

Report of West North West Homes

Report to Outer North West Area Committee

Date: 24th September 2012

Subject: West North West homes Leeds involvement in Area Committees

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s): Horsforth, Adel & Wharfedale, Otley & Yeadon & Guisley & Rawdon	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Summary of main issues

1. WNWhL provide a range of housing management services in the West and North West of Leeds. The Outer North West Area Committee area is coterminous with the 'Outer North West' housing management area comprising 3900 properties in the Adel and Wharfedale, Otley and Yeadon, Horsforth and the Guisley and Rawdon Wards. Tenancy and Estate Management services are delivered locally from our office located in Horsforth.
2. Support services such as rent accounting, lettings and property repairs are delivered through a centralised structure, however all customer enquiries can be made locally at the Horsforth Neighbourhood Office and at the Otley and Aireborough One Stop Centres; or via the Council Contact Centre.
3. This report seeks to advise the Area Committee of activities undertaken by WNWhL which impact on local communities and areas where opportunities exist to work collaboratively to improve conditions for local people.
4. This is the second of two bi-annual reports, agreed by Area Committee in June 2011, to provide an update of activities and services undertaken by WNWhL.

Recommendations

Members of the Outer North West Area Committee are invited to note the content of this report; WNWhL will provide a six monthly update report.

1. Purpose of this Report

- 1.1 To outline the purpose of West North West homes Leeds (WNWhL) involvement in Area Committees, and to explore ways of making that involvement as meaningful and productive as possible.

2 Background information

- 2.1 An introductory report was submitted to the Outer North West Area Committee in June, outlining areas of mutual interest and opportunities to promote collaborative working for the benefit of communities in Outer North West Leeds. The report recommended that WNWhL should provide further, more detailed, reports on a twice yearly basis.
- 2.2 WNWhL delivers services to customers through a combination of centralised and decentralised structures. Generally speaking, estate and tenancy management functions are delivered locally by the Neighbourhood Housing Team based at the Neighbourhood Housing Office on The Green, Horsforth. Support services such as Lettings, Rent and Repairs are delivered through a decentralised structure; however enquiries for the range of services we provide can be handled at the aforementioned office. The bulk of customer enquiries are processed through the Council Contact Centre, with whom WNWhL has a Service Delivery Agreement.
- 2.3 This report focuses on examples of joint working, and activities which promote community involvement and well being.
- 2.4 The Tong Estate in the Outer West area was identified earlier this year to be the testing ground for a locality working initiative. The Locality Working Initiative is a partnership between West North West homes Leeds (WNWhL) and Leeds City Councils, Outer North West, Locality Team. The aim of the project is to deliver joined up environmental services and to improve environmental conditions.

The scope of the project is to meet strategic objectives of WNWhL, Leeds City Council and the Outer West, Environmental Sub Group through collaborative work between WNWhL and the Locality Team.

Clear objectives have been set by senior management within WNWhL and Leeds City Council. There has also been active involvement from local Ward Members in setting the agenda and priorities. There has been commitment from both parties to undertake work across boundaries where necessary, to ensure optimum levels of efficiency, to prevent the spread of litter and improve estate cleanliness.

The results from the project are extremely positive with an improvement in the Estate Grading from acceptable to good and a 67% improvement in customer satisfaction.

The intention is now to extend the project to cover one estate in Outer West, Inner West Inner North West and Outer North West areas.

3. Main issues

3.1 Environmental Management

3.1.1 Partnership Working

3.1.2 Crime and Grime Multi Tasking Groups were set up in 2004. Their aim is to provide a clear framework for the positive management of the Outer North West area, whilst delivering a multi agency approach, when dealing with issues relating to crime and grime. To share local information and intelligence, to agree local priorities and deliver joint actions for delivering service improvements.

3.1.3 Agreed priorities of the Crime and Grime Group are to improve environmental conditions within the Outer North West area, to provide a joined up approach when dealing with issues in relation to crime, anti social behaviour.

3.1.4 The Outer North West, Crime and Grime Tasking Group has delivered 3 local action days in 2012 in the following areas; Weston Estate Otley , in the St James area of Horsforth and the Holtdale Estate in Holt Park.

3.1.5 A successful interagency day of action was undertaken in July 2012 on the St James area of Horsforth in conjunction with the Police, Community Safety, and the Fire Service and included a team of Neighbourhood Management Officers as well several Neighbourhood Caretaker vans. WNWhL also supported the day of action by providing skips at a number of locations throughout the estate.

3.1.6 WNWhL has an active role in delivery of local action days, including provision and delivery of promotional information, providing staffing resources, through our Neighbourhood Management Officers and Neighbourhood Caretakers. WNWhL also contributes financially with the provision of skips, where environmental improvements are required.

3.1.7 Common problems identified during action days are increasing number of incidents of fly tipping and graffiti.

3.1.8 Health & Environmental Action Services have issued fixed penalty notices to residents who have been identified as having fly tipped. In an attempt to be pro active WNWhL provide skips for tenants to remove surplus rubbish. WNWhL Neighbourhood Caretaking Team also deal with problems of graffiti on our estates.

3.1.9 The noticeable outcome of these action days have been improved environmental conditions, where local residents have provided positive feedback about improved conditions.

3.2 Caretaking and Cleaning

3.2.1 Our Neighbourhood Caretaking Team provide a front line environmental service, patrolling estates and communal buildings including daily visits to multi storey flats, ensuring a high visible presence to deter illegal dumping, illegal entry, vandalism and other acts of anti social behaviour.

- 3.2.2 The Caretakers act as the eyes and ears on the estate, reporting and recording any illegal activity and breaches of tenancy. They provide a patrol service of estates on a planned basis, assessing and dealing with environmental issues in communal areas, such as ginnels, walkways and communal land where grot spots exist.
- 3.2.3 The Caretaking team also undertake regular work in a number of areas which are identified as hotspot areas for litter and fly-tipping. They also undertake larger environmental projects tidying up areas of land not included in the Continental contract.
- 3.2.4 The monitoring of the new grounds works contract with Continental forms an important part of the work undertaken by the Neighbourhood Caretaking Team and other staff in the Outer North West area. The successful implementation of the new contract will have a significant positive impact on the environment within the Outer North West area.
- 3.2.5 WNWhL has in addition recently recruited a team of four Apprentice Caretakers. This new team in addition to learning skills which will help them to secure permanent employment will also form the basis of a resource to provide a Vulnerable Customers Gardening Scheme and handyperson service for vulnerable customers. This Apprentice Caretaker Team is headed by a Work Experience Mentor and will be based at Horsforth Housing Office but will work across all of WNWhL.

3.3 Estate Grading and Inspections.

In line with our published service standards WNWhL arranges regular Estate Inspections which take place on a monthly basis for each area; and a four times a year Estate Grading for each area.

The Estate Grading which now takes place quarterly has taken the place of the twice yearly Estate Walkabout. WNWhL reports on the grading of its estates four times a year and it was important to give customers and other stake holders the opportunity to have an input into this process.

Estate Gradings are promoted on our website and WNWhL welcomes the opportunity for customers, partners and other representatives to attend the inspections and estate grading with us. Often the issues identified may be the responsibility of other Council Departments e.g. Highways, Parks & Countryside and the Walkabouts provide an opportunity for other agencies to contribute to improving environmental conditions and quality of life for local people.

The Estate Grading for the first Quarter of 2012/2013 the Outer North West area shows that there were nine areas graded excellent, twelve graded good and three graded acceptable

Otley/Aireborough

Estate	Area	Grading
Otley 1	Weston Estate Otley	Good
Otley 2	Mount Pisagh, Queens Terrace, Myers Croft, Lea Croft, Walkergate & Side Copse	Good
Otley 3	Pool in Wharfedale	Good
Otley 4	Newall Carrs, Newall Avenue, The Green & The Oval	Excellent

Otley 5	Bacon Street Masefield Street, Shaw Close, Shakespeare's, Nunroyds, Eliot Grove, Ruskin Crescent.	Excellent
Otley 6	Town Street, Kelcliffe Avenue, Moorland Avenue, Moorland Crescent, Moorland Drive, Moor Lane, Netherfield Court Stanley Grove, Hawkhill Av, Park Road, Westbourne Drive	Good
Otley 7	Coppicewoods, Howson Close, Queensway,	Acceptable
Otley 8	Shaw Leys, Shaw Royd, Raywood Close, Newlands Av, Kirklands Close, Manor Close, Swincar Av, Netherfield Close	Good
Otley 9	Albert Square & properties off High Street	Excellent
Otley 10	Rawdon Estate: Aire View, Windmill Lane, Canadas, Markhams, Larkfields	Excellent
Otley 11	Hawthorn Estate Yeadon	Good
Otley 12	Westfield Estate, Chippendale Rise, The Crescent & The Crossway	Good
Otley 13	Henshaw Estate, Enfield, Breary Rise,	Acceptable
Otley 14	Bridge Street, Farnley Lane, Athelstan Lane, Turner Crescent, Fairfax Flats & Well Croft	Excellent
Otley 15	Bradford Road, Caxton Road, Duncan Avenue, Maylea Drive, Westbournes & West Busk Lane	Excellent
Otley 16	Adam Croft, Linfoot Court, Union Court, Whitely Croft & Guy Croft	Excellent

Horsforth/Holt Park/Adel

Horsforth 1	King Georges, Melrose Grove, Walk, St James Walk & Broadgate Estate	Good
Horsforth 2	Broadway, Broadgates, Stanhope Dr, Salmon Crescent, Wood lane & Alexandra Road	Excellent
Horsforth 3	Featherbanks, Regents, Cragg's & Broadway flats	Acceptable
Horsforth 5	Lickless Avenue, Drive, Gardens St James Av. Drive & Terrace	Good
Horsforth 6	Bank Gardens Drury Avenue, Lane, King Edward Avenue, Crescent, Grove Road & The Grove.	Good
Horsforth 7	Holtdale, Place, Gardens Road, View, & Lawn	Good
Horsforth 8	Holtdale Way, Garth, Av., Fold, Green, Grove, Croft, Close, Drive & Farrar Lane	Good
Horsforth 9	Adel Estate & Wayland Croft	Excellent

Members of Area Committee, and colleagues within Area Management, will receive invitations from the relevant Neighbourhood Management Officers to attend Estate Gradings in their wards which are spread across the 3 months of each quarter i.e. September October and December etc.

Area Panels

3.4.1 WNWhL has four Area Panels, which have the same boundaries as Leeds City Council's Inner and Outer West and Inner and Outer North West Area Committees.

3.4.2 The Area Panels have an active role in setting and agreeing local priorities using local Community Partnership Agreements. They have a delegated budget and are able to approve bid submissions for issues such as:

- Environmental schemes
- Community safety schemes
- Tenant involvement schemes

3.4.3 Eighteen submissions have been made to the Outer North West Area Panel for consideration since September 2011.

3.4.4 These bids have included joint funding initiatives including CASAC target hardening. The outcome of this project has been improved security measures for vulnerable tenants living in the Outer North West area which has also served to reduce the fear of crime.

3.4.5 Other joint funding initiatives have been joint funding of a youth diversion scheme in the Yeadon and Guisley areas building upon the Revizit model successfully used elsewhere in the city. It involves young people who have been identified by police, workers and other local agencies as at risk. These young people have a local reputation for antisocial behaviour and are aged 11-16. The idea is to provide an interesting and educational programme where attendance is encouraged by refreshments and social activities, providing young people take part in the group work. Full programme attendance is rewarded with a trip at the end.

3.4.6 The provision of benches and tables have been approved at The Willows Sheltered Housing Horsforth, Crowtrees Bungalows Rawdon, Farrar Lane Sheltered Housing Holt Park to encourage the use of the external garden areas by residents in good weather.

3.4.7 Raised Flower Beds and other types of landscaping have been approved for the Broadwalk Otley, The Willows Sheltered Housing Horsforth, Farrar Lane Sheltered Housing Holt Park and the Holtdale estate (various locations) Holt Park.

3.4.8 Bollards and fencing have been approved for Wells Court/Saxton House Yeadon, Farrar Lane Sheltered Housing Holt Park and Holt Lane historic hedge.

3.4.9 Notice Boards for twelve dispersed Sheltered Housing Schemes to provide a venue to disseminate information to residents regarding the services provided by WNWhL and other community events.

3.4.10. The provision of new covered bin areas containing household and recycling bins for the St James Flats Horsforth.

3.4.11. Providing funding to support the work undertaken by Wharfe Valley Branch Cat Protection with vulnerable customers of WNWhL in dealing with the re-homing of cats in emergency situations.

3.4.12. Provide funding for prizes for the Outer North West area 2012/2013 Good Garden Competition.

3.5 Community Engagement

WNWhL has a successful track record in community engagement. In 2008 we were awarded the Tenant Participation Advisory Service Quality Accreditation for Resident Involvement, the first ALMO in the country to achieve this. This is a three year award and we are proud to advise that in our recent Tenant Participation Accreditation Service re-accreditation WNWhL achieved a score of 18 out of a maximum 19 units.

We have recently established Tenant Scrutiny Panel, a method of involving customers which will offer us independent challenge and suggest proposals for change to the way we deliver our services. This has been done in consultation with customers over the last year. They are currently looking into the Gas & Electrical Safety Testing processes and property security after the shadow Tenant Scrutiny Panel investigated the Lettings process.

There are more than 15 different involvement methods that customers can access to become involved with WNWhL. These range from traditional Tenant & Residents Associations, of which there are 7 in the Outer North West area, to innovative forums such as the Sheltered Housing Forum and the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans Group.

Some other examples of community engagement have included:

- Working with partner agencies on the St James Flats Horsforth to provide the provision of household waste & recycling facilities.
- Local surgeries across the area, including at Broadfield, Haworth Court, Wayland Croft, Bennett Court, Wharfedale Court, Union Court and The Willows Sheltered Schemes;
- Attendance by Neighbourhood Housing Office staff at tenant and resident meetings.
- We have maintained active resident groups across the area and encourage Area Representatives, where there is insufficient interest for the resident group.

In the future we expect to see increased customer involvement across the area. We aim to achieve this by continued good relationships with our partner agencies and our Neighbourhood Housing Team focusing on excellence in tenancy management.

This report suggests that to further cement the relationship between Area Management and WNWhL there is potential to explore existing communication channels with WNWhL customers for wider consultation on a range of community issues.

4 Corporate Considerations

The joint work and development of shared services between WNWhL and the Outer North West Area Committee, provides an efficient and cost effective way of working, to drive improvement and efficiency, within the Outer North West area.

4.1 Consultation and Engagement

- 4.1.1 Detailed consultation is undertaken for each Area Panel bid submission. Post evaluation of schemes is also undertaken.

4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

- 4.2.1 There are no specific equality considerations arising from this report. The services and functions described in this report are consistent with the Council's and WNWhL's approach to Equality Diversity and Cohesion.

4.3 Council Policies and City Priorities

- 4.3.1 The content of this report is consistent with the WNWhL strategic objectives, and the strategic aims of the Council encompassed by the Vision for Leeds; Leeds Children & Young Person Plan; Strategic Health & Wellbeing Plan.

4.4 Resources and Value for Money

- 4.4.1 No additional resources are needed to deliver the approach outlined in this report which will be delivered within existing resources.
- 4.4.2 During 2012/13 each Area Panel has £50,000 Capital and £25,000 Revenue for bids which meet set criteria.

4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

- 4.5.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

4.6 Risk Management

- 4.6.1 There are no risk implications arising from this report.

5 Conclusions

- 5.1.1 It is concluded that there are clear benefits and opportunities for WNWhL working closely with Area Committees as outlined in this report. Developing this approach provides the opportunity to further develop services and join up working to the benefit of residents, which ensures that all agencies in the area target resources in a joined up and effective way.

6 Recommendations

- 6.1 Members are invited to note this report, and it is recommended that WNWhL provide a further six monthly update to Area Committee of progress with areas of mutual interest in the March/April cycle of meetings

7 Background documents

- 7.1 None

The background documents listed in this section are available for inspection on request for a period of four years following the date of the relevant meeting. Accordingly this list does not include documents containing exempt or confidential information, or any published works. Requests to inspect any background documents should be submitted to the report author.