

## NOTTINGHAM CITY HOMES

HOUSING MANAGEMENT  
SERVICES COMMITTEE

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF HEALTH & SAFETY

13 APRIL 2010

### HEALTH & SAFETY UPDATE – JANUARY TO MARCH 2010

#### 1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report updates the Board about significant health and safety and fire safety developments within the Housing Services division over the previous quarter.
- 1.2 This report covers 1 January 2010 to 22 March 2010.

#### 2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Housing Management Services Committee note the contents of this report.

#### 3 REPORT

##### 3.1 Incident reports and outcomes

- 3.1.1 Incidents reported by tenants / members of the public are now allocated to the most appropriate department so that outcomes are managed by the relevant team (they were previously reported separately).
- 3.1.2 There were 15 injuries allocated to Housing Services Between 1 January and 22 March. Nine were injuries to employees, and six were injuries reported by tenants / members of the public.
- 3.1.3 Most injury reports (4 tenants and 3 employees) were about people slipping on ice. Six of these occurred at sheltered schemes. Although we do not have any duty to grit footpaths or pavements, we have instructed sheltered scheme managers to grit higher risk areas. However, grit bins were not available at all sheltered schemes and in any case grit supplies quickly ran out and we could not secure replacement stocks because all available supplies were needed for gritting highways. We are now checking to make sure that grit bins are available and full, and this item has now been added to the H&S inspection checklist.
- 3.1.4 There were no further reports about items being ejected from windows at high rises, despite the fact that 18 such reports were made in 2009. This may in part be due to the loan by NCC of a portable CCTV camera (this has the advantage over fixed CCTV cameras that images can be

'rewound' and enhanced at a later date) which lets us identify exactly where items were thrown from. Two injunctions were obtained in late 2009 because of this technology, and a report was printed in the Nottingham Evening Post.

3.1.5 There were 19 violent incidents reported by Housing Service employees in this period. These were made up of 15 cases of verbal abuse, 1 verbal threat, 1 physical abuse, 1 threatening behaviour, and 1 domestic incident in which the visiting patch manager became involved. Verbal abuse cases are followed up by a warning letter from the housing office if the perpetrator's identity is known. Police were called to all the other incidents, and the tenant who was involved in the threatening behaviour case (running around with a knife and kettle) was sectioned under the Mental Health Act.

### 3.2 Fire Safety Policy

3.2.1 The company fire safety policy was approved by Board in January 2010. This policy requires significant time resources from Housing Services employees in particular as it includes recorded daily and weekly checks in both high rise and sheltered buildings and weekly checks in general purpose flats where there is a NCH caretaker service, although most of these checks were being carried out previously

3.2.2 The fire log book has been re-designed so that it is clearer and easier to fill in. The new log books have been circulated to high rise buildings and will be produced for sheltered schemes shortly.

3.2.3 Caretakers and monitoring officers have been trained how to carry out fire safety checks and complete the log book at high rise buildings and sheltered scheme managers have been briefed about the new process.

### 3.3 H&S Inspection Programme

3.3.1 The health and safety inspection programme is being rolled out, and the latest update is available on the company intranet. This programme refers to joint inspections by senior managers, health and safety advisors and trade union representatives and does not include estate inspections or scheduled visits by housing patch managers.

3.3.2 Health & safety inspections have now taken place in all area housing offices and other workplaces, and dates for annual re-inspection are being scheduled.

3.3.3 Inspections of high rise buildings are being booked for 2010, and the target is to complete them all by the end of May, after which there will be an annual re-inspection.

3.3.4 Sheltered schemes will be inspected every 24 months, subject to review according to risk. We plan to inspect half of these schemes this year.

### 3.4 Health and Safety Committee

- 3.4.1 The Health and Safety Committee is the group set up by the company to involve employees in health and safety management.
- 3.4.2 A restructure of this group has been agreed with management and trade unions, so that there will be separate, smaller committees for Housing Services and Property Services instead of a single, large committee. This should create more dynamic and focussed groups that will drive improvement in their specific service areas. Representatives from each committee will attend a corporate meeting, which will then feed back to EMT.
- 3.4.3 Employee safety representatives will also be more involved with health and safety investigations, inspections and risk assessments through the service area committees.

### 3.5 Health & Safety Training

- 3.5.1 A review of H&S training is being carried out as part of the company H&S Strategy. This review looks at the training needed for each job role throughout the company and is ongoing, but 5 key areas in Housing Services were identified for 2009/10. These are:
- Asbestos awareness.
  - Manual handling.
  - Lone working / violence awareness.
  - Fire safety.
  - Computer health & safety.

Significant progress has been made in each of these areas over the previous two months as detailed below.

- 3.5.2 Caretakers have now received asbestos awareness training. Courses for housing patch managers are in progress - the first of these was delivered week commencing 15/02/10. The course for patch managers takes the form of a 'tool box talk' rather than the full course for caretakers and trades persons, and is delivered at team briefs.
- 3.5.3 Manual handling training has been given to caretakers over the year. Our Learning & Development team is booking courses for anyone who has missed their course and this programme will be completed by the end of April.
- 3.5.4 Lone worker and break away training has been provided for caretakers. Violence awareness briefs are in progress at housing offices and Homelink, and will be completed by the end of April.
- 3.5.5 A fire safety e-learning programme has been rolled out to staff in Housing Services. This is carried out on computers in employees' own time, and includes a test at the end of the session.

- 3.5.6 A computer health and safety e-learning course has also been rolled out to computer users in Housing Services. This course is followed by a test and an employee assessment of their computer workstation, which is recorded and allows employees and their managers to record the actions taken to resolve any issues raised. The Health & Safety Team assists managers to resolve identified issues, and carries out additional assessment when required.

#### **4 OTHER OPTIONS**

- 4.1 This report is for information only

#### **5 FINANCIAL AND RISK IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 This report is for information only.

#### **6 IMPLICATIONS FOR NOTTINGHAM CITY HOMES OBJECTIVES**

- 6.1 Management of health & safety is essential to all of the Company's objectives as it will affect the health, safety and wellbeing of all the Company's stakeholders and customers.

#### **7 VALUE FOR MONEY AND EFFICIENCY ISSUES**

- 7.1 This report is for information only.

#### **8 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 This report is for information only.

#### **9 BACKGROUND MATERIAL AND PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS REFERRED TO IN COMPILING THIS REPORT**

- 9.1 N/A

**Contact officers:** Ian Rabett  
Head of Health & Safety  
14 Hounds Gate  
Nottingham  
NG1 7BA  
Tel: 0115 915 7236  
E-mail: [Ian.Rabett@nottinghamcityhomes.org.uk](mailto:Ian.Rabett@nottinghamcityhomes.org.uk)

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