

The Leasehold Excellence Network

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The story so far...

Take a look at some of the activities that members have taken part in, and benefited from, so far:

Benchmarking

- Performance indicator benchmarking pilot report 2006/7
- Performance indicator benchmarking reporting 2007/8
- Performance indicator benchmarking reporting 2008/9
- Fees chargeable benchmarking 2007/8.

Network briefings

Exclusive briefings have been commissioned on:

- Service charges
- Sinking funds
- Assisting leaseholders facing large bills for major works
- Excellence in leasehold management
- Creating efficiencies
- "Ask the expert!" ...your problems solved.

Positive practice

Good practice information and good ideas from the experience of our members include:

- Cleaning costs
- VAT
- Fuel re-charge
- Condensation
- Managing arrears
- Management charges
- Qualifications in leasehold management
- Amending and surrendering leases
- Interest charges
- Repayment for major works
- Service standards
- Buy back
- Sub-letting.

Workshops

Sold-out member workshops in York and London during 2009, with a programme of workshops planned for 2010.

Driving up service quality and leaseholder satisfaction

Designed to help drive up service quality and leaseholder satisfaction, the Leasehold Excellence Network is a resource for anyone working with leaseholders in social housing who wants to improve service delivery AND increase leaseholder satisfaction.

Useful for local authorities, ALMOs and housing associations it aims to help providers compare policy and practice, measure and evaluate performance through benchmarking, and identify innovations in the sector – to apply these where appropriate to deliver effective services that demonstrate real value for money. Support is provided through emails, good practice and briefings, workshops and seminars, and an annual benchmarking exercise, supplemented by other member surveys of specific aspects of service.

LEN is supported by a team of experienced Associates and practitioners, providing you with access to current leasehold service knowledge and practice from across the country.

"A leasehold benchmarking group is a welcome and invaluable tool in establishing PIs for leasehold management, measuring and comparing performance and sharing best practice to improve expertise in leasehold management."

Zoe Bryan, Leasehold Practice Advisor, Metropolitan Housing Trust Midlands

"Access to benchmarking information in leasehold services is an area which can always be developed and used to improve service delivery. As a founder member, this group is what we've been waiting for!"

Andy Patchitt, Business Development Manager, Longhurst Housing Association

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Why you should become a member of LEN

The network will:

- Carry out benchmarking of performance and other statistics for members
- Take the hard work out of keeping up to date with good practice through our briefing papers and regular email updates
- Provide you with policy support by analysing and translating emerging policy into practical steps that can be taken at the local level
- Put the knowledge and skills of our team of experts at your disposal – only a phone call away
- Put you in touch with like-minded peer colleagues who have similar interests
- Provide cross-reference help and information from our other specialist networks such as the Rent Income Excellence Network (RIEN) and the Housing Finance Excellence Network (hf:expert) where policies, good practice or other issues also relate to leasehold management.

You will get personal contact from a dedicated network manager who will help to shape the network's activities to meet the needs of members, co-ordinate good practice and help to resolve your issues and problems.

What we provide exclusively for members

Annual performance indicator benchmarking survey: we carry out a major benchmarking survey of our members every year on an ongoing basis, covering KLOEs 12 and 14 and other key performance statistics.

From the original pilot survey in 2006/07 and the first annual benchmarking survey in 2007/08, to the latest survey in 2008/09, we now have a bank of data and information on issues such as:

- Leasehold stock levels
- Shared ownership/flats/houses within the stock

- Satisfaction (including BME/non-BME proportions)
- Involvement opportunities
- Repairs response rates
- Satisfaction with repairs
- Collection performance
- Arrears
- Repossessions/forfeitures.

All members will get to take part in this survey each year, receive their highlighted copy of the full report, and will be able to draw from the year-on-year statistics.

Other benchmarking and surveys: we carry out benchmarking on other hot topics: the latest was a fees chargeable survey, carried out in April 2009. More surveys are carried out when a key issue arises.

Good practice: we summarise the good practice from all of our members on key issues, and also from Audit Commission inspections, and circulate regularly.

'Ask the members': if you have an issue with which you need the help or ideas of other members, we ask them for you and then co-ordinate their replies.

Briefings and updates: we provide specially commissioned briefings and updates written by leasehold specialists on the key issues within leasehold management at the moment.

Policy and practice: we take the strife out of searching for up-to-date information on leasehold management policy and practice by providing summaries and information on 'hot topics'.

Access to LVT news and tribunal decisions: we have secured exclusive access to the LVT Bulletin and can enable LEN members to access the site – all as part of your subscription.

Member workshops: we have started to run workshops for sharing good practice, discussing key themes, reviewing the benchmarking survey findings and creating an effective network of members.

And there's more...

- Discounted rates for HQN's annual leasehold conference and regional seminars and events
- 'Early warning' for any leasehold seminars to ensure that you jump the booking queue
- As a LEN member you will be able to influence our programme of national seminars and events as **we will ask you** about the issues that you would want us to cover.

And if you need more support?

HQN's performance improvement, finance and asset management consultancy teams offer bespoke consultancy support in relation to policy making and service implementation.

Examples of recent and current work include:

- Health checks of leasehold services in preparation for inspection
- Preparation and updates for leaseholder services manuals
- Reviews of leaseholder management charges.

The LEN team – at your service

Jeff Platt has extensive experience of leasehold property management and sales in both the public and private sectors. As a consultant and HQN Associate specialising in leasehold management, recent assignments have included Best Value reviews, procedure reviews and mock inspections for local authority and housing association clients, advising on lease terms and management structures for new developments, assisting the Audit Commission on redrafting their KLOEs on leasehold management, compliance checks for the Association of Retirement Housing Managers, business assessment assignments and disposal of surplus residential properties.

As immediate past chairman of the Institute of Residential Property Management (IRPM), Jeff is also heavily involved in developing professional qualifications and training in residential property management.

Jackie Dickens has been an HQN Associate since 2001. Prior to this she held positions at the London Borough of Harrow, Orbit HA and the Network Group, where she was responsible for leasehold management and promoting the Association's work in

the field of low cost home ownership initiatives. With HQN Jackie has worked on a variety of projects including Best Value reviews and numerous mock inspections of leaseholder services for ALMOs, local authorities and housing associations, including subsequent support work leading up to inspection by the Audit Commission.

Aileen Hamilton-Farey has over 25 years' experience of commercial and residential property management for both the private sector and housing associations. She has specialist knowledge of shared ownership and Right to Buy/Acquire leases, with particular interest in service charges and leasehold management for housing associations and local authorities. She is a member of the RICS Residential Faculty Working Party on the Residential Service Charge Code of Practice; a member of the RICS working party on the Commonhold and Leasehold Reform Act; a founder member of the PSNTO/RICS working party for open learning courses, and the Low Cost Home Ownership Group of the NHF; and a Fellow of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors and the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators. She is Vice-President of the Residential Property Tribunal Service in London and sits on various tribunals as part of that appointment.

Richard Waft is the Leasehold Excellence Network Manager. Richard joined HQN as a Business Manager in April 2007 and was responsible for implementing our pilot leasehold benchmarking exercise. Prior to joining HQN Richard held a consultation and research role in a local authority, which involved him in managing research, surveys and benchmarking. Our administration team ensures that the service runs smoothly and members receive the information they need.

Members receive personal contact and attention from Richard as the network manager.

Our members

Our network has expanded rapidly over the first two years. We now have members from local authorities, ALMOs, housing groups and individual housing associations. There is a wide range of members by size, type, and geographic location.

Membership fees

Details of LEN fees for 12 months' subscription can be found in the enclosed joining form. Discounts are available for organisations that are already members of other HQN networks. If you would like further details please email: len@hqnetwork.co.uk or call us on **0845 4747 004**.

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JOIN NOW!

LEN – the network for anyone working with leaseholders in social housing who wants to improve service delivery AND increase leaseholder satisfaction.

| | |
|---------------|----------|
| Name | |
| Job title | |
| Organisation | |
| Address | |
| | Postcode |
| Telephone no. | |
| Email address | |

How did you hear about the network?

LEN membership – 12 months' subscription is £820 plus VAT at the applicable rate and I understand that I will be invoiced for this amount upon receipt of my joining form.

Signature

LEN is one of a range of specialist networks run by HQN, a leading provider of consultancy and training, designed to help you to achieve real and lasting improvements in your services.

Discounts are available for organisations that are already members of other HQN networks. If you would like further details, please email len@hqnetwork.co.uk or call us on **0845 4747 004**.

Please return to: HQN Limited, Rockingham House, St Maurice's Road, York YO31 7JA

Please note that network membership is for individual organisations (or groups) and the staff employed by those organisations (or groups). Tenants and board members/councillors linked to the organisation/group that holds network membership can also access all member benefits, including the website password and published briefings. Members must not share any member benefits with other organisations who are not network members, as this devalues the benefits of membership for paying members. This includes sharing the password and the forwarding of emails, briefing papers or other documents to non-member organisations. HQN reserves the right to terminate network membership in cases of a breach of this code. We are, of course, happy for members to refer to network publications at meetings, etc. If further clarification is required, please contact hqn@hqnetwork.co.uk and your enquiry will be forwarded to the relevant network manager.

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