



Metropolitan Housing Partnership

National Residents Group

Business Plan
2010 – 2011



NRG and the Resident Involvement Strategy Manager at a development week-end March 2010

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Introduction from the Chair – Anne Travers

We have gone from strength to strength during the last year. We have had visits from many senior people in the organisation, including the Chair of the MHP Board Barbara Roche, and Chief Executive Bill Payne to name but a few. Members were invited to make a presentation to the MHP Board which we hope to repeat later in the year. We aim to continue with our emphasis on communication and to raise our profile even further during these difficult financial times in order to ensure that MHP customers receive the service they desire and deserve.

Annual Report

We have turned a corner in how we view ourselves and our place within MHP. There is much more confidence about being able to achieve meaningful outcomes in resident involvement and working with MHP staff. Individuals are much more assured about the changes they make and have transferred this into to the group working well together. Throughout MHP, staff are much more willing to work with us and are well aware of a difference in the level of knowledge and commitment. The group will work hard to continue this transformation.

Currently, as of 31 March 2010, we have 10 members in the group. The group began the year with 12 members, however, one member left the group because of non-attendance due to other commitments and another resigned because of ill health. We decided would be able to continue to carry out our duties with present members.

For these 10 members there are a number of roles to be carried out which are set out in the table below:

Roles of NRG members			
Officers	Chair	Secretary	Treasurer
Themes – lead on:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anti-social behaviour / respect • Resident Involvement - holistic • Sheltered/Supported /Housing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communications • Diversity • Sustainability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Management Policy • Achieving excellence - ACE • Community Investment
Internal representation	Customer First Committee	Resident Involvement Working Group	Various other
External representation	National Tenant Voice	TAROE	Various other

To carry out the themed roles, the members have 'job descriptions' which define the roles, and give leads on staff contacts, sources of information including trade press and websites, and where to find support. We are all 'tenant' members of the Chartered

Institute of Housing and can access policy from the CIH website as well as receiving Inside Housing magazine. We attend such meetings as the Customer First Committee, Resident Involvement Working Group, ACE Scrutiny Panel and Value for Money, Diversity Network, ASB group, Voids, Maintenance groups, and a number of others.

The objectives of the group:

We annually review the group's objectives which are set out in our terms of reference, most recently in October 2009. These are then used to guide the group over the coming year. They are:

- work in partnership with MHP and all its member organisations and be the voice of customers
- have membership on and work with MHP's Customer First Committee
- have links with involvement structures within each member organisation and help achieve good working relations between each organisation and its involvement structure
- have links with and involve other parts of MHP e.g. Community Investment
- ensure that each customer has equal opportunity to get involved in shaping policies, procedures and strategy, as well as the decisions taken in the day-to-day management of homes and overall strategic decision-making process
- assist MHP and its staff in the formulation of policies, service delivery, strategies and other appropriate activity
- consider reports and recommendations with regard to MHP service provision and respond if appropriate
- have a scrutinising role over MHP's involvement activities and structures
- reply to consultation from the Government and any other relevant bodies
- have links to other national residents' groups i.e. TAROE and TPAS
- Take part and get involved in the activities of the 'National Tenants Voice'.

All of the agendas and minutes, as well as Terms of reference and key operational documents, are available on the NRG website www.mhp-nrg.org.

Key Achievements 2009/10

In the 2009/10 plan, we set out our objectives for that year. Seven Saturday meetings were arranged, 3 of which had afternoon sessions of the years 1 and 2 Development programme. Added to this there were 2 development weekends at Trafford Hall with 2 full Saturday's training and the Friday evening and Sunday mornings being taken up with reviewing the Terms of reference and other operational documents. Four of us also attended the TPAS annual conference and hosted the NRG stall. There was a lot of interest in the group and its structure and activities from other tenants.

- ***Building links with involvement structure in member organisations***

We have all continued our membership and links with the groups that recommended us to the NRG, including reporting back to individual meetings about NRG activities. Where invited, members have attended events and meetings where there is no direct link. This has helped all customers become more aware of the 'MHP family' and what

the Partnership achieves together, as well as showing them that their input can both make a difference locally and nationally. Three of us also attended the MHP Board to give a presentation in order to feedback on customers' concerns and priorities for the organisation. There will be future dates for this interlinking.

- *Developing the second year of our Development programme*

We finished our first year of the Development programme in May 2009. This encompassed working together, effective working, effective governance, resident involvement, the wider world and who else is out there. The intention was to achieve an overall understanding of what is involved in customer involvement in social housing and how the group functions within that. The proposal for the second year was to look at all these aspects in a much more detailed way (see below for programme outline). The intended outcome has been to enable the NRG to challenge constructively the service provided by MHP and its member organisations. There has been a marked shift in how we question the senior officers that come to our meetings and how this eventually changes the way services are provided.



Some of the group in receipt of 'achievement' certs after finishing year 1 of the development programme

What the group covered in the second year of the programme:

- Housing and Regeneration Act
 - Tenant Services Authority, Homes and Community Agency and the National Tenant Voice and how all fit in
 - Type of Social Housing Provider e.g. council, housing association, co-operative etc.
 - Customer Involvement Structures in various organisations
- MHP's fit in all of the above
- Customer Involvement Structure in MHP
- What customer involvement structure to expect in a housing association group structure and how does MHP compare?
- Importance of Performance Indicators
- Housing inspection
- NRG as managers
- Time management
- Networking
- Working through groups
- Role as managers with area committees, TRA's and individual residents
- Worldview of tenants and housing
- Housing in the UK as a comparison to 3 other countries



NRG at the final session of Year 2 Development, Trafford Hall 20 March 2010

- TSA 6 Standards and Local offers
- The NRG and governance, a comparison to all sections of year 2 learning
- *Annual 1-2-1's and producing a detailed report on our skills.*
Interviews were carried out with members over March by the Resident Involvement Strategy Manager. The report identified how well we have developed over the preceding year and how we have taken up the challenge. A full copy can be found at www.mhp-nrg.org. The report's findings are used to help map out development for the group over the following year and to identify any individual training needs.
- *Continuing to have senior members of staff visit our meetings*
This was one of our strong performances over the year and we had a large number of MHP staff who came to fill us in on issues such as the strategic direction of MHP and the diversity strategy. The full list of attendees and a brief outline of why they came is listed below:

Barbara Roche – Chair of MHP	Came to introduce herself and to discuss her priorities for MHP and get feedback from the group, as well as to point out the priority to put customers first.	Bill Payne - Chief Executive Officer	An annual visit to let the group know what happened in the last year and the strategic approach that MHP will take over the coming year.
Priya Mitchell – Equalities Advisor	To give a training session on diversity, including Equality Impact Assessments, to further the group's understanding as part of our commitment to our 'Diversity statement'.	Howard Webber – Chair, Customer First Committee	Came to explore how the group worked and the fit with the Customer First Committee.
Guy Record – Chief Financial Officer	To review the proposed business planning and strategic intent of MHP and get feedback and the opinion of the group.	Rommel Pereira – Chief Operating Officer	Came to the 'Meet and Greet' to let the group know how the ACE programme was progressing.
Mark Sharman – Group finance Director	As part of the group's development programme, Mark held a session on MHP's finances and how rents are.	Kate Russell – Director of Policy and Performance	Kate came twice to the group. Firstly to ask the group to be involved in Community Involvement governance and secondly, to explain the planning to implement the 6 regulatory standards in MHP.
Neil Mawson – Managing Director MHT London	Neil explained how the Ace for Homes project would work and the idea	James Warne – Director of Asset Management MHT	Came to relay plans within MHT London on the implementation of the

	of the Chart, Challenge and Change process.	London	Decent Home standard.
Colin Thomas – Head Performance and Planning	Came to the ‘Meet and Greet’ to explain how the group can get more involved in policy consultation and the workings of Policy and Performance.	Michael Downie – AD Community Investment	Came to the group to further the idea of governance for Community Investment decisions and how that would work.
Mary Dowling – Head of Communications	Mary attended the ‘Meet and Greet’ to detail the communications plan for the year and how to connect with residents.	Corinne Seymour – Head Learning & Organisational Development	Corinne attended with Matt Hart to explain how a ‘Customer Learning Zone’ could be set up with e-learning modules available to MHP customers.
Mark Harrison – Diversity Strategy Manager	Mark met the group twice, once to consult on the content of the Diversity strategy and again to update the group on Diversity Network.	David Short – Financial Inclusion Manager	At the ‘Meet and Greet’ David explained to the group what programmes are in place to further financial inclusion for residents future plans.
Matt Bush – Sustainability Manager	With Seb Junemann, Matt at various meetings discussed key sustainability projects and obtained feedback from the group.	Sarah Keaney – Continuous Improvement Manager	Sarah came to the group to explain how long-standing complaints in MHP were being dealt with and to consult on better models of complaint handling.
Lesley Gordon – Publications Manager	With Mary Dowling, Lesley gave the group a training session on writing skills and producing effective reports.	Pat Goldfeather – Customer Service Development Manager	Pat detailed at the ‘Meet and Greet’ the development of the ‘Resident Inspectors and Mystery shoppers’ programme.

- *Holding a ‘Meet and Greet’ with key staff*

As identified in the table above, a ‘Meet and Greet’ was arranged in which a number of staff came to discuss with us their roles and plans for the year ahead. This included a number of the Policy and Performance (P&P) team and central service staff. Outcomes included a commitment from P&P to send the P&P bART to us to update us on the launch of new policies etc), an assessment of the feasibility of P&P undertaking more policy compliance



Bill Payne, CEO, and Kate Russell, Dir P&P, at the NRG 06 March 2010

checks, and a formal invite to the Maintenance Group Away Days in September 2009 (which 2 NRG members attended). Other commitments included our suggestion that staff have a clearer explanation as to why MHP collects data on sexuality when collating diversity strands so that they can pass this on to customers, and that communications send a regular update publication dates for internal and external magazines. It was also agreed that the Diversity Network meetings would be held earlier in the day in order for the NRG member with that theme to attend.

- *Receiving Resident inspection reports*

The Customer Service Development manager regularly visits us to discuss amalgamated reports on findings of Resident Inspectors and Mystery shoppers. Each NRG member can also receive the individual report for their particular organisation. As the programme develops, we, along with the Customer First Committee, will begin to direct the inspectors as to which service area of the organisation they would like to see checked next. Also, the 'action' plan and outcomes of each member organisation's reports will be shared with the NRG.

- *Ensuring policies and strategies put us at the heart of involvement*

We continued to monitor the work plan of the MHP Resident Involvement Strategy, helped to write up the Involvement statement and reviewed the Involvement policy. We were also consulted on and agreed the Equality and Diversity strategy and a number of policies including the Aids and HIV, Childcare and Carers expenses, Vulnerable Residents and Housing Serious Offenders.

- *Continuing our work with the Customer First committee*

Two of us continue to be members of the renewed Customer First Committee (formerly Q&A) and take an active part in both its meetings and other activities outside of the formal setting. The Chair of the group has also visited us during the year to outline the committee's future plans and to seek ways for the two groups to work better together.

- *External Training and Events attended 08/09*

We are encouraged to further our development and enhance the internal training by attending sessions and conferences related to our themes. The following events were attended by members of the group:

Date	Conference/Training	Organisers	Attendee
03/04/2009	Anti-social behaviour training	MHP	Alan Jones
08/04/2009	ACE R/SU Training	L&D	Michael Barron
09/06/2009	NTV consultation	TPAS 0161 868 3550	Alan Jones and Terry Curtis
12/06/2009	NTV consultation	TPAS 0161 868 3550	Ken Armstrong and Anne Travers
17/06/2009	ACE R/SU Training	L&D	Elsbeth Anderson
19/06/2009	ACE RSU training Managers only	MHP L&D	Elsbeth Anderson
23/06/2009	TSA - Phase 2 National		Anne Travers with

	conversation		Francis
27/06/2009	Writing skills	MHP Comms	June, Terry C, Anne, Michael, Mary, Alan, Ken, Stephanie
01/07/2009	ACE R/SU Training	L&D	Ken Armstrong
03/07/2009	Introduction to Housing Association Finance NHF	020 7067 1066	Elspeth Anderson
17/07/2009	ASB Petitioners Forum		Alan, June
20/07/2009	ACE RSU training Managers only	MHP L&D	Anne Travers
31/07 to 02/08/09	TPAS Conference	TPAS 0161 868 3550	Anne Travers, Mary Burt, Michael Barron, Elspeth
03/09/2009	TSA Phase 2 end	TSA	Mary
08/09/2009	InStep Regional Conference	InStep 0500 844 1111	Mary
17/09/2009	Writing Skills (staff)	L&D MHP	Michael Barron
13/10/2009	InStep Regional Conference	InStep 0500 844 1111	Michael, Ken
24-25/09/2009	Decent Homes Away days	Claudette/Maintenance	Terry C, Michael
04/10/2009	Power point -1/2 hour workshop	Francis 1088	All
24/10/2009	Diversity Training/guidance	Pryia	All
05/11/2009	TPAS Conference		Elspeth, Mary
11/11/2009	Community Crime Fighters' event	Home office?	Alan
25/11/2009	ASB Crime Fighting event	Home Office	Alan
26/11/2009	InStep Regional Conference	InStep 0500 844 1111	Alan, June
25/01/2010	AntiSocial Tenants conference	Capita 0207960 7721	Alan, June
02-04/03/10	From Recession to Recovery - CIH SE conference	Ocean media group 02476 571100	Mary, Anne

- *Being at the heart of the National Tenant Voice*

Residents have taken an active role in National Tenant Voice meetings, attending consultation events across the country and throughout the year as well as keeping a close eye through the media and www. We supported Anne Travers, our Chair who stood for election to the council and managed to get through to the final interviews. We will continue to follow developments and attend conferences when held.



Elspeth, Anne, and Mary along with Francis (RISM) at the TPAS conference August 2009

What the future holds

We have agreed a budget with MHP to continue our work within the organisation and provide equal or greater achievements for 2010/11. We have been prudent over the year and have made a saving on previous years while continuing our wide variety of work. We set out our budget below.

NRG Budget 2010/11

Member expenses	600.00	x 12 mth	7,200.00
Planned meetings	1000 x 10		10,000.00
NRG Group Training	(ring fenced and includes 2 week-end in Trafford Hall as both development and training events)		5,000.00
Other training and Conference fees			7,000.00
NRG IT	laptops, printers, software, readers		2,000.00
Publications (business plan etc)			500.00
RI Volunteer awards (ring fenced) x5 and costs			5,000.00
Contingency			1,000.00
TOTAL			£ 37,700.00

Communications Plan

The group is aware that communications are highlighted as poor when discussing with customers and that MHP struggles to get a consistent message out to all of MHP. We also believe that internally, between staff and different member organisations, there is need for improvement. As a group we also need to improve on our communications with each other and ensure that we are getting the message across. Our Communication Plan shows the way we intend to communicate our priorities to the MHP community.

It has three overarching priorities:

- continue to 'Up the ante' of the group so that we, and our aims, are known throughout the Partnership and the resident involvement community, both internally and externally
- improve communications between ourselves by contacting each other outside of meetings and discussing important future plans, and
- increase links between resident involvement groups within MHP, ensuring that we grow together and are held in esteem and as meaningful partners within MHP.



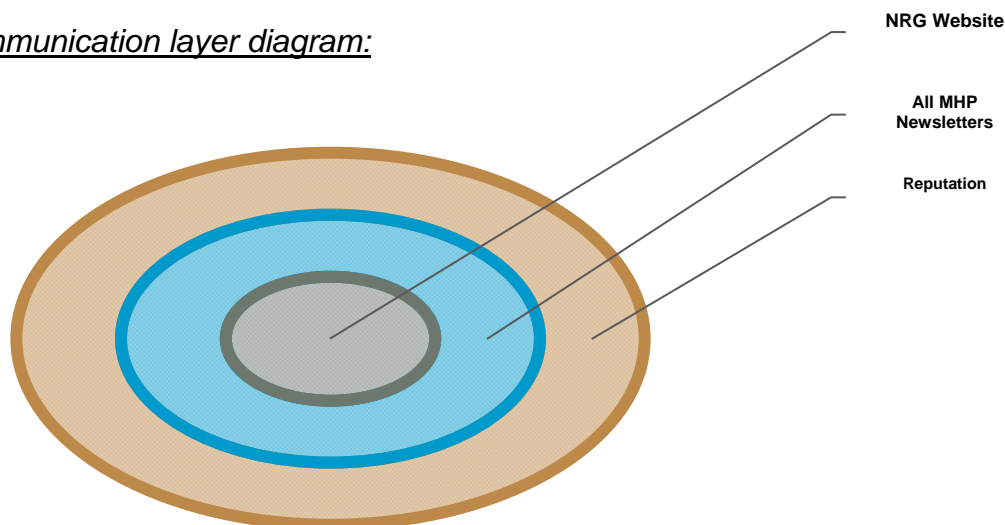
Mary Dowling, Head of Communications, discusses MHP's plans at the Meet and Greet July 2009

We continue to have 3 key themes for our plan:

- **Communication**
- **Partnerships/knowledge**
- **Championing residents' rights.**

We will use our communication plan to continuously push and improve on our priorities and 3 key themes. To do this we will utilise our website (www.mhp-nrg.org) as our main tool, then MHP websites and newsletters and finally reputation and word of mouth.

Communication layer diagram:



We continue to develop our website and in the last year have added a forum for customers to discuss issues outside the normal involvement process. We have also added all our past agendas, minutes and reports among several other improvements.

The NRG website front page (www.mhp-nrg.org)



Plans for 2010/11

Over the coming year we intend to keep up a very busy schedule and we want to continue to be at the heart of developments within resident involvement. We intend to:

Objective	Outcome
1. Implementation of the 6 Tenant Service Authority's service standards and their corresponding local offers.	6 MHP standards in place with an oversight of local offers which will be overseen by local involvement structures.
2. Prepare for the selection of 3 new members to the group by interview – 2 from MHP-wide and one from the care side October 2010.	Three new members selected and integrated into the group by October 2010. A buddy system will be in place to help them settle in and any training need identified and beginning.
3. Improve the communications within the group.	Group members are better prepared for meetings and work better as a team.
4. Work to improve communications within MHP for customers as a whole.	Products will be far more customer focussed to get the message across from the Group, member organisations and MHP.

5. Hold an annual Meet and Greet with key members of staff.	Objectives agreed between the group and key staff to the benefit of customers.
6. Continue our development as a group, training and attending conferences including a stall at the TPAS conference.	Have attended 2 weekends at Trafford Hall similar to last year, developed contacts from TPAS and increased general knowledge. Visited organisations with similar groups as ourselves.
7. Oversee the work of Resident Inspectors and mystery shoppers and ensure that customer-led scrutiny is robust in MHP.	Based on customer feedback, continue to guide inspectors to check service delivery and receive reports back on MHP's improvements.
8. Strengthen our links to governance.	Attend the MHP board regularly, board members visit NRG and meet chairs of the member organisations.
9. Help build the capacity and knowledge of customer involvement structures throughout MHP.	Increase in number of customers involved and local activity. Have encouraged involvement staff to provide training and more guidance for customers. This to be achieved through RIWG, Meet and Greet etc.
10. Build understanding of the MHP structure and how the NRG fit into that.	Better communication of the group with CFC, RIWG, ASP etc.

Present NRG and their roles



Elspeth lives in Brixton, London and is the current Chair of Clapham Park Homes Resident Panel. She joined the group in September 2008 as one of the 2 members for Clapham Park Homes. Her theme for the NRG is ACE, Achieving Excellence, which she leads along with Anne Travers. Clapham Park is an estate in South London, once owned by Lambeth Council. Nine years ago it became part of the Governments New Deal for Communities and the residents decided to run the estate ourselves. Three years ago it became an RSL Housing Association in partnership with Metropolitan Housing.

elspeth@elspethanderson.com



Michael is one of the group's Spirita representatives, joining in September 2008. He has been a resident of Spirita and its predecessors for over 8 years. His areas of responsibility within the NRG are Sustainability, Voids and Repairs. Michael has been a member of the Spirita West Committee for over 3 years. Before early retirement Michael served in the armed forces and then worked for the Royal Mail. Michael.barron@sky.com



Mary has lived on the Roundshaw estate for more than a quarter of a century and still going strong. Over the last seven years she has been an active member of the Roundshaw Community Board. She has also worked on the NRG for the past five years reaching the dizzy heights of treasurer. The theme that Mary has within the NRG is Customer First Committee, which feeds directly into the main board, and works on other sub committees. A lady not to be messed with. marykburt@hotmail.com



Terry is from Brixton in London where he is chair of the St Martins Board. Since joining the NRG in 2008 has become our scribe taking notes at all our meetings (hopefully). He has moved swiftly from Housing Management Policy (yawn) to the new and more interesting post of Community Involvement. He also works with many other committees outside the NRG. Terrycurtis_15@hotmail.com



Daniel joined the NRG in early 2007 and in September 2008 became an Independent member representing Sheltered and Supported Housing. Daniel is a very caring and considerate person. He is also responsible for the NRG website which has recently been re-vamped. If he sees a person struggling he will go to their assistance and he puts others first.



Alan has been a member of NRG since Sept 2008. Alan is the lead NRG portfolio holder for Anti-social behaviour. He is very conscientious in attending conferences and meetings and writes readable and comprehensive reports on those meetings. He does considerable research on ASB and passes on the latest information to both other customers and managers.



Terry is now coming to the end of his second year of his first term on the National Residents' Group. He represents the Diversity theme within the NRG and regularly attends the Diversity Network made up of staff from throughout the Metropolitan Housing Partnership. Terry's route on to the NRG was from MHT London, where he robustly chairs his local tenants and residents association. He uses his experience and knowledge from his work to look for better compliance on the DDA. We encourage Terry to ramp it up. terrymc_9091@hotmail.com



Stephanie has been on the National Residents' Group for nearly two years and represents MHT London. Communications is Stephanie's theme and she regularly meets the MHP Communications team with the NRG message as well as assisting on communication with MHP's customers. Steph is a regular good neighbour in Molly Huggins Close where she lives and is actively involved with its TRA. On top of all this, Steph is also a minister for her local church and uses her soothing influence to steady the NRG.



June belongs to the Granta Group and lives in Cambridge. June has been a member of the NRG for the past 3 years and has good attendance at our meetings. June is one of the NRG members represented on the Customer First Committee and is also the NRG member for Anti-social behaviour. June sits on various local committees for Granta, she has a wicked sense of humour especially when she has had a few drinks. June also provides us with great refreshments for our longer journeys. june.HT@btinternet.com



Anne lives in Long Eaton, Nottingham and has been on the NRG for the past five years. For the past 18 months Anne has been the Chair and represents the Spirita Group. Mother of 4 and grandmother of 6 Anne is a chef at Nottingham Trent University and works tirelessly for both the NRG and her local community. Anne is one of the 2 NRG representatives dealing with the ACE theme. She has a good sense of humour, is good natured and easy to get along with. annetravers@talktalk.net

Contacting the NRG

You can contact the NRG at any time by e-mailing them direct or filling in the contact form at the following link: <http://www.mhp-nrg.org/contactus.html>

You can also write:

c/o the Resident Involvement Team
Metropolitan Housing Partnership
2nd Floor, Cambridge House
109 Mayes Road
Wood Green
London N22 6UR

Or e-mail - residentinvolvement@mht.co.uk