

**Residents' Forum  
Minutes**

**Date:** Monday 4 April 2011

**Venue:** The Grange, 1 Central Road, Morden

**Start time:** 7pm

**Present:**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Initial</b>	<b>Address/Residents Association/Post</b>
Kathy Adams	KA	Aberconway Road, Morden
Michael Adams	MA	Aberconway Road, Morden
Judith Cortez	JCo	Delamere Road, Morden
P Fox	PF	High Path
Vince Grech	VG	High Path RA
Lucy Hedden	LH	Glebe Court TMO
Selina Hollands	SH	Carters Estate RA
Ron Holt	RH	Melsa Road, Morden
Marion Hyde	MH	Sadler Close RA
Tina King	TK	Marham Gardens
Yvonne Leigh	YL	Cherry Orchard Estate
Pat Lindup	PL	Blanchland Road, Morden
Geraldine Logan	GL	Hatfield Mead, Morden
Jacky Mason	JM	Carters Estate
Brian Matthews	BM	Four Acres & Edinburgh Court RA
Alex Newman	AN	Ramsey House, High Path
Christine Pember	CP	High Path RA
Tony Perkins	TP	Portland/Lewis Road RA
Moses Salisu	MS	Harlands Estate RA
Carol Shadwell	CS	Carters Estate
Lesley Sorrell (Vice Chair)	LSo	Morden Rd
Jo Spencer	JS	Richmond Court, Phipps Bridge
Janet Watkins	JW	All Saints RA
<b>In attendance:</b>		
Beth Wagstaff	BW	Circle Housing Group
Doreen Jones	DJ	Consultation Officer (minutes)
Theo Scott	TS	Consultation & Communications Manager
Susan Smart	SS	Assistant Director of Customer Services

<b>Apologies:</b>	
Sheila Perkins	Portland/Lewis Road RA
Bob Hughes	Trafalgar Court
Ruby Chapman	Trafalgar Court

Item	Details	Action
<b>1</b>	<b>Welcome &amp; Introductions</b>	
1.1	LS opened the meeting and introductions were made.	
<b>2</b>	<b>Minutes and matters arising from 7 March 2011</b>	
2.1	P6.4 – This comment was made by Lucy Hedden and not Lesley Smith (LS) as stated.	
<b>3.</b>	<b>Tenants Handbook</b>	
3.1	BW introduced herself as the Policy Officer and has been working on the new tenants' handbook for MPH residents. Of the residents meetings BW has gone to, this is one of the best attended.	
3.2	Work was started on the handbook last December, residents may recall being sent a survey to comment on their use of the Merton Council handbook. Some residents completed the survey and these views have been taken into account when producing the draft version. A draft copy of the handbook wording was distributed to the Forum. The final version will be A5 sized with a cardboard front. This version is very different to the previous hand book. This is intentional as we wanted to ensure the hand book continues to be relevant as information changes. This makes it cost effective and value for money as they are expensive to produce.	
3.3	LS - Would it be useful to have a definitive list of what constitutes an ASB issue clearly set out in the handbook? Residents who behave in this way are not going to ask for this information. BW – There is a section on page 16 &17 about this.	
3.4	VG – Can it be made clear that tenants are responsible for the behaviour of their children?	
3.5	TS – Residents can give their feedback to DJ by 28 April, this can be done by telephoning 0300 500 3000 or email <a href="mailto:getinvolvedmerton@circleanglia.org.uk">getinvolvedmerton@circleanglia.org.uk</a> . Alternatively if you have a question contact BW on 020 7288 4111 or email her at <a href="mailto:Beth.Wagstaff@circle.org.uk">Beth.Wagstaff@circle.org.uk</a> . We will report back at the next meeting what feedback was received.	
3.6	KA – Will the handbook be available in alternative formats? BW – it will be available in large print, audio or Braille on request.	
<b>4.</b>	<b>Large Estates Allocation Fund (LEAF)</b>	
4.1	One of the transfer promises was an annual budget of £211k to be spent on the 22 largest estates from April 2011. The amount per estate ranges from £3k to £38K. Initially it was planned to set up 22 estate panels having regular meetings with residents. However having taken into consideration resident feedback that there are too many meetings, we have decided against this.	
4.2	We have reviewed the process to spend the budget working in tandem with the Residents Associations (RA). There are 8 estates with no RA representation. On those estates we are promoting the empowerment of residents to volunteer to become 'Estate Champions' to work with the Consultation & Communications Team (C&C Team) to improve the local area. All residents will be consulted on the proposals before any improvements/activities are carried out.	
4.3	A letter will be sent to all residents in the 22 largest estates asking them to submit their proposals for improvements to their RA where applicable; alternatively on estates where there is no RA representation proposals should be submitted to the C&C Team and we will work with the Estate Champions to progress the proposals. There are clear guidelines on how the money can be spent, which is	

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	available on request.	
4.4	The C&C Team will manage each estates budget, liaise with MPH contractors and provide quarterly updates of the budget spend.	
4.5	<p>VG – Mary Bennell had discussed projects that she has been working on, which have started however drainage issues still remain in this area. Which budget can I apply to for the drainage to be cleared? TS – The budget that Mary was working on was for environmental improvements across the borough, this is separate to the £211K budget that is being discussed. Mary carried out consultation about this, which my team assisted with. Money for the drainage could be applied for from either the environmental improvements work, which Mary is leading on or from LEAF.</p> <p>JW – My RA have not received any feedback on the environmental improvements consultation with Mary. TS – It may be beneficial for Mary to attend a future meeting to discuss the current position on the consultation carried out. DJ to speak to MB about attending a future meeting.</p>	<b>DJ</b>
4.6	VG – Cavity wall insulation work has started at High Path, the RA was not informed that this work was being carried out. TS – The usual procedure is for the residents at the address where work is carried out to be notified, it is not always possible to inform the RA.	
4.7	MS – Does the estate budget go into the RA bank account? TS – No, the C&C Team will manage the budget spend and provide the RA management committee with quarterly updates. MS – if the money is not spent in that financial year, can it be carried forward to the following year? TS – No, we would prefer the money to be spent in the financial year that it became available. If there is a big project spend that the estate would like to save for then we would need the Finance Director to sign it off for it to be carried forward.	
4.8	LS – Is it an annual amount? TS - Yes, the same amount will be allocated annually.	
4.9	The feedback from Sadler Close is that the letter going out to residents needs to be more specific about what the money can be spent on. It should be made clear that it does not include responsive repairs or decent homes work.	
4.10	MS – How will you recruit Estate Champions? TS – There will be a different letter sent to those estates without RA representation.	
4.11	LS – It is a huge remit for Estate Champions, which is also unpaid. Could this work not be done by MPH? TS – Hopefully and ideally we would like to recruit more than one Estate Champion per estate. The long term aim is that those Estate Champions will ultimately set up a Residents Association.	
4.12	VG – It's hard to see how Estate Champions will work if the RA can't get things done. I have been trying for ages to have things done i.e. a water pipe on the estate and a parking permit for a committee member – neither of which has been agreed. TS – I believe that for many estates as part of the transfer promises there have been lots of improvements to estates. There are instances where we have to say no and if this is the case the reasons will be clearly communicated.	
4.13	MH – How will the proposals be consulted on, via the RA or individuals? TS – We will accept the proposals from an RA or individuals. All residents will be consulted on the proposals before any	

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	improvements/activities are carried out	
4.14	BM – I have invited residents to direct their proposals to the C&C Team.	
<b>5.</b>	<b>Resident Involvement Framework</b>	
5.1	MPH is now one year old, we have made great strides in involving residents, but there is still a lot to do. In 2009, Circle Anglia commissioned an independent audit of how resident involvement was delivered across the group. The audit found a lot of good practices across the group, but a lack of consistency in involvement choices. Out of this the Customer Engagement Delivery Plan was drafted, this sets out how group partners will deliver resident involvement in the next year.	
5.2	We are reviewing the Resident Involvement Framework to reflect the requirements to have a residents' scrutiny panel and meet the co-regulation agenda. As a landlord we have to make better use of our involvement structures to ensure that the services we provide can be scrutinised by residents to make improvements. We currently have 5 service improvement groups, this will increase to 10 to cover all service areas of MPH. We are also using the feedback from the residents' conference in the review.	
5.3	We will shortly be sending out questionnaire 'the big questions', we will be asking residents for their views and experience on resident involvement over the last 12 months. This information will help us to shape the resident involvement framework review. At the next meeting we will give feedback on the proposals for the review. There will also be an update on the Scrutiny Panel. We will ask for your views on the proposals between June and July. We aim to have the new Resident Involvement Framework up and running by September 2011.	
5.4	VG – When works have been completed, surely someone should be inspecting work. This would be a better use of resources. TS – Our aim is to set up the Scrutiny Panel, this is a direct requirement from the TSA, and all landlords have to do this. The TSA wants residents to have more influence and control over service delivery and performance. In essence if a resident believes a service area is not performing they will have the power to challenge and recommend how that service is delivered.	
<b>6.</b>	<b>Any other business</b>	
6.1	<p><u>Census 2011</u></p> <p>SS – A reminder for residents to complete and return their census forms. Merton Council relies on census population statistics to get the government funding they need for public services. We ask that you also remind family and friends to also complete their forms. MS – MPH should do more to promote the Census 2011. SS – We are promoting the need for residents to complete the forms, however it is not our remit to do more than we are currently doing.</p>	
6.2	<p><u>Circle Housing</u></p> <p>On Monday 4th April, our name officially changed from Circle Anglia to Circle. JW – Will the email addresses change? SS - Yes, it will change from <a href="mailto:name@circleanglia.org">name@circleanglia.org</a> to <a href="mailto:name@circle.org.uk">name@circle.org.uk</a> You can continue to use the old email address. There will be a transition period before the old addresses are no longer available.</p>	

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6.3	SS – Would like to thank the residents who were involved in the interviews for the tenant board member. MS was successful at his interview and now joins the MPH Management Board as a tenant board member.	
6.4	JM – what is happening about the election for a Chair of the Residents Forum, as this position is vacant. TS – At a previous meeting it was discussed and agreed to leave the current arrangements with Lesley Sorrell as Vice Chair. Once the resident involvement review has been completed we will start the process to elect a new Chair.	
	<b>Date of next meeting: Monday 9 May 2011</b> <b>Time: 6.30pm for 7pm start</b> <b>Venue: The Grange, 1 Central Road, Morden</b>	