

# Introducing Kath Lewis & Ken Bowles

*Representatives of  
RCT Homes Members' Forum*

&

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## RCT Homes – The Beginning

In 2007, the council transferred 10,400 homes and over 600 leaseholders to RCT Homes via the stock transfer process. The organisation is now responsible for more than 60 housing estates and 27 sheltered housing schemes. Properties included a large number of non-traditional types of build which, together with the standard properties, were required to meet the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) by 2012.

RCT Homes Ltd is a Community Mutual housing organisation which is owned by us, it's tenant members and most importantly it encourages us to take a full and active part in how the organisation is run.

The Board consists of 15 Directors of which 5 are tenant members.

The Members' Forum consists of 24 members = 20 tenants, 1 leaseholder and 3 'Friends of' or resident members.



## RCT Homes – What’s it about?

Unlike most other social landlords, RCT Homes is charged with “supporting the economic regeneration and development of the communities it serves” by providing local employment and training opportunities.

By working together we are focussing on ensuring that services are efficient and effective, and responding to and meeting the needs of tenants and the local communities by meaningfully involving them. This is vital to achieving our aims.

By getting involved, members can make a positive difference to life in our communities.

Currently we have:

**4, 736** Members & **677** new members pending

## Problems faced

- One of the main issues faced by RCT Homes is the bringing together of communities spread across 4 distinct valleys.
- Reluctance of tenant members to get involved.
- Confusion with RCT Homes still being associated with the council.
- How to make membership more meaningful for tenants.

Plus there are many other areas which have been identified and will be addressed.

## What we are doing about it?

Following a review of the Governance Policy Framework by the Board, discussions arose in relation to the membership of RCT Homes as a Community Housing Mutual. As a result, the Board asked the Members' Forum to lead a review of member involvement structures which included leaseholders and residents.

In particular, emphasis was to be given to good governance, maximising the engagement and involvement of tenant members, providing appropriate training and promoting constructive communications.

## How we went about it

- A review process was undertaken by a working group made up of members from the Members' Forum.
- Consultants were engaged to independently undertake the review.
- Consultants were also engaged to independently support the working group in preparing it's report back to the Members' Forum and Board regarding the review outcomes and recommendations. This was completed in March 2011.

## What were the outcomes?

- 27 recommendations to the Members' Forum and Board in April 2011.
- An Action Plan devised to address and deliver on all 27 recommendations.
- 9 of these have already been completed and more are still being implemented.
- A regular report to Members' Forum and Board on progress on achieving targets set for implementation of all 27 recommendations.

## Where we want to be

As a Community Housing Mutual, RCT Homes is striving to meet many of the core values and principles that define the co-operative movement.

Whether it's via the main community housing role or through any of its regeneration activities undertaken by many of its subsidiary companies, we hope as stakeholders, we will be able to take our organisation to where we the members want it to be.

Our key areas of delivery already include:

- Social enterprise – supporting businesses run for a social or environmental purposes.
- Capacity building – supporting initiatives that aim to develop and improve the range of skills and abilities among individuals and communities.
- Community-based renewable energy schemes – these are schemes run and maintained by the local community with profits being fed back into the community.

# Thank you for listening

Do you have any questions?