The most important takeaway for me was the significance of communication, while we as a group achieved great communication together and with Housing Matters (HM), it took a while to establish such an infrastructure. However, because of the early steps we took, communication errors were hard to come by after a few meetings. I believe this was achieved after we delegated roles inside the group and outlined a designated contact point for HM but also inside our group, this meant communication passed through one person and enabled a narrow approach with information. This built a comfortable and accessible communication method, which enabled for one voice from both parties to communicate and speak on behalf of their party. This resulted in clear communication as each task could be easily clarified if needed which reduced the amount of back and forth between both parties. Moreover, as a group we built a clear communication method with one another which enabled us to work collaboratively while away from the Foundry. This was imperative as we could help one another with a single message but also improved our communication on a bigger scale such as clarifying the topics to discuss in meetings prior to attending.

In addition to this, is to consistently reflect upon the brief, so as a group you are not diverging of the path laid out. This also applied to HM. During the period after Christmas break, we came back to a HM that was changing and evolving, meaning they wanted to make a few changes outside of the brief but for the most part still stick to the overall project brief. To include these changes, we created a Miro board to allow for card sorting, as well as a Miro board for HM to do card sorting. This enabled us to outline our findings and the goals from the brief as well as HM’s new goals and objectives. Through card sorting we were able to conclude a priority list that didn’t deter from the brief but also encompass HM’s new design choices. This was an important lesson of compromise as well as revaluation of a project that was in motion. A similar learning curve came after attending a HM board meeting and we were able to conduct a focus group of the wireframe we had at the time. Following the focus group, we received a lot of feedback which was ultimately the cause of us redesigning the Figma wireframe. While we managed to completely the task within a weeks’ time it was an important lesson of time management. During the creation of our project plan we had enabled time for feedback but not to this extent. Therefore, going forward into future projects, considering this from an early stage could lead to saving more time as well as creating a realistic project plan that factor in these potential risks/issues.

Another lesson that was quickly learned was to prepare for the unexpected, this was made abundantly clear at our group presentation in which we had prepared to showcase our timeline, planned trajectory as well as answer any questions sent our way. While our presentation was received well and showcased the work we had done, in the allotted time given to our group, as a group we were unprepared for the sheer quantity of questions we would receive. Uneven distribution in answering questions led to us looking rather unprofessional and unreliable even if all the questions were answered well and lack of preparation to have the work on screen led to us extending the time limit past the allotted time. Although the presentation ended on a good note and we managed to redeem face as well as answer all the questions presented to us, it is a situation to reflect and learn upon.

WordPress has/was the biggest challenge of the project as a group and as an individual but also the most educational part of the whole process. Every time I used WordPress to create a page I was constantly learning and revisiting old pages to improve with the new knowledge I had acquired. Challenges and problems appeared early with technical elements proposed in the wireframe perhaps not being possible in the application. Although, after some research we successfully added said elements such as a donation form embedded in the live WordPress page instead of having to travel to a third-party page. However, our biggest dilemma was the transfer of the page from our temporary panel server to Housing Matters. While migration is possible as we had successfully accomplished it, it was also daunting to try and recreate. After talking with specialists, we were advised to use a live staging server but this could pose a problem if HM did not have the infrastructure set, which they did not. Facing such pressurised circumstances, every decision and action was a learning curve. Managing time for transfer (migration) of the page if anything went wrong as well as communicating with numerous parties all at once and relaying it to people to keep everyone in the loop, proved a challenge but a pivotal part of the process.

Ultimately, the last step of the WordPress process was the final learning point of this project, SEO or Seach Engine Optimisation. While I had experience and knowledge in writing SEO, it was still a rather intimidating task due to every word and phrase needing to be meaningful and a good choice in the algorithm. While we had been supplied with google analytics and were capable of looking at keywords, the google analytics were rather vague and did not carry sufficient information to make clear SEO choices. Using what we had, as well as our own research into keywords, which we explored Google Ads for, another piece of software that had to be learned we successfully created a WordPress page that had been Search Engine Optimised. Once again time management was key here, we had given ourselves sufficient time to perform SEO, but perhaps not to the level we would have desired. Therefore, the key outcome of this was the process of learning SEO and implementing it into a live page as well as managing time to successfully achieve all our goals for this section of the brief but also for the project as a whole.