over budget because of additional numbers ordered at the end of last year, when an underspend was a possibility. This partly included securing a stock of boilers for install during 2022-3.
2. Savings of £50k have been achieved in the latest batch of Mansard (Dutch) roof replacements.
3. Mutual exchange costs are, by nature, reactive and no costs were actually encountered in the year. It was, however, thought wise to have a modest budget.
4. Fire risk assessment costs were anticipated following the extensive assessment exercise recently conducted. Such costs were however not needed.
5. Some £20k was saved in the remainder of the timber framed properties project at Broom Nook.
6. Further costs have been invested in Decency Works and Kitchens and Bathrooms as it became clear that work on Thermal Efficiencies would need to be rolled into 2023-24 and Fire Assessment costs would be minimal.
7. Spend on Three Storey Blocks was £75k over budget. This includes £24k spent on CCTV (three cameras per block plus storage) and £4k on communal door keys.
8. Adaptations tend to be reactive as the need arises.
9. Repointing was £37k under budget as much of the work was scheduled for the new financial year.
10. Materials were purchased for Belle Isle Circus fencing work prior to year-end and this cost has been charged,
11. Void refurb are on a reactive basis. Final costs for 2022-23 are some 20% less than estimated at the start of the year.
12. Major investment in Thermal Efficiency work will begin in 2023.

## (ii) Financial Year 2023-24

For 2023-24 the budget was set by Board in January 2023.

The largest single element is the thermal efficiency work to 34 properties on Windmill Road. These properties, built in 1944 are identified through thermal imaging and physical surveys as having particularly poor thermal efficiency The scope of work will comprise one or more components (see table below), depending on the individual property surveys.

Element	Cost
Roof	£5,500
Pointing	£5,000
Canopy	£2,000
Insulation	£2,000
Loft Insulation	£500
Rainwater Goods	£2,000
Ventilation	£1,000
Design Fees	£500
<b>Total</b>	<b>Maximum £18,500 per unit</b>

The annual budget comprises the following:

<b>Budget</b>	<b>£1,720,000 plus draw down from reserves</b>		
<b>Scheme</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Comments</b>	<b>Procurement</b>
Kitchens and Bathrooms	£250,000	24 Kitchens and 4 Bathrooms - 24 x £9k = £216,000 & 4 x £5,500 = £22,000 (small hangover for variations)	Tender via LCC SoS April/May
Mansard Roofs	£185,148	Based on 15 roofs at Middleton Road (phase 2)	Project managed by LBS Houston Roofing SoS April.
Fire Remedial Works	£30,000		Mears
Boiler Upgrades	£150,000		Sayes
Thermal Efficiency	£637,352	Includes £200k from reserves	Tender via NPS SoS June
Chimneys/ Canopies	£20,000		Mears
Fencing	£30,000		Mears
Footpaths	£15,000		Mears
Electrical Remedial Works	£30,000		Mears
Windows and doors	£20,000		Mears
Roofing	£15,000		Mears
Adaptations	£200,000		Mears
Asbestos	£30,000		Mears
Structural Works	£30,000		Mears
Decency Failures	£15,000		Mears
Unadopted Roads	£15,000		Mears
Damp Works	£25,000		Mears
Capital voids	£150,000		Mears
Legionella	£2,500		Mears
Adhoc capital work	£70,000		Mears

### **Recommendation:**

Board is asked to ACCEPT the above report and discuss any matters arising.

## 5.2. Revenue accounts 2022-23 update

### (i) Initial draft 2022-23

#### Budget Monitoring for the period ending 31st March 2023

Expenditure	Full Year Budget £	Year to Date Budget £	Actual Spend £	Variance	Notes
RESPONSIVE MAINTENANCE	1,386,257	1,386,257	1,346,949	39,308	1
CYCLICAL MAINTENANCE	577,353	577,353	569,151	8,202	
<b>TOTAL MAINTENANCE`</b>	<b>1,963,611</b>	<b>1,963,611</b>	<b>1,916,100</b>	<b>47,511</b>	
GATE	157,893	157,704	151,400	6,305	
INCOME AND TENANCY	245,092	245,092	239,571	5,521	
TENANCY SUPPORT	229,535	229,535	218,474	11,061	2
RETIREMENT LIFE	102,474	102,474	110,144	(7,670)	3
CORPORATE RUNNING COST	146,933	135,439	161,486	(26,047)	4
CORPORATE STAFFING COST	394,128	394,128	381,342	12,786	5
SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENTS	58,881	58,881	58,881	0	
DEPRECIATION					
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE`</b>	<b>3,298,547</b>	<b>3,286,863</b>	<b>3,237,397</b>	<b>49,466</b>	
<b>Income</b>					
Management Fee, Sheltered Fee, Incentive Payments, Bank Interest, including Exceptional Income	3,236,688	3,213,988	3,257,105	43,117	6
<b>OPERATING SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)</b>	<b>(61,859)</b>	<b>(72,876)</b>	19,708	92,584	
<b>One-off expenditure -Electrical</b>	<b>(51,420)</b>	<b>(25,710)</b>	0	25,710	7
<b>One-off expenditure -Voids</b>	<b>(36,692)</b>	<b>(36,692)</b>	0	36,692	8
<b>Community Fund Costs</b>	<b>(70,000)</b>	<b>(64,167)</b>	<b>(11,481)</b>	52,686	9
<b>(Deficit) after exceptional items</b>	<b>(219,971)</b>	<b>(199,444)</b>	8,227	207,671	

## NOTES

1. Systems issues have led to a now agreed credit note of £158k on the main repairs contract.
2. Savings in some staff costs.
3. Additional staff costs due to staff changes.
4. Additional expenses re funded Belle Isle Stories, offset by savings in certain areas.
5. Staff cost savings re pension costs.
6. Additional grant income for Belle Isle Stories as well the Kickstart Apprentice Scheme and other funding streams.
7. Electrical testing programme under review.
8. Potential void penalty avoided by reduction in number of empty properties
9. Community Fund re-launched and further spend expected.

### **(ii) Reserves**

BITMO's reserves as at 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 stood at £1,764k

Minimum reserves are £750k.

The Revenue budget for 2023-24 has a potential deficit of £354k (including £200k designated for thermal efficiency work and £70k for the Community Fund).

This leaves some £660k – notwithstanding the final results for 2022-23. This could potentially support the Community Fund or successor distribution mechanism for several years. It should however be borne in mind that inflation is likely to affect future years outcomes and there is likely to be further pressure on future years management fees from Leeds City Council.

### **Recommendation:**

Board requested to ACCEPT the above report and make any enquiries needed.



## 6. Other Scheduled Reports

### 6.1 Retirement Life Annual Report 2022-23

A report from the Tenancy Support Manager is attached per Appendix XXX.

It includes details on:

1. Information about the service (Web based and printed)
2. Lettings and allocations (Processes and numbers)
3. Key policies
4. Risk assessments (How and why these are done)
5. Support planning (Review of this process)
6. Home visits (Process, targets and achieved)
7. Communal facilities (Current programme)
8. Positive outcomes (Service or Personal Stories – anonymised)
9. Resident involvement (Schedule of meetings – key issues)
10. Feedback

Feedback has indicated that residents are happy overall with the level of service received, but have raised concerns about anti-social behaviour and also about levels of cleaning of communal rooms. We are in discussion with the contractor about this issue.

#### **Recommendations**

Board is asked to ACCEPT the report and raise any queries.

## 7. Board forward plan

### (i) Meetings schedule

The following schedule sets draft proposals for Board meetings for the coming year.

Date	Headline Report	Discussion topic	Area for Scrutiny and approval (not including standing items)
October 6 <sup>th</sup>	Urgent matters, Correspondence, Estate issues and Tenant feedback		Board elections
November 24 <sup>th</sup>		Community Fund	Safeguarding Complaints Performance KPI's Finance Committee Anti-Social Behaviour – deferred
December		No Meeting	N/A
January 26 <sup>th</sup>		Supported Living via Community Links	Budgets Repairs Finance Committee
March 30 <sup>th</sup>		Financial Inclusion	Budgets (agreed in January) Safeguarding Expanded KPI's
May 25 <sup>th</sup>		TSM Survey	GATE Programme Performance KPI's Risk Register (July) Health & Safety Report (July) Anti-Social Behaviour (July) Retirement Life
July 27 <sup>th</sup>		To be set by Board	HR Report Statutory Accounts Safeguarding Anti-Social Behaviour Complaints Finance Committee
August		No meeting	N/A
September 7 <sup>th</sup>		To be set by Board	AGM Performance KPI's Repairs GATE programme Finance Committee
September 28 <sup>th</sup>			

In addition to this the Board would be able to establish ad hoc sub committees should this be required.

The Finance Committee is the only current standing sub-committee – reporting as above.

## (ii) Board Member Bitesize Learning Sessions

Date	Title
Oct 2022	<b>Being a Board Member</b> Skills training and responsibilities.
Nov 2022	Session postponed due to lack of time
Jan 2023	<b>Handling Complaints</b> How the process works and what a complaints panel will examine
March 2023	<b>Financial Inclusion</b> Achievements and opportunities <b>Rents and Tenants Responsibilities (postponed)</b> An update on rent collections and how we support a positive payment culture. AND/OR <b>Lettings &amp; Tenant Support (postponed)</b> How we let properties and support our tenants.
May 2023	<b>Policy Reviews</b> Priorities and focus <b>Health &amp; Safety (postponed)</b> Primary areas regarding TMO operations
July 2023	<b>Repairs &amp; Maintenance</b> An overview of Responsive and Planned works
Sept 2023	<b>GATE activities</b> Impact and development

### Recommendation for Approval

Board members are asked to discuss and approve the above forward plan.

## **8. Any Other Business**

None prior to paper distribution.

**Date of Next Meeting: Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> July 2023 at 6.00pm**

# **APPENDIX 1**

## **Board Minutes 30<sup>th</sup> March 2023**

**BELLE ISLE TMO  
FULL BOARD  
Minutes of a Meeting  
Meeting held on  
Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> March 2023**

**Present:** Jean Burton  
Harry Austin  
Lisa Caley  
Julie Rhodes  
Ashley Knowles  
Cllr Paul Truswell  
John Oddy  
Rose Hodgkinson  
Steven Lamb  
Sharafath Ghafiri  
Lamin Makolo  
Cllr Sharon Burke

**In Attendance:** Deborah Kelly (Chief Executive Officer)  
Peter Olver (Head of Governance & Finance)  
Alex Orange (Head of Repairs, Maintenance and Investment)  
Peter Sutton (Community & Tenant Support Manager)  
Stephen Oldham (Income & Tenancy Manager)  
Karen Hoole (Governance & Admin Support Officer)  
Peter Greenwood (Leeds City Council)

**PART A – Public Agenda Items**

**Apologies**

Apologies were received from: Margaret Brown

**Questions from the Public**

There were no members of the public present.

**Issues raised by Board Members for the Agenda**

There were no issues raised.

## 1. Community Partners Development – Windmill Children’s Centre

Representatives from the Windmill Children’s Centre attended the meeting to give an overview of the services they deliver.

### Recommendations

Board members were requested to provide approval for discussions around providing a support package for submission at the next Board meeting.

**Approved**

## 2. Bitesize Training – Financial Inclusion

The Income and Tenancy Manager delivered a presentation on the current progress being made on Financial Inclusion.

## 3. Minutes and Matters Arising

The minutes of the meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> January 2023 were approved.

Matters Arising from the Board meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> January 2023 were as follows:

### Full Board Meeting 26<sup>th</sup> January 2023

Item	Update
Fruit orchard - bowling green at Belle Isle Circus	A community planting event was held on 23 <sup>rd</sup> February.
Belle Isle Circus fencing	The work has now commenced.
Board and volunteer recruitment	A series of sessions to inform shareholders of key activities and to recruit new prospective volunteers and board members are being held. The events will be held on 19 <sup>th</sup> April, 14 <sup>th</sup> June and 13 <sup>th</sup> September.
Board Engagement	Expressions of interest from Board members are currently being gathered for roles/areas of activity.
Charity application	Three independent trustees have been identified. Meetings to plan the way forward are to take place shortly.

**Recommendation:**

The Board were asked to APPROVE the minutes and discuss any matters arising.

**Approved**

**4. Operational Report**

The Chief Executive Officer presented the Operational Report and highlighted the following:-

**GATE activity**

BITMOs GATE was previously a 9-5 Monday to Friday service.

The Board wanted to be able to make the GATE available at a wider variety of times. As a result some of the daytime opening times were reduced with extended evening and Saturday opening for a limited time.

Tuesday evenings have proved popular with Thursdays not attracting many people after 6.00pm. The monthly Saturday morning sessions have also had mixed results.

The Community Development staff will liaise with residents and volunteers to find what other activities might be useful to make the Thursday sessions more popular.

**Repair Café**

Repairs Cafes are events where people can bring broken household items to be fixed. They can help people who would struggle to pay to replace broken items as well as being good for the environment.

It is proposed to run three sessions, one a month in May, June and July and be staffed by volunteer fixers from the existing repair cafes, while we try to recruit more local fixers.

The Board were asked to continue running the Tuesday and Thursday weekly sessions until 7pm and opening one Saturday a month until a further review at the July Board meeting, which would also review the repair café.

**Community Builder**

Ben Mills has been recruited as Community Builder and will commence with BITMO on 2nd May. The post is funded by the government via Leeds City Council.

**Community Fund**

It had been proposed to close the community Fund until May, and to remove the assistance with decorating from the community fund scheme but following a meeting of the Finance Committee it is recommended that the Community Fund remain open but that applications are to be prioritised. A working group will be established to look at community fund applications.

The following Board members volunteered to be involved in the working group:-

- Harry Austin
- Lamin Makolo
- Jean Burton
- Cllr Sharon Burke
- Steven Lamb
- Lisa Caley



Approval was sought to remove the decoration stream and add in support with small businesses, and assistance with gardening equipment for those who our Tenancy Support Team are working with on garden improvements

Board members requested clarity on the provision of funding to small businesses.

### **Board membership and volunteering**

The BITMO plan 2023 includes workstreams to generate interest in training for Board members, volunteering and board membership.

It was proposed to advertise to recruit up to 6 BITMO trainee board members and volunteers and to offer access and support to achieve a nationally accredited training and level 2 qualifications in housing and community development.

An opportunity to work with the community development team on existing community projects, running social events and community engagement will be offered

The opportunities will be advertised via South Leeds Life, on our website, and via Facebook, and available to all BITMO tenants aged 18 and over.

### **Key Performance Indicators Quarter 3 2022-23**

The Chief Executive Officer advised that current operational performance remains mixed. Further issues regarding CX have been identified and work around this is ongoing.

#### **Recommendation**

The Board were asked to:

- (i) ACCEPT the report following discussion and comment.

#### **Accepted**

- (ii) Approve the proposal to incentivise Board membership and volunteering

#### **Approved**

- (iii) Approve amendments to the Community Fund

***A Working Group will be established to investigate in more detail***

## 5. Finance Committee Reports

### 5.1 Capital Accounts 2022-23 update (as at 14/03/23)

The Head of Governance & Finance presented the Capital Accounts and reported that Capital spend is well on target to fill budget for 2022-23 with an expected spend of nearly 100% of budget.

Work has now commenced on the Belle Isle Circus fencing.

#### Recommendation

Board is asked to ACCEPT the Capital Accounts 2022-23 Update Report

**Accepted**

### 5.2 Revenue Accounts update

#### 5.2.1 Management accounts 2022-23

The Head of Governance & Finance presented the Revenue accounts for the 11 months to 28<sup>th</sup> February.

He highlighted that there have been issues around how two key systems have been talking to each other. The main contractor has been issuing invoices for payment, but the amount of payment made through the Cx system has subsequently differed. We have also had issues around errors and duplicates raised.

A review of all these transactions has resulted in an expected credit note of over £155k. This has been agreed by both parties and adjustment has been made to the accounts.

An audit of the Cx issues has been requested. Our external auditor will undertake this exercise.

The expected Revenue Account outturn for 2022-23 looks to be positive and levels of reserves are expected to remain healthy.

#### 5.2.2 Revenue Budgets 2023-24

The Head of Governance & Finance advised that there are three additional funding requirements for the 2023/24 financial year as follows:

- (i) The board and volunteer training initiative detailed on the Operational Report. It is estimated that this may be up to £6k per year.
- (ii) Tutoring Scheme - this scheme has now been operating for 6 months and has proved popular.. The Board were asked to continue to support the scheme in the short term up to a maximum of £6,300 for the next 6 months until additional external funding streams are found.
- (iii) BITMO has benefitted from supplies from Foodbank for some time on a gratis basis.

Foodbank now need to charge in order to continue their services and Board is therefore asked to support this aspect of operation at a cost of £500 for the next year.

The existing budget for the year has an operating deficit of some £17k prior to unusual items. Those items include: (i) the agreed additional Financial Inclusion Officer post for part year (£25k), (ii) a vacant post (£42k), (iii) Community Fund spend (£70k) and (iv) the agreed capital injection from reserves (£200k). Reserves as at 31<sup>st</sup> February 2022 were £1,764k and the budget as agreed would take that to £1,751k.

### **Recommendations**

The Board is asked to:

- (i) ACCEPT the above report and raise any queries.

### **Accepted**

- (ii) AGREE funding of the Board and volunteer recruitment initiative c £6,000

### **Approved**

- (iii) AGREE further support for the GATE Tutor scheme up to £6,300

### **Approved**

- (iv) AGREE to an annual subscription to Foodbank of £500.

### **Approved**

## **5.3 Community Fund**

### **5.3.1 Overview**

This item was discussed under Item 4 Operational Report.

### **5.3.2 Application**

The Board were asked to consider an application for funding for Craft Conscious wellbeing group activities (10 sessions). It is recommended that the Community Fund awards £500 on the proviso that sessions are held in an accessible venue in Belle Isle and , that Craft Conscious work with BITMO to publicise the sessions and that they seek partial or full funding externally for future sessions. BITMO would also agree to give them free use of BITMO's GATE for the 10 sessions if they wish to run them at Aberfield Gate.

**Recommendations**

The Board is asked to AGREE a Community Fund grant of £500 for the Craft Conscious Wellbeing Group.

*Approved*

**6. Safeguarding**

Safeguarding issues continue to be reviewed every two weeks. There are currently no open cases on the Safeguarding Log. Twenty-nine cases have been dealt with in 2022-23 to date.

Potential Tenants at Risk of harm are also discussed by a cross team forum each month.

A review of the Safeguarding Policy and Procedures and the Domestic Violence Abuse Policy and Procedures has been undertaken and revised documentation has been cleared with relevant personnel in Leeds City Council. These documents are now going for further review and will then be brought to Board meeting in May 2023.

**Recommendations**

The Board is asked to ACCEPT the report.

*Accepted*

**7. Board Forward Plan****(i) Meeting Schedule**

The Board Forward Plan for the forthcoming year 2022/23 was presented at the meeting.

**(ii) Board Member Bitesize Learning Sessions**

Board members were asked to note the Bitesize Learning Sessions

**Recommendation for Approval**

Board members were asked to discuss and approve the forward plan

*Approved*

## **8. Any Other Business**

### **8.1 Councillor Paul Truswell**

Councillor Truswell announced his retirement from the Belle Isle TMO Board.

Councillor Truswell will be sadly missed and Board members expressed their thanks and best wishes for the future.

**Date of Next Meeting: Thursday 25th May 2023 at 6.00pm**



## **APPENDIX 2**

# **KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

**2022-23**

**DRAFT**





Aim: Provide High Quality Services						2022-23 Q3	2022-23 Q4		
Aims	Goals	Ownership	Indicators of progress	TSM	Curr target			RAG	Comments
Provide High Quality Services	A quick and reliable repairs and maintenance service that gets the job done right first time	Repairs and Maintenance	(RR1) Repairs done right first time		95%	N/A	Not available	R	Issues with BI Power reporting
			(RR2) Repairs completed within target timescale	RP02	95%	16%	Not available	R	Urgent discussions with contractor
			(RR3) Repairs appointments made and kept		95%	N/A	Not available	R	Issues with BI Power reporting
			(Mears) Repairs - Post Inspections		10%	0%	0%	R	Lack of resource - to begin April 23
			(BITMO) Repairs - Number of post inspections		10%	0%	2%	R	Started 17.2.23
			(Mears Only) Repairs - Customer satisfaction surveys		90%	No data	No data	R	From April 23
			Satisfaction with repairs	TP02	90%	99%	98.14%	G	Contacting 100% prior to illness
			Satisfaction with time taken to complete most recent repair	TP03	99%	Via TSM	Via TSM	N/A	Awaiting TSM Q4
			Percentage of estate issues completed from 1/4ly estate walkabout		100%	100%	100%	G	
	Quality and targeted investment that maintains decent homes	Repairs and Maintenance	Homes that do not meet the Decent Homes Standard	RP01	0	0	0	G	Surveys to be re-started
			Percentage of communal areas meeting the required standard	NM	100%	100%	100%	G	Inspections completed weekly
			Properties with a stock condition survey completed in the last 5 years		1843	c 200	c.200	R	Depends on surveyor availability
			Capital Investment programme completed (100% for the year)		100%	72%	100%	G	On track
	Maximise rent collected with timely intervention and support	Income & Tenancy	Percentage of rent collected		98%	95.48%	95.99%	A	Ahead of city average in upper quartile - top 3 in Jan / top in Feb and Mar
			Percentage of rent owed		3%	3.84%	3.58%	A	Ahead of city average
			Amount of rent owed		£250k	£287,662	£268,069	A	
			% of arrears cases owing 7 weeks rent plus		9.44% (LCC end Jan)	7.05%	5.70%	G	6.78% at 31.1.23 wk 44
			Number of Household Supported with Financial Hardship		TBC	100	160	A	Target to be set based on resource
			Income generated		TBC	£102,000	£107,170	A	Target to be set based on resource
			Number of notices served		N/A	62 (7.62%)	98 (11.38%)	G	Q3 Hunslet 61 (6.99%) Middleton 45 (4.55%) Beeston 97 (9.61%)
			Number of cases entered to court		N/A	6	9	N/A	Secure and Introductory tenancies
			Number of Court orders obtained		N/A	4	8	N/A	Secure and Introductory tenancies
			Number of evictions		N/A	0	3	N/A	
			% of Financial Hardship cases closed with a positive outcome		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
	Local and responsive Tenant and Customer Contact	Tenancy Support	Quick and reliable telephone service - number of successful calls		Not Available	Not Available	Not Available	N/A	Phone statistics no longer available.
			Tenancy Amendments completed within target time		10 working days	25	35	G	Various types of reques - 100% within
			Mutual Exchanges completed within target time		42 days	19	26	G	Decision on all 26 - 100% within target
	Effective reletting of properties to minimise time properties are empty	Tenancy Support	Time taken to relet empty properties - Gross Relet		N/A	82.74 days	72.98 days	R	Issues with repair turnarounds
			Number of tenancy terminations		N/A	66	85	N/A	No target
			Number of commencements		N/A	87	101	N/A	No target
			Number of voids at period end		18.43	10	9	G	Decreased substantially
			Percentage of properties untenanted		1.00%	0.50%	0.40%	G	Decreased substantially
	Support for those older tenants who need it	Tenancy Support	Retirement Life Residents with a Support Plan		N/A	105	108	G	Reviewed annually
Support Plan reviewed within target time				95%	96.20%	97.22%	G	105 / 108	
RL Residents receiving Warden Service				N/A	62	63	N/A	58% of total	
Number of residents signed up for floating support				N/A	4	3	N/A	Annual	
Yearly RL service review report				May annually	May-22	May-22	G	Annual	

BITMO Aim: Build a Stronger, Safer, Greener Community										
Aims	Goals	Owner	Indicators of progress	TSM	Curr target	Q3 2022-23	Q4 2022-23	RAG	Comments	
Build a Stronger and Safer Community	Make homes and the environment as safe and secure as possible	Repairs and Maintenance	All homes have a current gas safety certificate (Gas safety checks)	BS01	100%	99.67%	98.75%	A	23 (12) properties o/s with issues of no access	
			Number of homes with a Gas safety certificate overdue for 0-4 weeks		0%	0.38%	0.65%	A	12 (7) properties	
			Number of properties with a Gas safety certificate overdue for 1-3 months		0%	0.27%	0.60%	A	11 (5) properties	
			Number of properties with a Gas safety certificate overdue for over three months		0%	0.00%	0.00%	G	Zero properties	
			All homes have a current electric periodic inspection certificate (Electrical safety checks)		100%	69.12%	77.56%	R	414/1845 overdue scheduled 2023-24. LBS contracted to bring to 100%	
			Fire Safety inspections to communal areas (Fire safety checks)	BS02	100%	100%	100%	G	157 areas checked	
			Asbestos safety checks - new	BS03	100%	100%	TBA	A	1206 properties have asbestos records from a total of 1842	
			Water safety checks - new	BS04	100%	100%	100%	G	Saves done 1.8.22 (6 items). Due annually.	
			Lift safety checks	BS05	100%	100%	77.27%	G	51/66 checks have valid checks. 15 overdue. Prioritised 2023-24 no access delays	
				Annual green spaces and footpath inspection (100% per year)		100%	100%	100%	G	Annual inspections complete.
	Expect tenants to abide by their tenancy agreements and hold them to their	Repairs / Tenancy Support / Comm Dev	Respond to tenant permission requests within 10 days (See Permissions log)		100%	100%	100%	G		
			Annual Tenancy Contacts		100%	40.7%	69.1%	A	Significant improvement on 4.52% in Q2.	
	Tackle anti-social behaviour quickly and effectively	Tenancy Support	Percentage of new tenant visits completed		50%	TBC	TBC	N/A		
			ASB - number of cases opened		N/A	52	79	N/A	Cumulative	
			ASB - number of cases closed		N/A	59	82	N/A	Cumulative	
			ASB cases relative to the size of the landlord	NM01	N/A	2.82%	4.30%	N/A		
			Support - opened and closed		N/A	17/26	23/29	N/A	Cumulative	
LASBT Number of cases closed - situation improved		66.67%	TBC	35.4%	N/A	11 cases where situation improved				
LASBT service satisfaction % of customers very satisfied/satisfied		100.00%	TBC	TBC	N/A	LASBT asked for data				

BITMO Aim: Be a Well Run, Tenant Led Organisation									
Aims	Goals	Owner	Indicators of progress	TSM	Target current	Q3 2022-23	Q4 2022-23	RAG	Comments
Be a Well-run organisation	Maintain an organisation that is tenant led	Governance and Finance	Full Tenant Board membership		100%	85%	85%	A	average 10.2 places filled out of 12
			Increase in Number of shareholders		10%	0%	0%	R	shareholder events ongoing
			Complaints relative to the size of the landlord - Stage 1 (% for each 1,000 homes)	CH01	N/A	1.03%	1.65%	N/A	33 complaints / 1843 homes
			Complaints relative to the size of the landlord - Stage 2 (% for each 1,000 homes)		N/A	0.33%	0.45%	N/A	9 complaints / 1843 homes
			Complaints responded to within Complaint Handling Code timescales - Stage 1	CH02	100%	47.37%	69.69%	R	23 of 33 responded to within 10 w days
			Complaints responded to within Complaint Handling Code timescales - Stage 2		100%	66.67%	66.68%	R	6 of 9 responded to within 15 w days
			Number of complaints referred to the Ombudsman in period		0	1	1	N/A	Case found in BITMO's favour (April 23).
			New indicator - A Five Year Business Plan that will be reviewed annually. This will include a review of Governance and Finance arrangements as well as establish and review BITMO's Mission, Aims, Goals and Values.		100%	Partial	Partial	A	Strategy updated.
			New indicator - An online Annual Report produced by BITMO for all tenants		100%	100%	100%	G	2023 report to be line with new Social Housing Bill
	Support and develop skills within the organisation	Governance and Finance	% of Board members attending all Full Board meetings		100%	71.91%	72.17%	A	64 attended from 89 possible
			Board appraisal - number who complete this within the year		100%	86%	86%	A	12 out of 14
			Board training - all Board members to attend at least two formal training sessions in the year		100%	82.4%	85.7%	A	All provided internally
			Staff attendance - Number of days lost through absence (average per employee)		10	11.8	19.4	R	UK average 4.6 days 2021 (ONS)
			Staff appraisal - number who complete within the year		100%	97%	97%	A	1 appraisal awaited
	Manage Money and Resources	Governance and Finance	Budget surplus/(deficit) target and projection		£222k	£72,000	£74,000	A	
			Unqualified annual audit by independent organisation		100%	Unqualified	Unqualified	G	Annual - Green



# **APPENDIX 3**

## **Disabled Adaptations Policy**

**DRAFT**



# Disabled adaptations

## STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

**Date April 2023**

	Author	Checker	Approver
<b>Name</b>	Deborah Kelly		
<b>Position</b>			
<b>Date</b>			
<b>Process Reference No.</b>			
<b>Other Process Reference</b>			

### Issue Record

Issue	Date	Issue History	Issue by
V1	24/4/23	1 <sup>st</sup> draft	D Kelly

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## **Purpose**

The purpose of the policy is to establish a clear and consistent approach to carrying out disabled adaptations to properties under BITMO's management.

## **Policy statement**

BITMO's aim is to support people who are disabled to continue to live in their homes with the benefit of reasonable adjustments, where it is practical to do so. Where it is not practical to do so because the adaptation required is structural, significant and/or not practical in terms of the best use of council housing stock, consideration will be given in the first instance to whether suitable alternative accommodation is available that would meet the physical and practical needs of the household.

Work will be undertaken where it is reasonable and practicable to adapt the property.

The work undertaken will be the most modest, practical, and cost-effective adaptation to meet the assessed needs of the disabled person whilst protecting the long term viability of the asset. The work will be carried out by BITMO's retained contractor. If the work is outside the capability of the contractor, it will be offered by tender to suitably qualified and experienced contractors that are approved by LCC.

## **Eligible works**

### **Adaptations will be considered to:**

- Facilitate access by the disabled occupant to and from the dwelling
- Make the dwelling safe for the disabled occupant and other persons living with them
- Facilitate access by the disabled occupant to a room used or usable as the principal family room
- Facilitate access by the disabled occupant to a room used or usable for sleeping
- Facilitate access by the disabled occupant to a room in which there is a lavatory
- Facilitate access by the disabled occupant to, or providing for the disabled occupant, a room in which there is a bath or shower (or both),
- Facilitate access by the disabled occupant to, or providing for the disabled occupant, to a room in which there is a wash hand basin,
- Facilitate the preparation and cooking of food by the disabled occupant
- Improving any heating system in the dwelling, to meet the needs of the disabled occupant
- Facilitate the use by the disabled occupant of a source of power, light or heat by altering the position of one or more means of access to or control of that source or by providing additional means of control
- Facilitate access and movement by the disabled occupant around the dwelling, to enable them to care for a person who is normally a resident there and is in need of such care
- Facilitate access to and from a garden by a disabled occupant or making access to a garden safe for a disabled occupant.



## **Ineligible works**

Provision of secondary access from the dwelling house, unless there are exceptional circumstances as approved by the LCC Panel

Formation of patios, decked areas, garden paths, walkways from garages and sheds

Storage areas and charging points for wheelchair/scooters.

Creating a safe play area and/or fencing, unless there are exceptional circumstances as approved by the LCC Panel.

Storage areas, for example children's equipment, medical equipment etc.

Parking bays/disabled parking areas

Dropped kerbs, hard standings, and ramps for non-wheelchair users/non-drivers (dropped kerbs, hard standings and ramps will only be considered when a person has been assessed by the Wheelchair Service as meeting the criteria for wheelchair provision), unless there are exceptional circumstances

Automatic door opening systems to main doors will not be provided unless the disabled person is otherwise unable to open the door, to safely access and leave the property independently (this would usually only apply to wheelchair users).

## **Suitable alternative accommodation**

To make best use of Council stock we will consider rehousing to suitable alternative accommodation before agreeing to carry out extensive adaptation work. Suitable alternative accommodation includes LCC owned properties across the city, and Housing Association owned properties.

## **Under occupation and over occupation**

If the property is too large for the needs of the resident according to LCC's allocations policy, suitable alternative accommodation will be offered rather than adapting a property for e.g., a single occupant living in a two- or three-bedroom family house requests a wet floor shower room. We will aim to offer a property that is already adapted, or that is level access accommodation, and that has the required number of bedrooms, thus releasing family accommodation for use.

If the property is too small for the needs of the household, we will aim to offer suitable alternative accommodation.

## **Reasonable and practicable**

Following the OT assessment and recommendation, BITMO must determine whether it would be "reasonable and practicable" to adapt the property. The considerations made as to whether it is "reasonable and practicable" are as follows:

The layout, construction, age, and condition of the property, e.g., narrow stairs and corridors.

The number, ages and needs of the other occupants of the accommodation.

The use of the accommodation by the disabled person and any other occupants, including relationships and how they interact.

The location of the accommodation, e.g., steep access to the property.

Any other options that have been considered less practicable than the proposed work.

The cost of the proposed work, compared to the cost of any alternatives.

Planning and Building Regulation constraints.

Successful adaptations carried out in similar types of accommodation.

The implications of carrying out the required adaptation with regard to its future use and classification and potential hardship issues, e.g., spare room subsidy.

## **Gardens and fencing**

Access to a garden can be considered, to enable the disabled person to dry clothes, play, or supervise play or carry out gardening. The specific access would need to be determined by the OT.

The most cost-effective solution for providing access to both the dwelling and the garden will be provided and wherever possible, one access would be provided to access the dwelling and garden. The work to be considered will not include landscaping gardens or fencing, etc.

Work will not be done to provide for the disabled person to access different levels of the garden. In the case of a child who has an identified need due to a learning disability, affecting behaviour and safety of the child, consideration will be made for the provision of a safe outside area of no more than five square metres, with appropriate fencing if required.

Work will not be carried out to extend an existing access e.g., creating a side access so a person can also go around the side of a house, if there is already suitable access

Where homes have communal gardens (e.g., blocks of flats served by a single access), we will not undertake work to provide for an individual to access the garden unless it can be demonstrated that, because of the disabled person's condition, the travel distance to the garden would be excessive and unreasonable.

In the case of a child (or in some cases an adult) with a learning disability, fencing will be considered, if necessary, to maintain the safety of the child (or adult) in the garden. An area of eight square metres would be fenced, if the OT can evidence that it is necessary and appropriate for the child's (or adult's) disability.

In the case of a child (or in some cases an adult), access to a garden can also include the provision of a safe area to play, if it can be demonstrated that due to their disability, the access created does not make it safe for them. The safe area would be immediately adjacent to the access created and will be no greater than five square metres of paved area.

Decking in any form will not be considered for assistance.

## **Decision and Appeal**

Decisions are made by BITMO. On occasions where the situation is complex, or the work required is extensive the OT recommendation will be referred to the LCC adaptations panel for advice.

A decision will be made and notified within 3 months of a referral being made by the Occupational Therapy Service.

If the subject of the referral, their carer, or the Occupational Therapy service, are not satisfied with the decision they can request a review within BITMO's complaints procedure.

# **APPENDIX 4**

## **Domestic Violence & Abuse Policy**

**DRAFT**



# Domestic violence policy

Date 2023

	<b>Author</b>	<b>Checkers</b>	<b>Approver</b>
<b>Name</b>	Peter Olver	Deborah Kelly	Board
<b>Position</b>			
<b>Date</b>			
<b>Process Reference No.</b>			
<b>Other Process Reference</b>			

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## Policy Statement

We recognise high levels of domestic violence and abuse in our community that seriously affects individuals and families. We will work with victims to keep themselves safe and prevent and respond to incidents of domestic abuse in the properties we manage. We will provide support and resources for those experiencing it: We understand that domestic violence can be a complex and traumatising experience, and the support we will provide includes signposting to counselling and support services, assistance with target hardening, and legal remedies to remove perpetrators of domestic abuse from tenancies. We are victim centred and will protect the confidentiality and privacy of people reporting domestic abuse and violence to us.

## Scope and objectives

This policy sets out the approach adopted by the Belle Isle Tenant Management Organisation in regard to how we listen; observe, respond and record reports of Domestic Violence and Abuse. This policy is to be used in conjunction with the Housing Leeds Domestic Violence and Abuse Toolkit which outlines the referral pathways and other resources to ensure that BITMO staff are equipped to deal with the issues.

It should also be read in conjunction with the safeguarding policy and procedures. This policy directs our employees and tenants in our domestic violence approach. The policy also extends to our external contractors and third parties (both victims and perpetrators).

The objective of the policy is to ensure a consistent approach is taken which incorporates Leeds City Council practices, methods, policies and procedures in handling reports of domestic violence and abuse. This policy takes notice of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/domestic-abuse-bill-2020-factsheets/domestic-abuse-bill-2020-overarching-factsheet>

## Definitions

### Domestic violence

Belle Isle Tenant Management Organisation (BITMO) has adopted the following definitions of domestic violence and abuse used by Leeds City Council:

Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. This can encompass but is not limited to the following types of abuse: psychological, physical, sexual, economic and emotional.

### controlling behaviour

Controlling behaviour is a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capabilities for personal

gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour.

#### Coercive behaviour

An act or pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish or frighten their victim.

#### Physical violence –

Slapping, pushing, kicking, stabbing, damage to property or items of sentimental value, attempted murder or murder. This includes so called ‘honour’ based violence, female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage. Victims are not confined to one gender or ethnic group.

#### Physical restriction of freedom

Controlling a person can see or where they go, what they wear or do, stalking, imprisonment, forced marriage;

#### Sexual violence

Any non-consensual sexual activity, including rape, sexual assault, coercive sexual activity or refusing safer sex; and

#### Economic abuse

- stealing, depriving or taking control of money, running up debts, withholding benefits books or bank cards.

### Responsibility for implementation

BITMO management will have responsibility for the Domestic Violence and Abuse Policy and will ensure that the policy and accompanying guidance:

- Is routinely included in staff inductions and ongoing training,
- Is implemented and adhered to;
- Complies with other staff policies and government legislation.
- Is regularly reviewed and updated by the BITMO Safeguarding Forum, management and the BITMO Board.

### Roles and responsibilities

All staff have a role to play when coming into contact with a colleague or service user affected by domestic violence and abuse. As a public front facing service our officers are often best placed to identify issues or difficulties, or where individuals disclose or ask for help. All staff should be proactive in identifying indicators of domestic violence and abuse, assessing risk and safety planning.

Taking action will enable an early response to help individuals find solutions. All staff should follow BITMO’s Safeguarding People Policy and Procedure, and we will ensure that training is provided regularly to promote staff awareness of safeguarding issues.

Relevant nominated staff also receive more in depth training which covers the referral process and how to access specialist advice and support.

## All Employees

- Have a duty to follow the Domestic Violence and Abuse policy and procedure discussing issues with manager or Lead Officer
- Be supportive and non-judgemental towards colleagues and tenants.
- Maintain confidentiality – do not discuss sensitive information about colleagues
- Report any safeguarding concerns to line manager or Safeguarding Lead Officer.

All staff should comply with the BITMO Health & Safety/Lone Working Policy to ensure appropriate risk assessments have been undertaken when dealing with domestic violence and abuse.

All relevant staff will have access to MARAC (Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference) training and will apply the DASH Risk Assessment and make referrals appropriately.

All staff will receive Domestic Violence and Abuse training; the principles of early intervention and prevention embedded in this training will ensure the response taken meets the needs of the individual and/or family; and the right services are provided at the right time.

## Safeguarding Lead Officer

- Be familiar with and use the safeguarding policy and safeguarding or domestic violence and abuse procedure (see Flowcharts below) and attend the appropriate training.
- Ensure organisational arrangements are in place to implement the policy and report on it to Board.

## Tenancy Support Manager

- Make sure appropriate and timely referrals are made to specialist domestic violence and abuse services with consent
- Current information on relevant agencies is available for BITMO staff and service users to access at all times in the Domestic Violence and Abuse (DVA) Toolkit (internal guidance).
- Be available and approachable for staff to raise DVA concerns.
- Listen, reassure and support employees with concerns related to domestic violence.
- Keep any information confidential, within the boundaries outlined in the Safeguarding Policy.
- Either encourage victims or staff to inform victims of support available by other relevant agencies

## HR Manager

- Be familiar with the policy and procedure and attend the appropriate training.
- Be available and approachable for those employees experiencing domestic violence.
- Listen, reassure and support employees who contact you.
- Keep any information confidential, within the boundaries outlined below.
- Respond in a sensitive, non-judgmental manner.
- Ensure that any employee who is experiencing domestic violence and abuse is aware of the options available to them to help them to make informed choices. Encourage the employee to seek the advice of other relevant agencies



## Information Sharing

Sharing too much information or not sharing enough information can have serious implications for families affected by domestic violence and abuse.

Where appropriate, and with the customer's consent, information will be shared with relevant agencies to maximise safety

Information will be shared in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations, Data Protection Act (2018) and the Human Rights Act (1998)

Information sharing should be proportionate and relevant and in accordance with information sharing agreements.

## Confidentiality

Belle Isle TMO recognises the importance of ensuring confidentiality in relation to those affected by domestic violence and abuse as a breach could lead to serious risk of harm to those involved and will ensure that all written notes are kept securely. In addition:

- Any disclosures of domestic violence and abuse will be dealt with confidentially
- Confidentiality will only be breached if it is felt that someone is at risk of significant risk or harm if the information is not shared or there are other safeguarding or legal issues that compel staff to disclose information to others
- The limitations of confidentiality will always be discussed and explained to those making a disclosure of violence or abuse

## Safeguarding Children & Adults at Risk

BITMO aims to ensure that all employees, volunteers and contractors are knowledgeable and appropriately skilled to deal with safeguarding issues. The Safeguarding Policy and associated training enables BITMO employees, volunteers and contractors to understand how to recognise respond and report a safeguarding concern.

## Recording information

Discussions with clients about domestic violence and abuse, and any actions should be documented. Domestic violence and abuse is often difficult to prove and the information may be required for evidence in legal proceedings and may be crucial in providing details to our service partners or securing convictions in the court process.

records will be:

- Clear and accurate
- Provide dates, times and locations of any incidents
- Kept secure (e.g. kept in secure areas and that electronic copies password protected)

## Engagement & Disengagement

Several Domestic Homicide Reviews in Leeds have identified issues relating to people who aren't engaging with services or who engage and disengage over time. Often these will be people with complex needs, those who are marginalised or experience barriers to accessing services. It is essential that all staff follow good practice to engage with customers, as follows:

- Ensure our service is flexible and welcoming
- Consideration is given to barriers to engagement and options are made available to overcome them, e.g. same gender member of staff is offered
- Be proactive in offering solutions, don't wait to be asked
- Maintaining contact with customers, to show empathy and keep them engaged.
- Agree with the customer how they can be safely contacted if they don't turn up for appointments, or respond to phone calls, and agree with them who you can contact if the above fails.
- Consider joint visits with other organisations.
- Avoid calling from withheld numbers.
- Identify other support agencies that may be involved and consider joint options to engage/work with the customer.
- Where children are involved be aware of the additional concerns this will bring and the likelihood of 'disguised compliance', for example, if they tell you they are separated from the perpetrator be aware of non-verbal clues such as the ex-partner's personal belongings in the home.

There are many reasons why someone may choose to stop using your service; however, it is important to check the risk status of clients who withdraw especially where it is known that domestic violence and abuse have been an issue. It is important to agree safe ways of contacting the person early in your involvement with them.

Things to consider when working with someone experiencing domestic violence and abuse:

- Agree with the client who a safe contact would be, this may require an advocacy consent form to be completed.
- Make several attempts and record all forms of contact with the customer.
- Contact the police to carry out a welfare check if there is a cause for concern.
- In cases where contact is still in place but the customer is disengaging it is important to check the reasons for disengagement and assess choice/safety/capacity/consent issues.
- Ensure all contact is recorded and why the case has been closed.

## Staff welfare and support

BITMO recognises that domestic violence and abuse may be experienced by both service users and our staff members. The Leeds CC toolkit provides both advice and guidance for disclosures from employees to managers as well as guidance and support for staff who may be affected by disclosure.

## Responding appropriately to employees who are victims of domestic violence

Managers must have a sensitive and non-judgmental approach when dealing with employees who are experiencing domestic violence. This can include:

- Taking the employee at face value and offering time to listen to them;
- Ensuring that any discussion about the employee's situation takes place in private, clearly stating the extent and boundaries of confidentiality;
- Understanding that the employee may not wish to approach their line manager and might opt to involve others, such as a colleague, a trade union representative, Safeguarding Lead Officer or Domestic Violence Team. It may be appropriate to offer the option of speaking to another colleague or someone from the LCC HR team who will be able to advise the employee and/or their line manager of what measures can be taken;
- Being aware that there may be additional issues faced by the employee because of, for example, their age, gender, sexual orientation, ethnic background, disability, religion or belief. Managers are not expected to understand all the cultural or emotional differences in each case but are obliged to treat people equally and with respect in responding to any additional needs. If specific advice in relation to any of the above contact should be made with the BITMO Domestic Violence Team or Safeguarding Lead Officer.
- Being non-judgmental - the employee may need some time to decide what to do and may try many different options over a period of time. Research has shown that it can take several years to break free of a violent relationship and you should, for example, not assume that because an individual returns or stays in a violent relationship, that the violence was not severe, did not take place, or that they did not want it to stop;
- Being aware of what support is available and exploring these options with the employee. If the employee does not want you to contact other agencies, you must respect their wishes.

## Legal remedies

There are three legal remedies that BITMO may use to take action:

Possession of the property

Permanent removal of the perpetrator

Removal on a temporary basis of the perpetrator by injunction

### Absolute grounds for possession;

- to seek possession under this ground there must be proof of an offence under Schedule 2A Absolute Ground for Possession (Housing Act 1988) for anti-social behaviour: serious offences. Domestic Violence on its own is not a crime – however a serious offence such as soliciting murder, threats to kill, wounding with intent to cause grievous bodily harm, malicious wounding, attempting to choke, suffocate or strangle in order to commit or assist in committing an indictable offence would fall under this ground.

There may also be cases where we can seek possession if we can prove an offence has been committed under section 5 of the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004 (causing or allowing the death of a child or vulnerable adult). Guidance in these cases will be sought from Leeds Anti-Social Behaviour Team and Legal Services.

## Responding to employees who are perpetrators of domestic violence

Abusive behaviour is the responsibility of the perpetrator. Domestic violence and abuse is a serious matter that can lead to a criminal conviction. If staff are perpetrators in domestic violence and abuse cases and want help, advice and support, it is suggested they contact the Respect National Helpline. Conduct outside of work (whether or not it leads to a criminal conviction) can lead to disciplinary action being taken against an employee because of the impact it may have on the employee's suitability to carry out their role and/or because it undermines public confidence in BITMO. Where appropriate, there will be an investigation of the facts as far as possible, and a decision made as to whether the conduct is sufficiently serious to warrant disciplinary action being taken.

Factors that will be considered are:

- the nature of any criminal justice proceedings and/or convictions;
- the nature of the conduct and the nature of the employee's work;
- the extent to which the employee's role involves contact with other employees or the general public;
- whether the employee poses a risk to other members of staff or the public, and;
- If any of the circumstances set out in the above paragraphs are brought to a manager's attention, advice should be sought in the first instance from the local HR service or a Domestic Violence and Abuse Champion.

## Responding appropriately to employees when both the alleged perpetrator and victim work for BITMO

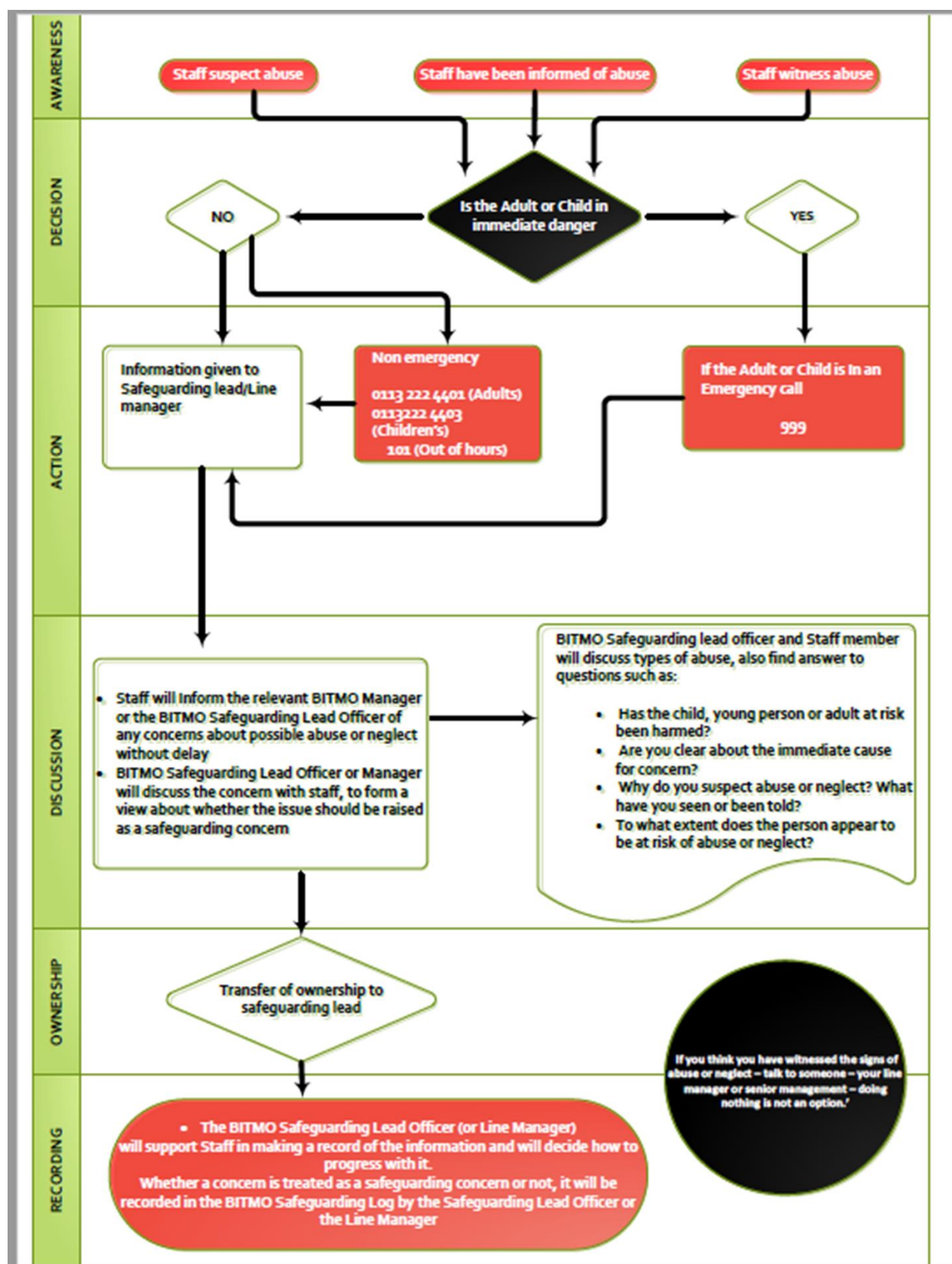
In this situation, additional considerations will need to be given and managers should seek additional advice from the BITMO Human Resources manager or the Leeds Domestic Violence Team.

- Confidentiality is of the utmost importance. All staff are reminded of their obligations. However, where safeguarding concerns are raised please refer to the safeguarding and information governance policies.
- Give consideration to moving one or both of the employees (any move of the victim should respect their feelings as well as their safety; no move of the victim should be done without their full consent).
- We have a duty of care for both members of staff. A separate contact officer should be allocated for each member of staff to maintain impartiality.

## Equality & Diversity

Domestic violence and abuse harms individuals, families, and communities. Anyone can experience incidents of inter-personal violence, however; women are considerably more likely to experience repeated and severe forms of violence. The issue cuts across peoples' ethnicity, religion, culture, class, age, sexuality, disability or lifestyle and can occur in a range of relationships including heterosexual, gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender relationships, and extended families.

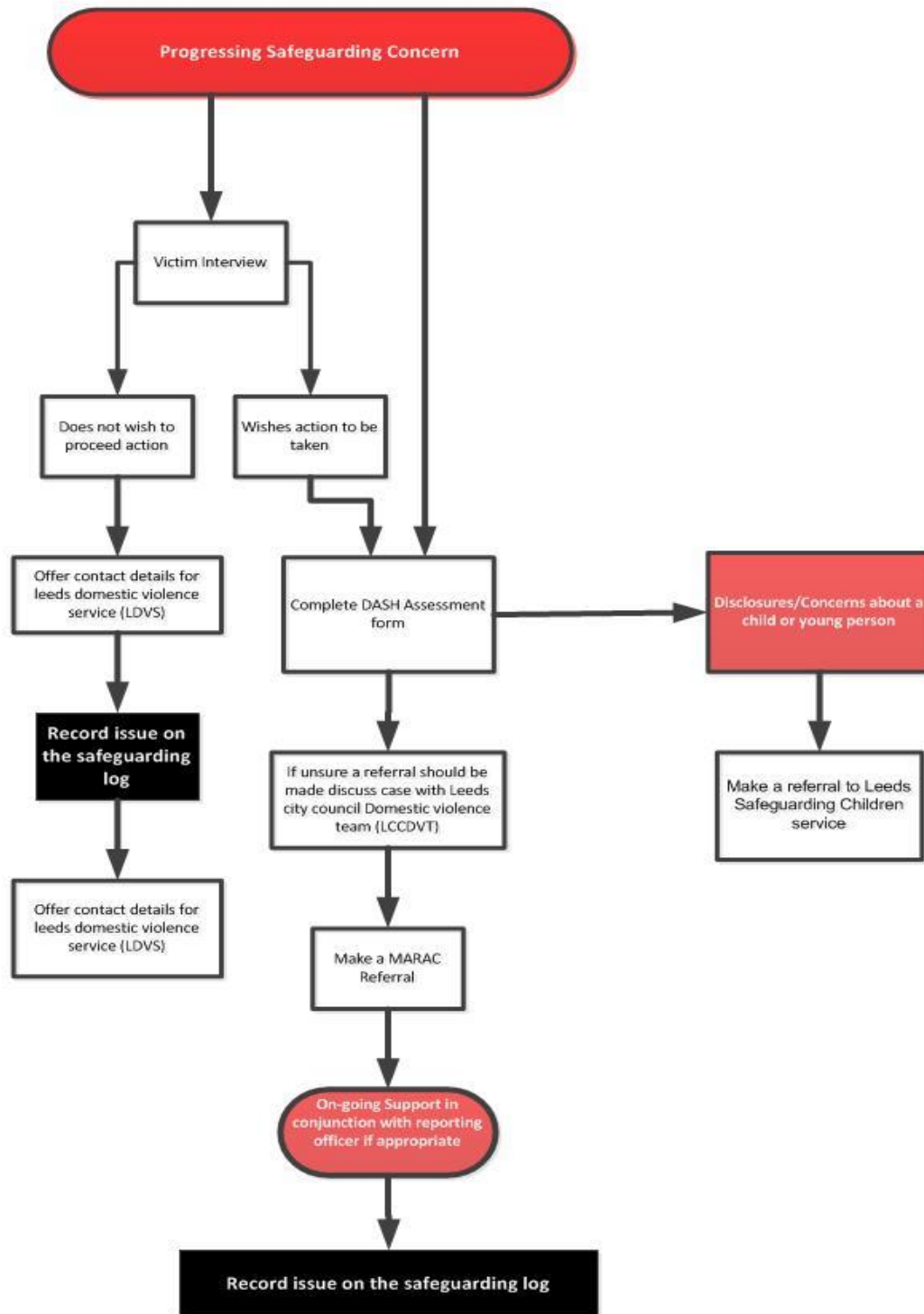
BITMO will ensure that all staff are aware of the different protected characteristics and the barriers people with these characteristics may face.



**SAFEGUARDING LEAD OFFICER: DOMESTIC VIOLENCE FLOWCHART**

INFORMATION GOVERNANCE

PROGRESSING A SAFE GUARDING CONCERN: DOMESTIC VIOLENCE



**APPENDIX 5**

**Safeguarding Policy**

**DRAFT**

# BELLE ISLE TENANT MANAGEMENT ORGANISATION (BITMO)



## Safeguarding policy and procedure

Date 2023

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<b>Other Process Reference</b>			



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## Policy statement

As a tenant management organisation and as an employer, BITMO has a duty to keep vulnerable adults, children and young people that it deals with safe from abuse (Children Act 2004 and the Care Act 2014).

BITMO has a duty of care with regard to children and young people under The Children Act 1989 as amended by The Children Act 2004; The Education Act 2002 and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018. Under section 11 of The Children Act 2004, BITMO has a responsibility for notifying frontline service partners and local authorities in regard to the safeguarding of Children in our area.

Under The Care Act 2014, BITMO understands the need to carry out an assessment of anyone who appears to require care and or support, identifying the needs and impacts on their wellbeing. Attention is also paid to The Mental Capacity Act 2005 which protects people who may lack capacity to make decisions for themselves.

## Scope

This Policy sets out BITMO's commitment to safeguarding our tenants, volunteers and staff. It recognises and supports everyone's right to grow up and live their life free from abuse, neglect and exploitation. There is a special obligation to protect children, young people and adults at risk.

BITMO aims to ensure that all employees, volunteers and contractors are knowledgeable and appropriately skilled to deal with safeguarding issues. This policy will enable BITMO employees, volunteers and contractors to understand how to recognise, respond and report a safeguarding concern.

The Policy encapsulates the relevant aspects of the Safeguarding Policy adopted by Leeds City Council. It also should be used in conjunction with other BITMO policies including those on:

- (i) Health & Safety
- (ii) Domestic Violence and Abuse
- (iii) Whistleblowing

## Objectives

BITMO is committed to responding appropriately to abuse and neglect by:

- Addressing safeguarding concerns promptly and efficiently
- Working in partnership with agencies that have a statutory responsibility or non-statutory involvement with persons at risk
- Develop a culture that does not tolerate abuse and encourages people to raise and/or address concerns in a prompt and proportionate manner
- Preventing abuse happening where possible by making appropriate and timely referrals
- Recognising signs of exploitation and or grooming then responding appropriately

- Raising awareness amongst employees about safeguarding, abuse and neglect through compulsory training
- Ensuring that employees recognise and report safeguarding concerns as part of their role
- Employees Informing their line manager or the BITMO safeguarding lead officer of any concerns about possible abuse or neglect without delay
- Discussing with line manager or the BITMO safeguarding lead officer whether the concern should be raised as a safeguarding concern
- Working in partnership with Leeds City Council and frontline service partners that have statutory responsibilities or non-statutory involvement with children or adults at risk
- Raising awareness among employees about safeguarding, abuse and neglect through compulsory training, meetings, briefings and toolkits.

## What is Safeguarding?

### Definitions

Safeguarding is a term used to describe how we protect adults at risk, and children from abuse or neglect. It is an important shared priority of many services and a key responsibility for BITMO.

Safeguarding is about protecting those who may be in vulnerable circumstances. The person may be at risk of abuse or neglect due to the actions (or inaction) of another person.

A “child or young person at risk” can be defined as maltreatment; somebody may abuse or neglect by inflicting harm, or failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family, in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely by others. They may be abused by an adult or adults, another child or children

An “adult at risk” is someone aged 18 years or over who may be unable to take care of themselves, or protect themselves from harm or from being exploited. This may be because their circumstances, such as chronic illness, disability, age, mental health issues or lifestyle, cause them to be at risk in some situations.

### Types of abuse

of “Children” may include (but not be restricted to) the following:

- Physical Abuse – e.g. hitting, slapping, restraint, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, misuse of medication
- Emotional Abuse – e.g. persistent emotional maltreatment
- Sexual Abuse – e.g. forcing or enticing a person to part in sexual activities, rape, indecent exposure

- Neglect – e.g. persistent failure to meet a physical and/or psychological needs
- Psychological or Emotional Abuse – e.g. humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation,
- Financial Abuse – e.g. theft, fraud, internet scamming, coercion
- Discriminatory Abuse – e.g. ill-treatment forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment
- Organisational Abuse – e.g. poor practice within an institution or specific setting
- Domestic Violence and Abuse – e.g., threatening behaviour, violence, abuse or genital mutilation
- Modern Slavery – e.g. servitude, forced labour, exploitation of children, and debt bondage
- Forced marriage – e.g. an abuse of human rights, a form of violence against women and men
- Honour based violence – e.g. to protect or defend the honour of the family or community
- Extremism – e.g. holding of extreme political or religious views; fanaticism

### Legal framework

Some key legislation and guidance relating to this policy includes the following (as amended by any subsequent updates):

- The Care Act 2014
- The Children Act 2004
- The Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Education Act 2002
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Domestic Violence, Crimes and Victims Act 2004 Working together to Safeguard Children Guidance
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Care and Support Statutory Guidance
- Data Protection Act 2020

This policy also takes notice of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/domestic-abuse-bill-2020-factsheets/domestic-abuse-bill-2020-overarching-factsheet>

### Safeguarding adults

The statutory responsibility to safeguard adults is established by the Care Act 2014. The Act introduced legislation to protect and support people who need it most, prioritising their wellbeing, needs and goals.

The statutory duty requires enquiries to be undertaken for an adult, where the organisation has reasonable cause to suspect that an adult is at risk in its area, identifying if:

- There is a need for care and support, whether or not the organisation is meeting any of those needs;

- They are experiencing, or is at risk of abuse and neglect;
- As a result of those care and or support needs, the adult or child is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect.

In the case of BITMO there is a special consideration for the safeguarding of our Retirement Life who come under our Warden Service.

### Safeguarding Children and Young People

Under The Children Act 2004, children and young people under 18 years of age are viewed as an especially vulnerable group. The Working Together to Safeguard Children Act 2015 Defines safeguarding as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment;
- Preventing impairment of children’s health and development;
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care;
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

### Principles we uphold

BITMO is committed to following the six principles as laid out by the Care Act 2014 in the services provided and all aspects of safeguarding activities:

#### Empowerment

People are supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and informed consent.

#### Prevention

– It is better to take action before harm occurs.

#### Proportionality –

The least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.

#### Protection –

Support and representation for those in greatest need.

#### Partnership

Services offer local solutions through working closely with their communities. Communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse.

#### Accountability –

Accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding.

### Duties

Care and Support Statutory Guidance (updated June 2022) issued under The Care Act 2014 states that housing providers should have in place arrangements that reflect the importance of safeguarding and promoting the welfare and well-being of vulnerable adults, children and young people.

BITMO will therefore ensure that staff, volunteers and contractors understand their duties with regard to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of vulnerable adults, children and young people.

In order to do this, BITMO will:

- Have clear operational policy and procedures related to Safeguarding (approved by the Board). The Board, Chief Executive Office and Heads of Service are responsible for developing this policy and ensuring that it is implemented and monitored effectively;
- Ensure that all employees:
  - Are familiar with the six underpinning principles above
  - Capable of identifying and recognising symptoms of abuse
  - Able to respond to safeguarding concerns taking appropriate action
- Designate a Safeguarding Lead Officer will take lead in organisational and inter-agency safeguarding arrangements.
- Work with the Leeds Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) for those who are experiencing abuse and deemed to be at high risk.
- Maintain confidentiality unless it is necessary to use information to fulfil its statutory safeguarding obligations.
- Keep all records accurate and up to date and in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2020 and the General Data Protection Regulation.

## Responsibilities and Accountability

Safeguarding is everyone's business and everyone working within the BITMO has responsibilities in relation to safeguarding. We need to ensure that we strive towards living and/or working in a community which feels safe and is safe for everyone.

### BITMO Board

As the governing body of the Tenant Management Organisation, the Board is ultimately responsible for the creation and implementation of this Safeguarding Policy.

### All BITMO staff and volunteers

All must be familiar with the BITMO safeguarding people policy;

- Be familiar with, and follow, their own services procedures and protocols for safeguarding children, young people and adults at risk;
- Treat all matters in a sensitive and confidential manner (whilst following reporting requirements);
- Know who to contact and how to raise concerns; and
- Report any concerns over the welfare of children, young people or adults at risk.

### Safeguarding Review Team

Comprising the CEO, Head of Governance & Finance, Tenancy Support Manager and a Community & Tenant Support Manager. It meets every two weeks to review the open Safeguarding Log and any other relevant issues.

### Tenants at Risk Panel

The Panel has staff representatives from across the organisation (plus advisors where necessary) and is led by the Safeguarding Review Team. It meets each month, in order to identify potential issues at an early stage.

## Managers

Managers are responsible for ensuring their staff and volunteers are aware of, and abide by, the safeguarding policy and procedures. They will identify training needs and provide support and guidance. They will ensure that where they and their staff work directly with children, young people and adults at risk, they will have a sound working knowledge of relevant legislation and guidance.

## BITMO Safeguarding Lead Officer

The BITMO Safeguarding Lead Officer will disseminate information and be a point of contact for staff to raise safeguarding concerns with. The BITMO Safeguarding Lead Officer shall be the Chief Executive and in his/her absence the Head of Governance & Finance or the Tenancy Support Manager.

## Human Resources Manager

HR will ensure best practice for safe recruitment and retention; including the requirements of the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). They will also consider and take appropriate action where there may be potential safeguarding concerns in relation to members of staff.

## Contractors

BITMO contractors which are in contact with tenants for the delivery of BITMO services will be made aware of the BITMO Safeguarding Policy and Procedures and will be asked to submit a copy of their own Policy & Procedures to BITMO. These will be examined for suitability.

## Training

All staff and volunteers will be briefed on induction and will participate in safeguarding training either via internal or external instruction to ensure that they are aware of the requirements of this policy and to provide them with the necessary knowledge and skills to implement this policy.

The level of training that they receive will be appropriate and proportionate to their role and depend upon the level of contact they have with children, young people and adults at risk. For those who need a higher level of training- this will be provided as part of their role.

## Review

This Policy and Procedures will be reviewed at least every three years by the BITMO Safeguarding Review Team and the BITMO Board or when necessitated by changes in legislative or guidance.



## Procedures

The procedures support the BITMO Safeguarding Policy and describe how it is to be implemented in practice.

### Communication

All staff, volunteers and contractors have a duty to inform the relevant BITMO Manager or the BITMO Safeguarding Lead Officer of any concerns about possible abuse or neglect without delay; this is in addition to taking any immediate action if needed e.g. contacting emergency services.

All safeguarding concerns should ultimately be referred to the BITMO Safeguarding Lead Officer (Chief Executive Officer or in their absence the Head of Governance & Finance or Tenancy Support Manager).

Assessment and action on abuse must always be in co-operation and collaboration with other agencies, such as Leeds CC Social Care, GP's and the Police.

Specific sections in the procedure to take note of are:

- Deciding whether a concern is a Safeguarding Concern
- Raising a Safeguarding Concern
- Consent
- Confidentiality
- Responsibilities of a BITMO Safeguarding Lead Officer

BITMO has a reporting procedure for concerns, which includes incident reports and logs. These procedures are conveyed to staff as part of training and induction.

### Deciding whether a concern is a Safeguarding Concern

Causes for concern may be brought to the attention of staff or volunteers. These may be from witnessing abuse or it being reported to them. Such abuse may fall into any of the categories above.

The BITMO Safeguarding Lead Officer or Manager will discuss the concern with you to form a view about whether the issue should be raised as a safeguarding concern.

As part of the discussion, as well as considering which type of abuse your concerns are about, the following questions may be useful:

- Has the child, young person or adult at risk been harmed?
- Are you clear about the immediate cause for concern?
- Why do you suspect abuse or neglect? What have you seen or been told?
- To what extent does the person appear to be at risk of abuse or neglect?

If you suspect a crime has been committed then you should be aware of the need to preserve evidence e.g. not touching or moving anything.

If a person reporting abuse feels more comfortable to meet in another environment rather than our office or their home, then we will accommodate this. We will also consider the cultural barriers that various community groups face when they are victims of abuse.

## Raising a Concern

The BITMO Safeguarding Lead Officer (or Line Manager) will support you in making a record of your information and will help you to decide how to progress with it. If it is decided that the concern needs to be passed on, the BITMO Safeguarding Lead Officer will do so by phoning either the **Adult Social Care or Children's Social Care Contact Centre public line**.

If your concern is not related to safeguarding, the BITMO Safeguarding Lead Officer or Line Manager will not raise a safeguarding concern. There may, however, be other appropriate action or signposting which may be helpful, including ringing the LCC Contact Centre to request other services. Whether you raise a safeguarding concern or not, it should be recorded, as agreed, in the **BITMO Safeguarding Log** by the Safeguarding Lead Officer or the Line Manager.

## Consent

When Safeguarding Adults, young people or child procedures are being considered, the consent should always be sought. Consent should be obtained as early as possible so that the concerns can be progressed to ensure the safety of the victim at risk. This does not necessarily mean that the word 'Safeguarding' has to be used but the issue should be discussed with the victim using appropriate terminology such as 'in order to make sure you are safe, we wish to share information with other people and possibly hold a meeting to discuss our concerns...' or similar words. A signature is not necessarily required, but the person's consent should be clearly recorded in the case file.

## Obtaining consent

- Undue pressure should not be exerted on the adult at risk to change their mind.
- The Victim should be given all the relevant information available in order to make an informed decision.
- The Victim should be reassured that their case would be dealt with confidentially, sensitively and professionally under BITMO Safeguarding procedures and

## Exceptions to obtaining consent

There are four potential exceptions to the general rule outlined above are as follows:

- If other people appear to be at risk of harm (adults or children)
- If there is a 'legal restriction' or an overriding public interest
- If the person is exposed to life threatening risk and they are unreasonably withholding their consent
- If the person has impaired capacity or decision making in relation to the safeguarding issues and the withholding of consent

As staff can be unsure or doubt decisions made around sensitive issues, as to whether decisions are right or wrong. It is useful to note, that legislative Acts can help provide guidance or clarification as to what is appropriate given the circumstances. For example:

- Mental Capacity Act 2005 - If the person is assessed (by qualified professional) as lacking mental capacity, decisions should be made in the best interests of the victim. An option here is to look for advocacy consent, power of attorney or welfare deputy by the court of protection.

- Crime and Disorder Act 1998 – under this Act there is a term called ‘overriding public interest’ which refers to a situation where it is essential to share information in order to prevent a crime or to protect others from harm i.e. for Hate Crime we have a statutory responsibility to report

## Confidentiality

Belle Isle TMO recognises the importance of ensuring confidentiality in relation to those affected by violence and abuse as a breach could lead to serious risk of harm to those involved and will ensure that all written notes are kept securely. In addition;

- Any disclosures of violence and abuse will be dealt with confidentially
- Confidentiality will only be breached if it is felt that someone is at risk of significant risk or harm if the information is not shared or there are other safeguarding or legal issues that compel staff to disclose information to others
- The limitations of confidentiality will always be discussed and explained to those making a disclosure of violence or abuse

## Reporting a concern

If the BITMO Safeguarding Lead officer or Manager is not available, you can report a safeguarding concern, like any member of the public, but you must ensure that you inform the BITMO Safeguarding Lead or Manager of this action as soon as you are able to. Discussions with the BITMO Safeguarding Lead should happen as quickly as possible, but you should not delay the safeguarding of a person at risk of abuse or neglect. If you cannot contact the Safeguarding Lead or Manager and you are aware of an immediate risk of harm, or the need for emergency medical treatment, do not hesitate to call the police and/or the ambulance service on 999. The Safeguarding Lead Officer and any associated relevant manager should subsequently be made aware by means of the current incident reporting procedure.

If there is not an immediate risk of harm and the Safeguarding Lead Officer or Manager are unavailable then, **please call the Leeds City Council (LCC) Contact Centre on:**

## Adults

**0113 222 4401 (8am to 6pm)**  
**0113 378 0644 (out of hours)**  
[edt.ss@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:edt.ss@leeds.gov.uk)

## Children

**0113 222 4403 (general public 8am to 6pm)**  
**0113 376 0336 (professional 8am to 6pm)**  
**0113 535 0600 (out of hours)**  
[childrens.edt@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:childrens.edt@leeds.gov.uk)

## Police contact telephone numbers:

- **For emergencies always dial 999**
- **For non-emergencies dial 101**

### Useful Information when you report a safeguarding concern

When reporting a concern you have about a child, young person or adult at risk, it is useful if you have the following information. If you do not have this information, then you should still let your Manager or BITMO Safeguarding Lead Officer know about your concern, as it may provide additional information to an already emerging picture. You should not be tempted to investigate the concerns. That is the role of safeguarding professionals. It is better to take the approach “if in doubt, report it”.

If you speak to your Line Manager they will pass the information on as appropriate.

<b>Name of Officer/Manager submitting the concern</b>	
<b>Date of incident</b>	
<b>Date concern raised</b>	
<b>Victim</b>	<b>Perpetrator</b>
Name (s)	Name (s)
Address (s)	Address (s)
Gender	Gender
Date of Birth (or approximate age if cannot be obtained)	Date of Birth (or approximate age if cannot be obtained)
Name(s) of person(s) with parental responsibility for a child or the primary carer(s)	Name(s) of person(s) with parental responsibility for a child or the primary carer(s)
Type of abuse :	
Summary	

