

## RESIDENT INVOLVEMENT STRATEGY

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### **1. Our Resident Involvement Statement**

**Housing Solutions Group's 5 point Statement:**

- 1. Housing Solutions Group is committed to working in partnership with our residents in everything we do.**
- 2. We believe that our residents have a fundamental right to be involved in all issues that affect their homes, neighbourhoods and the housing service they receive.**
- 3. We will provide all our residents with the greatest possible range of opportunities to get involved and have their say at whatever level they want.**
- 4. We will provide the support, resources and structures required to allow resident involvement to flourish and be a meaningful and integral part of the work of all our staff.**
- 5. We will encourage and value the input of all our residents and use their involvement to continuously shape and improve the services they receive – maximising customer satisfaction and value for money.**

## **2. An Introduction to our Resident Involvement Strategy**

Our Resident Involvement strategy sets out how Housing Solutions Group will work with residents over the next three years (2008/09/10.) to achieve our shared aims. It has been developed in partnership by residents and staff following a wide-ranging review of resident involvement in 2005/06 and further work in 2007 through surveys at summer events and meetings with MDHA Residents' Association Executive Committee. This strategy sets out an overview of the resident involvement work currently carried out and also looks at future opportunities to increase and improve resident involvement.

This strategy sets out:

- What resident involvement is
- Why we involve residents
- A range of ways in which residents can be involved
- How involvement fits into Housing Solutions Group's business strategy;
- Our vision for resident involvement;
- The resources available to enable involvement.
- Priority outcomes of involvement;
- Current situation
- A method for monitoring success of the Strategy and of reviewing it;

It is supported by 2 Plans:

- Action Plan for Priority Outcomes for Involvement (see Appendix A)
- Community Liaison and Resident Involvement Service Improvement Plan 2008-10 (see Appendix B)

## **3. What is Resident Involvement?**

Resident Involvement is about giving residents real choices and helping them to have a real say in the future of their homes and neighbourhoods. It is about involving residents in all decisions that affect them – including what our priorities are as an organisation, what work we do to improve their homes or the area where they live, how their rent and service charge money is spent as well as what services they receive and to what standard.

## **4. Why is Resident Involvement so important?**

We believe that Resident Involvement should be at the heart of everything we do and is essential to the success of our organisation. We recognise that residents should have the final say in what happens to their homes, their neighbourhoods and the service they receive.

Housing Solutions Group recognises that resident involvement needs to more than just a theoretical exercise but achieve real and positive outcomes for our residents, communities and ourselves. These outcomes can include:

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- Better understanding of the needs and wishes of residents;
- An organisation that is truly accountable to its residents and local communities
- Better services;
- Higher standards;
- Increased resident satisfaction;
- Stronger local communities;
- Better community spirit;
- Better quality of life and opportunities for residents
- Improved effectiveness and efficiency giving better value for money.

Housing Solutions Group is committed to achieving these aims in partnership with residents, communities and other agencies.

### **5. The current situation**

By working together MDHA Residents' Association and Housing Solutions Group have made significant progress with regards to resident involvement since the Best Value Review in 2005. The new structure and menu of involvement activities listed in section 6 provide a range of opportunities for people to be involved in the way that they want, when they want. Monitoring of attendees to activities is now carried out and work is being done to find out which groups are not represented within activities and what can be done to increase and widen that involvement. Targeted activities have taken place to encourage the involvement of vulnerable groups, such as the involvement of residents in the development of the Disability Equality Scheme.

Our tenant STATUS survey in 2007 demonstrated that of the 94% of respondents who were not involved in formal tenant activities, 42% of these would like to be involved. We have started to develop a profile of our residents by carrying out a tenant census, this will help us to determine how residents want to be involved and what their needs are.

We have a resident reading panel in place to make sure that information is easy to understand. MDHA Residents' Association Executive Committee give feedback on the content of the 'Streets Ahead' newsletter and have recently setup a sub-group to provide further editorial support.

MDHA Residents' Association Executive Committee have developed a Service Level Agreement in partnership with the Group, setting out how we will work together and our responsibilities. The Group is increasing its support to local community action groups and encouraging the setting up of local residents' associations to help meet the aspirations of communities.

The Group is working in partnership with other Housing Associations and Local Authorities to setup a programme of training and development for residents, staff and communities. MDHA Residents' Association Executive

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Committee have attended training to develop their skills and put in place an action plan for the year ahead. See Appendix C (to follow).

Service Forums have been launched as a method of involving residents in setting priorities, targets and influencing how resources are used. As a result the repairs priorities have changed and new methods of dealing with anti-social behaviour are being investigated.

The development design group has expanded its membership to include a broader mix of residents.

MDHA Residents Association are involved in assessing the value for money of involvement activities that have taken place.

Residents have been involved in developing service standards and targets across all our services including specific targets for landscaping and cleaning services which will be monitored directly by residents

### **6. The range of ways in which residents can be involved**

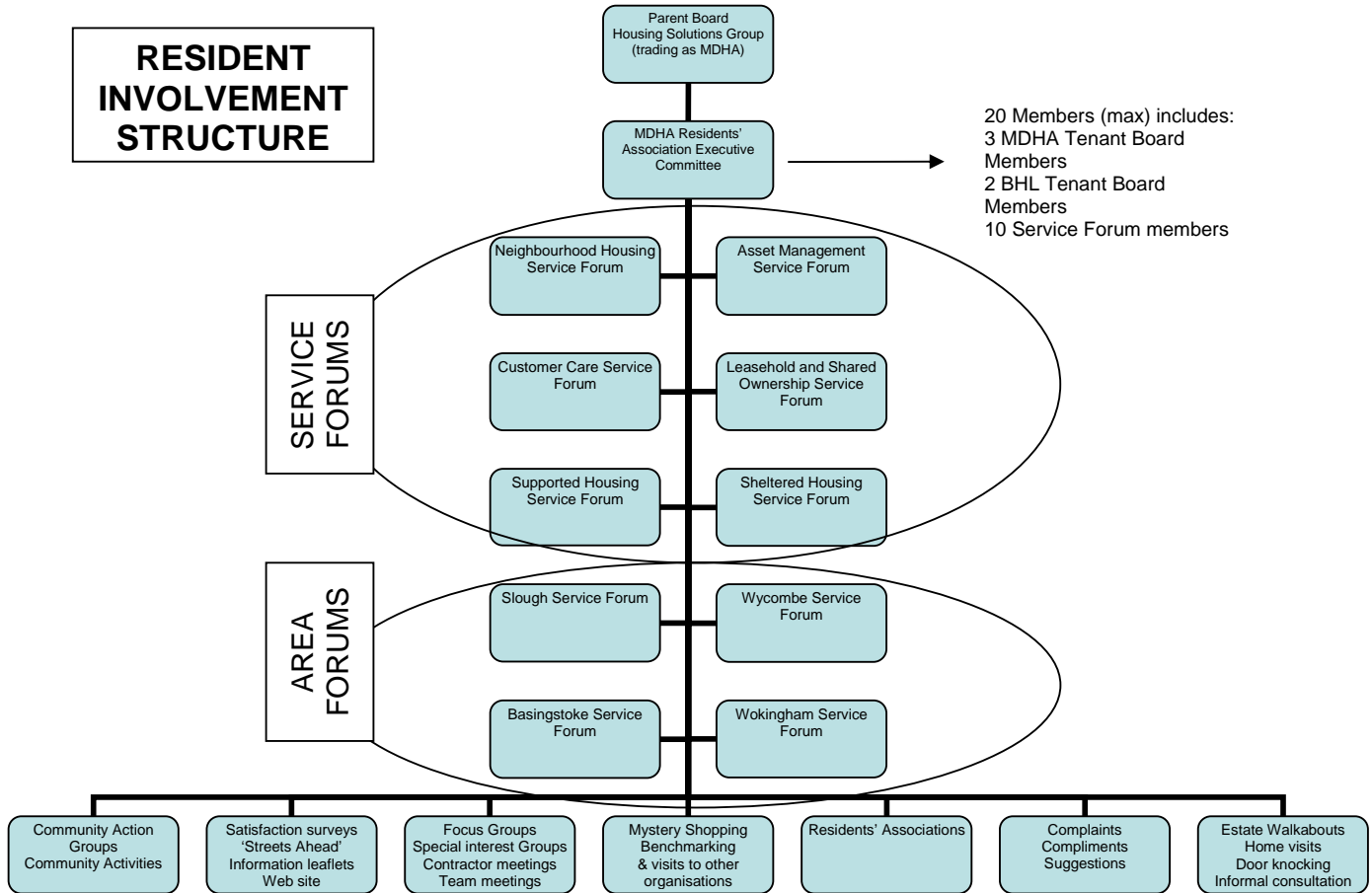
As a result of the 2005 Best Value Review on resident involvement, Housing Solutions Group and MDHA Residents' Association Executive Committee developed a new resident involvement structure. We both recognise that not everyone wants to get involved and that different people want to be involved in different ways - as such our involvement structure tries to provide the widest possible range of opportunities. We also recognise that this structure needs to be flexible and that between us we need to continue to monitor its effectiveness and make any appropriate changes or additions.

We also recognise that the way we communicate is essential in making Resident Involvement effective. We will use a range of communication methods to suit the needs and preferences of our residents including face to face contact, telephone, e-mail, text, letter, web-site, signs, posters, newsletters, leaflets, press-releases, meetings, focus groups and community events.

We will make sure that information about the matters that affect residents is simply explained, accurate, balanced and where appropriate translated or provided as spoken word, in braille or large print.

The new Resident Involvement structure is set out on the next page:

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## **Estate walkabouts, home visits, door knocking & informal consultation**

Area housing officers and estate wardens carry out inspections of the estates on a regular basis. These are advertised in advance in the Streets Ahead newsletter. Residents are invited to join the walkabout to raise any issues they may have.

A programme of door-knocking may be used in an area to get the views of a specific community or around a specific local issue – recognising that not everyone wants to attend meetings or complete surveys etc.

Where necessary we will always offer a home visit to a resident if that is more appropriate for their needs. Home visits allow us to understand better the need and views of individual residents.

Informal consultation opportunities could include going along to existing groups or community events that our residents already attend, perhaps meeting residents outside schools or play groups or through local churches, mosques and temples.

**Compliments, Complaints & Suggestions**

The Group is committed to listening to residents' views complaints, compliments and suggestions and recognise they provide essential feedback about our service. We will provide a range of opportunities and methods for residents to feedback their views – both formally and informally. In addition we will use comments and complaints, where appropriate, to improve our service making sure that the outcomes are reported back to residents.

**Residents' Associations**

The Group will provide support to residents who want to set up a local residents' association to discuss how their local area is being run. These could cover an area, estate, street or block of flats and could be either a formal or more informal group.

**Mystery shopping, benchmarking & visits to other organisations**

Mystery shoppers help us measure the performance of our services against agreed standards. They can do this by phone, e-mail, letter, or visit. Their identity is only known by the necessary staff. Through benchmarking or visits to other organisations residents can see how others work, share experiences and ideas and learn from best practice.

**Focus groups, specialist groups, contractor meetings & team meetings**

A focus group is small group of people who meet to discuss a specific topic. These groups may include a focus on the particular needs of a group of residents – such as our disabled residents or residents from our black and ethnic minority communities.

Residents may also be involved in meetings with contractors to help monitor and improve their performance or in team meetings where resident input is vital in understanding the role of the team and improving their work.

**Surveys, Streets Ahead, information leaflets and web-site**

Surveys are used to gain feedback on different services or ideas – they may be written, by telephone or face to face. They may be carried out by staff, residents themselves or in certain circumstances by external agencies. Where appropriate the surveys may be anonymous but wherever possible will allow for the results to be analysed by age, gender, ethnicity and disability to make sure our services are accessible and of a similar standard for everyone.

Streets Ahead is our regular newsletter and is sent to all residents providing a wide range of information and opportunities for involvement. We also produce a residents' handbook and many other information leaflets – all written and produced with resident input to make sure they are easily read and cover the areas residents want. Where appropriate these are all offered in different formats or languages.

We have a web-site providing key information on the organisation, our services and how residents can get involved. We are also working with MDHA

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Residents' Association to help them develop their own dedicated community web-site.

### **Community Action Groups**

These groups tackle local issues and can include any resident in the area, not just the Housing Solutions Group's residents. They also include membership of other agencies.

### **Reading Panel**

The reading panel review leaflets and documents to ensure that they are easy to understand.

### **Community activities**

A range of community activities are supported or organised by the group including, DIY workshops, fun days, football tournaments, trips out, clean up days, good citizenship lessons at schools etc.

### **Service Forums**

These are used by the departments to understand residents' priorities and involve them in key decision making and resource planning.

### **MDHA Residents' Association Executive Committee**

This is a formally recognised group that plays an active part in helping the Group to improve its services. They contribute to, influence, and are consulted on all areas of policy, standards and service delivery. All key issues or proposals that could significantly affect residents should be discussed at this Committee before being circulated to all residents. They meet at least once a month and represent residents' views on all matters.

### **Board of Management**

Residents who are members of MDHA Residents' Association are entitled to be elected to be Board members. They work at a corporate level, setting the strategic direction for the organisation and are involved in decision making that affects the way the Group is run. There are 3 resident Board members on the Housing Solutions Group Board and 2 on the Bridgewater Board. The management committee of Furnival is comprised entirely of residents.

## **7. How Resident Involvement fits into Housing Solutions Group's business strategy**

The new structure allows residents views and priorities to shape the priorities and direction of the Group.

Our commitment to involving residents is reflected in our vision and corporate objectives set out in our 5 year strategy.

Information about Housing Solutions Group's activities and performance is provided to its' Boards on a quarterly basis, to MDHA Residents' Association

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Executive Committee monthly and to the wider resident body through the quarterly newsletter 'Streets Ahead,' the annual calendar and website. Information is also provided to other parties on a regular basis as required. Where possible our performance information is compared to other similar organisations so that our residents can see how we are doing.

Business Strategy days are held annually with the Board, including Resident Board members. These days are an opportunity for the Board to set the corporate objectives of Housing Solutions Group.

The results of surveys, focus groups, complaints, estate walkabouts, mystery shopping and service forums are fed into MDHA Residents' Association Executive Committee to enable them to gain an overarching view of residents' priorities. MDHA Residents' Association Executive Committee meet with Housing Solutions Groups' directors on a quarterly basis to discuss arising matters.

Service Forums have been developed to allow for greater involvement in key decision making, priority setting and resource allocation within customer facing services, to ensure that the services meet residents' needs. The Service Forums respond directly to resident and staff views expressed within the Best Value Review of resident involvement, which stated that there was a gap between low level involvement and formal involvement through MDHA Residents' Association.

### **8. Our vision for Resident Involvement**

In partnership with MDHA Residents Association we have developed a vision for resident involvement. How we work towards this vision is set out in the Action Plan for Resident Involvement (to follow)

- **To make resident involvement a fundamental part of our business.**  
Resident involvement will be at the heart of our day-to-day work, our aims will be shaped by residents and our services reflect their need and aspirations. All staff will recognise the value and importance of resident involvement and it will be part of their day to day work. Residents will be involved in strategic decision making across a wide range of forms of involvement. A range of opportunities will also be available for communities to take, or influence decisions that effect neighbourhood services.
- **Be inclusive and provide opportunities for all residents to be involved.**  
We will work to involve 'hard to reach' groups such as black and ethnic minority communities and look at new ways to give particular groups a voice, for, example the young, those with disabilities and residents in outlying areas.

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- **We will know who are residents are, what their needs are, how and when they would like to be involved.**  
We will use this information to target our work and our resources and tackle any differences in satisfaction.
- **Provide support to help residents to make a difference.**  
We will help residents' access training and funding and provide dedicated staff to offer support and guidance. We will provide access to information to enable involvement. We will provide guidance about the level and influence of involvement activities.
- **We will encourage resident review of our performance.**  
We will regularly compare our performance with other landlords, working with our residents to set ourselves challenging standards. We will provide residents with performance information on key areas of our service and on the actions we are taking to improve areas where performance is not as high as we and residents would like.
- **Give value for money.**  
Effective resident involvement leads to improvements in value for money across all services. We will also work with residents to make sure our involvement policy works effectively and cost efficiently.
- **We will support communities to develop.**  
We will work in partnership with other agencies, or provide support to community groups, to make our communities better places in which to live.

### **9. The resources we need to make Resident Involvement work**

The Group recognizes that successful resident involvement requires practical and financial support. Housing Solutions Group has a dedicated Community Liaison team with a budget allocated to facilitate and provide:

- Training
- Information, advice, and guidance
- Organisation of meetings and venues
- Support for attending meetings :
  - Transport
  - Childcare
- Reasonable financial support, e.g:
  - start-up grants for newly formed groups
  - jointly agreed annual budget
- Facilities, e.g.:
  - access to premises and equipment,
  - stationery,
  - photocopying

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- Support for:
  - local tenant networks
  - fund-raising
  - partnership working
  - community development
  - ad hoc liaison
- Encouragement :
  - through innovative approaches to encourage new residents to become involved to ensure true representation
  - sustainability of established structure

MDHA Residents' Association Executive Committee manages its own budget, which covers publications, training, conferences, travel expenses, stationery etc. They also have a budget for their Annual General Meeting. The Residents' Association determine their budget requirements annually in partnership with the Group.

### **10. Priority outcomes of involvement**

In developing this strategy we have worked with a sub group of MDHA Residents' Association Executive Committee to determine the outcomes that involvement should achieve. We have also used findings of the 2007 STATUS tenant satisfaction survey, the 2005 Best Value Review, in house surveys, and summer event feedback. The action plan can be found in Appendix A

The priority outcomes for involvement are:

#### **1. Improved services:**

- *Residents want improvements to:*
  - *The condition of their properties.*
  - *The repairs and maintenance service*
  - *Their neighbourhoods*
  - *The 'out of hours' service*
  - *The value for money for their rent*

#### **2. Increased accountability to residents and communities**

- *Residents want improvements in their views being taken into account in the work of the Group.*
- *Residents and staff want to know more about the role of the residents' representative body 'Maidenhead & District Housing Association Residents' Association'*
- *Residents want to see improvements in the opportunities for involving them in the management of their homes.*

#### **3. Enable residents and communities to enhance their skills, confidence and quality of life**

- *Residents want access to learning and development opportunities.*

## **11. How we will monitor the success of the Strategy and review it**

We will review, monitor and evaluate the action plan at least every year with MDHA Residents' Association Executive Committee.

We aim to continuously improve service standards so that residents receive an excellent service. We will involve residents in setting challenging targets for improvement, monitoring these using feedback and performance data and regularly reviewing our service standards.

We will monitor the successful delivery of this strategy measuring the completion of the action and targets through resident involvement monitoring forms. We will review our approach to resident involvement as part of each activity and overall as part of an annual impact assessment.

### **Targets**

Performance Indicators help us to monitor our achievements and show us how we compare with similar landlords. Our current performance, where recorded, and targets for each resident involvement activity are listed in Appendix D (to follow)

This way we can demonstrate value and results and these will be reported to MDHA Residents' Association Executive Committee at least once a year. Some outcomes will take longer to achieve than others but this approach will help us to recognise small changes along the way.

We will also learn from our reviews about the best way to involve residents so that we can change or adopt a similar approach next time.

A resident involvement working group meets every three months and reviews progress against each service area. This also helps us to demonstrate how residents are directly influencing service improvements.

### **Annual impact assessment**

Each year we will review all our involvement activity and carry out an impact assessment. This will give us an overall picture of how involving residents has added value and helped us to improve services and influence outcomes.

### **Equalities impact assessment**

This strategy will be subject to an equalities impact assessment to make sure that it takes into account the different needs of all our residents and provides additional support and encouragement to those who traditionally are identified as 'hard to reach'.

**Value for money review**

As part of the annual review of this strategy we will carry out a value for money review to measure the effectiveness of the strategy in providing residents with improved services at a cost they consider appropriate.

## **Priority Outcomes for Involvement**

### **Summary Action Plan - March 2008**

In developing this strategy we have worked with a sub group of MDHA Residents' Association Executive Committee to determine the outcomes that involvement should achieve. We have also used findings of the 2007 STATUS resident satisfaction survey, the 2005 Best Value Review, in house surveys, and summer event feedback.

The priority outcomes for involvement are:

#### **Improved services:**

*Residents want improvements to:*

- *The condition of their properties.*
- *The repairs and maintenance service*
- *Their neighbourhoods*
- *The 'out of hours' service*
- *The value for money for their rent*

#### **Increased accountability to residents and communities**

- *Residents want improvements in their views being taken into account in the work of the Group.*
- *Residents and staff want to know more about the role of the residents' representative body 'Maidenhead & District Housing Association Residents' Association'*
- *Residents want to see improvements in the opportunities for involving them in the management of their homes.*

#### **Enable residents and communities to enhance their skills, confidence and quality of life**

- *Residents want access to learning and development opportunities.*

This is an initial summary action plan highlighting key areas for improvement, some of the actions to be taken and how we will measure our performance. As residents identified these areas as their priorities, they become priorities for Housing Solutions as a Group. As such, most of the detailed actions, performance measures and targets to address these priorities are set out in individual team plans.

This summary action plan will be used by MDHA Residents Association Executive Team to monitor our performance at an overall level and will be regularly reviewed and developed.

The targets set out in this Plan are draft only at this stage and need to be benchmarked against other organisations before being finalised in discussions with MDHA Residents' Association Executive Committee and Housing Solutions Executive Team.

## What do residents want?

### ***a) Residents want to see improvements in the repairs and maintenance service***

#### **Residents said:**

In the 2007 STATUS survey 74% respondents who had used the repairs and maintenance service in the last year were either satisfied or very satisfied with service they received. However 64% of respondents felt that repairs and maintenance needed 'some' or 'much' improvement and 82% of residents felt that this was the most important service. Therefore residents need to continue to be actively involved in helping to improve this service.

#### **How is this reflected in the Group's aims?**

The Group has objectives in its 5 year strategy to 'seek to continuously improve all aspects of the asset management service and seek to involve residents at all levels to ensure we meet wherever possible their changing needs and expectations.'

#### **How would this benefit residents and the Group?**

Increased resident influence over the priorities of the Asset management service will ensure that the work is targeted correctly, resulting in increased satisfaction with repairs and maintenance and improved value for money

#### **How will this be achieved?**

Attendance at Asset Management team meetings by a resident representative will continue. The Asset Management Service Forum will be used to monitor resident priorities, influence resource allocation and monitor performance.

#### **How will we measure it?**

The next STATUS survey is due to take place in 2010. Resident satisfaction with repairs and maintenance and the level of improvement needed will be measured at this time, with a target to increase satisfaction to 80% and reduce the level of improvement needed to 40%

Satisfaction with individual repair work is carried out through the resident response letters and monitored monthly. Satisfaction with repairs for 2007/8 has averaged 89% and for 2008/9 our target is to increase that to 92%

## What do residents want?

### IMPROVED SERVICES

#### ***b) Residents want to see improvements in their neighbourhoods***

##### **Resident said:**

77% of respondents to the 2007 STATUS survey were satisfied or very satisfied with their neighbourhood.

51% of respondents to the 2007 STATUS survey want 'estate improvements, e.g. landscaping, upgrading communal areas.'

42% of respondents to the 2007 STATUS survey want 'an expanded caretaking service'

##### **How is this reflected in the Group's aims?**

The Group has an objective in its 5 year strategy to 'review estates and neighbourhoods in response to Customer Satisfaction Survey 2007, implement strategies to address findings of the Survey'

##### **How would this benefit residents and the Group?**

- Increased satisfaction with neighbourhoods
- Increased value placed on neighbourhoods by residents
- Improved opportunities for residents to influence quality of life in neighbourhoods and communities

##### **How will this be achieved?**

A neighbourhood improvement budget will be available for residents to bid for with a panel of residents deciding on the priorities for investment

Improved use of estate walkabouts to include wider neighbourhood priorities in partnership with other agencies

Promotion of 'Good neighbour awards'

Consideration of neighbourhood or estate agreements setting out specific priorities and actions for that area

##### **How will we measure it?**

The next STATUS survey is due to take place in 2010. Resident satisfaction with their neighbourhood will be measured at this time, with a target to increase satisfaction to 85%

In the meantime consideration will be given to interim measures.

## What do residents want?

### IMPROVED SERVICES

#### ***c) Residents want improved access to services out of hours.***

##### **Residents said:**

48% of respondents to the 2007 STATUS survey, when asked to give their views on additional services they felt would help improve our service to them, suggested 'more out of hours appointments.'

##### **How is this reflected in the Group's aims?**

The Group has objectives in its 5 year strategy to 'seek to continuously improve all aspects of the asset management service and seek to involve residents at all levels to ensure we meet wherever possible their changing needs and expectations.'

##### **How would this benefit residents and the Group?**

- Increased satisfaction with repairs and maintenance.
- Removal of barriers in services to those who are unable to commit to daytime appointments.
- Decrease in missed appointments by residents.

##### **How will this be achieved?**

A review of opening times for our offices and contact centre has been carried out resulting in extending the times residents can access our services.

Where necessary we can also now offer evening appointments for certain repairs and gas servicing

##### **How will we measure it?**

The next STATUS survey is due to take place in 2010. The percentage of respondents who want 'more out of hours appointments' will be measured again and our target is to reduce that figure to 30%

In the interim we will work with residents to review the effectiveness of our extended opening hours and the take-up of evening appointments

## What do residents want?

### IMPROVED SERVICES

#### ***d) Residents want improvements in the value for money for their rent***

##### **Residents said:**

74% of respondents to the 2007 STATUS survey felt their rent represented good or very good value for money.

However 52% of respondents to the 2007 STATUS survey stated that 'value for money for their rent' needed 'some' or 'much' improvement.

##### **How is this reflected in the Group's aims?**

A core strand of our corporate vision is to deliver value for money in everything we do for our residents

##### **How would this benefit residents and the Group?**

- Services which offer better value for money and greater efficiency
- Release additional resources to help address other resident priorities
- Higher resident satisfaction

##### **How will this be achieved?**

In March 2008 we launched our value for money strategy and action plan setting out our approach to delivering value for money. Value for money is now also a key strand of all our service improvement plans for all areas of our work. Both residents and staff are actively encouraged to identify areas where they feel value for money improvements could be made

##### **How will we measure it?**

The next STATUS survey is due to take place in 2010. The percentage of respondents who feel their rent represents good or very good value for money will be measured again and our target is to increase that figure to 80%

We have also introduced a quarterly rolling satisfaction survey to track more closely satisfaction levels in 9 key areas. One of these areas is around value for money for the rent paid we have a target to increase satisfaction levels in each quarter by a minimum of 1%

## What do residents want?

**INCREASED ACCOUNTABILITY**

***a) Residents want improvements in their views being taken into account in the work of the Group.***

**Residents said:**

The 2007 STATUS survey showed 67% satisfaction rating for account taken of views, compared to a peer group average of 69% and National Housing Federation average of 68%. This was supported by anecdotal evidence (from MDHA RA, surveys and focus groups) that residents felt that their views had a limited impact. 60% of respondents felt that ‘taking tenants views into account’ needed ‘some’ or ‘much’ improvement. 49% want improvements in the way the Group keeps tenants informed (49%)

**How is this reflected in the Group’s aims?**

The Group has an objective in its 5 year strategy to ‘ensure that all residents have an opportunity to express their views and to develop methods of measuring their impact.’

**How would this benefit residents and the Group?**

- Work would be better targeted to meet residents’ needs, ensuring better value for money.
- Improved feedback to residents of changes made as a result of their views would encourage greater involvement resulting in improved representation of views. It would also build good relationships between residents and the Group.

**How will this be achieved?**

- Review of the capture and use of feedback obtained from residents, including analysis of differences in satisfaction to allow any inequalities highlighted to be addressed.
- Improve feedback to residents via Streets Ahead and the development of the community website.

**How will we measure it?**

The next STATUS survey is due to take place in 2010. Satisfaction with the way we take residents views into account will be measured again, with the target to increase satisfaction to 70%

We have also introduced a quarterly rolling satisfaction survey to track more closely satisfaction levels in 9 key areas. One of these areas is around taking residents views into account and we have a target to increase satisfaction levels in each quarter by a minimum of 0.5%

## What do residents want?

INCREASED ACCOUNTABILITY

### ***b) Residents and staff want to know more about the role of the residents' representative body 'Maidenhead & District Housing Association Residents' Association'***

#### **Residents said:**

In the 2007 Status survey 20% of respondents stated that a lack of knowledge about the tenant representative body was a barrier to them becoming involved. The Best Value Review in 2005 also showed that staff and residents were unsure of the role of the resident representative body.

This shows that MDHA Residents' Association needs to be better publicized and promoted to residents.

#### **How is this reflected in the Group's aims?**

The Group has an objective in 2008/09 to 'Continue to develop the new structure for the involvement of residents in setting priorities, targets, resource allocation and policy development.'

#### **How would this benefit residents and the Group?**

- Improved promotion of MDHA Residents' Association would result in more residents contacting the Executive Committee members. Members would therefore have a better understanding of residents' priorities and be more able to represent their views.
- Improved relationship between MDHA Residents' Association, staff and the wider body of residents.
- Staff and residents have an appreciation of the role of MDHA Residents' Association and what strengths they can bring to the Association and its residents.

#### **How will this be achieved?**

Promotion of MDHA Resident's Association, via Open days, leaflets, regular article in Streets Ahead, community website, Annual General meeting and roadshow.

#### **How will we measure it?**

The next STATUS survey is due to take place in 2010. The barriers to involvement will be measured again, with a target to decrease 'lack of knowledge about the tenant representative body' by 2%

We will also work with MDHA Residents Association on ways of measuring our performance on a more regular basis – perhaps through the new community web-site

## What do residents want?

**INCREASED ACCOUNTABILITY**

***c) Residents want to see improvements in the opportunities for involving them in the management of their homes.***

**Residents said:**

In the 2007 STATUS survey around half of respondents would like to see the Group improve the opportunities for involving them in the management of their homes (46%) A fifth of tenants said that there was a lack of information about the opportunities to be involved in (20%) 11% of tenants said that there were other barriers and those that gave an explanation were generally linked to ill-health/disabilities (24 tenants), age (13 tenants) and mobility/transport issues (8 tenants. 7 tenants mentioned work commitments.

**How is this reflected in the Group's aims?**

The Group has an objective in 2008/09 to 'Continue to develop the new structure for the involvement of residents in setting priorities, targets, resource allocation and policy development.'

**How would this benefit residents and the Group?**

- Improved opportunities for residents to influence the Group's priorities
- Improved opportunities for residents to influence quality of life in neighbourhoods and communities
- Improved relationships within communities
- Better equality of access to services by removing barriers

**How will this be achieved?**

- Continued development of the Service forums by the departments with support from Community Liaison to encourage influence over the Group's priorities.
- Encouragement of the development of local residents associations through attendance of sheltered schemes and the use of the mobile office to go out to communities.
- Development of innovative ways to involve hard-to-reach groups, through the use of the resident profile data to determine how, when and where groups would like to be involved and implementing proposed actions.
- Learning from experiences of residents at Furnival and Northborough Co-ops in the way that they are involved and have a real say in the management of their homes.

**How will we measure it?**

The next STATUS survey is due to take place in 2010. The percentage of residents wanting us to improve their opportunities to be involved in the management of their homes will be measured again with a target of reducing that figure to 30%

## What do residents want?

ENHANCE THEIR SKILLS, CONFIDENCE & QUALITY OF LIFE

***Residents want access to learning and development opportunities.***

**Residents said:**

MDHA Residents' Association Executive Committee expressed an interest in gaining more skills to enable them to work more effectively in partnership with the Group, representing residents' views and scrutinizing the performance of the Group.

Residents at summer events during 2007 were asked to provide their priorities for resident involvement 65% of residents showed an interest in the provision of training.

**How is this reflected in the Group's aims?**

The Group has an objective in 2008/09 to 'Continue to develop the new structure for the involvement of residents in setting priorities, targets, resource allocation and policy development.'

**How would this benefit residents and the Group?**

- Residents within MDHA RA Executive Committee have the required skills to work at a strategic level
- MDHA RA and the wider body of residents have more understanding of the Association's work.
- Increase in confidence and skills among residents, which can be used for the benefit of the organisation or transferred to the community/work
- Residents able to work more independently, reducing need for staff support e.g. MDHARA, local residents' associations tackling issues and/or gaining funding
- All residents can gain access to training, which could enable them to get into or improve their employment position
- Wider representation on Board due to increased capacity of residents.

**How will this be achieved?**

Establishment of a resident training programme.

**How will we measure it?**

Residents attending training will be asked for feedback following completion of training. This will aid assessment of their skills before and after training. Residents will be invited to use skills gained in project work, where possible. Numbers of attendees for courses will be monitored, to determine interest levels. Topics for future training will be set by residents through feedback gained.

## **Community Liaison and Resident Involvement Service Improvement Plan 2008/10**

Version	Date amended / updated	Officer updating
1	01/04/2008	Johanna Barrett
2		
3		
4		

### **Corporate context**

Housing Solutions Group's 5 year strategy has as part of its vision:

***We want to improve the lives of all of our residents and customers and we will achieve this by being fully involved with our residents and to communicate what we do and how we do it.***

Our corporate objectives include (as Corporate Objective 4):

***To keep customer service at the centre of all actions and to continually seek to involve residents fully so as to improve all aspects of that service***

### **Our Resident Involvement Statement**

In April 2008 we agreed with MDHA Residents Association a clear Resident Involvement Statement (*currently in draft - to be finalised with MDHA RA mid April*) summarising our approach to resident involvement:

1. **Housing Solutions Group is committed to working in partnership with our residents in everything we do.**
2. **We believe that our residents have a fundamental right to be involved in all issues that affect their homes, neighbourhoods and the housing services they receive.**
3. **We will provide all our residents with the greatest possible range of opportunities to get involved and have their say at whatever level they want.**
4. **We will provide the support, resources and structures required to allow resident involvement to flourish and be meaningful and integral part of the work of all our staff.**
5. **We will encourage and value the input of all our residents and use their involvement to continuously shape and improve the services they receive – maximising customer satisfaction and value for money.**

## **Our Vision for Resident Involvement**

In April 2008 we also agreed with MDHA Residents Association (*currently draft to be finalised mid April*) a jointly developed Resident Involvement Strategy. That strategy includes a shared vision for resident involvement setting out 7 key areas of focus and these form the structure of this Service Improvement Plan:

1. **To make resident involvement a fundamental part of our business.**
2. **Be inclusive and provide opportunities for all residents to be involved.**
3. **We will know who are residents are, what their needs are, how and when they would like to be involved.**
4. **Provide support to help residents to make a difference.**
5. **We will encourage resident review of our performance.**
6. **Give value for money.**
7. **We will support communities to develop.**

This Service Improvement Plan will also act as our Action Plan for the Resident Involvement Strategy and progress against it will be reported regularly to MDHA Residents Association.

In addition we have agreed a 'Priority Outcomes for Involvement' Action Plan summarising the key areas where residents wanted to see improvements in our service, accountability to residents and their opportunities to enhance their skills, confidence and quality of life (taken from the 2007 STATUS survey, 2005 Best Value Review, other in-house surveys and feedback from the summer events). Progress against this Action Plan will also be reported regularly to MDHA Residents Association.

This Service Improvement Plan is not a comprehensive list of all community liaison and resident involvement work being planned or being carried out within Housing Solutions Group. Most other Service Improvement Plans will contain specific areas of liaison or involvement and the Community Liaison team will provide support where appropriate.

It is also not a comprehensive list of all work being carried out by the Community Liaison Team but highlights areas of focus or improvement over the next 2 years.

The Plan will be regularly reviewed and updated.

**1. To make resident involvement a fundamental part of our business**

<b>Aim</b>	<b>Milestones</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Complete</b>	<b>Notes/Progress</b>
Every department service improvement plan will include resident involvement as a key aspect of any service improvements.	Completed Service Improvement Plans reviewed to ensure resident involvement included where appropriate and opportunities for joint working are maximised	By April 2008	All JB to review		Draft SIPs due 4 <sup>th</sup> April - JB to review w/c 7.4.08
All resident involvement will be followed by feedback internally and externally on residents' views and outcomes of the involvement.	Regular reviews of Service Improvement Plans to include required update on internal and external feedback  Annual involvement impact assessment to be published on the website for residents to access and copies to be provided to MDHA RA members	On-going  June 2008 June 2009	All PH/JB to monitor		
Staff to be aware of all resident involvement options available and given support to involve residents in improving our services.	JB to attend team meetings and to produce and circulate a resident involvement menu.  Publicise resident involvement menu on staff	By May 2008 & on-going  By May 2008	JB  JB		Core involvement options contained with draft Resident Involvement Strategy

	intranet				
	Continue induction session on resident involvement	At quarterly induction sessions	JB		
	Develop staff training on resident involvement	By July 08	JB		
Develop Resident Involvement Strategy, Statement and Action Plans in partnership with MDHA RA	Resident Involvement Strategy, Statement and Action Plans agreed	By April 2008	JB/NB & MDHA RA		Draft given to MDHA RA 31/03/2008.
	Quarterly progress updates against Action Plans reported to MDHA RA and to ET	Starting July 08 & then on-going	JB		
Continue to learn and develop from complaints, compliments and suggestions	Monitor complaints quarterly and provide feedback to MDHA RA and ET 6 monthly on how services have been improved	On-going			
	Complaints, compliments and suggestions to be discussed in all team meetings across the service areas	On-going			

### **Diversity impact**

By publicising outcomes of involvement and offering a range of involvement opportunities within all service areas a wider range of residents will be encouraged to become involved. By training staff on resident involvement it will raise their awareness of the need to involve a representative mix of residents, increasing the diversity of involvement activities. The Resident involvement strategy sets out the groups aims in terms of being inclusive. Through regular monitoring of the strategy the Group will be able to identify areas for improvement in terms of representation. Through regular complaints monitoring the Group will be able to highlight any dissatisfaction by particular groups.

### **Access, Customer Care, User Focus impact**

The inclusion of involvement in service improvement plans will encourage staff to use resident involvement at a strategic level, to improve their services to meet their needs.

By raising the awareness of resident involvement outcomes it will encourage all departments to use customer feedback to improve their services. Resident involvement will increase if residents see their views are taken into account in improving our services.

By encouraging departments to involve residents, a wider range of opportunities for involvement will be offered in different service areas, encouraging a wider range of residents to become involved. The Strategy highlights resident priorities, within these barriers to involvement are highlighted, with proposed actions to remove the barriers. Regular monitoring of the strategy will show progress and highlight areas for improvement.

Through effective complaints monitoring the Group will be able to learn from any improvement areas highlighted with regards to access, customer care and user focus.

### **Value for money impact**

By using residents views to improve our services all departments will be able to provide a better service and use resources more effectively. Residents' satisfaction with the Association taking their views into account will rise.

Joint working between departments on involvement activities will ensure value for money, by making the most of existing or proposed involvement opportunities.

**2. Be inclusive and provide opportunities for all residents to be involved**

Aim	Milestones	Target	Responsibility	Complete	Notes/Progress
To have an effective resident involvement structure	<p>Continue to develop the new structure for resident involvement</p> <p>Review effectiveness with residents, MDHA RA &amp; staff.</p> <p>Use quarterly rolling Tenant Satisfaction Questionnaire to measure satisfaction with 'taking tenants views into account' (Q9) and 'how good are we at keeping tenants informed' (Q10)</p> <p>Service Performance Assistant to attend training on managing focus groups</p> <p>Service Performance</p>	<p>On-going To be reviewed annually, implementing any changes required as a result of the review of the effectiveness of the structure</p> <p>6 monthly reviews</p> <p>0.5% increase every quarter to 2009 STATUS survey target of 70% satisfied</p> <p>By July 08</p>	<p>JB</p> <p>JB &amp; MDHA RA</p> <p>DK/JB</p> <p>GK</p>		<p>1<sup>st</sup> quarterly satisfaction questionnaire sent out March 08</p>

	Assistant to organise and attend focus groups in partnership with Community Liaison to ensure they are representative, effective and aligned with objectives and key resident priorities.	Ongoing	Teamleaders /GK/JB		
Increase involvement from residents from outlying areas.	<p>One representative from other organisations within HSG to join MDHA RA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Furnival</li> </ul> <p>Utilise tenant census information from residents to determine who would like to be involved, when and how.</p> <p>Carry out consultation with identified residents to determine barriers to involvement</p> <p>Implement actions to remove barriers and increase representation throughout involvement structure</p> <p>Recruit one representative from each of 4 outlying</p>	<p>By September 2008</p> <p>July 2008</p> <p>September 2008</p> <p>January 2009</p> <p>By February 2009</p>	<p>JB/MDHA RA</p> <p>JB</p> <p>JB</p> <p>JB</p>		Furnival Rep joined MDHA RA March 08

	<p>areas to join MDHA RA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Slough</li> <li>• Wokingham</li> <li>• Wycombe</li> <li>• Basingstoke</li> </ul>				
<p>Make our services more accessible to our residents living in outlying areas</p>	<p>Take our services to their neighbourhoods by providing a mobile office to visit all outlying areas (Slough, Wokingham, Wycombe &amp; Basingstoke) regularly and to publish the schedule in advance</p> <p>Review the effectiveness of the mobile office and implement any required changes</p>	<p>Mobile office purchased/leased by June 08</p> <p>From July 08 monthly visits scheduled and publicised</p> <p>July 2009</p>	<p>JB</p> <p>JB + key staff</p>		<p>Business case to ET April 2008.</p>
<p>Increase information available and formats for communication</p>	<p>Set up and maintain Community Website to publicise community events and initiatives and also to maximise feedback opportunities for residents.</p> <p>Report to MDHA RA and ET every 6 months on usage of the website</p>	<p>Web-site up and running June 2008</p> <p>Monitor usage by increased 'hits' to web-site every quarter December and</p>	<p>JB/DD/ MDHA RA</p> <p>JB</p>		<p>In progress</p>

		June 2008 December and June 2009 December and June 2010			
Increase involvement from all our residents including those identified as 'hard to reach'	<p>Involve residents from hard to reach groups in developing specific equality schemes and action plans relating to their specific needs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disability</li> <li>• Gender</li> <li>• Race</li> </ul> <p>Monitor consultation &amp; involvement where appropriate by age, sex, ethnicity and disability to ensure equality of opportunity and involvement</p> <p>Where inequalities within involvement exist, utilise the resident involvement database and links with local agencies to target under-represented groups to determine barriers to involvement</p>	<p>Equality schemes and action plans in place by July 2008</p> <p>Response to consultation &amp; level of involvement in line with demographics of resident base</p> <p>On-going</p>	<p>Diversity Working Group</p> <p>All</p> <p>All</p>		<p>Disability ES &amp; AP agreed December 07 Gender ES &amp; AP to be agreed April 08</p> <p>Standard monitoring forms in use throughout organisation – Tenant service info form will allow easier analysis</p>

	Implement actions to remove barriers to involvement	On-going	All		
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**Diversity impact**

The 2007 STATUS survey showed lower satisfaction in the outer and outlying areas. The service forums cover all geographic areas.

By recruiting members for RA from out of Maidenhead it will make the RA more representative of our residents. This will also be an opportunity to gain views about our services from residents outside of Maidenhead on a regular basis.

Monitoring response to consultations and levels of involvement by age, sex, ethnicity & disability will enable us to identify areas of concern, investigate causes and/or make necessary amendments to consultation or involvement methods and lead to increased satisfaction levels from all groups.

The use of more innovative involvement methods, e.g. mobile office and community website, will ensure that the Group is involving hard to reach groups, such as those without transport, those in employment and younger people.

**Access, Customer Care, User Focus impact**

By recruiting members for RA from out of Maidenhead will make the RA more representative of our residents. This will also be an opportunity to gain views about our services from residents out of area on a regular basis.

Purchase of the mobile office would have a great impact on access and diversity as residents would be able to attend meetings on their door step. This enables the Association to make sure that residents will have an equal opportunity to express their views.

The mobile office will benefit residents from out of Maidenhead and also residents from the rural areas as services the Association offers will be able to travel to them.

By reviewing the effectiveness of the resident involvement structure annually in partnership with residents the Group will ensure that it is effective, user focused and any access issues are identified.

The community website will increase the accessibility of involvement.

### **Value for money impact**

By regularly reviewing the resident involvement structure the Group will ensure that involvement is achieving value for money and that residents are effectively involved in decision making. This will ensure that we are delivering a service that meets our residents' needs. This will also increase satisfaction with involvement in decision making.

By gaining regular feedback from residents out of Maidenhead we will be able to use our resources more efficiently to meet their needs.

The mobile office will enable the Group to get wider views from residents to improve our services to meet their needs. This will increase satisfaction with the outer and outlying areas.

The website is an efficient way of publicising involvement opportunities to residents.

3. **We will know who our residents are, what their needs are, how and when they would like to be involved**

Aim	Milestones	Target	Responsibility	Complete	Notes/Progress
We will know who are residents are	Complete service information form to provide comprehensive information on all of our residents.	July 2008? (Helen to call back)	HS		Underway
To establish who are our active residents	<p>Analyse responses from the service information form and develop a database. Advise residents by letter that they have been added onto a resident involvement database.</p> <p>Contact all residents on the database yearly to ensure information on the database is up to date and provide them with information on how resident involvement has helped to improve the organisation and the service they receive</p>	<p>1 month after filled in forms have been received.</p> <p>October 2009 October 2010</p>	<p>JB</p> <p>JB</p>		Look into a possibility to utilise CRM system to monitor resident involvement.

**Diversity impact**

By knowing who are residents are we are able to make sure that we are taking into account the different needs of all our residents, providing additional support and encouragement to those who are traditionally identified as 'hard to reach'. We will also have appropriate information to meet resident needs.

**Access, Customer Care, User Focus impact**

By analysing the information from service information forms all departments will have access to residents who have stated they would be interested in getting involved, enabling them to promote involvement opportunities at point of contact. The information will allow hard to reach groups to be targeted to gain feedback to improve services. This will also ensure that resident involvement and community activities accurately reflect the communities in which we work.

By sending regular updates to residents on the database the Group will be continuing to provide good customer care and will be able to promote other involvement activities to residents, increasing accessibility of involvement.

**Value for money impact**

By knowing what our residents needs are we are able to use our resource more efficiently. Resident satisfaction with their views being taken into account will increase. Services can better meet the needs of all residents and satisfaction levels with service delivery should rise.

**4. Provide support to help residents to make a difference**

<b>Aim</b>	<b>Milestones</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Complete</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Establish what the training needs are for MDHA RA Committee	Skills analysis to be completed with MDHA RA Committee	October 2008	JB/PEP/MDHA RA		To be carried out after summer recruitment exercise.
Establish the need for resident training for all residents	Analyse service information form results on training.	October 2008	JB		
Ensure residents are able to be effectively involved with the organisation	Investigate the possibility of a training consortium with other local authorities and housing associations working together with PEP	First meeting held in February 2008  Next meeting to be arranged for November 2008	JB		
	Carry out a skills gap analysis of involved residents	By June 08	JB		
	Agree a new comprehensive training programme to enable residents to become	December 2008	JB		

	effectively involved with the Association.  Review the programme and implement any suggested changes	December 2009 December 2010	JB		
Ensure involved residents are able to carry out their role	Provide specific training to resident board members to ensure they can effectively carry out their role.	On-going	Board/JG +JB		
Ensure involved residents are able to carry out their role	Develop a support/information pack for residents wanting to form a residents group.  Work in partnership with MDHA RA Committee to develop an induction pack for new Committee members  Review both support/information pack for forming a residents group and induction pack for new	August 2008  August 2008  August 2009 August 2010	JB  JB/MDHA RA  JB/MDHA RA		

	MDHA RA members yearly				
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**Diversity impact**

Training will build the capacity of residents, enabling them to use the skills within their communities, the work of the Association or transfer them into employment.

**Access, Customer Care, User Focus impact**

By encouraging residents to take part in training it will remove barriers they may have not to get involved. It will give all residents the opportunity to take part. A resident training consortium would allow the group to offer a wider range of courses at lower cost.

**Value for money impact**

By offering training to residents they are given tools to be able to effectively be involved with the Association and influence on a strategic level. This will enable meaningful involvement and input and will encourage improvement of our services.

A resident training consortium would achieve significant savings for the Group, while allowing the Group to offer a wider range of courses and allow residents to build links and learn from other organisations.

## 5. We will encourage resident review of our performance

Aim	Milestones	Target	Responsibility	Complete	Notes
Keep residents informed of our performance and ensure that performance information is more accessible	Produce quarterly performance flyer providing performance information on key issues	Starting from April 2008	DK/NB		
	Utilise the annual calendar to provide performance information to all residents	September 2008 September 2009 September 2010	DK		
	Continue to use Streets Ahead to publish quarterly performance information	June 2008 September 2008 December 2008 March 2009 June 2009 September 2009 December 2009  Quarterly	DK		

	Continue to provide quarterly reports to MDHA RA on the Groups' performance		Debbie Denyer		
Develop service forums for all service areas.	2 service forums per department to be held yearly  Service forums to appear on all departments service improvement plans	Dates to be agreed by April 2008  April 2008	Team leaders/JB  PH		
Provide quarterly reports on new service standards developed by residents.	Reports to be given to MDHA RA quarterly,  To be published in Streets Ahead every 6 months and the annual calendar	June 2008 September 2008 December 2008 March 2009 June 2009 September 2009 December 2009  6mths and annually	DK/DD  DK/DD		Service standards agreed with MDHA RA.
Develop the mystery shopping	Review current mystery shopping programme	October 2008	GK		

programme with current mystery shoppers	Implement any suggested changes	November 2008	GK		
	Increase the areas of mystery shops including letters, emails, other departments and other organisations	November 2008	GK		
	Establish training need and provide appropriate training to all mystery shoppers	January 2009	GK		
Investigate the resident review programme	Gain feedback from Windsor Housing on how effective their first year of resident inspectors have been including establishing value for money	January 2009	JB		
	Report to ET on findings	February 09	JB		
Continue the Best Value Review programme with	Carry out Best Value Reviews in line with the agreed programme as set	Ongoing	All departments		

resident involvement	out in the Prospects for improvement service improvement plan and service area plans				
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**Diversity impact**

By ensuring our performance information is readily available and understandable for all residents it will encourage greater resident involvement.

By using a diverse range of mystery shoppers the Group can ensure that services meet everyone’s needs.

**Access, Customer Care, User Focus impact**

The service forums will ensure our residents have an opportunity to influence our service performance regularly. Therefore we can check the service we provide meets their needs and continuously improve our services with residents.

By developing the mystery shopping programme the Group will ensure high standards of accessibility across all service areas.

**Value for money impact**

By providing performance information to our residents quarterly we will be checking that they are happy with the service and would be able to make any changes regarding to any feedback received to meet our residents’ needs.

Best Value Review programmes challenge the value for money of service areas.

By reviewing the effectiveness of the resident review programme from Windsor Housing the Group can learn from this partnership approach and determine whether to sign up to it.

Mystery shopping is a cost effective way of challenging the Groups’ services by using those who experience the service.

**6. Give value for money**

Aim	Milestones	Target	Responsibility	Complete	Notes
Carry out a comprehensive resident involvement impact assessment on all resident involvement activities including value for money.	<p>Analyse all resident involvement monitoring forms from 2007/08</p> <p>Write comprehensive impact assessment including value for money impact</p> <p>Full report to go to MDHA RA and to ET</p>	<p>April 2008 April 2009 April 2010</p> <p>May 2008 May 2009 May 2010</p> <p>June 2008 June 2009 June 2010</p>	JB		

**Diversity impact**

The impact assessment will highlight areas of weakness in involving hard to reach groups, enabling targeted action for the following year.

**Access, Customer Care, User Focus impact**

By carrying out the impact assessment we will be able to review the effectiveness of the accessibility of involvement.

**Value for money impact**

By knowing the effectiveness of our RI activities we are able to establish which activities are good value for money.

## 7. We will support communities to develop

Aim	Milestones	Target	Responsibility	Complete	Notes
Review January 2008 PSHE Citizenship programme for schools and develop 2008/09 programme to roll out to other schools	Run PSHE programme to minimum of 2 schools.	December 2008	JB		Getting feedback on January 2008 programme by April 2008. Working with schools and partner agencies to improve and expand the programme to other schools.
Organise community events in all areas of our stock advertising them in Streets Ahead.	<p>Recognise areas that would benefit from community events and work with other agencies to achieve value for money and most impact</p> <p>Publish dates for summer events in the summer edition of Streets Ahead</p> <p>Start working with the resident involvement working</p>	<p>April 2008 April 2009 April 2010</p> <p>May 2008 May 2009 May 2010</p> <p>January 2009 January 2010</p>	JB		Events arranged and advertised in spring Streets Ahead for Arborfield and Evenlode.

	group to establish joint working on organising the events				
Expand current sheltered scheme computer training programme.	Gain feedback from residents who have attended the training to establish if need for any changes	May 2008	IT/JB		
	Re-advertise in all of the schemes	June 2008			
	Review the success and gain feedback from involved residents	January 2009			
	Implement any suggested changes	March 2009			

### Diversity impact

Equality impact assessments to be used to make sure events and activities meet the needs of communities and their residents.

By linking with other agencies we will be able to use existing networks and specialists to use their skills and links that they have with communities.

The PSHE and sheltered scheme computer training target younger and older age groups increasing the diversity of those involved.

**Access, Customer Care, User Focus impact**

Community events are being used to get views from residents who would not normally attend service forums or focus groups. This enables us to get wider view from our residents to improve our services to meet their needs.

By attending sheltered schemes to carry out the computer training, the training is accessible to a wide range of elderly residents.

**Value for money impact**

By supporting our neighbourhoods and communities to develop we are able to ensure that our services are appropriate to residents and neighbourhoods