

Newark and Sherwood Leaseholders Monitoring Group



MINUTES OF OUR PUBLIC MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 23 MARCH 2006



Attended by: Ian Dunlop, Chairperson
John Shaw, Finance and Purchasing Manager (Newark and Sherwood Homes)
Carolyn Rowston, Leasehold Services Officer (Newark and Sherwood Homes)

Councillor David Thompson (Newark and Sherwood District Council)
Mr and Mrs Smith (Leaseholders)
Mr Green (Leaseholder)

Apologies: Margaret Webb, Vice Chairperson
Suzanne Whitling, Finance Director (Newark and Sherwood Homes)
Barry Brassington, Investment Programme Manager (Newark and Sherwood Homes)
Mr and Mrs Thompson (leaseholders)

Venue: The Circle Community Centre, Clipstone

Time: 7.00pm

1) OPENING

ACTION

ID opened the meeting and introduced himself and the Newark and Sherwood Homes (NSH) staff attending the meeting.

2) MINUTES OF THE LAST COMMITTEE MEETING

CR went through the minutes giving details of matters discussed including:

- **Service Standards**

Consultation with leaseholders on the Consultation Register has now been carried out and following comments made from the consultation process the 2nd service standard has been amended to read as follows:

“With each service charge bill we send you we will provide you with a copy of our ‘Guide to Service Charges and the Repair and Maintenance of your Leasehold Flat’ together with clear information on the work or services provided and explain how your proportion of our costs have been calculated”.

When approved, the service standards are expected to be included as part of the Newark and Sherwood Homes document “Our Service Standards”. The company’s service standards are reviewed annually and it is proposed that the Leasehold Service Standards be included in the next issue due for publication this Summer. Copies of the current version of this document can be found on

CR

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the website www.nshomes.co.uk or from the reception area at Kelham Hall.

- **Leaseholders Handbook**

Due to the imminent structural reorganisation of Newark and Sherwood Homes publication of the handbook has been delayed to allow for the necessary amendments.

CR/AST

- **Audit and Best Value Review of the Leasehold Service**

A 3-day audit of the leasehold service is planned for week commencing 3 April 2006. This is expected to be a relatively high level audit concentrating on accountability.

The Best Value review is expected to be completed before the end of May and will concentrate on the issues raised by the Audit Commission following the inspection last year and the revised KLOE (Key Lines of Enquiry) and will involve all aspects of the service.

- **Buildings Insurance**

Newark & Sherwood District Council's (NSDC) Accountancy Section who send out the buildings insurance were asked to provide leaseholders with an insurance certificate or proof of insurance. Unfortunately, the insurers do not issue such a certificate, however, an up-to-date policy summary has been agreed. Unfortunately, the summary has not been able to be translated into 'Plain English' but efforts are being made by NSDC to try and make the document easier to read and understand. It was agreed that other authorities would be consulted to see if they had been successful in producing such a document in the desired format.

CR

It was noted that the policy summary does not clearly indicate if fixtures and fittings (eg WC, bath, basins etc) are included, CR agreed to ask NSDC for clarification.

CR/NSDC -JA

3) CORRESPONDENCE

None received.

4) MEMBERSHIP APPLICATIONS

There have been no applications to join the Committee to date and none were forthcoming at the meeting. All leaseholders are eligible to join the Committee subject to the agreement of the existing Committee members.

5) GROUP LOGO COMPETITION

The competition advertised in Homes from Homes Issue 4 (Winter 2005 Edition) invited all leaseholders to design a new logo for the Monitoring Group. The Group offered £30 for the winning entry and two runner-up prizes of £10 each. Unfortunately no entries were received.

The Group felt that this was a very disappointing response and will now continue

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to use the existing logo and artwork provided by Newark and Sherwood Homes.

6) INVESTMENT PROGRAMME

CR reported that decent homes work in the Western area commenced in October 2005 starting in Clipstone, Edwinstowe, Ollerton and Lowdham and is still on-going in these areas.

In the Eastern area work is currently being undertaken in Farndon.

The proposed programme for the 2006-2007 year is expected to be as follows, however, this may be subject to change:

In the Western area work is scheduled to start in Oxton, Southwell and Eaking.

In the Eastern area work is scheduled to start in Balderton, Hawtonville (planned maintenance), Elston, East Stoke, Collingham, Clifton, Harby and Thorney.

7) IMPROVEMENT WORKS

CR reported that she had received concerns from leaseholders regarding the decent homes work and other potential 'improvement' works such as development schemes (for example the proposed improvement works to the access to the flats on Tithe Barn Court). Leaseholders were unsure if they would be expected to contribute financially to this work.

To help clarify the situation CR explained that the Council's leases do not currently require leaseholders to contribute to 'improvement' works. Basically, improvements in this context would include any works or schemes that are not required specifically in order to maintain or repair the building or communal areas relative to the property or building concerned or works that are necessary to comply with any statutory obligations. However, should any part of the project involve the repair or maintenance of a relevant area or item then the costs for the repair or maintenance element of the project would be proportionally rechargeable under the terms and conditions of the lease.

8) NEWARK AND SHERWOOD HOMES – NEW STRUCTURE

As yet full details of the new structure are not yet available, however, it appears that the Leasehold and Right to Buy services are to be combined within the Finance Directorate based at Kelham Hall. CR announced that she expected to be relocated to Kelham Hall from the Farrar Close Office in early April 2006.

The Finance Director, Mrs Suzanne Whitling hopes to be able to attend future meetings.

9) ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None.

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8a) NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING

Thursday, 25 May 2006

Kelham Hall

By invitation only – please contact Ian (☎ 01636 659127), Margaret (☎ 01623 486185) or Carolyn (☎ 01636 655550) if you would like to join the Committee.

The meeting will commence with a working lunch from 1pm – lunch provided by NSH.

b) NEXT LEASEHOLDERS PUBLIC MEETING

Tuesday, 18 July 2006

Kings Court Community Centre, Southwell.

7pm – 9pm