

Issue 6

Tenant Services News

11th October 2010

Housing Improvement Plan

Progress is continuing to be made although some areas of the plan are being reviewed following the interest shown from the profile survey from a large number of tenants who want to be involved in improving services. In particular this relates to design and development of the annual report, development of a leaseholder manual and development of a tenant scrutiny panel. The survey has presented us with a resource of new tenants whose views could prove to be both illuminating and useful in the future.

Approximately 20 of these new tenants have already become involved in the development of the annual report and have made some interesting comments about both its style/layout and the nature of the content they would like to see. Examples include adding information which is in summary format and providing links to other places (such as the website) where more details can be obtained.

If any member of staff wants to be involved in any of the actions identified in the improvement plan, please contact either myself or the identified lead officer. This does not have to be an action linked to your current role in the organisation. For example, someone dealing with business support might be interested in helping to develop on some of the tenant participation issues and someone dealing with repairs might want to be involved with some estate management issues.

Customer Profiling

The survey has been very successful with over 35% (1826 out of 5227) of tenants now having returned their survey forms. The draw for the winners of the 10 cash prizes was made by Sue Griffiths and the winners (who have now been notified and received their prizes) will be publicised in the next issue of Keynotes.

Some of the interesting information to date is as follows:

- More than 190 tenants requesting documents in large print in the future
- More than tenants with hearing difficulties
- More than 290 tenants indicating that they wish to be more involved with the Council either formally (through resident groups etc) or informally (through postal/telephone surveys)
- More than 90 tenants expressing an interest in being involved in mystery shopping

All tenants who have expressed an interest in being involved have been approached with more details about the tenant scrutiny panel, mystery

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shopping and tenant inspectors. From the leaseholder survey, all leaseholders who are interested in being involved have been asked to attend an informal meeting in the next few weeks to look at the possibility of establishing a leaseholder forum.

Staff Meetings

Two of the four meetings held on 29th September were again held away from Ebley Mill and these were again well attended and more productive in terms of the discussions. It is intended, with some rescheduling to ensure everyone has an opportunity to attend, to hold all future meetings at a venue close to Ebley Mill – Kelly Headley will notify everyone of the details shortly.

The outcomes from the survey generated some interesting discussions at the meetings and questions were asked about how we were intending to capture the information from those who had not responded. Given that less than 5% of those sending their survey form back refused to provide any information, it seems likely that the non-returns are down to general apathy rather than a reluctance to participate. We are currently looking at using the annual tenant visit as the primary means of capturing this information but one member of staff also suggested using a “blitz” day (or days) involving all staff trying to contact as many tenants as possible. We are currently looking at using both of these methods over the next few months.

There was some discussion about tenant participation with reference to some of the difficulties surrounding the sheltered housing review. In general terms, if the sheltered housing review is taken out of the equation, our relationships with tenants are improving and changing with involvement this month in reviewing budgets and through the work on reviewing service standards and policies which is currently drawing to a close. The actions being worked on through the improvement plan will build on this improving relationship.

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