

# Tenant Inspectors Meeting

<b>Date:</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> February 2011	
<b>Time:</b>	1.30pm	
<b>Venue:</b>	Board Room, Meridian House	
<b>Present:</b>	Terry Chatwin	Tenant Inspector (Chair)
	Mo Weller	Tenant Inspector
	Alex Killen	Tenant Inspector
	Mary Southgate	Tenant Inspector
	Jim Newcombe	Tenant Inspector
	Janine Mee	Tenant Inspector
	Don Robertson	Tenant Inspector
	Steve Dale	Tenant Inspector
	Malc Dunderdale	Tenant Inspector
	Mark Harland	Tenant Inspector
	Ann Harland	Tenant Inspector
	Ron Weller	Observer
	Steve Evans	Head of Housing Management
	Wendy Britcliffe	Senior Resident Involvement Officer
	Lisa Smith	Senior Housing Manger
	Sarah Tighe	Resident Involvement Assistant
	Nasser Hassan	Caretaking Supervisor

## 1. Welcome, Introductions & Apologies

**Apologies:** David Scott & Cherrill Page.

Terry welcomed everyone to the meeting and brief introductions were given. It was confirmed that Ron was attending as an observer at the meeting and arrangements would be made for the RIO to visit and explain the process of becoming a tenant inspector. Ron was then due to attend some inspections with an experienced tenant inspector as part of his training.

## 2. Reminder of Repairs Log

Terry reminded the group about using the repairs log and that individual issues are to be entered in the log.

## 3. Matters Arising

### • Accuracy of Minutes/Action Plan

Wendy went through the individual items and discussed the actions that had been met as follows:

Tenant Inspector badges have been delayed due to the pictures taken at the previous meeting being unsuitable. Arrangements were made for photographs to be taken prior to today's meeting and these will be issued at the next meeting.

All tenant inspectors have been reminded to fill out the 'Tenant Inspectors Inspections' sheet and hand them to Sarah so she can arrange the inspections

without having to do a ring round. Sarah will contact those who were not present at this meeting.

It was suggested at the last meeting that a new column should be added to the estate inspections sheet to provide information on when the job had been completed. This has been arranged and completed by the relevant housing officer or by Nasser (Caretaking supervisor).

The forms for telephone checks on starter tenancy are to be reviewed. Wendy and Lisa asked that the TI's do some starter tenancy checks over the next 2 months.

Wendy has confirmed that housing officers are to attend quality checks on high rise blocks so that any issues from the inspections can be dealt with and jobs reported.

Wendy reminded everyone that they must encourage more associations to complete RI satisfaction cards.

Nasser Hassan was welcomed to the meeting and Wendy explained that he was attending to answer any relevant questions on caretaking.

Lisa confirmed that there was a small amendment to the October minutes, where it states that the fire service do checks on high rises every month, it should be yearly. The minutes were then approved as a true record.

#### **4. Reports on Inspections undertaken – October/November & December/January**

- **Estate Inspections**

It was agreed at the previous meeting that a summary sheet would be produced for all the estate inspections instead of going through each individual sheet when reporting back at the meetings. Wendy provided an update from the summary sheets as follows:

##### October

There were six estate inspections carried out in October and four of these were rated green and two rated amber. Untidy gardens were the main issue on the amber ratings. The Housing Officers are to contact the tenants concerned and estate caretakers involved in litter picking and clearing rubbish.

##### November

Six inspections were carried out in November all rated green. There was some flytipped rubbish which the estate caretakers removed from the area.

## December

Only one estate inspection was carried out in December due to the bad weather conditions. This was rated amber due to the rubbish in the communal entrances and around the bins. The estate caretakers removed the rubbish from the area.

## January

There were five inspections carried out in January and all rated green, only one was rated amber which was due to bulky items, rubbish and combustibles on balconies/ patio areas. The Housing Officer visited the tenants concerned and the caretakers were involved in litter picking and clearing rubbish.

Alex made a suggestion of splitting the Action/Job Completed column further so we can identify the action and then include the date when the job was completed. Wendy agreed to amend the sheet and explained that due to the timescale of inspections and works identified some jobs may not be completed in time for the meetings. Steve went on to suggest that we may want to report back on the inspections once we have all the information recorded.

- **Open Door**

Wendy confirmed that all staff are to be reminded of the principles of an open door and that arrangements are to be made for these to be carried out unless certain circumstances prevent this, e.g. the whole service area/team being on training for example.

Wendy provided an update on the open doors carried out over the last four months. Wendy explained that some open doors have not been carried out by using the set questions included in the form. Additional comments are being given which increases the amount of paperwork. Wendy agreed that whilst these are valid points a summary needs to be given from the inspection and included on the sheet. The open door sheets were developed with the tenant inspectors who agreed on the type of questions to be included. It has been discussed at previous meetings that where possible we cut down on the paperwork and admin for the tenant inspectors meetings. It has been reported from some individual members of staff that when they have been involved in open door inspections they felt they were under scrutiny rather than the service being inspected. Wendy encouraged everyone to follow the questions on the sheet for reporting at TI's meetings. Alex disagreed and thinks that all comments are valid and should be reported at tenant inspectors. Steve suggests that if we do get any additional comments we could do a summary on the suggested service improvements and whether they have been adopted or not.

Wendy reminded the T.I's about the difficulties and lengthy process involved when the open door was first introduced to other staff within the organisation. We

need to ensure this process is consistent and that staff involved understand these inspections are on the service and not the individual member of staff.

- **Telephone Checks**

Jim provided feedback on his telephone checks of the tenant liaison service. This was a good experience with positive feedback from tenants who had received the service. He stated that this has greatly improved from the North Lincolnshire Council days.

Janine would like to know when satisfaction surveys are carried out following improvement works and how this information is processed and followed up. From her own personal experience she did not start noticing problems until a year later.

Alex suggested adding another column on the sheet for job completed.

- **Empty Homes**

Maureen carried out an empty homes inspection on two properties in November and these were both rated red. This was due to no works being started at the properties. A request was made for a re-inspection to be carried out after work has been completed.

- **RI Satisfaction Cards**

Wendy gave a summary on the RI satisfaction cards received. There were a total of six completed for Oct/Nov and four for Dec/Jan. All were happy with the feedback provided at their meetings from the Housing Officers.

## **5. Report for Operations Committee**

Wendy went through the draft report and explained that the Chair will present this at the next operations committee on the 7<sup>th</sup> March. The report includes all the inspections carried out and the main issues from these.

## **6. Any Other Business**

Wendy asked if the T.I's are receiving copies of the estate inspection sheets following the inspections they have attended. It was confirmed that the T.I's have not been receiving these, Wendy will remind HO's to send copies out in the future.

Alex enquired if there are service reviews been carried out within the organisation and could T.I's be involved in these reviews? Steve confirmed that they would be informed and involved in the process.

Janine asked when the grass cutting would start. Nasser confirmed that it has started and litter picks are being carried out prior to grass being cut.

Mary commented on the cleanliness of the Board Room as the sides are dusty and the carpet needs hoovering. Wendy confirmed she would pass this onto the caretakers.

Terry commented on the pull cords no longer being used and suggested that they be removed before improvement works are started. The pull cords are now the responsibility of the council who would need to remove these. Lisa asked Terry to pass these comments onto Ian Bridge as he may have some more information on the matter.

Terry also asked why Choice Based lettings do not advise the potential tenant that some properties are not ready to move in. Lisa explained that they advertise before they are ready because this reduces the length of time it would be empty and also gives the new tenant a chance to influence any improvement works being carried out on that property.

Alex would like to know if we can carry out open door inspections on contractors, supervisors, managers (anyone up to EMT level), team leaders and support officers. Wendy agreed to check.

Alex made a request to do an open door inspection on the local links. Wendy reminded Alex that this issue had been raised before and it was reported that this service is not provided by North Lincolnshire Homes but is the responsibility of North Lincolnshire Council who would not allow us to conduct open doors.

Alex asked that EMT be provided with information from the T.I's and feedback be provided on the results following a T.I's inspection. Alex also suggested that we provide a summary of inspections at Community Voice meetings. Wendy explained that the T.I meeting is included in the resident involvement activity report and if there were any issues arising from this then it would be discussed. Janine confirmed that it was previously an agenda item but due to the length of the agenda it had been agreed to report this through the resident involvement report.

Mark pointed out to the group that if they request an open door inspection and are refused then they should go in anyway. Wendy stated that open doors would normally take place unless there is a specific reason for a refusal to be made. All staff are to receive a reminder on the open door process.

Ann said that she found that her open doors on Rents and Improvement works very informative.

Terry would like to see expenses forms and Resident Association satisfaction surveys on the website for TI's to print off.

**Date of Next Meeting**

5<sup>th</sup> April 2011, Meridian House, 1.30pm to 4.30pm.

Terry thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting.

**Note: Can you please ensure you bring your diaries and all paperwork with you to the next meeting including these minutes.**

NLH Contact Centre Numbers, either:

01724 279900

or

0800 032 6363