

# Moments that made the year

Commercial and Leasehold Services Residents' Review 2007/8



Welcome to your first Residents' Review from Commercial and Leasehold Services, Circle Anglia. I have only recently joined the service and am looking forward to working with staff to improve the services we provide for you. This review gives us an opportunity to reflect on how we performed last year and provide you with a taste of things to come for the future.



Commercial and Leasehold Services was formed in July 2006 as part of Commercial Services Circle Anglia (CSCA), which looks after the groups activities which are not directly related to social rented housing. We provide services to a range of residents including leaseholders, freeholders and temporary residents, living in homes owned by housing associations within the Circle Anglia group. In addition we also manage homes on behalf of other landlords.

Last year was our first full year and whilst there were a number of positive things achieved, it is also fair to say that we didn't always get it right for you and this is something that we aim to put right in 2008/9.

It is important that you continue to give us feedback about how well we are performing in order that we can use your comments to help shape and improve the services that we provide for you.

I hope you can spare the time to look through this review and please keep providing us with feedback.

**Alan Townshend**  
Interim Managing Director



Brookland Avenue  
in Cambridge

## Moments that made 2007

### Mystery shopping

We wanted to know what it's like to use our services and recruited two mystery shoppers to check this out and give us an honest view of the good and the not so good. We'll be using this feedback to improve our services to suit you.

### See my Data

You can now check your rent and service charge statements at anytime of day or night. We introduced the facility at the end of 2007 and since then you've been telling us this has been really useful. We made sure this is a secure system, just like online banking, so that this information can only be viewed by you. We started off with making 'See my Data' available to Circle 33 residents and it will have rolled out to South Anglia and Wherry residents over summer 2008. For full details visit [www.circleanglia.org/customers](http://www.circleanglia.org/customers)

### Surgery time for leaseholders on the Mardyke Estate

It made sense to us to give you a set day when you know you can come in and discuss any queries or problems with your home. Following the transfer of homes from the London Borough of Havering in March 2008, weekly surgeries have been established on Friday at the local housing office in Chantry Way. No appointments are necessary, so just call in. If you want an appointment on another day please call 020 7204 1523 or leave a message at the local office.

### We need your views

In July 2007 the Parkside estate transferred from Tower Hamlets Council to Old Ford Housing Association. As part of the transfer offer to residents a £80 million programme of improvements will be undertaken which include a number of estate improvements. We have been consulting leaseholders about these works and will continue to work alongside Old Ford staff on the delivery of this major investment programme.

### Saving £100,000 on heating bills

Now more than ever it's a priority to keep energy bills under control. Considering the current economic conditions we're glad we agreed a new contract with Scottish and Southern in 2007. We're passing £100,000 worth of savings over to you during a two-year period, and this started in late 2007.

### Don't forget to open your Front Door

You should have received your new and improved newsletter, 'Front Door' at the beginning of 2007. Our aim is to publish twice a year with all the latest on news and services improvements. We hope this works for you. Please let us know what you think and what else should be included by contacting Victoria Brooke on 01603 703806 or by email to [victoria.brooke@circleanglia.org](mailto:victoria.brooke@circleanglia.org)

We currently manage around 6,000 homes

Our plan is to build 700 shared ownership homes in 2008/9



## Going up

### He's at the top of the stairs

Six years ago, when Paul Barrett had used up all his savings recovering from an accident, he found he could no longer get onto the property ladder. The good news was that with Circle Anglia New Build Homebuy he was able to start with buying just 25% of a house in Hethersett, Norfolk, paying a reasonable rent on top. Six years on he's been able to buy the balance 75% using 'staircasing' and now owns his house outright. Staircasing is a facility which allows leaseholders to increase the proportion of ownership as and when they can afford to. Paul's house overlooks a pond and a field and he tells us he loves it.

### A house of their own

Beverley and Andrew Carter wanted to get married and were desperate to leave their parents' homes and set up home together. They've done the same as Paul above, starting with buying 25% and buying the rest later over a 14 year period.

**If you'd like to find out more about staircasing please call 01603 703588 for information**



## Facts and figures

Commercial Services Circle Anglia (CSCA) is the group's commercial partner. It began life as 'Homes' (part of Circle 33 Housing Trust), and in 2006 became Commercial Services Circle Anglia. CSCA handles the sales and marketing of New Build HomeBuy and private sales schemes through Your Lifespace [www.yourlifespace.org](http://www.yourlifespace.org)

It manages leasing schemes and leasehold, market rent and commercial properties. Commercial Services Circle Anglia also includes Anglia Maintenance Services, which provides repairs and maintenance to group members, other social landlords and commercial organisations.

The figures below have been included in line with guidelines from the Housing Corporation and the National Housing Federation\*.

### Reactive repairs

Homes with a valid gas safety certificate	99.0%
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### Home ownership performance

Shared ownership staircasings	64
Right to buy completions	21
Right to acquire completions	15
Social homebuy completions	2

### Income performance

Shared owner satisfaction with the sales process (monitored quarterly)	91.0%
Income collection (overall)	94.5%
Overall arrears	10.1%
Arrears (shared ownership)	9.1%
Arrears (leaseholders)	45.4%
Arrears (market rent)	4.6%
Arrears (intermediate rent)	10.5%
Arrears (temporary housing)	7.1%
Arrears (commercial, monitored quarterly)	2.2%
Vacant dwellings (market rent)	6.8%
Vacant dwellings (intermediate rent)	4.8%
Vacant dwellings (temporary housing)	3.5%

\*The figures above are correct as at 31 March 2008.

**On the front cover:**

Young couple exploring the possibility of buying a home through the shared ownership scheme New Build HomeBuy.

## How to contact us

### Circle 33 Housing Trust

**Call** 0845 304 1001/1002

(9am to 5pm, weekdays)

**Email** [leaseholders@circleanglia.org](mailto:leaseholders@circleanglia.org)

**Write to** Commercial and Leasehold,  
Circle 33 Housing Trust,  
1-7 Corsica Street, London N5 1JG

### To report repairs:

**Call** 08457 697 695. Outside offices  
hours emergency calls will be  
diverted to an external agency.

**Email** [repairs@circleanglia.org](mailto:repairs@circleanglia.org)

### South Anglia Housing and Wherry Housing Association

**Call** 01603 703588

(8.30am to 5.00pm, weekdays)

**Write to** Commercial Services Circle  
Anglia, 6 Central Avenue,  
St Andrews Business Park,  
Norwich NR7 0HR

### To report repairs

#### South Anglia Housing

**Call** 0845 600 1543. If you have an  
emergency outside normal office  
hours call Broxbourne Control  
01992 639561.

#### Wherry Housing Association

**Call** 01603 703500. If you have an  
emergency outside normal office  
hours your call will be transferred  
to Norwich City Council.

#### Old Ford Housing Association

**Call** 020 7204 1500 or  
0800 073 0427

(9am to 5pm, weekdays)

**Write to** Old Ford Housing  
Association, 73 Usher Road,  
Bow, London E3 2HS

**To report repairs** 020 7204 1520

**Email** [oldfordrepairs@circleanglia.org](mailto:oldfordrepairs@circleanglia.org)

Part of Circle Anglia.

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