

Opportunity knocks!

There are a number of vacancies for residents to join our Board or the Resident Scrutiny Panel – a rewarding and exciting way to make a difference and support the work of Westlea and the GreenSquare Group. **Read on to see why this may be an opportunity for you!**

What is GreenSquare Group?

GreenSquare is the dynamic housing group that brings together your landlord Westlea Housing with Oxford Citizens Housing Association (OCHA) and Oakus – with a passion for delivering excellent services and high-quality housing across Wiltshire, Oxfordshire and Gloucestershire. We manage over 9,000 homes, employ 350 staff and will develop around 2,000 new homes in the next five years.

What is a Board?

The Board is a team of people (some of whom are residents) who agree plans for the future and make sure that our work is properly carried out in line with these plans. Staff give support and provide information to Board members to assist them in making decisions. **The current Board vacancy is on our OCHA Board but we are also interested in appointing other candidates as a 'trainees' for both Boards so that you can be appointed to the Board next year.**

The OCHA Board has twelve members – four resident Board members and eight independent board members. The OCHA Board meets six times a year, usually in Oxford on Monday evenings. The Westlea Board has eleven members – four resident Board members and seven independent board members. The Westlea Board meets six times a year, usually in Chippenham on Thursday evenings.

What is the Resident Scrutiny Panel (RSP)?

This is a Panel made up of up to 10 residents (five from OCHA and five from Westlea), lead by an independent Chair, which has been set up to scrutinise the work of the Group members, primarily Westlea and

OCHA. In brief, scrutiny is the process by which you will be able to examine services – to ensure they are the right ones, and to make sure we are delivering against our targets.

We currently have one vacancy for a Westlea Panel member (and two vacancies for OCHA Panel members).

The RSP meets six times a year usually in Swindon on Tuesday evenings.

What experience do I need?

You will need to:

- support the core values and objectives of Westlea and GreenSquare.
- have an awareness of the needs and concerns of residents and other groups with whom we work.

You should have a willingness to learn and get involved. Good communication skills and the ability to work in a team are also important, but full training and support are given.

How much time is involved and is it paid?

As a Board member you would need to be able to commit around eight to twelve hours per month, which includes attendance at evening Board Meetings. Board members can be paid £3000 per year. For Resident Scrutiny Panel members, the time commitment is four to six hours per month and Panel members can be paid £1000 per year. We also pay members 'out of pocket' expenses to cover travel arrangements and childcare costs etc.

What else will I gain?

- a computer is provided if you don't have one;
- internet costs covered;
- relevant training;
- knowledge of how your housing is provided;
- a chance to make decisions about



Westlea's priorities and future; and

- an excellent addition to your CV.

Interested and would like to find out more?

Perhaps you have read this far and are still not sure whether this is for you? In order that you can find out more about becoming a Board member or Resident Scrutiny Panel member, we are running an informal 'open evening' to give you the chance to find out more and ask any questions.

Come and meet some of our existing resident Board and Panel members and let them tell you all about what's involved over a coffee or tea! We would like all interested residents to come along to this session and can arrange transport or meet your expenses for travel. This session will be on 24 June 2009, at the GreenSquare offices in Swindon (Barbury House, Stonehill Green, SN5 7HB).

To book yourself on the session, please contact Sarah Rigby: email sarah.rigby@greensquaregroup.com or telephone 01249 466042. If you'd like to talk about what is involved, please contact Mandy Arnold: email mandy.arnold@greensquaregroup.com or telephone 01249 466162.

The deadline for completed applications will be in the week commencing 6 July 2009, with shortlisting the week after and interviews in the week commencing 20 July 2009.