

Tarka Housing

Tarka Tenant Panel Communication

Minutes of Meeting: Friday 9 October 2009

Venue: Ethelwynne Brown Close Phase 2

Present:

**Mary Rowe, Chair, Chris Paterson, Secretary
Eileen Brown, Treasurer, John Sanders, Cathy Martin,
Eleanor Rogers, John Sherritt, Mick Bentley,
Peter Thompkins, Muriel Hosegood, Julia Bowden,
Cllr Margaret Brown, Margaret Shipman, Penny Ireland,
Linda Goldsmith-Ryan, Tenant observers.
Clare Lemmy, Customer Involvement Manager, Tarka
Paul Raeburn, Head of Housing Management, Tarka**

Apologies for Absence:

**Thelma Thompson, Sue Dunford, Sue Jones, Sue Mills,
Cheryl Cargill, Arthur Webb, Shane Connolly,
Nigel Barnard, Managing Director, Josh Jackson, Tarka
Chair Mary Rowe apologised for the recent handling of
former member Tony Walker's case.**

Minutes of the last meeting:

A number of amendments were made and these have been executed.

Chair's Discretionary Matters: No items.

Tarka Board Update: Paul Raeburn

The majority of papers were voted through without problem and performance figures for the quarter were approved.

Key performance statistics for managers have improved.

Tenant arrears and rechargeable items are to be looked at more thoroughly in terms of procedures.

In the focus on arrears, debt collection agencies will be used on occasion.

Mick Bentley sat in on a Board meeting and received greater understanding of the problems involved and what is required - and he remarked that the independent members were especially dynamic.

The Board picked up on issues raised by the User Panels.

John Sanders noted that the usual quarterly statistics had not been brought to the present tenant panel meeting.

Verbal Reports:

Asset Management: Josh Jackson was unavailable due to an urgent matter which had arisen.

Housing Management:

Actions recommended by the Auditors Panel were to be taken up.

Feedback on a local basis was to be implemented. Eileen Brown and Mick Bentley are to sit on a new panel to look at Feedback, the frequency of inspections, costs involved and improvements made.

Muriel Hosegood complained about waste bags blocking access to garages, which were not however, allowed to be removed!

Mick Bentley remarked that outside maintenance was not involved with estate inspection.

No further minutes were forthcoming due to meetings taking place recently.

Software concerning ASBOs was currently being evaluated.

Communications: Chris Paterson

The new issue of the "Tarka Times" was currently in preparation and will shortly be dispensed to the Tenants with a plethora of illustrations of summer events including detailed information on developments including the recent training exercises.

New members for this panel are required, particularly as some of the regular members have been absent recently due to illness and holiday.

Complaints Panel:

Analysis was taking place and a report will come to the Tenant Panel in December 2009. Ineffective communication with tenants appears to be the main problem, according to the review panel.

Auditors Panel: Julia Bowden

The latest impact assessment was looking at achievements and problems of concern.

The Disabled Adaptation review for Westcountry Housing was currently under way and a report due shortly.

Any of the Tarka User Panels can commission the Auditors to carry out further research on matters of concern.

Feedback on Tarka Talk Team Operations:

Successful operations in Holsworthy had provided an extremely positive response from the tenants who really felt that they were being listened to.

There were some doubts however, from Penny Ireland, as regards the treatment of the younger disabled but nevertheless the Tarka Talk Team exercise had proved extremely valuable with its positive response.

The Tarka Report identifying problems to be gone through at the next briefing on Friday 16 October 2009 prior to the next Talk Team visit to Torrington on 23 October 2009.

Consultant Ellis Blackmore has been very positive about the work of the Tarka Talk Team which he felt was unique in the country.

Feedback on Training:

Eleanor Rogers commented that the training sessions were very positive and fruitful.

A template for meetings had been established - based on the established agenda of the Tenant Panel meeting practice.

A contact sheet for User Panel purposes and contact numbers for panel members was proposed.

The Active Tenants Conference on 16 September 2009 had proved extremely productive and brought in some new, younger members for participation. However, it remains to be seen whether or not they join any of the User Panels.

The Tarka Board "Away-Day" Training takes place on Tuesday 13 October 2009 which will involve some preparation for next year's budget.

Discussion on the Purpose of the Tarka Tenant Panel:

The 3 groups set up amid the Tarka Tenant Panel produced a series of conclusions which are listed on an enclosed separate sheet.

It was noted that changing the days and dates of the User Panel Meetings carries acute problems as regards the production of Minutes in time for ensuing Tenant Panel meetings.

Any Other Business:

John Sherritt raised the problem of a recent power black-out in Appledore which apparently caused considerable confusion for tenants being unable to contact anyone on the emergency telephone numbers for Tarka or SWEB.

Peter Thompkins stated that grass cutting which took place at Chubb Churchill on Thursday 8 October 2009 was a complete shambles and left a terrible mess with the cuttings. Paul Raeburn is to inspect the situation.

Any Other Business: (continued):

Mick Bentley commented on recent decorating problems in a void property, with plaster work in a bad state of repair.

In addition, he reported on a tenant being frightened by a housing officer and a surveyor, and he urged the tenant to register a proper complaint. Paul Raeburn is to sort out this concern of threats to a tenant by a housing officer and a surveyor.

Tenancy Agreements regarding Complaint procedures in these types of cases should be reviewed at the earliest opportunity.

Future Meetings:

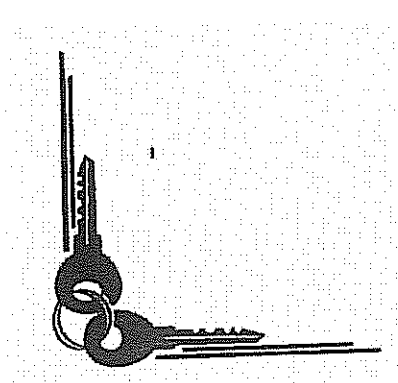
Tenant Panel Meeting: Wednesday 4 November 2009 @ 10.00am @ Ethelwynne Brown Close Phase 2.

Tenant Panel Meeting: Wednesday 2 December 2009 @ 10.00am @ Ethelwynne Brown Close Phase 2.

Xmas Party: Tenant Panel Chair Mary Rowe is to enquire as to suitable venues and dates for Xmas Lunch in early December 2009 and report back at a later date.

Mary Rowe closed the meeting at 12.45pm.

**Chris Paterson / Secretary
Sunday 18 October 2009**



Tarka

Housing



Tarka Tenant Panel Communication

Conclusions of Tenant Panel Members following a Study into the Purposes & Progression of the Tarka Tenant Panel

**Conducted during the Tarka Tenant Panel meeting of
Friday 9 October 2009**

- 1. To see that Tarka keeps its promises & commitments as set out in the Offer Document to Tenants at the time of Transfer.**
- 2. The Panel should scrutinise all matters relating to any part of Tarka operations.**
- 3. Meeting dates & venues, where possible, should be fixed permanently & remain the same to ensure continuity.**
- 4. Better management of User Panels information.**
- 5. Better / Up-To-Date information provided from meetings, in the minutes.**
- 6. Better Training opportunities.**
- 7. Discussion of specific subjects with less diversity off topics.**
- 8. Improved help for new tenants to help them gain information from the right sources.**
- 9. Better information for new tenants who attend panel / user panel meetings.**
- 10. Better information to tenants as to how they can get involved with Tarka.**
- 11. Scrutiny needs to be more detailed.**
- 12. The purpose of working groups as regards Scrutiny.**
- 13. Opportunities for tenants & panels to question management on Tarka Performance and matters of concern.**
- 14. Tenant Panel members should be able to bring up all any any complaints to the attention of the Tarka Management.**
- 15. The Tenant Panel would wish to observe staff working practices.**
- 16. Tenant Panel members should be able to pass on information to other Tenants based on relevancy and importance.**