



Metropolitan Housing Partnership (MHP)

National Residents Group (NRG)

Terms of Reference

2009/10

(Agreed at NRG Development week-end 02-04 October 2009 at Trafford Hall – Disciplinary procedure added 24/10/09)

Table of Contents

1. VISION	3
2. OBJECTIVES	3
3. SCOPE	3
4. STAKEHOLDERS	3
5. RESOURCES	4
6. MEETINGS, REPORTS, MINUTES AND AGENDAS	4
7. ROLES	4
ROLE TABLE	4
GENERIC JOB DESCRIPTION:	5
8. KNOWLEDGE AND COMPETENCIES	6
SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE:	6
COMPETENCIES	7
9. MHP'S NATIONAL RESIDENTS GROUP DEVELOPMENT TRAINING YEAR 1	7
10. MHP NATIONAL RESIDENTS GROUP DEVELOPMENT TRAINING YEAR 2	10
11. TRAINING PROGRAMME MATRIX	11
12. COMPETENCIES IN DETAIL	12
13. CONSTITUTION (04/10/09)	18
14. NRG EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY STATEMENT	20
15. NATIONAL RESIDENTS GROUP CODE OF CONDUCT	21
17. NRG DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE	23
16. NRG CONFERENCE/EVENT/TRAINING BOOKING PROCEDURE	25
17. NRG – EXPENSES CLAIM MENU	26
18. NRG STRUCTURE CHARTS	27
ROLE	27
MEMBERSHIP SOURCE AND INDIVIDUAL ROLES	27
19. STAFF WORK WITH RESIDENTS PROTOCOL	28
20. COMPUTER OR OTHER EQUIPMENT AGREEMENT OWNED BY MHP	29

1. Vision

The NRG's vision is to continuously improve services provided to customers ('customer' is used as a general term to describe all our tenants, leaseholders, service users, intermediate renters etc.) by MHP. It will do this by working in partnership with MHP to increase involvement, involvement activities and access to involvement activities.

2. Objectives

The Groups objectives are to:

- 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'

3. Scope

The Group will be involved in assisting and scrutinising any involvement activities in MHP and its member organisations and helping to improve housing management activity. This is to be done in co-operation with staff within the Partnership. Guidance and advice will be provided by the Resident Involvement Strategy Manager based in Policy and Performance.

4. Stakeholders

- All customers who have a relationship with MHP;
- Metropolitan Housing Partnership board, the member organisation boards, staff and staff groups and relevant committees including the Customer First Committee;

- Resident and Service User Groups and Board and Committee members.

5. Resources

The Group will receive an annual grant from MHP to carry out its activities and reimburse members expenses. The Resident Involvement Strategy Manager will apply for outside grants for other activities that the group may wish to take up.

MHP will provide an annual training programme based on individual's identified learning needs and those of the whole Group.

The MHP Resident Involvement Strategy Manager will provide support and advice, facilitate meetings and keep the Group informed about developments in the national resident involvement arena and other relevant areas.

6. Meetings, reports, minutes and agendas

- The Group shall meet six times a year bi-monthly. The meeting may be split into up to 3 parts where necessary – Part 1 Sub Groups, Part 2 the main NRG meeting and Part 3 Training or an information session;
- Where needed the group will meet on an extra date;
- The Secretary of the Group will be responsible for taking the minutes and actions and sending to all attendees within 2 weeks of the meeting;
- The agendas will be set by the Chair and Resident Involvement Strategy Manager at least 2 weeks prior to each meeting. The agenda items will be informed by the NRG members as a group from the previous meeting, suggestions from individual NRG members in between meetings, requests from involvement structures within partner businesses, MHP's requests and government activity;
- Reports will be written in good time and if possible sent out with the meetings notice and paperwork;
- The mail-out for meetings will be done 7 days prior to it and will be done in co-ordination of the Groups Officers and the Resident Involvement Strategy Manager.

7. Roles

The NRG members work together as a group and the main role is to speak with one voice. However in order to cover all the necessary elements that make up the modern housing movement each member will have a role within the group whether that of an officer or representing the groups views and lead on a housing/service theme. The table below sets out what these are:

Role Table

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 and 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

(see below for the information in a structure chart)

To do this it is necessary to have a job description and although members are volunteers it is vital to recognise that there is an important function to each role and why it is important to fulfil. Set here is universal attributes for each role and all responsibilities will be set out in full job description documents:

Generic Job Description:

- Maintain good working relationships with:
 - MHP and partner boards and staff, in particular the involvement staff
 - Resident Involvement Strategy Manager
 - Involvement structures in the partner businesses and its members
 - External bodies that the group may get involved with
 - Each other
- Develop role:
 - Get to know the Policy and Performance staff member who is related to your role and develop a mentor/partner relationship. Do the same if there is a relevant staff member in any MHP member organisation
 - Where it exists, attend relevant focus/or other meetings e.g. Diversity Strategy Group
 - Develop relevant contact with customers who have expressed an interest in your theme and who have no other route for this interest. This may include creating a sub-group or an e-mail corresponding group.
 - Read relevant publications and source and attend training/conferences on the subject
 - Enhance the role to become an expert from the point of view of MHP customers
- Businesslike:

- Read reports and prepare for NRG and other meetings
- Prepare anything you need to report to the group in good time and ensure it is sent to the involvement staff for mail-out 7 days prior to a meeting
- Report back to your involvement structure NRG relevant issues and in turn report relevant issues from your involvement structure to the NRG
- Follow the Code of Conduct and other governance rules
- Attend training with the NRG and take part
- Ad hoc
 - Help your colleagues in their role and work as a group

8. Knowledge and Competencies

The NRG is an important part of the involvement and governance structure relationship of MHP and as such members need to have skills and knowledge to reflect their role. MHP will support NRG members to achieve the required standard and a training programme will be developed for the group. The following knowledge and competencies are required for customers working at this level within the organisation:

(E: Essential L: Prepared to learn D: Desirable)

Skills and Knowledge:

- Social Housing

Up to date on Social housing & proposals for future	L
What is the role and remit of Housing Associations	E
Historic perspective	D
History of MHP and how the partnership works	L

- IT and written

Be able to use Microsoft office, in particular word	E
Able to send and receive emails	E
Be able to write fluent and concise reports	E
Be able to read and understand written reports	E

- Working in groups

Group processes and how they form / Dynamics	L
Ability to work with group members and staff avoiding conflict	L
Roles of officers (Chair, Secretary, Treasurer)	L
Committee skills	L
How the Local Committees and other groups fit in and their role	L
Meet with & work alongside other groups i.e. Local Committees,	L

other involvement groups, the Board etc	
Able to represent the group both to the member organisation and others i.e. TPAS	D
Ability to become a representative for the group i.e. RIWG NRG rep	D

- Training – See Appendix 1

Prepared to take training where required	E
Attend group training sessions in order to become more effective	E

Competencies (all essential) – See Appendix 2

- Professional and Ethical Practice
- Customer focus
- Teamwork
- Effective communication and influence
- Commitment and Drive
- Planning and Organising
- Confidence and Judgement

9. MHP's National Residents Group Development Training Year 1

The following table sets out the proposal of main themes and aim of the development sessions. For further details of the sessions run, please look at the actual programme.

Bi-monthly meetings	Sub headings of training
Diversity	Monitor the equality and diversity of the programme in particular impact and outcomes.
Logs	Devise a log system where NRG members can keep a record of their development throughout the programme. This should be an initial assessment of where they are now and then an updated assessment at the end of the year. This will assist in further training/development in the second year.
Meeting 1 – October 13:45 – 17:00	<p>This session should be designed for a new group as this will be their first time working together. All members should have the basic skills and this session will need to concentrate on learning together as a group.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the NRG's role within MHP <p>A brief introduction into the session, recapping on what they are here for and the group's responsibilities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is resident involvement, including its history <p>A brief outline of where the concept of resident involvement/tenant participation</p>

	<p>came from and its successes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Officer roles and committee skills <p>Basic responsibilities of the Chair, Treasurer and Secretary as well as how committee members fit in.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to have effective meetings <p>They will be able to read agendas and minutes as well as how to get the meanings from reports. They will also realise the importance of coming prepared (eg. reading all paperwork before attendance and doing all the work they agreed). Include ground rules on behaviour and their Code of Conduct.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listening and communication skills <p>Attendees will know how to communicate and listen in a group setting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing skills <p>When doing some work for the group, how best to get their message across.</p>
<p>Meeting 2 – December</p> <p>13:45 – 17:00</p>	<p>This session will again concentrate on the group working together, giving them valuable tools to identify where things may go wrong and how they can improve their own and the group’s techniques.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Terms of reference and other policies and procedures <p>A detailed look at the ‘NRG’s Terms of Reference 2008’ showing them the detail of involvement needed to work well within MHP.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group processes <p>How groups form, storm, norm and perform; when not to worry about upheaval in groups and when to know when it is becoming disruptive.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time management <p>Meetings are 3 to 4 hours long every two months – how to fit in everything and how to get better prepared.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritising <p>How to decide on what should be done first, as well as a look of what is not worth doing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management roles/skills <p>What is needed to be a manager in their position? Where the interpersonal, information and decision-making roles lie and with whom.</p>
<p>Meeting 3 – February</p> <p>13:45 – 17:00</p>	<p>This session will concentrate on governance and being privy to confidential information.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MHP and its group structure – a brief on all partners <p>Attendees will understand the group structure of MHP and how each partner organisation fits into it.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nature of governance <p>How Housing Associations are governed, the board structure and how the NRG fits into this from a legal perspective.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confidentiality – code of conduct <p>What is expected of members when privy to confidential information from MHP; a detailed look at the NRG’s own code.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk management and data protection

	<p>How to minimise risk associated with confidential information including data protection legislation. How to ensure their website is relevant and not using photos etc where they should not.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government policy <p>What are the latest initiatives from government – The Regeneration and Housing Bill, Tenant Services Authority, Tenants voice etc</p>
<p>Meeting 4 – April</p> <p>13:45 – 17:00</p>	<p>This session concentrates on the MHP group structure and how it deals with resident involvement in all of its activities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RI structures in the businesses – boards etc <p>Why is there a MHP board and three other boards? What do they do and who is ultimately responsible for what?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NRG and its relationship with RI structures <p>What is the relationship with the local RI structures to their boards and how does the NRG fit into this.</p> <p>Resident involvement in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing management • Repairs and maintenance • Allocations and lettings • ASB • Resident Involvement
Meeting 5	<p>What are the external factors that MHP and the NRG have to be aware of and who are we answerable to?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political climate <p>What do politics and Housing Associations have in common?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic climate <p>The credit crunch, American mortgages, investment – why do these things affect how many homes a Housing Association can build or rent?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing finance <p>Where does the money come from?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing legislation <p>What is happening to affect housing at the moment?</p>
Meeting 6	<p>Is the National Residents Group alone? This session is about all the other tenants groups that are out there and what they do. Including;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenants Voice • TPAS • TAROE

10. MHP National Residents Group Development Training Year 2

The following table sets out the proposal of main themes and aim of the development sessions. For further details of the sessions run, please look at the actual programme.

Bi-monthly meetings	Sub headings of training
Diversity	Monitor the equality and diversity of the programme in particular impact and outcomes.
Logs	Log book – the concept of the members logging their learning and how they have put it to use to continue. However, Engage need to look at how this could become compulsory and/or used in each session. An explanation of what the log is for, how to populate it and when it is required, to be added to the log book itself.
Session 1 – 6 hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A quick overview of year 1, bearing in mind there will be 3 members new to the programme. • Housing and Regeneration Act <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ TSA, HCA (to a lesser extent) and the NTV and how all fit in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What the 3 organisations do and their purpose, in particular to resident involvement and to the act. ○ Type of Social housing Provider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What is and what are the differences of Housing Associations, Council housing, ALMO's, Co-ops and others. In particular what is the governance and their legal structure in relation to how they work, funding and regulation. ○ RI Structures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What are their RI structures and what type of organisation do they affiliate to i.e. Co-op's to CCH. Has the credit crunch adversely affected RI? • MHP – fit <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ How is MHP fitting into all of this? ○ What is it's funding and an in-depth look into yearly accounts and rent revenue
Session 2 – 3 hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RI Structure in MHP <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Details of the RI structure in MHP ○ What RI structure would you normally expect to see in a group structure and how does MHP match up to this? Are the NRG the only type of national organisation? • Housing inspection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A look at MHP's resident inspectors and what they do and compare to the role of the Audit Commission and SNI's, why they expect and what are they outcomes • Importance of PI's <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What does MHP do and how important is it
Session 3 – 3 hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NRG as managers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Time management ○ Networking

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Skills for meeting the right people <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Working through groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Group processes and how the NRG are working together ▪ Dealing with conflict and knowing how to compromise • Role as managers with area committees, TRA's and individual residents
Session 4 – 6 hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worldview of tenants and housing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The International Union of tenants and their relationship with UK groups ○ What else is out there • Housing in the UK as a comparison to 3 other countries <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Compare three countries to UK housing and RI • The NRG and governance, a comparison to all sections of year 2 learning. What could the NRG do differently? • Overview of what was learned in year 2

All participants who attend the courses will receive a certificate, setting out the areas covered during the course.

11. Training Programme Matrix

Personal Development	How MHP Works	External Impacts
<i>Communication Skills</i>	<i>Partnership</i>	<i>Overall</i>
Listening	Businesses in the partnership – boards etc	Political climate
Effective Meetings	RI structure in the businesses	Economic Climate
<i>Team Working</i>	The NRG 'fit'	History of Social Housing
Effective Meetings	<i>Housing Management</i>	Housing finance
Personal Contribution	Repairs and Maintenance	Housing legislation
Group Processes	Housing Management Allocations and Lettings	
Time Management	ASB policy/procedures	
Prioritising		
<i>Governance</i>	Capital Programme	<i>Business Concepts</i>
Role of the area committee	Decent Homes	
Role of Officers		TPAS and other wider organisations
Committee Skills	<i>Support Services</i>	Best Value
Nature of governance	MSN Office – Word	Budgets
Relationships	E-mail	
Resident Involvement	WWW	

Community Investment
Role of Partner Landlord
board member v Area
committee
Accountability
Conduct
Confidentiality
Representation

Writing and reading
reports

Business planning and
setting objectives

12. Competencies in detail

Professional and ethical practice

Working to the highest professional and ethical standards in order to provide an excellent service

What you should do in any NRG role

1. Take responsibility for your work

- Take ownership for delivery of your own work
- Take responsibility for all your actions
- Own up to your mistakes and learn from them
- Assess your own performance, acting on feedback from others
- Make the effort to continually learn and develop new skills

2. Treat others with respect

- Treat people as individuals, with fairness, objectivity and equity
- Respect diversity
- Be aware of your own prejudices and learn how to minimise them
- Be discrete and keep personal information confidential
- Give credit where credit is due

3. Be dependable and trustworthy

- Be punctual, reliable and trustworthy
- Only promise what you can deliver and keep your promises

4. Behave ethically

- Challenge unethical or dishonest behaviour
- Declare any interests you may have
- Find out about your responsibilities in legislation governing anti discriminatory practice and fulfil them

What you should not do in any NRG role

- ❑ Break your promises
- ❑ Focus only on your own needs and interests
- ❑ Cover up mistakes to save your back
- ❑ Gossip about others' private lives (customers or colleagues)
- ❑ Criticise the organisation openly to outside agencies and customers
- ❑ Take credit for success without acknowledging others

Customer focus

Providing an excellent service to customers inside and outside MHP

What you should do in any NRG role

1. Treat all customers with respect

- ❑ Identify yourself
- ❑ Listen actively to all customers, arranging for an interpreter if necessary
- ❑ Communicate clearly and courteously with all customers, taking into account their diverse needs and circumstances
- ❑ Deal with all customers fairly and equitably
- ❑ Respond to all enquiries promptly, in a positive and helpful manner, with a “can do” attitude
- ❑ Try to see things from the customer's point of view
- ❑ Keep customers informed
- ❑ Keep appointments or inform customers promptly if you become unable to attend a meeting
- ❑ Keep customer information confidential, in accordance with policy
- ❑ Apologise for any mistakes or delays

2. Deal proactively with customer needs and problems

- ❑ Anticipate and monitor customer needs
- ❑ Adapt to the varying circumstances and needs of customers
- ❑ Take responsibility for responding to customer needs and solving customer problems, only referring them to others when it is genuinely appropriate
- ❑ Involve staff and/or services when this will benefit the customer
- ❑ Accept the customer's right to complain and deal with complaints professionally

What you should also do, if applicable to your NRG role

3. Seek and act upon customer feedback

- ❑ Listen to customers' views and respond to them
- ❑ Actively request customer feedback
- ❑ Act constructively on both positive and negative feedback

4. Continually improve customer service

- ❑ Develop ideas about how to improve policies, procedures and service delivery

- Work with others to put into practice agreed improvements

What you should not do in any NRG role

- Treat customers disrespectfully
- Make assumptions about customers rather than finding out their needs
- Use jargon, bureaucracy and red tape
- Make promises to customers that cannot be delivered
- Ignore customer feedback and take negative feedback personally

Teamwork

Working cooperatively and supportively with all colleagues

What you should do in any NRG role

1. Cooperate with others

- Treat all NRG members with courtesy, tact and diplomacy, respecting their differences and feelings
- Build effective working relationships with all NRG members
- Pull your weight, putting in extra effort to share the load willingly
- Work with others to ensure projects and tasks are completed on time
- Identify what others need to know and keep them informed

2. Offer support

- Help out when others need it
- Create time to think through issues with others, using their skills and making them feel valued
- Proactively share your knowledge, expertise and ideas with others

3. Work to improve NRG effectiveness

- Take a “can do” approach to achieving NRG goals
- Speak positively of others
- Give praise and credit when due
- Proactively give and receive feedback to improve performance
- Help to resolve conflict and disagreements

What you should also do, if applicable to your NRG role

4. Contribute effectively to cross-functional teams

- Regularly maintain networks and contacts
- Work cooperatively with others across organisational boundaries
- Initiate meetings with colleagues and partners to share information
- Contribute knowledge, expertise and ideas to cross-functional team meetings

What you should not do in any NRG role

- ❑ Avoid doing your fair share or helping others
- ❑ Be cynical and damage NRG morale
- ❑ Be only interested in the NRG
- ❑ Make negative comments about others
- ❑ Cooperate selectively in accordance with your own personal interests or objectives
- ❑ See yourself as better than others and fail to respect their contribution

Effective Communication and influence
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Communicating clearly and persuasively with people inside and outside MHP

What you should do in any NRG role

1. Communicate clearly and concisely

- ❑ Speak clearly, without using jargon
- ❑ Write clearly and concisely
- ❑ Listen actively
- ❑ Check that you have been understood
- ❑ Use humour appropriately

2. Adapt your approach

- ❑ Present yourself appropriately for the occasion or situation (e.g. dress)
- ❑ Use the most appropriate method of communicating for the audience and occasion
- ❑ Respect, and take into account, cultural differences
- ❑ Take into account others views and needs

What you should also do, if applicable to your NRG role

3. Negotiate win/wins

- ❑ Produce supportive evidence and accurate information to support your case
- ❑ Explain and justify your point of view and objectively discuss options
- ❑ Anticipate counter arguments and obstacles
- ❑ Emphasise the benefits of proposals

4. Exert influence inside and outside the partnership

- ❑ Build productive working relationships with people inside and outside the organisation, if appropriate to your NRG role
- ❑ Network with counterparts in other organisations, if appropriate to your NRG role

What you should not do in any NRG role

- ❑ Use only one style or approach
- ❑ Listen without hearing

- ❑ Present information in an unclear way
- ❑ Consider compromise as losing
- ❑ Give in too easily

Commitment and drive

Striving for excellence in everything you do

What you should do in any NRG role

1. Work conscientiously

- ❑ Plan and organise your work and meet deadlines
- ❑ Set and achieve high standards
- ❑ Make sure you understand NRG objectives and targets
- ❑ Focus on targets and do whatever needs to be done to achieve them

2. Take the initiative

- ❑ Anticipate problems and take action to avert them
- ❑ Accept ownership of problems and take action without having to be asked
- ❑ Take personal responsibility for seeing things through

3. Work dynamically and energetically

- ❑ Take things forward with a “can do” attitude
- ❑ Switch from project to project and be engaged in each one
- ❑ Seek opportunities to continually develop your skills and knowledge

What you should also do, if applicable to your NRG role

4. Set and meet challenging goals

- ❑ Question the status quo in order to identify better ways of doing things
- ❑ Take an interest in new ideas
- ❑ Embrace and adapt to change
- ❑ Look out for the impact of change on others and support them through it
- ❑ Help to identify barriers to change and seek ways to overcome them

What you should not do in any NRG role

- ❑ Walk away from problems
- ❑ Accept low standards from yourself or others
- ❑ Go through the motions
- ❑ Be unenthusiastic or negative
- ❑ Show no interest in learning about the organisation’s work outside of your own area
- ❑ Be inflexible and resistant to change
- ❑ Undermine new ways of doing things

Planning and organising

Defining priorities and organising yourself so that you can deliver them

What you should do in any NRG role

1. Organise yourself

- Ensure that your records are up to date and accurate
- Know where information is and how to find it
- Make time to regularly organise your paperwork and computer files
- Read all meeting papers before attending
- Be punctual for all appointments
- Aim to get things right first time

2. Set priorities

- Make sure you are clear about your NRG priorities
- Regularly review and update priorities in the light of new demands and your NRG work

3. Plan your day to day NRG tasks

- Focus on priorities
- Do the most difficult tasks first
- Try to control interruptions

What you should not do in any NRG role

- Be unable to find anything
- Work from day to day with no overall plan or focus
- Allow yourself to be interrupted constantly
- Produce rushed, poor quality work as you have not set aside enough time to do it properly
- Be regularly late and unprepared for appointments
- Focus on the immediate, easy tasks, putting off those that are more difficult

Confidence and judgement

Making clear decisions and dealing positively with challenges

What you should do in any NRG role

1. Focus on the positive

- Look to solve problems rather than create them
- Be flexible in your approach
- Be open to suggestions and new ideas

2. Make clear decisions

- Make clear decisions at appropriate times and stand by them

- ❑ Give yourself time to identify possible options when making a decision
- ❑ Know when you must consult with others
- ❑ Refer a matter to someone else when they will be able to handle it better than you
- ❑ Ask for advice when you are not sure what action to take

3. Manage feelings

- ❑ Stay calm and in control
- ❑ Absorb others' feelings and anxieties
- ❑ Express doubts and concerns
- ❑ Know when to stop and be able to switch off

4. Manage conflict and setbacks

- ❑ Deal with conflict constructively
- ❑ Stand by difficult decisions
- ❑ Anticipate problems and plan for how you will deal with them

What you should not do in any job role

- ❑ Get defensive or aggressive
- ❑ Dither about what action to take
- ❑ Rush into making a decision just to get the problem out of the way
- ❑ Avoid asking for help when you need it
- ❑ Ignore conflict and hope that it will go away
- ❑ Work beyond your limits and make errors of judgment out of tiredness

13. Constitution (04/10/09)



Metropolitan Housing Partnership (MHP) National Residents Group (NRG)

1. NAME

The name of the group is MHP's National Resident Group.

2. AIMS

- a) To represent all the customers who have a relationship with MHP and/or one of the member organisations; Clapham Park Homes (CPH), Metropolitan Housing Trust (MHT), Metropolitan Support Trust (MST), Granta or Spirita, and any regeneration project;
- b) To work in partnership with MHP to ensure that customers have adequate and meaningful opportunities to shape and improve the services they receive from MHP;
- c) To promote the exercise of customers' rights in involvement activity, both statutory and any other that MHP provides. To include a scrutinising role of the membership organisations involvement structures and activity;
- d) To encourage involvement activities both nationally and locally which will be open to all customers;
- e) To uphold equal opportunities and work for good relations amongst all customers within MHP.

3. MEMBERSHIP

- a) Membership of the Group shall be open to all customers with a relationship with MHP as stated in 2.a, with only 1 member from each household;
- b) There will be up to 16 representatives/members consisting of: 3 from MHT, 3 from Spirita, 2 from CPH, 2 from Granta, 2 from MST, 2 from regeneration projects (maximum 1 from any 1 and where there are more than 2 applicants interviews will take place) and 2 selected members to fill any resident profile or knowledge shortage in the group;
- c) Individual member organisation Involvement structures will select or elect their representatives using competencies and skills requirements set for the group and based on the diversity of MHP's residents. This will be done in time for the start of the Groups 2 year term;
- d) Membership will be for one 2 year term and each representative must subject themselves to re-election/selection if they want to stay on the Group. No member can stay on the group for more than two continuous 2 year terms;
- e) All Group members must attend the training programme provided each year;
- f) Any member of the group can be suspended by a relevant MHP member of staff where they are being investigated for breaches of tenancy, anti-social behaviour, breaking the law or suspected misbehaviour within the group. This suspension can be as long as the investigation;
- g) Membership will cease if a member; gives up or loses their tenancy, is in breach of tenancy including rent arrears, resigns, fails to attend meetings or training without sufficient reason, they become a member of MHP's, CPH's, MHT London's, MST's, Granta's or Spirita's board or an employee of MHP;
- h) If vacancies occur the Group will decide whether to replace them by an interview process or wait till the end of the term;
- i) In view of the potential conflict of interest no staff member of MHP or board member of MHP, CPH, MHT London, MST, Granta or Spirita shall be a member of the Group.

4. MANAGEMENT

- a) The Group will meet at least 6 times a year. The session will be divided in two, with meetings in one half and training or an information session in the other;
- b) The Group shall have a Chair, Secretary and Treasurer who will be elected by the Group at the first meeting after selection/election. Their term shall be for the same as the group, 2 years;
- c) Group members will represent customers including; representing customers at corporate and national level, work with staff to ensure continuous improvements in MHP's work in particular involvement, take up a 'theme' representing a particular business area e.g. ASB and become an expert in advising MHP staff on it from a customer perspective, sit on other relevant groups e.g. the Resident Involvement Working Group;
- d) When on NRG business, representatives must ensure any views put forward are those that have been agreed by the Group as a whole;
- e) The Group may create a sub-committee to further particular items. The sub-committee can include NRG selected individuals that are not NRG members and who have specialist knowledge in a particular area and/or from under-represented customers. These can be other customers or people with specialist knowledge and do not make up more than a quarter of the sub-group, the rest will be NRG members.

5. AFFILIATION

In agreement with MHP's Resident Involvement Strategy Manager the Group may affiliate to relevant external organisations.

6. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETINGS

- a) The Group shall call one Annual General Meeting for the purposes of receiving the Annual Report or Business Plan of the Group and the statement of accounts; of accepting the resignations of the Group and its Officers at the end of a 2 year term. The meeting will take place after one and two years from election/selection. The meeting can consist of the group and the Resident Involvement Strategy

Manager or can be attached to the annual Resident Involvement conference organised by the Resident Involvement Strategy Manager.

- b) The group will summarise their expenditure, budget, activities and plans as well as any changes in their constitution and/or Terms of Reference annually in MHP-wide and local resident magazines.

7. CONDUCT OF BUSINESS

- a) At all meetings the Code of Conduct agreed by MHP's Resident Involvement Working Group, or an alternative Code of Conduct agreed with the Resident Involvement Strategy Manager, shall be observed. A breach could result in the removal of that member from the meeting;
- b) All decisions should be by consensus. Where this is not possible it shall be taken by a simple majority of those members present and voting;
- c) The quorum for the Groups meetings, shall be 50%;
- d) The Group must operate as a completely non-political organisation;
- e) Copies of annual accounts, annual reports, attendance lists, and minutes of meetings must be sent within two weeks of completion of paperwork or meeting, to the Resident Involvement Strategy Manager;
- f) Where a guest or staff member has been invited to a meeting, a copy of agenda and papers will be sent to them before and a copy of the minutes shall be sent after;
- g) Upon receiving a request for a copy of the Constitution the Secretary must send out a copy within seven days.
- h) Not less than 28 days notice shall be given to each member of the NRG for changes to this constitution. The proposed change/s will be put in writing and sent to each member seven days prior to the meeting. Changes shall be agreed by not less than a 2/3 majority of those attending the meeting. The constitution will be ratified at each AGM.

8. FINANCE

- a) All monies raised by or on behalf of the Group shall be applied to further the aims of the Group and for no other purpose.
- b) The Treasurer shall keep proper accounts of the finances of the Group.
- c) The Treasurer shall present to each Annual General Meeting a written account of the finances of the group showing its income, expenditure and balances.

This Constitution was adopted as the Constitution of MHP's National Resident Group at a meeting held at _____ on _____ on will be reviewed each on around this date.

Signed _____ (Chair) _____ (Secretary)

Signed _____ (MHP Resident Involvement Manager)

14. NRG Equality and Diversity Statement

The NRG aims to fully reflect and represent the interests of customers to assist MHP in building 'better homes and stronger communities'. The NRG recognises that customers of MHP come from diverse communities and will ensure that the group is aware of and takes regard of the MHP Diversity strategy. It seeks to actively encourage the participation of all individuals to ensure that the views of the NRG are truly representative.

The NRG will make all reasonable arrangements to facilitate the inclusion of all customers, regardless of the following, this list is not exhaustive:

- **Race**
- **Gender**
- **Religion or Belief**
- **Sexual Orientation**
- **Disability**
- **Age**

The NRG is committed to ensuring that it develops and maintains the necessary skills and awareness of equality issues amongst its members to enable the group to meet MHP's commitment to community cohesion. They will do this by having regular updates from the Diversity Strategy manager at their meetings as well as taking relevant training sessions.

15. National Residents Group Code of Conduct

For committee members of the National Residents Group (NRG)

1. Purpose of the Code of Conduct
This Code of Conduct explains how members are expected to carry out their duties. Members should be mindful at all times that they are representing the views of MHP customers. All members are expected to abide by the following rules.
2. Confidentiality
The business of the NRG may involve members dealing with issues that may be of a sensitive and/or controversial nature.
 - Members must exercise discretion and care in performing their duties and responsibilities;
 - If confidential information is discussed it must not be passed on to anyone who is not a member unless otherwise agreed at a NRG meeting;
 - When committee members leave or resign from the NRG, they are expected to continue to act with discretion and not disclose confidential information they were party to during their term of office as a NRG member;
 - Upon leaving the NRG, members must return all equipment and confidential paperwork.
3. Conduct of meetings
Members must at all times observe accepted practice while taking part in a meeting:
 - To arrive on time for meetings and observe the NRG meeting ground rules;
 - To follow the guidance of the Chair in the conduct of the meeting;
 - To be courteous to each other and support and assist other members in seeking the best possible solution to problems being discussed;
 - To allow each other the opportunity to speak and comment;

- To remember that the purpose of the meeting is to benefit customers generally and not specific individuals. Personal issues should not be raised;
- Not to speak on behalf of the NRG outside of meetings without prior agreement from the group.

4. Externally

Members will at all times pay due respect to the NRG and individual members.

5. Conflict of interest

NRG members:

- Must not expect favourable treatment by MHP staff, nor should they be treated any less favourably: e.g. completion of repairs or housing allocations etc;
- Must use current MHP procedures when reporting repairs, problems and in making complaints etc;
- Must disclose if they have an interest in any contracts being awarded by MHP, for example if they have a close relative working for a company bidding for a repairs contract. In these circumstances, individual NRG members must abstain from discussions and decisions about an item in which they have a personal, financial or material interest.

6. Partnership

- NRG members, MHP staff and other partners should at all time work in an atmosphere of mutual respect and courtesy;
- When dealing on behalf of the NRG with MHP or a member organisation or other relevant organisations, the NRG committee members must ensure that any views they put forward have been agreed at properly convened meetings of the group;
- Committee members expressing personal opinions outside of NRG meetings must ensure that they do so strictly in a personal capacity.

6. Equality & Diversity

- The NRG has an Equality & Diversity statement which every member must adhere to.
- No NRG members will discriminate against any other NRG member, member of MHP staff or other partners. Discriminatory language or behaviour will not be tolerated and could result in disciplinary action.

7. Constitution

It is important for NRG members to be aware of the constitution of the NRG and adhere to it at all times.

8. Attendance

NRG committee members are expected to regularly attend NRG meetings. Non attendance at three meetings without prior notification could lead to an individual no

longer being considered as a member of the NRG. Attempts will be made by MHP staff and other NRG members to make contact with absent members.

9. Breach of Code of Conduct

Breaches of the Code of Conduct will result in a member being subject to the NRG disciplinary procedure which could result in suspension or dismissal from the NRG committee

Declaration

I _____ (please print name) hereby confirm that I have read and understood the National Residents Group's Code of Conduct. I agree to abide by the Code of Conduct at all times during my membership of the group.

Signed _____

Date _____

17. NRG Disciplinary Procedure

[Item 3f of the Constitution is separate and is not subject to this procedure – this is to ensure that the NRG is able to continue to function despite members been unwilling or unable to invoke this procedure]

Introduction:

1. All members of the NRG are subject to the NRG Code of Conduct whether they have signed it or not;
2. The Disciplinary Procedure will only be invoked where there is no alternative route and is hoped will be used as an aid to right a problem rather than to punish;
3. Under section 9 of the Code of Conduct a breach can/will result in the use of the Disciplinary procedure.

Invoking the procedure:

4. Where a member breaches the Code of Conduct a proposal will be put to the next meeting of the NRG that a member should be subject to the Code of Conduct:
 - The proposer can be a member of the NRG or any stakeholder of the group;
 - A vote of the group and a majority will confirm this course of action;
 - The person will then be asked to leave the meeting and the group will decide to:
 - a. Suspend the member from the group immediately and prepare to convene a disciplinary; or

- b. If the breach was not as serious, for the member to continue in the meeting and convene a disciplinary.

Convening a Disciplinary Panel:

5. The Chair and/or Secretary and/or Treasurer will prepare to hold a disciplinary panel meeting:
 - One of the officers as Chair, two other members of the NRG and the Resident Involvement Strategy manager (or alternative staff member) will form the panel;
 - One of the panel members will become 'prosecutor' and will ensure that all evidence and witnesses of the alleged breach will be presented to the panel;
 - A panel meeting date will be agreed with the member to take place as soon as practical after the NRG vote or within 3 months;
 - Where the member has given full co-operation and a disciplinary panel has not taken place within 3 months all allegations will become null and void;
 - All written evidence and proposed witnesses will be supplied by each party to the Chair of the panel 5 Working days (1 week) prior of the panel date. The Chair will then decide what is appropriate to make available to the member and the 'prosecutor', witnesses names may be withheld;
 - The member can have someone in attendance with them to give support and advice;
 - The Chair will decide whether the disciplinary will be open to all or not, what length it will be, whether evidence can be in statement form and whether the member can be in attendance throughout because of any behaviour issues.

Outcomes:

6. The panel should consider all the facts and evidence including calling witnesses as appropriate;
7. The member will be able to answer all allegations and can call witnesses and supply alternative evidence;
8. At the end of the session the panel will make a decision and inform the member of the outcome;
9. The following are possible outcomes (7a of the Constitution):
 - There is no evidence of misconduct and the member continues on the NRG;
 - The panel finds the member to be in a minor breach. The member writes an apology to the person or group involved and membership of the NRG continues;
 - The panel find the member to be in a serious breach and withdraw membership of the NRG.

Appeal:

10. The member or ex-member may feel that they have been treated unfairly and has a right to appeal. A request for an appeal is to be put in writing to the Resident Involvement Strategy manager;

11. An appeal will take place with a panel of not more than four, consisting of MHP board and Customer First Committee members;
 - This will be convened as soon as is practical after the request for the appeal;
 - The panel will consider the outcome of the Disciplinary panel, its notes and written evidence and will not usually accept any new evidence in particular that which was available at the original Disciplinary meeting, yet not presented by either party;
 - The Appeal panel can take into consideration the affect of overturning the Disciplinary procedure decision will have of the NRG holistically;
12. The decision of the Appeal panel will be final.

16. NRG Conference/Event/Training Booking Procedure

For committee members of the National Residents Group (NRG)

1. Purpose of the Conference Booking Procedure

This Procedure explains how members are expected to book and attend conferences/events and training sessions. Members should be mindful at all times that they are representing MHP service users and residents and need to show value for money. All members are expected to abide by the following rules. If members deliberately or frequently breach them, the member will not be allowed to book or attend another conference/event for 3 months or 3 months after the last event attended, whichever is longer.

2. Procedure

- a) On a monthly basis, on the morning of a NRG week-end (usually Saturday), the Resident Involvement officer will leave conference and training event material available for NRG members to view throughout the day. NRG members may also leave out events of interest that they have picked up.
- b) If a NRG member is interested in attending something they will write it down and give to the RI officer.
- c) In the latter part of the day there will be an agenda item on conferences in which the RI officer will list events members want to attend and their cost.
- d) The NRG, as a group, will discuss and agree or disagree, bearing in mind:
 - 1) Cost and;
 - 2) NRG conference/training annual budget
 - 3) Relevance to portfolio
 - 4) If 1 or more wants to attend same
 - 5) Location of event
 - 6) Ratio of events attended per member.
- e) When agreed, the RI officer will take away, book the event and send details to the NRG member. The relationship then moves to that of the event supplier and the NRG member and the RI officer will not normally be involved from this stage.

- f) The NRG member attends the event and writes a report on its content and learning to be circulated to the NRG – this may include conference/training material.

3. Failure to attend or give reports

Where the NRG member fails to attend an event or consistently fails to write/give a report without a good reason then they will be unable to book or attend another for 3 months or 3 months after the last event attended, whichever is longer.

17. NRG – Expenses Claim Menu

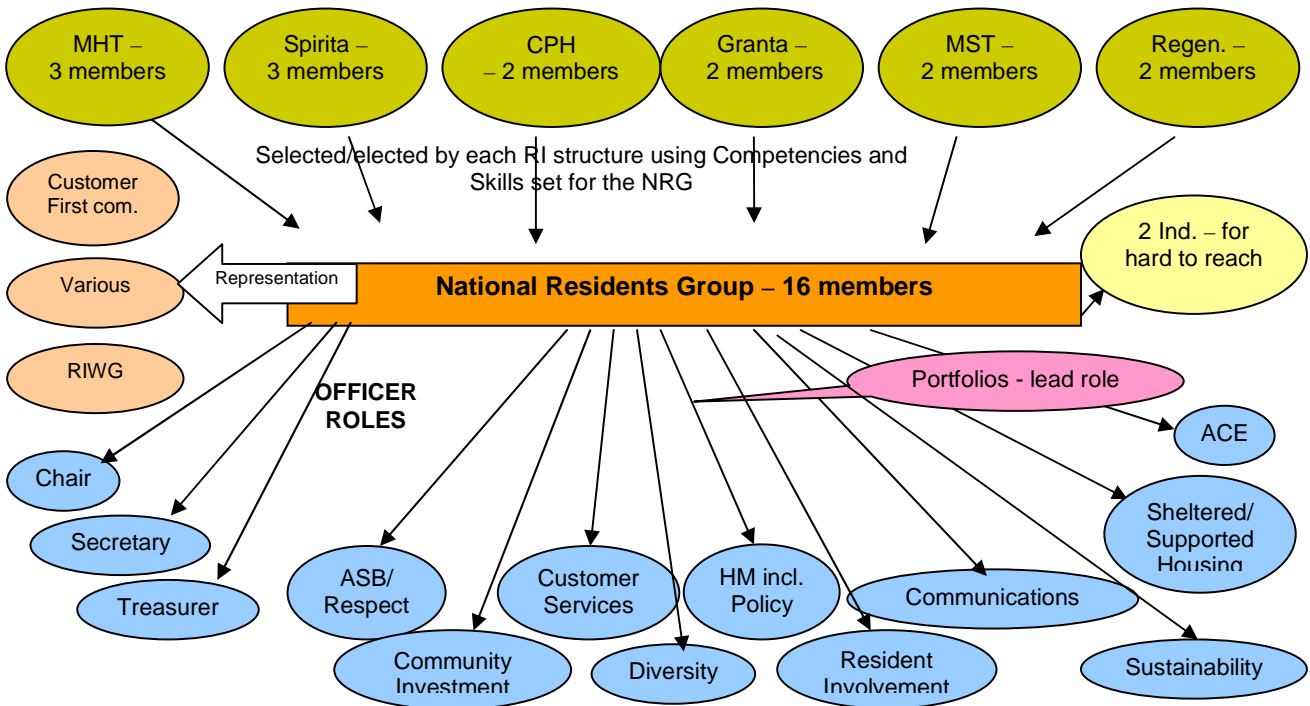
It is MHP's policy that no resident will be out of pocket because of volunteering time to the group. Listed below is the obvious claimable expenses, however please let us know of any other and if in doubt ask an officer.

Expense	Application	How much
MHP Conference Allowance	When attending a conference, which lasts 2 or more days to cover items such as drinks and snacks, networking and calls home.	£10
MHP Child care allowance to members for dependant child/children for whom the individual is a principal carer.	Where a partner / family member is not available when the member is attending a NRG event and needs to pay for childcare. All children qualify for same amount and where the child has special requirements an agreed amount should be arranged with an officer.	Minimum wage per hour £5.52 or; All day event £50 and Overnight £25
Travel – public transport	To use standard service travelling to NRG events.	All costs reimbursed on production of the receipt. Where the travel is in the 'oyster' card area receipts are not required.
Travel – Own transport	NRG members can use their own means of transport wherever required and encouraged to carry other members where possible and which an allowance is also payable. (At own risk)	Each mile 42p and for each passenger 21p (Bicycle 20p)
Subsistence Allowance	Where the NRG member is attending an event and there is no food provided and normal meals cannot be taken at home.	Breakfast £5.50 Lunch £6.50 Dinner £8.75 and

	<p>The following meals and times apply: Breakfast if overnight stay or event start by 7am Lunch if event lasting between 09:15 and 17:15 Dinner if a day event (from 09:15) continues after 18:30 or an evening event will continue after 22:30. NB – allowances can be made where appropriate please ask an officer.</p>	<p>Dinner with overnight stay £13.00</p>
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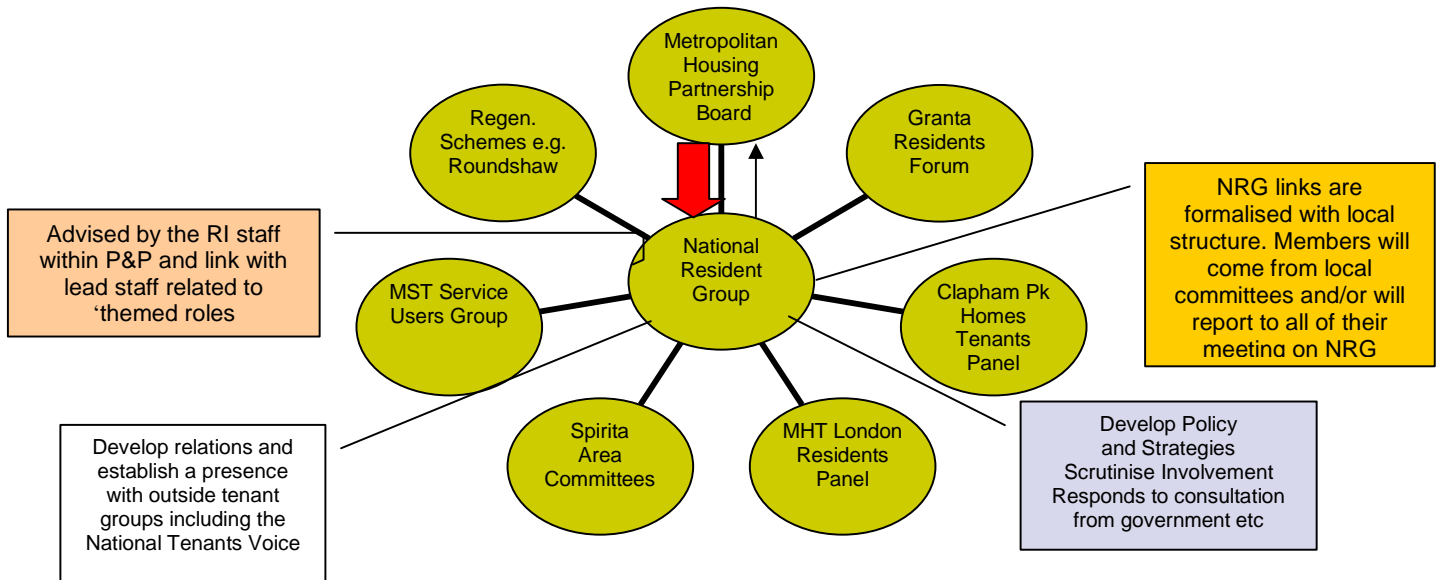
18. NRG Structure Charts

Role



NRG membership is up to 16. The majority will come from the 5 membership organisations involvement structures selected or elected and two will come from regeneration projects. The last 2 members will be selected by interview to fill any gaps in customer profile or knowledge that the NRG may have. All members will be expected to have, or agree to achieve, competencies and skills requirements set for the group.

Membership source and individual roles



19. Staff work with residents protocol

MHP has a strong commitment to work with our residents and involve them in the day to day and strategic decisions of the organisation. We do this in a variety of ways including surveys, focus groups, conferences and input at meetings.

It is a continuous programme of development and encouragement to get residents involved, and in the case of the NRG, participating in a number of MHP activities. It is important for residents and MHP to know how this input changed or enhanced our decisions.

Please ensure we continue this partnership working by following the points set out below:

1. Ensure that you consider all diversity and access issues. Where there are problems about any of the actions set out below keep the resident informed;
2. At least 10 working days notice to attend an event and all paperwork (overview, agenda, times etc) received by then and if moving date or venue then a further 10 working days notice is given;
 - Where any of the above is unavoidable the resident is informed immediately, giving reasons, and all alternative arrangements made for them;
3. Include a short synopsis of the event showing possible outcomes and why you want the resident to be involved;

4. All travel and hotel arrangements etc are done by the staff member and informed in good time to the resident;
5. The resident is reimbursed on the day for any expenses or within 5 working days (Please discuss in advance with the resident what are the likely expenses);
6. Food and adequate breaks are arranged;
7. No jargon and where used it is fully explained at least once;
8. The 'How was it for you' cards are used to collect KPI data and the officer running the meeting fills in the Resident Involvement database or an 'Event Evaluation' form. Info is returned to RI at P&P (contact francis.brazil@mht.co.uk ext 1088 for further information)
9. Minutes and actions sent within 10 working days and put on relevant resident forums;
10. The resident is thanked for their input and acknowledgement of any suggestions with full outcomes explained. Where there is an agreed incentive ensure they receive it.

20. Computer or other equipment agreement owned by MHP

Recipient:

Date:

MHP officer:

Job title:

Equipment details: _____

Use of NRG computer/laptop and other equipment supplied by Metropolitan Housing Partnership (MHP)

As part of its commitment to Resident Involvement, MHP will supply NRG members with computer and other equipment where they have not got their own. This is to ensure that they can carry out activities and their role for the group. This will include being able to write correspondence and reports, keep in contact through e-mail and be able to access the web.

The equipment cannot be used for business purposes, political activities or activities that break the law or Code of Conduct of the NRG.

It is reasonable for the NRG member to use the equipment for personal usage such as study activity, storing photos, answering private e-mails and private web use.

If you are in doubt about usage, please contact Francis Brazil the Resident Involvement Strategy Manager on francis.brazil@mht.co.uk or 0208 9761088 for further advice.

When your membership of the NRG ceases, as listed under 3 f and g in the NRG constitution, the equipment will be returned to MHP.

I have read the above statement and agree that the equipment that I have received as listed above will be used for my role as an NRG member. When I cease to be an NRG member I will ensure that it is returned to MHP.

Signed: _____ Block capitals: _____

MHP officer sign: _____ Block capitals: _____