

LATMOS INDEPENDENT RESIDENTS' **ADVISOR NEWSLETTER – JULY 2011**

This newsletter is for residents of the three estates - Ethelred, Magdalen and Thorlands - that are members of LATMOS (Lambeth Alliance of Tenant Management Organisations). LATMOS is an alliance of Tenant Management Organisations that would like to transfer their homes to a housing association to bring about improvements to homes and neighbourhoods and ensure the right of the Tenant Management Organisations to continue.

The Council has worked closely with the LATMOS shadow board to consider the level of investment required to bring the estates to at least the Decent Homes Standard set by the Government and to create the type of neighbourhoods that people want to live in. The LATMOS shadow board has decided that the best way to make these improvements and to keep local management through the TMOs is through partnership with an established Housing Association. After looking at a number of Housing Associations, they decided to go into partnership with WATMOS (Walsall Alliance of TMOs). The proposed transfer would mean this Decent Homes Plus standard could be met and improved on within the first five years.

There will be a ballot of tenants and leaseholders – planned for September 2011. The tenants will have to vote 'yes' before the council will transfer ownership of the dwellings to WATMOS. The views of leaseholders will also be taken into account. Between now and then WATMOS, LATMOS and the Council are working together to work out the details of how the transfer will work – especially how to invest enough money in the dwellings to bring them up to the Decent Homes Standard Plus.

'AWICS' have been appointed as Independent Residents' Advisor to the tenants and residents of the three LATMOS estates. 'AWICS' provides independent, accurate and complete advice to tenants and residents as they consider whether to transfer ownership of their homes.

Please contact us if:

- You would like to know more about the proposed stock transfer
- You have any questions about the proposed stock transfer
- There are any improvements that you would like to see to your home or on your estate
- You would like to tell us what you think about the proposed stock transfer
- You can contact us through our freephone helpline at 0800-028-8363, email at Adrian.waite@awics.co.uk and in other ways (see back page)

This newsletter:

- Updates you on the transfer proposals
- Gives you the results of last month's survey of residents' opinions
- Tells you how to get in touch with your Independent Residents' Advisor
- Gives you another opportunity to let us know what you think

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Transfer Headlines!

Offer Document

The Council will soon publish its 'Offer Document'. This will include the details of the offer that is being made to tenants and residents as part of the stock transfer. It will explain what would happen if a stock transfer took place for:

- Rents
- Tenancy Conditions
- Investment in Decent Homes & Improvements
- Governance (how the housing association would be run)
- The Ballot
- Leaseholder issues

If, when you get your offer document, if you have any questions please contact us.

Decent Homes and Improvements: What can the Council offer? What can WATMOS offer?

The Council has to rely on the Homes & Communities Agency (a government agency) for funding for decent homes and improvements. It would cost the Council about £250million to achieve the Decent Homes Standard across Lambeth but they have received only £18.5million for this year and next. This means that very little work can be done and none is planned for any of the LATMOS estates apart from the usual routine cyclical maintenance.

WATMOS is promising to invest £24million in the three estates during the first five years after transfer and another £80million during the 25 years after that. This includes routine cyclical maintenance.

Where would WATMOS get the money from?

Residents have asked where WATMOS would get the money from. WATMOS would borrow this money from the banks. The Council is not able to do this because it cannot afford to and because the government will introduce a 'borrowing cap' on councils from next April. WATMOS is able to do this because the government does not limit its borrowing and because the Council's existing debt related to the LATMOS estates would be written off.

Residents have asked what effect this would have on rents. Rents would not go up any faster with WATMOS than with the Council because all Council and Housing Association rents are controlled by the same government formula.

The WATMOS Business Plan

WATMOS is working on a Business Plan that will show how much they will invest in the estates, how much they will borrow, what their costs will be and how this can be paid for from the rents. This information will be made available to residents.

If you would like to know more, please contact us.

LATMOS Residents' Consultation – April 2011

Thank you to all residents who responded to the recent residents' consultation. We have now analysed the responses that we have received and have summarised them in the table below.

	YES	NO
Are you aware of the LATMOS proposals for stock transfer	68%	25%
Have you been kept informed of the proposals	68%	26%
Would you like to know more about stock transfer – through meetings, newsletters, open days, etc.	59%	32%
Do you have any ideas for improvements to your home or neighbourhood?	52%	32%
Do you agree that LATMOS should transfer ownership and management of the estates to a not-for-profit housing association?	66%	14%


Most residents who responded are aware of the LATMOS proposals for stock transfer and believe that they have been kept informed of the proposals. However, about a quarter of residents have told us that they are not aware of the proposals and have not been kept informed. If you are one of those who would like more information please get in touch with us.

Most told us that they would like to know more about stock transfer. This newsletter tells you more and the Council, LATMOS and WATMOS are also putting out information. However, if you would like to know more please get in touch with us.


One in five told us that they had yet to make up their minds about the transfer. If you would like to know more, or would like to have your questions answered before you make your mind up, please get in touch with us.

We will continue to provide information to residents through newsletters, meetings, the freephone helpline and in other ways so that all residents are fully aware of the LATMOS proposals and can make their own minds up about how they wish to vote in the ballot.

Many residents have made suggestions about making improvements to their homes and neighbourhoods. These included:



Space for Bicycles within our garden.



"Meetings, newsletters and open days. New bathrooms and kitchens, garden fences."

"Porches... just attract youths and drunks who sit on the inside ledge, it would be a big improvement to safety if these porches were demolished."

"Newsletters and more community police."

"Better grounds, flower beds and plants."

"Need new kitchen and bathroom, with option of a shower."

"More internal cleaning of walkways and landings, put security gates into operation."

"Kitchen modernisation that has been promised for years and never delivered."

"New window!!! - problems with condensation, security and mould. More plants. Repainting stairs."

Do you agree with these suggestions? If you do please tell us. If you don't please tell us.

LATMOS Stock Transfer - What do YOU think?

We would like to know more about what **YOU** think and so are carrying out another consultation.

We would like to find out what changes or improvements the residents would like to see made by LATMOS and WATMOS. There is a questionnaire enclosed with this leaflet for you to fill in to let us have your views so that we can make sure the stock transfer delivers what residents want. Please complete the form and post it to: Adrian Waite, 'AWICS' Limited, Room 3, The Shire Hall, The Sands, Appleby-in-Westmorland, Cumbria. CA16 6XN. Please use the enclosed prepaid addressed envelope and return the questionnaire as soon as possible and certainly before 26th August 2011.

Your feedback is very important. Please have your say.

If you have any questions on stock transfer or LATMOS you can contact Adrian Waite and his team. Details are below:

- Visiting our website at www.awics.co.uk/View/page/ita_lambeth_latmos/
- Emailing Adrian.waite@awics.co.uk
- Telephoning the freephone helpline on 0800-028-8363
- Text 07971-321863.
- Writing to: Adrian Waite at AWICS Limited, Room 3, The Shire Hall The Sands, Appleby in Westmorland, Cumbria. CA16 6XN.

If you need information in a language other than English or in large print or Braille, please contact Lambeth Borough Council on 0207-926-3475.

LATMOS STOCK TRANSFER QUESTIONNAIRE

Please let us know which of the following changes or improvements would be important to you:

	Very Important	Important	Not Important
Increase autonomy of the TMO. Residents to manage the estate themselves			
Increase opportunities for resident involvement in management			
Make improvements in day-to-day repairs such as cyclical maintenance, responsive repairs and tree surgery			
Make major repairs and improvements to windows, roofs, heating and hot water systems, pipe work and drainage systems			
Update tenants' bathrooms and kitchens			
Make improvements in maintenance of brickwork and walkways and external decoration			
Control service charges including section twenty notices			
Make improvements to the estate such as community facilities or better use of unused areas.			
Take more effective action against Ant-Social Behaviour			
Other: Please specify			

I am a tenant / leaseholder (please delete what does not apply)

I would also like to make the following comments:

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If you would like to make more comments please write on the back or include additional pages.

I would like to be contacted so that I can discuss this further: ☐

Name Telephone number / Email address

Address

.....
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(You do not need to complete your name, contact details or address if you do not want to)