

MINUTES OF BARLO BOARD
WEDNESDAY 2nd APRIL 2008
UCAN Centre, Hatfield Road, Halliwell, Bolton.

Members present: Andy Patel Private Landlord
 John O'Donnell Private Landlord
 Kath Gough Independent
 Linda Thomas Councillor

Also present: Andy Hulme Private Sector Renewal
 Julianne Scarlett Community Housing Services

Circulation: Philip Ward Private Landlord
 Stephen Gallagher Independent

1. Introductions and Apologies

Apologies received from PW and SG

2. BARLO Member Appointments

Discussed attendance at meetings by representatives noted that FA [private landlord] has been absent from more than 60% of meetings in the last 12 months therefore Board Members resolved that his office be vacated.

Action Thank FA for his interest and advise reason why his office is now considered vacated

DG [elected member] has also missed more than 60% of meetings discussed options for approaching Liberal Group for a new nomination. Agreed instead to await outcome of local elections which may lead to changes instead.

Request received from Glynis Roebuck to resign from BARLO Business Development Group. Glynis has provided helpful advice and support in her role but now believes group would now benefit from recruiting another Independent who would be able to offer alternative skills and expertise

Action Thank GR on behalf of BARLO for all her support and contributions. **JS**

General discussion about the difficulties of identifying new private landlord representatives willing to take a more active role in BARLO who fit the criteria regards property portfolio sizes in the Articles of Association. Agreed to investigate options for amending the criteria regards size restrictions on portfolio to encourage greater level of interest / participations from widest group of landlords

Action Identify options for amending Articles **JS**

3. Electrical Safety Standards

Presentation prepared by Peter Watson and Andy Hulme describes importance of the electrical safety certificate requirement as part of Housing Renewal and Accreditation Scheme requirements. Group reminded this issue was highlighted in the performance reports for the accreditation scheme which indicate approx 250 properties registered with BARLO cannot be accredited until a current satisfactory certificate has been provided regardless of how well general property and tenancy management standards are being maintained.

Presentation was well received, feedback and comments included

- A compelling case for retaining requirement
- Ask landlords are they still prepared to take the risk
- Highlight the 34,000 hospital visits due to exposure to electrical current
- Add photographs / images to increase shock value
- Remind landlords should check electrical safety at start of every tenancy per 1985 Act
- Certificate also a requirement if Cat 1 hazard identified under HHSRS
- Give examples of the financial costs
- Involve 'Competent Persons' at workshops to answer questions about retrospective / current standards
- Explain why RCD are they important and why so expensive and how to cope with sensitive equipment
- How can landlords not afford to do it
- Can landlords do their own PAT testing
- 'Choosing an electrician slide' could be viewed as patronising simply tell landlords / tenants what to ask for.

Action Presentation to be updated to reflect feedback and delivered at future landlord events **AH/ PW**

4. Implementation of Revised Code Of Standards

Important reminder that the Code of Standards needed to be updated to reflect changes in housing related legislation and provide a clearer benchmark for landlords and private rented services to enable them to identify good property and tenancy management standards. Key differences and points to note highlighted and implementation agreed will be phased in for all new applications and a 3 year renewal period for all existing members subject to any final amends when signed off by legal services

Action Introduce revised Code of Standards as soon as practical **JS**

5. Accredited Landlord Status

Brief discussion regarding the main difference between Bolton's Accreditation Scheme and many others is that in Bolton only the properties not landlords are accredited. Can cause confusion for landlords, prospective tenants and some officers. Group agreed that a task and finish group would probably be the best way forward to identify all the benefits and disadvantages of accrediting landlords and what the requirements might be if accredited landlord status could be introduced to enhance the current scheme

Action Identify appropriate landlords willing to participate including managing agents **JS**

6. Private Rented Sector Updates

Our BCH representative JC has requested that BARLO also programme presentations delivered at BCH on Migrant Workers / Money Skills at our future landlord meetings as felt these could provide private landlords with very useful and interesting information.

Action JS to identify speakers and forward plan

A list of proposed articles for the forthcoming newsletter were circulated and the group invited to suggest any future articles of interest

Action ALL

BARLO Membership Satisfaction Survey has been proposed by officers to help gather information about landlords satisfaction with services and support and also to gauge the value placed by landlords on benefits offered.

Action JS is to meet with officers to discuss style and content

Next Meeting: BARLO Business Development Group on Wednesday 21st May 6.00pm – 7.30pm at UCAN Centre, Halliwell Bolton