

Neighbourhood and Communities Group

Meeting Minutes

Date	Monday, 9 March 2026
Time	11am – 12.30pm
Location	Magna Carta Room Civic Centre, Station Road, Addlestone, KT15 2AH

Attendees:

- Maggie Ward, Corporate Head of Housing
- Nancy Waterhouse, Housing Development Manager
- Deana Humphries, Head of Tenancy Management
- Robert Burge, Estate Services Team Leader
- Steve Owen, Senior Park Supervisor
- Andrea Norman-Walker, Engagement and Inclusion Officer
- tenants

1. Welcome and feedback from the previous meeting

Andrea Norman-Walker welcomed all the residents and provided updates on the issues raised at the previous meeting:

- **New date for the “Litter picking” project:** Meet up and clean-up is a national campaign that RBC joined. Community Engagement is leading on it. The Group can join in. Further information will be circulated.
- **Fly tipping at Malet Close** has been cleared.
- **MCP stopped follow-up surveys:** MCP has a system problem that prevented automatic surveys to be sent following repair jobs completion. They are working on it. As soon as this issue is solved, information will be provided.
- **New bulky waste deposited illegally at Essex Close:** is being investigated.
- **Pigeon feeding** at an address on the Parkside estate, which is attracting large numbers of pigeons to rooftops: it was reported to Environmental Services. The issue will be followed up later in the spring/summer.
- **The future of the cleared empty properties at Braeside:** 4 properties were long-term voids of which 2 were renovated and re-let. Anther two are being renovated to be re-let. Renovations will also include other properties within the New Haw Regeneration Project. Streets are: Parkside, Braeside, Kings Road and Mayfield Avenue.

2. Outcome of Regulatory inspection

Maggie Ward summarised the judgement from the Regulator of Social Housing:

- We received a C4 grading. This is disappointing, as we feel that it does not reflect the amount of work that we have completed on our homes. Much of the activity we were inspected on has already been completed; however, our reporting did not sufficiently evidence this. Under the new inspection regime, more evidence-based reporting and external assurance are required to validate our submissions.
- We are working closely with the Regulator to implement our Improvement Plan.
- All residents will receive a letter explaining what the judgement means for tenants and outlining our next steps. The key points of the letter were presented at the meeting.
- We plan to increase our internal capacity, bring in additional contractors, and strengthening external oversight to address all issues raised by the Regulator.

One member of the Group commented that, from a tenant's perspective, the judgement does not seem fair and does not reflect their experience. It was agreed that the draft letter to tenants will be circulated to the Group for feedback.

3. New Homes Plans

Nancy Waterhouse updated the Group on plans to increase the number of RBC properties. She outlined the different routes for acquiring new homes:

- **Street property purchases** — often former Local Authority properties.
- **Development on our own sites** — such as Ripley Avenue and The Crescent.
- **Regeneration projects** — for example, the Parkside Estate. Nancy emphasised that neither the allotments nor the recreation ground will have houses built on but will be enhanced as part of the regeneration plans.
- **Section 106 (S106) Agreements** — legally binding planning obligations between developers and the local planning authority. These ensure that new developments contribute to the local community, including financially and also by provision of affordable housing, such as at Thorpe Lee Manor.

A member asked about affordable homes, and Nancy explained how rents for these properties are calculated. They are set at 80% of market rent but capped within the local housing allowance set by the Government for each post code area in the country. These homes are intended to act as a stepping stone between social housing and the private market.

Nancy encouraged the Group to provide feedback on the plans, attend resident meetings, and follow updates in the regular newsletters.

A resident from Braeside reported that he had not received invitations to resident meetings or seen any newsletters. Nancy agreed to investigate and ensure he receives all relevant communications. She also confirmed that if funding allowed, the organisation could be looking to purchase properties in Addlestone as well.

4. Role of the Neighbourhood and Communities Group in policy development

Deana Humphries highlighted the importance of involving tenants in policy development. The new Tenant Experience Panel will focus on scrutinising our processes, policies, and services.

The Neighbourhood and Communities Group is well placed to support and complement this work.

The Group has already received the draft Community Area Policy and the ASB Policy for feedback. In future, we would like members of this Group to contribute their views at an earlier stage—before we begin drafting new or revised policies.

Deana also presented a list of tenancy services and proposed performance indicators. She invited tenants to review these and suggest additional ways to measure other aspects of tenancy services.

5. Community Area Policy and ASB Policy consultation

Deana thanked the Group for their feedback on both policies and confirmed that she will revise the proposals, incorporating suggestions where possible. She addressed a concern raised about the Communal Area Policy, reassuring tenants that Independent Retirement Living Schemes have dedicated sheds for mobility scooters. Residents are encouraged to store scooters in these sheds and use other walking aids to reach their homes, as this is important for fire safety.

Deana asked that any further comments be sent to Andrea.

6. Victory Park Management

Steve Owen was asked to clarify the recent issues with the opening and closing of Victory Park. Residents have noticed that the park has been left open several times, and there is growing concern that, if left unlocked at night, it could attract antisocial behaviour or become vulnerable to vandalism.

Steve explained that responsibility for supervising the park's opening and closing lies with the Council's Open Space Team, while the physical locking and unlocking is carried out by a security company. He noted that there had been a problem with the padlocks recently, but he believes this has now been resolved.

He also mentioned that there are proposals to keep the park permanently open. A tenant remarked that it might happen by installing a telescopic barrier. Tenants expressed strong scepticism about this idea and asked how they could ensure that the park's management remains handled in-house. Steve advised them to raise their concerns with the local councillor.

7. Estate Improvement Plans/ Update from Estate Services

Rob Burge updated the Group on three ongoing consultations regarding estate improvement plans at Lasswade Court, Collingsbourne, and Garfield Estate. He also outlined areas identified for future improvement work.

Lasswade Court (10 flats)

The consultation received a strong response, with 70% of residents participating.

Rob presented a map outlining the proposed improvements, which include:

- Removal of the existing, safety-failed, cordoned-off playground
- Installation of a new patio area and grassed space

- Creation of a new bin store
- Addition of a secure bike store
- Introduction of a new drying area.

Resident feedback has been very positive, and the design will now be reviewed to incorporate comments and suggestions raised during consultation.

Collingsbourne (24 properties)

This estate currently has no parking provision,

Proposed improvements include:

- Creation of new parking areas
- Installation of bin stores
- Refurbishment of rear gardens

So far, around 20–25% of residents have provided feedback. Further engagement is being encouraged to ensure wider participation.

Garfield Estate (210 properties)

Consultation for this estate is being carried out online, with the Engagement Officer visiting all properties to encourage responses.

To date, 61 responses have been received.

Common issues raised through consultation include:

- Parking pressures
- Safety concerns
- Fly tipping

A member asked how the order of estate consultations is decided. Rob explained that the sequence is based on the needs of each estate. However, the focus is on starting and progressing works on current projects before launching new consultations.

8. Any Other Business

A resident of Surrey Towers reported that children from Middlesex Court have been entering the building and playing with the lifts. She is concerned, as the lifts are known to be very sensitive and have recently broken down several times, leaving residents with disabilities unable to leave the building. Rob assured the resident that the CCTV footage will be reviewed and steps will be taken to address the issue.

New fly-tipping has also been reported on the Garfield Estate. Rob is dealing with this matter as well.

Our next meeting is on 4 May 2026 at the Civic Centre.

Actions agreed:

- Draft letter to tenants regarding the Regulator's judgement to be circulated for feedback
- Follow up on information sent to residents at the Parkside Estate regarding the regeneration plans
- Proposed performance indicators for tenancy services to be circulated for comments
- Litter picking in Addlestone – details to be shared with the Group
- Investigating new fly tipping at the Garfield Estate
- Investigating ASB at Surrey Towers.