



**MINUTES OF THE HERTFORD AND OUTER LONDON RESIDENT PANEL MEETING
HELD ON 3 OCTOBER 2022
MEETING HELD AT PRIORY HALL, WARE**

PRESENT	AD ZH JJH IQ DC CSR	Hertford Panel Chair and Customer Service Committee Member Hertford Panel Member Hertford Panel Member Hertford Panel Member Hertford Panel Member Councillor & Independent Hertford Panel Member
IN ATTENDANCE	MM DG JT CD LR TH	Resident Engagement Manager Executive Director of Development Head of Business Performance and Improvement Head of Repairs and Estate Services Estate Services Manager Resident Engagement Officer
APOLOGIES	JR CR PL	Executive Director of People & Culture Councillor & Independent Hertford Panel Member Hertford Panel Member
NOT PRESENT	BS POG	Hertford Panel Member London Panel Chair (due to observe)
MINUTE TAKER	TH	Resident Engagement Officer

1	Welcome and Apologies	AD
1.01	The chair welcomed the panel	
2	Declarations of interest (declarations of interest to have been provided to the Chair)	AD
3.01	There were no declarations of interest from the panel	
3.02	TH advised that the meeting will be recorded for the purposes of the purposes of the minutes and would be disposed of.	
3	Matters arising – Action Log	TH

3.01	TH summarised the completed actions from the action log.	
3.02	Actions 5.08, 5.28, 5.13, 11.03, 11.05, 11.09, 4.07, 6.10 and 4.10 are all complete and have been removed from the action log – with approval from the chair	
3.03	In feedback from the development site visit that 3 panel members attended, DG advised that he would be happy to invite the members to a follow up site visit when the site has been developed further	
3.04	DG also asked the panel if they may like to be a part of outgoing communications to new residents at the site- to promote the panel and see if they may like to join	
3.05	The panel reacted favourably to this idea	
3.06	In relation to completed action, 11.05 , AD asked if sustainability can be added as an agenda item for the January panel meeting to get an update	
3.07	In relation to JRs blogs regarding right to buy (11.09), AD asked whether we are expecting another government paper on RTB- TH & MM stated they were unsure. TH to confirm.	TH
3.08	AD asked if another session could be arranged for the panel to meet the Neighbourhood Team- as some panel members were unable to attend. The RE team will arrange	The RE Team
3.09	Actions 7.11, 11.07, 5.06 & 10.10 remain on the action log with further updates/completion pending	
4	Panel Tenure	MM
4.01	MM introduced the item to the panel and explained the National Housing Federations code of governance	
4.02	IQ clarified how long a panel member can stay on the panel	
4.03	MM confirmed that the maximum term is 6 years	
4.04	MM also advised the panel that we will be aiming to recruit more panel members on an ongoing basis. It can be challenging to recruit residents to join the panel	
4.05	MM clarified that in line with the code of governance, we should really have a panel of 12 members	

4.06	There were no further questions from the panel regarding panel tenure		
5	Panel Member Re-Election	MM	
5.01	MM introduced the item and explained the role of the panels vice chair		
5.02	MM advised that JJH was appointed a temporary vice-chair, but we haven't completed a re-election so far		
5.03	MM stated that in the document provided under Ag05, she asked if any of the panel members would like to put themselves forward as vice chair		
5.04	MM advised that there may be a change to the vice chair tenure- this is something that she will investigate		MM
5.05	ZH asked if she could (hypothetically) apply for the post, as at the time by the time she would be appointed, she would have been on the panel for 6 years- so would she still be able to apply		
5.07	MM stated that she would clarify whether a panel member already in mid-term could apply for the vice-chair post- with our company secretary		MM
6	Panel Business		ALL
6.01	AD introduced the item and stated that the panel raised issues in the pre-meeting.		
6.02	MIQ raised the rent cap consultation article on the involved resident's newsletter- as it stated that Network Homes (and other housing associations), as there may be a difficulty to meet housing needs if the rents are capped- as opposed to having concern for residents		
6.03	MM clarified that when the term housing need is used, we're talking about not just the need of residents- but also being able to meet the need for prospective residents-and build homes for those who urgently need them		
6.04	DG stated that there's been a great deal of concern around the cost-of-living crisis, and the impact it'll have on residents, as the increase in repair costs are going above the rate of inflation		
6.05	MIQ mentioned that the same article stated that residents can apply for help with rent and costs from a discretionary payment from the local authority and asked of Network Homes had something similar		

6.06	MM advised that the discretionary housing payments come from the local authorities, so they're the ones who it sits with- not Network Homes	
6.07	MM then added that if we have residents to are in arrears and are struggling, it's something that we always look at, and apply for it as much as we can (although it isn't guaranteed that we'll get that money form the local authority)	
6.08	DG added that Network Homes has a Welfare Advice Team, who have been able to maximize benefits for residents who have been referred	
6.09	ZH asked how residents know about the team and the service	
6.10	DG responded that its usually signposted by income officers, neighborhood teams, but also the team has been promoted via our website, and resident newsletters	
6.11	MM advised she is also part of the Network Cares Team (the charitable fund) and they often refer residents to the Welfare Advice Team- as well sending residents food vouchers to support.	
6.12	ZH asked how Network Cares has been promoted to make residents aware of it- so they can also apply for support directly	
6.13	MM stated that they have been promoted in the resident newsletter, also in newsletters that are sent to specific teams. It is also going into rent booklets and service charge estimate communications	
6.14	MIQ stated that the newsletter the panel had just received didn't have alot of information for residents	
6.15	TH responded that this particular newsletter was only for involved residents- so the information included is tailored to them- not the wider residents' base	
6.16	MIQ added that there was no information about welfare/financial support tin the newsletter	
6.16	AD & TH advised that there is a section in the newsletter advising residents of the support available to residents- including the Welfare Advice Team, with a link to their page on our website	
6.17	MM advised that there is another newsletter that goes to all residents- the newsletter is called ' <i>Network Life</i> '	

6.18	AD stated that ZH would like to raise an issue based on a conversation from the panels pre-meeting	
6.19	ZH stated that a resident in her block had a letter from Network Homes. It said that a pair of shoes had been removed from her front doorstep. ZH said that the language in the note was strong	
6.20	ZH stated that the letter did cause a bit of an upset. The third-party contractors stated that they have to act under a zero-tolerance policy	
6.21	CD clarified that in absence of consistency prior to the previous estate inspector starting her role in Hertford, there has been inconsistencies regarding adherence to the TORT notices that were put up in blocks	
6.22	CD added that in the absence of staff there was an agreement that was made with the Neighbourhood Team, that for a while, items of value could be kept in storage- this storage is garages we own, that we could be making income on. So, a decision was made to apply zero tolerance across the board- as we have always had in blocks in the London region.	
6.23	CD also advised that when our third contractor (New-Green) carry out their inspections and see small items in the hallways, they will knock on the door and advise the resident of the policy and ask for the items to be removed before they leave the site- otherwise they will have to be removed. Any item that can cause an obstruction or a trip hazard for individuals trying to evacuate the area, is covered by a TORT notice (<i>A torts notice is a legal document alerting the owner of items that have been abandoned on private land or property. It is issued in accordance with the Torts (Interference with Goods) Act 1977. The fact that items or property have been left on your property or land makes you an involuntary baileeT</i>)	
6.24	ZH said that in this specific occasion, the contractor had left larger items in the external communal area, and has then removed the shoe from outside the resident's door- is why there was a feeling of upset in the block	
6.25	CD said she understands this sentiment due to the bulk waste outside- also unless New Green make Network Homes aware, we wouldn't know about it.	
6.26	LR stated that she is sending out a high volume of letters to residents regarding fly-tipping- so it is something we is regularly addressed.	
6.27	CD has stated that all of this will be fed back to New-Green- there is a regular meeting to pick up on issues and discuss rectification notices	

6.28	CD clarified that a rectification notice is following either a report from a resident or a visit to a site from an estates/housing officer, where they find that aspects of the cleaning do not meet the standard required. They then serve a rectification notice, which gives the contractor 24hrs to attend and rectify the issue that was picked up on. If they continue to receive rectification notices, or they do not rectify the issues picked up on- there are contractions in the contract that enable us to serve financial penalties.	
7	Network Homes Performance Report	SA/JT
7.01	JT introduced the item and invited the panel to ask questions	JT
7.02	JT gave a summary of each performance report.	
7.03	JT stated that the ratings for the trust objective was below target, but it had increased since the last report	
7.04	ZH asked what the target for this factor is	
7.05	JT advised that the target is 85%- and the current percentage is 78%. This also relates to how repairs and complaints are being dealt with.	
7.06	AD asked if we had a breakdown of what the complaints are- whether they're regarding repairs, etc	
7.07	JT stated that we do, and it is in the commentary (included in the papers sent to panel)	
7.08	JT stated that for future meetings we will investigate how we can attain more up to date performance findings, as they are produced monthly, to ensure the information is more current and matches the reports the Customer Service Committee receive.	
8	Resident Engagement Update	MM
8.01	MM opened the item and provided an update on what Network Cares is working on (amidst the cost-of-living crisis)	
8.02	MM summarised the expenditure of the Network Cares fund from April 2022 to date, and stated that it's expected to see a rise in applications as we head into the winter	
8.03	MM advised that we also have an arrears panel -who support residents facing challenging circumstances and have found themselves in high level	

	arrears. Network care have also provided residents with both food and fuel vouchers- we will try to help residents as much as we can	
8.04	ZH asked how much this is advertised and promoted, as it's a good thing we're doing. ZH stated that she wasn't aware of this and feels that we should publicise the goodwill work that we do	
8.05	MIQ stated that she had seen Network Cares promoted in a hard copy of the ' <i>Network Life</i> ' newsletter	
8.05	ZH responded that this is good, but many people also use the various social media multiple times a day- so this is another good opportunity to spread the word on the generous good will work that we do	
8.06	MM agreed that we don't promote as much as we should, and should do so more	
8.07	DG also agreed and stated that there is room to promote our new developments but also the charitable work we do	
8.08	DC asked what Network Homes are installing solar panels on newer homes, but are not installing them on older homes	
8.09	CD to query with Strategic Asset Management whether there are plans to install solar panels in older properties	CD
14	Estate Management Moved from for information following request to discuss	CD/LR
14.01	LR introduced herself to the panel and summarised the report findings	
14.02	LR advised that both herself and the Hertford region estates officer are new to their roles, they have been concentrating on ensuring all information scheme noticeboards is up to date and they are focussing heavily on quality of the schemes (cleaning, grounds maintenance, fly tipping, etc)	
14.03	DC asked other than large items being left outside, what other things are classed as fly-tipping	
14.04	CD responded that someone leaves bags of rubbish on the bin-room floor, it would be classed of fly-tipping, as the bin-collector won't remove it, and neither is it the responsibility of the cleaners	

14.05	CD and LR clarified that if a repairs contractor left a job and didn't tidy up and left things behind, it would be logged as a repair issue under a general enquiry, rather than estate inspection query	
14.06	LR explained the grading system within the report, and what the grades on specific areas of service mean.	
14.07	LR and CD advised that they are hoping to increase both customer satisfaction, and resident trust in us by creating platform that residents can access, to raise issues within the block in a timely and convenient manner. Possibly posters in schemes that would have a QR code that would take residents to a page to let us know if the cleaning hasn't been done that day, or it wasn't done to a satisfactory standard. This would mean that we would be able to address these issues immediately, as residents don't have to call in and raise a case	
14.08	No further questions from the panel	
9	Any Other Business	ALL
9.01	AD asked MM about the attendance of ELT members at the panel, as this was discussed in the pre meeting. AD asked who would be able to attend future meetings	
9.02	MM responded that she would be happy to invite any colleagues that the panel would like to be there. Therefore, we need to know in advance what items will be on the agenda, so we can ensure the correct colleagues will be there	
9.03	ZH said it is useful to sometimes have higher management presence. ZH stated that there was often more management presence at the online meetings	
9.04	CD stated that herself, LR or another member of the team will be happy to attend the meetings moving forwards	
9.05	MM clarified that we will always ensure the most appropriate person will be at the meetings, it may not be the highest-level colleague, but it will be the person who will be able to provide the answers to the agenda items	
10	Minutes from the meeting of 04 July 2022.	

	<i>For Information, not to be discussed unless so requested</i>	
11	Building Safety -	
	<i>For Information - Not to be discussed unless so requested</i>	
12	-Right to buy Per action log request	
	<i>For Information, not to be discussed unless so requested</i>	
13	Sustainability	
	<i>For Information, not to be discussed unless so requested</i>	
15	Housing Sector hot topics	
	<i>For Information, not to be discussed unless so requested</i>	

Next Meeting Scheduled for 3 October2022

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Chair

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Date