

TENANT AND LEASEHOLDER CONSULTATION GROUP MEETING

Tuesday 8 December 2004

MEETING NOTES

Present

Tony Bodgin	Exeter City Council
Steve Deakin	Exeter City Council
Cllr Peter Edwards	Portfolio Holder for Housing
Louise Barnden	DOME
Jim Swain	Shilhay
Margaret Swain	Shilhay
Cec Murley	St Thomas
Joan Smith	Rennes House
Mrs J Martins	Hamlin Gardens
Mrs Amoroso	Toronto House
Mrs V Thompson	Hamlin Gardens
Mr T Anderson	Widgery Road
Mr R Ingram	Beacon Heath
Mrs C Shepherd	Countess Wear
Mrs I Newby	Countess Wear
Mr R Greenaway	Beacon Heath
Mrs C Symes	Beacon Heath

Apologies

Gladys Tyrrell,

Introduction

Tony Bodgin opened the meeting with a general introduction.

Presentation of 'Managing Meetings Skills Course' certificates

Councillor Peter Edwards, the portfolio holder for housing presented certificates to the members of Tenants and Residents Associations who had successfully completed the course facilitated by Hoyle Associates.

Congratulations to: -

Councillor Granville Baldwin,

Terry Anderson (WWB Tenants and Residents Association),

Roger Greenaway, Chris Symes and Gladys Tyrrell (The Beacon Project),

Iris Newby, Cynthia Sheperd, Barry Mortimer, Silvia Jeffery and Marion Watkins

(Countess Wear Tenants and Residents Association).

Contractors Performance

Tony then went on to discuss the Satisfaction Survey Responses for the repairs contracts.

At this point a handout 'Satisfaction Survey Responses 1 July to 30 September' was distributed to the group a copy of which is included with these minutes.

A general discussion of the results followed. The group discussed whether the outcomes were valid because the figures contained in the survey were obtained from only a 6% and 5% return.

Neil Shire – the Housing Repairs and Technical Services Manager noted that the figures were based on a sample of only 6% which was too small to be representative. The technical officers inspect 15%, of all the repairs carried out, with 3% of the 15% being returned as unsatisfactory. We could use the same principle to consult with tenants. It may be that a post repair telephone survey of a 15% random sample would give much more reliable figures on which to base contract decisions.

Asbestos Survey - Update

The council is carrying out a survey of properties in Exeter to determine the levels of asbestos they contain.

The survey will include all the property types owned by Exeter City Council. A 10% randomly selected sample will be used to determine the levels asbestos across the stock. The sample will not include communal areas; all the communal areas will be surveyed individually.

Asbestos has been used as a general building material for many years until it was finally banned in 1985. It has been used in soffit boards, floor tiles, Artex, and even toilet cisterns to name but a few.

If the asbestos is in good condition there is no problem with it and it should be left undisturbed until such time as it needs to be dealt with. At this time it is then necessary to bring in specialist contractors to safely remove it.

What is important is that any new tenants coming into the properties containing asbestos are aware that it is there so that they do not damage it by doing normal DIY jobs around the house.

There are three types of asbestos: brown and blue asbestos were banned in 1975 and White asbestos was banned in 1985.

A handout was distributed to the group depicting two letters. A copy of the handout is included with these minutes.

One letter is intended for properties which have been surveyed and one is to new tenants of properties containing asbestos. Both letters will include details of the type and location of any asbestos found in that type of property and a map which shows the location within the premises.

Surveying 10% of the property types in Exeter City Council housing stock plus the communal areas will cost around £100,000. A further £100,000 has been put aside to deal with any asbestos that is found to be in a dangerous condition.

Any asbestos found in communal areas will simply be labelled if in a sound condition and safely removed if in a dangerous condition.

The survey started in June 2004 and is ongoing.

Kitchen Improvement Programme

The programme will take in 200 properties next year and will be a rolling programme. There are to be good levels of tenants choice in the look and design of their particular kitchen.

There will be a basic carcass, which will form the basis of the kitchen.

There will then be a choice of : -

- Four worktops to choose from,
- Two types of cupboard doors ,
- Four different floor tiles,

- Four different wall tiles.

There will also be a change in the types of sinks which are installed. The new sinks will be insert sinks, which sit in the worktops instead of the ones which fit on top of the actual unit.

The programme will start in the summer of next year and will then be a rolling programme to completion. The information used to determine which kitchens to target is based on the stock condition survey, which was carried out as part of the Options Appraisal process.

Options Appraisal (OA)

Louis Barnden, the Independent Tenants Advisor (ITA), was introduced to the group to give an update on the Options Appraisal process.

The Insight group met on Monday evening to make their decision about the future of the housing stock. Their recommendations, plus the tenants feedback from the poll will be put to the council. The council will then make a decision for the future of the housing stock based on the results of the tenant consultation with objectives that reflect tenants priorities.

The Insight Group were given the results of the tenants poll, which was a vote of around 8 to 1 in favour of 'Staying as we are'.

The Insight Group then held a vote based on the more in-depth information they have received over the past months.

The final decision reached by the Insight Group is to 'Stay as we are' and, if upheld by the Council, no further action will need to be taken. The decision of the tenants and Insight Group will now be put before Council and will form the basis of their final decision.

When the Options Appraisal process is over the Insight group will not be disbanded. It is hoped that there is a future role for the group.

The ITA will send out one further newsletter when the process is over to inform tenants of the decision reached and what the implications are likely to be.

Meetings for 2005

Wednesday 16 March

Wednesday 15 June

Wednesday 14 September

Wednesday 7 December

Any items for the agenda to Steve (265698) or Tony (265738).

IMPORTANT!

Anyone requiring a taxi to attend the meeting should ring Z CARS directly and not the council.

This arrangement is **only with Z CARS** and will of course continue to be paid for by the council. The telephone number for **Z CARS is 422888**