



**Minutes of the NIHE Disability Forum at Disability Action 189**  
**Airport Road West, Belfast**  
**Tuesday 16 January 2012 11.30am – 1.30pm**

**Present:**

Rosemary McCaw	North East
Sally McDonald	North East
Eileen Drumm	South
Isobelle Hamilton	South East
Ursula Marshall	West
Gerry Maguire	South

**Apologies:**

Yvonne Rooney	South East
Gerard Heatley	Belfast
Clifford Wylie	South
Dessie Meredith	
Victor Raymond Wilson	West
Teresa McDonough	West

<b>In attendance:</b>	Nicola Meegan	Disability Action
	Patricia Bray	Disability Action
	Brian Holmes	SCNI
	Leonard Sproule	NIHE
	Tony Steed	NIHE

		<b>ACTION</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Opening and Welcome</b>	
<b>2</b>	<p>Patricia introduced Tony Steed NIHE Equality Unit.</p> <p>Tony began his presentation by giving an overview of current Disability legislation and relevant Action Plans. This included the DDA 1995, DDO 2006 and Section 75 of the NI Act 1998.</p> <p>Tony gave an overview of the Housing Executive's Disability Action Plan and</p>	

	<p>Revised Equality Scheme. However he emphasised that he would be concentrating on the NIHE's Audit of Inequalities which he was currently working on. There then followed a question and answer session covering the follow topics:-</p> <p>Housing Application and the principle of law in regard to reasonable adjustments to remove barriers faced by disabled people within the process;</p> <p>Adaptation issue regarding the co-operation between different departments eg OT, Grants Officer - all in the right place at the right time;</p> <p>The match between the legislation and how organisations interpret it. 'Words are fine however action's are better';</p> <p>The need to look beyond traditional designed the requirements of people with sensory disabilities as people have eg 5 senses;</p> <p>The importance of IT and especially when servers go down and reliance on centralized systems;</p> <p>The adaptations application and access to GP's medical records;</p> <p>Tony ended the session by saying he was delighted that the Disability Forum was now established and that work was commencing on the Accessible Housing Register as both were measures within the NIHE Disability Action Plan</p>	
	<p>Nicola Meegan welcomed everyone to the third meeting of the Disability Forum.</p>	
<b>3</b>	<b>Apologies</b>	
3.1	<p>Clifford Wylie Yvonne Rooney Gerard Heatley Dessie Meredith</p>	

	<p>Victor Wilson Teresa McDonagh</p> <p>Members were reminded of the importance of attendance and to make every effort to keep meeting dates free.</p>	
<b>4</b>	<b>Resignation</b>	
4.1	<p>Patricia informed the group that Yvonne Rooney from the South East area has resigned for personal reasons. Brian had supplied the name of a new person covering Yvonne's area. Patricia will write to Yvonne and contact the proposed new member.</p>	<b>Patricia</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Minutes of Previous Meeting</b>	
5.1	<p>There were four amendments to the minutes</p> <p>3.2 should read – For example the tenant must receive approval from the local NIHE office should an emergency arise and then appoint a contractor</p> <p>3.2 should read -Victor handed out the new emergency card for Limavady detailing community representatives and other relevant telephone numbers.</p> <p>7.0 Should read - SCNI 8.1 Should read - SCNI</p>	
<b>6</b>	<b>Matters Arising from Previous Minutes</b>	
6.1	<p>Item 3.1 should be removed from minutes as the invite to the NIFHA will be issued at the appropriate time.</p>	

6.2	Item 3.5 should be removed from minutes as Leonard will provide an update on the PWC Report when it is announced.	
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<b>7</b>	<b>Summer task Outcome /Way Forward</b>	
	<p>Patricia had forwarded everyone a copy of the 'Summer Task' which outlined the findings of the 7 district office audits.</p> <p>The way forward was discussed and the following was decided:-</p> <p>Leonard to send the findings to each relevant District Manager and ask for feedback.</p> <p>Members to ensure that all their issues are recorded correctly in the report and to forward any outstanding issues to Patricia/Nicola by 25<sup>th</sup> January.</p> <p>Nicola and Patricia agreed to contact members who were not present at the meeting to update them.</p> <p>Nicola and Patricia to develop an accessibility template, based on the common issues highlighted within the summer task results which will be distributed to all District Offices</p>	<p><b>Leonard</b></p> <p><b>Nicola/Patricia/Members</b></p> <p><b>Nicola/Patricia</b></p>
<b>8</b>	<b>Tenant Manual</b>	
	<p>Nicola began by distributing copies of the 3 current NIHE booklets included in the Tenants Information Pack. She had also sourced other organisations' manuals and brought copies of the contents page for members.</p> <p>Nicola ran through the details of the discussion at the last meeting. Forum</p>	

members agreed that that the handbook should be unique and different to what is already available and that it should be of use to both disabled people and NIHE staff.

Nicola gave the members a Draft A4 sheet with the headings for the Manual. It was agreed that the manual would have two sections.

**1. Housing for people with disabilities**

- Finding a home
- Applying for a home
- Adapting a Home
- Moving house

**2. Housing issues identified by people with disabilities**

- Finding a home
- Applying for a home
- Adapting a Home
- Moving house

**Section 1** – It was agreed that Leonard would invite a housing practitioner (eg a Senior Housing Officer) to a forum meeting to outline and discuss the stages involved in obtaining a NIHE home.

**Leonard**

Members felt that the handbook should be directed towards NIHE tenants however it would signpost private sector readers to relevant information.

**Section 2** – It was agreed that members would speak to people within their areas in order to identify housing issues.

**Members/ Nicola**

Nicola also said that she could identify issues from research that she carried out

	<p>for the manual.</p> <p>Contact could also be made with Disability Actions' Advice and Information team to identify general issues encountered by disabled people.</p> <p><b>Discussion touched on the name of the manual and 'Housing Journey' was suggested.</b></p>	
9	<p><b>Information Exchange</b></p>	
	<p>Nicola informed the forum about the two other parts of the Housing Project -</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Disability Housing Design Panel</li> <li>2. Accessible Housing Register Group</li> </ol> <p>Nicola explained that the NIHE are very keen for the Disability Forum to become involved in the project.</p> <p>She then went on to outline how the NIHE want to set up an Accessible Housing Register and need for disabled peoples help.</p> <p>Members were asked if they were available to attend, in conjunction with other disabled people, a Focus group and a date was agreed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tuesday 31 January 2012</li> </ul> <p>Nicola agreed to email out further information</p> <p>Website – Nicola explained that there had been some changes to the NIHE website and that it might be worthwhile for members to take a look at it in terms of</p>	<p><b>Members</b></p> <p><b>Nicola</b></p>

	<p>accessibility and make recommendations to the NIHE.</p> <p>It was agreed that Nicola would contact members and ask them for feedback on the NIHE website this would then be produced into a report and given to the Web Department.</p>	<b>Nicola/Members</b>
	<p>Patricia raised the issue of the effective feedback mechanisms between the Disability Forum and the Central, Area and District Housing Community Networks.</p> <p>Members explained that the information about the Disability Forum was communicated to the 3 levels of Housing Community Networks and that they would act as the conduit between the 3 HCN's and the Forum. Isobelle Hamilton and Clifford Wylie are the Central reps.</p>	
<b>10</b>	<b>Any Other Business</b>	
<b>11</b>	<p><b>Dates of Next Meetings for 2012</b>        8 March 2012        1 May 2012        30 August 2012        30 October 2012</p> <p>Times of meetings to be confirmed.</p>	
<b>12</b>	<b>The Meeting Closed</b>	