

Bracknell Forest Leaseholders Association

27th August 2009

Present:

Michael Marsh (MM) (Chair)
Neville Campling (NC)
Margaret Firth (MF)
Bill Penney (BP)
Rosemary Goddard (RG)

Marjo Anderson (MA)
Bet Riley (BR)
Patricia Brown (PB)
Lorraine Christie (LC)
Shelagh Pile (SP)

Officers:

Linda Wells (LW) – Housing and Community Services Director
Steph Verstraeten (SV) – Customer Involvement Officer
Emma Martin (EM) – Customer Involvement Assistant
Nicola Smith-Crallan (NSC) – Housing Officer
Martin Thomas (MT) – Head of Technical Services

1.	Welcome and introductions MM welcomed everyone to the meeting. MM introduced SV and LW.
2.	Minutes of Last Meeting and Matters Arising MM mentioned how Bracknell is undergoing a lot of re-development at the moment, e.g. Bracknell train station forecourt, Longshot Lane, etc. MM said the leaseholder survey had been out for approx 1 month and 10 replies had been received. Survey results showed that members would prefer bi-annual meetings. The attendees present, thought six weeks was sufficient. It was agreed to continue to hold the meetings every six weeks. The minutes from the last meeting were agreed and signed.
3.	Guest Speaker – Martin Thomas MT briefly explained his job role and how he thought technical services had progressed and what had been achieved. MT mentioned the very committed workforce, repairs and maintenance figures, e.g. appointments completed on time are at 99.1%. 1300 jobs are completed every month. PDA's are being trialled for tradesmen which would save them having to come into the office to collect paperwork, etc. Landscaping have taken on a new administrator which should alleviate pressure on the landscaping team. MT spoke of some ideas and would like feedback from Leaseholders. MT said Bracknell Forest Homes might be extending the gas service to leaseholders, offering the services of repairs and maintenance, replacing communal lighting with more energy efficient lighting and renting out energy meters so that customers can gauge how much energy they use and create awareness. The group felt the ideas were good but needed more detail about costs to leaseholders, etc. MT will return to a future meeting with more details.

	<p>There was a discussion about grounds maintenance and land ownership. LW said that Bracknell Forest Homes is currently working with the Council to resolve the issue that revolves around land ownership and grounds maintenance. SP will liaise with relevant members of Bracknell Forest Council.</p> <p>LC suggested publicising the landscaping programme so customers are aware of when the work will be done. MT agreed and suggested notice boards, the website and perhaps, Spotlight.</p> <p>SP suggested reducing cuts in certain areas as the growth is slower and using those additional cuts in areas with faster growth.</p>
<p>4.</p>	<p>Update on Bracknell Forest Homes from Linda Wells</p> <p>LW started by saying that the TSA had recently visited Bracknell Forest Homes to conduct their “first year visit”. The inspectors went on a tour of the estates and met tenants and leaseholders. The informal feedback that was received was very positive and the outcomes of the inspection will be publicised in Spotlight and on the website.</p> <p>Children between the ages of 7 and 12 recently attended a youth event at Oakwood Youth Challenge, an outdoor pursuits centre, which includes activities such as rock climbing, mountain biking and animal care. The events were on the 4th and 25th of August. The feedback from the children who attended was excellent and they had a fantastic time.</p> <p>An event is being planned for ages 12 to 16 including community activities such as bulb and tree planting to encourage teens to look after the environment and a reward of cinema tickets, coral reef tickets or a visit to Oakwood, etc will be given to those who attend.</p> <p>LW introduced the “Planning for our future” Project for Sheltered Housing. The aim of the project is to develop a vision for Sheltered accommodation and services for the future. It was agreed that a series of focus groups would be put together to consult with customers to obtain their views. This would include discussions with the SSRA and coffee mornings at the schemes.</p> <p>LW said that the new IT system will be going live soon. Training for staff will commence in October. The first part of the system to be installed will be rents followed by estates.</p> <p>There will be changes in Housing Management in September. Housing Officers cover a range of tasks, including rents, estate issues, anti-social behaviour, etc. Housing Officers will now concentrate on certain areas of housing management; this includes neighbourhood management, rents and leasehold issues.</p>
<p>5.</p>	<p>Update on Leaseholders Handbook</p> <p>NC said that the leaseholder’s handbook is well under way and ahead of schedule. The group have set a target of getting it sent out to customers just after Christmas.</p>

	<p>At the next meeting in October, the first full draft will be ready to look at and it is the same format as the tenant's handbook so pages can be replaced and updated when necessary. It will also be going to the legal team in October so any changes can be made and checked, before the document goes to print.</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>MM explained that he had been invited to a presentation and tour of the new Longshot Lane Waste Management Park and members of the BFLA were more than welcome to attend. The presentation starts at 6:30pm on the 7th September.</p> <p>RG asked about Virgin Media analogue systems. NSC will contact RG.</p> <p>LC asked about parking. It was suggested LC speak with the owners of the land in question.</p> <p>MM said that he may not be able to carry on as Chair of the BFLA as he is looking to move. If anyone would like to stand for Chair or secretary please speak to EM. It was agreed that the next AGM will be held on the 8th October at Berkshire Court at 7:30pm.</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">Date of the next meeting: 8th October 2009 Berkshire Court 7:30pm – 9pm</p>