

# GreenSquare Group Limited Residents' Scrutiny Panel Inquiry Report

## Resident Involvement and Empowerment

### **(1) Summary**

An RSP inquiry into resident involvement was first suggested in 2010 mainly to see if the housing associations Westlea and OCHA were meeting the requirements of the regulator at that time, the Tenant Services Authority.

Pressure of more urgent inquiries meant that the subject of resident involvement remained on the RSP shelf for two years. Since then, because of major changes to GreenSquare's governance and the appointment of a new housing regulator, the subject has become even more relevant for an inquiry.

The Panel's intention is to offer a picture of what GreenSquare's resident involvement looked like during the four-month period April to July 2012, at the very start of important changes.

### **(2) Key findings**

- ⤴ (2:1) It is very apparent that GreenSquare's **commitment** to resident involvement is not simply part of its business strategy, but far more important than that. It is a **cornerstone**. GreenSquare would not be GreenSquare without resident involvement.
- ⤴ (2:2) 1<sup>st</sup> April 2012 marked the commencement of a **new era** for resident and community involvement. There is a newly combined Team, three new Communities Boards and a new Housing Regulator.
- ⤴ (2:3) The time ahead will be **exciting and challenging** for involvement staff and residents alike. Based on the Community Involvement Team's combined proven **experience** and **success** and on the information we have received, the future of GreenSquare's resident involvement is in **excellent hands**.

### **(3) Recommendations**

- ⤴ (3:1) That should the resident recruitment programme scheduled for autumn 2012 be unsatisfactory in obtaining suitable board or scrutiny candidates, a **review** will be applied to the current resident recruitment procedure.
- ⤴ (3:2) That the Community Involvement Team and Corporate Governance Team not only concentrate on the needs of the new communities boards but **equally** on the needs of **all** resident groups. Although no evidence has been found to suggest an imbalance, we believe there is a danger that a sense of a first and second division of resident involvement could arise and some long-established groups could feel under-valued and in need of re-defined roles and objectives.

We recommend that all groups should be reminded of their **value** and encouraged to **focus** on all that they **do well**.

- ⤴ (3:3) That contact details of all residents who have shown interest in resident involvement should be **retained** and wherever possible **encouraged** to consider other opportunities if they are unsuccessful with their first choice.
- ⤴ (3:4) That a register or system be operated by the new Community Involvement Team to establish a more **precise record** of resident involvement in order to provide **statistics** which illustrate resident involvement overall.
- ⤴ (3:5) That where there is **similarity** between groups, consideration be given to any **benefits** which could be obtained if the groups were **merged** or came together on appropriate occasions.
- ⤴ (3:6) That on the GreenSquare **website**, enquirers may have **direct access** to resident **involvement opportunities** instead of first going via the OCHA and Westlea (Oxfordshire or Wiltshire/Gloucester) links.
- ⤴ (3:7) That **clear guidelines** be given regarding the number of office-holder or leader **roles** a resident may hold at the **same time**. There remains ambiguity regarding this subject. We would value clarity as we are unable to find any advantage to residents if dual roles are permitted.

#### **(4) Reasons for Inquiry**

That GreenSquare has always welcomed residents to be involved in its affairs, has never been in doubt. So why have an inquiry now ?

From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2012, the opportunities and the necessity for residents to be involved in the decision-making process accelerated. The Group's new governance structure required Westlea's and OCHA's resident involvement teams to combine their talents and become GreenSquare's Community Involvement Team.

Three new Communities Boards opened for business to deal with many matters at a local level and the new social housing regulator, the Homes and Communities Agency, decided they would focus not on consumer affairs, but on governance and financial matters. So although the HCA have set consumer standards, the primary responsibility for resolving any issues with those standards is left in the hands of landlords and their residents.

#### **(5) Methodology**

During the four-month period April to July 2012, the Panel gathered information by interviewing three senior heads of departments: Helen Barbrook, community involvement head for Wiltshire; Wendy Spray, community involvement head for Oxfordshire; and Mandy Arnold, corporate governance manager. All three interviewees supplied copious notes and references and other members of their staff added more facts and figures as we requested them.

*(Methodology – continued)*

The Panel has also studied all of the pre-existing literature available on-line to prospective involved residents and requested opinions from established, experienced residents who have been involved for many years.

In addition to our study of the material supplied and listening to the explanations of the professionals, discussion between the panel members took place at four panel meetings during the study period with an additional meeting between the compilers of this report.

Details of the material referred to and of the on-line sources of additional information are given in the index of appendices.

## **(6) More Findings**

### **(6:1) New Community Involvement Team**

At the outset of a new era, the community involvement staff are exceptionally well-organised for the challenges ahead. The Panel were impressed with the amount and quality of the material supplied to them illustrating every aspect of the department's responsibilities and workload.

The Team's philosophy and aims reflect clear-minded enthusiasm and commitment which can only encourage and support residents with their involvement.

Consisting of 23 full and part-time staff located in Oxfordshire and Wiltshire, the team has an overall project budget of £400,000 for the year 2012-13, offering an extensive choice of involvement to a resident population of over 15,000. *(Estimated figure which does not include residents' children. Records show names of tenants or of joint tenants.)*

It is difficult to obtain a precise overall measure of the number of residents who are involved because some projects are continuous and some are limited to short periods of time. Some projects have wide general appeal and some only appeal to special groups. Furthermore some residents appear quite regularly at a number of different projects or events, so we could be counting the same people twice or more ! However, the estimate for resident involvement in the Oxfordshire area is believed to be over 10%. Some individual involvement figures for Isis (Oxfordshire) projects are shown in (section 2e) of the appendices. 2 pages). *(Participation figures for Westlea (Wiltshire) projects are recorded differently until the newly combined team moves to one IT system).*

### **(6:2) Involvement opportunities and incentives**

A full list of resident involvement opportunities can be found via the GreenSquare website which leads the enquirer to resident involvement in Oxfordshire or in Wiltshire and Gloucestershire.

Incentives, ranging from a £10.00 shopping voucher for attending a meeting, to £2,000.00 a year for board or panel members taking a portfolio, are offered to acknowledge a level of responsibility or completion of a specific piece of work. Reimbursement of reasonable out-of-pocket expenses is made to all involved residents. (Full details: (appendix 1f.)

(6:3) What residents think

The Residents' Forum, whose members hold regular meetings in the Westlea (Wiltshire) area of GreenSquare, is one of the two panels we consulted for comment. Many of the members of both panels have been established as experienced and involved residents for a long time.

The Forum plays a major role supporting the local communities board by consulting residents about decisions relating to GreenSquare's policy and planning for the future. The forum's feedback is then taken to the board, ensuring that local residents at the grass roots remain at the centre of the decision making process.

The Citizens Panel, based in the OCHA (Oxfordshire) area is the other panel we asked for opinions. The Citizens Panel conduct around 11 e-mail or telephone surveys a year to provide feedback on a wide variety of issues.

Over 95% of the residents we consulted enjoyed being part of the Residents' Forum or Citizens' Panel and would encourage other residents to get involved. Around 90% thought their association acted on their views. Forum members thought that their increased knowledge and confidence enabled them to apply for positions on communities boards.

More information is given in appendix 3a and 3b pages 1 to 7.

(6:4) Recruitment of residents

When the resident involvement inquiry was first suggested in 2010, the inquiry outline drew attention to the very low number of applications for resident board or resident scrutiny vacancies. At that time, GreenSquare's advertising of the vacancies by direct mail or via the resident magazines, generally attracted around 8 residents as far as the interview stage. This represented 0.09% of all households (estimated to be 9,168 at the time.)

So, two years later, has the situation improved ?

The total number of applications for the new communities boards amount to 26. Of that figure, 19 residents were already involved (serving on the original OCHA, Westlea or GreenSquare boards, or forum,panel,etc.) Only 7 applications were from 'new' residents.

22 of those who applied were invited for interview. If we assume that 6 or 7 of the 'new' applicants were invited for interview (as there are at least 6 new resident faces on the communities boards), the resulting figure is obviously a maximum of 7 'new' residents getting to interview stage in 2011/12 compared to 8 in 2010.

In percentage terms: 8 out of 9,168 households in 2010 = 0.09%; 7 out of 10,000 households in 2011/12 = 0.07%; or, even more realistically, 7 out of 15,000 residents in 2011/12 = 0.05 %.

Whichever way we look at these simple statistics, the same questions arise:  
Are we advertising the vacancies effectively ? Are the application forms designed to encourage or dissuade? Are the incentives and other benefits as generous as they can be?

*(Recruitment of residents - continued)*

Do the opportunities appear to be uninteresting, even boring ?

Does this matter ? We believe it does. Involvement to the level of community board or scrutiny panel provides residents with greater and regular opportunities to influence the professionals in their decision-making. Or at the very least, to pro-actively keep the resident perspective at the forefront of their thinking.

With the introduction of the Localism Bill last year, encouraging the decentralising of power downwards and outwards to the lowest possible level like neighbourhoods and communities, the Communities Boards are ideally suited for such roles. Furthermore, the new regulator, the Homes and Communities Agency, in taking a back seat on consumer affairs, is providing greater impetus to residents to be increasingly watchful.

Therefore, the higher number of applications GreenSquare can obtain is good for GreenSquare and good for residents. A larger group increases the choice of candidate to fill the vacancy and likely produces a greater number of good quality 'reserves' ready to fill other vacancies when they arise – as inevitably they will do.

*(Footnote: More recruitment is scheduled for autumn 2012.)*

#### (6:5) GreenSquare Academy

The GreenSquare Academy opened its doors at the beginning of 2012. Designed primarily to provide relevant courses for residents who are involved with GreenSquare's work, the academy also offers opportunities to help residents increase their skills or encourage them back into learning again.

Of the range of resident involvement projects, the academy is one of the highest costs per resident at £354.00 per head, but the expenditure is regarded as an important investment, not only for the advantage of the individual resident but also for the benefit of GreenSquare's resident involvement programme as a whole. If “Knowledge is power” we can regard this project to be an excellent example of resident empowerment.

By June this year, records show a total student intake of 62. Although enrolment to the academy was optional for the residents appointed to the new communities boards, all 15 members enrolled when courses began although several have since withdrawn. One resident thought that the course was not needed; another resident stepped down for health reasons; etc.

The academy organisers believe courses will help residents in many ways. There are sections on writing, interpreting, presenting, speaking in front of others, etc. All useful skills for anyone seeking employment. Resident board members have a course specifically designed for them. Generally, the courses continue over two years with around 25 training sessions, of three hours each session, with additional time necessary for preparation and study, spread over the period. However, there is flexibility in the system to meet the needs of residents and changes are being made as members settle into the programme and give feedback on how they need to pace the studies and accommodate the work.

We understand that the qualification itself will have little value per se, unless a student

*(GreenSquare Academy - continued)*

obtains a housing job, but it will demonstrate the skills referred to and others. It will also indicate commitment, enthusiasm and intelligence and may be useful towards being considered for other training or studies.

At the time of this report, the compilers were waiting for more details of the work of the academy from the perspective of the tutors. It will be interesting to watch the progress of the academy over time and to look more closely at the project at a later date.

## **The Inquiry Report**

Compiled by Nick Fry and Keith Fellows, GreenSquare Residents' Scrutiny Panel, (Tenant Involvement and Empowerment and Governance Portfolios, respectively).

Written by Keith Fellows : [Keith.Fellows@greensquaregroup.com](mailto:Keith.Fellows@greensquaregroup.com)

Report date: 14<sup>th</sup> August 2012.

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Appendices with index and summaries are attached to this report.

## **Acknowledgements**

This is the 11<sup>th</sup> report published by the Residents' Scrutiny Panel. The Panel wishes to thank all of those who assisted the Panel with this inquiry, supplying lots of facts and figures and answering many questions.

### Panel Members

Arthur Diggle  
Keith Fellows  
Mike Forward  
Nick Fry  
Dorothy Giacomini  
Kerry Law (Chair)  
Janet Allen-Louden  
Gina Ravens  
Gerry Webb  
Ian Willmer

### Witnesses

Mandy Arnold Group Corporate Governance Manager  
Helen Barbrook Community Involvement Head Wiltshire  
Wendy Spray Community Involvement Head Oxfordshire

### Governance Support

Fiona Hobbs Corporate Governance Officer

### Additional assistance

Paula Glen Corporate Governance Administrator  
(Preparation of report)  
Alice Pearce Senior Corporate Governance Officer  
(Academy information)

Minutes of the RSP meetings are available from [Fiona.Hobbs@greensquaregroup.com](mailto:Fiona.Hobbs@greensquaregroup.com) or via the GreenSquare website Resident Scrutiny Panel minutes section.

**Section 1**

*Appendix 1a: (RSP Inquiry into Resident Involvement):*

From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2012 there will be one GreenSquare Community Involvement Team. Following a review of its work, this text describes the team's key conclusions.

*Appendix 1b: Pages 1 to 5:*

This describes the opportunities available for resident involvement.

*Appendix 1c:*

A pyramid illustration of community involvement.

*Appendix 1d:*

Resident involvement levels 1 – 5.

*Appendix 1e:*

Neighbourhoods work levels and activities.

*Appendix 1f: Pages 1 to 6: (Updated 26<sup>th</sup> April 2012):*

This describes GreenSquare's incentives policy (draft) to encourage resident involvement.

**Section 2**

*Appendix 2a: (Further information for RSP inquiry):*

A statement of the philosophy and aims of GreenSquare's Community Involvement Team.

*Appendix 2b: Pages 1 to 4: (Prepared for the Isis Community Board on 18<sup>th</sup> June 2012):*

An overview of community involvement projects 2011 – 2012.

*Appendix 2c: (3 pages):*

Isis community involvement projects – impact assessment 2011 – 2012.

*Appendix 2d: (2 pages):*

An impact and cost matrix of Isis community involvement projects 2011 – 2012.

An impact and cost matrix of Westlea community involvement projects 2010 – 2011.

*Appendix 2e: (2 pages):*

Isis community involvement projects – impact assessment - summaries 2011 – 2012.

*Appendix 2f: (3 pages):*

Isis equality and diversity information 2011 – 2012.

Westlea equality and diversity information 2010 – 2011.

*Appendix 2g:*

Community Involvement Team staff structure.

*Appendix 2h: Pages 1 to 2 :*

A proposal for resident consultation on housing management policies and procedures, scheduled for summer 2012.

*Appendix 2i:*

A draft proposal for resident consultation on development strategy.

**Section 3**

*Appendix 3a*

Feedback from members of the Residents' Forum concerning their roles and influence on GreenSquare's business.

*Appendix 3b*

Feedback from members of the Citizens' Panel concerning their roles and influence on GreenSquare's business.

The material listed in this section was also used for study in the preparation of the inquiry report. A brief summary of the contents of the documents is given below.  
The full documents can be accessed on-line using the references shown.

*Neighbourhood Audit Forms (50 pages)  
submitted by OCHA, Westlea and GreenSquare  
to the National Housing Federation  
(5 yr. Period 2005/6 to 2010/11):*

The documents reveal the associations' wide-ranging commitment to a variety of projects and the capital and staff time/costs involved.

Facilities maintained or built

(Parking areas; community gardens and spaces; drop-in centres; etc.)

Safety and cohesion projects

(Home security; youth diversionary measures ; youth clubs; etc.)

Education and skills projects

(Training for residents; IT learning; etc.)

Employment and enterprise projects

(Life skills; full employment pilots; job search and help; etc.)

Environment liveability projects

(Energy efficiency measures; environmental improvements ;handyperson schemes; etc.)

Wellbeing, health, support and sports projects.

(Family intervention projects; young carers; etc. )

Poverty and inclusion projects

(Welfare and benefit advice; debt advice initiatives; etc.)

**Links below:**

**[Westlea Neighbourhood Audit Form](#)**

**[GreenSquare Audit Revised Financial Section](#)**

**[Neighbourhood Audit Form GreenSquare](#)**

**[Neighbourhood Audit Form OCHA](#)**

**[Neighbourhood Audit Form Westlea](#)**



*Westlea Board Report (16 pages)*

This review, for the period 2010 – 2011, outlines the many resident involvement activities undertaken by Westlea and attempts to assess their impact, effectiveness and value for money. Also, it prepares for the Westlea and OCHA resident involvement teams to merge to become one from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2012 in order to offer a combined range of opportunities to residents throughout the Oxfordshire and Wiltshire areas.

In addition to working as one GreenSquare Community Involvement Team, the Westlea review identifies other priorities such as the Residents' Academy; projects that provide employment and training opportunities for residents; and adapting to the new HCA self-regulatory approach.

**Link below:**

[Westlea Board Report Impact Statement 2010-2011](#)

*Descriptions of all opportunities available for resident involvement*

Access is via the GreenSquare website which leads the enquirer first to the Oxfordshire or to the Wiltshire and Gloucestershire area information. Then click the panel for resident involvement.

**Section 5:**

*Other references*

Localism Bill: Introduced to Parliament on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2010. Given Royal Assent on 15<sup>th</sup> November 2011, becoming an Act. "The Bill will shift power from central government back into hands of individuals, communities and councils."

Homes and Communities Agency: (HCA). Took responsibility for the regulation of social housing providers on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2012. "As the Regulator, we are responsible for maintaining the register of social housing providers and for setting out the regulatory framework within which they must operate."

"Knowledge is power": Quotation attributed to Sir Francis Bacon, 16<sup>th</sup> century British author and philosopher.

'Office-holder': For the purpose of tax returns – as defined by HM Revenue & Customs. (ESM 2502 – Offices: definition).



## **Appendix 1a**

### **Resident Scrutiny Panel Inquiry into Resident Involvement and Empowerment**

**19 April 2012**

#### **1 Introduction**

Thank you for your interest in Resident Involvement and Empowerment. We have collected some evidence to help with your inquiry. Helen Barbrook, Wendy Spray and Mandy Arnold will be at the meeting on 19 April and will be happy to answer questions then or beforehand.

#### **2 Background**

As part of Westlea and OCHA coming together, we have reviewed the Resident Involvement, Community Investment and Neighbourhood Involvement across the group. From 1 April 2012, we have one GreenSquare Community Involvement Team and we aim to deliver a consistent service to all our residents although taking account of local differences.

#### **3 Key Conclusions from the GreenSquare Community Involvement Review**

##### **3.1 Aims**

- Residents driving GreenSquare
- Building strong communities

##### **3.2 Things we know we will be doing**

- Involving residents at all levels and in all services
- Assisting with Governance Changes including developing the Communities Boards
- Your Say staff restructure including working with Neighbourhood Teams
- Setting up and running the Residents Academy
- Creating strong Communities
- Developing the One Community approach
- Cross team and cross Group working
- HAB lite way of working in new development projects
- Continuous improvement of our service
- Implementing the Priorities from the Residents Business Plan

##### **3.3 What we will stop doing**

- Some projects have moved to other teams
- Duplication or ineffective projects

### **3.4 Working practices we will highlight**

- Working in partnerships to support residents
- Publishing our achievements
- New methods of contacting residents eg texting, facebook
- Working flexibly
- One staff project lead across GreenSquare
- Sharing good practice e.g. Employment and Training projects
- Agreed approach for neighbourhood planning and regeneration
- Keeping ahead of the game by looking at new initiatives

## **4 Documents**

We have attached the following documents to give you more information on the current service.

### **4.1 Ways Residents can get Involved in GreenSquare (appendix 1)**

This lists the ways in which residents can get involved and gives an indication of the amount of time the involvement will take.

### **4.2 Pyramid of Involvement (appendix 2)**

This is a visual illustration of how we have large numbers of residents involved at lower levels, leading up to a few at the highest levels. The Academy is there to help residents who want to get involved and to move up the pyramid.

### **4.3 Ladder of Resident Involvement Levels (appendix 3)**

This shows how we have a variety of levels at which residents can choose to get involved. We believe this gives all residents who want to be involved an opportunity that is appropriate for them.

### **4.4 “Our Neighbourhoods” Work Levels (appendix 4)**

This shows how we will decide on the levels of community involvement to take place in our different neighbourhoods.

### **4.5 Draft GreenSquare Resident Incentives Policy (appendix 5)**

This is work in progress, but gives you an idea of the current incentives being offered. We would be interested in your feedback on this. We have still to carry out the resident consultation on this policy.

### **4.6 Resident and Staff contact list (appendix 6)**

This will be made available at the meeting

## **5 Recruitment**

### **5.1 Corporate Governance Recruitment**

#### **Resident Scrutiny Panel**

Open recruitment process from amongst all residents – leaflet to all residents. Also promoted via a number of local groups to target underrepresented areas on the Boards.

## **Communities Boards**

Open recruitment process from amongst all residents – leaflet to all residents. Also promoted via a number of local groups to target underrepresented areas on the Boards. Open evenings recruitment sessions

## **GreenSquare Board Members**

Applicants sought from amongst current Resident Board members and those successful in appointment to Communities Boards as above but in future will be open recruitment.

## **5.2 Community Involvement Team Recruitment**

Opportunities to get involved in all Community Involvement projects are made available to all our residents through residents' newsletters, flyers, websites, resident involvement leaflets and via staff contacts.

When new residents are signed up for their property, they are asked if they would be interested in getting involved. Any residents who show an interest are followed up by the Community Involvement team and offered the new recruiting DVD so that they can learn more.

We carry out direct recruitment of particular groups of residents (eg young people or BME residents) if those groups are underrepresented in our involved residents.

We currently have over 10% of our residents involved at some level which we believe to be a good target figure to achieve.

## **6 Further Information**

We carry out annual Impact Assessment Reviews on all our Community Involvement projects. If you are interested to know more about any project, let us know and we will send you the most recent Impact Assessment Review.

The following results were recorded in the last status survey in relation to resident satisfaction for their views being taken into account. Westlea's performance was 65% and OCHA's was 81%. Benchmarking for performance is against the following figures – upper quartile 70.3%, Median 66.4% and lower quartile 61.3%

## **7 Contact Details**

For further information on anything in this paper, please contact:

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01793 602801

## **Ways Residents can get Involved in GreenSquare**

We are committed to working in partnership with our residents and making sure their views and needs drive the way we provide our services.

We know that people prefer different methods of getting involved and have different amounts of time available. We have worked with our residents to develop a range of methods and we hope that at least one of these will suit each resident.

### **How much time will it take up if a resident gets involved?**

Low involvement - up to an hour in the year  
Medium involvement - up to 8 hours in the year  
High involvement 2 to 8 hours each month

## **Resident Involvement**

### **Resident board members** (high involvement)

Five residents are members of each of our three communities boards. The communities boards make important decisions about how we are organised and what services we provide. Three residents are members of the GreenSquare Group board.

### **Resident Scrutiny panel** (high involvement)

A scrutiny panel of 10 residents – five from the Oxfordshire area and five from Wiltshire assess our performance, monitor complaints, decide on areas of service that need investigating, and arrange for reports. If the panel is not happy about performance, they ask the GreenSquare board to take action.

### **Residents' business plan** (high, medium and low involvement)

We work with residents to find out their priorities for GreenSquare, and support them to write a residents' business plan through a working group, participating in budgetary discussions with Senior Managers and presenting their conclusions to the Boards. Young advisors are involved in the process.

### **Residents Forum – Avon & Marden** ( high involvement)

A panel of 15 residents that partner the Boards , monitor the Customer and Community Involvement Strategy, check involvement in reviews and continuous improvement , governance changes, regulatory changes and makes recommendations for the allocation of the Community Improvement Fund.

### **Mystery shopping and resident inspectors** (high, medium and low involvement)

GreenSquare trains residents as mystery shoppers and resident inspectors to test how good our services are. Mystery shoppers phone the relevant team with questions and record the responses they get. Resident inspectors inspect services via a brief to help continuous improvement and write

a report making recommendations.

**Training for residents** (medium and high involvement)

We have set up a GreenSquare Academy to provide relevant training courses for residents who get involved in our work and to help residents increase their skills. We also provide a mentor for resident board members.

We provide community based training opportunities to encourage residents to begin learning again as part of the Academy programme; we provide access to both national and regional conferences and events for involved residents.

**Older Persons' forum** (medium involvement)

There are 3 forums, where older residents are consulted about service delivery, hear about services from partner organisations and organise social events.

**Disability forums and Steering Groups** (medium involvement)

Our disabled residents work with staff and partner organisations to improve the services we provide for residents with disabilities holding regular disability forums. The Disability Steering Groups liaise with County wide equality groups, present to staff about disability issues, use multi media to promote information and organise local consultations.

**GreenSquare design forum** (medium involvement)

A group of residents from across GreenSquare work with staff to improve the design standards of new housing. It meets at least twice a year.

**Isis Repairs and maintenance group** (medium involvement)

A group of residents, contractors and our staff work together to develop and improve OCHA Homecare and the repairs service.

**Residents' associations** (high and medium involvement)

We provide support to set up formal residents' associations. We help by providing start-up grants and ongoing grants, drawing up constitutions and arranging meetings.

**Informal residents' meetings** (medium involvement)

We organise residents' meetings in schemes or localities where residents or housing staff show there is a need for them. These meetings discuss issues such as gardening, social activities, tackling antisocial behaviour or making an agreement on what services we provide.

**Newsletter for residents and Communications Group** (medium and low involvement)

At least four residents are members of the Isis editorial panel. We consult more widely on newsletters, website information and leaflets through the GreenSquare email Communications Group.

**Young Advisors – Avon** (medium involvement)

12 recruited and received accredited training; now carry out community mapping exercises and help with consultations.

### **Isis Citizens' panel** (low involvement)

We have a panel of over 200 residents who we ask to respond to 11 surveys each year by e-mail or phone. Each survey lasts no more than 10 minutes. We consult the panel on what services we provide, how we provide them and what we could do better.

### **Social Media** (low involvement)

Development of webpages to promote opportunities, inform and gain feedback. Pages now being developed for Communities Boards' areas.

### **Residents' suggestion scheme** (low involvement)

We encourage residents to suggest ideas for how we can do our work better and if the idea is taken up we give vouchers as a reward.

### **Resident surveys** (low involvement)

We carry out surveys to get residents' feedback. We use the results of the surveys to improve the services we provide and give feedback. There is a market research team now based in Corporate Planning and Intelligence which does door knocking, telephone and email surveys.

## **Community Involvement**

### **Neighbourhood Links** (medium involvement)

One or more residents act as a link between us and the residents of an estate. They tell us about issues in shared areas, help residents to contact us and find out more about the local area and help with community activities.

### **Community Fund** (medium involvement)

In Isis there is a community fund panel of 4 residents who lead on making the decisions on which community groups are allocated a grant. We make over £10,000 available each year for small community projects that promote work in communities where we have properties. In Avon and Marden £18 k – residents apply to Residents Forum- a sub group visit areas/individuals/projects/organisations and make a recommendation to spend to the whole forum who have the final vote.

The Communities Boards will be holding these budgets.

### **'One Community'** (low, medium and high)

We choose communities to focus our community investment on. We ask residents what would make their area a better place to live. We work with residents and local agencies to draw up, and carry out, a community action plan.

### **Isis Estate improvement fund** (medium involvement)

We make £40,000 available each year for improvements to the shared areas of our housing estates and schemes. We ask residents to make suggestions on what improvements we should make and how we should spend the money.

### **Family Involvement** (low involvement)

Strategy to reach this hard to reach group via home visits, facebook page and links with local schools, childrens centres and playbuses.

### **Neighbourhood walkabouts and Big Knocks'** (low involvement)

Residents and staff walk around their neighbourhood and make suggestions on how we could make improvements. Staff and residents can ask us for grants to make security improvements. We advertise estate walkabouts in the residents' newsletter and on our website.

Big Knocks' involves doorstep visiting by staff from across service areas – recruitment, feedback and promoting information and opportunities. These can utilise INSI – intelligence surveys.

### **Community Clean-Up Days** (low involvement)

All residents in an area are invited to take part in Community Clean-Up Days. We provide skips, gloves and other equipment and there are prizes for youngsters who help. We arrange to recycle as much of the rubbish as possible. We consult residents in the area.

### **Impact assessment review and resident involvement statement**

We review all aspects of our resident involvement work each year and report back to residents and board. The assessments look at Value for Money, the impact on individuals, services and communities.

### **You said – we did!**

Our website and newsletter have regular pages to give feedback on the results of resident involvement and on our performance.

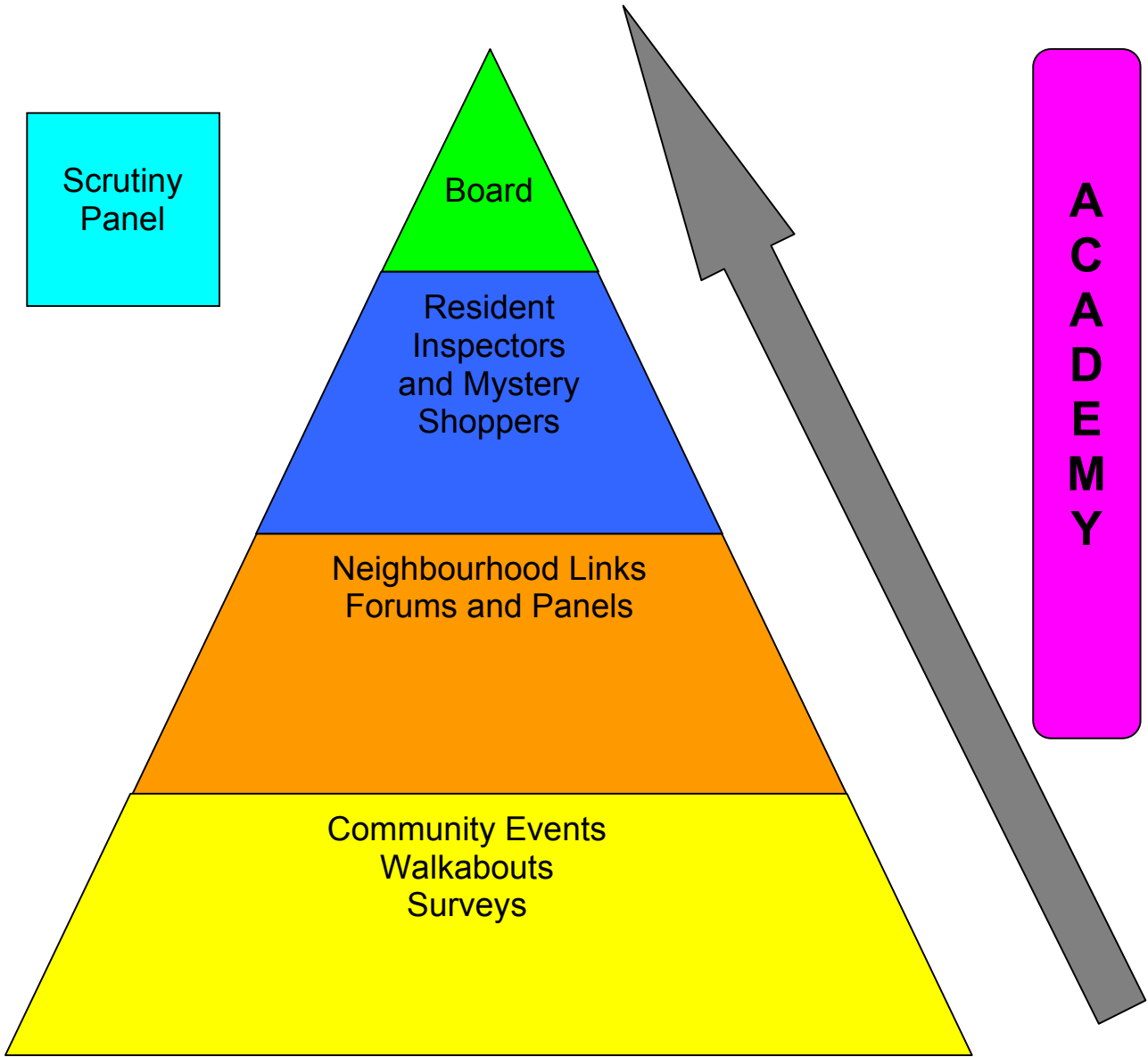
### **Working with all our residents**

In our resident involvement projects, we work to get rid of any discrimination and give everyone the chance to make an effective contribution.

We provide practical support – such as photocopying, meeting venues, computers and internet access – for residents who get involved. We provide support with reasonable costs of childcare and transport. We provide translation and interpreting where necessary.



**Pyramid of GreenSquare Community Involvement  
3 April 2012**



## RSP Appendix 1d RESIDENT INVOLVEMENT LEVELS

| Ladder of Involvement     | Activities  |
|---------------------------|---|
| Level 1 - informing       | <p>GreenSquare residents' magazines</p> <p>Websites</p> <p>Letters and emails from staff</p>  |
| Level 2 – consultation    | <p>Monthly rolling surveys of 10% of residents on policy or service delivery</p> <p>One off focus groups</p> <p>Quarterly meetings – fixed membership</p>   |
| Level 3 – partnership     | <p>Resident Business Plan – for residents by residents, every 2 years</p> <p>GreenSquare Residents Forum – bi-annual including Visioning and Impact Assessments</p> <p>Neighbourhood Links – virtual members of Neighbourhood teams</p> |
| Level 4 – delegated power | <p>Communities Boards</p> <p>GreenSquare Resident Board Members</p>   |
| Level 5 – co-regulation   | <p>Scrutiny Panel – carries out inquiries</p> <p>Resident Inspectors – inspects areas of work on behalf of the Scrutiny panel</p> <p>Mystery Shoppers – mystery shops on behalf of the Scrutiny Panel and Heads of Service</p>          |

| <b>Neighbourhoods Work</b>  | <b>Activities</b>   |
|---|---|
| All levels  | <p>Local newsletters: Promotion of inspections, feedback on results and action taken.</p> <p>Use of Sustainability indicators to identify areas. Report to Communities Boards with recommendation and market intelligence.</p>  |
| Level 1 – Estate Inspections with residents and Neighbourhood Links | <p>Recruitment of local residents reps where possible.</p> <p>Localised community events e.g. clean up days, life skills and health &amp; well being events.</p>  |
| Level 2 – Community Action Plans                                    | <p>Agree action plan and monitoring with residents and partners. Report back to Communities Boards.</p> <p>Targeted Community Development work plus other projects relevant to residents’ needs e.g. diversionary youth work, supporting specific families, financial inclusion, and environmental improvements.</p> <p>Residents groups – virtual or other wise.</p> |
| Level 3 – Estate based regeneration                                 | <p>Physical interventions such as remodelling/decanting and new build.</p> <p>Community consultation on analysis, housing need, design and programme.</p> <p>Residents group – virtual or other wise.</p>   |

## DRAFT GreenSquare Resident Incentives Policy – in process of being written



|  |   |                            |  |
|--|---|----------------------------|--|
| <b>Effective Date</b>                    | 01.04.2012  | <b>Date of Next Review</b> |  |
| <b>Date of Last Review</b>               |   | <b>Review Frequency</b>    |  |
| <b>Author Name</b><br><b>Job Title</b>   | Sue Rendell and Lew Fryer<br>Community Involvement Team |                            |  |
| <b>Reviewer Name</b><br><b>Job Title</b> |   |                            |  |
| <b>Related Policies and Procedures</b>   | GreenSquare Resident Involvement Guidelines             |                            |  |

### Contents

1. [Introduction/Policy Statement](#)
2. [Aims and Objectives](#)
3. [Policy Principles and Scope](#)
4. [Definitions](#)
5. [Terms of Reference](#)
6. [\(Main Body of Policy, with headings as appropriate\)](#)
7. [Equality and Diversity](#)
8. [Monitoring and Review](#)
9. [Implementation Plan](#)
10. [Resources](#)
11. [Procedures](#)

#### 1. Introduction/Policy Statement

This policy outlines the incentives offered to residents who are involved with GreenSquare Homes.

#### 2. Aims and Objectives

This policy aims to ensure that all residents are recompensed or rewarded on an equal basis, dependant on their level of involvement. It also ensures that they will never be out of pocket for being involved with GreenSquare.

#### 3. Policy Principles and Scope

As a regulated social landlord GreenSquare needs to show that the residents are at the heart of the decision making. The Homes and Communities Regulatory Board requires landlords to offer 'all residents a wide range of opportunities to be involved in the

management of their housing, including the ability to influence strategic priorities, the formulation of housing-related policies and the delivery of housing related services’.

In addition GreenSquare has a responsibility to talk to as wide and representative group of residents as possible. Part of the Equalities Act 2010 is the public sector Equality duty which aims to ensure public services meet the needs of different groups.

GreenSquare has a strong commitment to involving residents which goes beyond the regulatory requirement. Over the years a variety of different incentives have been used to encourage residents to take part in consultations and involvement activities to ensure that residents have the opportunity to give feedback and influence the delivery of services. This policy summarises how GreenSquare encourages participation with incentives and ensures no resident is excluded from being involved due to expense.

#### **4. Definitions**

*To be written*

#### **5. Terms of Reference**

*To be written*

### **6**

#### **6.1 Expenses**

GreenSquare will reimburse any travel expenses, parking costs, care and child care costs incurred by residents when they attend an involvement activity. We will also pay for taxi fares and LINK scheme donations for residents who do not have their own transport and when it is not practical to use public transport to get to and from activities. Taxis must be booked through one of GreenSquare’s approved providers. Residents will be required to complete a Tenants Expenses Claim Form (see appendix 1) and provide receipts for parking, public transport and care costs. GreenSquare will also reserve the right to check mileage claims with an internet based route planner and amend if necessary.

GreenSquare will also reimburse residents for subsistence when they are attending authorised meetings, training sessions and conferences which last for over 4 hours and if refreshments are not provided. Residents can claim the following on production of a valid receipt

- Breakfast £10.00 (can only be claimed before 7.00am)
- Lunch £10.00
- Evening meal £25.00 (can only be claimed after 8.00pm)
- Tea/Coffee £2.00 (max 2 per day)

Residents may also claim for out of pocket expenses when attending authorised training events or conferences which involve an overnight stay. A maximum of £5.00 per night may be claimed in advance through petty cash. Receipts and unspent money must be returned within 10 days of the event. GreenSquare will not pay for any alcoholic beverages.

#### **6.2 Refreshments**

GreenSquare will provide refreshments and lunches when meetings or activities run up to or over meal times. We will also cover the cost of refreshments and lunches when

residents are participating in activities being organised by external agencies or partners, where GreenSquare have asked the residents to attend.

### 6.3 Training and Resources

GreenSquare will provide training and support for residents who are involved in their communities or in monitoring and developing services.

GreenSquare will provide learning and development opportunities. This can range from in-house courses at GreenSquare, places at regional or national conferences, sponsorship on accredited courses and access to the GreenSquare Academy.

GreenSquare will provide IT equipment and stationery for Resident Forum Officers, Resident Inspectors, Young Advisors, Disability Steering Group members and officers of Residents or Community Associations. Computers and internet connections will be provided if residents do not already have access to a computer. If a resident wishes to use their own computer and accessories, GreenSquare will pay towards a standard internet connection package (up to the value of £2.00 per week) to enable residents to carry out duties on behalf of GreenSquare. The loan of computers and the Internet connections will be reviewed on a yearly basis. GreenSquare will not normally provide a printer. Computers will remain the property of GreenSquare and we reserve the right to take back the equipment and to cease funding the internet connection at any time. Residents will be required to cover the loan computer on their home contents insurance policy and to sign a disclaimer (see appendix 2 'Computers for Residents Terms and Conditions' and appendix 3 'GreenSquare IT Security Policy')

### 6.4 Payment for a role or activity

We will pay some residents for some roles and activities to acknowledge the level of responsibility or the completion of a specific piece of work.

(These rates for incentives have still to be consulted on with actively involved residents. They are indicative of the kind of rates we are currently making)

**Resident Board Members** – approx £3,000 pa for taking a portfolio

**Resident Scrutiny Panel Members** – approx £2,000 for taking a portfolio

**Young Advisors** - minimum wage plus £1 per hour. Young Advisors will be signed up to a casual working contract

**Residents Business Plan Steering Group** - £50\* for drawing up the plan

**Mystery Shoppers** - complete 5 shops receive £40\*

**Resident Inspectors** - £10\* per activity.

**GreenSquare Design Panel** - £10\* per meeting

**Repairs and Maintenance Group** - £10\* per meeting

**Residents Magazine Editorial Group** - £10\* per meeting or £50\* pa

**Community Fund Group (Isis)** - £10\* per meeting or £50\* pa

**Citizens Panel** - £25\* for answering 6 surveys in a year

**Resident Suggestion Scheme** – up to £50\*

**Estate Improvement Fund** – if suggestion is presented and adopted £15\*

**Neighbourhood Links** – internet connections paid

**Focus Groups** - £10\* per meeting

\* All these payments are in High Street Vouchers

### 6.5 One Off Rewards and Prizes

We may offer prizes or rewards at times to help ensure that we are receiving feedback from a wide a range of residents as possible. These will include:

- Residents being entered into a prize draw when they take part in a survey
- Residents receiving a voucher for taking part in a one off focus group or activity.

Vouchers given to residents will be to a minimum value of £10 and a maximum value of £50. The value given will depend on the level of influence they have had during the focus group or activity.

## **7. Equality and Diversity**

*To be written*

## **9. Monitoring and Review**

*To be written*

## **10. Implementation Plan**

*To be written*

## **11. Resources**

*To be written*

## **12. Procedures**

*To be written*

## **Appendix 2a**

### **Further information for RSP Inquiry into Resident Involvement 13 June 2012**

#### **1. The importance/influence of Community Involvement**

We are passionately committed to involving residents in GreenSquare. We believe this makes business sense, is a requirement of our regulators and is in line with our values. Our residents often don't have a chance to choose their landlord and despite choice based lettings, often have a very limited choice of location too. Since residents can't walk with their feet, it is crucial that we obtain their feedback and respond with changes to services and the way we deliver them. This enables the Association to target limited resources where they are most effective. Community involvement is vital in enabling this to take place, often connecting with hard to reach groups with partner organisations. The work of the Association is about people as well as the places where they live, doing our best to ensure a successful tenancy. This involves, especially in the current economic climate, creating projects that impact on some of the human issues that impact on the neighbourhood to improve the environment e.g. youth and employment projects. Always we would like to be able to do more, but we believe that the work that we undertake is valuable and our annual impact assessment reviews demonstrate that impact.

GreenSquare Group's recent development of Communities Boards and the Our Say staff restructure both fit neatly with the Government's move towards localism. This is particularly true of GreenSquare's commitment to more consultation at neighbourhood level which is partly a response to a drop in satisfaction rate in Wiltshire for opportunities for involvement that revealed people wanted more local influence in their neighbourhood. The community involvement team are working closely with the neighbourhood management teams to deliver this. The next stage of this will be in the GreenSquare Group's Visioning Evening planned for 20 September when the Communities Board will be meeting with residents from their communities board area and discussing their priorities.

The Government has reduced the level of inspection of housing associations including checking on what resident involvement is being delivered. It is pretty clear that the HCA is not going to carry out the same kind of detailed and regular inspections as were previously carried out by the TSA. However, we are in an era of co regulation and the RSP has a key role in this. Co-regulation can help us to be clear about both what residents as a whole want as well as specific demographic groups and whether we are delivering it effectively. GreenSquare Group has always been strongly committed to community involvement and it seems unlikely that will change even if the regulatory pressure has been reduced. This becomes an opportunity to ensure that what is delivered is focussed on what is useful and effective rather than what fits the regulatory requirements.

#### **2. Impact Assessment Reviews**

We thought you might be interested to see the paper (appendix i plus appendices A, B, C and D) that is going to the Isis CB on Mon 18 June which is an overview of the community involvement work in the Isis area and a summary of the 2011-12 impact assessment reviews. If you would like to see any of the impact assessment reviews for any of the individual projects, then contact Wendy or Helen.

The impact assessments are key to establishing how the intended benefits of a project have been achieved and whether they are value for money. It is an important part of the project review cycle that we make these checks and consider whether a project is either



still relevant, needs evolving or can be funded differently.

## **2. Consultation service to GreenSquare teams involving focus groups**

The RSP might be interested to hear details of a couple of consultations that we are about to undertake as examples of the use of focus groups and the offer of a tailored consultation service to other teams within GreenSquare.

- **Housing Management Policies and Procedures consultation**  
The attached sheet (appendix ii) gives details of this consultation over 5 key areas of drawing up consistent housing management policies and procedures across GreenSquare.
- **Development Strategy consultation**  
The attached sheet (appendix iii) gives details of the proposed consultation on a new development strategy which involves a mixture of survey work and focus groups

Helen Barbrook, Community Involvement Head, Wiltshire  
Wendy Spray, Community Involvement Head, Oxfordshire  
13.06.12



Appendix 2b Further Information for RSP  
14.6.12

## **Isis Communities Board**

**18 June 2012**

### **Community Involvement Projects Overview and 2011-12 Impact Assessment Reviews**

This item will be presented by:

- Wendy Spray, Community Involvement Head for the Isis area and
- The Isis based Community Involvement team

#### **Why we are coming to the Communities Board Meeting?**

- To tell you about the Community Involvement work
- To report back on the Community Involvement Impact Assessment Reviews for 2011-12

#### **What we will do at the meeting**

- There will be display boards of our work with the team there to answer your questions. These will be available from 5.45-6.30 pm particularly for any CB member who didn't see the display boards in Oct 2011
- There will be additional time during the meeting for all Communities Board members to look at the boards and talk to the team.
- Wendy Spray will give an overview of the team's work and the findings of the Impact Assessment Reviews and answer questions
- The board will hear about 2 projects in more detail as they are separate items on the agenda. These are the Community Chest Fund and the Play Areas' Audit.

#### **Why do we do Community Involvement?**

Community involvement is a key part of GreenSquare's service delivery particularly to ensure we meet 4 of the objectives in the 2012-13 Corporate Plan.

1. Create places where people want to live
2. Support a good quality of life for our customers
3. Provide an appropriate range and quality of service agreed with customers
4. Be a viable and sustainable business

## What do we do?

We are proud of the wide range of opportunities to get involved that we offer. You will see most of these listed in Appendix A. We have recently reviewed the projects with our colleagues in Wiltshire. This is to bring the work and the staff into one team and to develop a more consistent approach, although still being able to respond to local differences. We will formally launch the GreenSquare Community Involvement team later in the summer when some key vacancies in Chippenham have been filled.

We are drafting a set of new leaflets on the different ways to get involved which will be made available to residents and we will send to all Communities Board members once they are available. There is a DVD of residents talking about different involvement projects. These clips are also on the website.

<http://www.greensquaregroup.com/involve.htm>

The Residents Scrutiny Panel is currently carrying out an inquiry into Community Involvement. It is too early to know what recommendations they will make.

## Budget – how much does it cost?

### 2011-12

- Community involvement budget was £300K
- Partnering investment including from other housing associations and from fundraising into our communities was £694K (for details see appendix C). This includes fundraising which was to be spent in 2011-12 of at least £395K.
- This includes
  - Rose Hill Lottery                      £26K
  - Shout    £157K

### 2012-13

- Community involvement budget of £400K, the increase due largely to the Rose Hill lottery funding and the transfer of the One Community Funding from an Asset Management cost code
- We will report regularly to the Communities Board on our expenditure against this budget
- We would welcome Communities Board member involvement in drawing up the budget for 2013-14.

## Impact Assessment Reviews

Impact Assessment Reviews are a way of looking at the costs and the impact on residents of our community involvement work. They are carried out by the staff member who leads on the project. They are a useful tool as they help us to:

- Assess the costs and the impact of our community involvement work.
- Provide feedback to the board, residents and staff
- Help us to continually improve what we do

The staff complete these reviews as accurately as they can without devoting an unreasonable amount of resources to doing them.

## Some Key Findings from the Impact Assessment Reviews

### Appendix B – the Matrix

1. Most of our projects have a high impact on residents. The few that don't are all low cost.
2. Only 2 of our projects are high cost (more than £25K) and they both have a high impact. They are the Residents Scrutiny Panel and the Blackbird Leys Community Buildings. We are currently reviewing the costs of running the Community Buildings and seeing if they can be reduced.
3. The Employment and Training project had little impact in 2011-12. Both the costs and we anticipate the impact will be significantly increased during 2012-13 with the employment of a part-time employment assistant and the rolling out of this area of work across GreenSquare.

### Appendix C – the summary of the figures

4. A great deal of our work is done in partnership. This is reflected in the figure of £694K of investment from our partners (including fundraising).
5. A fantastic number of volunteer hours are contributed to our projects with a value of over £277K. The work on Blackbird Leys is a particularly strong example of this.
6. The highest cost per resident affected is the GreenSquare Academy. This is not surprising as GreenSquare wants to support our heavily involved residents, particularly our new Communities Board members.

### Appendix D – the Equality and Diversity Information

7. These figures show that our involved residents are representative of the residents in the Isis area and have been throughout the year.

### Background papers

We have made available the following background papers. We will be happy to answer questions on these at the meeting or by email. We will explain them more at the meeting.

- **Appendix A:** A table listing our major Community Involvement projects that have had an impact assessment review carried out for 2011-12. This provides you with a link to the detailed impact assessment review for each project, so you can look for more information on any project you are particularly interested in.
- **Appendix B:** An Impact and Cost matrix which should help you to see the level of impact and the cost of the different projects.
- **Appendix C:** An excel spreadsheet drawing together the figures from all the impact assessment reviews. This is background information for you in case you are interested.
- **Appendix D:** A table showing the diversity of our involved residents

## **Recommendations**

1. We ask the Board to note this report
2. We ask the Board to consider how often and in what form they would like financial and project monitoring reports to be presented
3. We ask if the Board would like to nominate a Board member or members to work closely with the team on drawing up the 2013-14 project plan and budget

### **For further information contact:**

Wendy Spray [wendy.spray@greensquaregroup.com](mailto:wendy.spray@greensquaregroup.com) 01865 782510

## ISIS COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT PROJECTS IMPACT ASSESSMENT REVIEW LIST 2011-12

**For more information on any of these projects, please follow go onto the forum which will take you to a folder that has all the Impact Assessment Reviews in it**

| <b>Project / Activity</b>                   | <b>Aims and Objectives</b>  |
|---|---|
| <b>55+ Housing Forum</b>                    | Provide an effective consultation group for residents in 55+ schemes to give us feedback and ideas about policy, procedures, good practice, forthcoming proposed changes to the service, health and safety issues affecting them.   |
| <b>Citizens Editorial Group</b>             | The Citizens Newsletter is an important communication tool that is distributed to all our residents. GreenSquare encourages residents to have input into their newsletter, giving them the opportunity to suggest ideas and help to decide what goes into it.   |
| <b>Citizens Panel</b>                       | The aim of the Citizens Panel is to consult a broad range of residents throughout Isis's properties on the services we provide through brief monthly surveys by email, telephone and post.  |
| <b>Community Buildings on Greater Leys</b>  | To build a sustainable community at Blackbird Leys at an estate and neighbourhood level, by offering suitable spaces within the community for activities and services.<br>To plan, manage and maximise the use of the community buildings for the benefit of the community.<br>To ensure activities, events, groups and services run within the buildings are done so legally, safely and in accordance with good practice guidelines.    |
| <b>Community Chest Fund</b>                 | To support community activities and foster social capital by financially supporting small-scale community projects in the areas that Isis has residents. To allocate £20,000 to community projects in Oxfordshire that will benefit Isis residents and which meet our requirements.<br>Have a core group of at least 3 residents and 2 staff members on the decision making group.  |
| <b>Community Clean up days</b>              | To give residents the chance to clear unwanted items from their homes and gardens by providing skips. To encourage the community to work together in keeping their neighbourhood clean. To provide residents, especially young residents, with the tools to clean their community on the day – such as litter pickers' gloves and high visibility jackets. To encourage recycling. To promote goodwill between GreenSquare and residents. |
| <b>Complaints survey</b>                    | To assess satisfaction levels with the complaints handling process and to ensure that complaints are managed consistently and fairly at every stage.  |
| <b>Customer Service Satisfaction Survey</b> | To assess satisfaction levels with service delivery standards and ensure that customer contact is managed consistently and fairly. To capture customer suggestions for service improvement and to promote customer involvement.   |
| <b>Disability Forum inc</b>                 | To offer a forum for Isis residents with disabilities where they can consider issues relating to them generally as people with disabilities as well as specifically as GreenSquare residents with disabilities.   |

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Disability Conference</b>            |   |
| <b>Employment and Training projects</b> | To enhance quality of life and reduce benefit dependency by offering training and support to residents in the area of employment.   |
| <b>Estate Improvement Fund</b>          | To increase residents overall understanding of Isis's budgeting. To give residents the opportunity to improve communal areas in which they live. To involve residents in allocating money to improve the communal areas of the neighbourhoods in which they live. To give residents the chance to present their suggestions to other residents and GreenSquare. |
| <b>Hab Oakus Oxford projects</b>        | To consult local people about plans to build 3 housing schemes, Westlands Drive and Dora Carr Close in Northway, and Barns Road in Cowley, providing a new community centre in Northway and community rooms in Barns Road, a shop and workshop for the charity Emmaus and 109 new homes.  |
| <b>Moving in survey</b>                 | To assess how the moving in process is managed in the Isis Neighbourhood across the three main tenure types, general needs, 55plus and temporary stock from initial contact until three week settling in visit. The survey to be sent to all new residents four weeks after move in.  |
| <b>Neighbourhood Links</b>              | This voluntary, resident role aims to improve life on GreenSquare Isis estates by acting as a link between the residents of an estate and GreenSquare.  |
| <b>One Community</b>                    | By focussing estate management and community investment resources, and taking a holistic view, we will improve the quality of life and the environment for local people.  |
| <b>Residents Associations</b>           | To work with residents' groups to develop an effective dialogue and ensure they continue to be representative of their community.   |
| <b>Residents Business Plan</b>          | To obtain residents ideas and priorities for changes they would like to see and incorporate them into a specific residents' business plan. Ensure that we are listening to our customers at a high strategic level.   |
| <b>Resident Inspectors</b>              | To enable residents to inspect our services and to recommend improvements based on their findings.  |
| <b>Resident Training and Support</b>    | To offer actively involved residents the opportunity to learn new skills to assist them in strategic involvement in GreenSquare and in their community work   |
| <b>Rose Hill Community Regeneration</b> | Rose Hill is an inner city estate located on the south-eastern outskirts of Oxford. It experiences multiple levels of deprivation - low skills, low incomes, poor health and high levels of crime. Project's overall aim is to empower all residents, of all ages, to instigate positive changes in their community, making Rose Hill a better place to live.   |
| <b>SHOUT project</b>                    | To give young people the opportunity to set up and run activities for children. To build relationships between young people and the older generation. To build self-esteem, create team-building activities and generate respect for other people, the local community and the environment. To work with all residents, regardless of their landlord or tenure. |
| <b>Starcatchers</b>                     | To provide a performing arts based community competition free to social housing residents in partnership with   |

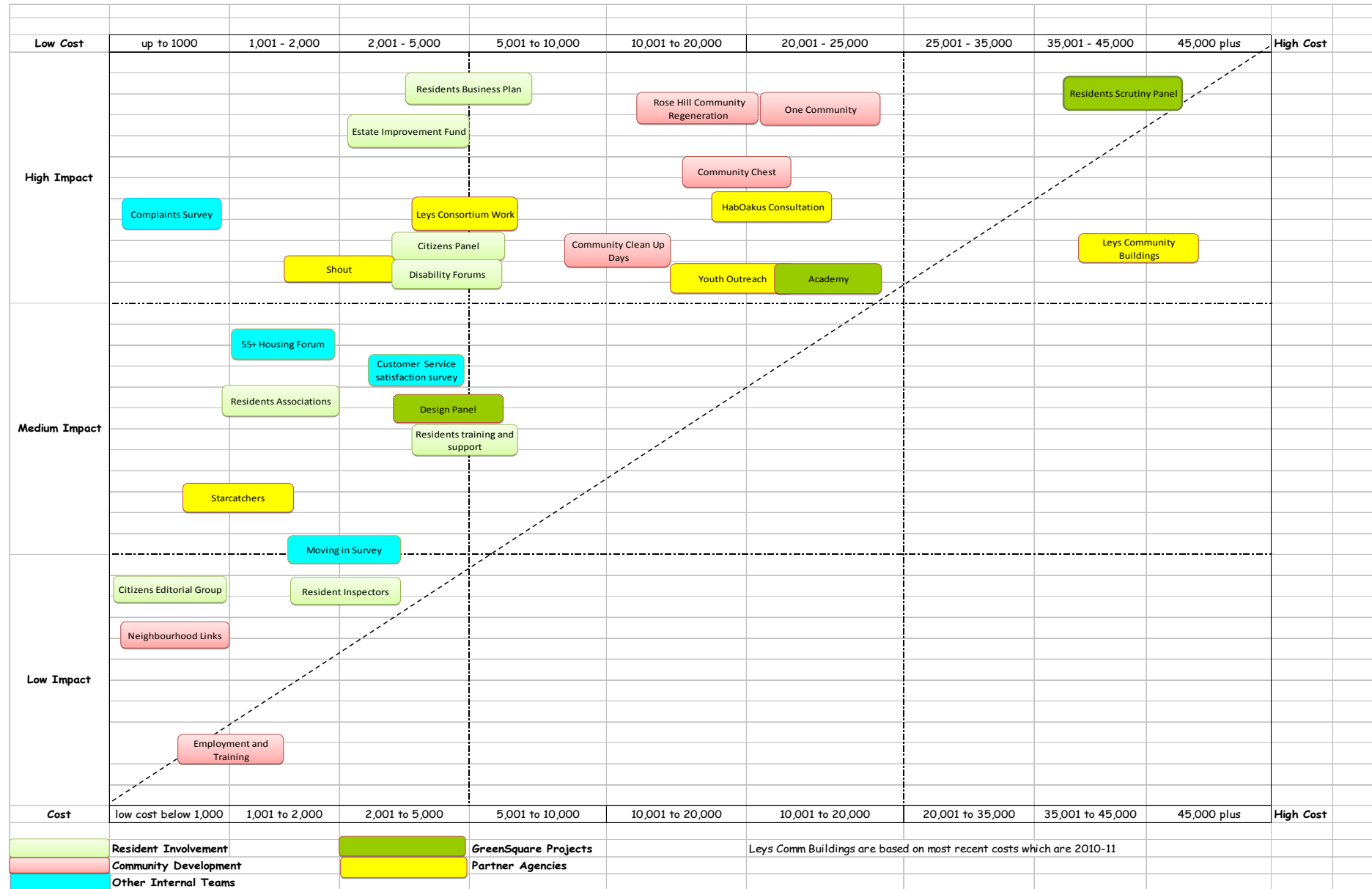
|                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
|                       | housing associations working locally.   |
| <b>Youth Outreach</b> | To provide high quality youth work on our larger estates in order to build positive relationships in the community, offer constructive experiences and role models and reduce the incidence of related anti-social behaviour. |

### **GREENSQUARE COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT PROJECTS**

|                                 |   |
|---------------------------------|---|
| <b>GreenSquare Academy</b>      | Improve the quality of resident involvement at a strategic level. Increase the number of residents who are able to take an active role at all levels of involvement. Improve the level of confidence in residents taking part in all involvement activities. Provide effective training for involved residents. Provide effective evaluation of the impact of learning. |
| <b>GreenSquare Design Panel</b> | To help influence the design and specification of our new homes so that we build better user-friendly homes that people want to live in. To influence the building of flexible, adaptable homes to meet all needs.  |
| <b>Resident Scrutiny Panel</b>  | To Monitor GreenSquare Group's Performance through review of Key Performance Indicators, complaints, audits and customer intelligence. To scrutinise the work of the group by reviewing decisions and carrying out formal Inquiries and reporting back to GreenSquare Board;<br>To agree and oversee the Group's Continuous Improvement programme.                      |



# Appendix 2d - Isis 2011-12 Impact & Cost Matrix - The impact matrix is based on the impact to Services, Accountability, Community and Individual Residents





## Appendix 2e - Isis 2011-12 Community Involvement Projects Impact Assessment Review Summary Figures

| Project / Activity                              | (1) Residents Involved | (2) New Residents Involved | (3) Residents Affected | (4) Staff hours | (5) Staff Cost | (6) Activity Cost | (7) Total Cost  | (8) Partnering Investment | (9) Total cost OCHA + Partnering Costs) | (10) Resident /Volunteer Hours/cost | (11) Cost Per resident involved | (12) Cost per resident affected | (13) Unit Cost of activity |
|---|------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------|-----------------|----------------|-------------------|-----------------|---------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 55+ Housing Forum                               | 18                     | 4                          | 534                    | 57              | £1,163         | £350              | £1,513          |                           | £1,513                                  | £1,800                              | £84                             | £2.83                           | £378                       |
| Citizens Editorial Group                        | 28                     |                            | 9100                   | 17.5            | £325           | £90               | £415            |                           | £415                                    | £90                                 | £15                             | £0.05                           | £103                       |
| Citizens Panel                                  | 310                    | 86                         | 9100                   | 105             | £1,875         | £2,750            | £4,625          |                           | £4,625                                  | £1,830                              | £15                             | £0.51                           | £420                       |
| Community Buildings on Greater Leys             | 1687                   |                            | 13000                  | 350             | £7,574         |                   | £28,895         | £412,847                  | £441,742                                | £117,180                            | £17                             | £2.22                           | £7,224                     |
| Community Chest Fund                            | 4                      | 0                          | 9100                   | 46              | £924           | £20,160           | £21,084         | £80,000                   | £101,084                                | £560                                | £5,271                          | £2.32                           | £514                       |
| Community Clean up days                         | 432                    |                            | 1792                   | 185             | £3,145         | £8,029            | £11,174         | £703                      | £11,877                                 | £4,320                              | £26                             | £6.24                           | £931                       |
| Complaints survey                               | 17                     |                            | 9100                   | 15              | £315           | £119              | £434            |                           | £434                                    |                                     | £26                             | £0.05                           | £15                        |
| Customer Service Satisfaction Survey            | 1681                   |                            | 9100                   | 122             | £2,254         | £1,332            | £3,586          |                           | £3,586                                  |                                     | £2                              | £0.39                           | £2                         |
| Disability Forum inc Disability Conference      | 80                     | 20                         | 765                    | 130             | £2,210         | £2,000            | £4,210          | £8,000                    | £12,210                                 | £3,500                              | £53                             | £5.50                           | £1,403                     |
| Employment and Training projects                | 18                     |                            | 18                     | 16              | £338           | £600              | £938            | £10,000                   | £10,938                                 |                                     | £52                             | £52.11                          | £19                        |
| Estate Improvement Fund                         | 68                     |                            | 1078                   | 141             | £2,505         | £0                | £2,505          |                           | £2,505                                  |                                     | £37                             | £2.32                           | -                          |
| Greater Leys Community involvement co-ordinator | 2144                   |                            | 13000                  | 560             | £4,847         |                   | £4,847          | £7,271                    | £12,118                                 | £130,000                            | £2                              | £0.37                           | £539                       |
| Hab Oakus Oxford projects                       | 344                    | 344                        | 344                    | 350             | £10,850        | £8,385            | £19,235         |                           | £19,235                                 |                                     | £56                             | £55.92                          | £3,205                     |
| Moving in survey                                | 152                    |                            | 152                    | 86              | £1,976         | £152              | £2,128          |                           | £2,128                                  |                                     | £14                             | £14.00                          | £13                        |
| Neighbourhood Links                             | 4                      | 2                          | 438                    | 17              | £330           | £416              | £746            |                           | £746                                    | £600                                | £187                            | £1.70                           | £187                       |
| One Community                                   | 45                     | 45                         | 140                    | 162             | £3,110         | £20,000           | £23,110         |                           | £23,110                                 | £710                                | £514                            | £165.07                         | £325                       |
| Residents Associations                          | 40                     | 20                         | 600                    | 40              | £680           | £700              | £1,380          | £600                      | £1,980                                  | £4,000                              | £35                             | £2.30                           | £345                       |
| Residents Business Plan                         | 8                      | 3                          | 9100                   | 158             | £3,376         | £1,989            | £5,365          |                           | £5,365                                  | £925                                | £671                            | £0.59                           | £1                         |
| Resident Inspectors                             | 7                      |                            | 9100                   | 108             | £2,102         | £250              | £2,352          |                           | £2,352                                  | £585                                | £336                            | £0.26                           | £0                         |
| Resident Training and Support                   | 12                     |                            | 9100                   | 85              | £1,895         | £3,000            | £4,895          |                           | £4,895                                  | £2,000                              | £408                            | £0.54                           | £699                       |
| Rose Hill Community Regeneration                | 6025                   |                            | 6025                   | 980             | £17,020        | £25               | £17,045         | £9,251                    | £26,296                                 | £3,520                              | £3                              | £2.83                           | £609                       |
| SHOUT project                                   | 400                    |                            | 1080                   | 55              | £1,025         | £2,000            | £3,025          | £157,202                  | £160,227                                | £4,500                              | £8                              | £2.80                           | £1,008                     |
| Starcatchers                                    | 14                     | 14                         | 46                     | 17              | £325           | £750              | £1,075          | £8,500                    | £9,575                                  | £1,000                              | £77                             | £23.37                          | £215                       |
| Youth Outreach                                  | 80                     |                            | 665                    | 8               | £172           | £20,000           | £20,172         |                           | £20,172                                 |                                     | £252                            | £30.33                          | £172                       |
| <b>Sub Total</b>                                |                        |                            |                        | <b>3811</b>     | <b>£70,336</b> | <b>£93,097</b>    | <b>£184,754</b> | <b>£694,374</b>           | <b>£879,128</b>                         | <b>£277,120</b>                     |                                 |                                 |                            |
| <b>GREENSQUARE PROJECTS</b>                     |                        |                            |                        |                 |                |                   |                 |                           |   |                                     |                                 |                                 |                            |
| Project / Activity                              | (1) Residents Involved | (2) New Residents Involved | (3) Residents Affected | (4) Staff hours | (5) Staff Cost | (6) Activity Cost | (7) Total Cost  | (8) Partnering Investment | (9) Total cost to OCHA                  | (10) Resident /Volunteer Hours/cost | (11) Cost Per resident involved | (12) Cost per resident affected | (13) Unit Cost             |
| GreenSquare Academy                             | 62                     | 50                         | 62                     | 738             | £12,468        | £9,485            | £21,953         |                           | £21,953                                 |                                     | £354                            | £354.08                         |                            |
| GreenSquare Design Panel                        | 12                     | 2                          | 200                    | 80              | £1,600         | £2,100            | £3,700          |                           | £3,700                                  | £248                                | £308                            | £18.50                          | £1,850                     |
| Resident Scrutiny Panel                         | 10                     | 3                          | 21700                  | 472             | £34,261        | £4,186            | £38,447         |                           | £38,447                                 |                                     | £3,845                          | £1.77                           | £2,824                     |
| <b>Sub Total</b>                                |                        |                            |                        | <b>1290</b>     | <b>£48,329</b> | <b>£15,771</b>    | <b>£64,100</b>  | <b>£0</b>                 | <b>£64,100</b>                          | <b>£248</b>                         |                                 |                                 |                            |

### Isis Equality and Diversity Information Impact Assessments 2011/12

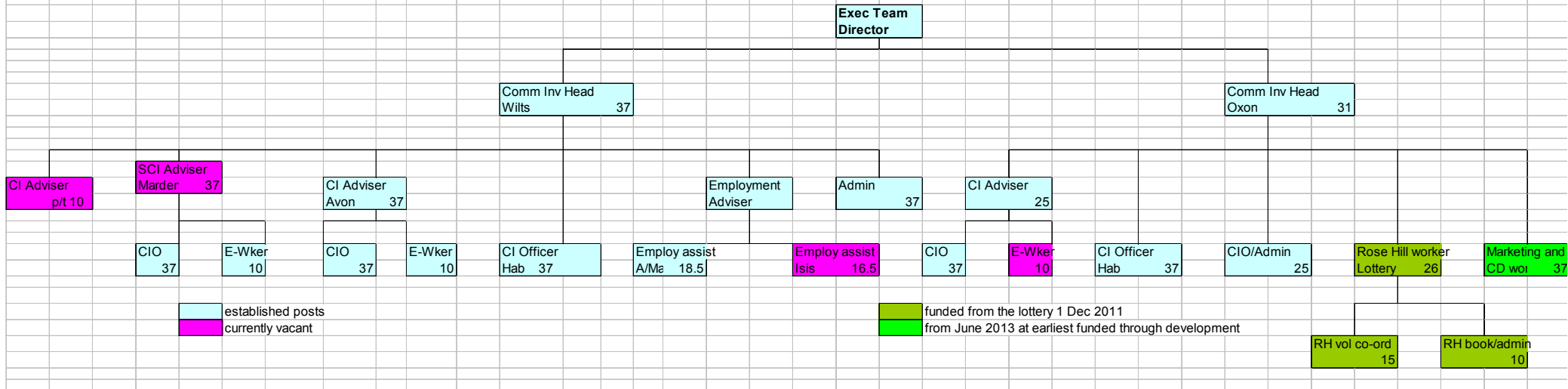
Information is based on all involved residents at 31 March 2012. Due to the way the information is held on our computer system, we don't have this information for children of residents or any other participant who isn't the tenancy holder / joint tenant.

There has been a very healthy increase of 36% in the number of involved residents in the past year to 327 at the end of March 2012. This is over 11% of our residents. The team has monitored the demographic breakdown of this group on a monthly basis and has recruited to correct any imbalances. As a result we have met all targets for the diversity of our involved residents through every month of the year. The table below shows the figures for our involved residents at the end of March 2012 alongside the figures for all our residents. They demonstrate that our involved residents are demographically representative of our overall residents.

| Characteristic            | 2011-12<br>Involved<br>residents % | Total OCHA<br>Residents % |
|---------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>Gender</b>             |                                    |                           |
| Female                    | 65.4%                              | 60%                       |
| Male                      | 34.6%                              | 40%                       |
| <b>Ethnic Origin</b>      |                                    |                           |
| White British             | 80.4%                              | 85.7%                     |
| Black and Minority Ethnic | 19.6%                              | 14.3%                     |
| <b>Disability</b>         |                                    |                           |
| Yes                       | 31.4%                              | 23.3%                     |
| No                        | 68.6%                              | 76.7%                     |
| <b>Sexual Orientation</b> |                                    |                           |
| Heterosexual              | 81.4%                              | 85.9%                     |
| Bisexual                  | 0.6%                               | 0.8%                      |
| Lesbian/gay man or woman  | 2.5%                               | 0.9%                      |
| Refused or unsure         | 15.5%                              | 12.5%                     |
| <b>Religion</b>           |                                    |                           |
| Christian                 | 53.3%                              | 48.1%                     |
| Buddhist                  | 0%                                 | 0.5%                      |
| Muslim                    | 4.7%                               | 2.9%                      |
| Hindu                     | 0.3%                               | 0.2%                      |
| Jewish                    | 0.3%                               | 0.1%                      |
| No religion               | 33.2%                              | 36.9%                     |
| Other religion            | 2.6%                               | 2.3%                      |
| Would rather not say      | 5.6%                               | 8.9%                      |
| <b>Age</b>                |                                    |                           |
| Under 18                  | 0%                                 | 0%                        |
| 18 – 25                   | 12.3%                              | 8.5%                      |
| 26 – 30                   | 10.4%                              | 11.0%                     |
| 31 – 40                   | 17.7%                              | 24.0%                     |
| 41 – 50                   | 21%                                | 24.2%                     |
| 51 – 60                   | 13.6%                              | 13.4%                     |
| 61 – 65                   | 8.5%                               | 4.0%                      |
| 65 plus                   | 16.5%                              | 16.9%                     |

Figures calculated as percentage of known data, so refused and blank removed from denominator except religion and sexuality where refused is included

**Community Involvement (CI) - 16.07.12 - for RSP inquiry**



## **Resident Consultation on Housing Management Policies and Procedures Summer 2012**

### **Background**

Housing Management are reviewing the policy and procedures of 5 key areas:

- Lettings
- Income Management
- ASB
- Estate Management
- Tenancy Management

This is driven by:

- the need to make the policies and procedures consistent across GSG
- the need for consistency to feed into the one IT system
- introduction of the new Chippenham contact centre in Aug

There is a tight timescale on the Lettings consultation driven by the need for work on the Lettings Orchard module due to start in September

Phil Brady is the lead Head of Neighbourhood on this work. Alison Davies is the project manager for much of the work driving this review and Vic is the sponsor. Dee Scott and Jan Morse are leading the Lettings procedure review.

There is a need for resident consultation on the policies and procedures and a proposal needs to go to the Exec team next Tues including what if any extra resources are needed.

### **Proposal for Resident Consultation**

1. To hold a GSG focus group in Swindon – one on each of the 5 key areas
  - a. Each focus group to be around 12 residents (ideally 4 from each CB area). We would recruit 5 from each area to ensure enough attending.
  - b. Focus group to run from 10.30-3 pm with 45 mins for lunch.
  - c. Incentive offered of £20 (in line with our new Community Involvement incentives policy) plus £10 travel time payment for those from Oxford and £5 travel time payment for those from Wiltshire.
  - d. One Head of Neighbourhood and one Neighbourhood Manager would attend the focus group to explain what is proposed and respond to questions, but the session would be independently facilitated.
2. To meet the timing needed for the Orchard module development, the Lettings focus group needs to be held during June. Income Management would be during July and the others would follow during Sept, Oct and Nov.
3. It might be possible for the Lettings consultation for some questions to be asked as part of the survey of waiting list residents being drawn up by Development.
4. We will review the process after the Lettings focus group and agree any changes needed to the process particularly to ensure that we have involved a sufficiently representative group of residents.

## Extra Resources needed

### For each Focus Group:

These figures are approximate



These figures are not covered in the existing Community Involvement budget. If any survey work is needed, this would be an extra cost.

## **Proposal for Development Strategy Resident Consultation 2012**

### **Questions**

Vic has a number of questions that he would like to ask residents. Development would turn these into a questionnaire. Roughly they are:

1. People who are on the waiting list can LA mail something out to people to create a focus group via Neighbourhood services to common waiting list.
2. Area of operation for GreenSquare
3. Mix of tenure - tenure blindness
4. Pepper potting do people have views on this.
5. Exclusion
6. Service charges. Quality of environment
7. Rural schemes rural Regeneration. How should we go about doing this.
8. How can we enable people to take up work placements and apprenticeships
9. Questionnaire for people who are potential residents RP option of market rent security and rent is higher.
10. Early resident involvement pre allocation trade off with having to wait to move in.
11. Should we be offering self build? Rented with sweat equity.
12. Preamble how many houses we build and over which area we are going to build them. Maximise as many as we can due to a massive need.

### **Process**

We propose the following:

1. A Viewpoint/CP survey across the group, with the answers analysed by CB area. We could may be aim for 100 responses from each area as we did for the RBP telephone consultation.
2. Invite residents when doing the consultation to join a focus group (one for each CB area). Run one focus group for each CB area.
3. If possible, consult residents who are on waiting lists. I've said I will discuss this with Housing Management (I'll ask Phil Brady) to check on feasibility as we would need to do it through our LA partners. Have you any experience of trying to do something similar?

### **Timescale:**

- April/May – Helen and I agree process and liaise with VP and Housing Management
- April/May - take the consultation plan to next RF meeting
- June/July – VP/CP surveys
- July/Aug – focus groups
- 1 Sept – all results need to be with Vic

Wendy  
20.4.12



## Appendix 3a

Information from Kerry Law:

I have heard back from 3 members of the Residents Forum who gave the following responses to our questions:

1. **How would you define the role of the group you are a member of? (Residents Forum)**

The main role of the Residents Forum is to:

Share Residents ideas and views on services and service standards and ensure that Residents are involved in the process.

Residents, who have not been involved, might feel more comfortable getting involved with this group. The level of involvement is not as demanding as some. Observers are welcome to give input so it involves more Residents and encourages them to share their ideas or highlight problem areas.

2. **Would you be interested in increasing your level of involvement.**

Have already done this and continue to do so, as and when required. e.g.. Community Board Member, Resident Inspector, Residents Business Plan etc.

3. **What are you gaining from your role on the group?**

I have already gained vast experience and training from being on the Forum. From being Secretary to Vice-Chair

Continue to learn and if it had not been for the Forum, I would not have had the confidence, or experience, to become a Community Board member. I can now take all this experience to the CB and feel that I have a distinctive advantage over those who have not been involved with the Forum, or other Resident Involvement. The RF is an invaluable stepping stone for any Resident wanting to get involved. We have seen many members grow and go on to be board members, Tpas representatives, Vice Chairs/ Chairs of other groups, Community board members as well as members of other Resident Involvement groups.

4. **What is Greensquare gaining from your role on this group?**

They are gaining a Resident's feedback on their services and service standards. A Resident who is passionate and committed to Resident Involvement. Someone who is now able to train new members of the group and share my expertise and experience with others.

Eve Crook

1) How would you define the role of the group you are a member of?

We are doing some training with the group on Monday so we have just been writing this all out so the answer is the same as Eve's.

2) Would you be interested in increasing your level of involvement?

I personally have been involved in almost everything and now with theACB

3) What are you gaining from your role on the group?

I gained lots of knowledge, confidence. I have been just a member then the secretary now the Chair and I see it going from strength to strength.

4) What is GreenSquare gaining from your role on this group?

Loyalty, experience, knowledge and a resident view as well as a Board Members view

Josie Owens

1) How would you define the role of the group you are a member of?

We are doing some training with the group on Monday so we have just been writing this all out so the answer is the same as Eve's.

2) Would you be interested in increasing your level of involvement?

I have also just joined the Avon Community Boards

3) What are you gaining from your role on the group?

I am the secretary and am gaining confidence everyday, getting to know people and being able to ask the right questions when i need to.

4) What is GreenSquare gaining from your role on this group?

I believe they are getting views from the perspective of a resident which helps them understand residents better.

Thanks

Louise Pettiger

Hope it will work for you

Thanks,

Kerry.

## Oxford Citizens Housing Association / GreenSquare Citizens Panel Annual Review and Feedback

Thank you for your involvement in the Citizens Panel during the past 12 months, you are helping us to improve the way we deliver our services, and we really do value your input. This month, we are asking you for your feedback about the Citizens Panel. As a result of your feedback last year we have introduced a regular survey feedback newsletter. The 'Home Improvements - Real Choice' survey newsletter is attached to this survey.

1. **Have you enjoyed your involvement in the Citizens Panel?**  
80 (96.4%) *Yes*  
3 (3.6%) *No*
2. **Do you feel the questions have been relevant to you as a resident?**  
75 (91.5%) *Yes*  
7 (8.5%) *No*
3. **Would you recommend the Citizens Panel to other OCHA residents?**  
77 (96.3%) *Yes*  
3 (3.8%) *No*

**4. Can you suggest anything that could be improved about the way the Citizens Panel is run?**

**Comments:**

- More multi choice choices
- Make sure surveys are sent as I have not always received them regularly.
- Why not have a free opinion part that covers any matters not previously mentioned
- Give options to say degree of agreement with questions
- More information about OCHA activities
- Sometimes there should be space for writing comment rather than just yes and no answers
- Maybe the occasional question about more general views on what community means to the tenants, like if you could have one thing in your community (a clinic, a playground, a sports centre, for example) what would it be? To gauge general views, not just the tenants issues
- No.....you cover such a wide spectrum of issues via the Panel's survey ..... and it is easy to understand and respond to
- Questions regarding disabled residents
- It seems to work well
- The emails do not display properly so I have to view it as print view, then I can't click on anything so I have to switch back to open the survey.
- Include questions that are relevant to shared owners
- As a 55+ resident I think more surveys could involve this section of your tenants
- Personal feedback would be helpful - i.e. what changes have been made
- Doing good job. Keep it up
- I find the question hard for me.
- Some of the questions could be better worded.
- More involvement for shared ownership.
- Upgrade PR information to all residents
- Advertise more in the Citizen Magazine.
- No. I think the format works well and provides an excellent opportunity for residents to air views and opinions.
- I would prefer to complete questionnaires online because it would be paperless and more economic.
- As far as I can see it runs very well for all residents and I enjoy staying here.
- I think the survey has been quite adequate and useful.
- The introduction of the "Survey Feedback Newsletter" is a very helpful innovation which I hope will be continued in future. So far the results have often been surprising and unexpected which can be informative and illuminating!
- No I think it is well organised.
- The questions and answer options need to reflect the possibility that a respondent could be a shared ownership tenant, as I am. The repairs survey was irrelevant to me since I am not entitled to use this service and was therefore very difficult to answer.
- At least 10 days to complete and return questionnaire.

**5. Now we have started our regular survey feedback newsletter, are you happy with the amount of feedback on the Citizens Panel that we have given you?**

74 (94.9%) *Yes*

4 (5.1%) *No*

**6. If no - please can you tell us more about what extra feedback you would like and how you would like to receive it?**

**Comments:**

- *Feedback could be copied to the RSP & in fact the topics to be covered could be reported to them as they would help with enquiries.*
- More feedback about individual areas/estates. eg. how many people on estate have completed survey
- A quick email would be helpful
- Good service and communications at social behaviour. Priorities for the housing team.

**7. Do you think OCHA has acted on the views of the Citizens Panel?**

70 (89.7%) *Yes*

8 (10.3%) *No*

**8. Our 11 proposed Citizens Panel topics for the next year are:**

**Sustainability**

**Priorities for Neighbourhood Plans**

**Access to Services/Complaints/Service Failures**

**Priorities for Development - Building for Life**

**Financial Inclusion**

**Grounds Maintenance**

**Anti-Social Behaviour**

**Planned Maintenance Priorities**

**Priorities for the Housing Support Team**

**Value for Money**

**Review of the 2012-13 Citizens Panel**

**Are you happy with the list of topics for the next 12 months?**

74 (98.7%) *Yes*

2 (2.7%) *No*

**9. If not, please make suggestions on how the list of topics could be improved.**

**Suggestions**

- : First time buyers
- How to swap your property. Will they ever come up for sale?
- Direct access for complaints
- Wider variety of social/educational activities
- Is there a chance to put access to rent accounts on line? Making it easier to check each month.

Not happy with comments about helping to pay for new kitchen etc, not everyone can afford

**10. This is the last Citizens Panel survey in the 12 months since April 2011. If you have completed 6 of the 11 surveys between April 2011 and March 2012 we will send you £25 worth of shopping vouchers to say thank you for your efforts. We will be offering the same rewards next year too. You can choose whether you want Love2shop vouchers or Tesco vouchers.**

57 (74.0%) *Love 2 Shop*

22 (28.6%) *Tesco*

**We are updating our Citizens Panel membership list. If you have answered a Citizens Panel survey during the last year we will keep you on the list. If you haven't and would like to stay on the list, please complete this survey or contact Richard Grant on 01865 782573, or [richard.grant@ocha.org.uk](mailto:richard.grant@ocha.org.uk)  
- If we don't hear from you, we will take you off the list.**

**If you have any questions on anything to do with the Citizens Panel, please contact Richard Grant.**

**Thank you for taking part in this month's survey!**

**In accordance with the 1998 Data Protection Act, any personal information provided during the completion of this survey will be kept secure and will only be used to provide and improve GreenSquare Group services. It will not be disclosed to a third party. Further information can be supplied on request.**