



Minutes of TPG meeting at Denson Close Waterbeach on 10th December 2018

Attendees (Tenants/Leaseholders)

Name	Address	
Patti Hall (PH(Vice Chair)	Cottenham	TPG
Angela Lewell (AL(Secretary)	Impington	TPG
Edna Ingrey (EI)	Gt Wilbraham	TPG
Glynis Goff (GG)	Waterbeach	TPG
Les Rolfe (LF)	Bourn	TPG
Helen Ballantyne (HB)	Dry Drayton	TPG
Adrian Prentis (AP)	Cottenham	TPG
Dave Hammond (DH)	Gt Abington	TPG
Kathy Rice (KR)	Elsworth	TPG
Joan Ball (JB)	Histon	TPG
Jim Watson (JW)	Willingham	TPG
Paul Bowman (PB)	Willingham	TPG
Nancy Chisholm (NC)	Gamlingay	TPG
Bob Petch (BP)	Gamlingay	TPG
A. Collett (AC)	Toft	Observer
E. Tomes (ET)	Toft	Observer
Howard Pheasant (HP)	Cottenham	Observer

Attendees (South Cambridgeshire District Council Representatives)

Name	Position in Council
Martyn Hilliam (MH)	Housing policy Officer
Peter Moston (PM)	Resident Involvement Team Leader
Helen Pagram (HP)	Resident Involvement Officer
Cllr Hazel Smith (HS)	Councillor & Housing Portfolio Holder
Debbie Barrett (DB)	Housing Services Team Leader

Guests

Don Carver (DC) SP Landscapes

	Topic	Actions
1.	<p>Apologies - Wendy Head - Val Hickey - Betty Murphy - Carol Akabi - Mark Gibbs - Peter Topping</p> <p>Please ring Wendy on 01223 894394 or E-mail:- wendymhead@yahoo.co.uk if you are unable to attend the next meeting.</p>	All
2.	<p>Minutes of the previous meeting</p> <p>The minutes of the previous meeting were taken as read, agreed as a true record, and signed by the Chair.</p>	
3.	<p>Matters arising</p> <p>AL said 4 paragraph 2 (6th sentence) should say resources (not sauces) and 4 paragraph 5 (10th sentence) should say badly fitting soffits and fascia boards (not suffices and fascia boards).</p>	

	LR said it was wasp's in the wall not bee's.	
4.	<p>Debbie Barrett - Housing Services Team Leader DB said she had come to give a catch up on ground maintenance.</p> <p>SP Landscape have got the Tenant's and Ground Maintenance contract for a further 5 years.</p> <p>There has been a re-structure. There was 2 officer's for re-lettings and then 3 officer's for 3 patches, but with welfare reform and the big patches covering 1,500 properties each, state inspections (not able to do many) and someone else doing the re-letting meant officer's didn't get to know new tenants for about 9 months. So from the 1st September went back to 6 patches so officer's are more involved with tenants and do their own lettings. Had to catch up at first but is now settling down.</p> <p>There is budget in the ground maintenance so there will be more estate inspections next year, need improvement and do some good work. With funding can make an area nicer. Maybe notice boards are needed or planters which can be funded for a few hundred pounds. Will chat to housing officers and find out if anything needed.</p> <p>Ground maintenance was re-tendered this year along with the Bus way and Park & Ride sites. There were 3 submissions who met the criteria. SP Landscape's tender took nothing for granted and presented a very good tender, so they have now been awarded the contract for 5 years (3 plus 2). This allows them to invest in new machinery. Have a good relationship with them and this is reflected in their understanding of what the residents need. They will put wrongs, right. When trees came down in the high winds , they went out and got rid of them. They have a good routine maintenance going on. If you have any idea's going forward please let me know. We need to get tenants involved by looking after areas around them. AP said tenants/TPG getting involved has died a death. DB replied this is nonsense, opposite, want them involved, have pot of money to spend. In the spring, will get in touch with TPG, Village Voice etc., and we will go out and look at areas. AP said Sheltered have their own budget and there's been nothing for 5 years. PB said he had been involved in inspections. Why not contact TPG group for their village. Be bigger and tenant led. DB took his name and village Willingham where he lives. JW said the last inspection he did was in Swavesey, 2 years ago. Also what about the hedges at Westfield. DB replied that it is on her radar and as this is a big job will have to wait until next April. PB said need to know service level agreements on maintenance as concerns are still there. Caught guys doing work and ask about an area which they did, but if not there doesn't get done. Also are the maps up to date. DB said the maps should be up to date, send her an e-mail and she will check the area concerned.</p> <p>AC asked about the trees at Toft, at St. Andrew's Cottages. DB replied gone to surveyor 3 weeks ago. Was also asked about apples that fall. Will get someone from SP Landscapes to take a look.</p>	<p>All</p> <p>PB/DB</p>

5.	<p>Don Carver - SP Landscapes</p> <p>DC said he had worked at SP Landscape's for 12 years in April and for the last 9 years cutting grass. Next month we are getting 2 new rotary mowers as feel they give a better finish. Also buying him a new lorry. as old one is 16 years old and proven to break down. South Cambs are going to be giving us identity cards, so you can challenge us and will also know who you are talking to. The team is the same, me, Matthew and Buzz.</p> <p>The contract has not changed. Will spray in February as this saves on strimming, less broken windows and helps brick work. DC was asked if he'd let people in bungalow's adjacent know when coming. Dc replied just ask him or let him know of area's not wanted to be sprayed. DB said will get Estate Officer's to put notices up when this is happening.</p> <p>DC was asked about spray used. He said we use Roundup and all research on this has come back that it can still be used. Is the environments most friendly on the market.</p> <p>We do 12 cuts a year, but this can vary. Grass all died off in August so nothing to cut. Therefore 10/12 cuts depending on the weather. Rough area's are done 4 times a year and welfare gardens 5 times a year between April to October. 1 edge cut between November to January (try to get done before Christmas). Additional work includes 2 re-sprays on hard standing, strimming of ditches and on sheltered only 1 off leaf or winter clearance. Trees are done but there is a schedule of rates for these and South Cambs will let them know which ones can be done.</p> <p>Back to PB's question, a new set of maps was done in 2015. PB has copy, were verges have been taken off. DC said we do only what is on the maps, so could have to pay for it. If no-man's land a nightmare to sort. Could be Highways, not South Cambs. DB said County Council do verges. We did offer but County said no.</p> <p>PB said 2 sprays on hard standing. Was confirmed, also told poor road is not South Cambs and surface degraded at end of garden/kerb could be highways.</p> <p>JB said there are 2 lay-bys in Kay Hitch Way that are full of weeds. DB will get them looked at.</p> <p>LR said you spray the odd manhole, but don't do gardens that are fenced in. DC replied we do communal area's only, no if fenced in.</p> <p>ET said I get my washing in when grass is cut, but neighbour never moves anything. DC said we do not have time to move things.</p> <p>DC said if bins put out before 4pm for the next day, won't cut grass. We cut between 7-30am to 3pm. PM will put this in the newsletter. DC said our start time is 7-30am to 5-30pm (will try not to start before 7-45am), and on Saturday's 8-15/30am start.</p>	<p>DB</p> <p>DB</p> <p>PM</p>
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CLlr Hazel Smith - Councillor & Housing Portfolio Holder

Reading through your minutes I could see that you've had some in-depth information last time about the programmes we have for keeping our houses up to the current standard. Now I've also learnt more about grounds maintenance.

There have been a number of conferences recently that officers and I have gone to, where the main topic that they can't get away from is the Hackitt report on the conclusions from the Grenfell Tower tragedy. For councils with tower blocks this is really important, but it will impact on us all. The fire doors in our blocks of flats are very important. The first thing we had to do was to replace some uPVC plastic fire doors, we had 40 that we found straight away that were the type that was no longer recommended because they failed the testing. These have all been changed now, but more changes to the regulations are expected, and we need to watch the advice and be prepared to make the changes that they recommend.

Something that will affect tenants is that the fire doors and their surroundings and frames, will have to be kept in the same state as when they were installed, and we have to inspect them every year. This means that putting in a new bigger letter box or a cat flap, for example, just won't be allowed. We're waiting for the law on all of this to be changed: it may apply to private tenants as well as council tenants. As David Purnell said last time, the testing and compliance is going to be under scrutiny in the future, so we're prioritising that. Compliance officer being interviewed this week.

The government may also change the relationship between the Council and the TPG in responding to the Hackitt Review.

Another big change has been the introduction of Universal Credit in South Cambs, which came in on 17th October for new claims. This won't affect people above pension age, but anyone with a new claim for Housing Benefit or one of the other benefits will automatically be put onto UC now. It's worth checking before anyone makes a new claim, that they'll actually be better off, because UC is not as generous as the previous benefits, so you might make a claim for more, and actually get less. A website called Entitled to lets you put in your wages and outgoings anonymously and will advise you what you might claim for. It's worth using that rather than looking, put in your village and any planning The Council's new aims include an emphasis on housing that is affordable to live in and also action on climate change and the environment with better energy efficiency and generation of energy. About 8 years ago a lot of our council houses were fitted with solar panels, which was really good for tenants whose roofs faced south who agreed to have it done.

I went to a seminar last week about solar panels on council houses: they can now fit them on roofs facing east and west too. Whereas the government subsidies, Feed in tariff and so on were very helpful back then, and tenants were promised free electricity, the situation now is that it has to happen without subsidies. So the electricity won't be free, but they are saying you could save 25% off all your energy bills. And this will only increase in the future when prices are likely to up (considerably). If the council could get an income too,

	<p>that would be a bonus. So I'd like to look into that.</p> <p>As you heard from Gill Anderton last time, we have developers building us new council houses all the time now. The government is keen that we should borrow money and build, and we are keen to do that too. But we must stay within what we can cope with while training up new staff to work with Gill, so we can't immediately double our programme, but that's what we're working towards. And as Gill said we have to get enough subsidy in to make the finances stack up too: we have to be able to pay for the interest on the money we borrow.</p> <p>The Health side of housing is also very important. We're pleased that the Let's Get Moving classes will continue to be funded by the County Council in South Cambs – these are advertised in the S Cambs magazine, and they do help keep people fit. We had another very good project funded by the government on Healthy New Towns, thinking initially about Northstowe, and we're continuing that work so it can feed into the new developments coming at Waterbeach and Bourn Airfield. It includes dementia-friendly planning, and putting benches on routes where people might walk as well as providing public toilets in the town centre – which you can't always rely on elsewhere these days.</p> <p>In September I enjoyed giving prizes at the tenants gardening awards – and spoke to a number of tenants who had really beautiful gardens. A couple of them were men, widowers now living alone, and they got great pleasure from their gardens, but some of them were quite lonely. I'm pleased that the toolkit that the council has put together on social isolation and loneliness is now available on the council's website: Cllr Ellington did a lot of work to pull this together and I was part of her little committee that worked on it. There are lots of ideas in there for getting people together across the community, and 12 case studies of different ideas including transport schemes, lunch clubs, community cafe, cookery club, mental wellbeing walking group, parish nurse, time banking, men's sheds. It's worth having a look to see what other villages are doing, and how to go about setting these things up – the volunteers in other villages are always keen to share their experiences, and it's probably not as hard as you think.</p> <p>Thanks to Anita who is leaving South Cambs in January – we will all miss her experience and professionalism. Will go to DB now for information.</p>	
<p>7.</p>	<p>AOB PH thanked PM, MH and HP and wished everyone a Happy Christmas.</p> <p>PM said the yearly annual report give key points including resident involvement from April 17 to March 18. Difficulty getting all information but will be available from the end of the week. Will know how many kitchen's, bathroom's and window's have been done. Will bring key points to TPG in February. Also at next meeting brief update on elections, small report. Will go in the spring newsletter all about it. Please also let me, Helen or Martyn about any local people, fund raisers, good neighbours etc., which will be of interest for the newsletter. HP has sent an e-mail out today with dates of the next meetings. Management consultants are working with South Cambs. there are 2 posts vacant (S. Hills and A. Goddard).Will review processes and make recommendations. PM welcomed HP to the meeting and AC and ET also. He thanks HP for the catering, sausage</p>	

	<p>rolls and mince pies. PM wished everyone a Happy Christmas and New Year and thanked also for ongoing support.</p> <p>PB said there was a meeting last Saturday re crime issues in Willingham. City Council and MP attended. No change way money spent or bobbies on the beat. More resources does reduce crime, crime rate gone down. Council tax for police is 78%.</p> <p>VH said TPG member's have badges but no-one is wearing them. Asked to wear them in February.</p> <p>HP had a message from Wendy - thank you all for the get well card, I am progressing quite well. back to hospital next week. Happy Christmas and New Year.</p>		All
8.	<p>Date, time and venue of the next meeting Monday 4th February 2019, 18:30 to 20:30 at Denson Close Waterbeach</p>		