

**Tenants' and Leaseholders' Panel Meeting**  
**21<sup>ST</sup> August 2008**

**Present:** Robert Gristwood (RGr)  
 Bob Begbie (BB)  
 Marcella Begbie (MB)  
 Chick Lavender (CL)  
 Barbara McMinnies (BM)  
 Trevor Pearson (TP)  
 Derek Sullivan (DS)  
 Nick Westlake (NW)  
 Sheila Lambourne (SL)  
 Michael Marsh (MM)  
 Margaret Firth (MF)  
 Henry Bone (HBo)  
 Tim Rawsthorne (TR)  
 Herbie Barlow (HBa)  
 Ron Godfrey (RGo)  
 Cllr Shelagh Pile (SP)

**Officers:** Linda Wells (LW) – Housing and Community Services Director  
 Joanna Flaxman (JF) – Resident Involvement Officer  
 Emma Martin (EM) – Resident Involvement Assistant

**Observers:** George McMinnies (GM)  
 Muriel Rawsthorne (MR)  
 Sue Cleaver (SC)

		<b>ACTION</b>
<b>1.</b>	<p><b><u>Welcome and Apologies</u></b></p> <p><b>Apologies were received from:</b></p> <p>Maurice Grant            Mark Hickson            David Weston            Bill Potts            Phil Jones</p>	
<b>2.</b>	<p><b><u>Agreement of Minutes/ Matters Arising</u></b></p> <p>It was agreed by everyone that the minutes could not be signed yet due to the minutes not being a true representation of what happened at the last meeting. CL said that AGM was mentioned and people asked about how to be elected as an officer of the Panel but this was not recorded on the minutes. It was decided that the chair will sign the previous minutes when the changes have been made.</p> <p>TR said that he hopes the letter that will be written to Peter Maguire from the new chair will express the Panel's upmost appreciation for all the hard work that he did, especially</p>	<b>EM / NW</b>

	<p>throughout the transfer to Bracknell Forest Homes. This was agreed.</p> <p>RGr asked if the repairs and maintenance satisfaction surveys had been taken to all the sheltered schemes. JF said they should have them as she sent a box to all scheme managers.</p> <p>RGr then asked if more tenancy agreements had been returned. LW said more and more are slowly coming back, housing officers are now reminding people to fill in the tenancy agreements and census when they make home visits.</p>																									
<p><b>3.</b></p>	<p><b><u>Election of Panel Officers</u></b></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th><b>CANDIDATE</b></th> <th><b>POSITION</b></th> <th><b>NOMINATED</b></th> <th><b>SECONDED</b></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>NW</td> <td>Chair</td> <td>RGo</td> <td>BM</td> </tr> <tr> <td>RGr</td> <td>Vice Chair</td> <td>DS</td> <td>NW</td> </tr> <tr> <td>RGo</td> <td>Vice Chair</td> <td>HBa</td> <td>BB</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BM</td> <td>Secretary</td> <td>HBa</td> <td>TP</td> </tr> <tr> <td>CL</td> <td>Treasurer</td> <td>HBo</td> <td>MB</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>NW stood unopposed as Chair, supported by a majority show of hands. Ballot papers were handed out to vote for the Vice Chair position with RGo receiving the majority of the votes. BM stood unopposed as Secretary supported by a majority show of hands and CL stood unopposed as Treasurer supported by a majority show of hands.</p> <p>CL said as some officers have changed; a new mandate form will need to be completed at the end of the meeting. CL also said when officers go to the bank to change the signatories they will need to take a form of ID with them and an up-to-date constitution also needs to be taken.</p> <p>NW thanked RGr and TP for their hard work and will send a letter of thanks to Peter Maguire.</p>	<b>CANDIDATE</b>	<b>POSITION</b>	<b>NOMINATED</b>	<b>SECONDED</b>	NW	Chair	RGo	BM	RGr	Vice Chair	DS	NW	RGo	Vice Chair	HBa	BB	BM	Secretary	HBa	TP	CL	Treasurer	HBo	MB	
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<p><b>4.</b></p>	<p><b><u>Bracknell Forest Homes Update</u></b></p> <p>LW said there was a Board meeting 24<sup>th</sup> July, Dermot McRoberts was re-elected as chair and, Tom Wheaton and Bob Wade were re-elected as vice chairs. The Board Members have discussed introducing an appraisal scheme. This means Board Members have the opportunity to talk about positive and negative issues, development requirements, etc. The Board Members approved this.</p>																									

The estate environment policy is also being developed; this includes grounds maintenance, landscaping etc. and will involve customers in setting standards. The aim is to have this finished by March 2009.

Estate meetings have been going well with ideas put forward for estate improvements; issues such as parking are going to need a joint approach with the council.

BFH have been contacted by Dacorum Council and the London Borough of Merton Council to visit and find out about the transfer. They are in the process of stock transfer and would like to meet tenants and staff to discuss experiences. Dacorum will visit on the 1<sup>st</sup> October and Merton will also visit sometime during October. Dacorum would also like to take a tour of the Borough.

HBa said that Dacorum and Merton tenants visiting Berkshire Court could be influencing the tenants' decision making, only giving one side of the story.

LW said that pre ballot, tenants, staff and councillors visited other housing associations, stock retention councils and ALMOs to gain insight into their experiences. Those who visit BFH will need to make their own judgment and BFH would just be sharing the knowledge we have gained. BB agreed and said that when 2 ladies from Kirklees paid a visit, he gained a lot of knowledge from them. BM also agreed and said it was a similar situation with Guildford when they visited. CL also thought it was a good idea. LW asked for 4 volunteers to meet Dacorum. MF, BM, SL, RGo and CL volunteered. BB suggested anyone else who would like to volunteer could perhaps meet with Merton instead once the date is known.

LW had a meeting with Caroline Titley and the Citizens Advice Bureau regarding information about people who have been hit hard by the credit crunch. It was suggested that an information with customers somewhere in the estates before Christmas and in January to discuss how to use money more effectively. Everyone agreed this would be beneficial.

RGr asked LW how much the transfer cost, how the money was raised and whether tenant's homes were securing the loan. LW said a business plan was drawn up to put before major banks to make a decision upon and yes the homes were used as security. RGr had information from the council about the amount of capital receipt received from the sale of the homes

	<p>LW discussed the customer involvement forward plan, which outlines the route that new pieces of work will take through customer groups and consultation mechanisms, and asked people if they had any comments. NW said he would like more time to look over the document, everyone agreed – this will be placed on the agenda for the next meeting.</p> <p>The shareholding membership policy was also briefly discussed and NW said he would like more time with this document also and for it to be on the agenda next time. Everyone agreed.</p> <p>HBo mentioned the Depot. LW said BFH is currently working on a plan to move repairs and maintenance staff to Berkshire Court so everyone is under one roof. The new IT system is also being introduced. Terms and Conditions of tradesmen is being evaluated at the moment because BFH is finding it difficult to recruit and keep certain trades, especially plumbers and plasterers. NW asked is this something inherited from the Council or is this because of BFH? LW said it is not anything BFH have inherited nor is it to do with BFH but simply because of the area.</p> <p>RGr said that at the Priestwood estate meeting, voids were discussed and would like to know where funds come from to complete a new kitchen in an empty property. LW said if a property needed a new kitchen then the money would come from the major works budget.</p> <p>LW had comments back from BM and CL about the shareholding membership policy. BM suggested it would be useful to look at Maidstone’s application for membership. NW asked if everyone could have a copy. RGr also said that he had sent in some comments, but LW had not received this letter, and would look for it and get back to RGr.</p>	<b>LW</b>
<p><b>5.</b></p>	<p><b><u>Treasurers report</u></b></p> <p>CL started by saying the 1<sup>st</sup> part of the £1000 grant has been paid in. Looking at the transactions most money is spent on travel expenses. The current balance at the moment is £742.48. CL said taxi fares have risen, because of fuel costs. The taxi fare for the last meeting included waiting time and that if meetings were to run on time we would not have that problem. He said that we have an alternative in JJM but they charge a service charge, so even with Laurie’s waiting charge, it works out cheaper. NW agreed, and said that as long as CL thinks the Panel is getting value for money then he would be quite happy for</p>	

	Laurie to continue.	
6.	<p><b><u>Ground Rules and Constitution</u></b></p> <p>CL proposed some amendments to the constitution, including the title which will need to be changed to “Bracknell Forest Tenants and Leaseholders Panel” to correspond to the bank account. DS also noticed some grammatical errors.</p> <p>RGr said that according to 10.1 amendments can only be made at the BI-Annual General meeting. However, it was pointed out that according to 10.2 a special meeting may be called if a significant change is required.</p> <p>RGr said because of the new amendments the chair cannot sign it as planned. JF said the Panel need to propose and agree the amendments and then the chair could sign it. NW agreed he would not feel happy signing it off today.</p> <p>The process of being co-opted was discussed, NW said he would like the process to be as simple as possible, if someone would like to do it, they are more than welcome. CL suggested once someone expresses interest, a letter should be sent to that estate to inform them that there has been a co-option but if someone else is interested who lives there that they can stand. Also that people in each area should be aware of what their representative has done for the area. SP said that contact details from reps should be provided to their estate. This could be put into Spotlight. MF said a flyer is a good idea to inform people. MF asked if a seat could be created for Home Farm. NW suggested to MF to become a resident’s voice for the MGM flats, MF agreed and will discuss with JF.</p> <p>RGr asked how many meetings each estate should have, JF said each area should have 2 meetings and 2 walkabouts per year other than areas where not a lot of people attend, in which case 4 meetings are held instead.</p>	<p><b>JF</b></p> <p><b>CL/JF</b></p>
7.	<p><b><u>Feedback from other meetings</u></b></p> <p><b>SSRA –</b> The SSRA were given a valuable talk from the water board. BB said they also mentioned the condition of the water first thing in the morning. Samples were taken at Binfield House and various recommendations were made. Scheme Managers will be doing the testing recommended by the water board to find out if the water is coming directly from the mains or a water tank. Residents have been told to drink bottled water. LW will follow this up.</p>	<p><b>LW</b></p>

	<p><b>BFLA –</b> MM said that the BFLA AGM is in September and everyone is more than welcome to come. NW would like to attend. It was agreed CL will send an e-mail to everyone with the details. A coordinator from the Regeneration Scheme will attend to give an update on the progress. PCSO's, the housing officer for leaseholders and the new senior housing officer for BFH will also attend.</p> <p><b>Newsgroup –</b> The next newsletter will be out on the 19<sup>th</sup> September at the request of BFH. The questions and answers from the estate meetings about the major works will be included.</p> <p>DS said that the comments from the Easthampstead and Wildridings meetings need to be included as well, due to the Easthampstead meeting being re-scheduled to 8<sup>th</sup> September.</p> <p>CL said the editorial board also desperately needs more articles from tenants and any younger people that would like to write an article are more than welcome.</p> <p>TR suggested perhaps someone from the Panel could be a correspondent. MF said she would have a think about this.</p>	
8.	<p><b><u>Any other business</u></b></p> <p>GM said he would like to co-opt for Crowthorne. BB nominated GM and RGo seconded. 12 votes were made in favour of GM being co-opted.</p> <p>CL said there is a leaseholder he would like to invite along, NW said to definitely invite him.</p> <p>MR said she would like to also co-opt for Wildridings. NW nominated and RGo seconded 12 votes were made in favour of MR. JF will send a letter to Crowthorne and Wildridings.</p> <p>MM said he had approached the housing officer for Wildridings, Ann Pinkney, about grey rubbish bins, which belong to the council. SP will follow this up.</p> <p>BB said the windows at Binfield House have still not been done, however painters have been in and painted over rotten wood, which is a waste of time and money. LW will follow up.</p>	<p><b>JF</b></p> <p><b>SP</b></p> <p><b>LW</b></p>

	<p>JF said West Kent are visiting on the 16<sup>th</sup> September, they will be coming to talk to BFH about excellence in rent and resident involvement. There are 4 places for panel members and JF will e-mail details, to be allocated on a first come first serve basis.</p> <p>SP said she is receiving concerns and questions from tenants, and asked who she should pass them onto? SP said she has permission from these tenants' to pass on information, she usually asks for it in writing. She agreed to pass these on to the relevant rep and JF will provide her a list.</p> <p>RGo said before the transfer extra loft insulation was being installed by the council, this has now stopped and some houses in Hanworth have gone without. LW said the best person to speak to would be Hazel Hill at Time Square and she can advise them on the best possible action.</p> <p>RGr asked about Choice Based Lettings, JF will contact Clare Dorning again to ask about attending the Panel.</p> <p>CL asked about the Harmans Water results from the last walkabout. JF said they have already been sent out. CL said he would like to see them to see if anything more has been done. JF will follow up.</p>	<p><b>JF</b></p> <p><b>JF</b></p> <p><b>RGo</b></p> <p><b>JF</b></p> <p><b>JF</b></p>
	<p><b><u>Date of next meeting</u></b></p> <p><b>Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> September, 7-9pm</b> <b>Berkshire Court</b></p>	