

Your Home, Your Say

We need your help!

Please complete and return the questionnaire section of this newsletter. Two lucky entries will win £25 shop vouchers to be spent in a shop of their choice!

If you would like this information in any other language or format for example large print or audio please telephone 0800 432 0891

Welcome to the first issue of our "Your Home, Your Say" newsletter.

Stockton Council, working in partnership with Tristar Homes is carrying out an "Options Appraisal" of the council housing stock. The purpose of the Options Appraisal is to consider how best to secure future investment to make sure we meet both your, and our own, aspirations for the future of housing in the Borough.

The Council wants to hear the views of those who would be directly affected by this, which includes council tenants and leaseholders in Stockton, Thornaby, Billingham and all other towns and villages within the Stockton Council area.

This newsletter includes a brief questionnaire, which gives you an opportunity to highlight to the Council the issues that are important to you. The feedback will help us assess your future housing needs and priorities. **Please take the time to complete and return the questionnaire.**

Why Now?

The Council in partnership with Tristar Homes has invested significantly in housing to ensure all homes will meet the Government's decent homes standard by 2010, but we know tenants want more than decent homes and we are now looking to the future.

What options would be considered?

More information and a greater explanation of the options being considered will follow in later newsletters, however here is a brief summary:

1. Transfer of the Housing Stock: This involves the transfer of ownership and management of the housing stock to a newly created or existing

Registered Social Landlord (also known as a Housing Association).

- 2. Private Finance Initiative:** This involves a long-term contractual commitment (typically 30 years), where a contractor manages and maintains the properties
- 3. Staying as we are (no change):** The Council retains ownership of the housing stock which would continue to be managed and maintained by Tristar Homes.
- 4. Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Self-Funding Model:** - linked to different HRA self-funding options.
- 5. Regeneration or special purpose vehicle:** This may involve a wide range of agreements that could potentially be used to secure and take forward housing led regeneration schemes.
- 6. A mix of the above options or any new option which may be identified**

Your views are important?

In order to assist the Council throughout the Options Appraisal a tenants' consultation group has been established. The "Housing Futures Customer Group" brings together tenants from existing tenant and resident groups who will give their views to the Council throughout the Options Appraisal process.

The Housing Futures Group meets with officers of the Council and Tristar Homes on a fortnightly basis and membership is open to all tenants or leaseholders. For more information about the group, or if you are interested in joining the group please contact us (Contact details overleaf)

Your Independent Tenant Adviser (ITA)

The Housing Futures Customer Group has recently appointed an Independent Tenants' Adviser (ITA) - Engage Associates.

Engage will provide independent information, advice and support to tenants and leaseholders throughout the Options Appraisal and ensure that your views inform the decision making process.

Over the coming weeks Eileen and Neil will be seeking your views and making sure you are aware of the Options Appraisal. This will include attending tenant/resident group meetings across the Borough to be available to give advice and information.

Your Independent Tenants Advisers are:



Eileen Adams



Neil O'Brien

Contact Details

For more information or to find out how to get involved please contact either:

Stockton Council - Options Appraisal Team:

Freephone 0800 432 0891

E-mail: stock.options@Stockton.gov.uk

Tristar Homes - Customer Involvement Team:

Phone: (01642) 527777 / 527676

E-Mail : resident.involvement@tristarhomes.co.uk

Engage - Independent Tenants Adviser:

Phone : (01845) 537145

E-Mail: info@engage3.org



QUESTIONNAIRE - Your views count

YOUR HOME AND NEIGHBOURHOOD

Select the top 5 issues on your home & neighbourhood that are important to you. Number them from 1-5 (1 most important, 2 second most important, etc)

- Keeping rents affordable
- Providing local access to the housing service
- Providing a fast and efficient repairs service
- Updating kitchens and bathrooms
- Installing showers in bathrooms
- Installing affordable heating systems
- Installing double glazing
- Tackling anti social behaviour
- Tenants being able to influence the way services are delivered
- Protecting tenants tenancy rights

YOUR ENVIRONMENT

Select the top 5 issues on your environment that are important to you. Number them from 1-5 (1 most important, 2 second most important, etc)

- Providing off street parking
- External improvements to my home
- More frequent painting programmes
- Help with garden maintenance
- Replacing boundary walls and fences
- Annual housing officer visits to my home
- Traffic calming measures or home zones
- Keeping the area clear of rubbish and graffiti
- Improving the appearance of the area
- Providing good grass and shrub cutting services in the environment.

Any other issue important to you:.....
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Please return your completed survey to the Options Appraisal Team in the envelope provided OR reply on-line by following the link on the Stockton Borough Council or Tristar Homes website homepages

If you would like to be entered into the prize draw please fill in your name and address below.

Name:

Address:

Postcode: Telephone Number:

Please return by Friday 16th November 2007 for a chance to win £25 of shopping vouchers