

Tinkers Bridge Residents' Association

Meeting Place, Marshworth

25 May 2017



Present: John Orr (Chair) Lesley Berry (Secretary), Paul Hurcombe (Vice-chair), Ron Ellis, Bill Fuller, David Lee, Sheila Taylor, Jenny Hathaway, Terry Weller, Derek Weller, Neasham Galloway, Cliff Green, Vincent, Barbara Willis, Jean Gates

Apologies: Nicky Johnson, Anne Bircham (YourMK), Kathy Higgins, Rosemary Englander

		Action by whom
1	Welcome The chair opened the meeting and welcomed members.	
2	Minutes of the previous meeting The minutes of the previous meeting (27 April 2017) were read and approved	
3	Matters Arising Dave Lee presented the email response from Lizzie to the questions she took away from that meeting: Please see below the questions raised at the meeting on 28th April and our responses to these. Q. What will happen to those in the process of Right-To-Buy? Q. What if house prices decrease - how will you compensate homeowners? Q. Can you CPO a property twice? They have previously been CPO'd by MKC from MKDP. R. We are currently developing a policy around these topics. A policy document will be available in July. It will include the details of policy for those who have bought their house under Right to Buy and compensation for home owners and details of the CPO process if this is needed. Q. The HRA can afford the maintenance required to fix the housing, so why is regeneration necessary? Q. Can we see the results of the stock condition survey? R. The stock condition surveys carried out across all MKC properties from October 2016 to April 2017 has shown the condition of the council owned homes across the seven priority estates is very poor. The HRA cannot afford this cost. Further detail on the stock condition survey is not being shared. Q. Will you measure the carbon footprint and impact on air quality of the programme? R. We will measure existing carbon and carbon during and post completion - this will be aligned to Milton Keynes Council carbon reduction undertakings. We will be seeking to reduce vehicle movements associated with works programmes, to enhance air quality and to minimise the impact on those	

communities directly and indirectly affected by the programme.

Q. As regeneration includes supporting People, especially in the 7 estates, what resources, including pressure on existing service providers, is YourMK able to provide to enhance the social facilities, especially in the estates where regeneration of property is not happening for some years?

R. The regeneration work will consider all aspects of the neighbourhood - homes, green space, businesses, community facilities, training, education, employment, social connections - and will put plans and support in place to address those factors that are not serving the community that live and work there. The plans will be developed with the community, as part of the masterplanning process when we start this engagement, which for Tinkers Bridge will be in 2020.

Existing support in terms of services provided by Milton Keynes Council will not be affected by regeneration - decisions on this are made by Milton Keynes Council.

YourMK will continue to provide support to people to access training and employment through its Neighbourhood Employment Programme, although this service is not well used for any of the estates in Woughton. We would welcome a discussion with you about how this could be improved.

Many thanks,

Lizzie

Lizzie Brown
Community Partnership Manager

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W: www.yourmk.co.uk

Dave Lee commented that these were responses, rather than answers to the queries.

Dave thought more information should be available on the Stock Conditions Surveys. John commented that his assessment from talking to one of the surveyors was that it was a "tick box" survey, and he thought it unlikely that the surveyors had any technical qualifications. People at the meeting said that their experience was that the surveyors were in the house for less than 10 minutes

Sheila asked about using Freedom of Information requests, which Dave thought would be difficult on YourMK as it is not a government body, but John suggested we could go straight to MK Council

Sheila suggested we should ask for a response directly from David Gleason.

Ron stated that we should take all the information that we have together and take action; he feared that the council had demolition in mind and that all the estates should get together to fight it.

Dave suggested that we need to challenge the responses, and that

someone specific needed to be selected to draft those challenges and see if they were acceptable to other members of TBRA. Agreed that Dave should do this and circulate a draft to all local email addresses that he has, especially John and Ron

For working together with other estates, Regeneration Watch MK is still possible, and John expected a meeting in mid June, possibly a hall hire in the Bradville/Fullers Slade area, and to get a survey from the residents to determine what they want from regeneration. Without that survey, representation on their behalf is not possible. John has met with Regeneration Watch Bradville (separate to their RA as only part of the area is for regeneration) and they are against demolition.

Dave has contacted a non-profit organisation that represents residents in regeneration schemes (TPAS) – there is a consultant living in Milton Keynes, and Dave will met with her in 2 weeks time (occurred on 7 June)

The LSE has a couple of 2 day events in Chester, at about £170 per person

-13/14 June – Neighbourhood renewal and estate regeneration

- 4/5 July – A new deal for neighbourhood renewal

Sheila to enquire if grants to attend are available from YourMK or the Community Council, with Cliff, Dave, and Kathy possible attendees.

Dave raised again that he felt the Regeneration thrust of supporting people should mean YourMK support developing the Meeting Place facilities, although the building comes under WCC

Feelings abound that estates which are not actually in the process of regeneration will be ignored as far as maintenance is concerned, being left to deteriorate to make demolition a more acceptable option

Two of the queries from our minutes of the last meeting had been omitted from Lizzie's response (David Gleason's promise of the full order, and also HRA spending), and so should be included in our response.

4 Environmental Report

Ron reported that wood for the raised flower beds (of a thicker size) has been ordered and is being cut to size at the woodyard.

George's boxes are needing more attention – Ron to discuss with April

The WCC services committee has agreed to change the lock on the back gate to the Meeting Place outside area, and let TBRA have a key, and storage facilities in that area.

Derek and Terry have taken over maintenance of several of the boxes, with Paul from Blisworth helping.

The alleyways have been improved, recently with wood chippings, and are now being used more.

WCC have requested we include fly-tipping and car parking articles in the next few editions of The Bridge

Bin cupboard doors can be replaced on council properties, the first contact being the parish councillor. It was disappointing that such things had not been picked up by the stock condition survey.

Ron

Barbara had a hole in her loft. The surveyor told her she needed more insulation in her loft, but the council would not pay for it. Barbara has paid for it herself.

Council litter picking is now only every 7 or 9 weeks, and this reduced frequency is having noticeable effects. The meeting agreed that Ron should write a letter of complaint to the council about this.

Ron

5 Chair's Report

The annual Parish Council meeting took place and the same people were returned to office.

A ruling has been brought in by the council to start enforcing car parking. This will be implemented by the Parish Council.

We should report parking and fly-tipping.

Ron attended the Communities and Housing meeting on 11 May, subject job seeking, and there is a helpful centre on the Lakes estate. Transport was identified as a problem, as often, if using buses, you have to go via the city centre, which gives long travel times. Bicycles or walking is, for some, the only alternative.

The meeting felt that cross-city buses should be available. It was noted that there is an active MK bus users group (Facebook Milton-Keynes-Bus-Users-Information-926401207370384)

The latest local unemployment figure is 3.8%, which is good.

6 Treasurer's Report and Grants

No report at present. John to assist Mavis with understanding the required reports.

The cheque of the grant for the Guides Camp has arrived

From the Tesco "Bags of Help" award, we have gained £2,000 to be spent within 12 months on "promoting active community participation with development of use of outdoor spaces". A vote of acceptance was carried unanimously.

Seaside trip. It was agreed that

The residents association wish to make an application to the Woughton Community Council for a grant for a seaside trip in the summer. Sheila made a formal proposal that we apply to the WCC for a grant towards the cost of a coach. The meeting agreed and the proposal was accepted nem com.

Deanna has decided that she cannot organise the trip this time. John to advertise for a new organiser

John

Sheila also asked that we agree to apply for funding for the pantomime trip. This was carried nem com, as was a proposal to seek funding for a summer event (e g Dog show)

We have been awarded Platinum status as a Residents Association by MKC. Ron's attendance at a large number of committee meetings has been crucial in achieving this rating, which means we are given a grant for running costs of £900. John proposed that £300 of that money be used to

John

	<p>help fund the newsletter, and this was carried nem com by a show of hands.</p> <p>John also stated that, as the newsletter carries publicity for WCC and YourMK events, we should be entitled to some funding from those organisations. The meeting agreed.</p> <p>Sheila gave a vote of thanks to all those who had dealt with the health check.</p>	
7	<p>Plan MK Consultation</p> <p>Possible comments on the Housing section of Plan:MK had been prepared and distributed by David Lee. He introduced this response, highlighting that Policy HN9 was not acceptable. He asked if the meeting wanted to formally accept the responses he had prepared, and this was carried nem com.</p> <p>David to submit the response, together with the First Steps plan, incorrectly described in the AGM as the community plan.</p> <p><i>Post meeting note: Documents submitted, and acknowledged as received by John Cheston on 30 May 2017, via email.</i></p>	
8	<p>First Steps Working Group</p> <p>Lesley reported this continued to function, and most of the items discussed by it had already been raised in this meeting.</p>	
9	<p>Council House Maintenance</p> <p>Terry and Derek have had their ridge tiles replaced, and also some panelling.</p> <p>Another tenant had had a window replaced</p> <p>There are still lots of houses that had not been touched, and this was unacceptable.</p>	
10	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>None</p> <p>John thanked everyone for their hard work</p>	
11	<p>Next meeting</p> <p>The meeting closed at 9 pm</p> <p>The next meeting is on 29 June 2017 at 7:30</p> <p>The next working group meeting is on 14th June at 7.00.</p>	

Appendix: Related documents:

- | | |
|------------------------------------------------|--------|
| 1) Response to Plan:MK housing (see item 7) | Page 6 |
| 2) Covering email sent with above response | Page 7 |
| 3) Acknowledgement of receipt of that response | Page 7 |
| 4) Email to Lizzie Brown (see item 1) | Page 8 |

Tinkers Bridge Residents Association

Formal response to Homes and Neighbourhoods section of Plan:Mk

Introduction

Tinkers Bridge is one of the estates listed for regeneration in Milton Keynes, and so the local Residents Association is concerned about the planning controls that may affect the estate. We therefore make the following points, and acknowledge the helpful discussion held by Milton Keynes Housing and Community Committee on 4 May 2017

General items:

1. The expression “over-concentration” occurs in several of the policies (HN4, HN7). This is open to wide interpretation, and so removal of it should be considered where possible.

Policy HN1 – Housing mix and density

1. The major part of our estate, (as with several others), was council housing, which would not be allowed by this policy. There is a major national shortage of low cost housing, and so this policy should allow exceptions of institutional “build to let” developments, where they include the social support required for the expected tenants, thereby also allowing student accommodation, as covered in HN8

Policy HN2 – Affordable Housing

1. Starter homes should be mentioned in either this, or a new policy, while recognising the point made in section 13.9 of the Plan.
2. No justification is seen for the 7% Shared Ownership and 26% Affordable rent split which make up the minimum of 33% affordable housing units, so considerable flexibility should be introduced into that split.
3. Viability arguments has been used in many developments to reduce social housing and increase the profit of the developers. The Plan should clearly minimise the possibility of that occurring, stating that Milton Keynes will only allow such arguments when national government policy forces them to be considered. This is a complete rewrite of the last section of this policy.

Policy HN6 – Accessible and Adaptable Homes

1. The phrase “subject to viability” should be changed to “subject to any viability tests imposed by government”, for the reasons outlined in point 3 on HN2

Question 7 – Temporary accommodation

1. Accommodation provision should be such that a young couple without capital can obtain an affordable home for themselves within 6 months of requesting such a dwelling, this time being similar to the planning period required for many marriages. Temporary and other housing supply through the council and/or other agencies should be increased to meet such a goal.

Policy HN7 – Houses in multiple occupation

1. As a residents association, we see houses in multiple occupation as often giving problems due to both the short tenancy durations, and no person in the property taking responsibility for the overall appearance and care of the property, resulting in overgrown gardens, rubbish not being correctly handled, and poor social cohesion. Properties with these problems do not always correspond to the formal definitions of HMOs. While acknowledging the legal problems in this area, we would welcome some means of making residents more responsible for the public impact caused by the use of their home.
2. We note that this policy references an existing approved document, which means any effective change in this areas would need to modify that other document.

Policy HN9 - Loss and conversion of residential

1. This policy is not acceptable as it stands.
- 2 Section A of this policy would be acceptable only when applied to the loss of a very small number of dwellings, possibly no more than 2. It should have no application at all to the regeneration of an estate, or section of an estate.
- 3 section B of this policy should be moved into HN11 (Gypsies and travellers). Although as currently worded, it also applies to travelling showpeople (policy HN12), the text with that policy indicates that it could not be applied for them.
4. For estate, or partial estate regeneration, a new policy should be created, reflecting the policy statement of Woughton Community Council printed in the Spring 2017 issue of the Woughton Gazette (<http://www.woughtoncommunitycouncil.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Woughton-Gazette-Spring-2017.pdf>)

Policy HN10 – Rural exception sites

As Tinkers Bridge does not have such sites, we have no formal response to this policy. However, we observe that it implies wealthy people will not be allowed to build new villas on their own land outside development boundaries.

From: Tinkers Bridge Residents Association [mailto:tinkersbridge@gmail.com]

Sent: 27 May 2017 09:21

To: Plan MK

Subject: Response to Plan:MK from Tinkers Bridge Residents Association

Dear Sir or Madam

At the 25 May 2017 meeting of our association, we accepted the attached response statement as our formal response to the housing section of Plan:MK. In addition, we would like our "Action Plan", originally accepted by Milton Keynes Council in the form of Councillor Hannah O'Neil at our launch event on 28 April 2016, to also be considered, and attach a copy.

Please send an acknowledgement so our next meeting can record you have received these documents.

Many thanks

Sent by David Lee on behalf of

Tinkers Bridge Residents Association

Dear Mr Lee.

Thank you for your comments on draft Plan:MK.

Regards

John Cheston

Development Plans Team Leader | Growth, Economy and Culture

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E: john.cheston@milton-keynes.gov.uk

Milton Keynes Council | Civic Offices | 1 Saxon Gate East | Central Milton Keynes | MK9 3EJ

From: Tinkers Bridge Residents Association [mailto:tinkersbridge@gmail.com]

Sent: 5 June 2017 20:18

To: Lizzie.Brown@yourmk.co.uk

cc: Anne.Bircham@yourmk.co.uk

Subject: Re: Questions raised at meeting on 28th April

Hi Lizzie

Thank you for your response to the questions. They were read out at the TBRA meeting of 25 May, and I have been asked to respond to them on behalf of TBRA.

The first point to make is that these are definitely "responses", rather than "answers", and we have observed that the response you gave in person on 28 April, as recorded in our minutes, also show a similar trait. However, we at TBRA would like the precision of answers whenever possible.

For the first group of three questions, we hope your policy document in July will fully answer the first two of them, but it is unlikely to answer the legal point of a property being CPO'ed twice. We do not understand why there should be any difficulty with giving a clear answer to this point.

On the second group of questions, you are saying without providing any evidence that "condition .. is very poor", and "The HRA cannot afford this cost". We have no grounds on which to believe those statements, and will not accept them without supporting evidence. The failure of YourMK to supply that evidence appears to us as contradictory to the promises on you web site to be "trustworthy" (this is not earning the trust of local people) "responsible" (How can you be "held to account" if you do not show the reasons for you actions) and "Empowering" (you are not empowering TBRA). We therefore request firm information from the HRA figures and stock condition survey, specifically looking for

1. The prevalence of structural faults in the surveyed properties, as a percentage of the total properties
2. What percentages fail each of the 4 criterion of the 2006 Decent Home standard (https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/7812/138355.pdf)
3. The standards used to judge Kitchens and Bathrooms, (noting the Decent Homes guidelines regards kitchens under 20 years old and bathrooms under 30 years old as acceptable (Criterion c)), and the percentage judged as being "very poor"
4. The number of minor faults noted during the survey as needing attention (such as holes giving access to birds into roof spaces, loose ridge tiles, damaged doors to outbuildings and bin stores) which have been feed through to the maintenance side of YourMK
5. The qualifications and training of the surveyors which gives them the standing to declare our homes as "very poor"
6. Formal fault investigation of the common defects identified - from the automotive sector of industry, I would expect a FTA, and a 8D/root cause analysis. Without such techniques being applied, how can you be certain the same problems will not appear some years further on, on other estates, or even on these ones after regeneration?

7. Cost estimates for repair of the commonly found defects. Although exact costs would be impractical, some cost estimates are needed to justify your course of action, so should be available, and be open to being challenged.
8. We want to see evidence of the level of maintenance activity on council houses over the last 20 years, to see if the current state is due to underspending over that period. We estimate that the following number of works should have been done each year, and so request to see how many were done in each year:

Item	expected life	Expected number per year
Kitchen refurbishment	15 years	11500/15=767
Bathroom refurbishment	25 years	11500/25=460
Outside repaint	10 years	11500/10=1150
windows replacement	30 years	11500/30=383
boiler/heating replacement	12 years	11500/12=958
Electrical wiring	25 years	11500/25=460

9. In addition to the items detailed in the previous point, there will be other significant maintenance expenditure (for example, on turning round a property after it has been vacated by a tenant). A breakdown of all these costs which appear to have totalled about £9m each year is desired, to clarify that maintenance has been correctly handled
10. The HRA accounts have very large amounts against "interest and cost of debts" (£10m) "Depreciation & impairment" (£11m to £14m), and "Capital improvements". More details of these are required, including the nature, magnitude, and age of debts, and, if amounts have been transferred to other accounts (such as reserves or capital improvements), the balance sheets and revenue sheets of those accounts.

Our minutes also list as one of the queries you took away "HRA spending", (to which you have not replied), which is expanded in the above request for firm information. We acknowledge that YourMK has not been responsible for the HRA over the last 20 years, and so accept that you may have to refer these questions on to MKC, but trust you will be able to give at least the name and email address of someone who can answer these questions in a useful fashion.

On Carbon footprint and air quality, what data will you be publishing, and will it include tracking the effect of any loss of green space on the air quality?

On the support of existing communities, you appear to be saying that until engagement starts with an estate, YourMK has no responsibility for the social facilities on that estate, that they are outside your Mission statement of "...Supporting the involvement of local people and groups in their community", and "Providing access to appropriate training, education and employment". Is that correct? That would almost imply a desire to run these estates down, socially, to make complete rebuilding of them more likely. If this is not the case, what steps do you expect to do in support of the residents activities in the Woughton estates before 2020?

You appear to have missed the query about David Gleeson's promise of the full order of the estates by the end of April. Can we expect a full, direct, explanation from David himself within the next

week? If not, please explain what your website promise of being "trustworthy" actually means.

Turning to the minutes of the TBRA meeting of 28 April, which have been available for some time at http://tinkersbridge.org.uk/tbra/download/TBRAMinutes/2017_04_27_minutes.pdf (the current version having 2 minor corrections noted when the minutes were received on 25 May), we would like further clarity on the following:

1. If rebuilding at a higher density is planned, where are the plans for the additional infrastructure for education and health?
2. How will the views of residents who are not on the electoral role be included?
3. How will RAs be included in the selection of independent advisors?
4. The query about being in the bottom 15% had a response about disability and mental health. This does not appear to make sense. Please explain the lifestyle that YourMK wants to create for the bottom 15% of social wealth distribution - we want it to include a good social network, local employment, good public transport, adequate health, education and housing - and would say that our present estate largely offers these things, the biggest problems being public transport and poor maintenance.
5. The query on council accommodation for lodgers who would be made homeless by regeneration had the response of the council is looking at these needs. Looking does not imply action. We want to know how long they may have to spend homeless waiting for the council to provide them with accommodation.
6. The minutes record that if council houses are demolished, tenants will be moved to a temporarily built area, and then can, if they wish, be moved back to Tinkers Bridge. Previously, a "single move" policy was being supported, so please clarify this area, including the nature of "temporarily built area" - the post-war temporarily built areas of prefabs lasted decades in many places

It does appear to us that the repairs on council houses are now happening faster under YourMK than previously, and we would like to acknowledge the improvement that YourMK has made in this area.

We look forward to your response.

David Lee

On 12/05/17 08:52, Lizzie Brown wrote:

Hi David,

Please see below the questions raised at the meeting on 28th April and our responses to these.

Q. What will happen to those in the process of Right-To-Buy?

Q. What if house prices decrease - how will you compensate homeowners?

Q. Can you CPO a property twice? They have previously been CPO'd by MKC from MKDP.

R. We are currently developing a policy around these topics. A policy document will be available in July. It will include the details of policy for those who have bought their house under Right to Buy and compensation for home owners and details of the CPO

process if this is needed.

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Lizzie

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