**Central Health and Safety in Housing Forum Meeting**

**Wednesday 16th September 2015**

**MDK Office Seating**

**11 WATERSIDE ROAD**

 **HAMILTON BUSINESS PARK**

 **LEICESTER LE5 1TL**

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| Agenda item | Minute | Action by |
| 1/234567810111213 | Welcome and IntroductionsJohn Newton welcomed everyone and the following attendees introduced themselves to other present.Gary Eastham – Sanctuary GroupJason Grant – Paradigm GroupElizabeth Hine – Dacorum Borough CouncilStuart Hufton – Derby HomesJohn Newton – The Community Housing Group (Chair)Sue Radford – Nottingham Community Housing AssociationSarah Shaw – Newark and Sherwood HomesTracey Tomlinson – Nottingham Community Housing AssociationApologies John Bennett – Community GatewayThomas Jones – Community GatewayAnna Hickman – Trent and DovePaul Williams – Peabody GroupJulie Newell – Circle HousingRichard Bowden –Solihull Community HousingAngela Rodway – Fortis LivingCarolyn Allin – EMH GroupLauren Watts – Longhurst GroupWil Pritchard – Cartrefi ConwyMark Darmody – Wolverhampton HomesPaul Sultana – Whitefriars HousingAndrew Griffiths – Bromford GroupCatherine Powell – Wrekin HTLibby O’Neil – Wrekin HTMinutes from the meeting on Wednesday 3rd June 2015The minutes were agreed for accuracy.Matters arisingJN expanded on the minute for item 4 by reading an article from the September edition of Health and Safety At Work dealing with term maintenance contracts. The article explained that term maintenance contracts are not normally notifiable under CDM 2015. CDM 2015 requires notification of projects. The article infers that term maintenance contract normally deal with single maintenance tasks at separate locations. However if the contact were to be used for something like a refurbishment which exceeds the notification criteria this particular refurbishment would need to be notified.SH added that at Derby Homes they applied the notification criteria on a strict basis and in particular days on site. He explained that the qualification of 20 days on site does not mean 20 consecutive days after work starts but means 20 days worked on site which can be spread over a period exceeding 20 days and could in fact be spread over a number of months.Update from the West Midlands Social Housing Fire Strategy GroupJN read out an update of the activities carried out by the West Midlands Social Housing Fire Strategy Group.Week 14th to 20th September 2015 is Fire Door Safety Week. JN pointed out that a website had been set up for the week and that it included a range of useful campaign material including videos, posters door guides, etc. The website is [www.firedorsafetyweek.co.uk](http://www.firedorsafetyweek.co.uk). Various comments made about standards of fire doors and in particular their installation.JN explained that the Federation of Master Builders and Local Authority Building Control were to join forces to promote the use of quality builders.JN went on to explain that the activities of Building Control had come under scrutiny following a fires in timber frame buildings in Canterbury and Manchester where a question was raised about the spread of fire through concealed voids. SR commented that H&S Advisors and Fire Risk Assessors are rarely involved in building projects and if they were many pitfalls could be prevented.JN explained that PAS 7 which is a specification for a Fire Risk Management System is to become a full British Standard – BS8777.The Group had a lively debate on mobility scooters which is still a problem most seem to be having difficulties solving.Expressions of interest have been received for the new Group Chair. Further nominations to be forwarded to Andy Frankum by end of September.The joint meeting due to be held with todays meeting is being rescheduled for late October.Legionella updateThe Group held a lively discussion on legionella risk assessments. The main point of the discussion was when should the risk assessment be reviewed.SS explained that Newark and Sherwood Homes had risk assessed in the region of 500 properties some of which had cold water storage cisterns. The assessments had identified a significant number with a build-up of sludge which in turn highlighted a problem with disinfecting systems and preventing exposing tenants to the disinfectant. The assessments also identified a few dead legs.Various comments were made regarding cold water feeds to washing machines and in particular how to control water from the feed pipe being back siphoned into the main feed.Comments made seemed to indicate that there is no clear policy on when to review the risk assessment but if the principle of reassessing when a significant change occurs were used this could be when a property becomes void. However this could range from every few months to many years. L8 (the Legionella ACOP) does not give any indication of the frequency of reviewing risk assessments. It was suggested that periodic stock condition surveys would be a reasonable means to carry out the reviews.Fire doors – inspection and repairsEH explained that her organisation had recently appointed a Facilities organisation to manage their repairs service. She was keen to understand how remedial work arising from fire risk assessments should be handled and in particular repairs to fire doors. She was concerned that the Facilities contractor would recommend new door sets when a repair would be appropriate.SH stated that there are no current legal requirements to inspect fire doors but there are a number of voluntary schemes. These schemes suggest that fire doors should be inspected every 6 months. There is a caveat to these schemes where the fire doors should be certified sets which have been installed by a certified installer and any repairs should be carried out by a certified repairer using material approved by the door set manufacturer. If these requirements are not met the inspector may not be able to verify if the door meets the relevant fire door standard and at best could be classified as a nominal fire door which may or may not meet the original fire door standard.A further point raised about the competence of those installing or repairing the doors i.e. are they accredited installers or repairers?Factory tourAfter a break for lunch a tour of MDK Office Furniture’s factory was conducted. The tour demonstrated how office chairs are manufactured. In essence each chair is custom built to the customers requirements and while they may look the same there may be significant differences of which many will be concealed.AOBSS asked about carbon monoxide detectors – she explained that a requirement for private landlords to install CO detectors was being introduced and that Registered Providers were not included but asked if there were any legal requirements that affected Registered Providers. SH and JN explained that currently there is a legal requirement for CO detectors to be installed in properties with solid fuel heating systems.SS further clarified her question by explaining that Newark and Sherwood Homes had found a number of properties where the gas flue analyser plugs had not been replaced after gas servicing.SR asked if anyone could share a pregnancy Policy and risk assessment. JN indicated he would forward a pregnancy risk assessment form.JN informed the meeting that the National Institute for Clinical Excellence had published a guidance document “Workplace policy and management practices to improve the health and wellbeing of employees”. He promised to circulate the web link to members ([www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng13](http://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng13)).JN also read out an article form Health and Safety at Work magazine about a radio interview with Judith Hackitt in which she stated that she felt that there were too many H&S practitioners. JN indicated that he would circulate a scanned copy of the article.2016 Meeting datesThe proposed meeting dates for 2016 are: -March 2016 – either 2nd or 16th June 2016 – either 1st or 15thSeptember 2016 – either 7th or 21stDecember 2016 – either 7th or 21stJN to circulate the dates to members.Date of next meeting2nd December 2015 – to be hosted by Sanctuary Group, Worcester. | JNJNJNJN |