

**BARNET HOMES  
BOARD MEETING  
16<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2007  
6.30pm – 8.30pm**

**AGENDA**

<b>ITEM</b>	<b>TITLE</b>	<b>STATUS</b>	<b>PRESENTING</b>
<b>1</b>	Introductions & Apologies		
<b>2</b>	Declaration of Interests		
<b>3</b>	Audit Commission		
<b>4</b>	Agree Minutes & Matters Arising		
<b>5</b>	Outcome of IIP Inspection (Verbal Report)	Information	Cora Vigar
<b>6</b>	Feedback from Barnet Homes Festival (Verbal Report)	Information	Margaret McPeake
<b>7</b>	Future of the Company	Decision	Derek Rust
This paper seeks the Board's approval to adopt a more proactive and overt approach to new business as part of Barnet Homes' future strategy.			
<b>8</b>	Regeneration Estates		Derek Rust
This report updates the Board on actions taken to address the key issues facing Barnet Homes and the Council in managing effectively the regeneration estates.			
<b>9</b>	Resident Involvement Strategy	Decision	Peter Headland
This report sets out a strategy for resident involvement in Barnet Homes.			
<b>10</b>	Feedback from the Sub-Groups	Information	Chairs of the Sub-Groups
This paper gives feedback on the Sub-Group meetings held since the last Board meeting held on 21 <sup>st</sup> May 2007.			
<b>11</b>	Forward Agenda Planning	Decision	Margaret McPeake
This paper sets out the proposed future agenda items for Barnet Homes Board.			
<b>12</b>	Any Other Business		

**BARNET HOMES  
BOARD MEETING  
21<sup>ST</sup> MAY 2007  
MINUTES**

**Attending:**

**Directors:**

Brian Altman	Yetunde Onifade
Dorothy Badrick	Monroe Palmer
Ingrid Beal	Trevor Renouf ( <i>Chair</i> )
Vi Britchfield	David Sidbury
Jem Fouweather	Tim Sims

**Apologies:**

Maria Colaco	Hugh Rayner
Julie Johnson	Sharon Slotnick

**Management & Staff:**

Kate Laffan	Cora Vigar
Margaret McPeake ( <i>CEO</i> )	Mike Wiffen
Derek Rust ( <i>Deputy CEO &amp; HoHS</i> )	Marian Dowling ( <i>Minutes</i> )
David Thomas	

ITEM	TITLE	ACTION
<b>1</b>	<b>Introductions &amp; Apologies</b>	
1.1	Introductions were not required	
1.2	Apologies were noted	
<b>2</b>	<b>Agree Minutes &amp; Matters Arising</b>	
2.1	Addition to Item: 4 – Award of the Housing Repairs & Maintenance Partnering Contract 2007/12	
2.2	The Board asked for it to be noted that John Lewthwaite (Regional Director – Connaughts) assured the Board that Connaughts would provide the residents of Barnet Homes a 3* service commencing the 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2007.	
2.3	Minutes were then agreed.	

2.4	Matters Arising	
2.5	<p><b>Item: 2 2.3</b>  <b>Reality Checks</b>  DR advised the Board that the “Estate Watchers Initiative” has been launched on the 15<sup>th</sup> May 2007, residents will now be carrying out reality checks. Caretakers have also received full information outstanding repairs to housing estates where they work.</p>	
2.6	<p><b>Item 2 2.4</b>  <b>Report on LAPN</b>  A report will be going to the Asset Management Sub-Group in June 2007.</p>	<b>Margaret McPeake</b>
2.7	<p><b>Item: 2 2.6</b>  <b>Board Appraisals</b>  The Chair asked for all forms to be returned ASAP.</p>	<b>All Directors</b>
2.8	<p><b>Item: 6 6.4</b>  <b>Progress on Regeneration Estates</b>  Agreed that this would be picked up under Item: 8 – Forward Agenda Planning.</p>	
2.9	<p><b>Item: 8</b>  <b>Budget &amp; Business Plan</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The BHCP on 15<sup>th</sup> March 2007 supported the Budget and Business Plan report which went to Board on 19<sup>th</sup> March 2007. The report included the response to the consultation. A letter is to be sent with the minutes of the May BHCP meeting formally advising them of this.</li> </ul>	
2.10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decent Homes Report will be going to the Asset Management Sub-Group in June 2007</li> <li>• A review of the Tenants Compact is now underway</li> </ul>	
2.11	<p><b>Item: 9 9.1</b>  <b>Resignation of A Board Director</b>  It had been agreed that this would be discussed at the Boards Event on the 11<sup>th</sup> May 2007. Due to time restraints this did not happen and will therefore be discussed at the</p>	<b>Strategic Steering</b>

2.12	<p>Strategic Steering Group on the 18<sup>th</sup> June 2007</p> <p><b>Item: 10 10.2</b></p> <p><b>Tenant Representation on The Board</b></p> <p>A report will be brought to a future meeting (Forward Agenda Update)</p>	<p><b>Group</b></p> <p><b>Cora Vigar</b></p>
<p><b>3</b></p> <p>3.1</p> <p>3.2</p>	<p><b>Declaration of Interest</b></p> <p>Councillor Monroe Palmer declared his interest as a London Borough of Barnet Councillor.</p> <p>Jem Fouweather declared his interest as a member of HQN and Acclaim</p>	
<p><b>4</b></p> <p>4.1</p> <p>4.2</p> <p>4.3</p> <p>4.5</p>	<p><b>Youth Engagement Strategy</b></p> <p>IB presented the report and emphasised to the Board that this strategy must be a long term project.</p> <p>DB advised the Board that the Council receives a grant from the Government of £199,000 to spend on youth in London. IB agreed to investigate.</p> <p>The Board asked if this service was only provided to Barnet Homes estates, it was agreed by all that Barnet Homes will work in partnership with other agencies.</p> <p>The Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acknowledged the valuable work which Ingrid Beal has contributed to developing the strategy</li> <li>• Noted the activities undertaken to engage youth</li> <li>• Agreed that the monitoring of the progress of the strategy will go to the Standards Sub-Group.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Ingrid Beal</b></p>
<p><b>5</b></p> <p>5.1</p>	<p><b>Resignation &amp; Board Elections</b></p> <p>The Board were asked to note the resignation of an Independent Board Director, the rotation</p>	

<p>5.2</p> <p>5.3</p> <p>5.4</p> <p>5.5</p>	<p>resignations and proposed election process. The Board noted the resignation of Tosin Okuzu on 9<sup>th</sup> May 2007.</p> <p>The Board expressed its thanks to Tosin Okuzu for her contribution to the Board since Barnet Homes was established in 2004.</p> <p>The Board noted the proposed rotation resignations and election process for this year.</p> <p>The board agreed to proceed to advertise for an Independent Board Director in line with the constitution.</p>	
<p><b>6</b></p> <p>6.1</p> <p>6.2</p> <p>6.3</p> <p>6.4</p> <p>6.5</p> <p>6.6</p>	<p><b>Disability Equality Duty (DED)</b></p> <p>The paper provided a summary outlining residents and employees involvement in developing the DED Action Plan.</p> <p>The Board asked if it would be more cost effective for a property to remain adapted upon becoming void. Margaret McPeake advised that this was currently being looked at and a report will be going to the Asset Management Sub-Group.</p> <p>The Board also asked what priority was given to communal Aids &amp; Adaptations i.e. ramps etc.. It was agreed that this would be referred to the Special Projects Asset Manager and reported back to the Board.</p> <p>David Sidbury queried the Item: 4.2 and the 35% quoted in the report. Margaret McPeake advised that this figure represented properties the new system will record individual tenants.</p> <p>The Board noted the progress of the Action Plan. It was proposed that the Action Plan should be renamed the "Disability Equality Scheme".</p> <p>It was agreed that the Action Plan would be monitored by the Strategic Steering Group.</p>	<p><b>Margaret McPeake</b></p> <p><b>Peter Headland</b></p>

<p><b>7</b></p> <p>7.1</p> <p>7.2</p> <p>7.3</p> <p>7.4</p> <p>7.5</p> <p>7.6</p>	<p><b>Outturn Performance for 2006/07 and Annual Complaints Report</b></p> <p>The report outlined the performance of Barnet Homes in its Pulse performance areas for 2006/07.</p> <p>The Board noted the outturn figures for 2006/07 and the detail which has been provided for the Standards Sub-Group on 15<sup>th</sup> May 2007.</p> <p>The Board noted the comparisons which have been made with other London housing authorities, 3* London ALMOs and Round 3 ALMOs and the conclusions</p> <p>The Annual Complaints report was noted</p> <p>The Board noted and commented on the contents of the report.</p> <p>It was agreed that the Performance Manager and the Governance and Efficiency Manager would bring a report to the Standards Sub-Group with an improvement plan and timetable for its delivery, taking account of the Board's comments.</p>	
<p><b>8</b></p> <p>8.1</p>	<p><b>Forward Agenda Planning</b></p> <p>The following agendas were agreed:</p> <p><u>16<sup>th</sup> July 2007</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Audit Commission</li> <li>• Outcome of IiP Inspection</li> <li>• Action Plan and Inspection Update</li> <li>• Regeneration Estates</li> <li>• Feedback from the Sub-Groups</li> <li>• Forward Agenda Planning</li> </ul> <p><u>17<sup>th</sup> September 2007</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft Self-Assessments</li> <li>• Performance &amp; Budget Review 2007/08 (Quarter 1)</li> <li>• Draft Annual Report &amp; AGM Notice</li> <li>• Preparation for Inspection</li> <li>• Feedback from the Sub-Groups</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Forward Agenda Planning</li> </ul> <p><u>29<sup>th</sup> October 2007</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Barnet Homes AGM</li> </ul> <p><u>Unscheduled Reports</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hills Report</li> </ul>	
<b>9</b>	<b>Feedback from the Sub-Groups</b>	
9.1	The Board noted the feedback from the Sub-Groups.	
<b>10</b>	<b>Feedback on preparing for inspection</b>	
10.1	Kate Laffan gave a presentation to the board on the work HQN have recently completed in assisting BH in preparing for Inspection. Kate Laffan advised that the key areas of focus arising from this work were the cross cutting themes of Customer Care, Equalities and Resident Involvement. Feedback on Income Management, Tenancy Management and VFM was positive. Recommendations for improvements have been incorporated into a project plan which will be monitored through Standards Sub-group.	
<b>11</b>	<b>Any Other Business</b>	
11.1	Brian Altman advised the Board that the recent Directors away day (11 <sup>th</sup> May) had been very successful and was enjoyed by all those Directors who attended.	

**16<sup>th</sup> July 2007**

**Developing the future of Barnet Homes**

**1. Statement of Purpose**

- 1.1 The Barnet Homes business objectives include "To develop new business areas for Barnet Homes". This is crucial if the impact of the loss of income through regeneration disposals and other financial pressures are to be successfully mitigated.

**2. Summary**

- 2.1 This paper seeks the Board's approval to adopt a more proactive and overt approach to new business as part of Barnet Homes' future strategy.

**3. Previous reports**

- 3.1 Strategic Steering Group 12<sup>th</sup> June 2006 – Future of the Company – discussion paper outlined the strategic pressures on Barnet Homes

Strategic Steering Group 21<sup>st</sup> August 2006 – Future of the Company – outlined options for exploring the future of the company

Strategic Steering Group 19<sup>th</sup> February 2007 – Future of the Company – outlined a potential timeline of key events

Strategic Steering Group 18<sup>th</sup> June 2007 – Future of the Company – outlined the financial pressures of the Housing Revenue Account HRA and gave an overview on the ALMOs Tomorrow guide to business planning beyond Decent Homes.

**4. Recommendations**

- 4.1 The Board are invited to comment on the contents of this report.
- 4.2 The Board are asked to reaffirm their support for the approach taken to new business as outlined in the New Business Policy Statement and in 7.18 of this report.
- 4.3 The Board are asked to agree a target for new business of 15,000 properties (or the financial equivalent) in total management thereby offsetting the loss of stock through regeneration and miscellaneous disposals.
- 4.4 The Board will consider as part of the next budget round support for a New Business and Grants Officer to ensure that a more proactive approach to new business development is undertaken.

## **5. Financial & Risk Management Issues**

- 5.1 This paper outlines the financial pressures on the company at 7.1 to 7.9. It goes on to outline a potential strategy for responding to these issues.
- 5.2 In effect the future viability of the company represents the ultimate risk and this paper is part of the process of managing the threats posed.

## **6. Resident Consultation and Equalities Issues**

- 6.1 The importance of resident consultation on the future of ALMOs can be summarised in the following quote. "The Department [Communities & Local Government] believes that it is for local authorities and their ALMOs, in consultation with tenants, to determine the ALMO's future roles and structure. There will be no single or prescribed model. We do however wish to ensure that any decisions on an ALMO's future take account of the views of all stakeholders, but most importantly those whose homes are managed by the ALMO."<sup>1</sup>
- 6.2 Any changes made to the ALMO will be the subject of resident consultation at least proportionate to those undertaken to the set up of Barnet Homes originally. Any proposals to transfer ownership of the stock would require a formal ballot.
- 6.3 It is important that residents buy-in to the new HRA Business Plan and they will be fully consulted.
- 6.4 Approaches to new business and the future of Barnet Homes will be the subject of a report to the Barnet Housing Consultative Panel and wider consultation with residents.

## **7. Background Information**

### **7.1 The Financial Context**

Over the course of the last year the Barnet Homes Strategic Steering Group has been considering papers outlining the potential future pressures on the company. These pressures may be summarised as being:

- Unfavourable recent annual subsidy settlements
- A Comprehensive Spending Review expected to have an adverse impact on the Housing Revenue Account (HRA)
- Rent convergence expected to complete by 2011/12

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<sup>1</sup> ALMOs Tomorrow A guide to ALMO business planning beyond Decent Homes March 2007 Tribal Consulting and Housemark Ltd

- Future anticipated reductions in income due to the loss of significant amounts of stock on the regeneration estates and through other miscellaneous disposals
  - Building cost inflation pressures
  - An already pressurised HRA
- 7.2 Over 90% of the company's Management Fee is met through the Council's HRA, and in turn around 90% of the HRA expenditure (excluding capital financing costs, depreciation and negative subsidy) are the payments to Barnet Homes. Thus the future financial viability of the company is closely linked to the sustainability of the HRA.
- 7.3 The Head of Financial Services has been working with the Council in updating and developing the HRA Business Plan model. This work is not yet complete but it is clear that the regeneration estate phasing will have a major impact through rent loss and higher management costs, increased responsive repairs, longer void periods and the loss of income from garages and commercial property.
- 7.4 The ability to manage inflationary pressures is also crucial, given that the allowances made by central government through the subsidy regime do not generally fully reflect local circumstances. This is particularly true of building cost inflation. The cumulative effect of a relatively small 'under-allowance' in percentage terms is quite dramatic, and emphasises the need for the company in partnership with the Council to work closely in ensuring that efficiencies continue to be gained.
- 7.5 Further work is necessary around the capital programme after 2010/11 (or completion of the Decent Homes programme). At the moment it assumes that this will be funded through the Major Repairs Allowance only, and that there is no further supported borrowing.
- 7.6 It is clear from the work done on the HRA Business Plan to date and the factors outlined at 7.1 that the current status quo for Barnet Homes is not sustainable in the medium to long term future. A new strategic approach needs to be agreed and adopted for the future.
- 7.7 A number of actions are required to complete the work on the HRA Business Plan and the timetable is set out below:

<b>Action</b>	<b>Timetable</b>	<b>Owner</b>
Complete Revenue Account Modelling	May/June 2007	Mike Wiffen
Update Investment Requirements Profile using 100% stock data	July 2007	Chris Wilkins

Incorporate updated position on regeneration	June 2007	Lorraine Butler (LBB)
Draft Supporting Text and Action Plan	June/July 2007	Paul Shipway (LBB)
Consultation	BHCP and Area Panels – Sept 2007	
Report to Cabinet	October 2007	Paul Shipway (LBB)
Report to Barnet Homes Board	October 2007	Margaret McPeake

As this work progresses we will be able to assess more accurately the impact on the company and it is suggested that the Strategic Steering Group initially receive regular progress reports on this. A further report will be made to the Board in line with the timetable above.

## **7.8 The Local and National Strategic Context The Council (The Shareholder)**

7.9 Barnet Homes have a ten year contract with Barnet Council by way of the management agreement. The contract has a five year break clause in order that the Council can review and take stock of the progress of the ALMO. This break clause will become effective in March/April 2009, less than two years away. At this point there is no indication from the Council that the break clause will be activated.

7.10 The Council are clear in their expectation that Barnet Homes would develop their own strategies towards accommodation, Information Technology and future business development. As the shareholder they would expect to be fully consulted on the strategies in order that they can be assured that they are robust and fit for purpose.

## **7.11 The National Context**

The issues that Barnet Homes are facing are not unique. Indeed the “ALMOs Tomorrow” publication makes it clear that ALMOs across the country are having to face up to similar challenges to a greater or lesser extent as they complete their Decent Homes (DH) programmes. In 5 years ALMOs have grown to the point where they now manage nearly one million homes and have invested over £3 billion into decent homes. The majority of ALMOs have now reached 2 stars or better and some have completed their Decent Homes programmes. The ALMO “experiment” is viewed as a success and the Government needs to decide what their role and purpose will be after DH.

7.12 The most prominent of these options relates to the proposed freedoms and flexibilities that high performing ALMOs could benefit from, potentially outside of the HRA restrictions they currently face.

However, these possibilities are still very much being explored at a pilot stage and the outcomes of them are still some way off.

7.13 In the meantime the Strategic Steering Group are of the view that the Board should take decisive action on developing an agreed strategic approach to the future of the company given the minimum seven year life span of the company.

**7.14 Securing additional new business income**

Barnet Homes has already adopted as one of its Business Objectives the need "To develop new business areas for Barnet Homes". In addition at its meeting of the 8th March 2006 the Business Sub Group adopted a New Business Policy Statement. This is attached as appendix 1 and is designed to underpin our approach to developing new income streams in a structured and risk conscious manner.

7.15 The Policy Statement is clear that "seeking out new business is not simply about growth for the sake of growth. It is about developing a more pragmatic and business like approach to developing the future of the organisation. In areas of strength we will develop wider markets and in areas where we are weak we will consider withdrawing from being a service provider."

**7.16** It is our view that the optimum size of Barnet Homes in terms of stock management is the current property portfolio of 15,000 tenanted and leasehold homes (or the financial equivalent). This enables a sufficient quantum of stock to operate both efficiently and effectively. It ensures the organisation is large enough to be financially viable but small enough to be managed effectively. **The Board are therefore asked to agree a target for new business of 15,000 properties in total management (or the financial equivalent) thereby offsetting the loss of stock through regeneration and miscellaneous disposals.**

**7.17 Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT)**

In considering our approach to the future of Barnet Homes and our approach to business development it is important that we what are our opportunities and threats.

<b>Strengths &amp; Opportunities</b>	
<b>Organisational advantage</b>	<b>Benefit</b>
We are the only <u>locally based</u> large scale provider of housing management services within the borough	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We are able to provide local quality housing management services economically in a way that an Registered Social Landlord (RSL) would be unable to do</li> </ul>

<p>We out perform the majority of the main RSLs working within Barnet, based on the Council's own monitoring information of housing management key performance indicators (KPIs). RSLs traditionally concentrate their energies into development rather than day to day management.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whilst we always anxious to seek ever higher standards of improved performance we already have a pedigree of delivery greater than our "competitors"</li> <li>• Chartermark and MJ awards for Nuisance work help create an impressive CV</li> </ul>
<p>We have the potential to offer housing management services to regeneration partners and on new developments</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are significant levels of social housing development throughout Barnet including Cricklewood and Beaumont Park all of which will need quality housing management service provider partners</li> </ul>
<p>We have the potential to provide 24/7 services through the enhanced Lifeline service once relocated</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The only genuine 24/7 service within the Borough that shortly will be able to offer enhanced lone worker monitoring and Telecare options</li> </ul>
<p>We have the potential to provide greater Supporting People (SP) services when the Commissioning Board tender their floating support contracts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A significant contract with greatly enhanced income on offer.</li> <li>• However, does this meet the criteria of core business and being what we do best?</li> </ul>
<p>We have the potential to shared services (including IT, accommodation etc.) with the Council, other ALMOs and service providers/stakeholders</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As part of the accommodation and IT strategy there is the potential to develop shared services with other providers giving both cost, functionality and location advantages.</li> </ul>

<b>Weaknesses and Threats</b>	
<b>Organisational disadvantage</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>
<p>We know from Housemark and other benchmarking analysis that our costs are generally above average</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Value for Money (VfM) programme needs to drive out efficiencies in service provision.</li> <li>• New business may be an opportunity to lower our overall cost per unit.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The option of offering services at below unit cost could be explored.</li> <li>• Shared services could lower our unit costs further to make our services more competitive to other providers.</li> </ul>
Developing new business must not impact on core business delivery – it is our reason to be	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Three stars for core business is the ultimate guarantor of new business</li> </ul>
We do not have the capacity and skills to develop or deliver new business opportunities including a marketing strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A New Business and Grants Officer should be recruited to support this work</li> </ul>
Despite the New Business policy Statement new business continues to be pursued in a largely unplanned and opportunistic manner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As above but note that the structure for evaluating and monitoring new business is in place</li> </ul>
Any RSL contract would potentially be the subject of EU tendering processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bidding for works is at risk and costly – budget provision would have to be made</li> <li>• Developing strong relationships with RSLs may well open up sub EU compliance opportunities</li> </ul>
Our own residents need to understand and support the approach prescribed towards new business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A consultation process would be required with BHCP and wider residents</li> </ul>

**7.18 In our view the strength of Barnet Homes is in the provision of its core housing management functions.** This has very much reinforced by the indicative inspection work carried out by HQN. **It is in this area that Barnet Homes should concentrate on in developing new income streams.**

**Author:** Mike Wiffen (Head of Financial Services)  
Derek Rust (Deputy Chief Executive)  
David Sidbury (Vice Chair)  
**Date:** 1<sup>st</sup> July 2007

### What is new business?

**In its simplest terms 'new' business covers any activity that improves our financial viability by reducing overheads and supporting our core functions.**

Increasing turnover is not enough – new business must demonstrate that it increases viability at the same time and supports our core aims. New business may come from the Council through the management fee, through external grants including Supporting People, and from other housing providers or the private sector.

Seeking out new business is not simply about growth for the sake of growth. It is about developing a more pragmatic and business like approach to developing the future of the organisation. In areas of strength we will develop wider markets and in areas where we are weak we will consider withdrawing from being a service provider.

### Framework to Act:

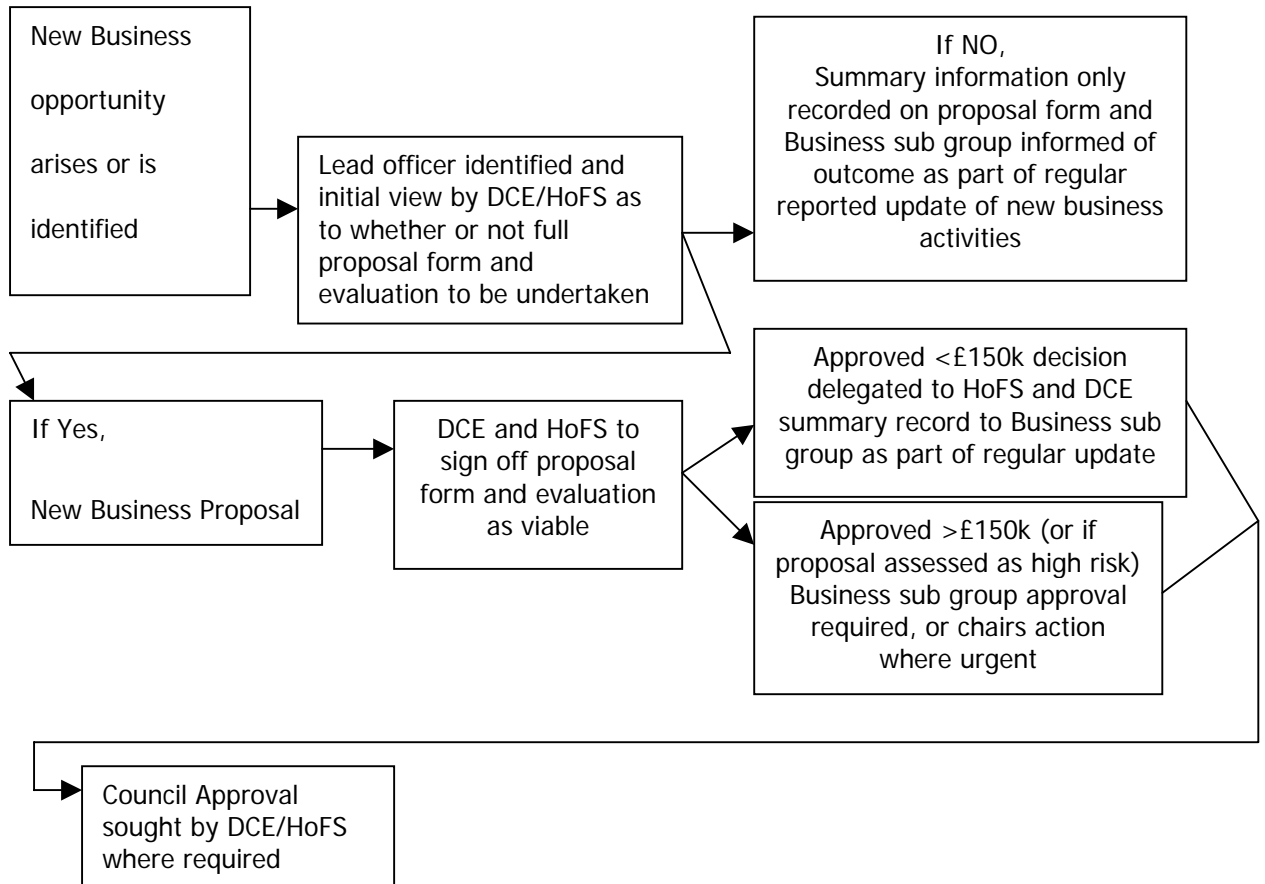
- The management agreement permits the ability for Barnet Homes to carry out work or services with third parties with consent (25.3).
- The Local Government Act 2003 s95 enables ALMOs to trade in any activities related to the well-being function where the local authority is not rated as "weak" or "poor" in the CPA rating.
- The Business sub group have responsibility for overseeing the overall approach to new business and approving specific proposals where appropriate.

### Responsibilities:

- Deputy Chief Executive is responsible for monitoring and leading on the development of new business.
- Head of Financial Services is responsible for ensuring financial viability and robust risk analysis has been undertaken of any new business proposals
- Business Sub Group is responsible for overseeing and approving all new business proposals assessed as high risk or above a contract value of £150,000
- Staff are responsible for following the correct procedures in pursuing a new business growth area.

Process:

New business initiatives will be evaluated using the New Business Proposal Form



DR/CC Mar 06

**16<sup>th</sup> July 2007**

**Housing Regeneration Estates**

**1. Statement of Purpose**

- 1.1 Barnet Homes seeks to achieve excellence by delivering high quality and improving services to all residents. This report addresses our service delivery to the four main regeneration estates where satisfaction with services has been lower than on the wider housing stock.

**2. Summary**

- 2.1 This report updates the Board on actions taken to address the key issues facing Barnet Homes and the Council in managing effectively the regeneration estates.

**3. Previous reports**

- 3.1 **19<sup>th</sup> March 2007** – Board report outlined the progress on each of the four main regeneration schemes and outlined the key issues facing both Barnet Homes and Barnet Council.

**4. Recommendations**

- 4.1 The Board are asked to note and comment on this report.
- 4.2 That this report be developed into the basis of a regeneration strategy for Barnet Homes including a combined Asset Management and Housing Services action plan led by the relevant Area Housing Managers and the Regeneration Manager within Asset Management.
- 4.3 That the issues in relation to Granville Road and Whitefields Estate are also picked up as part of the regeneration strategy for Barnet Homes by staff of Housing Services and Asset Management.

## **5. Financial & Risk Management Issues**

- 5.1 The costs of managing the regeneration estates as compared to our non regeneration stock are outlined within the report at 7.13. Any cost implications as a result of this report will be the subject of appropriate budget bids or shift in existing resources.

Tenants of regeneration estates show lower satisfaction for the key Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs) than for tenants of the wider stock. This impacts on the overall ratings for these BVPIs and represents an inspection risk for Barnet Homes. It is also a risk for Barnet Council in Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) terms. This report aims to address these risks.

## **6. Resident Consultation and Equalities Issues**

- 6.1 This report contains information on our approach to resident involvement at item 7.29 and 7.43. The varied demography of the regeneration estates are outlined at 7.8. As part of the development of a regeneration strategy a full Equalities Impact Assessment will be undertaken of regeneration estate services.

## **7. Background Information**

- 7.1 The four main regeneration estates of Grahame Park, West Hendon, Dollis Valley and Stonegrove/Spur Road represent the largest concentrations of council housing stock within the borough. By their nature they are challenging locations to manage and maintain well. The regeneration of these estates will aim to make them more attractive mixed tenure locations where people live by choice.
- 7.2 Overall satisfaction with landlord services (BVPI 74a) is currently standing at 53% for the four main regeneration estates compared with 75% for the remainder of the stock. This has had the impact of reducing the overall satisfaction figure for Barnet Homes to 71%. For the Council this has had the effect in CPA terms of producing a lower threshold score for this BVPI. For both organisations it is therefore important to understand why satisfaction is significantly lower on the regeneration estates and to respond accordingly.

7.3 In considering causes of lower satisfaction on the four main regeneration estates we have considered the following factors:

- The Regeneration Timeline
- The Demography of the Estates
- Housing Management Service Provision
- Repairs and Capital Investment
- Non Secure Tenancies
- Resident Involvement
- Information and Negative Publicity

#### **7.4 The Regeneration timeline**

The main regeneration schemes have had a long and difficult inception. An example of the length of time that regeneration plans have taken to deliver to date is the Grahame Park timeline as outlined below:

- Early 1999 – Initiation of community planning review on the future of Grahame Park
- July 1999 - Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS) planning for real event and report “Putting new Heart into Grahame Park” issued
- February 2001 – Levitt Bernstein appointed to create a community masterplan as a basis for regenerating Grahame Park estate
- September 2001 – Community consultation “Have your say day” to select a preferred planning option for regeneration
- March 2002 – regeneration development partner selected – Choices for Grahame Park (CfGP)
- July 2004 – resident ballot held to demonstrate support for the proposed regeneration scheme
- 2004-2007 - further development of the scheme and consultations (including formal section 10a consultation, design consultation, numerous fun days, Compulsory Purchase Order consultation, planning consent consultation etc.)

This length of time for developing schemes is not untypical. Work on the schemes for West Hendon and Stonegrove commenced in around the year 2000 with Dollis Valley following in around 2002.

7.5 From the Board report of March 2007 we know that the current status of the four main schemes including estimated completion dates is as follows:

<b>Estate</b>	<b>Current position</b>
Grahame Park	Demonstration phase 32 homes commenced, scheme due to complete circa 2024
West Hendon	Demonstration phase due on site early 2008, scheme due to complete circa 2017
Stonegrove & Spur Rd	Demonstration phase 62 homes commenced, scheme due to complete circa 2014
Dollis Valley	Still in planning and negotiation stage, scheme due to complete circa 2018

7.6 In effect the regeneration schemes have already been in development for up to 8 years. Throughout this time frame a variety of intensive consultation processes will have been undertaken with residents on the delivery of the schemes. In spite of this there still has been no significant building and the tangible benefits of regeneration for the residents of the four estates are still yet to be felt. Potentially the schemes remain between 7 and 17 years from completion of all building and demolition phases. In our example case of Grahame Park this equates to a 25 year programme from the beginning to end.

7.7 Conclusions

**Long lead in times for the regeneration schemes will undoubtedly have an impact on tenant satisfaction within these areas.** Timetables and phasing schedules will have been presented, revised and represented. Regeneration may understandably have been seen as too much talk and not enough delivery. Indeed for some residents they may well believe that they will not benefit at all due to the long time periods and the perceived uncertainty involved.

## 7.8 The Demography of the Regeneration Estates<sup>1</sup>

The table below outlines the current known demography of the regeneration estates compared to the main stock.

	Regeneration Estates	Non Regeneration Estates
White	52.9%	77.3%
BME	47.1%	22.7%
Age 16-19	4.2%	1.3%
20-25	11.5%	3.1%
26-44	42.9%	27.5%
45-59	22.1%	28.2%
60-69	8.7%	12.2%
70-79	8.4%	14.8%
80+	2.2%	13.9%
Family Households	49%	28.2%
Disability	9.6%	44.3%

From this data it is apparent that the current regeneration estate tenants are more likely to be BME, younger and to have families than the tenants of the main stock.

7.9 The four main regeneration estates make up around 22% of the total rented stock of Barnet Homes. However, the new lettings there in 2006/07 amounted to 29% of total lettings. The vast majority of these lettings were made on a non secure basis of tenancy agreement [see 7.22]. Turnover of stock on the four main regeneration estates is as you would expect higher than in the wider stock.

The table below outlines the impact of lettings in 2006/07.

	Regeneration Estates	Non Regeneration Estates	As a % of the whole
Disabled new tenants	9%	4%	5%
Non English speakers	15%	13%	13%
White British	28%	44%	40%
BME	72%	54%	61%

<sup>1</sup> Face to face survey data 2006

0-18 years old	75%	25%	3%
19-25 years old	42%	58%	20%
26-35 years old	34%	66%	22%
36-59 years old	25%	75%	36%
60-65 years old	16%	84%	6%
66-75 years old	8%	92%	7%
76 years old +	0%	100%	5%

New tenants being re housed on the regeneration estates generally are non white and younger. This will have the impact of reinforcing the differences in demography with the main stock as outlined in 7.8 above.

7.10 In addition we know that regeneration estates also have the following attributes:

	Regeneration Estates	Non Regeneration Estates
Transfer requests	848 (27%)	2,269 (73%)
Average arrears	£333	£316
Benefit take up	1613 (23%)	5,347 (77%)

The regeneration estates are areas of recognised high deprivation with higher debt levels and greater benefit reliance and transfer requests proportionate to their population total.

Our "Successful Tenancies" initiative found that Grahame Park has the greatest numbers of rent arrears related evictions proportionate to the overall stock. This may also relate to the fact that regeneration estates have more younger and BME tenants who in themselves are also more likely to be evicted for rent arrears<sup>2</sup>. This finding is likely to apply to the other regeneration estates as well.

#### 7.11 Conclusions

**Tenants of the four main regeneration estates tend to be younger and to be from a BME background.** They are also more

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<sup>2</sup> The Successful Tenancies Initiative 2007 also found that young, new and certain BME tenants are more likely to get into arrears difficulties and face eviction than other demographic groups

likely to have families and suffer from high relative levels of economic and social deprivation. The higher turnover of stock is reinforcing this change in demography from the main stock. Significantly from the face to face surveys **we know that that BME and younger tenants generally tend to be less satisfied than other demographic groups.**

### 7.12 Intensive Local Generic Housing Management Services

We understand that the characteristics of the regeneration estates outlined in 7.8 to 7.10 make them a very different proposition in management terms to the wider housing stock. We have developed as a result a bespoke approach to housing management that concentrates on more intensive local service provision of generic services to the residents of our four main regeneration estates. Grahame Park is managed through a local office on the Grahame Park Concourse. The other three estates are managed by the Priority Estates Team based on West Hendon Broadway.

7.13 We know that as a result of this approach the services provided to regeneration tenants are more expensive per head. This has an impact on the overall relative costs of housing management when benchmarked against other organisations through Housemark 2005/06 (see below).



Rank	Name	Rank	Name	Rank	Name
1	Ealing Homes	5	Brent Housing Partnership	9	Hammersmith & Fulham
2	Ascham Homes	6	CityWest Homes	10	Homes for Islington
3	Hillingdon Homes	7	Hounslow Homes		
4	Kensington and Chelsea TMO	8	Barnet Homes		

7.14 In response we have undertaken detailed Value for Money (VfM) reviews of regeneration services against our specialist teams to ensure that we understand both the costs of the relative inputs as well as the comparative value of the resulting performance outcomes.

December 2005 Specialist Generic Housing Management Review

<b>Service Provision type</b>	<b>Average Housing Management staff cost per property</b>
Local generic regeneration services	Grahame Park = £250.18 Priority Estates = £332.78
Centralised specialist non regeneration services	£186.99

As a result of the review changes were made to the Priority Estates Team in the following financial year equalising their costs at around £290 per property with the Grahame Park team.

Performance comparisons between the specialist and generic teams are undertaken as a matter of operational routine by the Housing Sustainability and Core Performance Managers. This ensures that there are no significant or unexplained differences in performance outcomes. The only significant difference found was in relation to caretaking services with a 30% difference in satisfaction (see appendix 1).

Headline details of other relevant VfM reviews are attached as appendix 1 including comparisons of cost inputs and performance outcomes. These are covered in more detail on our website within the About Us menu.

7.15 We believe that the provision of more intensive local services to the main regeneration estates presents the best form of service provision to meet the local needs there. We understand that this comes at an enhanced price for housing management services. 65% of regeneration tenants themselves judge the rent to be good value for

money compared to the whole of the stock at 78%. They were no more likely to consider that the rent as poor value for money. In the context of the wider regeneration issues of the estate this appears to be a creditable outcome.

- 7.16 The December 2006 Face to Face survey reinforced our approach to regeneration with its findings that:
- 17% of regeneration tenants are likely to go to their local housing office compared with 7% of non regeneration tenants
  - 83% of regeneration tenants are likely to make contact by phone compared with 92% non regeneration tenants
  - 0% tenants on regeneration estates found it difficult to contact staff whereas 7-8% on non regeneration estates did
  - Tenants on regeneration estates were less likely to find staff unable to deal with their problems (9%) than across the whole of the survey (14%)

Despite this regeneration tenants were overall still less satisfied with the final outcome (57%) compared to the wider stock (68%). However, regeneration tenants were also less dissatisfied (5%) with the final outcome compared to the wider stock as well (19%).

#### 7.17 Conclusions

Barnet Homes spends significantly more per head on intensive local services in response to the demographic needs outlined earlier in the report. As a general principle housing management performance outcomes are generally comparable to those for the wider stock. Indeed, on some indicators the service secures greater satisfaction. However this in itself is not necessarily sufficient to influence headline satisfaction levels.

**It would appear that poor housing management services can lead to lower satisfaction on the regeneration estates amongst the tenants there. However strong, local and more expensive services are not in themselves a guarantor of greater satisfaction. The main exception to this is the regeneration caretaking services where satisfaction is unacceptably low at 46%.**

## **7.18 Repairs and Capital Investment into the four Regeneration Estates**

All the properties on our four main regeneration estates have a variety of technical defects. Many have failing elements due to poor design or because they are reaching the end of their expected life. Most properties do not meet the Government's Decent Home Standard (DHS). Many parts of these estates have been poorly designed and have as a result contributed to anti-social behaviour and vandalism.

The permanent solution to these problems, together with the objective of creating sustainable communities will be delivered through the self funding regeneration programmes.

- 7.19 Over the past five years there has been very little investment into the fabric of the regeneration estates. This is understandable given the need to avoid work with a limited life. In addition responsive maintenance work has also been restricted for the same reason. This approach was on the understanding that there would be clarity of phasing and timescales for demolition to enable sensible "just in time" investment strategies on a cost benefit basis to be developed. This has not yet occurred with any level of genuine certainty.
- 7.20 Our face to face survey tells us that 60% of regeneration tenants are satisfied with day to day repairs compared with 76% of tenants in the wider housing stock. Overall dissatisfaction is the same between the two groups at 11%. The table below gives more details on perceptions of the repairs service for regeneration and non regeneration tenants.

Survey Question Area	Regeneration	Non Regeneration
Rated last repair as good	52%	35%
Rated last repair as poor	5%	6%
Feel repairs are completed in good time	86%	88%
Attitude of staff good (repair)	78%	94%
Attitude of staff poor (repair)	0%	4%
Repair completed on time	90%	82%
Repair not completed on time	0%	13%
Call centre service rated good	71%	91%
Call centre service rated poor	0%	4%

It would appear from this table that actual experience of repairs undertaken on regeneration

#### 7.21 Conclusions

During the development period of the regeneration schemes **the approach to repairs has been to minimise expenditure whilst capital investment has practically ceased.** With increasing clarity over the length of times the schemes will take to complete this approach is clearly no longer sustainable. The impact of DHS work being undertaken on the main stock should not be underestimated in relation to its ability to boost satisfaction. It follows therefore that a lack of DHS work on regeneration stock will have a dampening effect on satisfaction. **The general publicity of the benefits of the DHS work being undertaken to the wider stock has undoubtedly contributed to a sense of being forgotten on the regeneration estates. This will have impacted on headline tenant satisfaction levels.**

#### 7.22 **Non Secure Tenancies**

Non secure tenancies have been created on the regeneration estates since around 2003. Non secure tenancies have less statutory rights than the normal secure tenancies offered by the Council for its permanent stock. Non secure tenants are allocated homes as a discharge of duty under the relevant homeless legislation rather than benefiting from choice based lettings as secure tenants would. Non secure tenancies may be terminated by the serving of a Notice to Quit on the tenant.

- 7.23 Non secure tenancies were introduced on the regeneration estates by the Council in order that occupied property may be repossessed without difficulty as each of the demolition phases proceed. Non secure tenancies will also enable some of the “head room” for decanting purposes on schemes where there will be a net reduction in social rented housing.
- 7.24 Failure to secure properties for demolition in time for each phase timetable could result in delays to the overall scheme. This could result in financial impacts for the scheme business plan and/or potentially financial penalties on the Council or Barnet Homes.
- 7.25 There are now over 750 non secure tenancies on the regeneration estates, equivalent to around 31% of the regeneration stock. This is around 7% of the total stock managed by Barnet Homes. The highest concentrations of non secure tenancies are on the Grahame Park estate where there are over 460, equivalent to 36% of the stock there. With the high turnover outlined above this will continue to increase as each year goes by until the regeneration schemes genuinely make significant progress.
- 7.26 The tenants that have been housed on a non secure basis on the regeneration estates are almost certainly no different to those who were historically were placed there, i.e. significant numbers of homeless families and applicants from the Housing Register. However, the policy of housing non secure tenants on regeneration estates has potentially had the following impacts in terms of community cohesion and social inclusion:
- Non secure tenants are not clear where in the future they will be re housed, they will not necessarily benefit from the new homes created on the estates and on which much publicity from the RSLs and the Council is released
  - Non secure tenants are in danger of becoming identified and perceived by existing longer term tenants as potential problems and the cause of nuisance and anti social behaviour (in fact their profile suggests that they are more likely to be victims)
- 7.27 Focus groups were held with non secure tenants of regeneration

estates in December 2006 by Barnet Homes. This identified the following issues:

- The potential for continuous moves created a dilemma between establishing and investing in a home and the potential to be moved
- Concern over potentially the need to keep changing schools for children
- Concern over the condition of their new homes they had moved into (We know that non secure tenants tend to be less satisfied with the condition of our empty properties [68%] when compared to secure tenants [88%])
- Perceived stigma of the regeneration estates where they were moved to (crime and anti social behaviour) and lack of facilities for young people
- Poor communication on the future of the estates
- Lack of cultural sensitivity

#### 7.28 Conclusions

Almost one third of tenants on regeneration estates are on non secure tenancies. **Non secure tenants lack certainty over their future and will not benefit from the new homes being developed on the regenerations estates. In some instances the fact that they are new and have lesser rights may have contributed to stigma and stereotyping with the wider community.** Against this backdrop it is easy to understand that they will have lower satisfaction than the tenants of the wider housing stock.

#### 7.29 **Resident Participation on Regeneration Estates**

We know from the 2006 face to face survey that only 47% of regeneration tenants are satisfied with opportunities for involvement compared with 57% in the wider stock. 19% are actively dissatisfied. Only 35% believe their landlord takes any account of their views when making decisions compared with 48% in the wider stock. 93% of regeneration tenants have taken no part in a variety participation opportunities available compared with 75% of tenants of the wider stock.

7.30 It is interesting to note that despite the fact that resident involvement on regeneration issues as described under 7.4 has been more frequent

and more intensive than for the wider stock the overall satisfaction is lower. This has a significant impact on a key BVPI (75a) for both Barnet Homes and Barnet Council. In CPA terms again we are lower quartile as a result of this performance. It is quite possible that consultation saturation and fatigue has been reached during the extensive timeline outlined above. This has also potentially led to the “squeezing” out of more formal consultation on day to day Barnet Homes business.

### 7.31 Conclusions

**Residents of regeneration estates are showing the signs of consultation fatigue** arising from intensive work undertaken around developing the physical regeneration schemes. This may be combined with the fact that **a third of regeneration tenants are non secure and do not feel engaged with the future of the estate that they will not benefit from.**

### 7.32 **Information and communication**

Residents of the regeneration estates currently receive information from a number of sources:

- Barnet Homes – The primary communication route with residents is the At Home newsletter which provides generic information including details of the Decent Homes Scheme. Whilst this information is generally positive it should be remembered that regeneration tenants will not be benefiting from the significant investment into the general stock. An equivalent message has not been promoted for the interim repair and investment plans for the regeneration estates.
- Barnet Council and the RSL partners – the main communication of both these sets of organisations are related to the progress and relevant benefits of regeneration. A third of residents (non secure tenants) will not currently benefit from the new homes within the schemes and have no certainty of their future.
- The local media – The regeneration estates have always suffered from a level of stigma locally. Negative stories make news and are printed prominently. Positive stories are not so fortunate thus reinforcing popular myths about regeneration estates.

Coupled with this is the often negative campaigning of local interest groups as recently experienced on the Grahame Park estate during the community fun event. Resident opinion was canvassed by a questionnaire from the local MP on how long regeneration was taking and whether or not they thought it would actually happen.

### 7.33 Conclusions

Residents of regeneration estates currently receive mixed messages from a variety of sources. **The lack of certainty over the timing of regeneration, what will happen to non secure tenants and what the interim investment will be impacts on their overall resident satisfaction. Negative publicity that the estates attract is also a factor.**

### 7.34 **Dealing with issues of lower satisfaction on the four main regeneration estates**

Having identified the main likely sources of lower satisfaction on the regeneration estates it is important to be clear about the potential solutions to be implemented through delivery of the service improvement plans.

### 7.35 **Quality Housing Management Services – caretaking**

As we have seen strong, local and more expensive services are not in themselves a guarantor of greater satisfaction. Despite this we will continue to invest in and improve our local housing management services ensuring a strong and consistent link with the specialist teams that serve the wider stock. We will particularly concentrate our efforts on the regeneration caretaking services. The outline housing management service improvement plan for regeneration estates is attached as Appendix 2.

### 7.36 **Repairs and capital investment**

We know that working on current timetables it will be upwards of 2024 before the regeneration of all the estates in Barnet is completed. In the meantime:

- The estates must be kept in an acceptable state of repair.
- Residents must feel that they are receiving the same service levels

afforded to residents on the retained stock.

- There must be a sensible balance between desired levels of maintenance and what can be reasonably expected given the limited life of the existing buildings.

7.37 In order to understand the investment needs of the regeneration properties a stock condition survey will be undertaken. Barnet Homes have established an internal project team with a remit to:

a) Create a brief and commission surveys with an emphasis on putting together a planned repair programme that reflects the proposed regeneration programme for each estate. This will concentrate on ensuring homes remain habitable for the duration until demolition. This will include:

- An assessment of Health and Safety issues
- A running repair estimate
- A projected 30 year maintenance program to ensure the stock is weather tight and structurally sound
- A survey of all externals, 10% internals and all lifts
- Advice on whether blocks are economic to repair or should be disposed of

The surveys are to be completed by the end of July 07.

- b) To create a cost analysis of repairs and maintenance costs on all regeneration estates over the last 3 years
- c) To create a prioritised programme of works
- d) To identify funding streams to support works
- e) To communicate to residents, stakeholders and staff the outcomes

7.38 A number of low rise blocks and houses on Grahame Park and Dollis Valley are to be retained by the council. These properties will be upgraded under the Decent Home Standard programme and these works will now be progressed as soon as possible. Residents will be consulted as to what works will be undertaken to their homes to

ensure they blend into the newly regenerated estate.

7.39 To bring together all of the different facets of maintaining the Repairs and Maintenance Plans for the four regeneration estates a dedicated Regeneration Manager will be appointed within Asset Management. The manager will provide the link between all housing and regeneration staff, residents and our Registered Social Landlord (RSL) partners on the repairs plans. They will take responsibility for the effective maintenance of the estates leading up to final demolition and the handing over of the estate to the RSL. This approach is already bearing fruit with works being procured to deal with graffiti problems and to bring forward planned estate works.

7.40 The face to face surveys identified lower satisfaction with staff attitudes on regeneration estates. As part of the corporate customer care action plan front line staff, including the call centre, have been prioritised for Mary Guber training. In addition the new repair contractor Connaughts have undertaken to introduce a new approach to customer care for operatives as part of their enhanced service delivery.

7.40 **Non Secure Tenants**

The Government requires councils to half their use of temporary accommodation by the year 2010. This is in conflict with the Council's current policy towards non secure tenancies on regeneration estates. The Council are therefore currently reconsidering their approach to non secure tenants. As with other residents non secures need to be provided with relative certainty and clear, concise information about their future. An early decision is needed by the Council on this issue in order that clear messages may be communicated to non secure tenants on the regeneration estates.

7.41 One of the outcomes of this would be that Barnet Homes could confirm its own approach to non secure tenants. For example, initiatives we have developed for new non secure tenancies where through a combination of funding from the Minnie Althorpe Trust (£11,500) and core funding commencing 2007 (£20,000) we are able to offer new tenant furniture and white goods start up packs. The goods are

provided with a six month guarantee from Restore, a furniture recycling organisation.

7.42 Non secure tenants also need to be more closely brought into the resident involvement structures, more on this below.

#### 7.43 **Resident involvement**

We recognise that a significant effort is to be made in resident involvement terms on the regeneration estates for both secure and non secure tenants. We have appointed an interim Resident Participation Manager and a Resident Participation Officer to provide dedicated work on the regeneration estates in partnership with the local generic housing teams. Initial priorities of the post will be targeted at the Grahame Park and West Hendon estates.

In addition we aim to improve resident involvement opportunities by:

- Mapping current involvement mechanisms
- Making use of the new resident sounding board once established
- Developing a face to face survey specifically targeted at regeneration tenants
- Developing (task and finish) resident groups to look at issues around repairs/caretaking/housing management etc.
- Resolving representation at BHCP and in other formal structures for non secure tenants
- Developing bespoke newsletters and looking in future for a close fit with LBB and the partners on communication
- Targeting more of our existing capacity building capability to the regeneration estates and improving community development options

#### 7.44 **Information and certainty**

Many of the themes of this paper revolve around the quality of information provided to the regeneration estates and greater certainty of key messages. Intrinsic within this is the need for improved partnership working with Barnet Council and the RSL partners. Regular strategic meetings are already held by the Deputy Chief Executive and the Strategic Development Unit to deal with matters of common interest.

7.45 However, in recognition of the fact that many of the issues that are

relevant to regeneration involve both the Council's Housing Service as well as their Strategic Development Unit a joint meeting was held recently to discuss shared issues. As a result a brain storming event for all parties is planned for the Summer at which strategic planning can be undertaken around many of the issues within this paper. This should lead to key decisions by the Council being made and more overall clarity of purpose. This will aid co-ordinated, clear communication and information strategies from all of the respective organisations in future.

- 7.46 The ability to bring forward more capital and maintenance works to regeneration estates arising from the surveys currently being undertaken [7.37] also gives an ideal opportunity to commence the positive information process.

#### **7.47 Recommendation**

**It is recommended that given the many complex issues outlined here that this report be used as the basis of a regeneration strategy for Barnet Homes including a combined Asset Management and Housing Services action plan led by the relevant Area Housing Managers and the Regeneration Manager within Asset Management.**

#### **7.48 Whitefields and Granville Road Estate**

This paper has deliberately concentrated on the significant issues relating to the four main regeneration estates making up of one fifth of Barnet Homes' stock.

It is recognised that there are now also redevelopment proposals for both the Whitefields and Granville Road estates. However, these estates currently differ significantly from the four main regeneration estates for the following reasons:

- Whitefields and Granville Road do not have the high levels of turnover or the variances in demographic profile
- The homes there are still subject to choice based lettings rather than being let by allocation
- Neither estate currently has a policy of housing non secure tenancies within the stock there and thus matters of community

cohesion are not so explicit

- The management of the stock is undertaken through the core housing management teams and not through generic local teams
- The lead in times for the schemes are not (yet) so extensive

7.49 However in other respects there are parallels with the experience of the main regeneration estates. For example:

- A need for clarity of the redevelopment proposals are required and should be well communicated as soon as possible
- A repairs and investment plan is needed in the interim and again needs to be communicated clearly and well
- Excellent partnership working will be required between Barnet Homes, Barnet Council and any development partner
- If there is to be any changes made in tenancy types or the suspension of choice based lettings to these estates issues of community cohesion may need to be addressed.

**7.50 It is therefore recommended that these issues are picked up as part of the regeneration strategy for Barnet Homes by staff of Housing Services and Asset Management.**

**Author: Derek Rust (Deputy Chief Executive)**

**Date: 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2007**

**Chief Executive Officer Approved:**

**Date:**

**Managing Rent Arrears VfM review**

Service Provision type	Average Housing Management staff cost per property per week	Average arrears per tenant	Evictions
Local generic regeneration services (22%) <sup>3</sup>	£4.66	£316	21 (58%)
Specialist Rental Income Team (78%)	£1.85	£333	15 (42%)

**Managing Anti Social behaviour VfM review**

Service Provision type	Average Housing Management staff cost per property per week	Average Nuisance and Harassment Actions taken per population head
Local generic regeneration services (22%)	£2.06	Grahame Park = 1.14% Priority Estates = 0.77%
Specialist Nuisance Team (78%)	£1.10	0.65%

**Managing Caretaking Services**

Service Provision type	Average Housing Management staff cost per property per week
Resident Caretakers	£5.40
Mobile Caretakers	£2.79
Grahame Park Caretaking Plus Service	£5.96

Service Provision type	% blocks inspected	% satisfaction	% satisfaction
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<sup>3</sup> Stock split proportions between the service delivery types

	<b>by Estate Service Managers</b>	<b>with the overall estate environment</b>	<b>with the overall caretaking service</b>
Local generic regeneration services (22%)	108.6%	60%	46%
Specialist neighbourhood Teams (78%)	96%	77%	77%

### **Managing Tenancy and Estate Management**

<b>Service Provision type</b>	<b>Average Housing Management staff cost per property per week</b>	<b>% Tenancy audits completed</b>	<b>Illegal occupant repossessions</b>	<b>New Tenant visits completed</b>	<b>Customer letters responded to in time</b>	<b>Complaints responded to in time</b>
Local generic regeneration services (22%)	£1.71	110%	8 (24%)	77%	97.6%	85.2%
Specialist Neighbourhood Teams (78%)	£1.74	95.7%	25 (76%)	99.1%	93.4%	80.0%

To provide excellent services driven by customer involvement  
To develop safe sustainable and cohesive communities through partnership

### **Housing Services Operational Plan objective**

To deliver quality services to regeneration estates in partnership with LBB and RSL partners

### **Key Objectives:**

Deliver the highest possible standards of customer care  
Achieve excellent performance across all service areas  
Ensure residents make a fundamental difference to running their homes and neighbourhoods  
Reduce tenancy failures  
Make residents feel safe  
Keep estates clean and green  
Deliver quality services to regeneration estates in partnership with LBB and RSLs

### **Issues:**

- Increase resident satisfaction with the overall service
- Increase satisfaction with the estate environment
- Increase satisfaction with the caretaking service
- Increase satisfaction with opportunities to participate
- Deliver service improvements to raise satisfaction levels of insecure tenants
- Work in partnership with asset management to improve the physical estate environment
- Meet key performance targets – voids and arrears
- Establish clear arrangements to monitor service provision for ASB and project plan for diversity activity
- Deliver successful tenancies
- Deliver the Barnet Homes Equalities and Diversity Plan
- Maintain and improve customer care standards

Actions c/f from 06/07

- Finalise approach to insecure lets with LBB
- Implement furnished lettings scheme
- Embed process for translation of key documents
- Develop insecure residents' forum
- Finalise website

<b>Service Improvement</b>	<b>Tasks</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>ECD</b>
Improve Communication	Embed regular 1:1s Discuss Performance/Personal/ projects Each appraisal	TW/SMcD	On-going
	Set individual targets through annual appraisals linked to competency framework	TW/SMcD	End of June
	Six monthly briefings from senior manager – to include opportunities for two way feedback	SRO	June and November
	Establish briefings for staff – including caretakers on Regen issues	TW/S McD	June 2007
Improve satisfaction on the Regeneration estates	Develop joint schemes with residents and community/voluntary sector	RS/DM	March 2007
	Introduce Estate Action Days/Special projects involving resident consultation	DM/RS	Start April 2007
	Provide input into environmental improvement programme for Regeneration estates - agree prioritised action plan with residents and Asset Management	TW/S McD	July 2007
	Review use of caretakers for minor repairs	TW/S McD	

	Begin use of Green Card system for complainants	DM/S McD	June 2007	
	Have agreed Action Plan to improve standards across GP which Has key accountabilities for caretakers' patches Increase daily monitoring Involves HOs in identifying and resolving issues Sees weekly improvements in standards	RS/TW/SRO	End of June 2007  Starting June 2007	
Improve quality of service through performance monitoring	Respond to SMT Reality Checks with action plans	DM/RS	April onwards	
	Meet targets for rent arrears and voids (KT action plan to be inserted)	TW/S McD	April onwards	
Establish clear arrangements for monitoring performance in responding to ASB	Complete Chartermark Gap Analysis for ASB	TW/DR	June 2007	
	Input cases on to data base	TW/S McD	June 2007	
	Start to use Witness support packs	TW/S McD	May 2007	
	Roll out staff briefings on ASB	TW/S McD	June 2007	
	EW to commence regular case review of serious ASB and harassment cases	EW/SMcD/TW	June 2007	
	Develop project plan for use of diversionary activity to deal with ASB. Pilot baseline survey at Stonegrove before Youth Shelter installed	S McD	June 2007	
	Carry out VSS for Regen	TW/S McD/EW	Sept 2007	
Equalities initiatives	Caretakers' duties to be translated into standard community languages so they can be included in the information provided to new tenants	SRO	June 2007	
	Welcome Pack to be translated into community languages	TW/SMcD		

	Staff language data base to be developed	TW	June 2007	
	Surgery for new tenants to be piloted	S McD/TW		
Reduce tenancy failures	Skill up decant officer to provide support for new tenants	S McD	July 2007	
	Monitor use of Housing Support Officer at Grahame park	MH	On going	
Ensure residents have a meaningful input	Appoint specialist RP Officer for Regen	PH/TW/S McD	June 2007	
	Agree action plan for Regen estates – including proposals for consultation mechanism on Barnet Homes services and non secure residents' forum –	TW/S McD	July 2007	
Improve satisfaction of insecure residents	Implement furnished lettings scheme	DP/MH		
	Roll out translated CD for new tenants			
	Welcome pack to be available in translated form and to include information on Community Groups	TW/S McD	Sept 2007	
	Arrange coffee mornings for new tenants – pilot at West Hendon	S McD	Aug 2007	
	Finalise rent arrears procedures for non secure tenants	MH	July 2007	

**1. Statement of Purpose**

- 1.1 Our six business aims include “to provide excellent services driven by customer involvement” and “to develop safe, sustainable & cohesive communities”. Resident involvement is central to achieving these aims.

**2. Summary**

- 2.1 This report sets out a strategy for resident involvement in Barnet Homes.

**3. Previous reports**

- 3.1 The Strategic Steering Group on 16.4.2007 considered a review of resident involvement. The Group requested that a resident involvement strategy be prepared. A draft strategy was considered by the Standards Sub Group on 12.6.2007 and this report aims to incorporate their feedback on the strategy. One of their main comments was to make the draft strategy more concise.

**4. Recommendations**

- 4.1 The Board is requested to:
- Agree the draft resident involvement strategy

**5. Financial & Risk Management Issues**

- 5.1 Resident participation is an Audit Commission Key Line of Enquiry (KLOE). Excellent performance in this area will be a key element in achieving 3 stars in the next inspection.
- 5.2 Resource issues are set out in section 7 of the report and within the action plan.

**6. Resident Consultation and Equalities Issues**

- 6.1 The Tenant Compact Residents Steering Group has helped to draft this strategy. The views of the Board will be reported back to the Group and the Barnet Housing Consultative Panel.

**7. Background**

- 7.1 The draft strategy is attached.

**Author:** Peter Headland – Service Development Manager  
**Date:** 3.7.2007  
**Approved by:** Margaret McPeake – Chief Executive

# Barnet Homes Resident Involvement Strategy

2007/2010

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1. Introduction
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## 1. Introduction

This strategy sets out our aims and objectives for resident involvement in Barnet Homes and how we will achieve and measure this over the next three years. We use a wide definition of resident involvement embracing community development and all customer feedback on our services.

The strategy links to our Business Plan and other strategies such as sustainable communities and youth engagement.

The Tenant Compact is the formal agreement between Barnet Homes, Barnet Council and residents as to how they will be involved in decision making in housing issues. The key elements of this strategy have been agreed with residents and are incorporated into the Tenant Compact. The action plan is shared jointly with the Tenant Compact (appendix 2).

## 2. Our business aims

Our six business aims include to:

“provide excellent services driven by customer involvement”

“provide services that meet the need of all our diverse and vulnerable customers”

“develop safe, sustainable & cohesive communities through partnership”.

This strategy aims to support the business aims by:

- Having resident involvement at the heart of our service improvement
- Ensuring opportunities for involvement reflect the needs and preferences of residents

- Helping us develop communities people are proud to live in

### 3. Our mission statement, ambition and aims for resident involvement

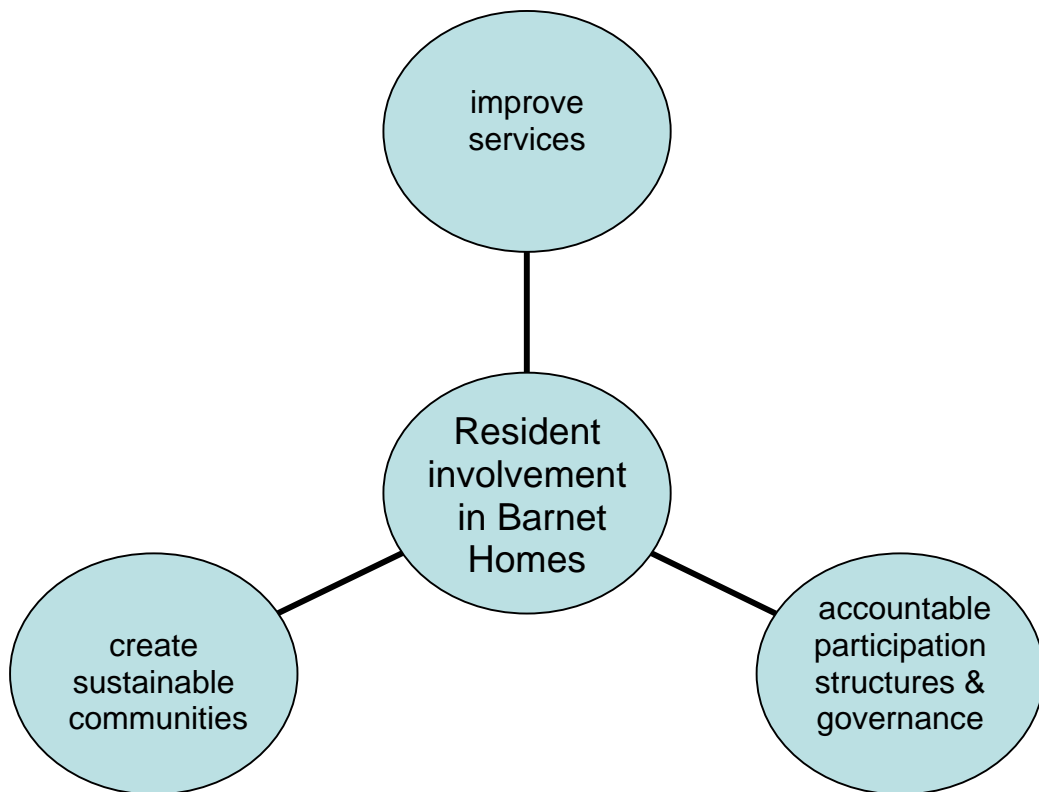
Resident involvement is key to achieving our mission statement. Our mission statement is to:

“achieve excellence by delivering high quality and improving services to all residents”

Our ambition for resident involvement is that:

“residents are aware of a wide range of opportunities to be involved and that they consider that their involvement has made a fundamental difference to achieving better homes, services and communities”.

The aims of involvement at Barnet Homes are to:



#### **4. Our six guiding principles**

Our strategy is based on the following principles:

- Resident involvement should be at the heart of how all service areas in Barnet Homes improve services and communities
- There should be a range of methods for involvement that are well publicised and residents encouraged to participate in
- Opportunities for involvement should be regularly reviewed to ensure they are effective, provide value for money and meet the preferences of all residents including those who traditionally are less involved
- Support and training should be provided for residents who wish to be involved
- Residents should receive clear and prompt feedback on how their involvement has shaped services and communities
- The success of the strategy must be built on a successful partnership between residents, staff, our partners and the Board

#### **5. Our four objectives for resident involvement**

- To provide a comprehensive range of methods of involvement, based on the preferences of residents
- To increase satisfaction with opportunities for involvement for all residents
- To ensure that resident involvement drives improvements in services
- That residents are involved in a range of community projects that lead to safe, sustainable, cohesive communities

#### **Objective 1: To provide a comprehensive range of methods of involvement, based on the preferences of residents**

##### **Why is this important?**

We know that most residents either do not wish or are unable to regularly attend formal residents meetings. 36% of residents are aged over 60, 12% over 80. 35% of tenants consider themselves to have a limiting long term illness, impairment or infirmity. Over the years we have shifted resources to focus on more informal methods of involvement helping us to improve services and to develop sustainable communities.

However we value the importance of an accountable formal participation framework to social landlords and make this accessible to all residents who wish to join in. Area Resident Organisations (formerly known as Area Partnership Panels) have an important role in developing local involvement projects for estates and groups who traditionally have had no voice.

Appendix 1 lists a menu of 10 key ways to get involved and appendix 4 shows the preferences of residents for involvement.

### **Achievements to date**

- Annual programme of 625 face to face interviews by independent market research company driving service improvement – an opportunity to hear the views of all residents
- Programme of focus groups across the organisation

### **Key developments 2007-2010**

- Set up Viewpoint – our Housing Sounding Board of 750 residents – a high quality database of residents who have told us their preferences for involvement and issues of interest to them
- Area Resident Organisations develop local involvement projects
- Carry out a value for money review of resident involvement

### **Headline success measure 2007/2008**

- Evidence of a range of effective involvement projects which meet identified preferences for involvement

### **Objective 2: To increase satisfaction with opportunities for involvement for all residents**

#### **Why is this important?**

We want to be one of the best landlords at resident involvement. At present we have some way to go - 60% of residents are satisfied with opportunities for involvement. In particular we need to target people in the “neither satisfied nor dissatisfied category”.

Improving satisfaction with involvement opportunities is essential in helping to improve satisfaction with the overall service – our aim is to increase this from 75% in 2006/7 to 78% in 07/08 and 82% by 2012.

We have a very diverse population. 25% of residents are black, minority and ethnic (BME) and their satisfaction level with involvement is 55%.

Residents on regeneration estates are more likely to be younger, BME, have children and be less satisfied with services (only 47% were satisfied with opportunities for involvement compared with 57% other estates). There are over 750 non secure tenants on regeneration estates.

### **Achievements to date**

- Targetting the preferences of involvement for BME residents –such as focus groups

- Innovative involvement work on the Disability Equality Duty including face to face survey of 250 disabled tenants

### **Key developments 2007-2010**

- Publicity campaign for resident involvement
- Introduce new involvement initiatives on regeneration estates which meet the preferences of residents
- Deliver youth engagement strategy action plan

### **Headline success measure 2007/2008**

- 65% of tenants satisfied with opportunities for involvement (measured by face to face survey)

### **Objective 3: To ensure that resident involvement drives improvements in services**

#### **Why is this important?**

Designing services based on residents views, needs and preferences provides the key to improving satisfaction levels. This is recognised in our business aims. 77% of tenants felt that we took account of their views when developing services (15% a lot and 62% a little) – which suggests we can do much more. All our services should be open to resident involvement.

#### **Achievements to date**

- Disabled tenants told us that adaptations were the single most important thing we could do to help them – and an additional £800,000 pa was put into the adaptations programme to clear the backlog and reduce waiting times
- £189,000 funding for customer care initiatives such as staff training

### **Key developments 2007-2010**

- Produce a single annual consultation plan of work by all sections
- Roll out customer feedback “health checks” across the organisation – this is a structured approach by the Service Development team to quality check, and collate how service areas are using feedback information to develop services
- Improve the awareness of staff with involvement opportunities and the relevance to their work

### **Headline success measure 2007/2008**

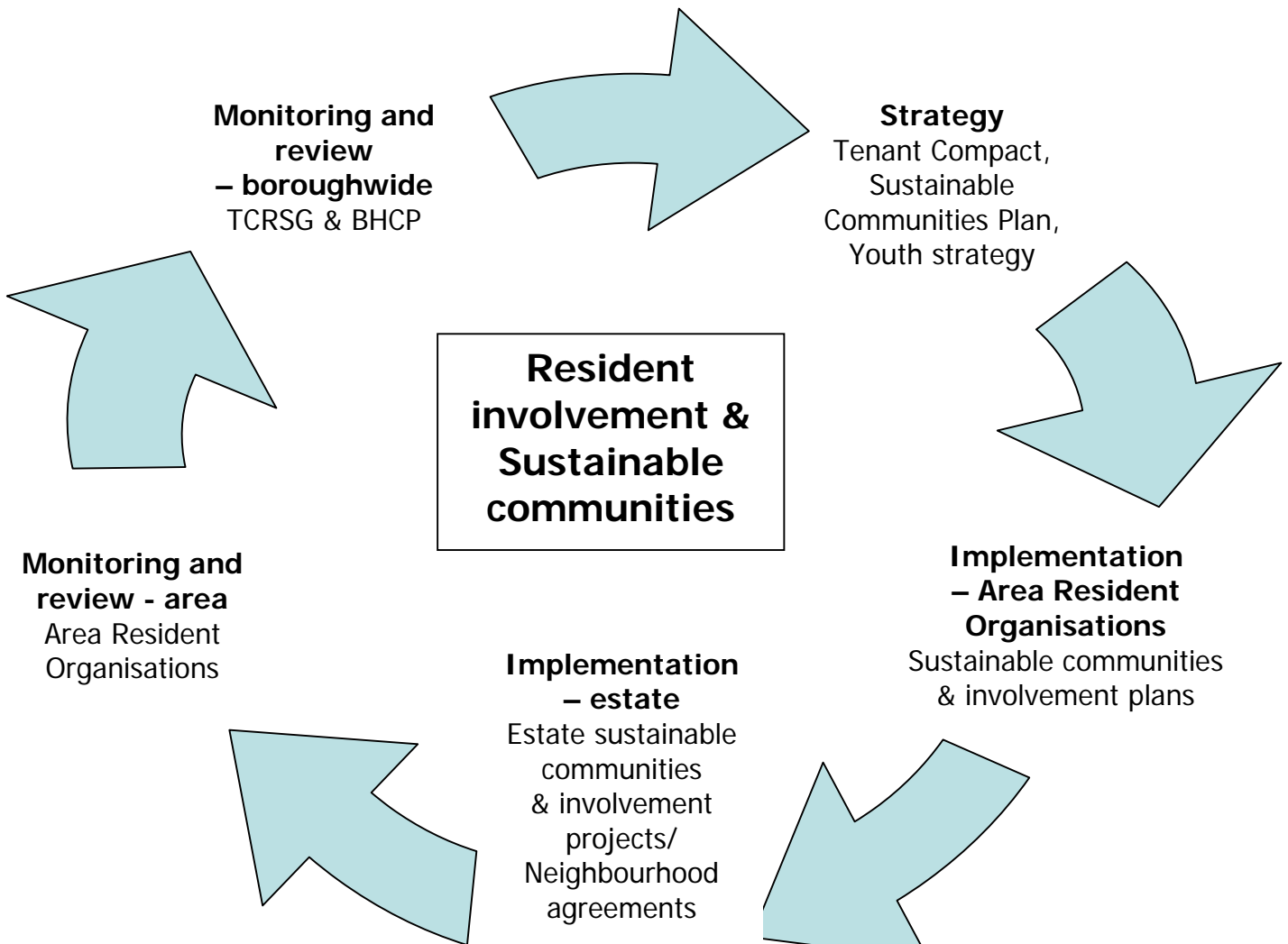
- Comprehensive evidence of how involvement has shaped services reported quarterly to the Board and in an annual involvement impact statement

**Objective 4: That residents are involved in a range of community projects that lead to safe, sustainable, cohesive communities**

**Why is this important?**

For Barnet Homes to succeed in “improving lives, not just housing” it is essential that strong communities are developed alongside the physical improvements of decent homes. The majority of our housing stock is in the most deprived areas of the borough – indices of deprivation show 12 areas within the 20% most deprived nationally. One of our biggest challenges is to improve the quality of life in these areas so it moves towards the standard for Barnet as a whole.

Our resident involvement strategy links with our sustainable community and youth engagement strategies. Successful projects require joint working by staff across the organisation, our partners and residents. Area Resident Organisations have a role in developing programmes of sustainable community projects in their area.



Residents need to be involved from a grass roots level in building these communities.

During the budget and business planning consultation residents highlighted the importance of engagement with young people.

### **Achievements to date**

- Over £600,00 of external funding achieved in the last three years
- Gardening scheme for residents – with a Bronze Award in the BBC Gardeners World competition

### **Key developments 2007-2010**

- Sustainable communities work programmes of Area Resident Organisations
- Improve publicity for estate action days/estate inspections
- Obtain external funding for projects such as youth work, regeneration estates, Information Technology training

### **Headline success measure 2007/2008**

- Evidence of a comprehensive range of projects in place - from an annual statement of sustainable community projects by Area Resident Organisations

## **6. Monitoring, review and evaluation**

Monitoring of progress against the strategy and action plan will be carried out by the Standards Sub Group of the Board and the Tenant Compact Residents Steering Group who will receive a traffic light update on performance against targets. *It is proposed directors from the Sub Group attend the TCRSG on a quarterly basis.*

The strategy and in particular the action plan will be reviewed on an annual basis. This will be jointly by the Sub Group and the TCRSG making recommendations to the Board of Barnet Homes and the Barnet Housing Consultative Panel.

The success of the strategy will be measured by:

- the headline success measures in section 5
- achievement against targets in the action plan
- benchmarking against other high performing social landlords

- feedback from staff, residents and the Board
- the number of people involved

*The roles of the TCRSG and BHCP are set out in appendix 1 and 3.*

A value for money review of resident participation will be carried out in 2007/8 and this may result in significant changes to the strategy.

## **7. Resources**

Resident involvement is the responsibility of all sections of Barnet Homes. Each team has their own customer feedback and involvement mechanisms set out in the Tenant Compact.

The budget for Resident Participation is £105,000. This is delegated to the Tenant Compact Residents Steering Group. In addition to this there is £20,000 provision for the annual face to face survey programme.

The action plan in appendix 2 includes cost implications of proposals.

## Appendix 1: Menu of 10 ways to get involved

	Ways to get involved	Time required	Our services which are involved	Frequency per year	Level and impact
1	<b>One to one.</b> Residents can write, phone or e-mail us with complaints, compliments or suggestions via Talk2Us or talking to staff	Minimal	All	Individual chooses	Policy and Service development
2	<b>Surveys and questionnaires.</b> Residents are contacted randomly by ourselves or a market research company- could be postal, phone, text, face to face or e-mail	Up to 30 mins	All except Corporate, Finance	Random	Policy and Service development
3	<b>Viewpoint – our Housing Sounding Board</b> Residents volunteer to participate in programme of involvement opportunities such as surveys ( postal, phone, e-mail), focus groups, meetings on specific issues, conferences	1 hour per quarter	All except Corporate, Finance	Min of 2 times a year to enter a prize draw	Policy and Service development
4	<b>Mystery shopping</b> Residents are trained to quality check our services	1 day training + 3 hrs per quarter	All except Corporate, Finance	Varies	Policy and Service development
5	<b>Estate inspections</b> Residents invited to participate in estate action days/inspections on their estates. Residents can also monitor standards on other estates	2 hour per quarter	Housing Services Asset Management	4 times	Monitoring leading to service improvements
6	<b>Block representatives</b> Residents can volunteer to be a representative for their block – monitoring service standards	1 hour per week	Housing Services Asset Management	Ongoing throughout the year	Monitoring leading to service improvements
7	<b>Community initiatives</b> Residents can get involved and help suggest a range of initiatives for their estates including youth schemes,	Depends on project	All except Corporate, Finance	Individual chooses	Service development

	gardening				
8	<b>Training events</b> Advertised programme of training events including employment initiatives. Many residents go on to be more involved.	Courses can be half or full day	All	Individual chooses	Self development
9	<b>Resident groups</b> Recognised associations and other groups working with our staff to improve services	4 hours per month	All except Corporate, Finance	Varies	Monitoring leading to service improvement
10	<b>Formal participation structure in Barnet Homes</b> For residents wishing to be more involved and who wish to/are able to attend regular meetings				
	<b>Editorial Board</b> Reviewing publications/publicity	2 hours per quarter	Chief Executives	4 times	Information and review
	<b>Area Resident Organisations</b> Includes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Area Resident Organisations (formerly known as Partnership Panels)</li> <li>• Sheltered Housing Panel (sheltered residents only)</li> <li>• Leasehold Partnership Panel (leaseholders only)</li> </ul> Local housing management and maintenance issues	2 hours a month	All except Corporate, Finance	10 times a year	Monitoring leading to service improvement
	<b>Regeneration involvement</b> Each estate agrees its own mechanisms to avoid consultation overload on the estate – could be a panel or programme of focus groups	Varies	All except Corporate and Finance	Varies	Monitoring leading to service improvement
	<b>Estate Environmental Panel</b> Considers estate service issues	2 hours a month	Housing Services	10 times a year	Monitoring leading to service improvement
	<b>Youth Forum/Engagement Panel</b> Develop youth projects and involvement. £60k budget.	2 hours per month	All except Corporate	Individual chooses	Monitoring leading to service improvement
	<b>Umbrella Groups</b> (made up of representatives from Panels)				
	<b>Tenant Compact Residents Steering Group</b>	2 hours a month	All except Corporate and	10 times a year	Policy and service

	Resident involvement issues. Reports to the BHCP.		Finance		development
	<b>Barnet Housing Consultative Panel</b> Resident forum for Barnet Homes and Barnet Council on boroughwide issues. Chair has agenda slot at the Board.	2 hours a month	All except Corporate and Finance	10 times a year	Policy and service development
	<b>Stage 3 complaints panel</b> Residents involved in adjudication of complaints	2 hours a quarter	All	Varies	Policy and service development
<b>Strategic structures</b>					
	<b>Tackling Crime &amp; Housing Overview Scrutiny Committee</b> 2 representatives nominated by BHCP	2 hours a month	All		Strategy
	<b>Barnet Homes Board</b> 5 resident board directors (1 leaseholder)	4 hours per month?	All	1 meeting per month	Strategy

## Appendix 2: Action plan

### Objective 1. To provide a comprehensive range of methods of involvement, based on the preferences of residents

Tenant Compact key target marked by (k)

Task	Outcome	Resources	Timescale	Lead
Develop the RP database into a Housing Sounding Board "Viewpoint" (k)	Comprehensive consultation facility for whole organisation. 750 residents involved	£2k SPSSx/SNAP software	Live end August 2007	S.O-M
Compare involvement menu with preferences from f2f survey 2007	Can demonstrate resources linked to preferences.	Existing budget	Oct 2007	S.O-M
Deliver programme of 6 series of Focus group programme (3 sessions per subject)	Action plans developed which are used to drive service improvements	Existing RI budget (cost varies according to method used)	2 a qtr	S.O-M
Use community texting as a involvement facility	Pilot exercise carried out. Younger tenants satisfied with opportunities to participate	Existing budget	Dec 2007	JN
Implement mystery shopping pilot with Solon	Action plans developed which are used to drive service improvements	£10k (Innovations Fund grant)	August 2007	JJ/Solon
Fully implement the review of the Area Resident Organisations – inc customer	80% of members satisfied	Existing RI budget	Dec 2007	SN

involvement programmes, complaints monitoring (k)				
Develop proposals for Resource Centre	Resource Centre opens and is well used by residents.	To be identified	March 2008	SN
Carry out a value for money review of resident involvement	Costs of involvement activity understood and used to review involvement strategy	To be identified	Sept 2007	HQN SN
Review with partners resident involvement in their service provision	Partners identify service improvements from involvement	Staffing resource	Ongoing	CW

## 2. To increase satisfaction with opportunities for involvement for all residents

Key actions to achieve this	Outcome	Resources	Timescale	Lead
Develop a strategy for outreach work with community groups/new communities (k)	Network of community groups in place we can consult with on all main diversity issues	£2k	July 2007 to agree strategy	AD
Evaluate progress with involvement options which are the preferences of BME residents	Increase in BME satisfaction with opportunities for involvement	Existing RI budget	Sept 2007	SN
Implement regeneration estate involvement structures which meet preferences of residents	5% increase in satisfaction with involvement on regeneration estates	To be identified	Sept 2007	SN
Improved, interactive involvement	Online survey provides	Existing	July 2007	SN

pages of the website (k)	positive feedback	budget		
Carry out publicity campaign for resident involvement	5% increase in satisfaction with opportunities for involvement	Existing publicity budget	End July 2007	PCH
Feedback to residents on actions taken as a result of all involvement activity	5% increase in satisfaction with opportunities for involvement	Existing publicity budget	Ongoing	All
Carry out biannual F2F disability survey	5% increase in disabled tenant satisfaction with opportunities for involvement	Existing face to face survey budget	2008/9	S.O-M
Carry out biannual F2F leaseholder survey	5% increase in leaseholders satisfaction with opportunities for involvement	£10k	2008/9	KT
Deliver agreed training programme	Positive feedback from residents attending. Good attendance levels	£20k existing budget	Ongoing	HC
Hold Open Day for residents	Better the 400 total which attended the Open Day two years ago	£10x	30 <sup>th</sup> June 2007	Events team

### 3. To ensure that resident involvement drives improvements in services

Key actions to achieve this	Outcome	Resources	Timescale	Lead
Develop effective ongoing system for collecting evidence of how resident involvement has shaped services at all levels (k)	Board, residents consider there is comprehensive evidence of this	Staffing	Aug 2007	CA
Roll out customer feedback health checks across the organisation	All service areas have clear proposals and action plans from involvement	Staffing	Aug 2007	S.O-M
Fully integrate customer feedback into the business planning process (k)	Business Plan fully shaped by feedback	Staffing	Dec 2007	PH
Raise staff awareness of involvement activity and outcomes across the organisation	All staff aware of involvement responsibility and able to explain options to residents	Existing publicity budget	Sept 2007	SN
Produce single annual consultation plan of work by all sections	Reduce consultation overload. Maximise joint opportunities for consultation.	Staff resource	Sept 2007	S.O-M
Produce an annual impact statement of resident involvement	5% increase in satisfaction with opportunities for involvement	Existing publicity budget	June 2008	SN
Revise all service standards with residents	Residents fully involved in drafting all standards	Staffing	July 2007	DR
Review the election process for resident board directors and capacity building for future directors (k)	Pool of potential resident directors in place	Existing Training budget	Ongoing	HC

Involve residents in VFM reviews across the organisation	Resident groups agree comprehensive evidence of involvement in VFM reviews and the programme targets their priorities	Existing resources	Ongoing	VFM lead officer/ PH
Build strong/quality membership of Panels and consider co-option where diversity targets are not met	Increased membership and diversity targets met	Existing RI budget	Ongoing	SN

#### **4. That residents are involved in a range of community projects that lead to safe, sustainable, cohesive communities**

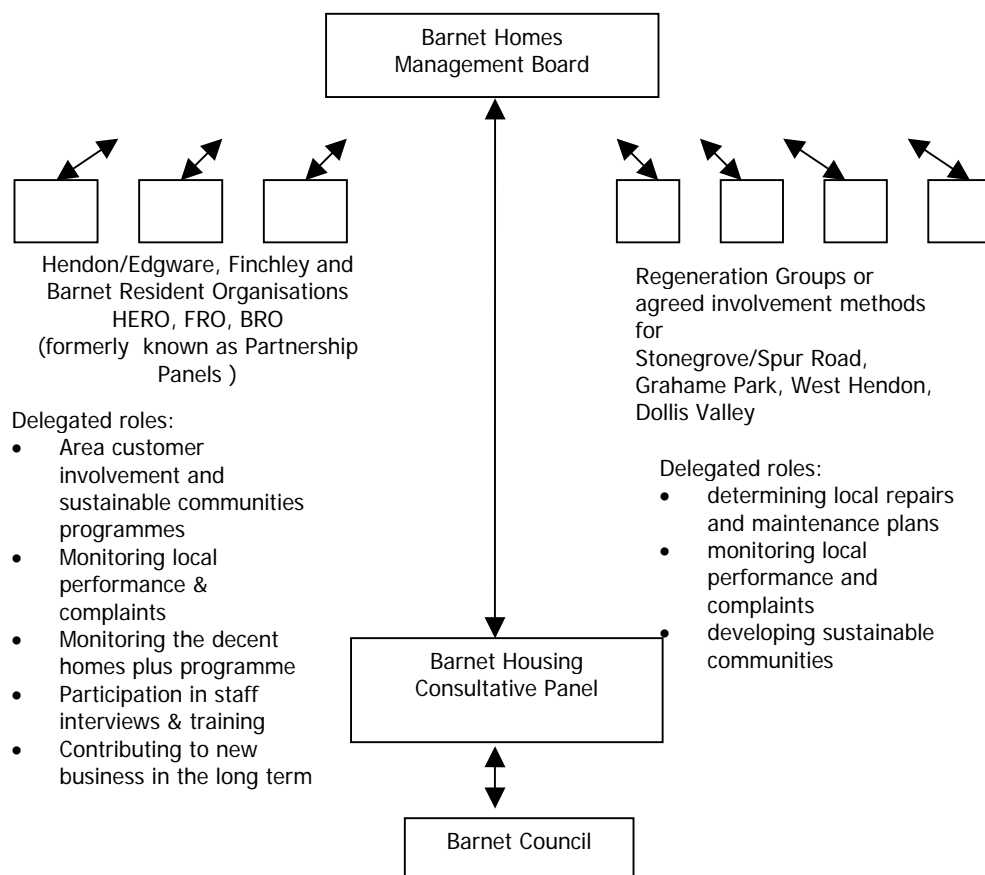
Key actions to achieve this	Outcome	Resources	Timescale	Lead
Fully implement the review of the panels including area sustainable plans (k)	Annual statement of sustainable community projects by Area Resident Organisations	Existing RI budget	Dec 2007	SN
Improve Estate action days/estate inspections publicity	Increased attendance by residents	Existing budgets	Sept 2007	SRO
Set up Neighbourhood agreements in each area	X agreements per area	Staffing resources	Dec 2007	SRO/SN
Youth engagement strategy finalised and on target	Increased participation by young people Youth action plan targets met	£60k provision agreed by Board	Launch at 30 <sup>th</sup> June Open Day	SN
Implement involvement actions in the Respect agenda improvement plan	100% of actions met	Staffing resources	Ongoing	SRO

Implement involvement actions in the sustainable communities strategy	100% of actions met	Staffing resources	Ongoing	SRO
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Lead: SRO Sheila Oliver, SN Shirley Neighbour, PH Peter Headland, HQN Housing Quality Network, HC Hughie Clark, DR Derek Rust, S.O-M Sarah Osei-Menya, CA Cathy Arnold, KT Kevin Turnpenney, PCH Philippa Hancock, AD Anne Denison, JJ Jacqui Jones, JN Jacky Nelson, CW Chris Wilkins

### Appendix 3. Formal participation framework summary

The simplified main structure is:



The **Barnet Housing Consultative Panel** is the boroughwide resident forum. This is chaired by a resident and made up of 24 residents elected by the other panels. It discusses boroughwide issues about Barnet Homes services and strategic housing issues of Barnet Council. It also considers issues raised by Partnership Panels. The Chair of the BHCP has an agenda slot at the Board.

There are **three Area Resident Organisations**. In 2006 the Area Partnership Panels rebranded themselves Hendon and Edgware Residents Organisation (HERO), Finchley Residents Organisation (FRO) and Barnet Residents Organisation (BRO). This aims to help in their publicity campaign. The Service Development team provide information on the tenant profile in each area to help the Panels set diversity targets for their membership.

In 2005/6 the Board agreed six business aims. Residents and the Board reviewed the roles of Partnership Panels to help support the new business aims and these are listed in the chart above. Two key roles of the organisations are to develop **area based sustainable communities and customer involvement** plans – to develop and deliver a programme of

activity which meets the preferences of residents for involvement and community activity in their area. The work of the organisations links closely to the Sustainable Communities Strategy and the Youth Engagement Strategy.

The review of the panels has not yet been fully implemented and Barnet Homes will continue to support this process.

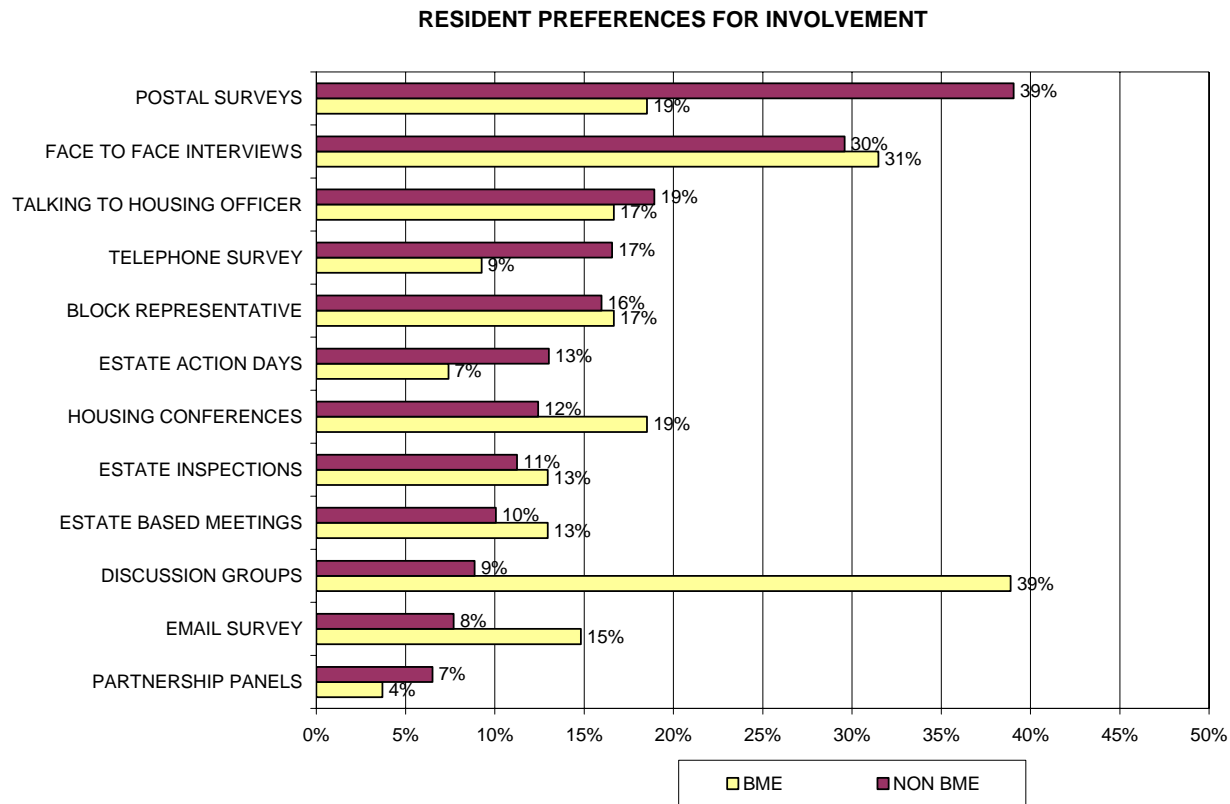
Satisfaction levels on **regeneration estates** are lower than elsewhere in the borough. We are setting up mechanisms on regeneration estates (Grahame Park, West Hendon, Stonegrove/Spur Road and Dollis Valley) for residents to have a greater say on the housing management services provided by Barnet Homes – the delegated roles are listed in the chart above. Our work so far suggests that there may not be one model which suits all. Following resident feedback the Board agreed to fund a new post to progress this in 2007/8. A separate steering group on each estate is responsible for working with partners on the regeneration proposals for the estate.

There are also specialist partnership panels for sheltered housing and leaseholders.

The Tenant Compact Residents Steering Group is the focus for resident participation issues and develops and monitors the Tenant Compact.

## Appendix 4: Preferences for involvement

The chart below shows preferences for involvement by ethnicity. It is based on a three year average of findings from our face to face surveys.



Over the years we have added some options – in some cases the sample size is very small and these have been excluded.

**1. Statement of Purpose**

- 1.1 This report aims to support the Board in its strategic role of maintaining an overview of work undertaken by the different Sub-Groups.

**2. Summary**

- 2.1 This paper gives feedback on the Sub-Group meetings held since the last Board meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> May 2007.

**3. Recommendations**

- 3.1 That the report is noted.

**4. Financial & Risk Management Issues**

- 4.1 None arising

**5. Resident Consultation and Equalities Issues**

- 5.1 None arising

**6. Background**

- 6.1 Since the last Board meeting of the 21<sup>st</sup> May 2007 the following meetings have taken place:

- Asset Management Sub-Group – 27<sup>th</sup> June 2007
- Business Sub-Group – 6<sup>th</sup> June 2007, 4<sup>th</sup> July 2007
- Standards Sub-Group – 15<sup>th</sup> May 2007, 12<sup>th</sup> June 2007
- Resources Sub-Group – 24<sup>th</sup> May 2007, 5<sup>th</sup> July 2007
- Strategic Steering Group – 18<sup>th</sup> June 2007

Feedback from these meetings is provided in the attached appendices.

**Author: Marian Dowling – Board & Governance Manager**

**Date: 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2007**

**Chief Executive Officer Approval:**

**Date:**

1. The Asset Management Sub-Group has met one since the May meeting of the Board and was attended by Jem Fouweather, Ingrid Beal, Trevor Renouf, David Sidbury and Dorothy Badrick a summary of issues discussed is set out below.
2. Review of the Planning Supervisor (CDM Coordinator) – Role in the Delivery of Decent Homes
  - 2.1 The Sub-Group were updated on the selection of the contractor, Scott, White and Hookins. The contract period commenced on 11<sup>th</sup> June 2007, this is to be reviewed in 12 months time when the London Area Procurement Network (LAPN) would have an approved list of contractors. It was agreed to monitor closely and review in 6 months time. There is to be a Workshop on 25<sup>th</sup> July 2007, staff and partners to attend.
3. Performance Monitoring & Partnering Update
  - 3.1 The Sub-Group were given an update on our current Asset Management performance indicators, Barnet Homes statistics for residents satisfaction with decent homes is currently 78.05% with the constructors reporting 90%+. It was proposed that the Quality and Assurance Team sample test the constructors information and carry out independent sample testing. The group were also updated on the current programme of works.
4. Repairs & Maintenance Budget Monitoring – May 2007
  - 4.1 The Sub-Group received details of the current budgetary position for the Repairs and Maintenance services. It was noted that the interface problems experienced during the early stages of the new contract had impacted on the delivery of the service, it was reported at the meeting that the position for June had shown improvement.
5. London Area Procurement Network (LAPN)
  - 5.1 The Sub-Group received an update on LAPN. Clarification on payment to LAPN was requested by the group and whether the 1.5% payable was on the total contract value or the savings made, and was this dependent on 10% savings being achieved.
  - 5.2 The group also asked that the contractual arrangements with LAPN be clarified. A further report will be tabled at the meeting in August.
6. Customer Satisfaction with the Repairs and Maintenance Service
  - 6.1 This item was referred to the Asset Management Sub-Group by the Standards Sub-Group as concerns were raised with the drop in performance and customer satisfaction during the first 2 months of the new contract.
  - 6.2 The sub-group were advised that this was mainly due to the interface problems within the first 6 weeks of the contract which had now been resolved and performance was

improving. It was proposed that targets were to be clearly identified within the 60 Day Action Plan, also additional resources should be considered.

6.3 The item will now be discussed at the joint meeting with the Standards Sub-Group to be held on 24<sup>th</sup> July 2007.

7. Community Benefits from Decent Homes

7.1 The Sub-Group received a report on the community benefits from the decent homes works and the first decent homes annual report for 2005/07. It was proposed that links with the community benefits should also include regeneration activities.

8. Adaptations – Procuring through LAPN

8.1 The Sub-Group were updated on the progress of procuring through LAPN for the Adaptations programme. A full analysis of the backlog was requested and this is to be reported to the Standards Sub-Group. Benchmarking is to be carried to ensure value for money is being achieved.

8.2 Details of the LAPN procurement process were requested and officers were asked to look into the option of our current partners including this service within the existing contracts.

9. Asset Management Strategy

9.1 The Asset Management Strategy was circulated at the meeting and the timetable was discussed. Comments to be sent to Chris Wilkins by the 9<sup>th</sup> July and Chair of Group to clear for consultation by 20<sup>th</sup> July 2007. The Strategy will be submitted to full Board for approval on 17<sup>th</sup> September 2007.

10. Resident Involvement Review

10.1 The Sub-Group received the draft Resident Involvement Strategy for 2007-2010 and were asked to consider whether it addressed the Board's concerns and to identify any issues they felt were not included. A report is to be tabled at the joint Standards Sub-Group and Asset Management Group on 24<sup>th</sup> July 2007.

**Author: Jem Fouweather (Chair)**

**Date: 5 July 2007**

1. The Business Sub-Group has met twice since the May meeting of the Board and a summary of the main issues discussed is set out below.
2. Directors attending were (both meetings unless stated) David Sidbury, Tim Sims, Trevor Renouf, Dorothy Badrick, Monroe Palmer (June) and Vi Britchfield (July).
3. Budget and Finance
  - 3.1 We received the draft final accounts, excluding FRS17 information, for 2006/7 prior to audit. The company made a surplus of £639,000 in the year leading to a cumulative reserve, excluding the pension liability of £1.129 million, which is ahead of our forward financial plan. The accounts are at present being audited. We asked for further reports (confidential) on two potential contingent liabilities which we considered at the July meeting. The Financial Services team were thanked for the work undertaken in completing the end of year accounts prior to deadline.
  - 3.2 There are no issues arising out of the budget monitoring for 2007/8 at this point, save that we agreed a further allocation from contingency funds to support working with the Council in investigating unauthorized occupancy and gathering information on anti-social behaviour.
4. Value for Money
  - 4.1 A comprehensive VFM review of ICT services has been considered. We noted the level of expenditure on ICT and accommodation and how it compared with other ALMOs. The report recognised that there has been significant improvement in the service received over the past two years which was evidenced by the user survey. However there were some areas of concern, notably Contact Manager, the call centre and telephony and network capacity which need to be addressed. Some early gains can be achieved, such as reducing the number of licences and centralising the printing function. Since ICT and accommodation are intrinsically linked to the future of the company this has been referred onward to the Strategic Steering Group.
  - 4.2 The Annual Efficiency Statements (backward-look) for 2006/7 were considered, and both showed that we are achieving above the required efficiency gains. After adjusting for inflation our capital efficiencies over two years total £2.688 million, of which 92.6% is cashable, and representing a 5.67% gain against a target of 2.5%. On housing management and maintenance the efficiency gain in 2006/7 was £987,000 (of which £126,000 was non-cashable), representing 3.5%. Over two years we have achieved a total of £1.613 million which represents 5.6% (0.6% ahead of target).

4.3 We also received a paper on the proposed VFM review of insurance arrangements, where there is considerable interest in a shared approach by a number of ALMOs and an update on the Procurement Action Plan.

5. Audit and Risk

5.1 We considered the results of the Strategic Risk Management exercise undertaken with our insurers, Zurich Municipal and welcomed the new approach taken and agreed that it should be adopted for our risk assessment and registers. There are some areas of concern that we discussed at our last meeting but are confident that there are plans in place to mitigate and/or eliminate these risks.

6. Business Continuity Plan

6.1 We received a further update and are pleased to note that this will be completed by October this year, save that a real-time test of Disaster and Business Recovery will not be undertaken until early 2008.

**Author: David Sidbury**  
**Date: 5 July 2007**

The Standards Sub-Group has two updates to bring to the Board, 15<sup>th</sup> May 2007 and 12<sup>th</sup> June 2007.

### **15<sup>th</sup> May 2007**

Attended by: Brian Altman, Dorothy Badrick, Vi Britchfield, Trevor Renouf, David Sidbury and Tim Sims (Chair).

#### Performance Monitoring

The report outlined the performance of Barnet Homes in its Pulse Performance areas for the month of March 2007 and the outturns for 2006/07.

Issues discussed were: Customer Care, which showed improved performance, complaints, Safe and Sustainable Communities and reality checks. The Chair noted his disappointment with some of the figures.

The Group conveyed their thanks to the Voids & Lettings Team and in particular the Fresh Start officer for their excellent performance in exceeding targets.

#### Inspection Issues

The Group were given a presentation, which updated them on the key issues arising around inspection.

#### Successful Tenancies

The report outlined the successful tenancies initiative.

The Group were advised of how the initiative intended to try and reduce the number of evictions for rent arrears and legal enforcement action for nuisance by carefully planned preventative work.

It was agreed that the draft policy initiative would be monitored via the performance indicators once agreed.

### **12<sup>th</sup> June 2007**

Attended by: Brian Altman, Dorothy Badrick, Vi Britchfield, Trevor Renouf, Tim Sims (Chair), Sharon Slotnick.

Chris Wilkins – Head of Asset Management was introduced to the Group.

The Group were provided with an outline of the definitions for ASB/Nuisance Nuisance/Anti Social Behaviour, Less Serious Nuisance, Serious Nuisance.

The Group were provided with a profile of vulnerable people in rent arrears.

## Resident Involvement in Complaints Project/Service Planning and Proposed VfM Review

The report set out the draft resident involvement strategy.

Discussions took place around the need for more integration between the Area Panels, BHCP and the TCRSG. It was felt that the strategy was too broad with too many principles and suggested a maximum of four pages.

It was suggested that ways to open up the panels/groups could involve more training, plus time limits on how long a tenant could remain on a group.

It was agreed by the group that Derek Rust would provide a summary of the Groups comments to be presented with the strategy to the TCRSG on the 26<sup>th</sup> June 2007 as listed below:

### Observations from the Standards Sub Group

- Strategy is too long and should preferably be around 4-8 pages maximum – it needs to be more concise
- Section 3 does not match what is known of resident preferences for involvement against what types of involvement are provided – in effect is it what people want?
- The menu of involvement options is too broad (scatter gun approach), better to concentrate on fewer options and do them more thoroughly – are we trying to be all things to all people
- Are we clear on what want out of resident involvement? – we must clarify the vision in simple terms
- The statistics used on page 4 are different to those used in the Strategic Steering Group report, why?
- There are too many principles – they need to be shorter and sharper
- The principles read as us to them and not them to us, seven start with we and sound paternalistic
- Involvement and participation is made to appear complicated when at heart they are simple and need to be kept simple
- The current arrangements do not appear to join up - TCSG to BHCP to Board – this includes an onus on all Board members to attend a variety of the resident structures from time to time to observe, listen and answer questions
- VfM review will have an important influence on the strategy once completed
- Appendix 1 – what training have they had, what is average length of service, how many attend, how many of the people attend more than one group (double counting)

### General Updates

The Group were updated on: Policy Procedures & Service Standards, Housing Adaptations Monitoring Panel, Value for Money & LAPN, Publicity & future Communications and Residents Festival in Partnership with Barnet Youth Board 30<sup>th</sup> June 2007.

#### Inspection Update

The group were given a presentation which provided an update since the Board meeting of the 21<sup>st</sup> May 2007 issues covered were: Equalities, Resident Involvement, Customer Care and Regeneration.

#### Performance Monitoring

The Group were advised that each year targets are reviewed and put up, which in part accounts for the increase in red/amber traffic lights.

The Group discussed complaints logging, Chris Wilkins advised that a member of his team had been given the responsibility to check complaints as it was felt that some had been categorised incorrectly.

Note: Following a meeting between the CEO, Operational Asset Manager (East) and the Managing Director of Connaughts a 60 day improvement action plan has been drawn up, although this will be monitored by the Asset Management Sub-Group a copy will be given to the Standards Sub-Group.

#### Decent Homes

The Group were advised that Barnet Homes are not currently collecting and inputting all satisfaction data. The Operational Asset Manager (East) has recently visited Hillingdon Homes who having looked at best practice have outsourced this function.

Chris Wilkins is currently investigating the reasons for poor satisfaction rates on Decent Homes.

**Author: Tim Sims – Chair Standards Sub-Group**  
**Date: 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2007**

The Resources Sub-Group has one update to bring to the Board, 24<sup>th</sup> May 2007.

The Resources Sub-Group will have met again on the 5<sup>th</sup> July the update from this meeting will be presented at September Board.

**Directors present:**

Vi Britchfield (Chair)	Trevor Renouf
Julie Johnson	Tim Sims
Yetunde Onifade	

**1. Health & Safety**

The Sub-group received an update on the health & safety issues raised at the last meeting and the action being taken. This includes a co-ordinated system of inspection and survey, annual maintenance programme and ongoing publicity to raise resident awareness. We queried checks on roof tanks for legionella and water pressure needed for dry risers on higher rise blocks, and agreed to invite Phil Buck to the next meeting to explain this further.

**2. HR Statistics**

We received the usual report on HR statistics which showed reduced sickness absence of 9.3 days at the end of the year (March 07). Although not quite on target (8 days), this represents a reduction for the second consecutive year. Catherine Solomon also provided an analysis of formal disciplinary cases against the staffing profile, which showed that males and staff aged over 60 years had a higher number of disciplinaries than other staff, which is something we need to monitor. We have asked that this information is provided twice yearly in the future.

**3. IiP**

Gladys Mhone gave an update on the preparations for IiP reassessment which takes place at the end of June. The preparations have included staff workshops run by the People First Team, information cascaded through team meetings and posters in all offices. The Sub-group wished the HR team good luck with the assessment and eagerly look forward to the outcome.

**4. Progress of HR Strategy**

The Sub-group received a position statement on progress with implementing the HR Strategy (approved by the Board in March 06) and was impressed with the progress so far and congratulated the HR team. The Sub-group also discussed the recent Board awayday event

and how useful it found the Belbin assessment and recommended that SMT/Heads of Service should also consider this.

**5. HR updates**

We received updates on the following: progress on the essential car user review, TUPE, HR SLA, JNCC, proposed staff survey, AGM, smoking policy. We noted that the essential car user review is reaching a conclusion and requested details of the final numbers of staff who will be adversely affected, for the next meeting.

**6. Future meeting dates**

We agreed to change future meeting dates to a Thursday and Marian Dowling will circulate a list of the revised dates to all Board Directors.

**Author: Vi Britchfield**

**Date: 29<sup>th</sup> May 2007**

**Barnet Homes Board**  
**16<sup>th</sup> July 2007**  
**Strategic Steering Group Feedback to the Board**

**Item: 10**  
**Appendix: E**

The Strategic Steering Group has one update to bring to the Board, 18<sup>th</sup> June 2007.

**18<sup>th</sup> June 2007**

Attended by: Dorothy Badrick, Vi Britchfield, Jem Fouweather, Trevor Renouf (Chair), David Sidbury and Tim Sims.

Equalities & Diversity

The report provided the Group with the Equalities & Diversity Strategy, the action plan and the tasks and success measures for 2007/08.

The Group recommended that tenant profiling should become part of the action plan with a target of 100% profiling.

The Group were asked for their comments on the Equality Scorecard, they asked for more measurable targets to ensure a more meaningful scorecard.

The Group were advised that Yetunde Onifade had agreed to lead for the Board on Equalities.

Board Elections

The Group asked for some amendments to the essential/desirable criteria of the job profile.

**Future of the Company**  
**Feedback from the Chairs/Leaders Meeting**  
**Confidential item:**

The Group were updated on the outcome of the meeting of the Leader of the Council, Cllr. Lynne Hillan, Trevor Renouf (Chair of the Board) and David Sidbury (Vice Chair of the Board).

The Group agreed their views on the future of the company. These proposals will be going to Board for agreement on the 16<sup>th</sup> July 2007.

**Author: Trevor Renouf – Chair of the Board & Strategic Steering Group**  
**Date: 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2007**

**1. Statement of Purpose**

- 1.1 Barnet Homes is committed to achieving effective governance and ensuring we deliver our objectives and commitments to target.

**2. Summary**

- 2.1 This paper sets out the proposed future agenda items for Barnet Homes Board.

**3. Recommendations**

- 3.1 That the Board's views are sought on the proposed agenda

**4. Financial & Risk Management Issues**

- 4.1 Not applicable

**5. Resident Consultation & Equalities Issues**

- 5.1 Not applicable

**6. Background Information**

6.1 Monday 17<sup>th</sup> September 2007

- Draft Annual Report & AGM Notice
- Preparation for Inspection
- Draft Self Assessments
- Hills Report
- Asset Management Strategy
- Appointment of Directors
- Forward Agenda Planning
- Feedback from the Sub-Groups

6.2 Monday 29<sup>th</sup> October 2007

- Barnet Homes AGM

6.3 Unscheduled Reports

- Resident Participation at Board
- Board Remuneration
- Governance Review

**Author: Marian Dowling**

**Date: 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2007**

**Chief Executive Officer Approved:**

**Date:**