

**MINUTES OF LANDLORDS FORUM MEETING**

**HELD ON 26th June 2007 (Lister room)**

Present: Harvey Juttla, Jay Janjua, Dean Andreou, Mr Sabir, Mr Shah, Joanne Odnyer, Manjit Mohan, Urmila Mohan, Yasmin Papaloizou, Tasos Papaloizou, Mr Ahmed, Ian Armstrong-Brown, Sainab Sameul, Manjinder Bhati, Paul Iwerebor, M J properties, Ken Rakhra, Ish Rakhra, T Scrutton, Susan Adebayo, Moses Green, Polly Kaur, Prem Busra, Yusuf Valli, Suheb Momin

London  
Borough of  
Newham

(LBN): Modesta Anucher, Sharon Webb, Scott Sangha, Arlene Cowan, Russel Moffatt  
Conor Loughran

Sue Bassan, Caroline - The Rent Service

Apologies: Rachel Ashworth, Ian Dick

Chaired by: Modester Anucha

Minutes by: Scott Sangha

Posted on the Newham Website

<b><u>Matters arising from previous Meetings</u></b>	<b><u>ACTION</u></b>

**Introducing the new No Smoking regulations.**

Scott Sangha provided information for agents about the no smoking signs required to comply with the no smoking legislation that is coming into effect on 1<sup>st</sup> July 07. Highlighted that the signs are available in various languages.  
Website: Smoke free England- <http://www.smokefreeengland.co.uk>

**Consultation on a Star Grading System for Agents within Newham.**

**Decent Homes and the Private Sector- Mr Russel Moffatt (Housing Markets Team Manager)**

Decent Homes Standards

Russel Moffatt talked about the origin of Decent homes Standard, where it came from and the 4 key tests. Highlighted the statue minimum – HHSRS- where 29 Hazards are assessed.

Explained that if the property fails on 3 or more of the key elements it will fail under Decent Homes. He went through Thermal Comfort and the types of insulation required in a home. Recommended that landlords should go beyond the basic standards required by fitting energy saving devices such as energy efficient boilers if possible. Mentioned that grants may be possible through East London Warm Zone and Warm Front. Their current target is to ensure 70% of the private sector meets the decent homes standards. Briefly mentioned the decent homes plus standard- 2015-2020 where a more ambitious decent homes standards will be set. Asked the landlords if they have any questions about Decent homes standards or the HHSRS.

Scores on the Doors

Open discussion with landlords and agents on their views about a proposal to set up a new scheme, similar to one already in place with food premises in the borough(Food inspectors visit the premises and then a sign on the door highlights the score given.)

This scheme would apply to letting agents, properties would be visited and scores given which would be displayed on the agents door. The main objective of the scheme would be to improve safety and standards of properties in the borough. Explained there would possibly be fees to inspect the properties. The advantages of the scheme for agents could be attracting the best tenant, improve tenant relations, possibly higher rents. Explained that this is just an

<p>idea at present hoping to introduce this next year after consultations with agents and landlords.</p> <p>Various Questions from the audience were taken by Russel.</p>	
<p><b><u>Gas-Elec Safety Systems – Keith Bowtell (Area Manager)</u></b></p> <p>Guest Speaker Keith Bowtell talked about the importance of carrying out inspections to the gas and electrical installations in rented properties. Talked about the regulations and the legal implications of landlords. Advised that engineers should be qualified and a member of an approved body before they carry out any works. Under Corgi- Regulation 36 states that landlords and management agencies of rented properties must have a gas safety certificate. In the event of any loss both parties may be liable. Keith talked about electrical regulations. Advised landlords to check the small print on their buildings insurance as gas and electrical safety certificates may be requested in the event of a claim.</p> <p>Talked about the inspections required and when they should be done. Gas – annually and Electrical every five years or when stated on the certificate. Advised to annually check Fire Detection systems and Carbon monoxide detectors.</p>	<p><b><u>ACTION</u></b></p>
<p><b><u>Housing Benefit Update-Conor Loughran, Strategy And Performance Manager</u></b></p> <p>Provided an update on processing HB applications. Mentioned the number of outstanding cases was at its lowest level in 2 years.</p> <p>New Claims – 47 days Changes – 24 days</p> <p><b><u>Overpayments</u></b></p> <p>Answered question from previous forum. Advised that the tenants name whose benefit was overpaid will show once on the schedule. So if it is carried over it will not show on the subsequent schedules.</p> <p>If you having problems please contact the Landlords Helpline or email service. 0208 430 2000 ext 84424 email: <a href="mailto:Benefits.Stakeholders@newham.gov.uk">Benefits.Stakeholders@newham.gov.uk</a></p>	

A member of the Housing benefit team will be based at each Local service centre to assist clients.	
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**Updates by Modester Anucha - Strategic Manager Housing Needs**

**Private Sector Leasing**

Advert was placed around six weeks ago. There was around 15 expressions of interest. There was a slight delay in assessing these. The reply will be sent out over the next few days. This will be followed by a tender valuation and selection process. Decisions will be made around October 2007.

Leasing activity will be kept to a minimum- to help meet Government targets of reducing people in temporary accommodation.

At present some leased properties will be handed back to the owner, however there will be an option to keep the tenants in the same property under the Bond Scheme.

**B+B**

Letter sent out to all B+B providers advising of the baby rate and the standard rate. Fixed rates for all B+B providers.

Procurement of B+B providers- advert will be sent out in the next two to three weeks. website and local paper.

**Bond Scheme UPDATE Scott Sangha (Initiative Team Leader)**

**ACTION**

Scott provided statistics on how the Bond Scheme is performing since its launch in January 2007.

Re-iterated that agents must not request fees, deposit or rent in advance from the tenants under the bond scheme.

Reminded Landlords that all properties must have a valid,

- Gas Safety Certificate
- Electrical Inspection report

This must be provided when client signs up the Tenancy.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To Ensure any converted flats have planning permission</li> <li>• All Rubbish cleared/In and out of property</li> <li>• Smoke alarms provided</li> <li>• All free fro Category 1 Hazards-No damp or Mould.</li> <li>•</li> </ul> <p>All of the above will save time and money to Landlords who want their properties let as quickly as possible.</p> <p>A property Standard checklist was provided for the agents and landlords.</p> <p><b><u>Discretionary Housing Payments Update- Sharon Webb</u></b></p> <p>Provided an update on DHP.</p>	
<p><b><u>The Rent Service</u></b></p> <p>Following request from landlords at the last forum- the Rent Service were invited. They answered questions from various landlords about rent levels in the borough.</p>	ACTION
<p><b><u>Any Other Business</u></b></p> <p>Training for Landlords on Decent Home standards -Dates update at next Forum</p>	