

The Charity of Mrs Mabel Luke



Mabel Luke Trustee Ltd, Company No.10241286 is the Trustee to the Charity of Mrs Mabel Luke

ANNUAL REPORT FOR RESIDENTS 2019-2020

WELCOME

I am pleased to present the first Annual Report for residents. The report covers the first full financial year after the flats were completed at Mabel Luke Place, that is April 2019 to March 2020.

The Charity is a registered provider of social housing and is therefore accountable to the Regulator of Social Housing as well as to the Charity Commission. The Regulatory Framework for Social Housing outlines what is expected of registered providers by setting out standards for service delivery. You can see them at: www.gov.uk/guidance/regulatory-standards.

This report tells you how we are doing against these standards.

Sue Farrant

Chair of the Board of Mabel Luke Trustee Limited,
Trustee to the Charity of Mrs Mabel Luke

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RESIDENT INVOLVEMENT

We aim to work with you to improve how we communicate and involve you in our decision making so that your views can really make a difference.

We held a residents' annual meeting in the grounds of Mabel Luke Place on 23 September 2018. The aim was to give you the opportunity to meet some of the Directors (and each other) and air any concerns or share any thoughts on what would make life better at Mabel Luke Place. It was well-attended and you said you would like to have another meeting in 2019. Invitations were sent out for a meeting on Saturday 21 September 2019 but this time only two residents came and the meeting did not go ahead.

Directors invited residents to join them on a "walk around" of the communal areas of Mabel Luke Place on 9 March 2019 and again on 27 February 2020 in order to review how well services such as cleaning and gardening were going and check for any problems and defects. No residents came but Directors called at each flat as they went around.

In May 2019, Directors made appointments to visit every Licence holder. These visits will be repeated every year (Covid-19 restrictions permitting!) with the aim of discussing any concerns you might have, run through the Licence conditions and check on the condition of the property.

We would like in the future to work with residents in the preparation of our Annual Reports. For example, the Report might include a section written by residents, presenting your views on what it is like living at Mabel Luke Place or you might want to see other information included. If you have ideas **please let us know**.

COMPLAINTS

We always do our best to deliver a good service but if something has gone wrong you have the right to make a formal complaint. We will try to put things right and learn from our mistakes. Our Complaints Policy sets out how we will respond. The Charity belongs to the Housing Ombudsman Service (www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk) so if you believe we have not handled your complaint properly or if you need help with making your complaint, you can go to the Ombudsman.

In 2019-20 we did not receive any formal complaints from residents.

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YOUR HOME

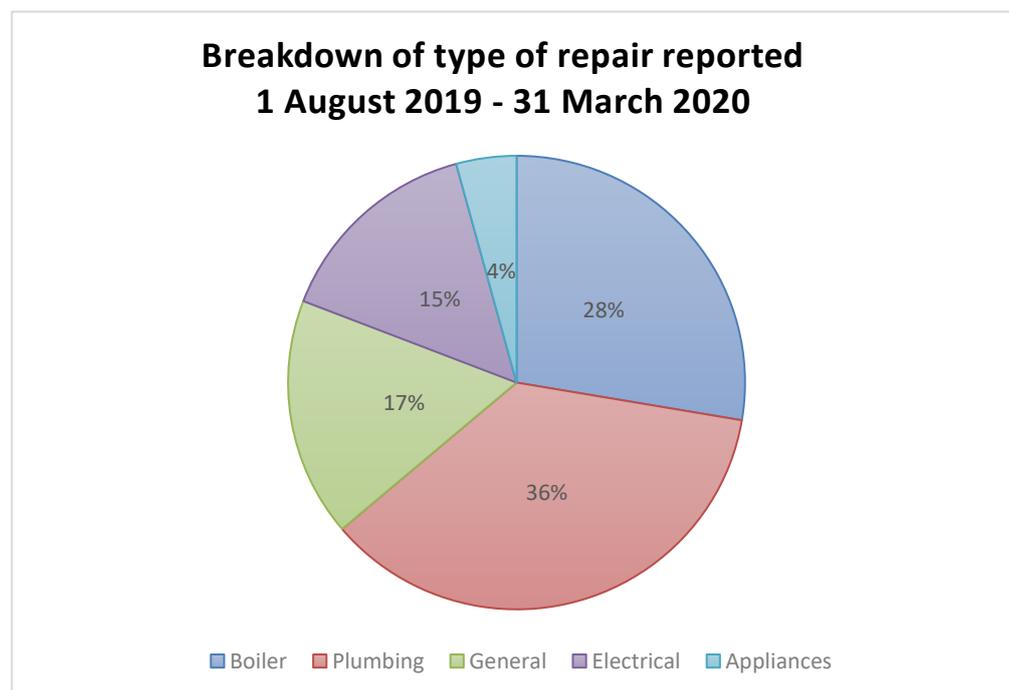
This section tells you how we keep your homes well-maintained.

Routine repairs and maintenance

Our repairs reporting leaflet sets out how you should report repairs. Repairs are dealt with differently depending on whether they are categorised as Emergency, Urgent or Routine. The leaflet also sets out the timescales in which we aim to respond to repairs.

We cannot give you a full report on the number and type of repairs needed between April 2019 to March 2020 because the builders, Feltham Construction Ltd, were still responsible for dealing with any maintenance issues until the summer of 2019. We can tell you that 47 repair requests were received and dealt with between August 2019 and March 2020 and the average time between receiving the report and the work being completed was 7 days. Introducing an email address for you to use to report repairs has made it easier for us to respond quickly.

The breakdown by type of repair is shown in the chart below.



We know residents suffered a great many plumbing and boiler problems and Directors appreciated your patience as we tried to sort things out. Although some of the issues were due to poor workmanship when the flats were built and could be fixed fairly easily, it also became clear that the hot water/heating systems installed at Mabel Luke Place just could not cope with the hardness of the local water. You will see from the chart that plumbing and boiler repairs accounted for nearly two out of every three repairs between August 2019 and March 2020.

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Directors took advice and decided to install a hard water filter for each boiler. That work has been completed and residents should have far fewer problems from now on.

Our total repairs and maintenance budget for 2019-20 was £8,185.00 and our spend was £10,006.00.

Our repairs and maintenance budget for 2020-21 is £10,000.00

Planned maintenance

As time goes on, Mabel Luke Place will need maintenance beyond day to day repairs. The Charity is setting money aside for work that can be planned for future years to keep the properties comfortable to live in and looking good, things like decorating the communal areas, replacing kitchen appliances or the central heating boilers.

WEEKLY MAINTENANCE CONTRIBUTIONS

Residents of almshouses pay weekly maintenance contributions (WMCs) not rent.

As a registered provider, we have to follow guidance from the Regulator on setting and increasing our WMCs. We also make sure that they are set within the level of the Council's local housing allowance so that our properties are affordable to people on benefits. We will always keep the WMCs as low as we can and will not necessarily increase them every year. In 2018 and 2019, the weekly cost (including the service charge) remained at £164.80 for 2-bed flats and £146.40 for the 1-bed flats.

Every household pays a weekly service charge as part of their WMC. In the year 2019-2020 it was £4.03 a week. That money pays for gardening, cleaning of the hallways, stairs and landings, window cleaning, electricity in the communal areas and the landlord's water supply (used by the gardeners). Next year we will be able to give you a breakdown of costs and show how your service charge was used.

WMCs are the Charity's only income and we use the money to keep Mabel Luke Place well-run and maintained, including paying the wages of our part-time Clerk, Jacqui Letsome. We need residents to help us deliver good quality services by paying their WMCs promptly, by letting us know quickly if any repairs are needed and by keeping communal areas clean and tidy.

With your help, we kept arrears at a very low level in 2019-2020, an average of just 0.61% of the total due. All the money was paid in due course. The Charity may be able to help people who are struggling to pay their WMCs by allowing them to make payments over a longer period.

We are not allowed to give financial advice but will suggest organisations that can give support.

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VALUE FOR MONEY

This section deals with how we ensure that the income that we receive from the Weekly Maintenance Contributions (WMCs) is spent in as economical a way as possible while providing good quality services for our residents.

Directors check that WMCs are no more than 80% of local private rents (and so eligible for Universal Credit). We have a procurement policy that we use when letting contracts to make sure we get a good quality service at the best possible price. Proactive maintenance such as annual boiler servicing helps to keep repair costs down.

A great deal of the Charity's day-to-day work is done by volunteer Directors and we pay our Clerk only for a limited number of working hours (up to 8 hours a week in 2019-2020).

LICENCE AGREEMENTS

Almshouse residents are not tenants and you have a Licence to Occupy instead of a tenancy agreement. Your Licence agreement sets out the Charity's legal obligations and your responsibilities and we will consult you if we want to make any changes to conditions. In 2019-20 we put forward changes to our parking policy which were approved by residents.

ALLOCATIONS

Our Allocations Policy states how we will allocate any of our properties that become available. We did not have any new lettings in 2019-20 which was unsurprising as our residents did not move in until May and June 2018.

GOVERNANCE AND FINANCIAL VIABILITY

This section looks at how we make decisions and ensure that the Charity of Mrs Mabel Luke is financially sound and properly run.

Mabel Luke Trustee Limited

Mabel Luke Trustee Ltd is the corporate trustee, or controlling body, for the Charity of Mrs Mabel Luke. The Board of Directors of Mabel Luke Trustee Ltd provides the leadership to ensure that the Charity:

- Is financially sound
- Meets its legal obligations
- Is accountable to our residents and the wider community it serves

The Chair of the Board is Sue Farrant. Sue took over in October 2019 when Bill Piner stepped down after 20 years, having overseen the transformation of the Charity's properties from four old houses to the present three blocks of flats.

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The Board has three committees:

- Finance Committee looks regularly at the Charity's income and spending to ensure that we manage our money properly and can protect ourselves against future money problems and keep services going
- Residents Committee deals with resident-related matters including the allocation of vacant properties, resident involvement and complaints
- Property Committee deals with property-related matters including repairs and maintenance and parking.

Data Protection

Under the General Data Protection Regulations we are legally required to be careful in how we manage our residents' personal data. Director Laura Coyle is the Charity's Data Protection Officer. If you have any concerns about how we manage your personal data then you can contact Laura at laura.coyle@mabelluke.co.uk.

Safeguarding

Concerns can be reported to the Safeguarding Lead Director on safeguarding@mabelluke.co.uk. In 2019-2020, the Safeguarding Lead Director was Samantha Smith.

WHERE TO GET MORE INFORMATION

If you'd like more information about anything in this report please do not hesitate to contact our Clerk on 07555 779207 or contact@mabelluke.co.uk

If you want to read one of our policies, you will find it on the website mabelluke.co.uk or you can ask the Clerk to send it to you.

Tell us what you think

We would welcome any comments or thoughts you may have about this report. Please let us know using the contact details above.