



## **HullSTARS Advisory Committee Meeting**

29<sup>th</sup> March 2017 – 10.30am

Meeting Room 3, Student Central.

### **Attending:**

*Samantha Page **SP** (HullSTARS); Shelly Bennett **SB** (HullSTARS); George Bainbridge **GB** (Vice President for Welfare and Community); Liz Pearce **LP** (Director of Membership Services, HUU); Chloe Reid **CR** (Advice Centre Advisor); Ian Sanders **IS** (Hull City Council); Michael Rainsford **MR** (StuRents); Jill Cooper **JC** (University Accommodation Manager); Debbie Drake **DD** (Humber Landlord Association); Christine Kirk **CK** (Hull Student Landlord association.)*

1. **Apologies** –Toni Proctor (HullSTARS)– *Maternity Leave*
2. **Ratification of Minutes from previous meeting** – All present and in agreement.
3. **General up dates:**

SP Summarised to the group general updates with what has been completed by HullSTARS to date:

### **Audits:**

- Approximately 75 Audits left to do over the next 5 weeks.
- SP Introduced replacement Auditor Freddie Colpman as Georgina Baulch has now moved to Leeds on an Internship within a law firm.
- HullSTARS office will be closed from the **Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> April - Friday 14<sup>th</sup> April 2017**. Sam will be back in the office on the **Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> April, 10.30 – 3.30pm**
- Final day of Auditing will be **Friday 12<sup>th</sup> May 2017**

### **Review week:**

SP discussed the upcoming Review Week with the group. The event will run 24<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup> April, 11am-2pm. SP advised that arrangements are well underway; marketing will commence the w/c 10<sup>th</sup> April. HullSTARS will also have a stall in the Library on 27<sup>th</sup>, which is new to the event, so excited to see if successful. Hoping to improve on number of reviews collected last year. Review target TBC once staffing is arranged. As an incentive, any review left during this event will be in with a chance of winning £50 Amazon Voucher.

### **Housing Social:**

The final Housing Social will also be held during Review Week (Tues 25<sup>th</sup>) StuRents.com and Advice Centre will be attending to give help and support. Free Pizza will also be available. The aim of the day is to encourage students struggling to find housemates for next year, or help those whom have fallen victim to signing a contract too early and have now split from their housemates to find students in a similar situation and hopefully form new house groups. Was a successful event last year with several success stories, so hoping to have similar success this year.

### **“Love your Home” Review Day**

Extremely successful. Promotional staff collected 103 reviews over 3 hours at our “**Love your Home**” themed review day, stall looked amazing and footfall was great due to positioning of the stall near to HUU reception area.

**DD.** Commented on the upbeat & positive nature of the reviews at the moment and observations were made that this reflects the theme of the event. SP agreed this to probably be the case, however promotional staff are encouraged to express to students that they can leave positive or negative reviews regardless of the review day theme.

### **HUU Competition:**

Fairly successful, social media following has increased since the competition launch. Facebook followers are up by 11 & Twitter followers are up by 24. Not as successful as anticipated, however this is still 35 new students future HullSTARS posts and information will reach.

George Bainbridge announced the winner live on Facebook. The live broadcast received over 2000 watchers, which was fantastic. This is a marketing tool HullSTARS will aim to use again to promote future events.

The prize was a £50 Amazon voucher however next time we may look at a more valentine’s themed prize. E.g. a cinema pass for two, or a meal voucher.

### **Student Spring clean:**

The event was a huge success with a fantastic turn out considering the poor weather conditions. 26 Students, Council representatives, Landlords (PD student properties, Loc8me & Unicom) University staff, Police & McDonalds got involved throughout the day.

The event was split into two sessions. The morning session focused on Cranbrook Avenue & Salmon. The afternoon session targeted Lambert Street & De Grey Street.



Priority collections were made by the council at designated pick up points, and all rubbish was collected within 30minutes of the session end times.

All volunteers were provided with litter pickers, gloves & refuse bags as well as the added help of brooms and shovels provide by the council. The Boathouse on Newland Avenue once again supplied food and refreshments.

Overall the event has received nothing but positive feedback, with students emailing asking when the next event will be.

New to this event, we selected at random a “Picker of the day” The winner received £10 in HUU vouchers. SP also created volunteer certificates, as proof of volunteer work to enhance CV’s. These seemed to be greatly appreciated, and something we will continue with.

**JC.** Made a suggestion regarding ten foot`s around the area being targeted next time.

#### **Library pop up event:**

Taking on board feedback from the previous meeting, where a suggestion was made to get HullSTARS more outward and student facing we attended the library on Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> April from, 11.30am – 1pm. During that time 23 reviews were collected.

The process was worthwhile as the footfall was great although mindful of the fact that students are there to study. However the café being near to the pop up stall created a great opportunity to gain reviews and engage with a different “pool” of students.

**SP** is Planning to go again in May. And forward planning, HullSTARS will look to attend once a month. This will be increased to fortnightly during Oct, Nov & Dec every 2 weeks, this will aid in promoting the “No Rush No Pressure” campaign during the house hunting season.

**DD & CK** felt that a pop up stall during Freshers Week would be an advantage and increase awareness of HullSTARS before students start the process of house hunting. **SP** agreed this could be beneficial and intends to have a presence.

**SP** advised that the HullSTARS Code & Process documents will be re visited this summer **SP & LP** to review, any amendments will be made if needed. And updates will be disseminated to HSAC in advance and confirmed at the annual Open Meeting.

#### **4. Housing Fair:**

**SP** updated the group with the progress of the consultation period to review a change of date to the HullSTARS Housing Fair.

- A meeting has been held with the Advice centre to address concerns they had regarding Housing fayre date change – contract release etc. The Advice centre is happy for HullSTARS to consult with students to gain their opinions. This will be achieved during Review Week, using a token drop (similar to Waitrose) the students will have the option to chose, November, December, February & March.

- **JC.** Suggested HullSTARS drop into the Lawns to gain student reaction to Housing Fayre.

**Action – SP to book a visit to The Lawns with LP to promote Review Week and Housing Social.**

- **DD.** Expressed concerns that moving the Housing Fayre to February would not be helpful to smaller landlords. **SP.** Assured DD that we will look at all data before a decision is reached.
- **CK.** Made the comment that students are prepared to travel for good quality housing.
- **MR.** Expressed the need for a level playing field for all Landlords & the earlier the information is supplied to students they will have a better understanding of what is available.
- **JC.** Asked what triggered the students to start looking? **SP.** Believes it is Ashcourt’s annual Halloween Party is the “unofficial” start to the letting season.
- **SP.** Informed the meeting of an interest from 2 large landlords to sign with HullSTARS after hearing the date of the housing fair may be moved. This is Interesting, however **SP** stressed any decision will be made for the students and what is best for them. Not what is best for landlords.
- Further to the consultation process SP sent a survey out to HullSTARS registered landlords, seeking their feedback. 17 landlords responded. SP summarised the results;
  - 71% of landlords feel December is NOT a suitable month for the Housing Fair to be held.
  - 88% of landlords would like to see the Housing Fair held in November, with only 6% for December, 0% for February and 6% for March.
  - 82% of landlords would be more inclined to attend if the date was moved.

**5. Web site updates:**

Suggestions made already:

- Make replies to reviews more obvious and prominent visually.
- Search option for property address brings up nearest address if mis- spelt
- Extend verification link.

SP asked the group to go away, use the website and feed back any improvements/amendments they would like to see. SP asked for these to be emailed to her by 12<sup>th</sup> May. This will then allow time to get quotes from the web developer, and for work to be completed over the summer period.

**Action – HSAC Group to feedback to SP any improvements/amendments to the HullSTARS website.**



### **Audit Criteria:**

**SP** asked the group to re-visit the audit criteria and report back to her any amendments they would like to see made to the document. This could be the re-wording, missing criteria etc.

**SP** asked **IS** to check that the criteria matches that of the HHSRS Policy and Housing Act Legislation.

**SP** requested these proposals be with her by 12<sup>th</sup> May. She will then meet with **IS** and ensure the criteria is currently and valid.

**LP** expressed the need to mirror Hull City Councils criteria.

**SP** expressed concerns about being able to confirm criteria at the Open Meeting in July due to the impending change to HMO Licencing. **IS** was unable to confirm when this will be implemented, however is almost certain it will be in place later this year.

**Action – HSAC to report to SP by 12<sup>th</sup> May with any proposed amendments to be made to the Audit Criteria.**

**Action – SP to email link to specimen audit template on the HullSTARS website to HSAC.**

## **6. A.O.B.**

### **Licencing:**

**IS** updated the meeting on the new licencing scheme for HMO.

- To date no additional information, however from the **6<sup>th</sup> April 2017** new legislation is being issued **CIVIL PENEALTY ENFORCEMENT**.
- **IS**. Explained that this will take enforcement away from the courts and over to Hull City Council.
- To date **IS** has not received guidelines on implementing this legislation, however he anticipates that landlords will have a 6month window to apply for the new licence.
- At present the database shows 1500 properties which are 2 storey shared houses, he anticipates that information gathered will be split into 2 group: Cohesive & Non-cohesive
- **IS** has been emailing landlords to discover the number of bedrooms in the properties and found most to be very forth coming with the information & the information supplied by HullSTARS useful.
- **IS**. Also stated that council tax information would be used to support data after that the council will be knocking on doors to complete their data.
- **IS**. Explained in brief the enforcement, which will occur if licences are not purchased depending on accredited or non- accredited properties. Criminal convictions or fines

**DD** informed the group that this would be her final HSAC meeting as a representative of the Humber Landlord Association as she is stepping down from this post. **SP** thanked her for her dedication and commitment during her time in the role, this was echoed by the other members. Future correspondence will now be sent to Danny Gough, until the role is filled.

Next meeting to be held on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> July – Open Meeting. Venue TBC.

**Action Table:**

<b>SP</b>	SP to book a visit to The Lawns with LP to promote Review Week and Housing Social	Completed – attending 24 <sup>th</sup> April.
<b>All HSAC</b>	HSAC Group to feedback to SP any improvements/amendments to the HullSTARS website.	12 <sup>th</sup> May 2017
<b>All HSAC</b>	HSAC group to report to SP by 12 <sup>th</sup> May with any proposed amendments to be made to the Audit Criteria.	12 <sup>th</sup> May 2017
<b>SP</b>	SP to email link to specimen audit template on the HullSTARS website to HSAC.	Completed.



Hull Student  
Accommodation  
Rating System



@HullSTARS



/hullstars

[www.hullstars.com](http://www.hullstars.com)

HullSTARS University House, University of Hull, Cottingham Road, Hull, HU6 7RX