

## **Leaseholders Meeting**

**Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> July 2011**

### **Cosmopolitan Housing Association**

#### **Attendees:**

Georgie Ryan	Development Assistant
Craig Fallon	Leaseholder
Veronica Ronald	Leaseholder
Dorothy Oakes	Leaseholder
Mrs M Garrett	Leaseholder
L Traynor	Leaseholder
Kathleen Hibbs	Redwood Close
Mary Hitchell	Redwood Close
John Melbourne	Leaseholder
P Davies	Leaseholder
Pat Prendergast	Leaseholder
M Loh	Leaseholder
Tracy Loh	Leaseholder
Colin Pickles	Leaseholder
Mr and Mrs Fletcher	Leaseholder
Joanne Oliver	Home Ownership Manager
Sarah Navis	Home Ownership Assistant

#### **Welcome & Introductions**

JO introduced the attendees from Cosmopolitan Housing and asked the leaseholders to introduce themselves.

JO went onto explaining that the purpose of the meeting was for general information and various announcements.

#### **Leaseholders Handbook**

JO began by expressing her appreciation for the valuable input the leaseholders had with the handbook.

The handbook was introduced after Leaseholders suggested that it would be a valuable tool when someone purchases a shared ownership property to explain what both the leaseholder and lessee duties would be and give an overview of shared ownership.

JO explained that the leaseholder handbook would soon be available in different formats, including on disk and via email.

### **Service Improvement Plan (SIP)**

JO informed the residents that the SIP was designed to improve our organisation and how we perform. The leaseholders are encouraged to become involved in these to assist us in improving the areas that affect them and to give Cosmopolitan Housing Association honest feedback.

It was agreed that since the plan was put into place in April of 2010 various suggestions previously made by leaseholders have been addressed including the introduction of the leaseholder handbook.

Leaseholders should continue to provide CHA with honest feedback to assist with continual improvement and if they feel we are not providing the service that they want.

JM (Banbury Court) announced to the group that he and other residents hold a neighbourhood watch meeting every 2 – 3 months in order to involve / familiarise themselves with the wider community with Cosmopolitan staff and a representative of the police attending.

It was reported that this has been a great success as various matters have been resolved and there is a greater sense of community.

### **Site Visits / Leaseholders Surgery**

The Home Ownership Team staff visit sites and inform leaseholders by letter of the time and date they will be there twice a year. This allows leaseholders to book a time slot to talk to staff face to face and voice any queries they have regarding their home / surrounding area.

JO acknowledged that weekdays may not be convenient for all leaseholders due to work commitments etc and therefore an arrangement has been put in place whereby, staff will carry out once visit on a weekdays and one visit during a weekends. (Example: The first six months of the year meetings will take place on weekdays and the last six months weekends.)

JO asked the leaseholders whether they would prefer the next meeting to be held in a more social environment. Leaseholders feel that a structured meeting is more beneficial; however, this could be reviewed if more leaseholders join the group.

### **Annual Report**

JO encouraged the leaseholders to have input into CHA's next Annual Report, providing information on the improvements that have been made and on the ongoing community support offered by leaseholders / Cosmopolitan and the local police force. If anyone would like to become involved in this please contact the Home Ownership Team on 0151 227 3716.

## **Assettrust Housing**

JO announced that CHA are selling their interest in the Shared Ownership leases to a company called Asset Trust. CHA have done this in order to free up funds in order that they can fund new developments.

JO explained that this only affects Shared Ownership Leaseholders and does not affect clients that purchased under Shared Ownership for the Elderly.

JO reassured the leaseholders that nothing will change with their lease, CHA will act as a managing agent to Asset Trust, and therefore Leaseholders should not see and changes.

This change does not restrict you as the leaseholder; you will still have the same rights that are contained in your lease. The only change will be that your lease is no longer with Cosmopolitan Housing Association but with Asset Trust.

Questions asked by Leaseholders:

Can we still staircase?

Yes your rights regarding the lease will remain the same.

The best way that I can explain it to you is that Cosmopolitan Housing Association is selling its share in the lease is similar to a leaseholder changing their mortgage company.

Why is the shared ownership for the elderly not affected by this change?

This is due to us already having sold the maximum equity that we can to the leaseholders and only retaining a small amount to stipulate an age restriction on the properties.

Will mortgage companies be concerned by this change?

No - as the lease remains the same they share the equity now with Asset Trust instead of Cosmopolitan.

## **Open Questions and Answer**

### **WHY IS IT THAT THE LEASEHOLDER CANNOT PAY A SERVICE CHARGE AND RECEIVE GAS SAFETY CHECKS ETC IF THEY CHOOSE TO?**

Discussions have begun in regards to this being an option to each property owner. I would point out that we cannot go any further with this until after our merger with CDHT.

In the meantime, a list of valued contractors has been produced in order for leaseholders to get work estimated free (including gas servicing) and completed at a reasonable rate as per leaseholders request – refer to the handbook.

### **WHY ARE LEASEHOLDER RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL REPAIRS?**

Although Cosmopolitan Housing Association own a percentage of your house this is to assist lower income clients onto the property ladder. All the normal responsibilities of owning your home are the same. This includes repairing and maintaining, purchasing contents insurance, paying all of the bills etc. There is an exception with flats/apartments were we are responsible for carrying out repairs to the communal areas by way of a management company (repairs are at the owners expense and are recovered via service charges)

### **CAN COSMOPOLITAN PROVIDE CONTENTS INSURANCE?**

This is something that we can look into once the merger with CDHT has gone through.