

# ENGLISH RURAL HOUSING ASSOCIATION

## RESIDENTS PANEL MEETING

Notes of meeting held on 21 June 2011

Present: Martin Collett (MC), Christine Knight (CK), Jane Jennings (JJ),  
Brian McCombie (BM), Lesley Childs (LC), Kathryn Watson (KW)

		ACTION
1	<p>APOLOGIES</p> <p>Apologies were received from Martyn Clements, Tony McArthur and Pauline Rose.</p>	
2	<p>SERVICE BRIEFING – HANDLING COMPLAINTS</p> <p>Aim to resolve all complaints at the first point of contact before they escalate into a formal complaint. Once a formal complaint is made, the Complaints Policy and Procedure are sent to the complainant so they are aware of how their complaint will be handled.</p> <p>Complaints are recorded in the monthly KPI's and the Complaints Register is available at all Panel meetings. Any complaints are used to review internal procedures and identify areas for improvement.</p> <p>It was agreed that the KPI's would include a brief summary of any complaint received during the month and an annual review of all complaints would be undertaken to identify any common themes.</p> <p>The Complaints Policy is available on the website.</p>	
3	<p>NOTES OF LAST MEETING</p> <p>These were agreed.</p> <p>Gas servicing review meeting took place on 4<sup>th</sup> May – very satisfied with BTU and has been an improvement in the service received. An additional contribution above the contract sum was agreed to cover additional travel costs following a large number of repairs over winter to the outlying properties. Per unit costs still remain lower than previous contract.</p> <p>SW HM Tour – the tour scheduled for 17 May was cancelled due to lack of availability of Panel members. This will be rearranged to take place during August.</p>	

4	<p><b>NEW TENANCY – TENANCY REVIEW POLICY &amp; PROCEDURE</b></p> <p>The policy was agreed subject to one minor change under section 2.5.</p> <p>The policy will be included as part of the sign up pack for all new residents who are signed up on the new tenancy.</p> <p>An update on the new tenancy will be included in the next newsletter so existing tenants are aware of the changing situation should they wish to move in future.</p>	
5	<p><b>COMPLAINTS REGISTER</b></p> <p>This was available at the meeting for review.</p>	
6	<p><b>OPEN MIC FOR RESIDENTS</b></p> <p>Mispostings to rent account were discussed. It was agreed that letters should be sent to residents if any adjustments for misposting are made to their accounts.</p> <p>Water connections – following a water leak at Warehorne, there has been some confusion over who is responsible for leaks or fault on the actual connection to the water meter. Water company have advised that they will undertake the work on this occasion but if there are any further problems this would be the landlords responsibility. Further investigations needed to clarify point of responsibility.</p> <p>Trees in gardens – ongoing concerns amongst residents regarding maintenance responsibilities. This has formed part of the recent Health and Safety review and large trees will be inspected regularly. Feedback to development staff has resulted in considerations being made on the location of trees on new schemes. Wherever possible trees will be removed from gardens and no new trees planted.</p>	KW
7	<p><b>KPI's</b></p> <p>Arrears now under target of 3%.</p> <p>Warning letters sent to residents by both BTU and English Rural to follow up 4 outstanding gas safety certificates.</p> <p>Following analysis of recent re-lets and target times it has been identified that CBL seems to be causing delays</p>	

	<p>and making the 14 day target for voids with minor works unachievable. It was agreed that this would be changed to a target time of 21days, and although this would still be tight it would be more realistic.</p>	
8	<p>PLANNED MAINTENANCE</p> <p>This year's programme will be the biggest to date. Contracts have been broken down into 3 regions which has allowed local contractors to tender for works.</p> <p>Pre-contract meetings held on 23 June and works will hopefully be underway by July with external works to be carried out over summer months and internal works later in the year.</p>	
9	<p>RESIDENT INVOLVEMENT IMPACT ASSESSMENT</p> <p>No further additions or amendments to the assessment.</p> <p>Full resident survey will be undertaken in Autumn and will be shorter than the previous surveys. This will be promoted in the next newsletter encouraging residents to respond and a prize draw will be offered.</p>	
10	<p>CORPORATE UPDATE</p> <p>Adrian Maunders joined the meeting to provide an update.</p> <p>Following a meeting of the Audit and Standards Committee, the Annual Accounts were approved and will be submitted to the Board for final approval at the next meeting.</p> <p>Southern Housing Group are undergoing a stock rationalisation programme and English Rural have expressed initial interest in some of the stock. The package includes over 100 properties with approximately 70 rural homes and the remainder are urban stock. The Panel raised concerns over the cost of buying the homes and how this would affect our own development programme. The urban stock was also discussed and how any proposal should not include these properties. The Panel also asked if considerations had been given to the additional staff time that would be required to manage the homes. Staff coverage in the Kent area is already very close to capacity and it would seem necessary for additional staffing resources in this region.</p>	

	<p>Affordable Housing Programme Bid – the bid included 203 new homes to be developed between 2011-2015 and the outcome should be known during early July. The Panel asked if they could be informed when the outcome is known.</p> <p>Kent Housing Group launched its Rural Housing Protocol at a joint event with the opening of English Rural's homes at Egerton.</p> <p>National Rural Housing Week will start on 11<sup>th</sup> July and English Rural will be holding a turf turning event at Chiddingfold on 14<sup>th</sup> July to help promote this.</p>	MC
11	<p>A.O.B</p> <p>This years annual report will include the corporate annual report and business planning, the annual report to residents and the local offers. The Panel will be consulted via email on the feedback to residents section and the Annual report will be ready for distribution at the AGM in September.</p> <p>The Panel agreed to invite another resident to become a member. The resident had already expressed an interest in becoming more involved in the Association and it was felt their experiences would be a useful contribution to the Panel.</p>	MC
12	<p>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</p> <p>Next meeting to be held on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> September 2011 on the morning of the AGM.</p>	