

**MINUTES OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING FORUM HELD ON
17 January 2018**

PRESENT: The following members signed the attendance record for the meeting.

Keri Blay – NLCE
Sam Jackson - NLCE
Susan Whiter – NLA
Susan Yorkas – NLA
Rob Crawford – NLA/ALL WESSEX/NLCE
Tim Gorton – CONSIDERATE
B Walsh – NLCE
M Keeshan - Landlord
Jane Barron - Landlord
Mark Slater - Landlord
Jason Orme - NLCE
Leslie Green – NLCE
Martin Wride - Landlord
Lorna Wride - Landlord
Les Tolley - Landlord
Mike Reading - Landlord
K Bennett - Landlord
M D Murphy - Landlord
W White - Landlord
S Steel - Landlord
A Mason - Landlord
R.T. Crouch - Landlord
R & C Jones - Landlord
H Blyth - Landlord
A Jeffries – NLCE
Mark terry Short – NLCE
Sharon Laws – NLCE
Gail Cooke - Landlord
Richard Cook - Landlord
Drew Elkins – NLCE
Mike Ford - Landlord
Andy Mackenzie – NLCE
Steve Lamb – NLCE
Bill Atherton - Landlord

CHAIR

Gerry Laws
66 Greenhill Road
Winscombe
Somerset
BS25 5PB

Tel: (01934) 852525

VICE CHAIR

Richard Osborne
Dr Foxes
Knightstone Causeway
Weston-super-Mare
BS23 2AD

Tel: 01934 427020

SECRETARY

Michaela Holloway
Private Housing Services
Town Hall

Somerset
BS23 1UJ
Tel: (01275) 888734

Zac Nicolaidis – NLCE
Tony Agar - Landlord
Matthew Thorne – NLCE
Rachael Southcombe – NLCE
Alison Garland – NLCE
Helen Brown – NLCE
Debbie Sharkey – NLCE
Kenn Harrison – NLC E
M Nicholas - Landlord
J Cook - Landlord
Monica Hitchings - Landlord
Penny Ashby - Landlord
Michael Paphitis - Landlord
Gill Cox - Landlord
Hannah Jones – NSC
Pip Bodalia - Landlord
Howard Evans – NSC
David Seaton - Landlord

1. Apologies – Tony Dishkin
2. Minutes from previous meeting – Deemed to be correct
3. Matters arising – None
4. **Presentation – Lisa Osborn Private Rented Housing Manager NSC**

In depth presentation on the [review of the housing conditions in the private rented sector](#). The purpose of the review was to examine the extent of poor housing conditions in the Private Rented Sector within North Somerset, to establish if there are any particular areas which suffer from higher concentrations of such properties and to set out the future strategy. Lisa explained there was a questionnaire to complete alongside the review, however the review should be read in full prior to completion as it details the opinions, proposals, list of roads and will clarify the area to which the review relates.

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REVIEW OF HOUSING CONDITIONS



Q – Have all the properties been investigated for the Additional licensing scheme

A – Yes the investigations are complete and the relevant paperwork is being issued to the relevant persons

Q – Is burning/fires considered a hazard?

A – This would be considered a nuisance and the responsible department to deal with this matter is [Environmental Protection](#).

Q – Most of the poor stock is Victorian stone built houses. A lot of which may suffer with damp and mould. What if the landlord cannot afford to carry out the works to resolve the problem. Are there any grants available?

A – There are low level [grants](#) and loans available the loans are provided through working in partnership with [Wessex Resolutions](#). It was mentioned that shouldn't part of the rental income could be used to improve the standards of the property? Landlords can

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also apply to [City Energy](#) who may be able to assist landlord and tenants to access fully funded energy saving measures to help to improve properties.

Q – Will NSC be taking enforcement action against tenants who cause issues within a property i.e. damp and mould?

A – A new initiative has been put into place called [Tenant Passport](#). Tenants can gain a qualification online on how to manage a tenancy, budget, care for and maintain their property.

Q – Isn't this a reactive situation? For instance a good tenant moves in and the property is in a nice condition. A bad tenant moves in and then there is a damp and mould issue. How does a landlord explain this to NSC.

A – Category 1 hazards are investigated as they are considered a serious health and safety issue. The Housing Standards Team understand hazards do not occur overnight, and both the landlord and tenants complaints and comments are taken into account to ensure a balanced idea of any damage caused or when a problem started. If it is considered a serious hazard we advise the landlord of the works that need to be carried out. Any tenant placed by NSC lettings team are educated and given advice and [leaflets](#) to enable them to maintain a tenancy

Q – The report focuses on 14% of rented accommodation in central Weston. What about the owner occupiers? Why should landlords improve properties if an owner occupier doesn't have to?

A – Legislation applies across the board. NSC do serve notice on owner occupiers to improve their properties. An owner occupier has a choice to live in the accommodation with hazards, some tenants do not have this choice. They are not responsible for repairs and the council has a duty to assist tenants if the landlord fails to carry out repairs.

Q – In twelve months from when a tenant moves in, the property is full of damp and mould, hazards and has been damaged by a tenant. What happens in that situation?

A – During the course of a tenancy it is the landlords responsibility to ensure the tenant is conducting themselves in a tenant like manner. An inventory should be taken at sign up and inspections taken place throughout the tenancy. It is also a question of education. If a property is let to someone on a low income is this cost effective to the tenant? Can they afford to adequately heat the property?

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Q – Is there any funding available from North Somerset Council to assist landlords with self-regulating?

A – Sam Jackson – [The National Landlords Code of Excellence](#) provide a local accreditation scheme. NLCE aims to provide a scheme that recognizes landlords and agents who wish to provide good quality, well managed properties and to encourage the supply of good quality private rented homes. To provide and facilitate information and training for landlords.

To close – Rob Crawford All Wessex congratulated Lisa Osborn and North Somerset Council for an excellent presentation. He was impressed how the council are open to options. He had spoken to other Local Authorities who have a different way of approaching the same issues and advised the landlords of North Somerset not to lose the opportunity.

**The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 11 April 2018 at 18:30
in the Old Council Chamber.**

**Please make your way in for the meeting through the main Reception
Town Hall entrance, a member of staff will come and collect you.**

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