



Leasehold Panel

Minutes – 1 July 2009

List of the documents appended to the Minutes

The following documents are referred to in the minutes of the meeting of 1 July 2009:

1. Appendix 1 - Flipchart notes for the Aspirations Project
2. Aspirations Slides
3. Appendix 2 – Decent Homes billing – Year 2
4. Appendix 3 – reply from Paul Bridge (Chief Executive) to letter on behalf of the Panel from Mrs Goodhew
5. Appendix 4 – letter of reply to Mr Bridge's letter, proposed by Mrs Goodhew and agreed by the Panel
6. Appendix 5 – Email and press release provided to the Panel by Mrs Goodhew to provide them with information on the subject of the proposed deputation



Leasehold Panel

Minutes of the meeting, 1 July 2009

1. Attendance: Mrs M Shaw, Mrs Anne Goodhew, Mr B Hines, Ms Lesley Ramm, Ms Linda Chrysostomou, Mr Charles Connolly, Mr Roger Kemp, Ms Rita Batzias, Ms Mary Allen, Ms Shirley Perlman, Ms Marion Merrick, Mr Frank Tunney, Ms Susannah Adewumi, Mr Michael Ruggins, Ms Anne Crellin, Ms Sylvia Morgan, Mr F Edwards, Ms Deloris Myers, Ms Lucille Parris, Ms Janet Owughah, Mr Nino Vrana (21)

Chair: The meeting was chaired by Mr Roger Kemp.

Apologies: Mr Martin Laheen sent his apologies.

Officers: Mr Nesan Thevanesan, Head of Home Ownership; Mr Simon Godfrey, Involvement and Equalities Manager; Mr Nick Claxton, Senior Home Ownership Officer, Mr Michael Bester, Major Works Lead Officer, and Mr Bruce Nicholas, Leasehold Project Officer who took the minutes.

2. Key Leaseholder scheme - update, Nick Claxton, Senior Home Ownership Officer.

Mr Claxton reported that a short leaflet or 'flyer' on the key leaseholder scheme had been sent to all leaseholders on the 12 June with the June edition of Homes Zone. He said that 27 leaseholders had volunteered to participate in the scheme to date, representing 31 blocks. The first meeting of the Working Party had been on the 4 June and four leaseholders had attended: Ms Sue Brown, Ms Anne Crellin, Mr Martin Laheen and Ms Sylvia Morgan. There was a second meeting of Working Party on the 29th June 2009. The terms of reference were being worked on and would be circulated to LHP members for comment in due course.

Key Leaseholders will be able to select the different types of responsibilities they can cover from a list including the following options (and the application form they will receive and complete will mean they sign up to each option separately):

- Review of the quarterly list of communal repairs. Here you have to read through the quarterly repairs lists for your block and estate and send any comments or queries to the Home Ownership Team to be forwarded for investigation. If any amendments are required these will be done before the calculation of the Actual (at the end of the financial year).
- Inspection of communal repairs. You can participate in the spot checking of communal repairs, either with a surveyor during the day or in your own time if this is not possible. The spot checks of pre-selected repairs have to be carried out by specified deadlines.
- Mystery Shopping. We would like leaseholders to make some anonymous telephone calls to staff in the Home Ownership Team – with general queries. This is in order to provide feedback on the effectiveness of the general service provided to customers. This will only be done occasionally.
- Service Monitoring. Some involvement in the monitoring of day-to-day services, including cleaning of communal areas and grounds maintenance, and raising queries and concerns via HOT.
- Point of Contact. To take up general queries on behalf of other leaseholders in the block or estate, with your contact details made available to other leaseholders (in that block or estate only) – but only if you specifically agree to this.

Forward Action Plan

Mr Claxton outlined the steps required in the organisation of the scheme as follows:

- Re-draft and distribute the Terms of Reference
- Draft the procedures covering each function to be carried out by a Key Leaseholder
- Send letters of acknowledgement to people who have volunteered, enclosing the agreed Terms of Reference, and requesting their preference regarding a daytime or an evening induction session in October.
- Draft a further recruitment flyer to accompany the booklet to be sent out with the Actual 08/09
- Present an update to the Panel at the 28th July meeting.

In response to a question Mr Claxton confirmed that a key leaseholder would not have to act as a point of contact if they did not wish to do so. If a large number of leaseholders decided to become key leaseholders in an estate, the option would also be open to them to form a residents association.

3. Aspirations Project – Simon Godfrey, Involvement and Equalities Manager.

Mr Godfrey explained that the project was concerned with the overall question as to what everyone thinks Homes for Haringey should look like in the future.

To be an outstanding housing provider he said Homes for Haringey needs to listen and respond to what residents and other partners say. It already seeks their views on its current services, but it was also relevant to ask whether there were other areas that should be covered. This would be particularly relevant after the Decent Homes Programme finished in 2012.

Mr Godfrey therefore asked the question “Should we only focus on maintaining and improving homes? Or should we do more to link with other services to help residents with access to work, training or educational opportunities and other essentials such as youth, health and crime prevention services?”

Homes for Haringey was consulting widely on this question, involving the following groups:

- Council tenants and leaseholders and household members
- The staff
- Councillors
- Staff from Council teams which work with Homes for Haringey
- Other agencies and partners

During the course of his presentation he said he would seek the Panel’s views on a number of questions. The answers would help the organisation plan for the future. Later in the year when everyone’s views have been collated Homes for Haringey will ask all residents what they think of the options.

Mr Godfrey then took Panel Members through a series of questions and the results are summarised in the flipchart notes ([Appendix 1](#)) and the [Aspirations Slides](#) (summarising Panel Members’ responses to the aspirations questions), which are also attached.

4. HOT report on year 1(2008/9) of the Decent Homes Programme and finalisation of the leaseholder questionnaire on major works. Mike Bester, Major Works Lead Officer.

Mr Bester presented a report to the Panel, which is attached ([Appendix 2](#)). He said he would provide this on a regular basis. He explained that leaseholders in year 1 did not receive the booklet *Decent Homes: A guide for residents*, since this only became available midway through Year One. Panel

members said that this was regrettable, as the booklet was very comprehensive.

Mr Bester said that he had included a section in the report on windows applications. Although quite a few people had requested an information pack, the number of those actually installing their own windows had been quite small.

In response to the views expressed by the Panel Mr Bester said that the Home Ownership Team would produce a special questionnaire which would include questions to cover value for money issues. It would also cover the performance of the Home Ownership Team with respect to billing for major works. It would be sent to leaseholders with the final accounts. Although the Panel felt this would be a positive development, they remained dissatisfied with the arrangements for the Decent Homes questionnaires and the compilation of the resident satisfaction statistics from them.

A question was then raised about the decent homes satisfaction statistics (for tenants and leaseholders) in the June issue of the residents' magazine, *Homes Zone*. Mr Connolly said that these statistics were very misleading. No reference had been made to the fact that leaseholders' views often differed significantly from those of tenants. Ms Ramm said it was obviously wrong that the contractors should themselves distribute and collect the questionnaires from which the resident satisfaction statistics were compiled.

- **Action point 1.** Mr Thevanesan agreed to take the matter up on behalf of the Panel and report back.

5. HOT administration charge for leaseholders opting to install their own windows. Nesan Thevanesan, Head of Home Ownership.

Mr Thevanesan explained that although there had been quite a lot of enquiries from people thinking of installing their own windows, very few leaseholders had actually gone ahead with it. One reason appeared to be that the administration charge was a barrier to a lot of people. There had been quite a high number of queries objecting to the charge.

In addition some leaseholders said they would go ahead with installation without paying the charge and without obtaining the necessary approvals. Mr Thevanesan said that since dealing with the queries and undertaking enforcement action was quite time consuming and therefore expensive it would be justifiable to consider abolishing the charge. If people did not proceed with their applications, the costs would have to be included as part of the management fee in any case. The costs of enforcement in some cases might also fall on all leaseholders.

However a number of leaseholders objected on the basis that this would mean the majority of leaseholders would have to bear the cost. In view of this the Panel requested for this matter to be considered at the next meeting.

- **Action point 2.** Panel to decide at the next meeting.

6. Minutes of the last meetings – 8 June 2009 - the minutes were agreed as a true record.

There were the following matters arising. At the last meeting the Panel had asked why leaseholders who were retired were not entitled to the same discounts for garages as tenants. Mr Thevanesan reported it had been agreed that these discounts would now be made available to leaseholders with immediate effect. He also confirmed that a talk to the Panel on estate improvement work had been arranged to be given in September by Tayo Otitolaju, the Project Manager.

7. Motion concerning Digital TV Conversion – update from Anne Goodhew.

Mrs Goodhew reported on the following matters:

- Paul Bridge, Chief Executive, Homes for Haringey had replied (15/06/09) to her letter on behalf of the Panel – see [Appendix 3](#).
- She proposed that the Panel should reply and provided a draft for the Panel's consideration – see [Appendix 4](#)
- Councillor Matt Davies, Lib Dem Housing Spokesperson had suggested in an email to her(see [Appendix 5](#)) that leaseholders nominate:
 - o A deputation to present their case to the Council (on the 20 July)
 - o A representative to talk to the local press.

Mrs Goodhew provided Panel members with copies of the documents referred to above. It was agreed that Mrs Goodhew should reply to Mr Bridge in accordance with the draft she had prepared and that she should make the necessary arrangements for a deputation and someone to talk to the press.

8. Forward agenda proposals. These were agreed.

9. Any other business. It was agreed that Mr Kemp should chair the next meeting.

Mr Kemp thanked the speakers for the very interesting presentations and then declared the meeting at an end.

The Aspirations Project



Homes for Haringey

Leaseholders' Panel – 1 July 2009

Appendix 1 to the Minutes

Aspirations Project Flipchart Notes

1. What organisations (any sort) do you see as being good?

Organisation	What makes them good?
John Lewis:	Staff have interest therefore bother
Consumer Direct:	Lots of information and helpful
99p Store:	Prices
Choices:	Prices, returns
National Express:	Dealt well with complaints and changed policy
Disney's Furniture in Haringey:	Good advice, deliveries, service

2. How does Homes for Haringey compare?

- Not listening, resolving enough/at all
- Unreliable – not delivering what they say
- Not responding to messages
- Switch off once they know you're Leaseholder (✓✓✓)
- Makes you feel you are falsely accused (e.g. owing money when didn't)

- No response from Paul Bridge, Chief Executive to a group letter... [It should be noted however that Mr Bridge did arrange for Jackie Thomas, Executive Director of Housing Management to write a letter on his behalf.]
- Not complying with complaints process... not answering at all
- HLA meeting – trying to change constitution
- Not taking responsibility for Homes for Haringey responsibilities

Note: ✓✓✓ indicates general agreement from people in the room

3. What would Homes for Haringey need to do to become 'good'?

- Train staff in customer service
- Have staff with positive helpful attitude
- Communicating internally (left hand not knowing what right hand is doing) (✓✓✓)
- Follow complaints procedure fully
- Respond to questions, don't ignore them
- Take responsibility
- Understand leaseholders don't have lots of pounds

4. Any other considerations?

- More childcare needed including on estates.

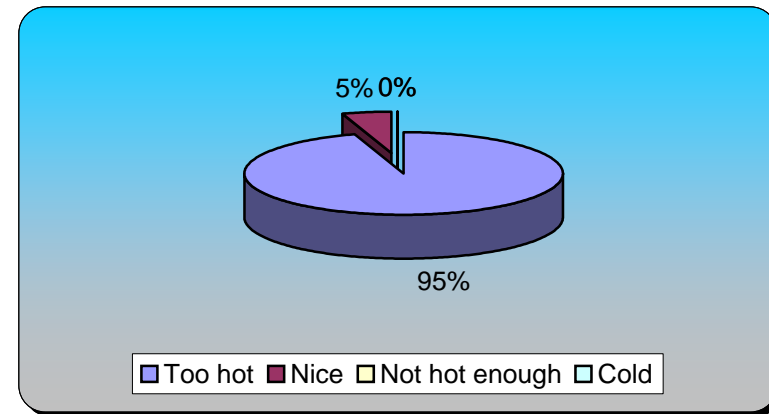
Aspirations: Leaseholder Panel

Turning Graphical Results by Question

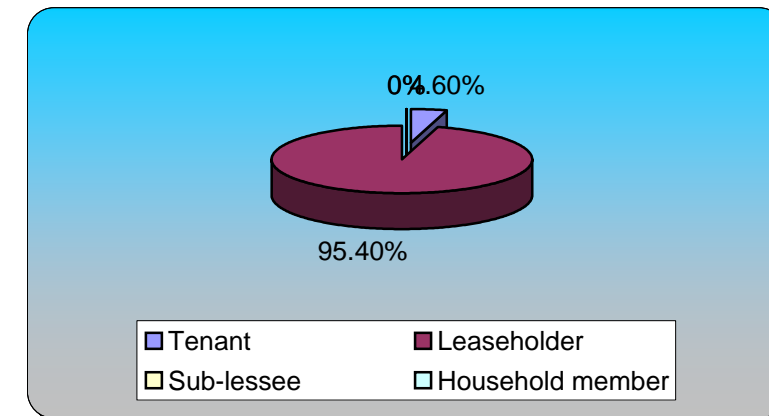
Session Name: Leaseholders' Panel

Created: 01/07/2009 20:09

1.) The weather today has been...	Responses	
Too hot	19	95%
Nice	1	5%
Not hot enough	0	0%
Cold	0	0%
Totals	20	100%



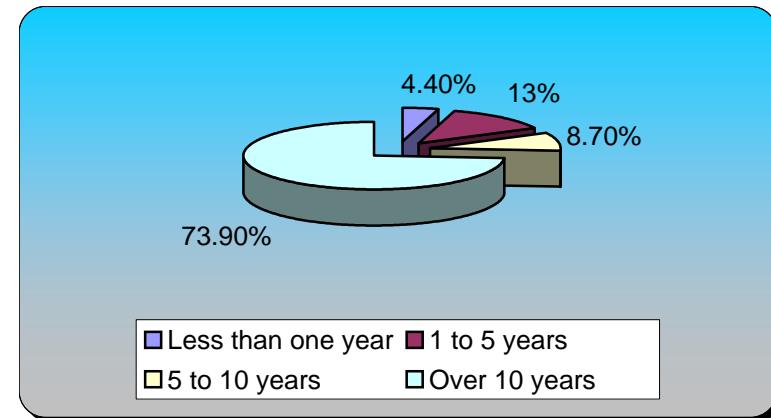
2.) Are you a...	Responses	
Tenant	1	4.55%
Leaseholder	21	95.45%
Sub-lessee	0	0%
Household member	0	0%
Totals	22	100%



Aspirations: Leaseholder Panel

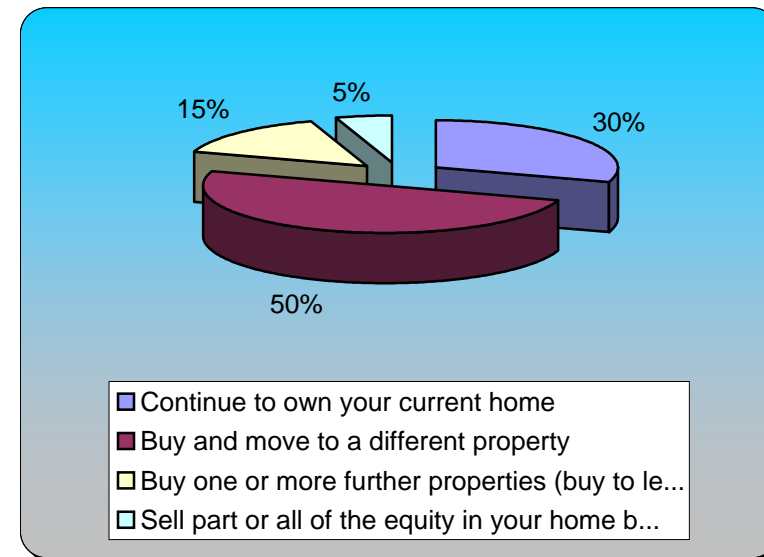
3.) How long have you lived in your current home?

	Responses	
Less than one year	1	4.35%
1 to 5 years	3	13.04%
5 to 10 years	2	8.70%
Over 10 years	17	73.91%
Totals	23	100%



4.) LEASEHOLDERS ONLY. Ideally, would you...

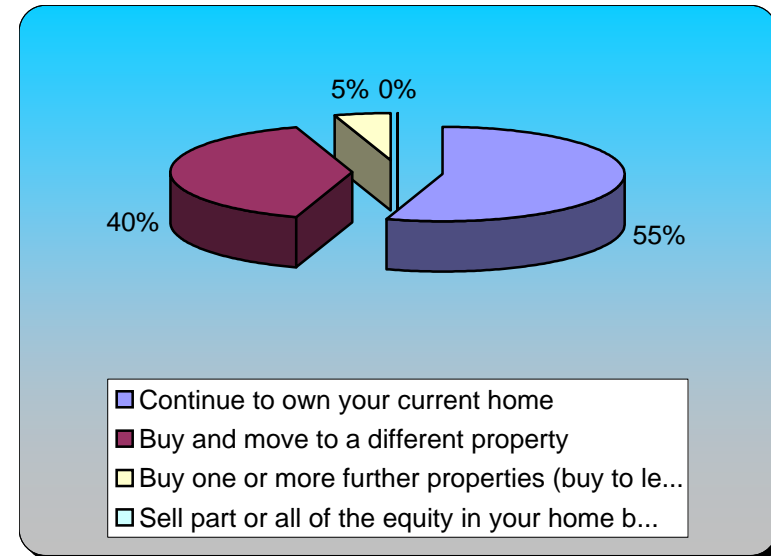
	Responses	
Continue to own your current home	6	30%
Buy and move to a different property	10	50%
Buy one or more further properties (buy to le...	3	15%
Sell part or all of the equity in your home b...	1	5%
Totals	20	100%



Aspirations: Leaseholder Panel

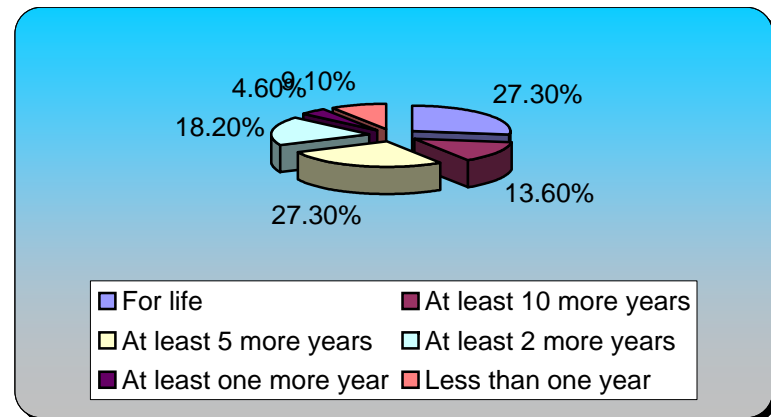
5.) LEASEHOLDERS ONLY. Realistically, what do you expect to do?

	Responses	
Continue to own your current home	11	55%
Buy and move to a different property	8	40%
Buy one or more further properties (buy to le...	1	5%
Sell part or all of the equity in your home b...	0	0%
Totals	20	100%



6.) How long do you hope to live in your current home

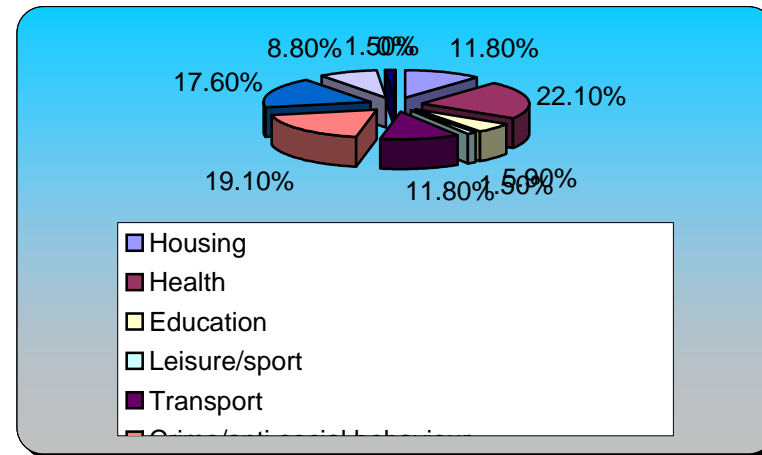
	Responses	
For life	6	27.27%
At least 10 more years	3	13.64%
At least 5 more years	6	27.27%
At least 2 more years	4	18.18%
At least one more year	1	4.55%
Less than one year	2	9.09%
Totals	22	100%



Aspirations: Leaseholder Panel

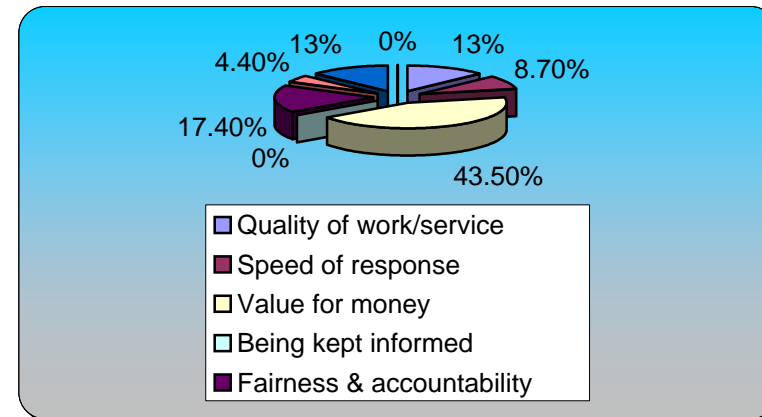
7.) Please choose the three most important areas for your household

	Responses	
Housing	8	11.76%
Health	15	22.06%
Education	4	5.88%
Leisure/sport	1	1.47%
Transport	8	11.76%
Crime/anti-social behaviour	13	19.12%
The environment	12	17.65%
Community facilities (incl. for children/youth)	6	8.82%
Employment	1	1.47%
Other	0	0%
Totals	68	100%



8.) What is the most important aspect of customer service for you?

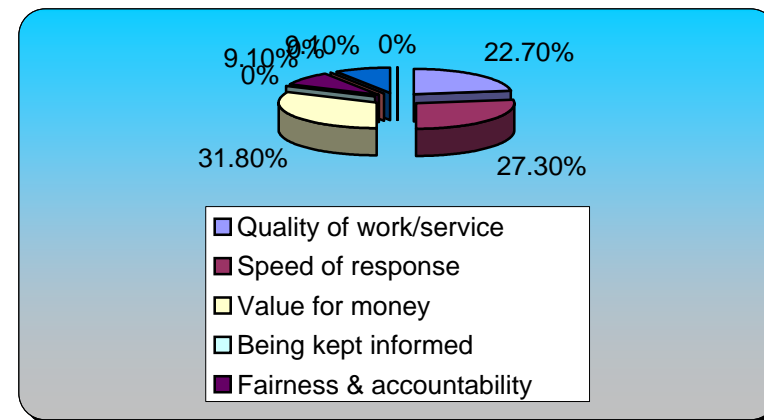
	Responses	
Quality of work/service	3	13.04%
Speed of response	2	8.70%
Value for money	10	43.48%
Being kept informed	0	0%
Fairness & accountability	4	17.39%
Politeness	1	4.35%
Being treated as an individual	3	13.04%
Other	0	0%
Totals	23	100%



Aspirations: Leaseholder Panel

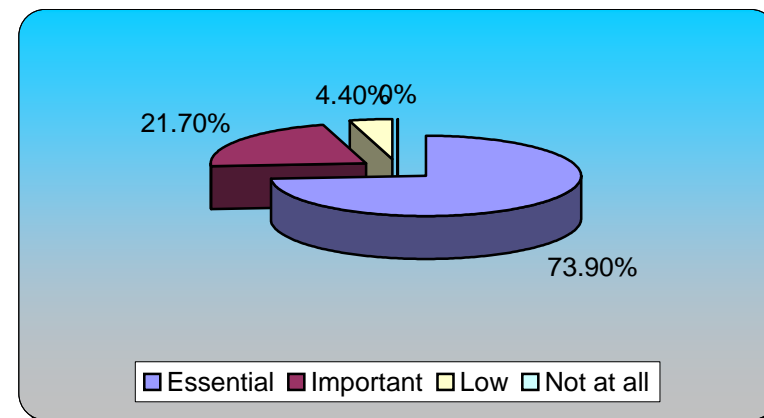
9.) Which of these needs most improvement?

	Responses	
Quality of work/service	5	22.73%
Speed of response	6	27.27%
Value for money	7	31.82%
Being kept informed	0	0%
Fairness & accountability	2	9.09%
Politeness	0	0%
Being treated as an individual	2	9.09%
Other	0	0%
Totals	22	100%



10.) How important is it that HfH works with other agencies on Crime & anti-social behaviour

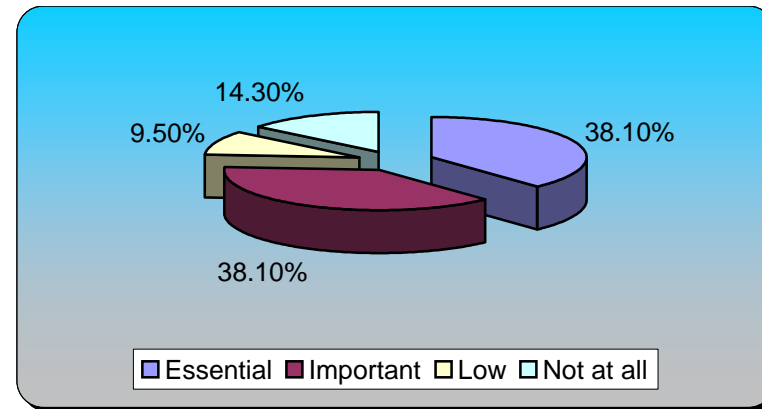
	Responses	
Essential	17	73.91%
Important	5	21.74%
Low	1	4.35%
Not at all	0	0%
Totals	23	100%



Aspirations: Leaseholder Panel

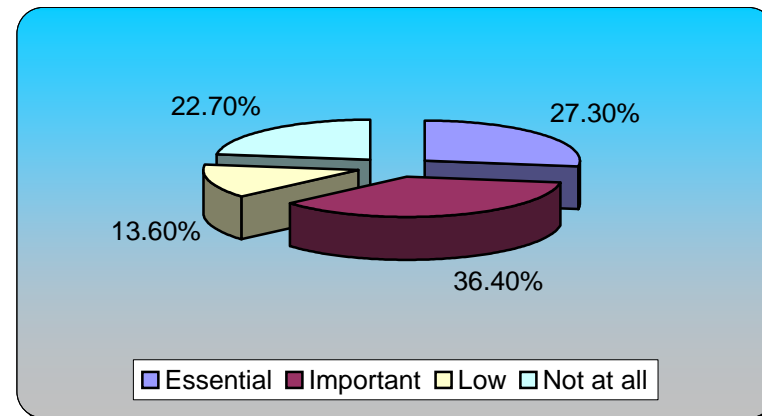
11.) How important is it that HfH works with other agencies on Supporting parents

	Responses	
Essential	8	38.10%
Important	8	38.10%
Low	2	9.52%
Not at all	3	14.29%
Totals	21	100%



12.) How important is it that HfH works with other agencies on Employment

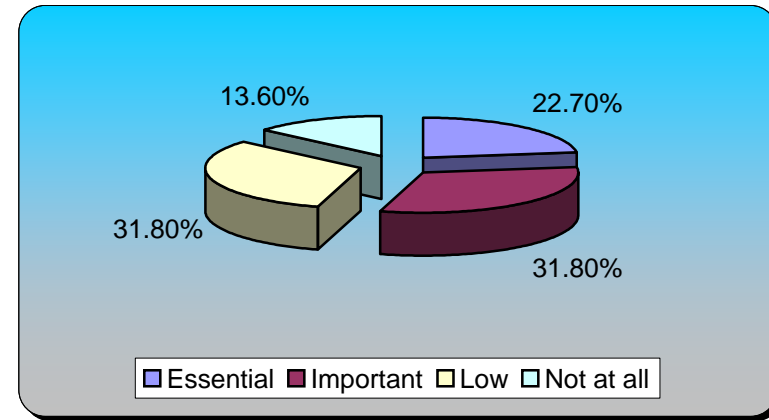
	Responses	
Essential	6	27.27%
Important	8	36.36%
Low	3	13.64%
Not at all	5	22.73%
Totals	22	100%



Aspirations: Leaseholder Panel

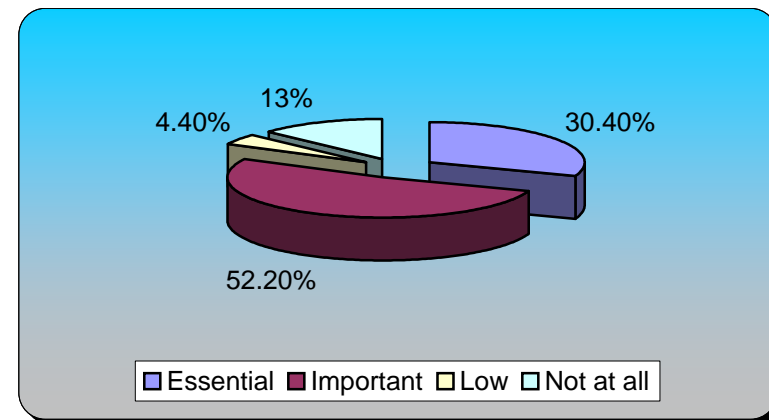
13.) How important is it that HfH works with other agencies on Benefits & support for low income households

	Responses	
Essential	5	22.73%
Important	7	31.82%
Low	7	31.82%
Not at all	3	13.64%
Totals	22	100%



14.) How important is it that HfH works with other agencies on Activities & facilities for young people

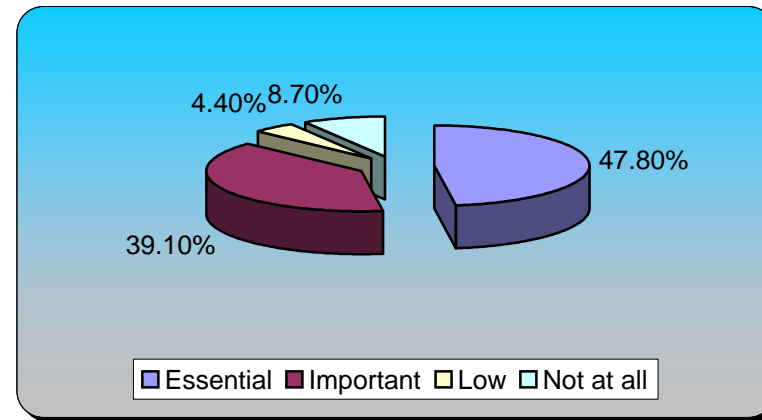
	Responses	
Essential	7	30.43%
Important	12	52.17%
Low	1	4.35%
Not at all	3	13.04%
Totals	23	100%



Aspirations: Leaseholder Panel

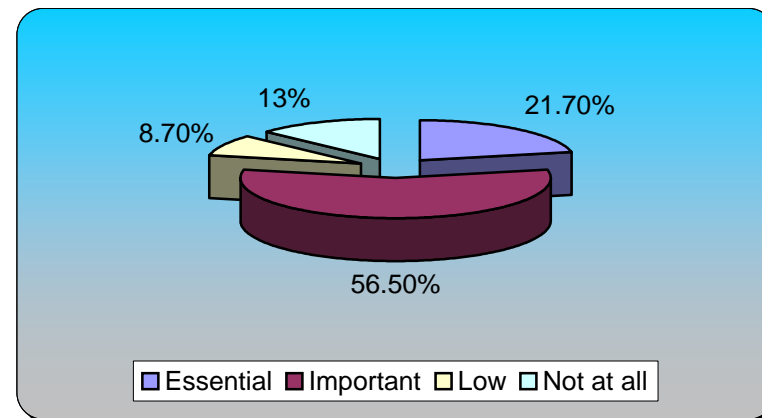
15.) How important is it that HfH works with other agencies on Caring for older people

	Responses	
Essential	11	47.83%
Important	9	39.13%
Low	1	4.35%
Not at all	2	8.70%
Totals	23	100%



16.) How important is it that HfH works with other agencies on Caring for other vulnerable people

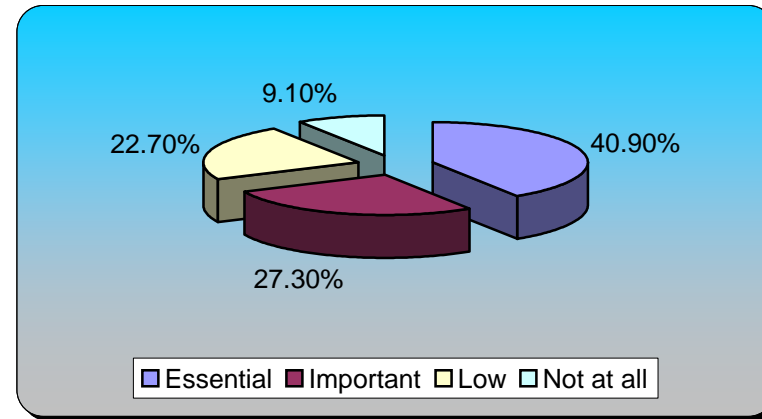
	Responses	
Essential	5	21.74%
Important	13	56.52%
Low	2	8.70%
Not at all	3	13.04%
Totals	23	100%



Aspirations: Leaseholder Panel

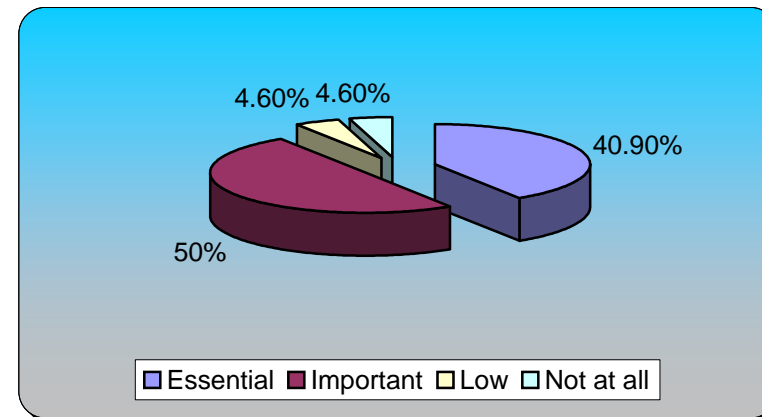
17.) How important is it that HfH works with other agencies on Education (all ages)

	Responses	
Essential	9	40.91%
Important	6	27.27%
Low	5	22.73%
Not at all	2	9.09%
Totals	22	100%



18.) How important is it that HfH works with other agencies on Building new homes

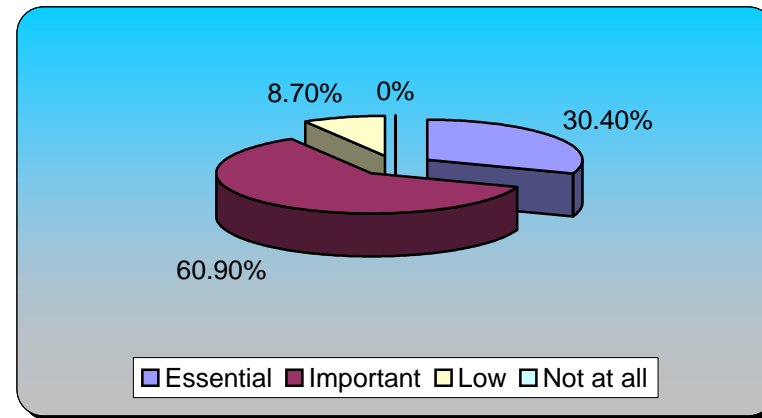
	Responses	
Essential	9	40.91%
Important	11	50%
Low	1	4.55%
Not at all	1	4.55%
Totals	22	100%



Aspirations: Leaseholder Panel

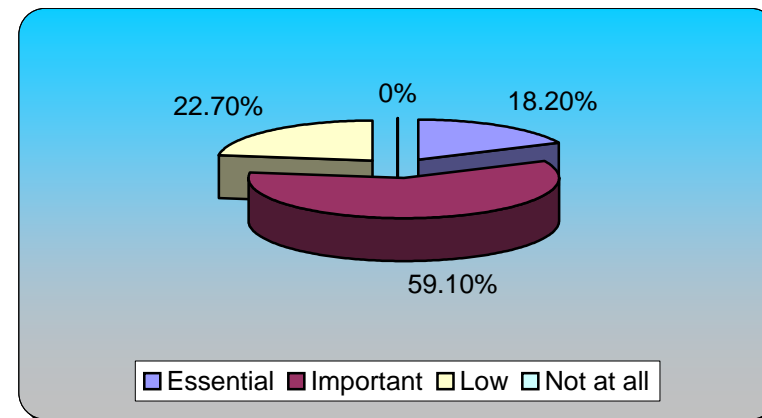
19.) How important is it that HfH works with other agencies on Regenerating neighbourhoods

	Responses	
Essential	7	30.43%
Important	14	60.87%
Low	2	8.70%
Not at all	0	0%
Totals	23	100%



20.) How important is it that HfH works with other agencies on Green issues

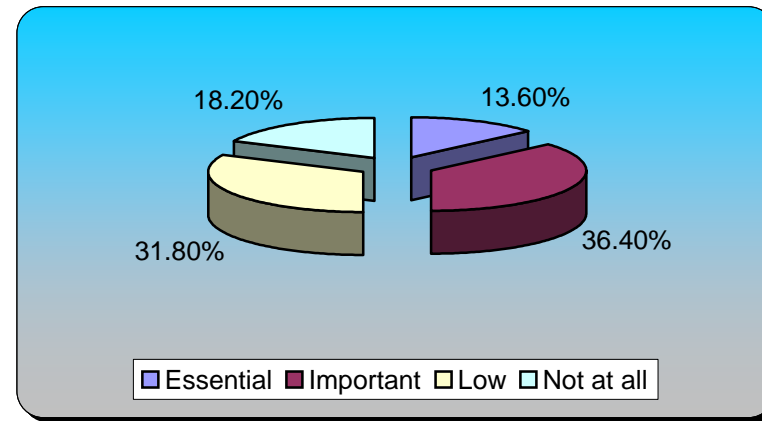
	Responses	
Essential	4	18.18%
Important	13	59.09%
Low	5	22.73%
Not at all	0	0%
Totals	22	100%



Aspirations: Leaseholder Panel

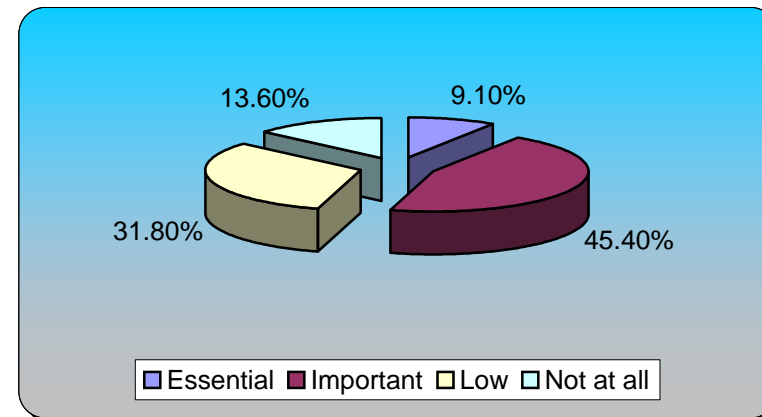
21.) How important is it that HfH works with other agencies on Improving residents' health

	Responses	
Essential	3	13.64%
Important	8	36.36%
Low	7	31.82%
Not at all	4	18.18%
Totals	22	100%



22.) How important is it that HfH works to Enable people to become home owners

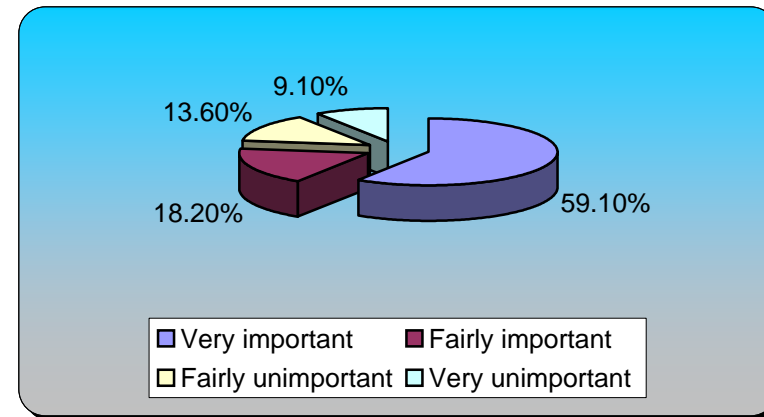
	Responses	
Essential	2	9.09%
Important	10	45.45%
Low	7	31.82%
Not at all	3	13.64%
Totals	22	100%



Aspirations: Leaseholder Panel

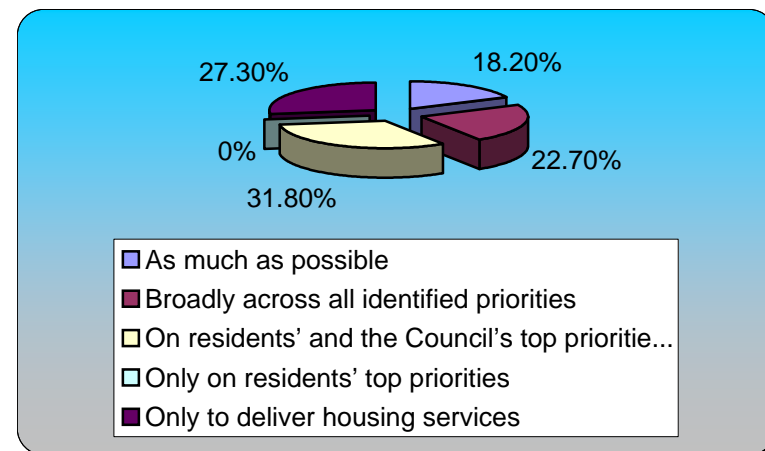
23.) How important to you is it that the work of Homes for Haringey is co-ordinated with the Council's work?

	Responses	
Very important	13	59.09%
Fairly important	4	18.18%
Fairly unimportant	3	13.64%
Very unimportant	2	9.09%
Totals	22	100%



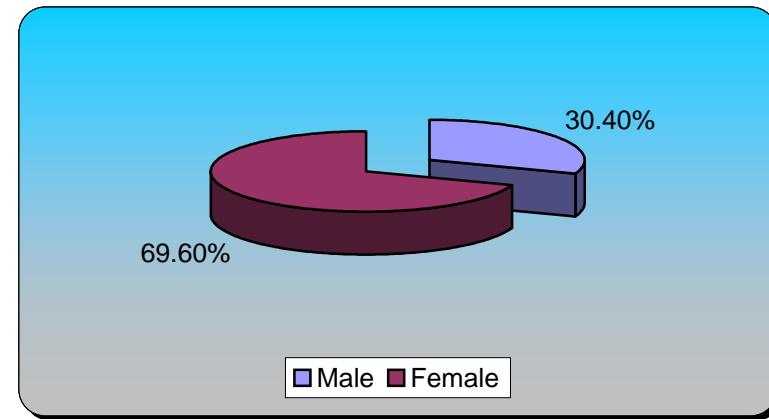
24.) How much should HfH link with other services?

	Responses	
As much as possible	4	18.18%
Broadly across all identified priorities	5	22.73%
On residents' and the Council's top priorities...	7	31.82%
Only on residents' top priorities	0	0%
Only to deliver housing services	6	27.27%
Totals	22	100%

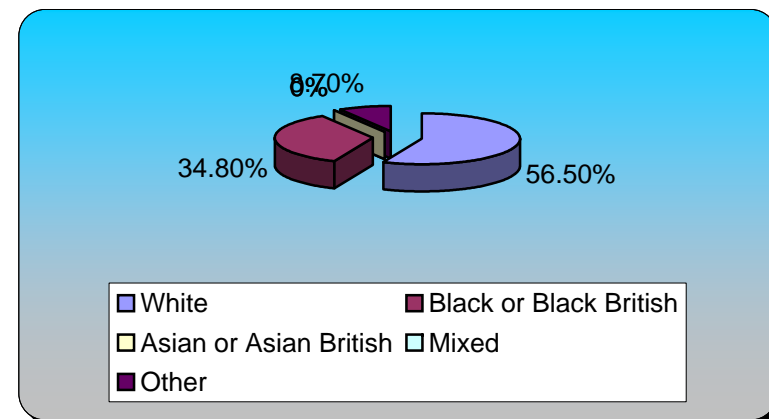


Aspirations: Leaseholder Panel

25.) Are you...	Responses	
Male	7	30.43%
Female	16	69.57%
Totals	23	100%

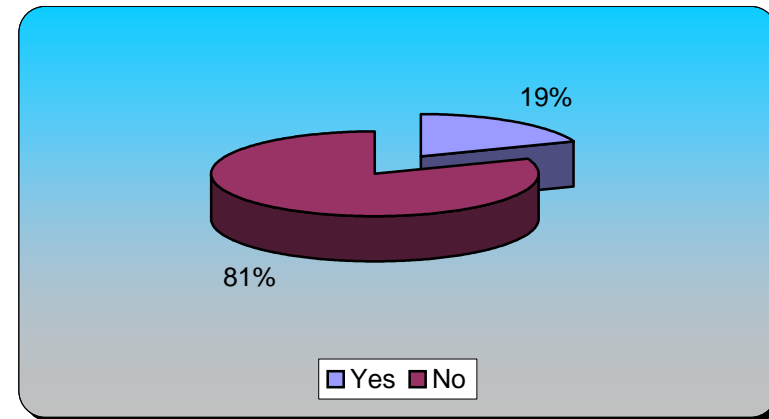


26.) Which best describes your ethnicity?	Responses	
White	13	56.52%
Black or Black British	8	34.78%
Asian or Asian British	0	0%
Mixed	0	0%
Other	2	8.70%
Totals	23	100%

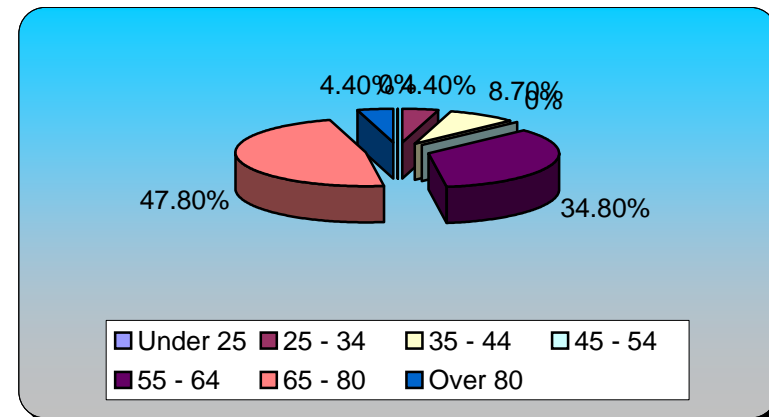


Aspirations: Leaseholder Panel

27.) Are you disabled?	Responses	
Yes	4	19.05%
No	17	80.95%
Totals	21	100%



28.) How old are you?	Responses	
Under 25	0	0%
25 - 34	1	4.35%
35 - 44	2	8.70%
45 - 54	0	0%
55 - 64	8	34.78%
65 - 80	11	47.83%
Over 80	1	4.35%
Totals	23	100%





APPENDIX 2 to the Minutes, 1 July 2009

Home Ownership Report to the Leasehold Panel, 1 July 2009

Decent Homes Year One (2008/9)

Section 20 Notices and invoices for major works

Number of Decent Homes Section 20 Notices issued for Year One

Area	AMP	Section 20 Notice Date	Number of Leaseholders
Hornsey	3	02/07/08	17
Hornsey	6	30/07/08	35
North Tottenham	5	14/05/08	29
North Tottenham	6	04/08/08*	3
North Tottenham	8	08/08/08	35
North Tottenham	9	07/08/08	21
South Tottenham	2	22/04/08	17
South Tottenham	3	22/04/08	20
South Tottenham	4	22/04/08	38
South Tottenham	5	23/05/08	42
South Tottenham	6	23/05/08	6
South Tottenham	7	17/06/08	22
South Tottenham	8	27/06/08	10
Wood Green	1	20/03/08	15
Wood Green	2	09/10/08	8
Wood Green	3	09/10/08	11
Wood Green	4	27/06/08	10
Wood Green	13	26/09/08	11
TOTAL			350

*North Tottenham 6 was withdrawn from Year One and re-issued on 26 May 2009

Number of windows permission application packs requested

Although leaseholders in Decent Homes Year One were not unfortunately not able to obtain permission to install their own windows, in August 2008 the new policy regarding permission for windows came into effect.

Area	Number of application packs requested	Number of completed applications received
Hornsey	50	2
North Tottenham	17	0
South Tottenham	60	6
Wood Green	24	3
TOTAL	151	11

Number of observations received in 08/09

Area	Number of Observations received & responded
Hornsey	49
North Tottenham	16
South Tottenham	54
Wood Green	13

Under the Section 20 legislation, an observation has to be in writing and received within 30 days starting from the date of the Notice. The above figure includes observations received for all 08/09 major works schemes, not just Decent Homes.

Site meetings attended by HOT officers

Area	Number of meetings attended by HOT
Hornsey	2
North Tottenham	1
South Tottenham	3
Wood Green	1

Number of Decent Homes invoices issued for Year One

Invoices for all properties in Decent Homes Year One were sent out on 30 March 2009. Please note that some blocks were withdrawn from Decent Homes Year One, and so the number of leaseholders who had works carried out decreased.

The total amount billed as the £3,113,905.88. The average bill was £8,928.64 (the mean. The median amount was £9,078.44).

Breakdown by Amount

Invoice	Properties
Less than £1000	62
£1000 - £2,499	17
£2,500 - £4,999	27
£5,000 - £7,499	25
£7,500 - £9,999	66
£10,000 - £14,999	76
£15,000 - £19,999	48
£20,000 - £30,000	22
TOTAL	343

Breakdown by Area

Area	Properties
Hornsey	52
North Tottenham	66
South Tottenham	155
Wood Green	70
TOTAL	343

Drop-in Sessions

As well as the booklet *Paying for major works invoices* (Hard copy was sent out with each invoice and is also available online) and telephone support, HOT arranged drop-in sessions for each area. These were held in the Civic Centre, the Eastifield Road Community Centre and the Eric Allin Community Centre. The sessions held in the Civic Centre were much better attended than those in the other venues.

Area	Date	Number of leaseholders attending
Hornsey	07/04/09	6
North Tottenham	06/04/09	1
South Tottenham	16/04/09	13
Wood Green	08/04/09	13

Billing timescale for Decent Homes Year One

Invoices were only issued once works had commenced on site.

Area	AMP	Section 20 Notice Date	Days between	Start Date	Days between	Invoice Date
Hornsey	3	02/07/08	68	08/09/08	234	30/04/09
Hornsey	6	30/07/08	75	13/10/08	199	30/04/09
North Tottenham	5	14/05/08	68	21/07/08	283	30/04/09
North Tottenham	6	04/08/08	42	15/09/08	227	30/04/09
North Tottenham	8	08/08/08	73	20/10/08	192	30/04/09
North Tottenham	9	07/08/08	74	20/10/08	192	30/04/09
South Tottenham	2	22/04/08	71	02/07/08	302	30/04/09
South Tottenham	3	22/04/08	41	02/06/08	332	30/04/09
South Tottenham	4	22/04/08	55	16/06/08	318	30/04/09
South Tottenham	5	23/05/08	38	30/06/08	304	30/04/09
South Tottenham	6	23/05/08	38	30/06/08	304	30/04/09
South Tottenham	7	17/06/08	48	04/08/08	269	30/04/09
South Tottenham	8	27/06/08	108	13/10/08	199	30/04/09
Wood Green	1	20/03/08	81	09/06/08	325	30/04/09
Wood Green	2	09/10/08	95	12/01/09	108	30/04/09
Wood Green	3	09/10/08	95	12/01/09	108	30/04/09
Wood Green	4	27/06/08	80	15/09/08	227	30/04/09
Wood Green	13	26/09/08	59	24/11/08	157	30/04/09

Take up of payment options for Decent Homes Year One

Payment Option	Applications (to date)
Full Payment with 5% discount	16
Interest-loan over 3 Years (Under £10,000)	43
Interest-loan over 3 Years (Over £10,000)	22
Mandatory Loan	4
Discretionary Loan*	1
Interest-only Loan / Deferred Loan*	0
Houseproud Loan*	1
Hardship Capping*	0
CAB Referrals	17

*Before leaseholders are considered for these options, they are referred to the Citizens Advice Bureau, who will see if they can receive financial assistance from the Department of Work & Pensions. They are also able to help them decide which payment option is best suited to their needs.

Learning Points for Home Ownership Team

Communication

- Although HfH complied with all statutory Section 20 consultation, many leaseholders complained that they only found out works were proposed for their building when the first site meeting was held.
- HfH now write to all residents, including leaseholders, at least four months before the start of the year that their property is scheduled to have Decent Homes works. HOT also have a leaseholder event for all the properties scheduled to have Decent Homes works in the coming year.
- For properties in Year Two, the workshop was held in two sessions, afternoon and evening, on 28 January 2009. 65 leaseholders indicated their intention to attend, and 45 attended over the two sessions.

Resident Satisfaction

- Leaseholders were unhappy that the Resident Satisfaction form did not include any questions on value for money, which is a key leaseholder concern.
- HOT are proposing to issue a questionnaire to leaseholders at final accounts stage. This will address leaseholders' perception of value

for money. This questionnaire will be in addition to the Resident Satisfaction form, which will continue to be sent to all residents when works are substantially complete.

Reporting to the Leasehold Panel

- HOT will provide a quarterly report to the panel with the above statistics. We will also report on final accounts: time between completion of works on site and issue of final accounts, variation between Section 20 amount and final account costs and results of HOT leaseholder questionnaire.

Mike Bester, Major Works Lead Officer

APPENDIX 3

Leasehold Panel minutes, 1 July 2009

Reply from Paul Bridge (Chief Executive) to letter on behalf of the Panel from Mrs Goodhew

15 June 2009

Dear Mrs Goodhew

Thank you for your letter dated 21st May 2009 regarding the installation of IRS systems. I am sorry for the delay in responding.

We take resident involvement very seriously and I am committed to working with you to resolve the concerns of the leaseholders you represent. In response to the specific points you have raised:

1. There is no specific legal obligation on Haringey Council to provide a full Integrated Reception System (IRS). What the Council is required to do is upgrade analogue communal aerial systems where they currently exist in order to ensure that residents who currently rely on the analogue signal will be able to receive the digital television signal after the digital switchover.

We are currently seeking further legal comment on this point and will respond to you as soon as we receive comment.

2. Homes for Haringey is preparing a report for the Council's consideration. This report covers the possibility of leaseholders being able to opt out of the full IRS installation on the understanding that the Council's policy on satellite dishes will be applied on blocks where IRS has been installed even if some residents have opted out.

This will require a policy decision from the Council but it is most likely that even if some leaseholders are allowed to opt out of having the full IRS system they will still be required to comply with the no dish policy.

3. Leaseholders are required to pay for repairs and/or improvements to their block in line with the terms of their individual leases. Homes for Haringey have carried out consultation in line with the statutory requirements and the Council's current policy.

Where residents have reinstalled dishes after the IRS systems have been installed, action will be taken by Housing Management staff in Homes for Haringey to ensure that all residents comply with the current policy.

4. We are not aware of any grant funding in this area of work available to Local Authority Landlords for the full IRS system or a more basic system. I have asked the Asset Management team to contact you and explore this in more detail; clearly if there is grant funding available we will seek to pass this benefit on to residents.

In regards to the freesat system, this is currently available for around £180 but does require the installation of a satellite dish which is currently against the Council's policy; this can therefore not be considered as an option.

5. Any price comparisons should be undertaken along side a comparison of the specification. Our research shows that the Barnet Specification is not as extensive as Haringey Council's and charges to Islington residents have been heavily subsidised and are therefore not reflective of the actual cost of installation.

However, a full review of the cost of installing the IRS system is already underway, the full work package is being tendered so we can benchmark against the current market and hopefully bring the costs down. The tendering exercise will be completed in July and the result of this may influence how the IRS works are procured and delivered across the remaining stock.

6. And 7. Currently, aerial systems in Haringey blocks are subject to a maintenance contract. This contract is 'call-out only' and there are no regular maintenance inspections or charges. The block is only charged if there is a call out to inspect or repair the aerial. When our Home Ownership Team prepare the Estimated Service Charge, we do not know how many aerial repairs each block will require. Therefore, we include an allowance of £10 per leasehold property.

At the end of the financial year, we are able to obtain the cost of any aerial repairs that were carried out and the cost of any call outs. If no aerial repairs or call outs are carried out, then this is reflected in the leaseholder's Actual Service Charge as a nil charge. A similar method is used for day-to-day repairs, whereby an allowance is included for each property in the Estimate Service Charge. If no repairs are carried out, then this is reflected when the Actual Service Charge is calculated.

Any call out required during the defects liability period will be attended by the contractor who installed the system at no cost to the Council or leaseholders.

8. And 9. For ease of delivery this work is being carried out at the same time as decent homes work; in some instances this relates to the use of scaffolding erected to deliver decent homes being used to install the IRS systems, however, there are instances where scaffolding has not been required and installations have been carried out off balconies and communal walkways.

It is the Council's intention to fund the IRS works from other capital funding that will be not impact on the funds available for decent homes works. There has been extensive consultation on the decent homes programme and this continues to be the case.

I will write to you again to confirm the outcome of the tendering exercise and how this impacts on the digital switchover issues you have raised above. In the same letter I will confirm the Council's decision on the options for delivering the digital switchover and whether or not leaseholders will be given the option to opt out.

In the meantime we will continue to consult with residents on the current works.

Thank you for taking the time to write to me and I hope you find this response useful. If you have any further queries or would like further clarification, please do not hesitate to contact either myself or our Director of Asset Management, Ola Akinfe at the River Park House address, or by email on olatayo.akinfe@homesforharingev.org.

Yours sincerely

Paul Bridge
Chief Executive
Homes for Haringey

Paul.bridge@homesforharingey.org

020 8489 4260

cc: Mike Jones, Chair - Homes for Haringey Board
Cllr Claire Kober, Leader of the Council
Cllr Robert Gorrie, Leader of the Opposition
Cllr John Bevan, Cabinet Member for Housing

APPENDIX 4

Leasehold Panel minutes, 1 July 2009

Letter in reply to Mr Bridge's letter of the 15 June, proposed by Mrs Goodhew and agreed by the Panel

121 Edgecot Grove, N15 5HH

To: Mr Paul Bridge, Chief Executive

01 July 2009

Dear Mr Bridge

The Leasehold Panel met this evening and wishes to thank you for your reply (June 15) to our letter (21 May). We have kept the same paragraph numbering for ease of communication and our response is as follows:

1. We realize that there is no legal requirement for Haringey Council to provide a full IRS to tenants and indeed we would request that you do not do so. Tenants who presently depend on their analogue communal aerials will only require basic digital tv reception. Any tenants requiring something more sophisticated will already have that capacity through whichever cable/box/satellite they have chosen. The likelihood of all their choices being covered by any IRS you install is limited and, as you aware, some tenants have already re-installed their own equipment.

The problem here is obviously closely related to the dishes/aerials being considered unsightly. We will comment further in this below.

2. You mention that Homes for Haringey is preparing a report for the Council's consideration. It doesn't seem to us that the process of full consultation with residents is going to be undertaken as part of this preparation. This is very disappointing as we have always understood that HfH Residents' Panels were set up for this purpose.

For consultation to be effective we would have expected the Leasehold Panel to have been informed considering the impact on service charges. It seems justifiable to request that we see and have the opportunity to comment on the whole report before recommendations are finalized. This would be democracy at work but it may now be too late!

The no-dish policy you mention is already written into every leasehold and tenancy agreement. It is not enforced and it would be overly costly and extremely unpopular to do so now. Satellite dishes may not be beautiful but they are part of life now and will not disappear even if by some

miracle communal IRS is totally successful because there are many private and HfH properties with no alternative access to digital ty.

3. You refer to leaseholders being required to pay for block repairs and for improvements in line with our leases. This is something of which we are very aware and would point out that we can still distinguish between fair and unfair service charges. We were very happy with the Council's recent decision to permit leaseholders to take responsibility for their own windows – a fair and reasonable option to offer.

4. We would value input from Asset Management on the question of funding and have requested an adequate explanation of why costs differ from one block to another. At the HLA AGM in March Cllr Bevan mentioned an average of £350 (presumably under Les Armstrong's plan), yet the revised invoice re IRS for Newlands House (on completion of DH works) was £791.90 ! These two approaches and their costs should raise questions from councillors. We understand from an e-mail yesterday from Ola Akinfe that this problem has been acknowledged but there will still be the question of compensation for those leaseholders who have been overcharged within the DHP. Why should they suffer?

5. We are pleased that a review of the cost of installing IRS is under way but we understand that this is the continuation of the original IRS procurement under Les Armstrong. This programme is something about which the Panel has been informed and updated and we are represented in the procurement process, but we were not represented or consulted over the work currently being done within the DHP. Hopefully the Council will bring the latter to a halt.

6. Your answer does not cover our reference to Newlands House where they have already had an annual maintenance charge of £10 per flat for 2009/10 on top of the extortionate installation charge referred to under 4 above. Why is there an immediate maintenance charge? Why is there no ongoing guarantee ?

7. We now understand that the switchover of any IRS system will of necessity occur immediately on completion.

8 and 9. Thank you for your reassurances re the DH budget. We sincerely hope that the Council will fulfil its intention to fund IRS from other capital funding. We realize that the consultation over the DHP was extensive. Many leaseholders gave up valuable time to be part of that process but at no time in the course of that consultation were we made aware that digital tv provision would be included in the DHP. Indeed it should not have been included as obviously there was no control over the costs—something which the DH procurement process would have examined closely.

We would point out that scaffolding is rarely necessary as it is perfectly possible to use a bosun's chair for IRS installation – Twyford House is a good example.

You will be aware that as a panel we have rallied support from councilors and many others. This is a very sore subject as far as we are concerned. Leaseholders cannot afford these charges and are being put under tremendous pressures that they do not deserve. The length of this response underlines the strength and depth of our concerns.

We still wish to see your aforementioned report and we look forward to a more favourable response to this situation.

Yours sincerely

Anne Goodhew

Deputy Chair, Leasehold Panel

cc: Mike Jones, Chair - Homes for Haringey Board
Cllr Claire Kober, Leader of the Council
Cllr Robert Gorrie, Leader of the Opposition
Cllr John Bevan, Cabinet Member for Housing

APPENDIX 5

Leasehold Panel minutes, 1 July 2009

Email and press release provided to the Panel by Mrs Goodhew to provide them with information on the subject of the proposed deputation

From: Cllr Davies Matt [<mailto:Matt.Davies@haringey.gov.uk>]
Sent: 29 June 2009 11:14
To: annegoodhew@btinternet.com
Cc: Paul Dennison; robert.gorrie@haringeylibdems.org
Subject: RE: Haringey Liberal Democrat News Release - Revealed: Residents forced to pay ten times more for digital aerials than neighbouring boroughs

Dear Anne

Below is a press release that we have issued to local media.

One of the papers (Haringey Independent) is looking to speak to a leaseholder in following up the story - would you be happy to talk to them? If so, please let Paul Dennison in the Lib Dem office (copied above) have a contact number he can pass on to them. Or if you prefer then ask Paul for their number to call.

I am meeting with the director of housing at the council tonight and will raise this with him. I am also meeting the HfH chief executive next week, along with Lib Dem colleagues on the HfH board, with the aerial charges being the main issue for discussion.

Depending on the outcome of those discussions, might you be interested in making a deputation to Full Council on July 20th? I can take you through the details of that if you are interested - if you haven't seen one of these before, it's essentially a chance to put your argument to all councillors for 5 minutes.

Best wishes

Matt

Cllr Matt Davies
Lib Dem Housing Spokesperson

-----Original Message-----

From: Paul Dennison <pmdennison.haringeylibdems@gmail.com>
Sent: 29 June 2009 10:35
Subject: Haringey Liberal Democrat News Release - Revealed: Residents forced to pay ten times more for digital aerials than neighbouring boroughs

NEWS RELEASE

Date: 29 June 2009

Contact: Paul Dennison 020 8489 2950

Revealed: Residents forced to pay ten times more for digital aerials than neighbouring boroughs

It has emerged that all local leaseholders in Haringey are being forced to pay up to £800 each for the installation of digital aerials without an option to opt out of the scheme. Haringey Council is obliged under central government legislation to provide digital access to all tenants but has decided to pass on large costs to leaseholders even if they do not want services or already have digital access through cable or telephone service providers.

Local Liberal Democrats, who calling for an opt-out clause, have branded the charging system "unacceptable" and have highlighted similar schemes in Islington and Barnet where leaseholders have an opt-out clause and costs are much lower. In Islington the cost is a one-off fee of £75.

Liberal Democrats are backing local leaseholders' associations in their fight against the charges and have said that the Council needs to listen to leaseholders and change the scheme.

Cllr Matt Davies, Liberal Democrat Housing spokesperson, comments:

"These charges are totally unacceptable. For too long Haringey Council have been using leaseholders as a cash-cow but this time they have gone too far.

"Not only are they failing to give leaseholders any say in whether they want this service but they are charging up to ten times more than other boroughs."

Lynne Featherstone MP adds:

"Leaseholders already have to pay large sums of money in maintenance and work carried out by Homes for Haringey yet, at any given opportunity, they are asked to dig into their pockets. In a time of recession this is just not on.

"Homes for Haringey need to re-consider this unfair policy. If they fail to act, Haringey Council should use their powers of direction to make them."

ENDS

* *

- Information from Islington Council shows that leaseholders are able to opt out of the digital aerial scheme and if they want to access the service the Council charges £75. **
- Every local authority in London has the duty to provide access to digital services before the digital switchover in 2012.**