

# MINUTES OF RESIDENTS' FORUM

Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> June 2009



Present: Leigh Tate (Customer Services Manager)  
James Scott (Resident Involvement Officer)  
Martin Buddery (Operations Director)  
Carol Wilkinson (Board Member)  
Mr A Rogers                      Miss C Turner  
Mr J Simmons                     Mr D Fitt  
Mr F Woods                       Mrs S Woods  
Mrs P Kemp                        Mr T Leyland

## 1. INTRODUCTION & FEEDBACK FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

James introduced himself, Leigh and Martin to residents and asked residents to introduce themselves to the forum.

### **Greenstead Estate**

James advised that Mrs Watson has been given a written schedule of exactly how grounds maintenance duties were broken down by Sally Thirkettle, Housing Manager. Problems at Delius walk now appear to be rectified.

### **Meadow View, St Osyth**

Laura Twitchett, Housing Officer, has visited the relevant households to discuss these issues and make residents aware of the current situation. However, there are still parking issues in this area.

### **The Close, Great Holland**

Lesley Glover, Housing Officer, has contacted the resident concerned and is working to solve the issues in this area.

## **2. DO YOU KNOW WHO YOUR HOUSING OFFICER IS?**

James explained that in his experience of talking to residents, a sizeable proportion seemed to either not know, or be unsure about, who their Housing Officer is. A show of hands revealed that several attendees were in this position. James and Leigh to look into ways of making sure that all residents are aware of who their Housing Officer is as this is their first point of contact for estate management issues. It was also suggested that it might be a good idea to advertise who the local Estate Representative was in a given area. James noted that if this was to be done, each Estate Representative would have to give their consent and it would by no means be compulsory as some may prefer to maintain their anonymity.

## **3. OVERVIEW OF *THE BIG SURVEY!* RESULTS**

James handed round a summary of the main findings of *The Big Survey!* and talked through each aspect. Residents agreed that the results regarding experience of service from Colne staff were in line with their own experiences (i.e. very good).

## **4. COLNE COMMUNITY FUND**

James gave a presentation on the Colne Community Fund, explaining what it was for, the project that had received grants from the fund and how to apply. Most attendees appeared not to know about the fund and were very interested. The general feeling was that Colne should make residents (and non-residents, as it is a community-wide fund) more aware of the Colne Community Fund's existence. Three residents asked for application forms to be sent to them. James has subsequently sent these forms (18/06/09). Mr Leyland and Mr Simmons both said that they would like to join the Colne Community Fund panel.

## **5. DIRECT ACCESS TO RESIDENTS' VIEWS FOR BOARD MEMBERS**

James explained that Colne were looking into ways that there could be more direct contact between residents and board members. Several ideas had been discussed including one board member attending each Residents' Forum meeting; board members joining in with existing site walkabouts with residents and contractors; and "Meet the Board" events where residents would be invited to come and speak to the Board about issues that concerned them. Residents were in general agreement that these types of initiative were a good idea and that any "Meet the Board" event should have a relaxed and informal feel so as not to intimidate residents who may wish to express an opinion or ask questions. Residents were also quick to note that this should be very much a two way process.

Martin stated that he was also keen to form a formal link between Residents' Forum and the Society's Board where the Board would receive feedback from Residents' Forum on performance information provided. James advised that Residents' Forum minutes were now available for anyone to view on the Society's website, although this version does not include the 'Resident Round Up' section for data protection reasons.

## **6. MAKE UP OF RESIDENTS' FORUM**

James spoke to residents about the importance of promoting the idea of Residents' Forum as an open and friendly place where residents can find out more about the Society and have their views taken into account. Many attendees agreed that some residents may be wary of attending as they may consider it a very formal and daunting experience. James asked residents to fill in a short questionnaire outlining their interests and why they attend Residents' Forum and explained that, with residents' permission, some of these would be used to promote the idea that the people who attend Residents' Forum are ordinary people 'just like you and me' and therefore show that the Forum is not in any way exclusive. Photographs were also taken and permission slips signed by those that were happy to have their photograph used.

The possibility of changing the name of Residents' Forum to make it seem more inviting was also discussed although nothing concrete was decided upon.

## **7. RESIDENT 'ROUND UP':**

CONFIDENTIAL – full minutes only available to attendees.

## **6. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING:**

16<sup>th</sup> September 2009. Time and venue TBC.