

THREE OAKS HOMES TENANTS' FEDERATION

MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING HELD AT THE BLABY PARISH COUNCIL OFFICES, WESTERN DRIVE, BLABY, ON 5th JULY 2010 AT 10.00 A.M.

Present:	Joan Deacon	Chair
	Suzi Randall	Vice-Chair
	Jim Humphreys	Treasurer
	Jean Humphreys	
	Lesley Woodward	
	Jackie Clarke	
	Jean Ricketts	
	Shirley Heggie	
	Mary Thompson	
	Mary Hood	
	Pat Mills	Tenant Observer
	Marie Marston	" "
	Val Smith	" "
	Elaine Whatsize	Investment Programme Assistant, TOH
	Alpa Patel	Neighbourhood Officer, TOH

The Chair welcomed Elaine to the Meeting.

Elaine explained that TOH was considering replacing B & Q decoration vouchers with a B & Q decoration voucher card which is a more economical way of providing tenants with decorating expenses. It eliminates an excessive amount of paperwork currently involved and is easier for tenants to handle than a number of vouchers. The card works in the same way as a store 'gift card' and there is a time limit of 6 weeks in which to use it. If vouchers are lost, they cannot be cancelled but if a card is lost it can be cancelled. Any money not used on a card after 6 weeks can be reclaimed by TOH.

Elaine asked for the Committee's approval for TOH to change from decoration vouchers to the decoration card. The Committee was unanimously in favour of this change.

A question was raised as to whether decoration vouchers are being issued to tenants who have had damage caused by work being done in a neighbouring property. Elaine agreed to arrange for an inspector to look into this on behalf of the tenant affected.

The Chair thanked Elaine who then left the Meeting.

1. Apologies for absence have been received from Tony Mann and Keith Posnett.

2. Declarations of Interest – Joan, and Jim declared an interest as Board Members of Three Oaks Homes and, as such, would refrain from discussing or voting on any matters which may conflict with this.

3. Approval of Previous Minutes - The Minutes of the Committee Meeting

held on 7th June 2010 were approved subject to amendment of the wording on page 2, regarding removal of items from void properties, to read "A tenant who has installed their own stair-lift has been told it will **have to** be removed".

4. Matters arising from previous Minutes

Page 3 – Regarding Group Asset Management Strategy

- When confirmation is received from Bruce Kerr that the Strategy has been approved by Subsidiary and Group Boards, a copy will be circulated to Committee Members. It is understood that TOH will also have their own Asset Management Strategy which should involve tenants in consultation.

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- Report to TOH Board – Joan and Lesley had attended a meeting with Chan Kataria, EMH Group CEO, to discuss the points raised in this report. Chan had sent a letter outlining the outcome of the meeting and copies were passed round.

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- Refurbishment Programme – One tenant's query was still outstanding and would be taken, again, to the next Steering Group meeting.

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- Voids – The procedure requested from Bruce had been received but was not clear and had certain anomalies which needed explaining. Lesley had spoken to Adam Chamberlain at TOPS for clarification but was still unsure on several points. Adam had said he would come to a future meeting to discuss this if we wish. A meeting of Bruce Kerr's voids group is due to take place in the 2nd half of July which Jackie and Lesley would be attending and they would try to get clarification then of how this process is followed. An update will be brought to the next meeting.
- Co-regulation, election of tenant Board Members – There was concern that TOH would want to take the election of tenant Board Members away from the Federation. The Constitution of the Federation states that tenant Board Members are elected by the Committee and any changes to the Constitution would have to be approved by the Committee and other tenants at an AGM. There was a general discussion around this and it was felt that the purpose of the consultation with DWA, with regard to tenant Board Members, was to look at more ways to recruit prospective tenant Board Members and the type of training and information they would need to receive before being ready to be put forward for election. We would have the opportunity to put these points to DWA during the consultation exercise.

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- It was suggested that a member of the TOH Allocations Team be invited to

attend a Committee Meeting to answer questions which some members had.

- An updated list of Committee Members on sub-groups will be brought to the next Meeting.
- Aids and adaptations – The date for the next meeting has still not been finalised due to absences of some staff members involved.

5. Treasurer's Report

The cheque account currently stands at £6424.07, and there is £29.74 in petty cash. There is 1 taxi bill of £46.50 to pay. The accounts for the last financial year have been sent to be audited.

6. Secretary's Report – Nothing to report.

7. Tenant Representative Reports

- A report from the Investment Programme Steering Group was passed to Committee Members. One Committee Member reported that the socket for her kettle, that she had been advised to use by the TLO, was inaccessible to her. This raises Health & Safety issues and Jean/Shirley will mention it at the next Steering Group meeting.
- Safe as Houses – A meeting had been held, attended by Suzi and Mary Thompson. The total budget for the year is £30,000. The programme is looked at on a quarterly basis with £7,500 to spend. There are 11 successful applications this quarter and £3201 has so far been allocated. Further discussions are being held on the other applications to determine if they should come out of this or another budget.

A question was asked as to whether a request for new locks on the gates, and security lights, at College Road had been mentioned at the SAH meeting.

- Central Communication Forum - Jackie had attended a meeting of this Forum which was mainly discussing youth and how to help them access available facilities. An amount of £2000 had been made available to provide transport.

Other events attended by Committee Members include Neighbours Day and the Communications Group meeting discussing the editorial for the Autumn edition of Branching Out. It was noted that the Summer edition had not yet been received.

8. Any Special Business – Open Discussion

- Comment was made regarding the importance of advising Chair – or another Committee Member - if unable to attend a meeting. Also, TOH Officers who wish to attend should advise Chair of their intention beforehand.
- 2 observers had attended one of TOH forums. They had found it interesting but felt that some people had only come because they had their own agenda to discuss. It will be interesting to see how many will continue to attend on a

regular basis. There had been a lot of paperwork and a lot of information to absorb.

- 1 observer had also attended a Code of Practice (with regard to Housing Related Support) consultation meeting. Joan had also attended this meeting but, due to a communication mix-up, was unable to stay because the meeting time was different. Meetings will be held monthly until the end of the year and Lesley volunteered to attend future meetings.

It was noted that the Code of Practice document, which is 42 pages long, was printed on single sides of paper and the question was asked "Why don't TOH print double-sided documents"? like the Federation do.

9. Any Other Business

It was confirmed that observers are welcome to attend Committee Meetings in order to decide if they wish to become Committee Members. With regard to the TOH Forums, it was decided as part of the Resident Involvement Strategy Action Plan, that forum representatives would be selected from outside the Committee. This decision was taken to enable TOH to get more tenants actively involved in consultations etc. As Pat and Marie have now observed 3 meetings, they are eligible to join the Committee and must therefore decide if they wish to join or remain available for other consultations. If Pat and Marie decide to join the Committee, they can be co-opted on at the August Committee Meeting.

Alpa outlined the consultation with DWA with regards to involving more tenants e.g. doing road shows. The next consultations were taking place this afternoon.

Alpa passed round copies of the Maintenance Forum minutes to the Committee and confirmed that minutes of all Forums – which will be long term – will be copied to Committee Members in order to avoid overlap or duplication of activities.

Alpa stated that a copy of the Federation Code of Conduct had been given to Forum members as a basis for producing their own.

The Chair asked everyone if they had any comments on Chan Kataria's letter referred to, and passed round, during Matters Arising earlier. Time had been allowed to read the letter and everyone was happy with the content and did not require Chan to attend a future meeting. Jackie commented that some items in the letter referred to the Group Customer Council of which she is a member and would be attending a meeting in the near future.

Reference the visit of Three Valleys Housing – Confirmation of final arrangements are awaited and Suzi and Lesley have been asked to attend all day.

Alpa asked for information on any local events being held where TOH/DWA could attend to attract tenants. Suggestions included asking the Parish Council and looking in the Blaby Courier.

Alpa reported that TOH are looking to streamline future issues of Branching Out to

ensure publication is not delayed by late submissions. In future, all articles etc. will be sent to Alpa to be co-ordinated. Louise Riley EMH Group Communications Manager will be overseeing newsletters etc. of all subsidiaries.

10. Date, time and venue of next Meeting

The next Committee Meeting will be held on 9th August 2010 in the Blaby Parish Council Offices, Western Drive, Blaby, from 10.00 a.m. – 12.30 p.m.

11. CLOSURE OF MEETING - The Meeting was closed at 11.45 p.m.