

FENLAND TENANTS' FRIEND

A newsletter published jointly by the Fenland Tenants' Forum and the Independent Tenants' Advisor

Welcome to the Second Edition of the 'Fenland Tenants' Friend'

This is the second edition of the newsletter for tenants of Fenland District Council that is published jointly by the Fenland Tenants' Forum and the Independent Tenants' Advisor that will give Fenland tenants a summary of the FACTS about the proposed housing stock transfer.



In this edition we look at:

- Circle Anglia is the preferred partner
- What policies have been developed for the new Housing Association?
- How can tenants get involved?

We will send you further editions of this newsletter as we progress towards the ballot, when tenants will decide whether the housing is transferred. The Tenants' Forum and the Independent Tenants Adviser believe that tenants must have all the FACTS so that tenants can make up their own minds about the transfer proposal.

Circle Anglia is the preferred partner

The housing association partner has been chosen by a 'Partner Selection Panel'. Three members of the panel are tenant representatives.

The feedback from tenants after the open days and the site visits has helped the Partner Selection Panel to choose Circle Anglia. The pictures in this newsletter are of the site visits. This recommendation is now going forward to Fenland District Council.

Circle Anglia was formed in 2005 from the merger of two well-established housing groups - Circle 33 and Anglia. It manages just under 33,000 properties. Circle Anglia says that it provides "So much more":

- Great homes
- Reliable services
- Local solutions

Circle Anglia provides a wide range of affordable housing choices, together with care and support packages that enable more vulnerable residents to maintain their tenancy.



After the Council has approved the choice of Circle Anglia, negotiations will take place to identify exactly what a transfer could offer to Fenland's tenants. At this point, probably in November 2006, the ballot will take place. However, between now and then there will continue to be opportunities for tenants to find out what is going on and to have their say.

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What policies have been developed for the new Housing Association?

Council officers have been developing new policies for the housing association that are designed to improve homes, neighbourhoods and services for tenants. This is being done in consultation with the Tenants' Forum and the Shadow Board.

So far, policies have been discussed on:

- Complaints Policy
- Tenancy Agreement
- Gold Service
- Resident Involvement
- Income Maximisation

The complaints policy describes how tenants' complaints will be resolved.

The draft tenancy agreement is the new tenancy agreement that tenants would have following a stock transfer.

The Gold Service policy is one of providing improved services to tenants who keep up to date with their rent, keep to their tenancy agreement and do not commit anti-social behaviour.

The resident involvement policy covers anyone who would be living in a housing association home – including tenants, leaseholders and (importantly in the future) any new shared owners and residents in temporary accommodation or supported housing.

The income maximisation policy relates to rents and service charges and includes methods of payment, encouraging payment, arrears and enforcement action.

We will soon be looking at policies for:

- Anti-Social behaviour management
- Repairs, maintenance and improvements
- Special needs housing
- Equality and diversity
- Allocations and lettings



How can tenants get involved?

Tenants can contact the Independent Tenants' Adviser through a freephone helpline on 0800-028-3365. The Independent Tenants' Adviser has a website at www.awics.co.uk/fenlandita and can be contacted by e-mail on Adrian.waite@awics.co.uk.

The Council is also running focus groups that are helping to develop policy. These can be joined by calling 0800-169-0655.

Tenants can also get involved through their local Tenants' Association. Contacts for the Tenants' Associations are shown below:

- Chatteris – Colin Greenwood 01354-693782 or Keith Haylett 01354-693048.
- Manea -Nicola Morris 01354-688098.
- March – Jean Key 01354-652933.
- Thorney Toll – Tony Coleman 07961-957878.
- Whittlesey –Irene Henson 01733-208368.
- Wisbech – Ron Butcher 01945-582094.



The Open day at Wisbech

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