

**HACKNEY HOMES Ltd
Resident Liaison Group Meeting**

Thursday, 10 September 2009 at 6.00pm to 7.50pm

**The Chief Executive's Conference Room, 1st Floor,
Christopher Addison House, 72 Wilton Way, Hackney E8 1BJ**

Part A Meeting (Open to the Public)

Distributed to:

Resident Liaison Group Members:

Rupert Tyson (Joint Chair)
Tom Price (Joint Chair)
Audrey Villas
Danny Neeson
Joyce Brown
Terry J Edwards
Muriel Gordon
Shirley Bogan
Lionel Fairweather
Ehsan Uddin
Erdal Doganduzel
Jean – Paul Lawrence Tampu-eya
Denise Bingham
Tony Goodchild
Michael Gills
Susan Fajana-Thomas
Gordon Guthrie
Mavis MacGee
David White

Officers:

Charlotte Graves
Neil Isaac
Robin Smith
Gary Penticost
Neehara Wijeyesekera
Judith Morrison
Tom Hunt
Clive Taber
Alex Jarosy
Alan Turner
Tom Hogan

Papers circulated to:

David Larkin
Brian Marsh
Feryal Demirci
Alice Burke

Housing Partner Representatives:

Mouchel: David Saxon
Nii-Amon Nikoi

Pinnacle: Elliot Brooks
Pathmeads: John Ferman
Sarah Chapman
Fergal Ward

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HACKNEY HOMES Ltd
Resident Liaison Group Meeting

Thursday 10 September 2009 at 6:00pm to 7.50 pm,
The Chief Executive's Conference Room, 1st Floor,
Christopher Addison House, 72 Wilton Way, Hackney E8 1BJ

A Part A AGENDA (Open to the Public)

Item	Presenter	Subject	Pages	Status	Duration	Time
1.	Chair	Welcome and Introduction		Information	5 mins	6.00-6.05
2.	Chair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apologies • Declarations of Interest including HH Board Members declaring they are Board Members 		Information	2 mins	6.05-6.07
			Information			
3.	Chair	a) Minutes of 2 July 2009 and Matters arising b) Rolling Register	1-10 11	Decision	10 mins	6.07-6.17
4.	C Graves/Exec team	What's happening at Hackney Homes Update? Update from Partners		Verbal	15 mins	6.17-6.32
5.	T Edwards	Feed back from the Service Improvement Committee		Verbal	5 mins	6.32-6.37
6.	M Brewer	Housing Management Contracts	12-14	Information and Discussion	15 mins	6.37-6.52
7.	G Penticost/A Turner	Estate Garages and Other Associated Assets	15-20	Information and Discussion	10 mins	6.52-7.02

8.	M Gordon	Feedback from the Stamford Hill Focus Group		Discussion	10 mins	7.02-7.12
9.	R Campbell	Update on Health and Safety -Swine Flu -Fire risk assessment	21-22	Information	10 mins	7.12-7.22
10.	T Hogan	Service Standards	23-36	Information/ Discussion	10 mins	7.22-7.32
11.	T Hogan	Review of Tenancy Conditions	37-46	Information/ Discussion	10 mins	7.32-7.42
12.	C Taber	Enhanced TRA Meetings Review Update	47-48	Information only		
13.	Chair	Any Other Business		Information	5 mins	7.42-7.47
14.	Chair	Date of next meeting: 12 November 2009 (Christopher Addison House)		Information	1 min	7.47-7.48



Hackney Homes Ltd

ITEM 3a

Part A Minutes of Resident Liaison Group Meeting, held at Christopher Addison house, 72 Wilton Way Hackney E8 1BJ

On 2 July 2009 at 6.00PM

Present	<p>Rupert Tyson (Joint Chair) Cllr Tom Price (Joint Chair)</p> <p>Brian Marsh Muriel Gordon Mavis McGee David White Gordon McGuthrie Lionel Fairweather Jean-Paul Lawrence Tampu-eya Alice Burke Shirley Bogan Ray Ross Tom Woolley Tony Goodchild</p> <p><i>Housing Partner Representatives</i> Elliot Brooks John Newbury</p>	<p>Officers Charlotte Graves Gary Penticost Judith Morrison Tom Hunt Clive Taber Kevin Kingston Wayne Hilton</p> <p>In attendance Uzma Durrani George McGee Cristina Sganga Stephen Farquhar</p>
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Item	Open to the Public	Action	Date
1. Welcome & Introduction	Rupert Tyson welcomed everyone to the meeting and all those in attendance introduced themselves. There appeared to be some confusion as to who was a member of the group and the Governance Manager would circulate a list round to clarify membership.		

Item	Open to the Public	Action	Date
<p>2.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apologies • Declarations of interest 	<p>Apologies were received from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Susan Fajana-Thomas • Denise Bingham • John Ferman • Terry Edwards • Joyce Brown • David Larkin • Alan Turner • Neil Isaac • Neehara Wijeyesekera <p>None</p>		
<p>3(a) Minutes of 7 May 2009</p> <p>Matters arising</p>	<p>There were two corrections to the minutes of 7 May 2009. Rhonda Dewsnap was missing from the list of those present.</p> <p>7 Any Other Business. "Hackney Homes would consult with Residents over the review and renewal of the Neighbourhood Contracts" should be added to the minutes.</p> <p>With the above corrections, the minutes were agreed as a true record and signed accordingly.</p> <p><u>Energy Costs</u> Gary Penticost said that Energy Costs had overspent by £1.5m which was why the charges were increased for 2009/10. Discussions have been held with the Council about the district heating charges and the Council wanted to see what the newly tendered energy costs would be before they</p>		

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Item	Open to the Public	Action	Date
	<p>would consider any reduction in charges. These prices should be known in September at which time an update can be given. Hackney Homes Audit & Finance Committee asked officers to review the issues around charging for district heating and the overall costs and benefits to residents of such schemes compared with individual systems. This work has started and an update would be brought to the Audit & Finance Committee on 13 July followed by an update to the next RLG.</p> <p><u>Clockhouse Meeting Space</u> Clive Taber said that matters were in hand and surveyors had now been appointed. Muriel Gordon thanked Clive Taber and Pinnacle for getting this project underway.</p> <p><u>Garages Update</u> A report was circulated to the Group and this would be on the agenda for the September meeting.</p> <p><u>Resident Participation Strategy Enhanced Tenant & Resident Association Review</u> Clive Taber said that feed back about the Questionnaire had been given by two of the Panels and this had been incorporated. The Questionnaire would now be sent to all TRAs.</p>	<p>N Isaac/G Penticost</p>	
		A Turner/G Penticost	10.09.09
		C Taber	July
3(b) Rolling Register	The Rolling Register was noted.		
4. Key Issues for Hackney Homes	<p>The Chief Executive and Heads of Service then gave a verbal update on the key issues in their areas.</p> <p><u>The Chief Executive</u> said that the key issues for her were money and savings. @£2m savings had to be found this year and next year without affecting the</p>		



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	<p>services Residents needed and this was going to be challenging.</p> <p><u>Head of Estate Environment</u> The key issues for Estate Environment were</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewing all the methods of undertaking the services to ensure that they were the most cost-effective • Setting up service level agreements with all the estates which would set out how things were done, when they would be done and the associated costs. Residents were involved in drawing up these SLAs • For leaseholders, posting detailed information on the web which would set out e.g. costs per block, how things were progressing. <p><u>Head of Leasehold and Right to Buy</u> The key issues for Leasehold and Right to Buy were</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A financial advice surgery was scheduled to be run on 18 August. Various agencies would be attending such as Age Concern, Private Sector Housing Specialists and debt specialists. To date, 60 leaseholders had booked a place. • A leaseholder/freeholder conference had been arranged for 26 September and it was hoped that as many leaseholders and freeholders as possible would attend. <p><u>Neighbourhood Contract Housing Manager</u> The key issues for the Neighbourhoods were</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation and implementation of the ETRA review which was a large project. 		



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Item	Open to the Public	Action	Date
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anti Social Behaviour – a considerable amount of work was being undertaken with our Partners to improve our service. • Exploring ways of expanding the information we provide on benefits, debt and tax credits. <p><u>Director of Property Services</u> The key issues for Property Services Were</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring the improving trend in responsive repairs continued • Ensuring that the 184/EIB programmes were successful • Extending the planned maintenance core groups <p>Alan Turner was retiring later this year and Gary Penticost informed the Group that the post would be advertised along with the post of Divisional Head for Maintenance. Gary Penticost also thanked Alan Turner for all his hard work in leading the decent homes project.</p>		
<p>5. Presentation from Peter Norton WoodCo</p>	<p>Peter Naughton from WoodCo gave a presentation about the Woodberry Down regeneration project from a Resident perspective.</p> <p>The key concerns for Residents were</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As the site was being regenerated, repairs had been seen to be less of a priority • The design of the flats was moving from dual aspect to single aspect • The regeneration teams were more concerned with the bricks and mortar aspect of the regeneration rather than the community side. 		



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Item	Open to the Public	Action	Date
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • @ 50% of the outright sale flats were likely to be buy to let investments and short term lets made it harder to build a community • Leaseholders were suffering from leasehold blight <p>Kevin Kingston thanked Peter Naughton and all his colleagues at WoodCo for the hard work they had put in over the years. However, he said that considerable work had been undertaken on building community cohesion, sustainable communities and people development. Charlotte Graves said that the repairs issue had been acknowledged and that officers were waiting for approval to spend £20m on repairs at Woodberry Down.</p> <p>The Group considered that homes were the key issue here and that there was a view that no one had been listening to the people at Woodberry Down. Residents had been moved out for the regeneration but there were no homes for them to return to. There was also concern about the impact a new government may have on the regeneration project. A question was asked whether it would be possible to refurbish the flats rather than demolish. Gary Penticost said that the flats were beyond economic repair and after many years of consultation, demolish and rebuild had been agreed as the best way forward.</p> <p>The Group asked if the Council were going to buy back the leasehold flats and would this be at the regeneration value. Peter Naughton responded that the Council are buying back leaseholder properties but only to those who are facing severe hardship, for one reason or another, and only on a case by case basis.</p> <p>The Group agreed that it was important to have heard the Woodberry Down</p>		



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Item	Open to the Public	Action	Date
	<p>Residents' views.</p> <p>Charlotte Graves said that the Residents had been listened to more recently and there was a clear line on repairs. There was a normal service for day-to-day repairs and there was money now for interim repairs. The Council and the regeneration team were in weekly contact with government to get the £40m regeneration money released.</p> <p>Peter Naughton thanked the Group for its support.</p>		
<p>6.Consultation Presentation on Hackney Homes CCTV Strategy</p>	<p>Wayne Hilton gave a presentation on Hackney Homes CCTV Strategy and he thanked David White for his input. The Group said that one of the problems with CCTV around the estates was signage and asked if this would change. Wayne Hilton confirmed that the signage would be changed and improved. Officers at Hackney Homes had had discussions with the Council and it had been agreed that the low level ASB would be dealt with by Hackney Homes.</p> <p>The Group said that over the years, the registration numbers of dumped cars had been reported to the Council but it seemed that no follow up had occurred. As there would now be more visual evidence would there be prosecutions in the future. Wayne Hilton said that this would be followed up and information would be collated to try to identify the perpetrators and legal advice would then be taken.</p> <p>The Group asked how the Concierge service would fit in with this Strategy. Wayne Hilton said that he had been informed that all the Concierges had security accreditation but that he would clarify this.</p>		

Item	Open to the Public	Action	Date
	<p>The Group said that reporting crime deterred crime but that people would only report crime if there was feedback that it was being dealt with and this feedback should be publicised. Elliot Brooks said that the ASB procedures were currently being revised but that feedback mechanisms had been included in the re-drafted procedures. Action plans would be drawn up on what was being done on each of the reported crimes.</p> <p>If any member of the Group required further clarification, then they could contact either Wayne Hilton or Elliot Brooks.</p>		
<p>7. ETRA Review Update</p>	<p>Clive Taber introduced the report. The Questionnaires were being sent out to all TRAs and the TRAs had four weeks to feedback their comments.</p> <p>The Group noted the report.</p>		
<p>8. Alternative Forms of Engagement- Feedback from Focus Group</p>	<p>Clive Taber introduced the report. There was a query over why a Leasehold Advisory Group had been set up when there was already a Leaseholders' Forum and was this not a duplication. Charlotte Graves said that the Leasehold Advisory Group provided an alternative way of meeting with her to discuss what was and was not working well. The Leasehold Forum was not representative of all Leaseholders. Information about the Advisory Group had been included in the Leaseholder Newsletter and a single mail shot had also gone out asking Leaseholders if they wanted to join the Group.</p> <p>The Group noted the report.</p>		
<p>9.Environmental Improvement Budget</p>	<p>Clive Taber introduced the report and highlighted the new arrangements. Any money not spent in the EIB at the end of the year would be transferred into the 184 walkabout budget so that additional communal works in the Neighbourhood could be carried out. It was reported that one project had been submitted for EIB two years running and it had not been done and there</p>		



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	<p>had been no feedback on why. Gary Penticost apologised for this and acknowledged that the old system had not worked well. There was concern that the level of EIB bids would mean that there were not enough resources to carry the works out. Gary Penticost said that there were a variety of means available to get the work completed – the DLO, Support Contractors as well as the main maintenance contractors.</p> <p>Clive Taber said that in order to maximise the EIB spend, no bids would be processed after 1 October.</p> <p>The Group said that this was a good example of officers listening to Residents and congratulated them on the new procedure.</p>		
<p>10. Alternative Meeting Venues</p>	<p>Rupert Tyson said that the Board had considered this at its meeting on 29 June and had asked the Governance Manager to review some more venues. Any suggestions from the Resident Liaison Group should be sent to Tess Merrett.</p>		
<p>11. AOB</p>	<p>An issue was raised about the underground car park at Shoreditch House. Elliot Brooks said that he would investigate this and report back.</p> <p>The Group asked that for the next meeting, the Partners be included in the round-up of key issues. The Group also asked for some feedback from the Service Improvement Committee.</p> <p>It was noted that the estate cleaning statistics were very inconsistent across the borough. Charlotte Graves said that this had been picked up and Tom Hunt would report back.</p>		



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Item	Open to the Public	Action	Date
	<p>The Group asked for feedback from the Harrogate Conference.</p> <p>There was a query about where to go for residents of single blocks or flats in single converted houses which were too small for a separate TRA if they wanted to bid for EIB for example. Clive Taber said that there was a Street Property Sounding Board and it was also possible to team up with a neighbouring TRA.</p> <p>Clive Taber said that Resident Services would be contacting panels re consultation about the Partner Contracts.</p>		
12.	<p>The meeting closed at 8.00 pm</p> <p>The next meeting will take place on 10 September 2009 at 6.00 pm at Christopher Addison House.</p>		

Signed as a true record of this meeting _____ Chair Dated _____



Item 3b)

Rolling Register Resident Liaison Group

<p>1 Garages Update 30.10.08</p>	<p>Garages update</p> <p>Report and Strategy on Garages to consider</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demand • Condition • Future finance • Viability • Whether to demolish 	<p>G Penticost</p>	<p>September</p>
<p>2. Update on Decent Homes Programme</p>	<p>8.2 Equalities Impact Assessment report on kitchens and bathrooms and arrears policy in respect of kitchens and bathrooms to be brought back to the RLG following discussion at Service Improvement Committee</p>	<p>T Hogan</p>	<p>September 09 Verbal Update</p>
<p>3. Woodberry Down</p>	<p>Representatives of WDCO to be invited to give a presentation to RLG on what was happening</p>	<p>R Smith</p>	<p>November 09</p>
<p>4.Estate Plans progress report</p>	<p>A report on progress would be brought back to the Board in November</p>	<p>C Ferrarello</p>	<p>November 09</p>

Title of Report: Housing Management Contracts	
Decision Making Body: Resident Liaison Group	Date: 10 September 2009
Classification: FOR DISCUSSION	Report of: Interim Head of Resident Services
Item Previously considered at: N/A	On Which Date: N/A
Report Author: - Malcolm Brewer Ext 5033	Appendices: N/A

Report Outline:

- Paragraph: 1.0 - Introduction
- Paragraph: 2.0 - Background
- Paragraph: 3.0 – Limitations and Restrictions on Decisions
- Paragraph: 4.0 - Panel Response

If you have any questions about this report, please contact Malcolm Brewer on 0208 356 5033 or email malcolm.brewer@hackneyhomes.org.uk

HOUSING MANAGEMENT CONTRACTS	<i>Classification</i> For discussion at the Resident Liaison Group meeting.
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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the Resident Liaison Group of the current review of the Housing Management Contracts and open a dialogue with a view to secure a steer or a consensus from the Liaison Group of the options available as a result of the expiration of the Housing Management Contracts.

1.2 Three (3) Housing Management contracts are due to end in March 2011 and two (2) in 2012 (see Table 1 below) although there is an extension clause in each contract. Any decision to extend will need to incorporate resident's views. Each contract area is providing services to thousands of residents whose views should have a bearing on any decision.

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 The provision of housing management within Hackney Homes is through a number of partnering agreements.

Table 1

Contract Area	Partnering Organisation	Contract Start	Contract Expires	Expiry Extension Option	Contract Expires
North East	Pinnacle	2007	2012	2 years	2014
Shoreditch	Pinnacle	2007	2012	2 years	2014
North West	Pathmead	2004	2011	3 years	2014
DeBeauvoir & Queensbridge	Mouchel	2004	2011	3 years	2014
Homerton	Mouchel	2004	2011	3 years	2014

2.2 Hackney Homes has to decide the way forward in regard to these contracts, particularly in light of its wider aim of achieving 3*, which includes increasing resident satisfaction.

2.3 The imminent expiration of these contracts is an opportunity to establish whether there are potential savings to be gained by re-thinking how housing management is provided as well as taking the opportunity to draw out 3* performance outcomes from an improved or different delivery method.

2.4 Each option proposed will need to consider the major priority of value for money, Hackney Homes' savings and HRA delegated savings and best value.

3.0 LIMITATIONS AND RESTRICTIONS ON DECISIONS

3.1 These remain the Council's contracts and therefore are subject to Council decisions. This may be in the form of full ownership or with a steer by being present at discussions or decisions.

3.2 Timing of decisions is critical with regard to procurement of any new contracts. There would be a cycle which may involve at best an eighteen month lead in for full procurement.

4.0 Panel Response

- 4.1 As the Resident Liaison Group is responsible for monitoring and observing services provided by Partners in your neighbourhoods. We would like you to comment on their progress, and on your observations about possible extension.

Thank you for taking time to provide this feedback. We may well arrange for further feedback from residents in your area, however, could I ask you also to comment on how you feel residents views in your area may be gathered.

Title of Report: Estate garages and other associated assets	
Decision Making Body: Resident Liaison Group	Date: Thursday 10th September 2009
Classification: For Information	Report of: Director of Property Services
Item Previously considered at:	On Which Date: N/A
(1) List the <u>Hackney Homes</u> Committees / Board Meetings which have previously considered the item;	N/A
(2) List the <u>Hackney Council</u> Committees / Cabinet Meetings which have previously considered the item.	Cabinet 27.07.09
Report Author: Bob Snowsill x2902	Appendices: None

Report Outline:

- Paragraph: 1.0 - Summary of Report;
- Paragraph: 2.0 - Recommendation(s)
- Paragraph: 3.0 – Background;
- Paragraph: 4.0 - Impact Upon The Hackney Homes Strategic Plan 2008-2013;
- Paragraph: 5.0 - Impact Upon The Hackney Homes Risk Register;
- Paragraph: 6.0 - Consideration of the Hackney Homes Equality & Diversity Strategy 2006 and Action Plan 2007 - 2010;
- Paragraph: 7.0 - Consultation Process & Findings;
- Paragraph: 8.0 - ICT Implications;
- Paragraph: 9.0 - Human Resources Implications;
- Paragraph: 10 – Financial Implications;
- Paragraph: 11 - Legal Implications / Advice;
- Paragraph: 12 - Other Related Decisions / Guidance.

1.0 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report outlines the progress made on the delivery of the garage and associated assets review approved by Hackney Council Cabinet on 27th July 2009.
- 1.2 The garage stock has suffered from a lack of investment over many years and has consequently fallen into significant disrepair.
- 1.3 Only a small percentage of garages are producing rental income and many are illegally occupied.
- 1.4 A large number of garages and other buildings are insecure and have been fly-tipped. This has resulted in infestations and other serious health and safety issues.
- 1.5 Many semi-derelict garage courts have become centres of anti-social behaviour including prostitution and drug abuse.
- 1.6 Laundries, drying rooms, pram stores and other ancillary buildings have become disused due to changing lifestyles and, in many cases, have deteriorated to the point where they are structurally unsound.
- 1.7 The combination of under investment and disuse has resulted in many of these buildings becoming eyesores and seriously diminishing the visual and physical amenity of many of our estates.

2 RECOMMENDATION

That the group note the contents of this report.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Hackney Homes manage the Council's stock of garages which totals some 4,200 units.
- 3.2 Current rent levels are £13.40 a week for tenants of council housing and £13.40 plus vat a week for leaseholders and private tenants.
- 3.3 Garage rent arrears are currently £91,260 which represents 3.2% of the potential income.
- 3.4 The current review has the following objectives:
 - 3.4.1 To carry out an audit of all current Garages, storage facilities and other assets associated with existing estates.

- 3.4.2 To identify current usage, tenure and costs of repair/ improvement/ conversion, demolition or disposal of these assets.
 - 3.4.3 To identify current demand for such facilities and operational management options.
 - 3.4.4 To propose a financial model which aligns income with maintenance expenditure for such retained assets.
 - 3.4.5 Introduce a pilot exemplar project during 2009/10
 - 3.4.6 Provide a long-term strategy and resource assessment by December 2009.
- 3.5 The project involves the following tasks:
- 3.5.1 Carry out a review of the number, location, condition and rental status of estate garages, stores, drying rooms, laundries and other facilities.
 - 3.5.2 Prepare a Garage standard and calculate repair costs required to meet this standard. Identify improvements on each site to enhance lettable (improved lighting or partial demolition for example)
 - 3.5.3 Establish a process to maximise income from sound garage units by evicting illegal users and re-letting on formal tenancies, where there is a clear demand at a viable market rent
 - 3.5.4 Establish rental demand for garages on each estate, refurbish void but viable units and re-let at viable market rent.
 - 3.5.5 Investigate development potential of garages or other assets not in demand and make proposals for alternative uses.
 - 3.5.6 Review with partners the operational management options available to maintain new tenancies in an effective manner.
 - 3.5.7 Consult with stakeholders to identify a pilot exemplar project and implement proposals in 09/10
- 3.6 Progress on the 09/10 pilot:
- 3.6.1 As at 14th August we have surveyed 224 garages across 12 estates and are taking a range of actions dealing with the outcomes of the survey.

- 3.6.2 We have served Notice to Quit on 206 garages where no rent is being paid.
- 3.6.3 We have updated computer records on 18 rented garages which previously showed as void.
- 3.6.4 We have re-possessed and secured 80 garages.
- 3.6.5 We have placed orders to force entry, and re-possess 126 garages once Notice to Quit expires.
- 3.6.6 We have placed orders to clear and refurbish 56 garages.
- 3.6.7 We have placed orders to demolish 13 garages.
- 3.6.8 We have located the users of 11 garages who have now signed formal tenancies.
- 3.6.9 We have placed orders for the demolition of 8 abandoned drying sheds, 7 derelict pram stores and one derelict former caretaker's store.
- 3.7 Partners in neighbourhood offices are updating their garage waiting lists in preparation for a post refurbishment letting programme.
- 3.8 We will shortly be commissioning a survey of access and lighting issues to the surveyed blocks.

4 IMPACT UPON THE HACKNEY HOMES STRATEGIC PLAN

- 4.1 The income and investment model, currently being developed from the survey results, will inform a new, viable management and maintenance programme for these assets. This will ultimately make a positive contribution to the housing revenue account.

5 IMPACT UPON THE HACKNEY HOMES RISK REGISTER

RISK	PROBABILITY	IMPACT	CONTROLS
Resident objections	Low	Medium	Full consultation
s.20 implications for leaseholders	Low	Low	Consultation with Leasehold Income Services
Low demand for garages	Medium	Low	Demolition is proposed for low demand units.

Lack of funding for pilot	Low	Severe	£250K Finance approved by Cabinet 27.07.09
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6 THE HACKNEY HOMES EQUALITY & DIVERSITY STRATEGY 2006 /ACTION PLAN 2007 – 2010

N/A

7 CONSULTATION PROCESS & FINDINGS

7.1 Consultation has taken place with stakeholder officers at Neighbourhood Offices, Estate Safety and the Police to identify the pilot exemplar project for 09/10.

7.2 Consultation has taken place with stakeholder officers in the Council's Neighbourhoods & Regeneration Housing Renewal Team to both share information gathered on garages as part of the Estates Plus project and also to identify certain garages on regeneration estates for the 09/10 pilot project.

8 ICT IMPLICATIONS

8.1 A Project Excellence workstream is being established and both Saffron and Codeman will be updated from the survey and project information.

9.0 HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

9.1 An officer currently on secondment from a housing management partner has been allocated to the project as a surveyor for 2 days per week. The costs of this secondment are fully resourced within the project budget. This officer will support the Development Compliance Manager and the Development Compliance Officer in the delivery of the project within the current financial year.

10.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 A Capital budget for the 09/10 pilot project in the sum of £250,000 was approved at Cabinet on 27th July. This will fund

- the appointment of a surveyor in the sum of £24,000
- demolitions in the sum of £50,000
- refurbishments in the sum of £176,000

10.2 The outcomes of the pilot will be reviewed in November and a ROP bid will be submitted for a budget to fund the roll out of this project in 2010/11.

11.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS / ADVICE

N/A

12.0 OTHER RELATED DECISIONS / GUIDANCE

N/A

Title of Report: Update on Health & Safety	
Meeting: Resident Liaison Group	Date: 10th September 2009
Classification: For information only	Report of: Health & Safety Manager
Item Previously considered at: N/A	On Which Date: N/A
Report Author: Robert Campbell Health & Safety Manager T: 0208 356 2095	Appendices: N/A

Health & Safety Update

1.0 Swine Flu

- 1.1 Hackney Homes Silver group have received daily updates from LBH and the Cabinet Office. The Silver group have held regular meetings to ensure that management are agreed and fully aware of Hackney Homes' strategy and that a consistent message is given to staff and other stakeholders in-line with government guidance.
- 1.2 Union representatives have been invited to all meetings and consulted on the approach being taken.
- 1.3 To encourage good hygiene practices, all staff are being given a bottle of hand gel and information on ways of minimising the risk of infection. The catch it, bin it, kill it advice has been promoted by the communications team via the staff newsletters, notice-boards and the intranet.
- 1.4 Hand gel is being issued to estate environment and property services operatives.

2.0 Fire Safety

- 2.1 Following the recent Camberwell fire, there has understandably been increased attention on fire safety from residents and the media.

- 2.2 The issue for Hackney is that the design and construction of Lakanal House is similar to some residential blocks managed by Hackney Homes on behalf of Hackney Council.
- 2.3 In advance of the Police and/or London Fire Brigade inquiry into what caused the fire, Hackney Homes are being proactive in assuring its residents, staff and Board that it is minimising the risk of a similar incident in Hackney Homes blocks.
- 2.4 Hackney Homes is confident that we have completed the fire risk assessments in all blocks that are six storeys and higher and are in the process of completing the rest of our blocks. Where defects or issues have been identified, we are taking action to resolve and undertake remedial works.
- 2.5 We will await further information from the inquiry into what caused the fire and will decide on what action to take if any.
- 2.6 Advice on fire safety for residents will be included in the next edition of the Hackney Homes magazine.
- 2.7 The tenant handbook is currently being updated and will emphasise the importance of keeping communal areas and balconies clear.
- 2.2 We are also able to report that Hackney Homes have been pro-active in its approach to fire safety and regular meetings are held with the London Fire Brigade, who are working with Gerda and Hackney Homes to produce a fire safety DVD.

Title of Report: Service Standards Review	
Decision Making Body: Resident Liaison Group	Date: 10 September 2009
Classification: FOR INFORMATION/VIEWS	Report of: Head of Service Development
Item Previously considered at: N/A	On Which Date: N/A
Report Author: - Tom Hogan	Appendices: A Current Service Standards

Report Outline:

- **Paragraph: 1.0 - Summary of Report**
- **Paragraph: 2.0 - Recommendation(s) to Resident Liaison Group**
- **Paragraph: 3.0 – Background**
- **Paragraph: 4.0 - Comments**

If you have any questions about this report, please contact Tom Hogan on 0208 356 4017 or email tom.hogan@hackneyhomes.org.uk

1.0 SUMMARY OF REPORT

1.1 The report tells the RLG that a general review of service standards is currently underway with the aim of ensuring they are all clear, deliverable and reflect the priorities of residents.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION

2.1 The Resident Liaison Group is asked to note the report.

3.0 BACKGROUND

3.1 The statement of service standards is the single most important commitment offered to customers. It sets out what customers can expect and the timescales within which to do so. As such they are the principle promises against which complaints are judged and are a key reference document for the Council, Ombudsman and the Audit Commission. A list of the current service standards is attached to this report on Appendix A.

3.2 Guidance from the Audit Commission and elsewhere makes it clear that they must conform to the SMART standard. They must be definite ie. an

unconditional commitment to do something; measurable in the sense that systems are in place to do so and used by managers to achieve targets; agreed (by the Board); realistic with resources needed achieve them; delivered within a certain timescale. This is a high standard and one which tests the quality of management and planning throughout the organisation with implications for finance, human resources and IT as much as frontline services.

- 3.3 They were last reviewed in 2007 after extensive public consultation and endorsed by the Board the following April with a commitment to review them the following year. Experience since suggests that there are compelling reasons to improve the current set of service standards.
- 3.4 At present there are some 118 published service standards split between twelve service areas, not all have associated systems to allow either those responsible to accurately report on or steer service provision. The sheer number of service standards is widely regarded as difficult to manage and in some does not help understanding.
- 3.5 In some cases performance has not matched the stated service standards. In these cases a view needs to be taken about whether action can be taken to raise performance to the required level or, if not, to set a revised level which can be achieved.
- 3.6 At present performance against the standards is not published in any one place. Until recently a selection was included within the Performance Report but this practice has been stopped. It is important that the public are able to see such results because, apart from other benefits, it is a prerequisite in achieving accountability.
- 3.7 An examination of recent Audit Commission reports where ALMOs have been awarded three stars reveals certain key elements:
- strong leadership and direction in the organisation; ability of customers to access services in ways and at times convenient to them
 - a commitment to staff training
 - customers influencing service delivery
 - high levels of customer satisfaction
- 3.8 Organisations which could demonstrate effective responses in these areas were commended. Ownership and accountability for the agreed service standards from Board level in terms of performance reporting through to the engagement of managers in service delivery and knowledge of frontline staff are all expected. Staff training needs to reflect this. Performance in telephone answering in particular is used as a key indicator because it is the dominate means of communication. How the service standards are arrived at must show that customers were able to make informed choices between service priorities.
- 3.9 The new Tenancy Services Authority (TSA) has been established to unify regulation of all councils, housing associations and ALMOs. After extensive consultation it is proising that they will use a framework which looks at the following areas: the quality of accommodation, tenant choice and customer service, repairs and maintenance, neighbourhoods and estate management, anti social behaviour and security, tenant empowerment, complaints, local

area cooperation, rent, tenure, and allocations, governance, viability and efficiency and value for money. Landlords also have an opportunity to agree additional local standards with residents which may be in partnership with other agencies or limited to a particular estate or area. Hackney Homes has proposed that the Estate Plans scheme may be a suitable way to agree such a localised response with residents which meets problems as they see them and takes account of local circumstances. Further guidance on all these areas is expected but the criteria by which organisations will be judged is expected to be similar to the Audit Commission's key lines of enquiry (KLOE). Consultation and choice in services will feature along with feedback and publicity about the actual services delivered and customer satisfaction levels. Organisations will be expected to offer standards of customer service comparable to other businesses using national accreditation schemes where appropriate. Clearly it will therefore be important for the review of service standards in Hackney Homes to consider these features along with the other aims identified above.

The Review Process

- 3.10 Officers have completed an exercise to consider all the information available within Hackney Homes. This included performance statistics, estate inspections, mystery shopping, complaints and satisfaction surveys. They also looked at service standards used by other ALMOs and councils commended by the Audit Commission including City West Homes, Homes for Islington and Camden Council, and organisations farther a field such as Sandwell Homes (West Midlands), Solihull Community Housing, Gateshead Housing Company, Poole Housing Partnership, Northwards Housing (Manchester) and Berneslai Homes (Barnsley). The managers responsible for each of the main services in Hackney Homes have also been interviewed and suggested improvements based on good practice examples and their experience.
- 3.11 Focus groups have also been arranged to discuss specific service areas. The resident participation data base has been used to identify people who were prepared to give up some of their time to discuss particular services. In addition the ethnic minority (Asian Women, African and Caribbean, and Turkish forums), the Disability Focus Group, and the Street Property Sounding Board will be used to give other parts of the community to express their views.
- 3.12 Tenants and residents' associations have been notified of the review and been asked to offer any opinions they might care to share about any of the current service standards or the revisions suggested.
- 3.13 A revised set of service standards will then be analysed as part of an equality impact assessment to make sure that they do not have any unintended negative effects on any part of the community. The final version of the service standards will then be recommended to the Executive Team and the Board of Hackney Homes for implementation in April 2010.
- 3.14 The new service standards and the actual performance achieved will be published on the website, on posters and in leaflets. Staff will be briefed to ensure that they understand the minimum standards they need to achieve.

4.0 Any comments regarding the review process or about any of the service standards are welcome and will be entertained as part of the review and can be addressed to Tom Hogan, 136-142 Lower Clapton road, E5 OQD, 0208 356 4017 and tom.hogan@hackneyhomes.org.uk .

Item 10 Appendix A

Service Standards as Agreed by the Board in 2008

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Customer Services

Reception Waiting Times

1. When you visit our reception you will see a receptionist within 5 minutes.
2. You will be interviewed within 15 minutes.

Contacting us by letter, personal visit, fax or Email

3. We will reply to all letters, faxes emails and enquires made during a visit to our offices, with a written response, within 10 working days of receipt.

Contacting us by Telephone

4. We will answer telephone calls within five rings.

Appointments

5. We will offer you an appointment within 5 working days of your request.
6. If it is difficult for you to get to your Neighbourhood Office, we will make an appointment to visit you at home within 5 working days of your request.

Responding to Complaints

7. All complaints will be answered in full within 15 working days

Reporting on our Performance

8. We will publish performance information about our performance quarterly and annually in April.

Hackney Homes' Newsletter.

Estate Environment

Cleaning duties

Every day we will:-

9. Clean communal entrances;
10. Sweep courtyards, paths and roads;
11. Keep lawns and flowerbeds clear and safe by removing litter and dangerous waste;
12. Keep the bins and the rooms in which they are stored clean and clear;
13. Deal with any health and safety hazards;
14. Replace broken bulbs, where it is possible for the estate cleaner to do so. Where this is not possible, report the fault to the Repairs Service.

Window Cleaning

15. Estate cleaners will clean the inside of windows in communal areas, in line with our published window cleaning schedules. The outside of communal windows will be cleaned, by external contractors twice a year, in March and November.

Grounds Maintenance

We will:-

16. Keep plants in good health by pruning and mulching;
17. Prune shrubs between November and March;
18. Prevent damage to lawns by removing any build up of leaves in autumn.

Removal of Graffiti

19. We will remove offensive graffiti within 3 hours of being reported. Other graffiti will be removed within 4 working days of being reported

Play Areas

20. Every day we will sweep, litter pick, empty litter bins, remove graffiti; ensuring the area is clean and free from hazardous deposits

Home Ownership

Applying to Buy

21. We will send out a Right to Buy application form within 24 hours of one being requested.

Confirming the Right to Buy

22. We will tell you within 4 weeks of receiving your application, via the form RTB2, whether or not you have the right to buy (or within 8 weeks if you have been a tenant with us for less than 2 years).

Confirming the Price and Making the Formal Offer

23.If you do qualify, we will make the formal offer, setting out the terms of your proposed purchase, including the price, within 12 weeks of the RTB2 (8 weeks if you are buying a freehold property).

The Right to Appeal

24.Once you have received your offer, we will give you the statutory period of 3 months if you wish to appeal against the valuation to the independent District Valuer.

Cancelling the Application

25.If you do not respond to the Offer we will not cancel your application until at least 12 weeks after your offer AND after we have given you at least a further period of 4 weeks notice, in writing.

Advice about the Service Charge

26.Provide an estimated service charge bill in March of each year.

27.Provide an actual service charge bill in September of each year.

Information about the Account Balance

28. Provide an account balance within 3 working days of the request.

Providing a Statement

29.Provide a service charge statement every 6 months, in April and October.

Collecting Service Charges

30.Collect 100% of the service charges owed to Hackney Homes/ Hackney Council and take action to recover these costs under the terms of the lease.

Consultation before Major Works

31.The Home Ownership Service will issue all legal consultation notices to leaseholders within 10 days of instructions.

Permission to make Improvements

32.Respond to requests to make improvements or alterations within 15 working days.

Rent Collection and Arrears**Rent Debt**

33.We will collect 100% of rent due.

Collecting Rent

34. We will set up a rent account and provide a rent payment card for new tenants within 3 days of the tenancy date.

Consultation about changes to rent and service charges

35. In line with current government guidance, the annual rent increase, we will not increase rents by more than the rate of inflation, plus half a percent, plus £2.00 per week.

36. We will inform tenants of any rent increase at least four weeks before this must be paid.

37. We will write to you each year (in January or February), to confirm the rent and other charges for the coming year.

Rent Statements

38. We will send a rent statement to all tenants every three months, within 10 days of the end of each quarter.

Rent Details

39. We will provide a breakdown of the gross rent within 10 working days of receiving a request.

Responding to Enquiries

40. We will respond to balance queries and requests for replacement rent cards within 2 working days.

Processing refunds

41. We will notify HB within one working day of any change in a tenant's circumstances.

Requests for a Reference

42. We will reply in writing to a request for rent and tenancy references from lending institutions within 5 working days.

Notification of Rent Arrears

43. We will notify HB within one working day of any change in a tenant's circumstances.

Requests for a Reference

44. We will reply in writing to a request for rent and tenancy references from lending institutions within 5 working days.

Notification of Rent Arrears

45. We will advise tenants, in writing, within two weeks of the rent account going into arrears.

Repairs and Maintenance**Emergency Repairs**

46. We will carry out emergency repairs to ensure your safety within 24 hours (usually the same day if reported before 12 noon).

<p>Emergency Repairs include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Bad Water leaks (i.e. where uncontrollable by using a bucket or bowl); ○ Blocked toilet (if you only have the one); ○ No drinking water; ○ No electricity supply to home.
<p>Raising an order for the Work</p>
<p>47. We will issue an order the day a repair is reported, unless it is necessary to inspect the job first.</p>
<p>Responding to Repair Requests</p>
<p>48. We will reply within 5 working days to repairs requested in writing or by e-mail to:- Repairs.rcc@hackneyhomes.org.uk.</p>
<p>Appointments</p>
<p>49. We will agree a morning (8am-1pm), afternoon (12pm-4.30pm) or late afternoon (4.00 – 6.00 pm) Monday to Friday appointment for all non-urgent repairs and on Saturdays from 8.00 a.m. to 1.00 p.m;</p>
<p>Immediate Repairs</p>
<p>50. We will carry out immediate repairs in response to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Major damage; ○ Flooding; ○ Home is insecure ; ○ Real danger to life or limb. <p>Our aim is to attend within 2 hours and make safe.</p>
<p>Emergency Repairs</p>
<p>51. We will carry out emergency repairs to ensure your safety within 24 hours (usually the same day if reported before 12 noon). Emergency Repairs include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Bad Water leaks (i.e. where uncontrollable by using a bucket or bowl); ○ Blocked toilet (if you only have the one); ○ No drinking water; ○ No electricity supply to home.
<p>Urgent Repairs</p>
<p>52. We will carry out urgent repairs, where there is substantial inconvenience damage or danger, within 5 working days.</p>
<p>Non-urgent Repairs</p>
<p>53. Non-urgent repairs, which do not pose any danger to occupants or members of the public, will be carried out within 20 working days (usually within 3-10 days by appointment);</p>
<p>Inspecting and checking Quality of Work</p>
<p>54. Our staff at the Hackney Homes' Contact Centre will phone a sample of residents, after repairs have been completed, to find out how satisfied they are with the quality of work carried out;</p>

55. We will inspect 10% of completed repairs for quality, cost and customer satisfaction;

56. Our Technical Audit team carries out inspections of completed reactive repairs;

57. Specialist inspectors carry out inspection of completed specialist repairs, such as lift breakdowns, gas and electrical works and door entry systems.

58. Our operatives will leave customer cards for residents to comment on the services.

Servicing Gas Appliances and Central Heating

- We will:-

59. Carry out a gas check in all tenants' homes, where gas appliances have been installed by Hackney Council or Hackney Homes, once a year to make sure that any gas appliances and the central heating system are safe and work properly;

60. Issue the tenant with a copy of a valid gas safety certificate;

61. Replace any Hackney Homes' supplied appliances that have become obsolete with an up-to-date and more energy efficient appliance.

Repairs in Empty Properties

62. All repairs outstanding at the start of a tenancy will be completed within the target time for non-urgent repairs (20 working days).

TV Aerial/Satellite Dishes

63. We will repair notified faults within 5 working days.

CCTV

64. We will check that CCTV cameras are working and will carry out necessary repairs within two working days. If a replacement is required, we will provide this within 10 working days.

Painting the Outside of the Property

65. We will paint the outside of all properties every 8 years, unless the property is involved in a separate improvement programme. This will be included in our Asset Management Strategy.

Lifts

66. We will respond to lift breakdowns within 2 hours between 8.00 a.m. and 6.00 p.m, Mon- Fri and within 3 hours at other times, if there is no other lift available.

We will undertake: -

67. a monthly service on all lifts;

68. an annual safety check on door gear;

69. a detailed inspection on a 5 year cycle.

70. We will replace major components and replace complete lifts when required.

Repair of Door Entry Systems

71. We will attend to faults within 7 days unless circumstance requires a faster response, i.e.: vulnerable tenant.

Replacement of Door Entry Systems

72. We will consult if a new or replacement door entry system is planned for your block.

Estate Lighting

We will:-

73.Refer individual light fitting faults to estate cleaners for re-lamping and within 7 days;

74.If cleaners are not able to remedy fault or if a whole section of lighting is faulty, we will attend within one working day of receiving the report;

75.Where necessary, upgrade and replace estate lighting, including replacing old fittings with energy efficient lighting and fitting additional lights to improve the quality of illumination and rewire where necessary, on a 4 year cycle.

Reviewing Resources

76.We will review annually with residents, the resources and support available for resident involvement.

Resident Participation

Resident Participation Compact

77. We will monitor the Resident Participation Compact six monthly, reporting back to the Resident Liaison Group. In addition, one annual meeting of the Resident Compact Review Panel will meet formally to review the content.

78. Feedback from the six monthly reviews will be presented to this Panel.

Resident satisfaction

We will seek continuously to improve resident satisfaction with our participation opportunities.

During 2008, our target is for a 10% increase in resident satisfaction.

The Tenants' Levy

79. We will collect the Tenant Levy fund weekly from tenants' rents at the rate of 10p per week. This fund will be distributed to registered Tenant and Resident organisations, according to criteria set by the Tenant Levy Steering Group;

80. Publish annually a report detailing the expenditure funded by the Tenants' Levy;

81. Circulate the minutes of the Tenants' Levy Steering Group, by hard copy or email, within 15 working days of each meeting.

Enhanced Tenant and Resident Association Meetings

82. Hackney Homes' staff will attend the quarterly Enhanced Tenant and Resident Association (TRA) meetings; take the action notes and agree these with the Chair;

83. Estate Managers will initiate action on all action points within 3 working days of the meeting;

84. A response will be given for all queries raised at the meeting within 15 working days.

85. Hackney Homes' staff will attend the quarterly Enhanced Tenant and Resident Association (TRA) meetings; take the action notes and agree these with the Chair;

86. Estate Managers will initiate action on all action points within 3 working days of the meeting;

87. A response will be given for all queries raised at the meeting within 15 working days.

The Resident Liaison Group

88. Neighbourhood Panels, special interest groups, TMOs and the Leaseholder Forum will be invited to send a representative to the bi-monthly Resident Liaison Group (RLG) meeting;

89. We will send out the minutes of the RLG meeting within 15 days, by hard copy or Email, as required.

Role of Estate Managers

Estate Managers will:-

90. Contact all TRAs in their area at least once a month (in addition to attending the quarterly Enhanced TRA meetings);

91. Arrange visits within 5 days of a TRAs request;

92. Confirm action in response to telephone calls from the TRA, in writing, within 10 working days;

93. New Estate Managers will make contact with TRAs in their management area within two weeks of starting employment;

94. New Estate Management Team Leaders will make contact with TRAs in their area within four weeks of starting employment;
95. All information to be discussed at formal Hackney Homes meetings with resident groups will be made available, by hard copy or Email, as required, at least 10 working days before the meeting.

Tenancy Management

Assignment; Succession; Name Change; Joint Tenancy; Discretionary Tenancies

96. We will investigate, process and action all requests for changes of tenancy and notify all residents of decisions reached within 10 working days.

Permission to Make Improvements

97. We will respond to requests to make improvements or alterations within 15 working days.

Aids and Adaptations

98. The Council's Occupational Therapist will make contact with the tenant within 2 days of the initial request or referral;
99. The full assessment will be carried out by an Occupational Therapist within the following 28 days;
100. The tenant will be notified of the outcome within 5 days of the Occupational Therapist's assessment, including an action plan for carrying out the works needed;
101. Routine aids and equipment will be provided within 7 working days of receipt of the request.

Moving Home

102. We will respond to applications to move home within 10 days, confirming the outcome of within 10 days.
103. We will review all re-housing applications annually.

Visits to new tenants

104. We will visit all tenants within 20 working days of moving into a new home.

Anti-Social Behaviour, Hate Crime, Nuisance and Domestic Violence

105. We will respond to neighbour disputes, reports of Nuisance and incidents of Anti-Social Behaviour and Hate Crime within 3 days.
106. We will respond to serious incidents of Anti-Social Behaviour, Hate Crime, Nuisance and Domestic Violence by offering an interview or personal visit within 24 hours.
107. An interview will take place within 5 working days of receiving the initial complaint, and an action plan will be agreed.
108. In response to a threat against life and limb or a major emergency, we will carry out immediate repairs to ensure safety within 2 hours.
109. Where there is substantial inconvenience, damage or danger, we will carry out urgent repairs within 5 working days.
110. Complainants will be contacted to review cases at an agreed frequency and at least monthly.
111. Complainants, witnesses and perpetrators will be informed in writing, within 5 days of a case being closed, giving the reasons for doing so.
112. We will remove offensive or hate crime graffiti within 3 hours of this being reported to us. Other graffiti will be removed

within four working days.

Emergency Rehousing

113. We will arrange emergency accommodation for a tenant or leaseholder who is a victim of domestic violence or hate crime, and is assessed as being in immediate danger, if this will reduce the risk.

Abandoned Vehicles

114. We will commence investigations within 3 days of receiving a report of an illegal/unauthorised/abandoned vehicle.

115. We will work with Hackney Council to remove abandoned vehicles within 10 days.

Parking on Estates

116. We will process and register parking applications within 10 working days of receipt;

117. Review our parking waiting list every 2 years;

118. We will undertake estate inspections not less than once a month to identify illegal/unauthorised parking;

Title of Report: Review of Tenancy Conditions	
Decision Making Body: Resident Liaison Group	Date: 10th September 2009
Classification: For decision	Report of: Director of Finance & Resources
Item Previously considered at: N/A	On Which Date: N/A
Report Author: - Tom Hogan, Head of Service Development 0208 356 4017 136-142 Lower Clapton Road, E5 OQD	Appendices: Current Tenancy Conditions

Report Outline:

- **Paragraph: 1.0 - Summary of Report;**
- **Paragraph: 2.0 - Recommendation(s) Committee;**
- **Paragraph: 3.0 – Background;**

If you have any questions about this report, please contact Tom Hogan on 0208 356 4017 or email tom.hogan@hackneyhomes.org

1.0 SUMMARY

The report has been prepared to notify the RLG of a review currently underway to revise the tenancy conditions (attached) of all homes let by Hackney Homes on behalf of the Council with the aim of implementing new tenancy conditions by April 2010. The report explains the reasons for undertaking the review and the statutory consultation process entailed.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 2.1 That the RLG notes the report and consultation process and offers any comments on the engagement of tenants in the process and any particular views on improvements to the current conditions of tenancy.

3.0 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Tenancy conditions for Secure tenants was last reviewed in 2003 and it is generally considered good practice to repeat the exercise about every five years to take account of legislative changes and local priorities.

- 3.2 Prior to work commencing on such a review a group of staff including representatives from the Neighbourhoods, Property Services, Housing Services, Rent Accounts, Neighbourhoods and Regeneration and Hackney Legal met to identify the potential benefits. Some of the ideas included the following:

- a. Making the document simple and clear for tenants and staff
- b. Rechargeable repairs clause to make it easier to reclaim costs
- c. Clarity about statutory obligations for repairs
- d. Requiring permission to fit steel gates and grilles
- e. Permission to fit satellite dishes
- f. Reserving the right to require tenants to lay floor covers (laminated flooring policy)
- g. Making domestic violence and hate crime a breach of tenancy
- h. Limitations on the numbers of pets
- i. Banning smoking in communal areas of blocks
- j. Ban on untaxed vehicles parked on estates
- k. Allowing access to Hackney Homes and authorised Council staff
- l. Ban on storing goods in common parts to prevent an obstruction or fire hazard
- m. Garden maintenance obligations
- n. Sub-letting – clarity that only part may be sub-let
- o. Carers and those acting on behalf of tenants – set conditions
- p. Second homes clause – that under certain circumstances a tenant may be required to give up their council tenancy if they have another home which meets their needs and is available.

- 3.3 Many of these items are needed in order to respond to some key organisational priorities such as recharging for damage caused by neglect and vandalism. In other instances we know from focus groups with tenants on ASB and other topics that noise nuisance is one of the main areas which gives rise to complaint and in respect to which stricter conditions related to floor coverings and pets may help staff respond more effectively. In addition to which the Audit Commission has recommended that domestic violence is stated as a ground for possession.
- 3.4 It should also be pointed out that some of the current conditions of tenancy have been criticised for being unclear and hard to enforce, and it would therefore be as well to use any review as an opportunity to make them more robust. The former tenancy arrears condition is one such example.

Review Process

- 3.5 In law the tenancy conditions form part of a contract between each tenant and the Council. The review process must follow certain steps including statutory consultation after which the final proposals are for the Council to agree. However since the service has been delegated to Hackney Homes as an ALMO any proposals to change the current conditions will be put before the Board for their endorsement and thereafter recommended to the Council.
- 3.6 Tenants living on estates managed by the Tenant Management Organisations will be affected and therefore they will be included in the consultation and review processes.
- 3.7 The Housing Act 1985 (sections 102 – 103) sets out the minimum statutory process to be followed. It says that a preliminary notice (apart from rent increases) must be served on each and every secure tenant affected which tells them that their landlord intends to vary the conditions of tenancy. It must set out in writing all the changes and new conditions proposed and their effects, and invite them to comment within a certain specified time. The landlord is obliged to consider all the comments received. On the last occasion this exercise was completed several thousand such comments were received which had to be collated and fed back to tenants. Thereafter a notice of variation must be served on each tenant. This will specify the new conditions, their effects, and the date on which the new conditions take effect – at least four weeks after the notice.
- 3.8 In addition to this formal consultation residents will be encouraged to give their views about what they would like to see in the revised conditions. A reference group will be organised to allow interested tenants an opportunity to consider options in greater depth. Tenants' and Residents' Associations have been notified and asked whether any of their members would like to take part in addition to the TRAs submitting their own written comments. A series of focus groups is

being organised with those from the Street Property Sounding Board, Disability Focus Group, Turkish Forum, Asian Women, African and Afro-Caribbean Consultative Forum, and they will also be encouraged to join the reference group discussions.

- 3.9 The current conditions of tenancy have been analysed in respect of their equalities implications for different groups, and it is envisaged that all new proposed clauses will continue to be analysed as the review progresses. Involving residents from diverse backgrounds, such as those with a disability or from a mix of ethnic minorities, will be particularly beneficial in this aspect of the review therefore.
- 3.10 Publicity is being planned to include articles on the website and in the newsletter. A press release to local newspapers and the minority publications will outline the aims of the review and say how people can give their views. Staff have also been informed through their management teams and on the intranet.
- 3.11 An initial equality impact assessment has been completed to consider whether the current conditions of tenancy have a negative impact on any section of the community and how it might be mitigated. This information will be used in the redraft of the new conditions during the consultation period.
- 3.12 Law and Democratic Services are represented on the project team and will oversee the tenancy conditions as a whole to ensure they are enforceable and meet statutory requirements.
- 3.13 It is likely that the final version will be considerably more detailed than the current version. It is therefore intended that plain English and Easy Read guides are produced in addition to translations in the main languages used in the borough.

Tenancy Agreement

Reference number:

0017401

Office use only:
Photograph or photographs to be attached before filing.

This is a tenancy agreement between the following tenants (referred to as 'you')

First name	Family names	Relationship to first named tenant

and the Director of Housing, Christopher Addison House, 72 Wilton Way, London E8 1BJ, acting for the London Borough of Hackney (referred to as 'we', 'us').

For secure tenancies only

This agreement creates a **secure tenancy** of the following property ('your home').

The property is on the following estate.

For introductory tenancies only

This agreement creates an **introductory tenancy** of the following property ('your home').

The property is on the following estate.

Your introductory tenancy will last for one year until:

 / /

After this date, it will automatically become a secure tenancy unless we have started possession proceedings against you.

The tenancy begins on Monday ___/___/_____.

The total rent you must pay at the start of the tenancy is £ : each week.


This does not include your Council Tax, or any arrears (missed rent payments) from a previous home. See the details in condition 2 over the page.

The tenants and the following other people will live in the property.

Full name (first name then family name)	Are they male or female?	Date of birth	Relationship to you
		/ /	
		/ /	
		/ /	
		/ /	
		/ /	
		/ /	

The property is a: Flat Maisonette House

There are _____ bedrooms and the property is on the _____ floor.

 **Hackney** Housing Service



Signature of tenants

I have read the list of tenants' responsibilities in this agreement and agree to meet them.

Full printed name	Signature	Date of birth

Signed for the Director of Housing by:

Printed name	Signature	Date of signing of agreement

Summary of your rights as a secure tenant

Your tenancy is secure until you give it up or we get a court order. Your tenancy will no longer be secure if you fail to live in your home as your only or main home, or if you sublet your whole home. If this happens, we may start possession proceedings against you and you may lose your home. Members of your family may have a right to take over the tenancy when you die.

You may take in lodgers, and you may have the right to buy the property. You have the right to have certain repairs carried out, and may do these yourself in certain situations.

Each year you will get a report on how the department is run. If you ask, we will give you details of our letting policies. You may go to council cabinet meetings. You can ask to see your personal files. We have to consult you on any major proposals about the way we manage your home. And we have to give you details of your legal rights.

With our written permission, you may sublet part of your home, exchange with another tenant and carry out improvements.

If you apply for Housing Benefit you have the right to know how we assess your application.

You have the right to choose a new landlord in certain situations.

A special note for introductory tenants

You **do not** have the 'Right to Buy' your home until you are a secure tenant. Your introductory tenancy will count towards the total length of your tenancy when we work out any 'Right to Buy' discount.

In certain circumstances we **may** give you permission to take in lodgers, sublet part (**not all**) of your home, carry out improvements to your home or exchange your home with another tenant.

We may start possession proceedings against you if you break any of the conditions of this agreement and you may, as a result, lose your home.

After 12 months you will become our secure tenant, with the rights described above, unless we have started possession proceedings against you.

Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit

All new tenants should fill in an initial benefit application form when they sign this agreement and leave it with the Housing Officer. If we award benefit, we will then pay it from the day the tenancy starts. If we give you a benefit application form, you should take it away, fill it in and return it as soon as possible.

Our responsibilities

- 1 We will carry out:
 - those repairs which the law says we are responsible for; and
 - any other repairs which it is our policy to carry out.

The repairs we will do are listed in the tenants' handbook.
- 2 We will make sure that estates are cleaned in line with our estate-cleaning policies.
- 3 We will do our best to protect you by investigating any reports of noise nuisance, domestic violence, or racial or sexual harassment. We may take action for you and may evict people carrying out the nuisance or harassment if they live in one of our properties.
- 4 We will keep some homes for older people only. We will provide extra services for the people who live in these homes as far as our budget allows.
- 5 If you are having trouble paying your rent or charges on time, we will make sure you get advice from our staff.
- 6 We will consult you if we are planning to increase your rent. We will not try to make a profit from rent or use it to pay for general services in Hackney. Once a year we will publish details of our income and spending.
- 7 We will try to support and consult tenants' associations and other groups which we can be sure represent all of our tenants.
- 8 We will consult you on major issues affecting council homes generally. We will consult you about local issues at estate committee meetings or in other suitable ways.
- 9 If you apply to move, we will assess your application using our published rehousing policy. We will monitor all our offers of rehousing to make sure that we treat all tenants fairly.
- 10 If you ask us to exchange homes with another tenant, we will consider your application in line with our legal duties and our policies. We will show you a copy of these policies if you ask.
- 11 We will run a home contents insurance scheme as long as the costs of the scheme are reasonable. You can join the scheme to insure your belongings by filling in an application form and paying the weekly charge.
- 12 We will give you a copy of our tenants' handbook which contains details of your legal rights and our housing-management policies.

If we send or deliver any letter or notice, for legal purposes it will be assumed that you have received it.

If you need to serve a notice on us, the official address is:

**The Director of Housing, Care of The Notices Offices, Housing Services,
Christopher Addison House, 72 Wilton Way, London E8 1BJ.**

Your responsibilities

Condition 1 – Pay rent

You must pay your weekly rent and other charges every Monday. We may run a scheme to encourage you to pay your rent regularly.

We will only increase your rent if:

- we told you that we would within 28 days of the start of the tenancy; or
- we told you in a formal notice about a change in the rent.

Condition 2 – Rent arrears and charges

You must also pay £..... each week for rent and charges from when you lived at

..... The total amount is £..... If we have not written an amount here, we may tell you about any rent arrears or charges, in writing, within 90 days of the date of this tenancy agreement. We will add these rent arrears or charges to your rent account, and you must pay them as rent.

Condition 3 – Behaviour

You, and anyone living with you or visiting your home, must not do anything to harass other people because of their:

- race;
- colour;
- nationality;
- ethnic origin;
- sex;
- sexuality;
- religious or political belief;
- age; or
- medical condition or disability.

You, and anyone living with you or visiting your home, must not interfere in any way with neighbours, other people who live in the neighbourhood, anybody visiting the area or the landlord.

Acts of harassment can include:

- physical attacks;
- threats of violence towards anyone;
- written or verbal abuse;
- bullying and threatening behaviour;
- damage or threats of damage to the property of another person;
- stalking;
- incidents of nuisance such as persistent or offensive phone calls, knocking on doors and sending communications which contain indecent or abusive materials; and
- writing threatening, abusive or insulting graffiti.

You must not do anything in your home, or any part of the estate or neighbourhood, which we believe may be a nuisance, disturb any other person or be considered antisocial behaviour. This condition also applies to anyone living with you or visiting you.

You will break this condition if you create a noise nuisance, for example, by playing loud music. You will also break this condition if you hold a party which we believe:

- you advertised to the public;
- you charged or will charge people for; or
- annoys or may annoy your neighbours.

Acts of antisocial behaviour and nuisance include but are not limited to:

- noise nuisance;
- dumping rubbish or furniture;
- throwing things or allowing things to be thrown from balconies or out of windows;
- graffiti;
- carrying out major vehicle repairs on the property and in the surrounding areas;
- installing or using equipment such as aerials to operate illegal radio broadcasts from your own or any other council property or shared roof space;

- dealing in or using illegal drugs in properties and in the surrounding areas; and
- any act or failure to act which is intended to disturb the peace and comfort of anyone or to inconvenience them in any way.

You must not obstruct, abuse, harass, threaten or assault any of our officers, contractors or agents. This applies whether or not they are carrying out their duties for us. You must not cause, allow or encourage anyone else to do so. This rule applies to anyone living with you or visiting you.

Condition 4 – Pets and pests

You must make sure that you keep your pets under proper control and do not allow them to cause a nuisance, annoy or frighten other residents. You must not allow any animal kept as a pet to foul your home or, if your flat is in a block, any areas that you share with your neighbours. We may decide to ban you and anyone living with you from encouraging pests or allowing any animal to be kept in any of our properties. We will write to you with details of the ban and it will automatically become a new condition of your tenancy.

Condition 5 – Parking

You must make sure that you and your visitors park your cars and any other vehicles so they do not cause an obstruction. You must not park, or allow your visitors to park, in an area which we say is a no-parking area. You and your visitors must keep to any parking control scheme we introduce or that already exists.

If we ask, you must:

- give us the registration numbers of all vehicles used by you or members of your household which may be parked on the estate at any time; and
- display any permits we provide in the way we tell you.

You and your visitors must not park any untaxed vehicle at the property or anywhere on the estate. You and your visitors must not carry out major car repairs on the property or in the area around the property.

Condition 6 – Fire hazards

You must not store materials that can catch fire, liquids or gases in your home unless you need them for normal household uses such as heating.

Condition 7 – Tell us about repairs, damage or pests

You must tell us about:

- any problem in your home which it is our duty to repair;
- any problem which is damaging, or is likely to damage, your home or the homes around you;
- any problem which is damaging, or is likely to damage, your health or the health of others; and
- any pests which are damaging, or are likely to damage, your health or the health of others.

Condition 8 – Letting people we have authorised into your home

You must allow our staff, agents and contractors to get into your home at any reasonable time to inspect it. You must allow us to carry out repairs and other work which we consider necessary at any reasonable time. This includes inspections and repairs needed to deal with problems in other parts of the building or other buildings nearby. It also includes improvements.

Examples of improvements include:

- installing new windows; and
- installing new electrics or heating systems.

We may carry out repairs to your home that are your responsibility if you fail to carry out these repairs yourself. We may recharge you for these repairs. We will add any amount you have not paid within 28 days to your rent account and you must pay it as rent. If we need to carry out emergency work but have not been able to contact you to get your permission to get into your home or you have unreasonably refused access, we will force entry and change the locks. We may decide that any overdue inspection of gas appliances in your property is an emergency for this purpose.

Condition 9 – Minor repairs

You must treat your home in a reasonable way and take care of all fixtures and fittings. You must carry out minor repairs to your home which are not our duty to carry out.

Condition 10 – Decorating, cleaning, gardens and getting rid of rubbish

You must:

- decorate the inside of your home, and keep surfaces, walls, ceiling fixtures and fittings in a reasonable condition;
- keep any private garden or other private area tidy and free from rubbish;
- make sure your home is clean so that it does not cause a nuisance to neighbours;
- put all rubbish in bags and place the bags in the rubbish chutes or rubbish stores; and
- get rid of all large items of rubbish or household waste in a safe and appropriate way.

Condition 11 – Changes to the tenancy and long absences

You must get our permission before you hand over your tenancy or sublet your home, or any part of it. You must tell us if you are leaving your home for a period of 12 weeks or more, tell us when you intend to return and provide contact details.

Condition 12 – Exchanges, running a business and making alterations

You must not do the following unless you get our permission, in writing, first.

- Exchange your home with another tenant.
- Use your home or any part of the estate for trade or business.
- Carry out alterations, improvements or additions to the property.

To avoid any doubt or misunderstanding, putting up a satellite dish or metal gates are classed as additions. We will not unreasonably refuse to give permission. You must also get all the other approvals you need, including planning permission and building regulations approval.

Condition 13 – Moving out

You must give us four weeks' notice in writing if you want to end your tenancy. At the end of your tenancy you must:

- take away all your belongings and rubbish;
- replace all fixtures and fittings which you have removed;
- leave all property in a reasonable condition; and
- return all your keys to your local housing office.

If you leave any belongings behind at the end of your tenancy, we will store them for one month, either at the property or somewhere else. If you want to collect any of your belongings during that period, you will be able to do so as long as you pay our reasonable costs of looking after your belongings properly. After one month, any belongings that we still have will become our property and we may get rid of them as we see fit. We will not look after perishable items (that is, food and plants).

Condition 14 – Photographs

You must agree to us taking a photograph of you at the beginning of your tenancy to avoid fraud. We will then take pictures of you regularly at our housing offices. We will keep copies of your photograph on your housing file and in a photographic data bank that we maintain.

Condition 15 – Disputes and arbitration

You have the right to independent arbitration to sort out any disputes that may arise between you and us as a result of the tenancy. This will not, however, apply to issues relating to benefits. Your housing office will give you details of the process if you ask. If you decide to take a matter to arbitration, the outcome will be final. We or you may refer to the existence of this process as appropriate in any legal proceedings (this means that if a dispute goes to court, you or we can ask for proceedings to be halted until arbitration has been used or taken in account when working out legal costs).

Condition 16 – Personal information

By signing this tenancy agreement, you agree that we can use the personal information you give us in line with the Data Protection Act 1998 for the purpose of preventing fraud.

Title of Report: Enhanced TRA Meetings Review Update	
Resident Liaison Group	Date: 10th September 2009
Classification: FOR INFORMATION	Report of: Head of Resident Services
Item Previously considered at: Report to meeting of Resident Liaison Group	On Which Date: 30 October 2008, 2 July 2009
Report Author: - Clive Taber, Resident Services	Appendices: N/A

Report Outline:

- **Paragraph: 1.0 - Summary of Report**
- **Paragraph: 2.0 - Recommendation(s) to Resident Liaison Group**
- **Paragraph: 3.0 – Background**
- **Paragraph: 4.0 - Update on the Enhanced Tenants & Residents Association Meeting Review**

If you have any questions about this report, please contact Clive Taber on 0208 356 2058 or email clive.taber@hackneyhomes.org.uk

1.0 SUMMARY OF REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the progress of the Enhanced Tenants & Residents Association (ETRA) review.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION

2.1 Resident Liaison Group is asked to note the contents of the report.

3.0 BACKGROUND

3.1 In September 2007 the new ETRA meetings were established with the estate managers being the main liaison point on estate based issues. As part of the consultation process and the establishment of the ETRA system it was decided that after the system had been operating for over a year a review would be carried out to measure its effectiveness. The review process was commenced in January 2009.

4.0 UPDATE ON THE ETRA REVIEW

4.1 The original timetable has been extended to ensure that the process was thorough and produced good quality and productive outcomes that residents were able to properly contribute too that would give the process and any resulting changes legitimacy. The consultation element of the Review has been completed in the summer and the reports to the RLG and to the Hackney Homes Board will take place in November and December 2009 respectively.

4.2 The details of actions completed and timings for those yet to be completed are set out in the table below:

Action	Timing	Status
Discussions with Neighbourhood Panels	Jan 09-April 09	Complete
Feedback from AC Report	Feb 09	Complete
Discussions with Councillors	May 09	Complete
Discussions with Estate Managers	June 2009	Complete
Survey to all TRA's	July - August 09	Complete
Views from Alternative forms Of engagements/Non-TRA Residents	August 09	Complete
Discussions with key HH service/ Departments & Members support	September 2009	In progress
Meeting with Cabinet Members	September 2009	To be done
Follow Up Meeting with Councillors	September 2009	To be done
Consideration of outcomes and Proposals by Hackney Homes Executive Team	Sept/October 09	To be done
Report to RLG on outcomes	November 09	To be done
Consideration of outcomes and Proposals by Hackney Homes Board	December 09	To be done
Implementation of changes	December 09 onwards	To be done

4.3 We would like to thank all those who have contributed their views to the Review process.

Clive Taber
Neighbourhood Contract Manager