

**Partners for Improvement in Islington  
Residents Forum Meeting**



**Minutes of the Residents Forum**

**Held at 6.30pm on Thursday 24 January 2008**

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**PRESENT:**

<b>Forum Members:</b>	Susanne Lamido	(SL)	Interim Chair
	Michael Adedeji	(MA)	
	Suzanne Bryant	(SuB)	
	Shirley Bryant	(ShB)	
	Chris Matthews	(CM)	
	Dave Gorman	(DG)	
	Sally Ingrey	(SI)	
	Muriel Duncan	(MD)	
	Georgina Galliers	(GG)	Interim Vice Chair
	Lisa Crowley	(LC)	
	Chris Radway	(CR)	
	Laura Young	(LY)	
<b>Partners:</b>	Tom Irvine	(TI)	Minutes
	Ami-Anne Spring	(AS)	
	Liz Voss	(LV)	
	Doug Pope	(DP)	
	Philippa Wooldridge	(PW)	
	John Venning	(JV)	
<b>HFI:</b>	David Selo	(DS)	
	Ivan Willis	(IW)	
<b>Observing:</b>	Ann-Marie Greensmith		

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<b>Apologies:</b>	Chris Graham
	Melvyn Holden
	Rosemary Hilton
	Richard Best

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**1. Minutes and matters arising from meeting of 24 November**

1.1 Minutes agreed

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**2. ASB Update**

2.1 PW introduced item and ran through paper providing an update on ASB, including information on the Respect Agenda. The group were informed that Partners have introduced an ASB Pack for residents; this provides information on what Partners are required

to do, along with what residents should do if they are encountering ASB. There is also information on external agencies that deal with ASB such as Safer Neighbourhood Team, Noise Nuisance Team and the Police.

- 2.2 PW explained that Partners has recently worked with the Fire Brigade on the 'Life Project', where local youths work with the brigade for 5 days and are taught basic skills such as respect and responsibility.
- 2.3 CR raised concerns that issues such as a neighbour flooding his property are not being treated as ASB, when they should be. It was suggested that the definition of ASB in the Tenants Handbook is amended to reflect this.
- 2.4 PW advised that the definition used is the Government's definition, therefore it cannot be changed, however Partners will take these comments on board.

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### **3. Chair's Report**

- 3.1 SL introduced the item and ran through the paper.
- 3.2 TI confirmed that Partners will send out a formal response to the issues raised in the Chair's report.
- 3.3 TI explained regarding the Emily Thornberry MP 'survey' that Partners have analysed the data collected and are in the process of contacting 117 from whom Partners had not previously received a complaint.
- 3.4 It was decided that Partners will write to Patrick Langley to thank him for his contribution to the Partners Residents Forum.

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### **4. Tenancy Audit**

- 4.1 DP introduced and ran through the item. It was explained that Partners have an obligation to audit 10% of all properties, approx 170 in Round 1 and 290 in Round 2. The reason for this is to ensure that the person named on the tenancy, is the person living in the property. Partners will take action against any person who is not using a property as their sole home, e.g. sub-letting. Visits will be carried out Out-Of-Hours and at weekends.
- 4.2 The issue was raised whether the audit could also be used for checking whether tenants are complying with the other terms of their Tenancy Agreement. It was explained that at the moment this does not form part of the audit, however where there is a reason to, Partners would run checks on tenancy compliance.

- 4.3 It was suggested that Partners need to update their tenancy files as one forum member was audited twice. Due to a name change, which was not updated in the file, Partners questioned whether the resident was authorized to live in the property.
- 4.4 DP advised he would raise this point to the Housing Management Team.

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## **5. LBI Consultation on Housing Strategy**

- 5.1 TI introduced the item and explained that a representative from LBI was unable to attend the meeting; therefore he would be presenting the paper on Housing Strategy. It was explained that the council are producing a new Housing Strategy in 2008 and would like to consult residents on this. The consultation will be as wide as possible and the Housing Strategy will apply to all Landlords in Islington, social and private. A questionnaire has been produced which the council would like members to complete and return. The group was then asked if there were any issues they wanted to highlight.
- 5.2 Issues raised within the group, to be considered in the Housing Strategy included:
- More facilities for young people in Islington
  - The need for larger family properties in Islington
  - The need to avoid building more and more properties in Islington. This increases population and reduces green space.
  - The emphasis should be on improving existing properties as opposed to building more.
- 5.3 TI explained that he would feed the information above back to LBI.

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## **6. HFI Consultative Panel Papers**

- 6.1 DS ran through paper and asked members if they had any questions?
- 6.2 The issue of Leasehold charges for Digital TV upgrade was raised. DS explained that tenants would be charged a proposed 25p per week for the upgrade and maintenance, and Leaseholders would reimburse the council for this cost within their annual Service Charge.
- 6.3 It was asked what would happen to residents who have their own aerials that pick up foreign channels (e.g. Philippines sky channels). DS explained that residents are welcome to pay for any extra channels that they may want, however channels such as this will not be covered in the upgrade.

- 6.4 It was discussed that Environmental and Capital works should also be considered for the security of Partners street properties, as well as estate properties. The interim chair asked for HFI to look in to this.
- 6.5 TI explained that he would look in to who owns stairwell areas at the front of Partners properties for LY.
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## **7. Works Team Update**

- 7.1 LV ran through paper and explained that the Works team is looking to invest money in local charities/organizations. The group was asked for suggestions.
- 7.2 Suggestions included:
- BTCV.org.uk – conservation trust based in Kings Cross.
  - ANAND MANDA – elderly group for the Asian community.
  - LEAP PROJECT – performance forum for local under-privileged children.
- 7.3 LV explained the Works team key holding procedure.
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## **8. Performance at a Glance**

- 8.1 TI ran through the paper and asked the group if there were any questions.
- 8.2 The subject of telephone calls (D2) was raised; TI explained that Partners recognise call handling as a very important aspect of their service and are continuing to look at ways of improving the service.
- 8.3 Forum members stated that areas of responsibility for repairs need to be clearer; this will result in repairs being completed quicker and more efficiently. TI suggested that a member of the Repairs team should come to the next meeting.
- 8.4 It was suggested that the way the Performance at a Glance report is produced indicates that the Repairs team are 'Patting themselves on the back when they shouldn't be'. TI explained that the report is reporting actual performance and is not intended to come across as self congratulatory. The Forum agreed that future performance reports should not contain graphics and should simply state performance. TI advised that Partners will make changes to reflect this request and confirmed forum members are welcome to make suggestions on how they would like the report to look.
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## **9. HFI comments on Partners Performance**

- 9.1 IW ran through paper. It was suggested that the Works team might want to address the service they provide to Leaseholders in the next meeting.
- 9.2 TI was invited to explain that Partners are intending to commission a survey of Partners residents and are considering what questions might be appropriate to include about major works.

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## **10. Forum Training Needs**

- 10.1 TI introduced the item and explained that Partners would like to know what training courses would be most important to forum members. Members were asked to fill in the recently sent out Training Needs Form and return it to Partners if they had not already done so.
- 10.2 Members suggested that a Members Forum Pack, along with the chance for new members to meet Partners staff would be a good start.

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## **11. Any Other Business**

- 11.1 It is discussed that Partners do not have a Leasehold representative on the HFI sub-board. GG agreed to take this point back to HFI.

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## **12. Chair and Vice Chair Discussion and Election**

- 12.1 SL (interim chair) introduced the item saying she understood that some members of the old PF11 forum want to split into 2 groups again. The interim chair said that time was now limited and decided to defer this item to the next meeting. Forum members expressed concern that this item was being deferred without the consent of Forum members.
- 12.2 Members were advised that they would be contacted regarding the deferment of this item.

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The meeting closed at 8.35pm.

**Actions arising from minutes – Partners Residents Forum**  
**24/01/2008**

<b>ITEM NUMBER</b>	<b>ACTION FROM MINUTES</b>	<b>UPDATE AS AT 6/03/2008</b>	<b>OWNER</b>
3.2	Formal response to Chair's report of 24 Jan 2008 meeting	Complete	TI
3.4	Letter to Patrick Langley to thank him for his contribution to the Residents Forum	Complete	TI
5.3	Forum's feedback on LBI housing strategy consultation to be forwarded to LBI.	Complete	TI
6.3	Respond to question about what will happen to residents who have their own aerials/dishes when HFI complete digital aerial upgrade.	Complete – answers included in papers for meeting of 13 March 2008.	Amanda Dooley, HFI
6.4	Respond to question as to why no portion of the budget for Environmental and Capital works is allocated to Partners properties.	Complete – answers included in papers for meeting of 13 March 2008.	Amanda Dooley, HFI
6.5	Stairwell areas outside basement properties – who is responsible for them?	Information to be tabled at meeting of 13 March 2008.	TI
8.4	Revise the format of the performance reports for the Forum in light of comments at this meeting.	New format provided for meeting of 13 March 2008. The Forum is invited to comment on the revised format or suggest changes.	TI
9.1	Partners to respond to HFI comments on Partners performance, specifically with respect to Leaseholder satisfaction in the most recent Works satisfaction survey report.	Complete:  Response from Partners Works Team as follows: <i>"As the sample size increases for Leaseholders it indicates a general trend of satisfaction with the improvements, however an erratic trend of satisfaction for service.</i>  <i>"We will therefore concentrate our efforts on communication, events, open days &amp; focus groups to identify the reasons for the discrepancies</i>	Mark Allum, Partners Works Team

		<i>including how we work together with the Housing Management Team on consultation."</i>	
10.1	Training Needs Analysis – Forum members to return forms to Partners	Chairing skills training need identified (at extraordinary meeting of 04/03/08). Partners will offer Chairing Skills training from an external trainer in April/May 2008.	TI / EB
10.2	Partners to consider devising a "Forum Member's pack" to address the knowledge training issues (from Training Needs Analysis).	Partners agree this is a good idea and will compile a pack for members. Draft pack to May meeting of the Forum.	TI / EB
11.1	Take issue of lack of leaseholder representative on HFI Contracted Services Sub Board back to HFI.		Georgina Galliers
12.2	Chair and Vice Chair discussion and election	Complete (at extraordinary meeting of Forum on 04/03/08)	Forum