ORWELL RESIDENTS GROUP MEETING
MINUTES

Monday 23rd February 2026 6pm - 8pm
Crane Hill Lodge

			Action by
1.0	**Attendees**	Mary Ager (MA) Val George (VG) – on Teams Jackie Millar (JM) Maggi Miller (MM) Rob Longfoot (RL) Michelle Lunt (ML) Sarah Parramint (SP) Claire Townley (CT)	
	Apologies	John Burman (JB)	
2.0	**Minutes of the previous meeting**	The minutes of the meeting held on 26th January 2026 were agreed.	
3.0	**Customer Engagement action plan 2026**	RL introduced the item and said change was needed ahead of the regulatory inspection in 12-18 months. At the last meeting, he'd shared what the Regulator for Social Housing will be looking for in an effective residents' group. He explained that by Christmas 2026 we will: • Review how customers want to be engaged • Provide a menu of involvement - equal access • Customer-led group will be empowered and enabled • Have representative customer-led scrutiny and challenge • Offer an attractive reward and recognition package • Have customer representation at CIC (x2) – to be advertised in June A number of key changes will be required and he presented a draft action plan detailing actions and ORG involvement over the next year. One of the key requirements is that the group must be tenant led and he was delighted to announce that MM had volunteered to take on this role. The group thanked MM and offered their support to her.	

<table>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td>RL talked through a curve change and confirmed to the group that we are looking to meet the regulatory requirements by taking current ORG members on the journey. The group will be supported through the process by the staff present at the meeting.

ORG members raised various issues including:

• Making the group as inclusive as possible with representation from all ages
• Offering opportunities to customers who don’t live locally to Ipswich.

ML explained that in future the Chair (MM) would meet with CT two weeks ahead of the meeting to discuss and agree the forthcoming areas of business. Information would then be uploaded for members to view ahead of the meeting.

ACTION: RL to share the action plan once formalised.</td><td>RL</td></tr>
<tr><td>4.0</td><td>Policy run through</td><td>RL explained that policy reviews are another example of how things need to change.

ML said that in the past, the ORG were presented with a policy for consultation and then given five questions to answer. Moving forward, the draft policy will be shared ahead of the meeting and ORG will be invited to come up with questions they want answered. Staff could help with prompts but not provide questions. ORG were encouraged to think differently and challenge Orwell with content.

The Gas Servicing Policy and Procedure was presented for the ORG to trial this approach. The following points/questions were raised:

• The policy mentions an EIA assessment (page 2) – should the ORG view the EIA as part of the policy review?
• The format/layout of the policy could be improved including less jargon. Is there an accessible version for customers? Could it include a contents sheet? Bulleting of key points to make it easier to follow.
• Who is the policy for? And who has led the policy i.e., tenants, Orwell, regulation?
• Obligations/responsibilities are difficult to understand.
• Annual gas servicing – tenant needs to know who to go to if there are problems.
• Page1 bottom line – does that sentence mean anything? Do customers receive this information?
• What about shared owners?
• Procedure map – too small</td><td></td></tr>
</table>

		• KPIs/monitoring – nothing included for how we will measure delivery/success/outcomes.	
5.0	**Scrutiny run through and then themes**	CT presented a summary of what makes a good scrutiny. This was based on the TPAS No Nonsense Guide which is a national standard. Currently the scrutinies are staff led but this should be a tenant led activity. She explained the following 4 step methodology: • Step 1 – plan. ORG agree what they are reviewing. What are we reviewing and how will we do it? • Step 2 – investigation. ORG gather and review information. What is really happening and why? • Step 3 – report. ORG share findings. What should change? • Step 4 – review. ORG hold Orwell accountable. Did this lead to improvement? The ORG should suggest topics, review evidence, ask questions, help shape recommendations and monitor progress. Online tools are available to support the process and staff will also support the ORG through the first scrutiny. **ACTION:** CT to share the slides after the meeting. MA asked if the information could be printed not just sent electronically. **ACTION:** A brief discussion took place about the scrutiny topics for 2026 and it was agreed that a top 10 list of suggestions will be shared ahead of the next meeting. Confirmation of the three scrutinies will be sought at the next ORG meeting.	**CT** **CT**
6.0	**Update on telephone service improvement**	RL explained that since joining Orwell, he has reviewed call demand and how we’re meeting it. Orwell receives 2,700 calls per month to the 0345 number. In the past Customer Services would answer all calls and then share to whoever the call related to. The restructure created three teams (repairs, housing admin, business support) and they all operate differently under different managers. RL presented 2 graphs and explained how performance was not meeting demand. In November the wait time was 5 mins with a large number of calls being unanswered/dropped. This was due to staffing issues. In February, the latest data shows that wait times have dropped to 2 mins and only a few calls were unanswered/dropped.	

		RL then presented a heat map which showed that Monday morning is peak time for reporting repairs. VG asked why no information was available for weekend calls to the Out of Hours service (OOH).	
		ORG shared their personal experience of the OOH service, saying that staff are rude and don't answer. RL confirmed that Orwell are currently re-tendering the OOH service. RL explained that there were 8 objectives for the new telephone system: • Interactive Voice Response (IVR) options – friendly, accessible • Staff to be available to answer calls • Warm welcome • Ask the right questions to give the right answer • Staff have the tools to responds with care • Develop colleagues • Enhancements will improve experience and capacity The enhancements that will benefit customers are: • RingCx – modern call centre options • Call queue functionality – after a minute of holding customers will be able to press 5 to request a callback (from April) • Comfort message and queue position to be provided The enhancements that will benefit staff are: • Customer details will be available automatically • Conversations will be recorded, summarised and stored on CRM • Ai performance reporting & appraisal functionality will enable us to manage change better and provide meaningful feedback to staff ML took members through the proposed new greeting which includes: • a warm welcome • Data Protection requirements around ID • an open question about the support customers might need • updating contact details The ORG suggested the following changes: • Remove the question "How are you today?" • Move the open question about support to later in the call – they felt asking this question so early was intrusive.	

7.0	**Any other business**	None.	
8.0	**Date of next ORG meeting**	23rd March 2026 (18:00 at Crane Hill Lodge)	
9.0	**Date of next CHAT meeting**	7th March 2026 (10.00 at Crane Hill Lodge)	