

## OAP Decorations Focus Group held on 19<sup>th</sup> February 2008 at 11.00 am at GCH Offices

### Customer Attendees

8 customers attended the focus group with ages ranging from mid thirties to over sixties. There were six females and two males for areas in Westgate, Kingsholm, Robinswood, Saintbridge and Tuffley.

Three customers who received assistance with decorating sent their apologies but informed that they were very satisfied with the process and contractors who carried out the work.

### GCH Attendees

Name	Company Position	Telephone	Email
Paul Smith	Asset Management Manager	3396645	Paul.smith@gloscityhomes.co.uk
Terry Elcock	Resident Involvement Officer	396071	Terry.elcock@gloscityhomes.co.uk

The focus group was assembled from people who were waiting for assistance with decorations, people who had received assistance with decorations and those who expressed an interest.

The representation is as follows:

- 1 Received assistance
- 1 Waiting for assistance
- 6 Expressed an interest

1.1 PS gave an overview of how the current process for assistance currently operated in GCH

1.2 TE welcomed the attendees and circulated the 2008 ReAction Report for the OAP Decorating Focus Group for comments.

- 1.3 MN informed that publicity of the scheme is still not wide enough to reach all people and GCH should consider advertising in the Tenant Times. PS reminded attendees that too much advertising would have an even greater impact on the current £40,000 budget and people would be disappointed having to remain on a waiting list for too long a time.
- 1.4 MN pointed out, some customers would like GCH to explore providing labour for decorating if the customer provided the materials, PS explained that the current contract requires GCH to offer work to Morrison and it is unlikely them or other contractors would want to enter into such an arrangement as a profit element from most companies is the mark up of supplying materials.
- 1.5 TE informed the attendees there is already an organisation in Gloucester called Care & Repair that can provide this kind of assistance. DS informed that she had already used them and was happy with work they provided
- 1.6 CB raised that some older customers have family living locally and their lives are too busy through work to get their help with decorating their homes, TE informed that a review of the policy for the way this service is being provided and it should help make things clearer.
- 1.7 A discussion took place about who should receive assistance with this service and agreed that it should be for older and vulnerable people and the scheme should be renamed to "Assisted Decorations For Elderly & Vulnerable People"
- 1.8 AT left the meeting for another appointment
- 1.9 TE asked when a review of the service takes place would anyone be interested in sitting on a working panel, DS MN MD PM CB expressed an interest.
- 1.10 TE distributed copies of the current application form and a draft revised form that may come into use when the review takes place.

1.11 PS informed that the waiting list had been reduced since the last focus group meeting and the current number is approximately 25.

1.12 TE explained that GCH have to look at each Service Standard every year to get feedback on how customers feel this is operating and if any should be changed.

The Service Standard voting and comments were:

1. Decorating help is only given if a customer is elderly or disabled and does not have a family member to help?

**7 agreed with this**

**Comments:**

- none

2. Decorating materials maybe given every 3 years if a customer can get a person to do the work for them?

**7 agreed with this**

**Comments:**

- Reword the text in the Tenants Handbook to make it clear that this area of service is to assist people who are vulnerable.

3. Decorating may be done every 7 years if a customer does not have anyone who can help with the work

**2 agreed with this**

**5 disagreed**

**Comments from people who disagreed:**

- One thought Three years to reapply
- Two customers thought five years to reapply
- Two customers thought four years.

4. If GCH receives a request, a home visit will be made within 5 days for an assessment?

**0 agreed with this**

**7 disagreed**

**Comments:**

- All felt that a request of this nature is not a high priority and should be 28 days for the assessment.

5. Within 1 working day of a home visit a decorating voucher will be issued if only materials are required.

**0 agreed with this**

**7 disagreed**

**Comments:**

- All agreed that 14 days was a realistic timescale to issue a voucher

6. Within 1 working day of a home visit a customer will be informed that their details have been added to the decorating programme.

**0 agreed with this**

**7 disagreed**

**Comments:**

- All thought it would too difficult for GCH staff to try and meet this target and again 14 days would be a more achievable.

**The group were asked what would they expect an excellent management organisation to provide for people who needed assistance with decorating**

- Have sufficient funds and review this every year

- Have a transparent policy that is easy for people to access and understand.
- Ensure young vulnerable people are not excluded
- Introduce a points system similar to GCC housing allocations

TE thanked everyone for attending and informed those who expressed an interest in reviewing this service area will be contacted when the 1<sup>st</sup> meeting is arranged.

**Terry Elcock**  
**Resident Involvement Officer**  
**19/02/09**