

LEASEHOLDERS REPRESENTATIVE GROUP
Thursday 10th January 2008

Present: Christine Campbell, Leaseholder Board Member; Tom Watt, Chair; Keith Nials, Vice Chair; James Weston, Secretary; Rachel Webber, Treasurer; Wendy Phipps, Vice Treasurer; Denise Key; Lisa Key; Alison Philpot; Andy Cluett; Michael Young; Paul Baker; Emma Sutton-Hills; Richard Sutton-Hills; John White; Mike Gaisford; Joyce Bright; Jenny Ford' Julie Gaisford.

VAHT Officers Present: Jules Goodridge, Resident Involvement Officer; Fillan McLellan, Resident Involvement Manager.

Invited Trust Staff: Ian Silver

Apologies: Jeff Barry; Mr Hartley; Val Scott; Jeff Barry.

		Action by
1	<p>Welcome and apologies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Tom welcomed all to the meeting and wished all a happy new year. ▪ All introduced themselves to each other. 	
2	<p>Notes from last meeting 8th November 2007 and matters arising</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Minutes agreed as correct and all actions cleared ▪ Tom wrote to LHMC regarding the sub group meeting. Ian is keen for the meeting to continue and he has promised to sit on that group too. 	
3	<p>Ian Silver</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ian thanked all for the invitation 2. Ian has met Christine, Tom and Keith and had requested the questions ahead of the meeting but these were not provided until 5pm today but should cover most of those issues tonight. 3. Ian stated that the Trust had not got off to the best start with LH. Long way to go to build confidence and trust and this is a two way process. 4. Ian stated the Trust has inherited the position they are in and are working to improve the situation. <p>Service charges</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Still working towards actual charges. £56,000 received so far in service charge payments. 6. Mike has been doing reconciliations and issuing revised bills. 7. Still in the process of doing a survey of the stock. Still trying to unravel the Grounds Maintenance service with the Council. Ian meeting with the Council next week to try to resolve the issues. Contract runs till 2012. They need to provide a breakdown of all costs. 	

8. When actual bills are released this will have a breakdown of costs.
9. It is hoped then that LH will be able to monitor services received once this information is received.
10. Vale House residents should receive their actual bills soon.

Windows and Doors

11. The Trust have changed lawyers. Still a complication due to the different leases. Clarification more or less received (they still have a couple to look at). There are two different types of leases:
12. Type A – where it is the LH responsibility i.e. windows and doors (581). Letter will be going out soon to gauge interest in buying into the window and door contracts.
13. Type B – Trusts responsibility to do windows and doors (18)
14. Type C – similar to type B (1)
15. Those with type B and C will be visited.
16. Complications – type A lease; LH can buy into the contracts in place. Payment options being looked at currently.

Gas Servicing

17. Provisional prices have been agreed internally. Annual gas servicing approximately £88.00. however may need to go to board.
18. CP12 annual service. Full parts and labour service for approximately £172. again subject to possibly going to the Board.
19. New contractors in place now for Gas Services.

Update on the Homeowner Team

20. Majority staff have been agency to date. Now looking to recruit Homeownership Manager(HM). Christine and Tom are welcomed to be part of the Interview panel.
21. Mike Ekoja will be leaving at the end of January. Hoping to get someone in soon.
22. Ian stated he felt it was important that the new HM should be sat at the table and work together with you all to offer professional expertise, understanding and advice.

Healthcare Check

23. Ian explained that we hope to be a 2 star service overall. We've had a mock inspection. LH received 0 Stars in the first mock. Progress has been made however we expect the verdict to be poor again but we should be told that we have progressed and that we have prospects of improving.
24. We will work closely with the LRG on the action plan for further improvement.

Estate Standards

25. Ian re-iterated that he would like LH to be involved in Estate inspections.
26. Ian looking to grade Estates Bronze, Silver and Gold. Inspections will be done to grade them and you are welcomed to come along.
27. The district will be mapped and info will go to the LRG. Environmental improvements will have a big impact on the areas. Stock Condition Survey will highlight where the work needs to be done.
28. It is expected that the Board will tell us that we need all estates up to Gold in a number of years.
29. Neighbourhood Team currently being recruited to start this work.

Building Insurance

30. Tendering process happening currently. Christine has raised various questions.
31. Ian would like to invite a couple of LH between the dates 14th – 18th January for a meeting to look at the Building Insurance issues for 2008/9.
32. Ian reiterated that they really do want to work with the LRG.

Administrative Charges

33. We are looking to introduce Admin Charges. The income you pay will be offset against the charges. To explain – if a LH is behind with service charge payments, letters are issued and you collectively pay for this currently. With the introduction of an admin charge the LH in arrears will pay.
34. Q: Do we have to pay for permission 'right to improve' to have the new doors? A: We will be asking you to indicate if you are interested. When we give you a price, this will be all you pay.
35. Q: Will the doors and Windows come as a package? A: We hope to be able to split it down. I don't know currently what the costs are.
36. Q: If you have done your windows will you still replace ours? A: Common sense approach is no we won't. This does need to go through the Board.
37. Q: Why have you forged ahead without any notice doing digital aerials? A: See 3.39
38. Q: Junction box and mast been put up. No notice given. There has been no consultation. Why is this work being done and I'm being charged when it doesn't need to be done until 2011? A: Ian will look into the issues. See 3.39
39. *R: Mike Ekoja did write to all Leaseholders' who are affected prior to the work starting. The reason for bringing the works forward is twofold firstly to backfill for under spend in the window installation due to section 20 and secondly to obtain best value saving*

	<p><i>two years inflation on costs.</i></p> <p>40. Q: Can you please address letters not being signed. We have no way of knowing who sent it? A: I will look into this.</p> <p>41. Q: £10. ground rent – overall SC includes buildings insurance. Are we insured if we don't pay till the end of the year? A: my understanding was that should pay £10 followed by a further £10 on account. Doing this you will be insured.</p> <p>42. C: Draft handbook has various mistakes. R: when all comments are received we will then have a final version.</p> <p>43. Q: Whether we pay at the start of at the end – has the insurance been paid by the Trust? A: The insurance for this year has been paid by the Trust.</p> <p>44. C: When you go back to the board – my parts labour and service cost £80 per year. Ian asked for the company providing this for comparison. The general view was the estimates were too high.</p> <p>45. Q: how often do the Health checks take place. A: As a Registered Social Landlord we get regulated by the Audit Commission. This is called an Audit commission Inspection. To prepare for this we have mock inspections and from these come improvement plans. We will have an improvement plan from this Health Check that we will share with you.</p> <p>46. Q: I am a bit concerned that having met the accountant you are giving different timescales for when estimate and actual bills will be out. Can we have clarification: A: Estimates bill for the year ahead in March. Actual Within 6 months after financial for previous financial year (by 30 September).</p> <p>47. Tom addressed the group saying it would good if we could get some Insurance quotes together and urged that they be sent in ASAP.</p> <p>48. Nominations to go to the meeting with Ian; Keith, Tom, John. Jules to notify Ian.</p>	<p>IS</p> <p>TW</p> <p>JG</p>
4	Break	
5	<p>Code of Conduct</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Jules talked the group through the Code of Conduct adopted back in July 2007 and asked whether they would like to review it. The following were added: 2. Jules explained that currently all respect each other and are polite and courteous. Jules emphasised the importance of the Code of Conduct and re-iterated how important it was to adhere to so as not to upset anyone in the group. 3. Running to time – the last couple of meetings of have run over the time allocated on the agenda. And there 	

	<p>are a couple of reasons for that – 1) Agenda items may not have been allocated the correct timings and 2) AOB.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Tom and Jules are working to ensure that the timings for the agenda items are correct to avoid the meeting running over. 5. The item AOB has changed to AUB. This is to try and control the timings during the meeting. If you have an agenda item you must raise it with Tom (if not Tom – then Jules, so she can raise with Tom) so it can be built into the evening. <p>Important reasons to not let the meeting run over are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Some may have children you need to get home too. 7. Taxi's are booked and people will need to leave when they arrive and will not want to miss any of the meeting. 8. Venues are booked from for certain hours and in particular to this venue, the keys need to be returned. Returning them late can result in costs increasing for the venue. 9. And finally it's important to run to timings as it's unprofessional to let meetings run over. 10. Code of Conduct to be an agenda item for the next meeting. 	TW/JG
6	<p>Constitution</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Both Tom and Jules declared they had received no amendments. 2. James talked about the name of the group. The correct name is <u>The Leaseholders' Representative Group.</u> 3. James also raised the question regarding the freeholders. Jules to get clarification for next meeting. 4. The group agreed that the constitution should be signed. 5. Tom and James signed the document. 6. Jules to bring copies for all committee members to next meeting. 	JG JG
7	<p>Finance Update</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Rachel updated the group that the Account application form is being filled out. 2. Three signatories are required. These will be Wendy, Tom and Rachel. 3. Rachel will open the account this week with two pounds - £1 to savings account and £1 to current account. 4. Rachel has spoken to Ian requesting receipts, money etc. if Rachel disagrees with any she will meet with the finance directors to start the account from 	

	<p>scratch.</p> <p>5. All thanked Rachel for all her hard work regarding the finances.</p> <p>6. All agreed the official address for the organisation should be Toms address.</p>	IS
8	<p>Feedback ~ LHAG</p> <p>1. Christine and Tom went to London. They had 45 minutes only with the advisor.</p> <p>2. The advisor would not go through our lease. We did get some information</p> <p>3. Tom stated that other leaseholders have succeeded at tribunals in the past in getting excessive charges reduced to more reasonable charges. He feels we should be working to towards this. The group agreed in principle. There would be costs involved. When you go to Tribunal the Trust have to pay 50% of the costs. Tom talked through other aspects of the procedure.</p> <p>4. They can legally tell us to pay up to 6 months in advance based on previous years. Although this can't happen this year.</p> <p>5. Ian has offered services of the trusts solicitors free of charge. They could translate our leases into plain English. Christine recommended that the group should do this and then get a second opinion. We as a group can then decide what to do. The group fully supported this motion. Tom to speak to Ian to arrange.</p> <p>6. Q: We need to find out the legalities of other instances such as the digital aerials. A: Tom stated that the problem is the Leases. Hopefully when we have them interpreted we may be in a better position.</p> <p>7. Keith recommended that the LRG get in contact with other RSL's that have won cases. Haringey is one who won their appeal on reasonable charges.</p> <p>8. Fillan stated that we pay a yearly subscription to see whether TPAS can provide any information.</p>	<p>TW</p> <p>JG</p>
9	<p>Board Feedback</p> <p>1. Christine has had a lengthy discussion with the new Chair of the Board. He is prepared to bring back some issues to the general Board meeting next month.</p> <p>2. Q: when does your Board position come up? A: September this year.</p> <p>3. Christine has worked hard for us. All to give thought as to whether they would like to stand although Tom pointed out that he hoped Christine would stand again.</p>	

10	<p>Meeting dates for the year</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tom explained the importance of knowing when the meetings are held in advance and with that put to the group the following dates for meetings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 6th March 2008 – Eskdale Road Community Centre ▪ 1st May 2008 – Trust Boardroom ▪ 3rd July 2008 - Eskdale Road Community Centre ▪ 4th September 2008 – Walton Court Community Centre ▪ 6th November 2008 - Eskdale Road Community Centre ▪ 8th January 2008 – Walton Court Community Centre 2. It was felt that more meetings may be needed and there was a preference to find free venues such as the Trust Boardroom. Jules and Tom to look into dates and book meeting for next month. 	JG/TW
11	<p>Any Urgent Business</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Jules explained that the new Resident Involvement Officer for the West area, Ada Terry, is organising the Conference for this year. Jules asked the group for a representative to go onto the working group. They will meet four times between now and July. The group to contact Jules if they are keen to be involved. 2. Draft Handbook – all to feed back their comments back. Tom has made the groups suggestions known to ME and IS at the Trust and written to say that the LRG would only support if they took into account their suggestions. 	All
12	<p>Date of Next Meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Tuesday 5th February 2008 – Board Room, Fairfax House, Buckingham Street, Aylesbury. Bucks. HP20 2NJ ▪ <u>PLEASE NOTE</u>: this is an extra meeting and may not be in your diary's. ▪ Thursday 6th March 2008 – Eskdale Road Community Centre. 	