

The Scheme Executive

Minutes of meeting held on 29th April 2009, at 10.00am in the
Graduate School, University of Hull

Present

Reece Andrew (RA)	Chairperson
Bob Bousfield (BB)	Humber Landlords Association
Paul Ramsey (PR)	Humber Landlords Association
Belinda Garry (BG)	Scheme
Ian Sanders (IS)	Hull City Council
Chris Baker (CB)	Hull City Council
Coralie Tringham (CT)	Hull University Union
Helen Gibson (HG)	Hull University Union
Jason Coleman (JC)	Humber Landlords Association

Apologies

Simon Allison (SA)	University of Hull
Gina Rayment (GR)	Hull University Advice Centre
Jill Cooper (JC)	University of Hull
Andrew Lee (AL)	University of Hull
Ben Ball (BBa)	Lincoln University

In Attendance

Debra Stansfield	Secretary
------------------	-----------

The meeting began with introductions to Paul Ramsey who is to replace Bob Bousfield of Humber Landlords Association.

1. Minutes of the previous meeting

Action plan items discussed, The Scheme publicity/promotion was ongoing.

2. Developments in the Student Residential Market

RA discussed briefly the two developments which had been given approval by the planning committee for the City Centre which will total about 1000 extra student bed spaces.

RA informed the Executive that he had met with John Hocking, Director of Housing where the MP complaint was discussed regarding student/private landlords. In conclusion he feels that in general there is a negative misconception of private housing.

RA to draft letter for MP Diana Johnson with general information in relation to standard compliance and ask the question why The Scheme should be disadvantaged by HALS landlords able to enter a free scheme.

CB mentioned that there had been plans for HCC to review the HALS scheme for some time but this had not yet taken place. One of the options may be to introduce a charge for student accredited accommodation or restrict HALS membership to non student landlords.

IS asked if complaints to student union could be passed to HCC regarding HALS landlords.

CB to send a list of accredited landlords with HCC to CT, the University Advice Centre and to BG.

BB informed that the purchase of part of the Newlands Home site has gone ahead to include 13 listed buildings to be adapted to around 130 student bed spaces. The rest of the site is to remain residential.

RA working on figures showing true picture of student housing needs for 09/10. Projected figures based on 08/09 intake of 98.5% in university owned and 450, 1st years accommodated through The Scheme. Strong recruitment for 09/10 expected.

There has been a small percentage of withdrawals and BG is to explore the reasons and/or the percentage in the private sector.

RA said that the University has put out to tender for new build on west campus for between 500 and 800 bed spaces. Expected completion for September 2011 may include subsequent closure of Needler and Ferens Halls as no net gain in number of bed spaces was expected.

IS mentioned attending a Northern Housing Conference in Harrogate. It was noted that the general feeling about the future is seen as City Centre Living.

HG spoke of Leeds/Headingley students moving out of residential areas and is concerned that the student accommodation was becoming Ghetto style, recommended that Hull should keep what they have now i.e. smaller housing around campus.

3. Scheme Stickers – deferred until the next meeting due to proposer being absent.
4. Landlords Forum

Date agreed for 25th June 2009

BG requested that agenda ideas for the meeting to be forwarded to her.

CB suggested that rubbish be a topic to cover, ways of educating students regarding waste management and information for landlords about Environmental Crime team enforcement.

There has been a leaflet drop which included printing in alternative languages with the help of translation and printing from the International Office. BG is looking to doing something similar dependant on costs in September. BG to send a reminder letter to landlords regarding waste benefits for Scheme members.

JC asked if another 'Bring out your rubbish' day could be done at end of June, where waste disposal units were distributed in local areas, HCC to advise.

CB raised concerns about 'To Let' being boards left up after properties are let, which was seen as detrimental to residential areas. Possible new legislation could apply or landlords could apply to join a voluntary scheme. IS informed of a Model scheme in Leeds;, information to be sent to BG. BG is to bring this forward to the Landlord's Forum in June to adopt a best practice policy. RA to action removal of any University to let boards.

EPC certificates were briefly discussed to consider if they were effective. PR informed that as the majority of housing stock was Victorian built it could only get to a grade D or C at best.

5. Lettings Policy

Point one discussed the draft lettings policy for 2010/11 and if the University of Hull request if they would be able to offer halls students an option of applying for the University stock of student houses. This was agreed in principal as it would not be detrimental to landlords. The draft lettings policy is to be brought to the Landlord's Forum.

6. Inspection Report

BG presented inspection report sheets. Findings showed approximately 30% of properties had problems with damp or condensation. The latter being the main problem due to lack of ventilation and lifestyle factors of student tenants.

RA spoke of user issues, HCC currently carried a vacancy for an Environmental Officer, which was reflected in the 2009/10 inspections. RA to write to Angela Dearing with the concern that HCC are not able, due to staffing levels to fulfil their obligations of inspecting Scheme properties and to also write regarding the review of HALS.

IS informed the Executive that mandatory inspections are to be carried out by HCC and included 98 Scheme properties.

CT suggested that tenants be left a letter inviting them to contact BG for further information following an inspection of their property.

7. Scheme Subscription

BG proposed an increase of £5.00. The HLA members thought that this was not a good idea in the current financial climate.

BB raised the point again that not all landlords who advertised on The Scheme were including all their properties, thus were getting away with lower subscription fees. BG informed the Executive that work was in progress for Derek Ord to produce a data base of where students lived, therefore showing which properties have not registered with the Scheme. This information should be available by the end of May 2009. JC suggested an amnesty of non-registered properties firstly to encourage further registration of properties.

BG to look at The Scheme budget and new ways of raising funds. If funds were recovered from non registered properties as a result of data base information there would be no need for an increase. However since a rise may be required, if income is sufficient to run The Scheme, the item was to be brought forward to the next meeting/Landlords Forum.

8. Any other business

HG raised the matter that the Corgi register has changed now to The Gas Safety Register. However, the service was the same in effect, although the certificates had a new look. The new company's register is available to view on the website.

IS asked for the yearly property form to include the number of storeys and the number of occupants. IS informed the executive that two scheme landlords were being interviewed one of which was under caution due to the alleged breach of licensing conditions. The properties were found during the pro-active mandatory licensing inspections. One of the properties was over occupied and one was not licensed.

IS will report back on the outcome of interviews. However until any prosecutions took place, no action would be taken against Scheme landlords. IS would inform the Executive of the results of the investigations, which are expected to be within 3 months.

IS informed the Executive that his main area of work was now in licensing therefore Julie Hilton would replace him on the Executive and he will bring Julie to the Landlords Forum meeting.

CB informed members about the Peel project, HCC and gateway.

HG and CT are also to bring new HUU representatives to the Landlords Forum.

IS raised the matter of licenses being issued with conditions, as not all landlords were complying. HALS and The Scheme properties were listed on a public register for which data protection does not apply.

The meeting closed with thanks expressed to IS, BB, CT and HG for their work and support on the Executive.

ACTION LIST

Minute	Action	By Whom
<p>3. Developments in the Student Residential Market</p>	<p>(a) RA to draft letter to Diana Johnson MP regarding compliance.</p> <p>(b) HALS landlord complaints to KuHCC.</p> <p>(c) List of HALS accredited landlords to be sent to CT, University Advice Centre and The Scheme</p> <p>(d) To research withdrawals of 1st Years</p> <p>(e) Agenda items for Landlords Forum to be sent to BG</p> <p>(f) Waste management leaflet, proposed drop to students in September</p> <p>(g) Commitment to a further 'bring out your rubbish' day is required</p> <p>(h) Model Scheme required from Leeds to look at the problem of 'To Let' boards</p>	<p>RA</p> <p>IS</p> <p>IS</p> <p>BG</p> <p>All Executive Members</p> <p>BG</p> <p>CB</p> <p>IS</p>
<p>5. Lettings Policy</p>	<p>(a) Draft Lettings Policy</p> <p>(b) Letter to Angela Dearing regarding obligations to inspecting Scheme properties and a timescale to review HALS.</p> <p>(c) Database of student addresses.</p>	<p>BG</p> <p>RA</p> <p>AL/JC</p>
<p>9. Any Other Business</p>	<p>(a) Reporting back of investigations into non compliance of licensing conditions.</p> <p>(b) New sabbatical representatives to attend Landlords Forum</p>	<p>IS</p> <p>HG/CT</p>
