

Mill Farm Close Housing Management Sub Group Meeting

10 March 2009

Resident Representatives in attendance:

Jackie Fineman, Phil and Olive Balch, Mariam Yabou, Danielle Davis, Yasmin Osman, Ravi Panara, Hansa Panara, S. Panara, D. Alexander, Louise Gharai

Advisors: Alison Pegg – Harrow Council; Louis Blair – First Call

Catalyst Housing Group: Andy Reid, Murray Crawford, Les Warren, Khalid Hamaida

	Action
<p>1. Introductions</p> <p>LB introduced the meeting the purpose of which was to hear about Catalyst's proposals in relation to rehousing and compensation.</p>	
<p>2. Matters Arising</p> <p>AP ran through the action points from the last meeting which MC needs to pick up. She reminded everyone that copies of all the minutes are posted on the Mill Farm website and that issues can be raised at any meeting under Any Other Business.</p>	MC
<p>3. Rehousing proposals</p> <p>AR introduced the subject and circulated a first draft document for discussion. This has been based on the Offer document for the Rayners Lane estate in Harrow.</p> <p>The decanting programme cannot be completed until the estate design is finalised.</p> <p>Catalyst are proposing to move people once only into their new permanent home. They will also try to speed up the moving process for existing tenants where possible and if acceptable to individual tenants.</p> <p>For tenants who currently have a larger home than they need, Catalyst would offer to rehouse them in a new home with one bedroom more than they need. For example, a single tenant currently living in a 2 bed flat will be offered a new 2 bed flat.</p> <p>RP asked how the needs of disabled tenants will be met. Would they get larger flats? AR advised that the disability needs would be assessed – some of this has already been noted from the Housing Needs survey and the rehousing offer would be based on medical needs and would include any necessary adaptations. MC reminded everyone that they will be building new purpose built wheelchair home so there will be more opportunities to ensure disabled tenants get appropriate housing compared to what is available at the moment.</p> <p>MY asked how children of different sex are treated in assessing need. It was confirmed that a family with a 2 boys and 1 girl would be assessed as needing 3 bedrooms. Another example given of a family with a girl of 14, boy of 7 and baby girl would be assessed as needing 4 bedrooms. If anyone wants to check what they would be entitled to then they should speak to AR/MC.</p> <p>LG asked if tenants would be housed near their existing neighbours. MC confirmed this can be arranged if this is what tenants want. On another scheme first choice of properties in any phase was given on length of tenancy.</p> <p>MC advised that where there is a choice of flat or house, the decision on who</p>	

<p>should have the house would be based on need eg ground floor flats are more suitable for people with disabilities and length of tenancy.</p> <p>LB asked if downsizing tenants would be entitled to an incentive/compensation payment as currently with the Council. MC to consider as they have not currently allowed for this.</p> <p><u>Pets</u> – Catalyst will allow existing tenants to take their pets with them if they are not causing a nuisance now, on the basis the Council has allowed them and had not taken action against them. New tenants will have to get written permission in advance before they get a pet.</p>	<p>AR/MC</p>
<p>4. Help with Moving/Compensation</p> <p>LW was introduced. He will be working with and supporting tenants during the moving process.</p> <p>There are 2 elements to the compensation allowances. All existing tenants will receive a <u>Home Loss payment</u> of £4,700 or the amount applicable at the time of moving. This is paid after the tenant moves. Existing tenants will also receive a <u>Disturbance Payment</u> to meet the reasonable costs of moving home eg removals. Gas connection and reconnection of cooker, disconnection and reconnection of washing machine, dishwasher, TV aerial, telephones, redirection of mail, refitting of carpets/curtains or replacement with similar quality if they cannot be refitted. The Offer is the same as that offered for Rayners Lane.</p> <p>LB advised that redirection of mail should be for 12, not 6 months.</p> <p>MC advised that all new homes will have an integrated TV reception system so all tenants will have to do is buy a set top box to connect into it.</p> <p>LG asked what would happen if tenants have fitted laminate floors and they cannot be reused. MC thought that Catalyst will have to replace with similar quality laminate.</p> <p>JF asked the position if tenants want to get new carpets – would Catalyst pay to fit them? MC to consider how this would be approached as old carpets would be refitted so there should be some assistance to those tenants who choose to replace them entirely.</p> <p>MC confirmed that vinyl tiles are supplied as a standard floor covering.</p> <p>MC confirmed that Catalyst are in the process of getting permission to put a temporary office in Mill Farm Close so tenants will be able to discuss their individual needs with LW when he is on site.</p> <p>LB advised there needs to be a section of Transfers covering the process in the future if tenants need to transfer somewhere else.</p> <p>LG asked if the existing storage sheds would be replaced? MC advised that ground floor flats and houses would have gardens and sheds may be provided in these. MC to confirm. Other flats will have internal storage rather than externally accessed storage.</p> <p>It was agreed it would be useful to have some short leaflets that explain the rehousing policies.</p>	<p>MC</p> <p>MC to confirm in draft Offer</p> <p>MC</p> <p>AR/MC</p> <p>MC</p> <p>MC/AP/LB</p>
<p>5. Home Ownership Options</p> <p>KH circulated a leaflet and explained how shared ownership works. Tenants can part buy and part rent a property, buying more shares until they own the property</p>	

<p>outright if that is what they choose. Shared owners pay a mortgage, rent and service charges – it is more expensive than renting but cheaper than buying outright.</p> <p>Existing tenants will be given priority to buy a shared ownership property if that is what they want and can afford.</p> <p>Service charges reflect actual costs – Catalyst does not make a profit on the service charge. Service charges will be minimised, for example there are no lifts planned as the blocks are a maximum 4 storeys.</p> <p>Tenants will families do not get rehoused above the third floor.</p> <p>AP thought it would be helpful to have some examples of what it costs to buy under shared ownership. MC to provide and bring to the meeting on the 24th March</p>	MC
<p>6. Any Other Business</p> <p>LG asked what play space will be available for those in 2 bed flats. MC advised there will be a large balcony plus access to communal space including a children’s play area.</p>	
<p>7 Next Meeting</p> <p>Tuesday 17th March 7 – 8.30 pm. Topic – Resident Involvement/Community Initiatives</p> <p>Thursday 19th March 7- 8.30 pm – Design Workshop – First Review of Masterplan</p>	