

HRA Review

On 25 March the Government published its long-awaited plans to dismantle the current Housing Revenue Account (HRA) subsidy system which is used to fund Council housing

For the majority of housing authorities there is no subsidy as such because this is a system to redistribute funds between Councils. It is based on notional levels of rents and allowances for management, maintenance and major repairs of the housing stock.

For some time the system has been regarded as unfair by most housing authorities, not only because of the use of notional rather than actual data but also because there is no strong link between rent levels and funding for services; in addition annual settlements

make medium term planning very difficult.

The Government proposal is to adjust the level of HRA borrowing on a once and for all basis, cease the subsidy system and for Councils to then maintain their self-financing HRAs without further funding support from Central Government.

The Government consultation is seeking the voluntary agreement of the 177 local authorities with housing stock to accept the borrowing adjustment and implement the self-financing system from 1

April 2011.

Hounslow Homes has been carefully considering the proposals and modelling the impact of the HRA debt adjustment over a 30 year planning period.

This work has been carried out in close liaison with Council officers. A communications plan has been established to ensure that tenants and leaseholders are fully consulted and Council Members briefed before approval for the consultation paper response is sought in time for the 6 July deadline.

New Service Delivery Plan

Prioritising our work for the benefit of our residents

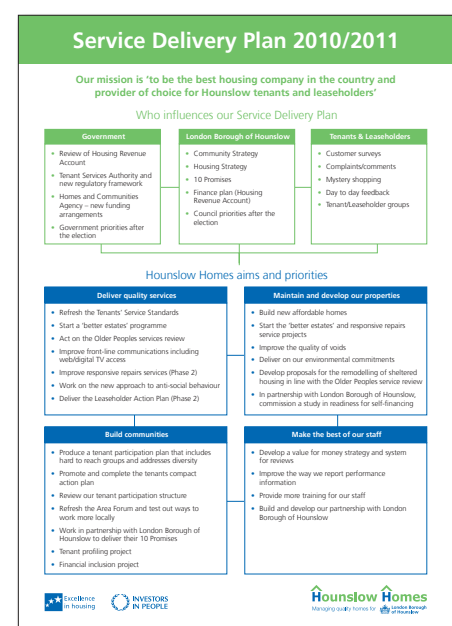
The aim of the new service plan is to build on our achievements of last year and to focus our efforts to further improve our services so that our tenants and leaseholders and councillors can say with confidence that Hounslow Homes is their housing provider of choice. Our priorities this year are to:

- Deliver quality services
- Maintain and develop our properties

- Build communities
- Make the best of our staff

Within these four areas there are projects that every staff member at Hounslow Homes will have some input into, whatever their role in the company.

All the priorities have an element of partnership working with LBH and many are specific to helping deliver Hounslow's 10 Promises.



Encouraging a community approach to reducing our impact on climate change

We want to assist communities in Hounslow to work towards achieving a sustainable future that helps address climate change

Hounslow Homes is taking action to reduce the carbon footprint of the housing stock it manages and because there is a wide-range of social and other factors that affect behaviour, we will be including a wide range of local stakeholders in the consultation process.

We are looking to work with the Greening Campaign to coordinate our efforts with not only the dedicated communities and individuals, but also with Hounslow Council, other public groups and the private sector. Through a structured programme, the Greening Campaign supports communities in establishing a governance structure

and aims to help motivate people to reduce their energy consumption and lower their personal and community carbon footprint.

Experience has shown that this approach encourages up to 23% of a community to take action within six weeks of the launch of a campaign. Savings made by the community are then calculated by the Greening Campaign and fed

back to them so that they can chart their progress and show how they are making a difference. The information is also shared with the local authorities and can assist their efforts to tackle issues such as fuel poverty, deprivation and community cohesion.

Hounslow Homes is looking to hold a meeting at St Catherine's House on 19 May to enable key stakeholders from Hounslow Homes, London Borough of Hounslow and local Councillors to discuss the campaign. Our invited guest will be Terena Plowright - who has created and developed the critically acclaimed 'Greening Campaign'.



Looking ahead

Better Together event

2-5pm
Friday 15 May
Twickenham Stadium

Greening Campaign meeting

Wednesday 19 May
Venue TBC

HFTRA Conference

Saturday 5 June
Renaissance Hotel, Heathrow

Sheltered Housing open day

2pm
Friday 18 June
Edward Pauling House
Westmacott Drive, Feltham
TW14 9RJ

Hounslow Homes Board Meetings 2010

23 March, 7 June, 29 July,
7 October (AGM) &
14 December

Housing Heroes Awards

Friday 10 September
Twickenham Stadium

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