

new front cover picture to go here

Reviewing the Impact of Resident Involvement at EastendHomes

July 2007 - June 2008



Contents

1. Introduction	page 3
1.1 The Brief	
2. Background	page 4
3. Ways to get Involved	page 5
3.2 Estate Inspections	
3.3 Local Newsletters	
3.4 Corporate Newsletter	
3.5 Leaseholder Surgeries	
3.6 Major Works Consultation	
3.7 Main Board	
3.8 Estate Steering Groups/Boards (ESG's and EB's)	
3.9 Resident Users Panel	
3.10 Tenants Satisfaction Forms	
3.11 Mystery Shopping	
3.12 Text Messaging Focus Groups	
3.13 Disabilities Focus Group	
3.14 Equalities and Diversity Focus Group	
3.15 Readers Panel	
3.16 Overall Results	
4. Measuring the Impact of Resident Involvement during 2007/08	page 16
5. Conclusion	page 16
6. Recommendations	page 17
7. Appendices	page 18
Appendix A - EastendHomes' Draft Involvement Statement	
Appendix B - evidence of Resident Involvement	
Appendix C - examples of Local Newsletters	
Appendix D - examples of Corporate Newsletters	
Appendix E - evidence of Surgery Meetings	
Appendix F - evidence of Major Works Consultation	
Appendix G - evidence of agenda and minutes (see example)	
Appendix H - examples of agendas and minutes for Estate Steering Groups/Boards	
Appendix I - examples of letters/questionnaires/results	
Appendix J - examples of Tenant Satisfaction forms	
Appendix K - sample forms and evidence of training	
Appendix L - Disabilities Focus Group minutes/agenda	

1. Introduction

This report sets out the results of the exercise to evaluate the impact of resident involvement throughout EastendHomes, together with an audit of the implementation of the recommendations made in the previous years Impact Assessment report.

2. Background

2.1

EastendHomes (EEH) was created by the London Borough of Tower Hamlets under the "Housing Choice" transfer programme as a council sponsored landlord.

2.2

EastendHomes was registered with the Housing Corporation in February 2001, is a Limited by Guarantee company and a Registered Charity. The association currently owns and manages around 2096 rented properties and is the freeholder of around 1430 leasehold properties on the following estate areas: Christchurch; Mile End East; Glamis; Holland; St George's and Westferry.

2.3

In April 2008 PGA were commissioned by EastendHomes to evaluate the impact and levels of involvement and decision making that residents had had during the period August 2007 to June 2008. Further to report on the recommendations agreed by the Main Board in December 2007 as a result of the Resident Involvement Impact Assessment report for the period June 2006 to June 2007.

2.4

EastendHomes' Resident Involvement Statement is currently being re-designed to incorporate new resident initiatives and levels of involvement. EastendHomes' Involvement Statement (see appendix A) sets out how EastendHomes has listened to residents and how they have responded to their outcomes in regard to the delivery of services. The statement also shows how EastendHomes' residents can be involved in the management of their homes and estates and the ways in which tenants are able to positively influence day to day services and the regeneration.

2.5

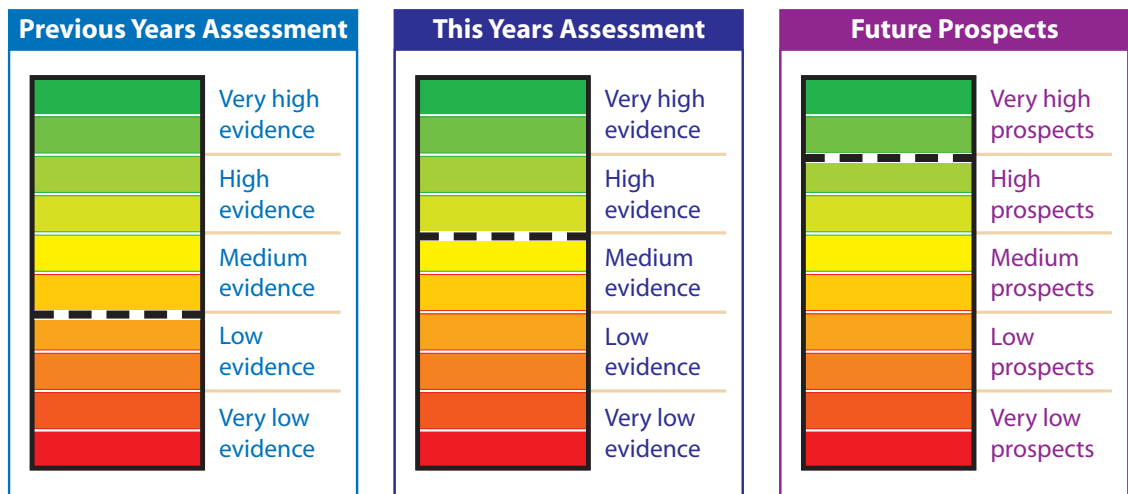
EastendHomes' emphasis during 2007-08 has been the democratic elections to the Estate Boards and being able to demonstrate and evidence that residents have been offered a number of ways to get involved at a level and time commitment that suits them.

3. Ways to get Involved

3.1

This section of the report sets out the initiatives which are on offer by EastendHomes to residents in order for them to get involved and make a difference.

3.2 Estate Inspections

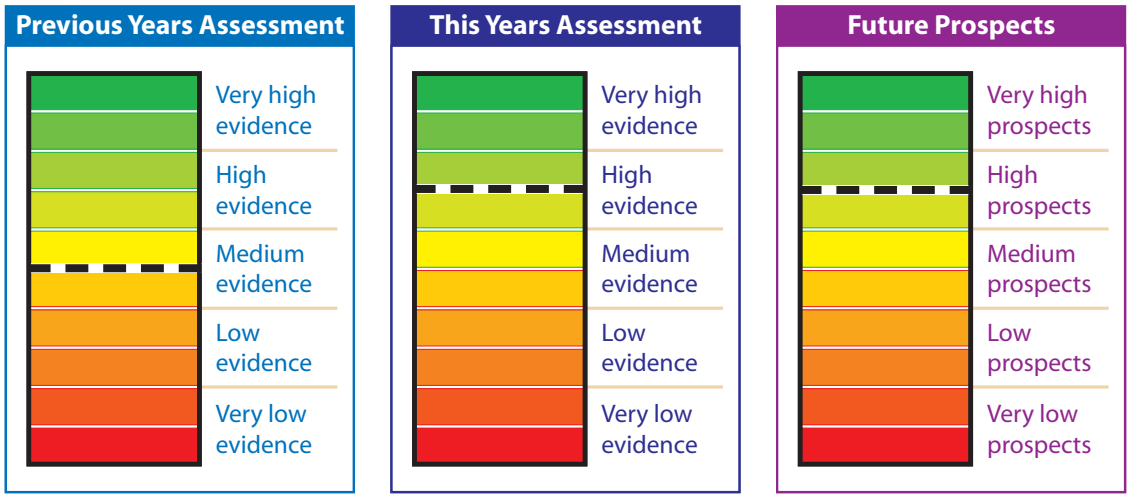


Residents are invited to accompany EastendHomes staff on regular walkabouts on their estates to identify any outstanding repairs to external and communal areas, i.e. horticultural areas, lighting (estate and block), play areas, abandoned vehicles, paving, bulk rubbish, guttering, graffiti.

Staff record any items raised and endeavour to get them resolved, the results are to be reported back to the relevant Estate Board/EMB together with the action taken and reasons for any delay and recorded in the minutes (see appendix B, evidence of resident involvement. Example of Estate Inspections on the computer's J Drive).

Although Estate Inspections have increased from last year as is evidenced. The results are still not being reported to all Estate Boards on a regular basis.

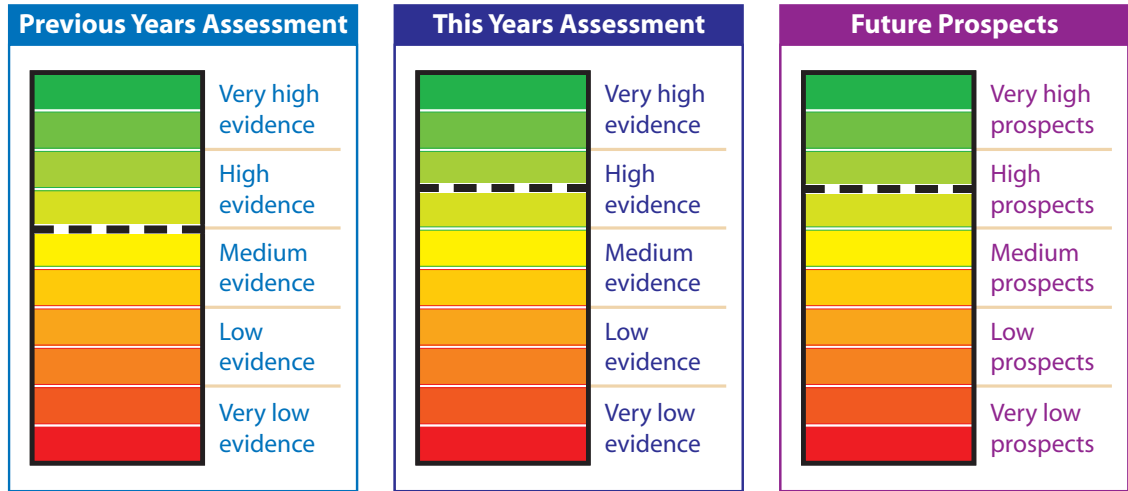
3.3 Local Newsletters



Local newsletters are produced for each EastendHomes major estate area, Mile End East, Holland, Glamis, St George’s and Island Gardens. The newsletters give an opportunity for residents to have their say and share their views/opinions with other residents. EastendHomes have used the newsletters to inform residents about local elections, and in regard to regeneration works, show flats, drop in sessions and open days (see appendix C for examples of local newsletters and also EastendHomes’ website for publications).

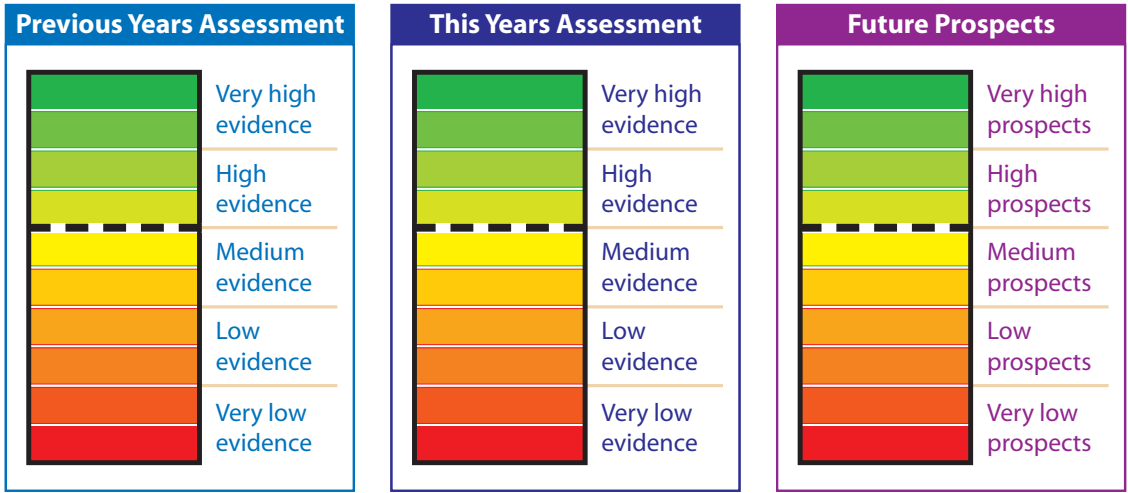
The style and layout of local newsletters vary from each estate area due to staff and local residents input, and residents use the newsletters to have their say on local issues which are raised at Estate Boards.

3.4 Corporate Newsletters



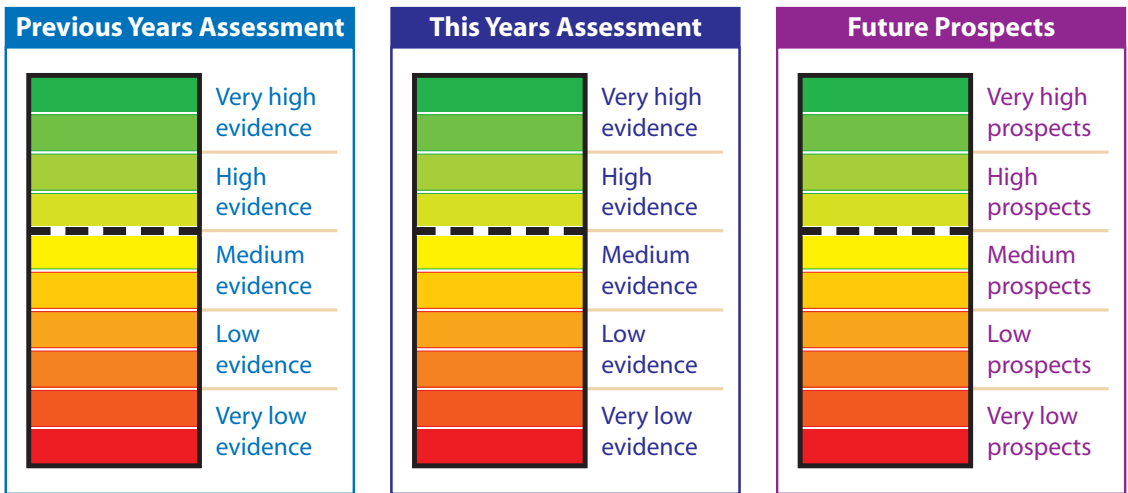
Corporate newsletters are produced on a quarterly basis by EastendHomes for all residents to report any major events, updates on regeneration works, new policies and new initiatives being introduced by EastendHomes (see appendix D, examples of Corporate newsletters and also EastendHomes’ website publications). These have been produced regularly and to a good standard and now have a Resident Readers Panel providing a view on the layout, articles and subject matter.

3.5 Leaseholder Surgeries



Leaseholders surgeries are being held on each of the major estate areas (Glamis has yet to be arranged) in order to answer any questions or resolve any problems that leaseholders may have in regard to service charges or services. Leaseholders can also make an appointment to see a member of EastendHomes staff to discuss any of the above matters either at the Head Office or to have a home visit (see appendix E, evidence of surgery meetings and also EastendHomes' website leasehold services). These are currently leaseholders of which EastendHomes are the landlord. EastendHomes also provide a translation service.

3.6 Major Works Consultation

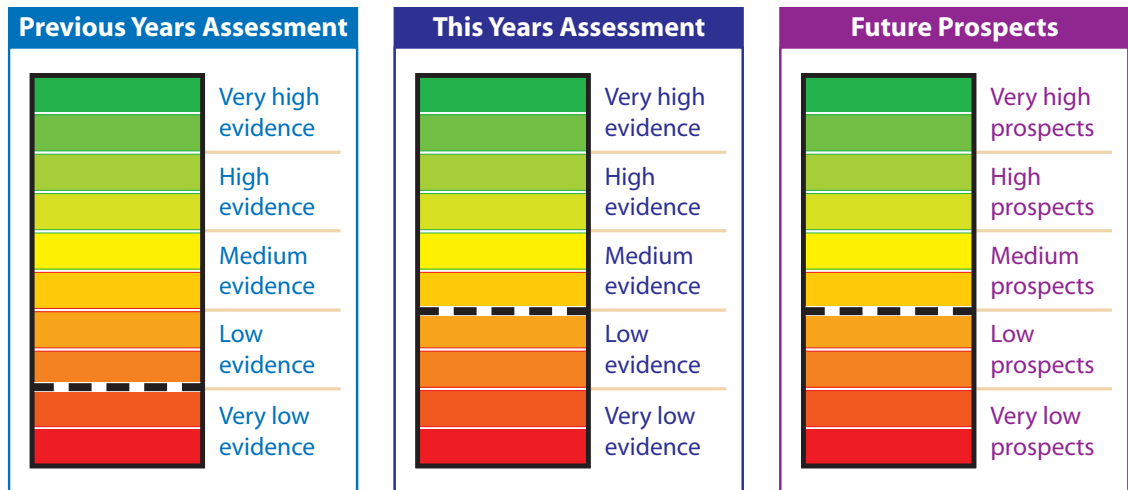


The consultation that began with residents during the transfer process from the London Borough of Tower Hamlets has been continued by

EastendHomes staff and includes, contractor interviews, open days, drop ins, show flats, face to face meetings and block meetings relating to their estates and the regeneration works being carried out.

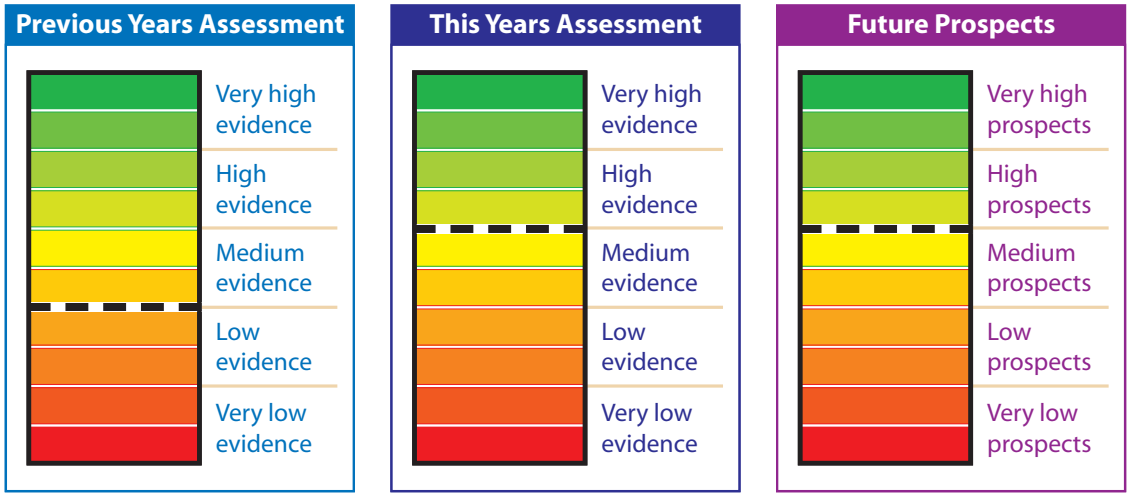
The works are currently at different stages on each of the major estate areas due to the dates they were transferred from London Borough of Tower Hamlets to EastendHomes. Evidence of the consultation that has taken place and the way in which this was communicated to residents is shown at appendix F.

3.7 Main Board/Sub Groups



The Main Board is made up of eight residents, two councillors and eight independent members. Currently there is a resident member vacancy which has yet to be filled following the recent elections to the Estate Board on the Holland Estate. Residents have undergone Governance training on joining the Board and as part of their induction. Resident Board members of which three are male and three female also attend Sub Groups of the Main Board which are Finance and Audit Personel, Service Review Board, Community Facilities and Commercial Premises. The calendar of Board meetings and a sample agenda and minutes can be seen at appendix G.

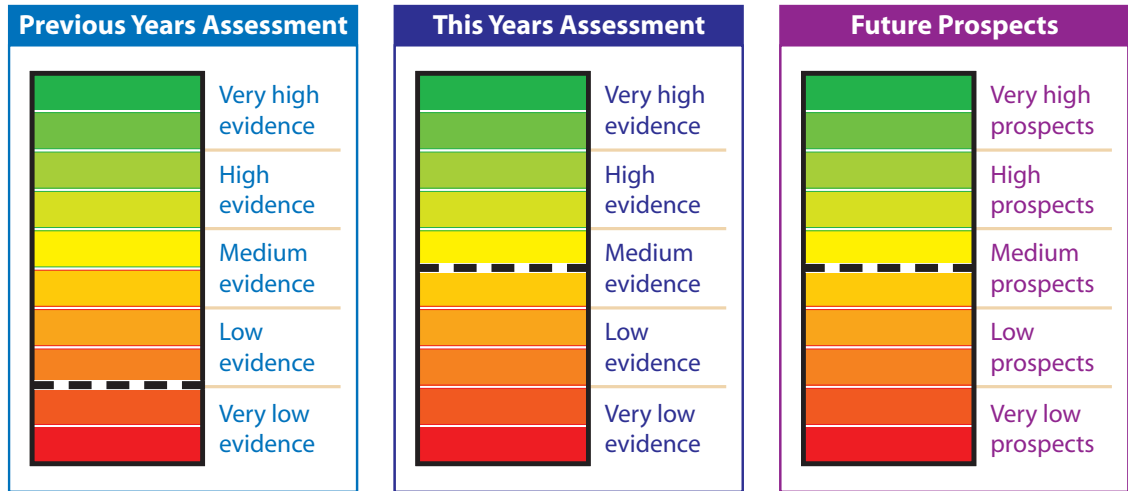
3.8 Estate Steering Groups/Boards (ESG's/EB's)



In the last year Holland, St George's and in June 2008, Glamis have all held democratic elections. It is planned that in the Autumn 2008 Westferry will also hold elections. Once this is completed all Estate Boards will have a democratic framework from which residents will be elected onto the EastendHomes Main Board.

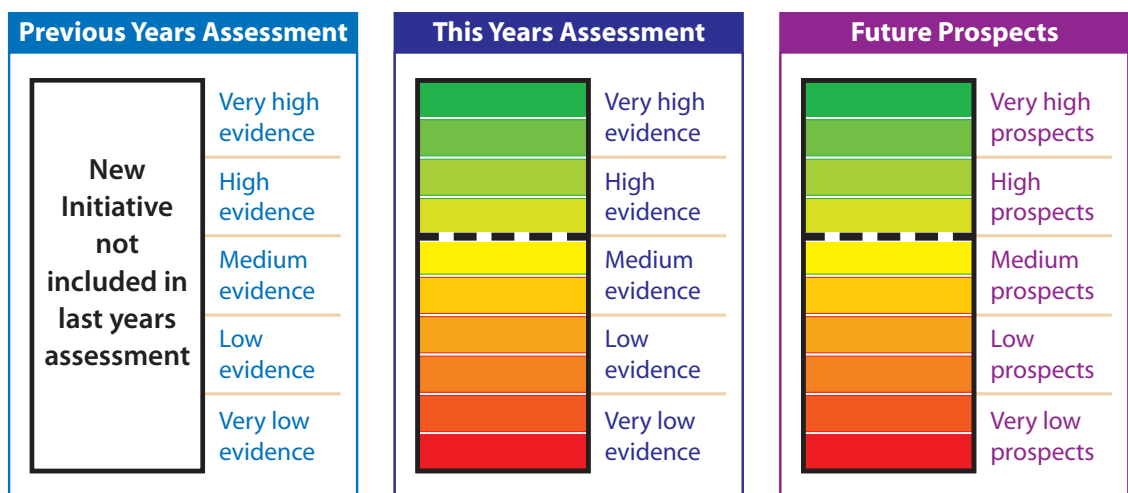
A new resident group, the Glamis Residents Association has also recently been formed in May 2008, which has considerable support from the residents on the estate and which is governed by a constitution and code of conduct. The Estate Boards/Steering Groups have met throughout the year, usually on a monthly basis and a sample of their agendas and minutes can be seen at appendix H.

3.9 Resident Users Panel



The Resident Users Panel was set up in May 2007 and now has representatives from Mile End, Holland, St George’s, Westferry and Glamis Estates. The Panel has around 50 resident members currently who are rewarded for their time and expertise by EastendHomes in the form of £25 worth of shopping vouchers given twice per year. Residents are asked to complete questionnaires and give their views on EastendHomes policies, procedures and regeneration works on a regular basis which are analysed and presented to the Service Review Board, see appendix J for examples/evidence.

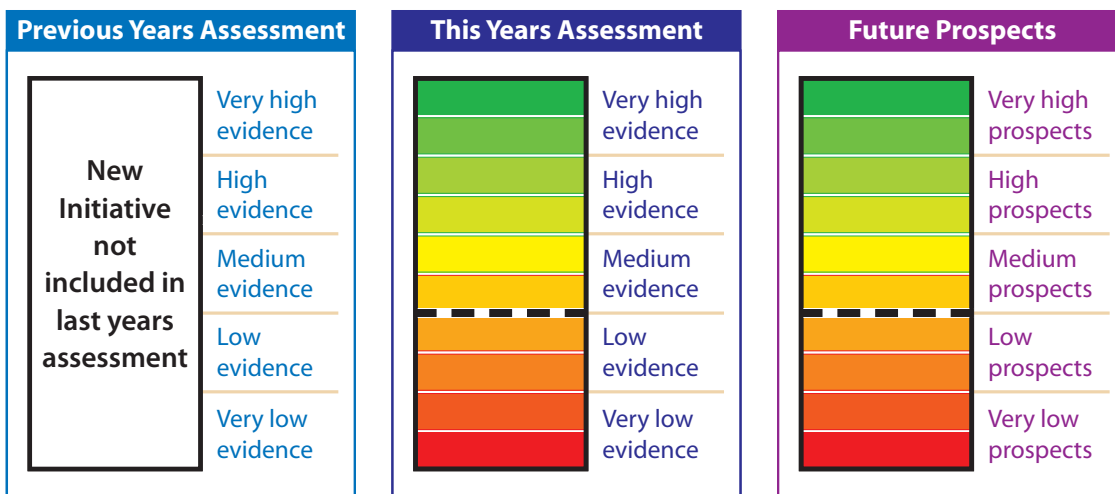
3.10 Tenant Satisfaction Forms



The tenant satisfaction forms are completed by tenants in their homes following the completion of any repair works carried out by EastendHomes repairs contractors. Once the forms are completed the

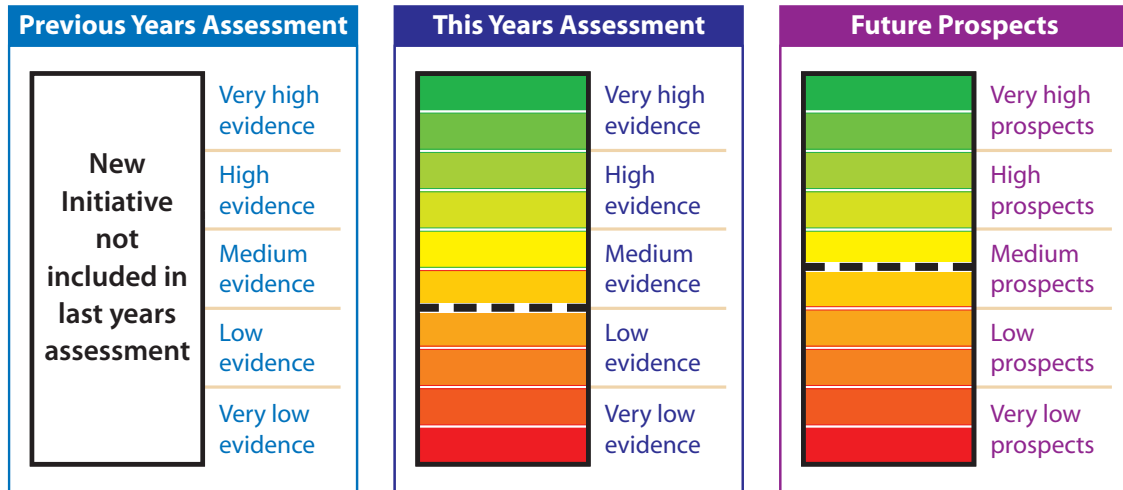
tenants can post or hand them in to the local estate office. These forms are then sent to the performance monitoring staff who provide regular key performance indicator (KPI's) reports to the Main Board and Estate Boards, see appendix K for evidence/example (Glamis and St Georges forms are held electronically and Island Gardens, Mile End and Holland are retained in files).

3.11 Mystery Shopping



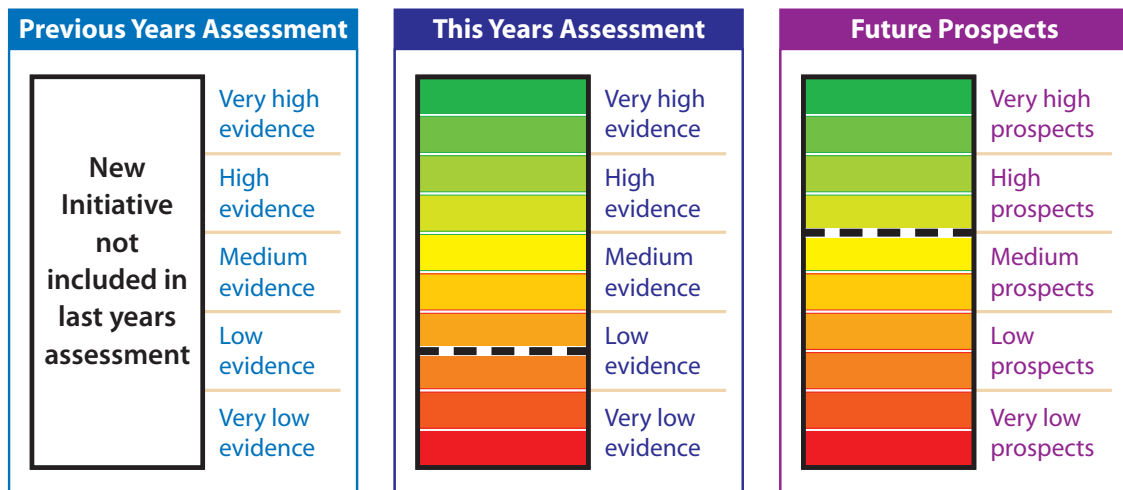
In May 2008 EastendHomes staff and residents (volunteers) were together with staff and residents from Tower Hamlets Community Housing and Gateway local landlords trained in the art of Mystery Shopping. The training was carried out by Housing Quality Network (HQN). Mystery Shopping of all three organisations is now underway with a feedback session arranged for July 2008. It is proposed that Mystery Shopping will now be an ongoing exercise throughout the year, when the initiative will be reviewed. EastendHomes rewards resident volunteers with £50 shopping vouchers for attending the training, carrying out the shopping and attending any follow up sessions. See appendix L for sample forms and evidence of the training.

3.12 Text Messaging Focus Group



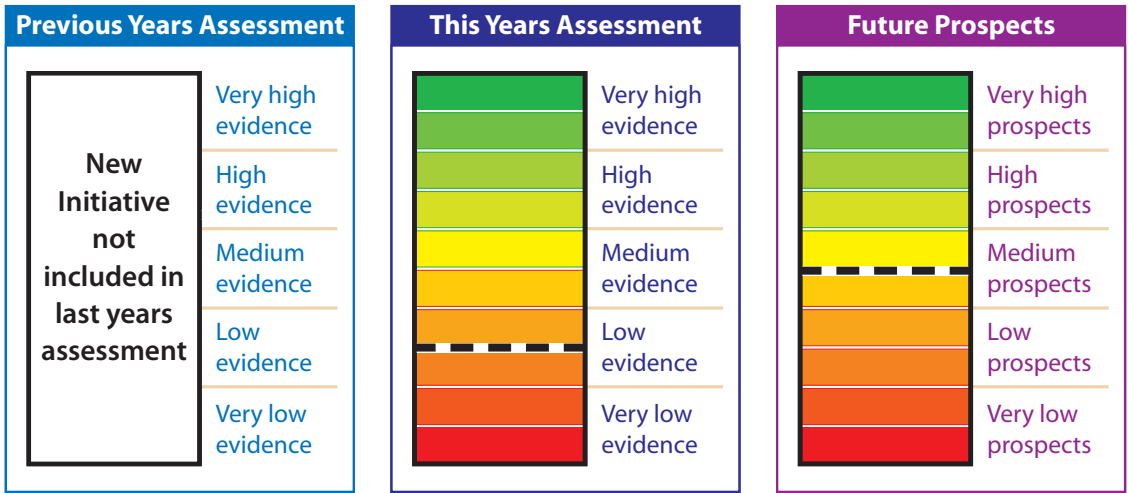
This initiative was started in May 2008 and has a small number of texters. It is intended that this will be grown considerably and will reach the youths which are currently a hard to reach group.

3.13 Disabilities Focus Group



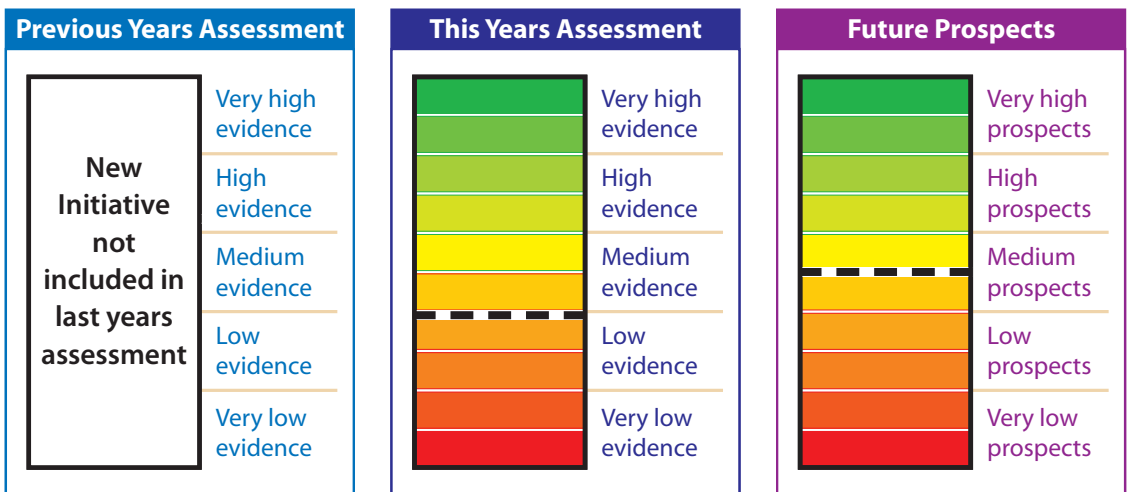
The first meeting of this group was held in May 2008 and chaired by EastendHomes Chief Executive. The Group are reviewing Access to Services, Communicating with Residents, Disability Equality Scheme and Aids and Adaptations. The Group will meet quarterly in the future. See appendix M for evidence of minutes/agenda.

3.14 Equalities and Diversity Focus Group



This new Group was set up in May 2008 and will meet quarterly to monitor policies and review new initiatives.

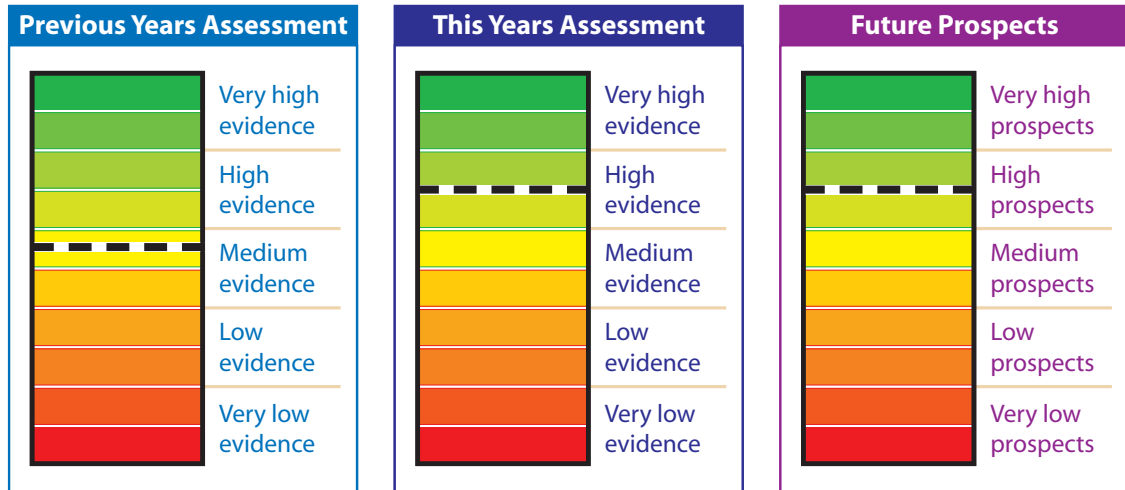
3.15 Readers Panel



A Resident Readers Panel has been set up in May 2008 to review corporate newsletters, layout and provide articles and subject matter for future issues.

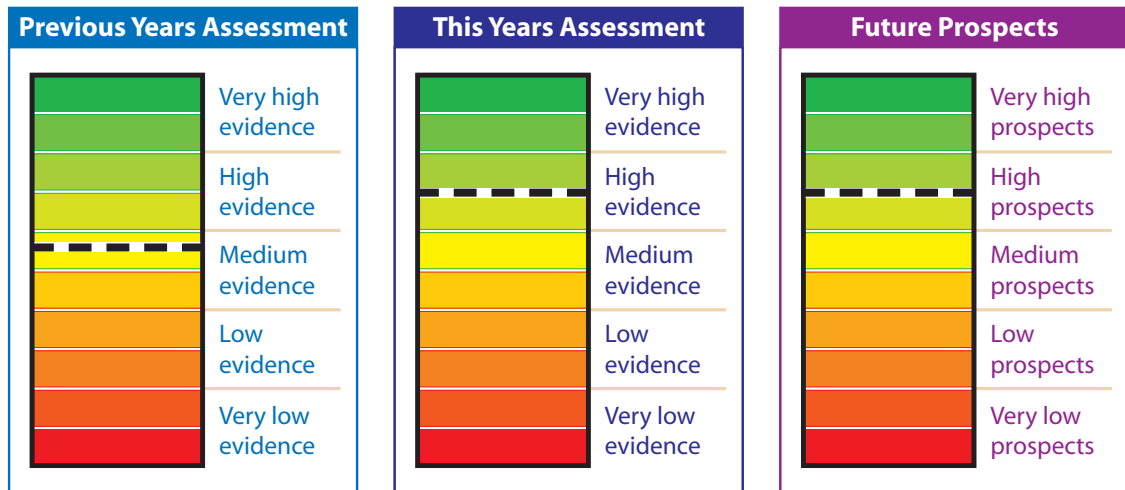
3.16 Overall

Overall results NOT including EastendHomes New Initiatives



The comparison of last years involvement initiatives and that of the same initiative for 2007/08 has shown that a full years records are in evidence which accounts for the improvements shown.

Overall results including EastendHomes New Initiatives



Although a lot of the new initiatives are at an early stage there is some evidence which added to that of the now established involvement initiatives has produced the improved level of Resident Involvement shown together with that of the level of future prospects for resident involvement.

4. Measuring the Impact of Resident Involvement during 2007/2008

4.1

At the time of completing this report EastendHomes are in the process of completely rewriting their Resident Involvement Statement with a view to increasing resident involvement at all levels of the organisations decision making framework by marketing the initiatives set out in section 3 of this report. However, EastendHomes draft documents have been used in order to evidence the initiatives currently on offer to residents, and to make a comparison with the previous years Impact Assessment. The scoring levels for each resident involvement initiative being undertaken and the results they have achieved to date are set out above.

4.2 Measurement of Resident Involvement

Each of the initiatives of resident involvement has been subject to being evidenced either electronically or in paper format for the period above. A subjective judgement has also been placed on initiatives which are not regularly evidenced or those which have been recently introduced. Last years assessment figures have also been converted in comparison using one full unit measurement to two units on this years assessment.

Comparison between the same initiatives have shown that EastendHomes have improved and if the new initiatives are continued throughout the period should show a marked improvement for the Impact Assessment 2008/09.

5. Conclusion

5.1

EastendHomes are continuing to build on the foundations laid last year.

EastendHomes have acted upon and implemented the recommendations made in last years assessment and have introduced a number of new resident involvement initiatives.

EastendHomes are also going to install a Resident Involvement Computer based system for tracking and recording all resident contact made throughout the organisation with staff and other agencies.

EastendHomes are, in the interests of Best Practice, continuously looking at ways to improve how to reach their hard to reach residents groups and working jointly with other RSL's to provide value for money and increase resident involvement at all levels of the organisation.

EastendHomes have improved upon last years assessment and with the new initiatives and the Resident Involvement computer system in place should be able to evidence and show further improvement when the next assessment is carried out.

6. Recommendations

It is recommended that:

6.1

A Resident Champion be appointed at the Main Board and for each of the service areas.

6.2

Each report produced for the Main Board to have a section headed Residents Views. If the contents have implications for residents in regard to services or service standards the residents views need to be evidenced before a decision(s) is made.

6.3

Quarterly reports to be produced for the Service Review Board in regard to the levels of Resident Involvement and impact that the involvement initiatives are having.

6.4

A training programme for Resident Involvement at all levels be set up in order to 'Grow' EastendHomes. Further that the results be reported back quarterly to the Service Review Board.

6.5

Quarterly reports to be produced for the Service Review Board in regard to the Resident Involvement Register computer system and the results being recorded.

6.6

The Main Board approve the report.