

TENANTS' VOICE

An independent newsletter produced for tenants and leaseholders

FUTURE OF OUR HOUSING SERVICE TO BE DISCUSSED BY THE COUNCIL

COUNCILLORS WANT YOUR VIEWS

On Monday 8 September our Council will be discussing the future of Council Housing In Rutland.

Regular readers of TENANTS' VOICE will know that since the New Year a working party of Tenants, Councillors and Housing Staff have been hearing evidence from housing experts about the future of the housing service.



Council homes in Rutland need to be improved and modernised to meet the Government's Decent Homes Standard and to stop them falling into decline. As things stand it looks as if the Council needs to spend around £23 million over 10 years to do this, but it doesn't have all this money available.

So, after months of looking at all the options, the working party thinks that Rutland County Council should begin talking with all Tenants and Leaseholders about a possible transfer of all Council homes to Spire Homes.



At the meeting on 8 September Councillors will decide whether to open talks with Tenants about a transfer to Spire (who already run the housing service for the Council). If Councillors agree, there would then have to be a long consultation followed by a secret ballot of all Tenants before any transfer could go ahead. Even then, transfer can only go ahead if the majority of Tenants who vote, vote 'yes' to transfer.

It's still not too late to have your say. **Before** they make any decision on 8 September to start talking to tenants about a transfer, Councillors are keen to hear what Tenants and Leaseholders think about their homes and estates and the quality of service they get from Spire Homes.

Over the page we list all of Rutland's Councillors and how you can get in touch with them. If you have any comments please make them before 8 September so that the debate will be more effective.

Now is the time for you to get in touch. Tell your Local Councillor what you think. Don't wait – have your say now – before 8 September

Or use our tear off slip or phone 0800 0855 492 and we will pass on your views to the Council

TRANSFER FACT
Homes can't transfer without Government permission **and** a secret ballot of tenants.

A message from Rutland Tenants & Leaseholders Partnership (RTLTP)

This is a very important time for Council Tenants and Leaseholders in Rutland. We are urging all our readers to get in touch and have their say before 8 September.

On that day Rutland County Councillors will be asked to agree to consult us all on a possible transfer to Spire Homes in 2009, which could only happen if Tenants voted for this in a secret ballot. This decision will affect us all – nothing has been decided yet. So do not miss this chance to have your say.

We are urging all our readers to get in touch and have their say before 8 September.

And rest assured, whatever our landlord decides the RTLTP will keep a close eye on the events that follow. Four of us sit on the Council's Stock Options Appraisal Group and whatever is decided on the 8 September the RTLTP will continue to play an active part in developments.

The RTLTP promises:

- ✓ To give you the facts
- ✓ To look after the interests of all Tenants and Leaseholders
- ✓ To be independent of the Council

If you want to get involved or find out more phone our Independent Advisors **DWA** on: 0800 0855 492.

OAKHAM FUNDAY

Many thanks to everyone who came to the Funday at the Oakham Museum on Saturday 26 July and fed in their views. It was good to meet you all.

Congratulations to the winners of our competition in issue 2: Miss J Crick, Mr Ian Riley and Mr & Mrs Corby who have each won a £20 shopping voucher. And to Maria Saddington who wins the survey form prize draw of a £50 shopping voucher.

TRANSFER FACT
Whatever the Council decides Tenants and Leaseholders are safe in their homes and all our major rights will be protected.

DWA
A NOT-FOR-PROFIT HOUSING CONSULTANCY COMPANY

Genuinely Independent Advice
This is NOT a Council newsletter

It has been produced with local Tenants and Leaseholders and **DWA**, your Independent Tenants' Advisors

FREEPHONE 0800 0855 492

ARE YOU A LEASEHOLDER?

This affects you too. You have a right to be consulted too. Get in touch – get involved

Our day-to-day Housing Service in Rutland already comes from a Registered Social Landlord (RSL) – Spire Homes, who have been running our Housing Service since 2006.

USE OUR REPLY SLIP TO GET IN TOUCH OR FREEPHONE DWA 0800 0855 492

NOW IS THE TIME TO HAVE YOUR SAY

Look up your Local Councillor and make sure they know what you think

Ward	Councillor	Contact Details
Braunston and Belton	Mr L. John Duckham	01572 724761
Cottesmore	Mrs Janine Rodger	01572 759832
Cottesmore	Wg Cdr Rob D Toy	01572 812355
Exton	Mr Terry C. King	01572 812735
Greetham	Mr Roger B. Begy	01572 812529
Ketton	Mr Hugh E.G. Rees	01572 759832
Ketton	Mr Barrie W. Roper	07718 765909
Langham	Nicholas Mark Wainwright	01572 755313
Lyddington	Mrs Deborah Stuart	01572 822267
Martinsthorpe	Edward Baines	01572 722154
Normanton	Mr Trevor C. Ellis	01572 758224
Normanton	Mr Peter J.W. Golden	01572 821524
Oakham North East	Mr Jeffrey T. Dale	01572 723569
Oakham North East	Cpt Vijay Dighe	01572 722331
Oakham North West	Mr Richard J. Gale	01572 757770
Oakham North West	Mr Trevor Lovell	01572 771492
Oakham South East	Mr Mark Wells	07802 277334
Oakham South East	Mr Gene Plews	01572 723321
Oakham South West	Mr Peter W. Jones	01572 757252
Oakham South West	Mrs Heather Wells	01572 722884
Ryhall and Casterton	Mr Chris A. Parsons	01780 762489
Ryhall and Casterton	Miss Charlotte L. Jones	01780 765449
Uppingham	Mr Kenneth A. Bool	01572 822996
Uppingham	Mr Peter D. Ind	01572 823570
Uppingham	Mr Marc A. Oxley	01572 822334
Whissendine	Mrs Loretta Marsh	01572 812529

Source: Rutland County Council website August 2008

**Remember – you have a right to be consulted
Transfer can't happen without a Secret Ballot of all Tenants**

USE THIS TEAR-OFF SLIP TO HAVE YOUR SAY...

To my Local Councillor

Dear Councillor,

Before you make a decision about the future of my housing service I want you to know:

I think Spire Homes are doing a good job delivering my housing service

I think Spire Homes are not doing a good job

I have seen services improve since Spire got involved

I have not seen any service improvements since Spire got involved

My views on a possible change of Landlord to Spire Homes is:

.....

.....

Name Address

..... Postcode

Phone No.....

Please return this form to **DWA FREEPOST SWC5119 Telford TF8 7ZA** and we will forward it to your Local Councillor. No stamp required

Competition Time

How much do you know about what is going on?

Q1. How long has the Stock Options Appraisal Group been looking at the housing service?

Answer:

Q2. How many members of the RTLP sit on the Group?

Answer:

Q3. When are Councillors going to make a decision about whether to open transfer talks with tenants?

Answer:

Send your answers to:

Freepost SWC 5119 Telford TF8 7ZA

The first three correct answers to arrive will each win a £20 shopping voucher.

Don't forget to give us your name and address!

YOUR INDEPENDENT ADVISORS

When Landlords are thinking of making any major changes to the housing service Tenants and Leaseholders are entitled to their own independent housing experts to double check what the Council is doing or saying.

DWA are experienced Tenants' Advisors. They are a not-for-profit company who strongly believe that Independent Tenant Advisors should be just that – independent.

DWA works for Tenants and Leaseholders. They do not work for the council. **DWA** are here to explain the issues and make sure everyone understands what is going on.

Your Independent team of housing experts, community development workers and experienced tenants is led by Deborah Walthorne and David Williams. Their job is to make sure everyone gets the information they need about what is going on. The Government expects Councils to pay for this service so that expert professional advice is completely free for tenants and leaseholders at the point of delivery.

When we use the word 'Tenant' (or 'Tenants' or 'all Tenants') in this newsletter we are referring to secure and introductory Tenants of Rutland County Council. You may receive lots of unofficial information over the next few months. If you are not sure about anything please check with your Independent Tenants' Advisors to make sure you have all the facts. The Freephone 0800 0855 492 is open between 10 am and 3 pm Monday – Friday. It is free to landline callers. If you use a mobile phone there may be a fee – check with your phone company. Out of hours you can leave a message on our answerphone. We will ring you back if you leave your name and full telephone number – don't forget to tell us your area code. You can write to DWA at Freepost SWC 5119 Telford TF8 7ZA. No stamp is needed.

USE OUR REPLY SLIP TO GET IN TOUCH OR FREEPHONE DWA 0800 0855 492

This newsletter is available in other languages and formats such as CDs and bigger print. If you know anyone who needs this kind of help please let us know. You can also visit our website on: www.dwa-housingconsultants.co.uk and click on Tenants' Zone – Rutland. Remember – no transfer can go ahead without a secret ballot.