

Somerton Resident Steering Group meeting: Wednesday 3 May 2023, 17.30

Attendees

NCH: Pravin DeSilva, Phillip Lott, Rebecca Sluman, Sally Dixon, Emily Martins
Oxford Architects: Andrew Brown

Residents: Janine Clarke, Linda Clark, Danny Davis, Gwyneth Johnson Mcloughlan, Paul Jenkins, Debbie Clarke, Sharron Dennis, Carol Williams

Councillors: Apologies given

Introduction

Rebecca advised the group that the meeting was being recorded, there were no objections:

1 Action from previous minutes

1.1 The group thought the inspections of the void properties, fortnightly while they are being checked, isn't enough. NCH are still looking into this and have asked the group that if they see anything untoward / suspicious then to ring / email myself and or call out service centre on (01633) 381111. The group said that they would.

1.2 The group asked about a property that was used on a temporary basis as a decant, is now empty. Can this property not be relet. Rebecca is looking into this with internal NCH teams. Another property in Somerton has been relet this week

2 Home Options

2.1 Sally Dixon (Neighbourhood Manager) for Somerton explained that she has been telephoning NCH customers to get them registered on home options. This is owned and run by Newport City Council, they are involved in all offers of social housing accommodation within Newport, so we have to register people on this list so when the time comes we can move people to new homes within Somerton or out of Somerton if they wish

2.2 People do not have to bid for homes and offers will be made directly to people but in order of fairness and to ensure we are following the correct processes then we must make sure every household in Somerton is registered.

2.3 Sally sent letters out to people who she hasn't been able to contact via the telephone to ask them to register themselves if they are able to do this or to ring Sally and she can help them with the registration process

2.4 Newport City Council currently have a wait time for applications to be registered of up to 9 months so we have had to start the process now to ensure there are no delays when we come to the time of households moving

2.5 A resident asked if we could put some information in the Somerton Facebook page explaining the process and the situation. **NCH to look into this**

2.6 Prav explained that NCH will be attending the Councillor ward surgery on Wed 10th May at the Hope Centre, so we will be able to answer people's questions / concerns they may have

2.7 A member of the group asked if we could keep information at The Hope Centre, the next newsletter will be left at the Hope Centre as well as delivered to every home on the estate

2.8 I have asked the group that if anyone speaks to them and are concerned about registering on home options, then please pass on their details (if they are happy with this) and we can contact them via the telephone / email and visit if they wish

2.9 A member asked if people / households know what types of properties they are eligible for. Sally explained that once households are registered on home options, NCC will write to them to advise they are registered and the properties they are eligible for

3 Design Update

3.1 We have completed topographical surveys this week, these were completed in back gardens of homes, where we needed to carry out this survey, people were written too

3.2 We will be looking to carry out acoustic surveys over the next few weeks, these will be carried out by a consultant. We will be initially looking at carrying out the surveys via our empty properties

3.3 Ground investigation works started at the back on Laburnum Drive wc: 1st May 2023, again this is to look at what the ground is made up of and the stability of the ground.

3.4 We have had the vegetation cleared on NCC Acacia Avenue land. Now the vegetation has been removed we will be having some more ground investigations works carried out over the next few weeks

3.5 Andrew showed the map that we showed in Septembers consultation event, that shows areas for regeneration and areas for refurbishment. We are constantly reviewing these areas as and when we receive survey information. In the coming meetings we are will be able to show if we have made any changes to these areas

3.6 We are reviewing and updating areas with modern methods of construction

3.7 In March we submitted the Welsh Government concept submission, we have received feedback and approval from Welsh Government this week

3.8 We are looking to submit another pre-application submission to Newport City Council. We have submitted one previously however there has been a change within NCC planning department, so we want to get their feedback on the designs

3.9 The tender information has been issued for the refurbishment pilot scheme

3.10 We are carrying out open house visits to contractors who want to have a look at both properties to help aid them with their bid submissions

3.11 Submissions will be due in by the 2nd June

3.12 Evaluation of the bids will take place between the 5th June – 16th June

3.13 We would be keen to get some members of the steering group involved approx. 4 members to help us mark the questions the group helped put together. This will take place outside of the steering group meeting and will be an evening meeting

3.14 Prav explained that since the tender pack has gone out, we have had 10 contractors download the information, which is great

3.15 A residents asked that when we start with Acacia Avenue and people are moving out and they want to stay in Somerton will they be moving into a house that has already had all the works. Prav explained that this is exactly what will happen, we will be looking at the refurb programme to help aid the regeneration works

3.16 Prav explained that we are looking to submit a planning application later this year for the regeneration areas

3.17

4 Communication

4.1 We will be sending a newsletter out to all homes in Somerton in the next few weeks

4.2 NCH will be attending the Councillors Surgery at The Hope Centre on Wednesday 10th May at 11:00am

4.3 Community Consultation we will look to hold in July, as we are still waiting information for the surveys that are taking place to aid the plans / designs

5 Any other business

5.1 A member off the group isn't sure why empty homes aren't being relet. Prav explained that even though properties may look immaculate from the outside the inside could tell a different story

5.2 The group would like to see the process in full that empty properties go through and what are the reasons they aren't being relet. **NCH to look into this**

6 Next Meeting

Time and date of next meeting:

Wednesday 7th June: 17:30pm – Hybrid meeting