

# CHCG

## MINUTES OF THE CITY HOUSING CONSULTATION GROUP MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 24TH SEPTEMBER, CARDINAL SQUARE

Present:	Dennis Rees	- Chair of Derby Homes
	Sylvia Hyde	- DACP
	Gwen Stubley	- DACP
	Bernard Harry	- DACP
	Elaine Jackson	- DACP
	Nita Murphy	- DACP
	Joanna Palmer	- DACP
	Bayo Kujore	- DMEHG Representative
	John Bloxsom	- Derby Homes
	Maria Murphy	- Derby Homes
	Shaun Bennett	- Derby Homes
	Phil Davies	- Derby Homes
	Richard Smail	- Derby Homes
	Jonathan Geall	- Derby City Council
	Andy Crowe	- Audit Commission, Housing Insp
	Roy Read	- Best Value TIA
	Peter Higginbotham	- TIA Central Region
	Andrea Spurling	- Panel Assistant, Derby Homes

Apologies: Ray Bradbeer, Maureen Parker, Councillor Gerrard

### 1 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Agreed as an accurate record.

### 2 MATTERS ARISING NOT ON THE AGENDA

#### **Update on Grounds Maintenance**

Derek Bale has been asked to take the lead with regard to the Grounds Maintenance issues.

#### **Revised Complaints Procedure**

The final version is currently with the printers. It will consist of a 4 page leaflet which will contain a complaints form. The booklet will be available at all local housing offices. The procedure will come into force on 1st November 2002. Staff will also receive training on the new procedure.

#### **Update on Area Boards**

John attended a meeting on Monday 16th September. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister are considering the proposals.

## **DACP Equalities Action Plan**

Elaine sent a copy of the draft plan to Phil.

### **3 TO AGREE ANY LATE ITEMS**

- a Reintroduction of Young Persons Initiative
- b John Bloxsom

### **4 FEEDBACK FROM HOUSING AND SOCIAL INCLUSION BRIEFING**

Jonathan Geall introduced five key issues that had been discussed at the briefing.

- Proposal to develop Derby Homefinder choice-based lettings across the whole city

Jonathan circulated a report outlining the progress and development of Derby Homefinder.

The pilot will end in March 2003. Feedback from staff has been very positive. The initiative has been very successful and as a result it is proposed to introduce it throughout the city.

A focus group consisting of people who have had experience of Homefinder, and Council Officers will be set up later this year. Questionnaires have been sent out to 3,400 people asking for their opinions of the initiative.

At the end of the discussion some concern was expressed by members of the DACP about the standard of Customer Care at the Housing Options Centre. John will speak to the manager about these issues.

### **ACTION: Jonathan to speak to manager of Housing Options Centre**

Elaine asked that the Derby Minorities Ethnic Housing Group is involved with the focus group.

### **ACTION: Jonathan to make sure DMEHG members are invited to the focus group**

- Commissioning of floating support scheme for young people

Jonathan circulated the report outlining the scheme that has been prepared with regard to developing a floating support scheme which is aimed specifically at young people. Derby City Council's strategy to prevent youth homelessness has identified a shortage of supported housing for young people and has targeted floating support as the preferred means of increasing the support available.

Walbrook Housing Association won the tender and it is proposed to have the scheme in operation by December.

- Home energy efficiency submission to the Environment and Sustainability Overview and Scrutiny Commission

Jonathan circulated the report on home energy conservation for information.

- Update on the new Housing Strategy

Jonathan outlined the extensive consultation that had taken place while producing this year's Housing Strategy

The draft strategy was circulated. Any comments will be brought back to the next CHCG meeting.

Jonathan agreed to make copies of the final document available to DMEHG and DACP

- Derby City Council and Derby Homes participation in the Major Cities Housing Group

Jonathan confirmed that the Council and Derby Homes will both attend future meetings. Derby is the only Major Cities member that has set up an Arms Length Management Organisation.

## 5 TO RECEIVE AND UPDATE ON THE IMPROVEMENT ACTION PLAN

Maria outlined the key issues that are currently being addressed:

### a Local office opening times

The report discussed at the last CHCG meeting was agreed by the Board. The changes will come into effect in November.

### b Review of Customer Care Policies and Initiatives

A Process Improvement Team has been established to look at this.

### c Access Review of Local Housing Offices

This is well underway. Surveys have been carried out at Allenton and Alvaston. The plan is to have completed all the surveys by the end of this financial year.

Farooq Malik has been looking at the seating provision in all reception areas.

### d Housing Benefit Process Improvement Team

This has been established. The PIT will be working closely with the existing Housing Benefit Liaison Group.

Maria will send a copy of the action plan to the DACP.

**ACTION: Maria to send a copy of the plan to the DACP**

**6 TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE TOP TEN STANDARDS FOR HOUSING**

The top 10 standards monitoring began in April 2002. The first quarter results were published in Housing News. There are certain areas where 90% is being achieved. The standards that are not achieving 90% are being looked at in more detail. Individual repair cases are being analysed in order to identify where the problems are occurring.

Standard number 6 is particularly worrying. This relates to inspecting properties and inputting the repair orders. One reason behind the low level of performance is the problems that have been experienced with the retention and recruitment of Area Property Surveyors. A full team is now in place. It is also looking to be improved.

**7 DERBY HOMES TENANT AND LEASEHOLDER BOARD ELECTIONS**

The Derby Homes Annual General Meeting will take place on 31st October. The four tenant and leaseholder places on the Board were up for renewal. Sylvia Hyde, Nita Murphy, Dennis Rees and Jenny Bradley will be joining the Board. There will be a contested election for the South West. Audrey Marples and Lionel Massingham are standing. Ballot papers will go out to all tenants in the South West next week and the ballot will close on 27th October.

The period of office for the tenant members will be determined by the drawing of lots. Two members will stand until 2003, 2 until 2004 and 1 until 2005. From then on retirement will be by rotation. Bernard Harry, Theo Harris and Tracy Maddocks have stood down. John will write to them thanking them for their contributions.

**ACTION: John Bloxsom to write to Tracy, Theo and Bernard**

**8 TO RECEIVE PROPOSALS ABOUT LOCAL HOUSING OFFICE BOUNDARY CHANGES**

It is proposed to change local office boundaries to come in line with ward and area panel boundaries. As initial analysis had indicated that:

- Morley estate will be managed by the Mackworth office.
- Exeter House will be managed by Stockbrook Street and the properties outside the ring rd at the Manor Road junction Uttoxeter New Road currently managed by Stockbrook Street will become the responsibility of the Austin office.

- Properties in Mickleover currently managed by Mackworth will also be moving to Austin.
- The Birdie estate will move from Old Sinfen to New Sinfen. A copy of the final management changes will be sent to the DACP prior to the changes going public.

A consultation exercise has not been carried out as there is very little open to consultation.

These change will work alongside the Customer panel changes and it is hoped that Customer panels will link into Area panels. Any items discussed that are not Housing related would be brought to the attention of the Area panel. This matter will be discussed in more detail at the next meeting. Jonathan will invite a representative from the Area Neighbourhood Team to the next meeting.

**ACTION: Maria to send the LHO boundary proposals to DACP**

**ACTION: Jonathan to invite a rep from the ANT to the next meeting**

## 9 TO RECEIVE FEEDBACK FROM STAFF CONFERENCE

The conference took place on 11th September. All local offices were closed and emergency cover was arranged with Carelink. The day went very well and was well and it was felt that closing the offices played a significant part in the success as all staff could attend.

## 10 TO REQUEST ADDITIONAL FUNDING FOR DERBY TENANTS RESOURCE CENTRE TO ALLOW FOR A PREMISES CHANGE FOLLOWING EXPIRY OF LEASE

The lease for Boden House runs out in June 2003 and the DACP need to find new premises. The cost of the current lease is approximately £4500. Any new property will cost substantially more than this. The DACP requested that additional funding is provided. Phil stated that the decision lies with the Board or possibly Derby City Council. The DACP has Phil's support. Phil asked if the DACP would write to him outlining all the possible options for new premises.

**ACTION DACP to write to Phil outlining their proposals for new offices and resource centre**

## 11 TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON TENANTS DAY

Dennis reported that everything is on course. He thanked Tracy, Richard Platt and members of the DACP for all their hard work.

12 TO RECEIVE ANY OTHER REPORTS FROM COUNCIL CABINET  
AND DERBY HOMES BOARD

Copies of the Derby Homes Board reports were circulated. The draft improvement plan for the maintenance review will be part of the inspectors work this week.

13 LATE ITEMS

1 Reintroduction of Young Persons Initiative

Bernard outlined his commitment to set up a young persons group (16 - 30) to replace the Young Tenants Action Group. Anyone who is interested contact Bernard or Gwen on 256213.

2 John Bloxsom

John announced that he will be leaving Derby at the end of the year to join Rutland Council. He wished Derby Homes and the DACP every success in the future.

14 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will take place on 29th October, 2.00 pm, Cardinal Square.