

Moments that made the year

Support Initiatives Residents' Review 2007/8
EPIC Trust and Supported Housing





It's been a very positive year from my perspective. We've continued to provide support and care to young people, families, older people and people with learning disabilities as well as tenancy sustainment services to families and support to people with mental health issues.



We passed our mock inspection in readiness for the real Audit Commission inspection in Autumn 2008. What's more, our CSCI Annual Service Review confirmed that the EPIC Trust Domiciliary Care Agency provides an "excellent" service.

This was all great news, but we can't just sit back and say our services are fine as they are so, at the same time, we've taken a good look at how we can improve our services.

For starters, we've been collecting your feedback through the status survey. Now we know where we stand, we can adapt our plans. This isn't a one-off either. We'll continue to gather your feedback and will keep looking at how to ensure that our services meet your needs.

HARTS for Families is now in its 5th year. By the time you read this, we'll have celebrated with a party in June, which was attended by many of our families who are supported by the service. This year also marked the 10th anniversary of EPIC Trust opening its very first supported living scheme for people with Learning Disabilities in Cambridge.

I hope you enjoy reading this year's residents' review. If you'd like to get in touch with us, you'll find our contact details on the back pages.

Best wishes, Anne Anketell
Managing Director

Moments that made 2007

Now we know how happy you are

For the first time we've collected your feedback in an organised way that enables us to compare ourselves against our partners in the Circle Anglia group.

- Sheltered Housing residents expressed 89% satisfaction with our services
- Supported Housing residents expressed 73% satisfaction with our services

As our work and services are specialised, the next step is to find out how we compare against similar care and support providers in London and regional organisations in South Anglia, Norfolk and Essex. The report which shows how we're doing will be published in 2008. The more information we have, the better we'll be at providing you with quality support services.



EPIC Trust awarded Investors in Volunteers Accreditation

This is difficult to achieve, so we were thrilled to have been awarded this accreditation in October 2007. It gives us a platform to launch volunteer schemes across our care and support services, which we hope to extend across the Circle Anglia group. Volunteers have been gaining new skills and confidence, and several have gone on to be in full employment with us.

HARTS now in its 5th year

We support 658 vulnerable families and we're very proud that this service continues to go from strength to strength.

When the inspector calls we'll be ready!

The Audit Commission is due to inspect us in Autumn 2008. To ensure that we are on the right track, we had a mock inspection in November 2007 and passed with flying colours, getting the highest scores ever:

Wherry and Circle 33 2 stars and good prospects
South Anglia 1.5 stars and good prospects

Efficiency and effectiveness

We monitor our budgets regularly to ensure efficient spending. We've also reviewed and restructured our management team to make sure that we're as effective as possible.

Increased customer involvement

It makes a real difference if you're involved in how we do things. There were a number of activities which increased opportunities for you to be involved in 2007/8, including:

- A major review of the support planning process and redesign of your Support Plan form. This is now clearer and much easier to use. Thank you!
- Policy forums, including consultation on policies and procedures
- Surveys by post, email and telephone
- Service users attending Board meetings to share their experiences

Growing and growing

In 2007/8, we won new contracts in Suffolk, Cambridge and the London Boroughs of Islington and Camden. We'll continue to bid for others in order to deliver great services to more people.



HARTS in action

One of our service users is a father with shared responsibility for his two sons. He had been renting a room in a shared accommodation with three other single men, and this was clearly inappropriate when his children came to visit. With help from HARTS he was accepted onto the Haringey Council Landlord Accreditation Scheme and, as a result, he moved to good quality, self-contained private accommodation. It's now easy and straightforward for his sons to visit and stay with him.

Another service user was living in temporary accommodation when HARTS started working with them. Neighbourhood disputes were causing problems for the family and leading to poor relations with Haringey Council. The HARTS worker acted in an advocacy role, liaising with the council to prevent further problems and helping the family to write applications to move into a different home. The family were supported with moving into their new, permanent accommodation, and were given resettlement support to help in their new tenancy.

“There has been a huge improvement for me over this year. I feel more able to come and talk to staff; they are approachable and I know that jobs will get done.”

Rosie Firmin

Making a difference

We provide:

- Care and support services to more than 5,800 people
- Sheltered housing to more than 2,000 older people

In 2007/8:

- Independent Living Centres and Foyers provided accommodation and support for 329 young people
- 151 people with mental health issues were in supported housing
- 1311 people benefited from support to help them maintain their tenancy during difficult times, including bereavement, debt and relationship issues
- By March 2008 over 97% of our service users had support plans and risk assessments

Circle 33

- Resolved 89.7% of Supported Housing complaints at the first attempt

Wherry

- Resolved 100% of Supported Housing complaints at the first attempt

South Anglia

- Resolved 100% of Supported Housing complaints at the first attempt

Looking ahead

We'll be looking at how we can improve the services provided to older people in all the areas in which we work. Our first step will be talking to you to ask for your views. We'll use this information to plan ahead and adapt our services to your needs as well as thinking about what new services are needed. At the same time, we will continue to find new ways to involve you and find out what's important to you.

“Getting the Handyman Service up and running in sheltered schemes in South Anglia has made such a difference. There are so many small jobs that can need doing, and now older residents know they can contact this service and get a shelf or a hook put up when they need one.”

Annis Cove



An open space in one of the sheltered schemes managed by Support Initiatives

You might like to know...

Who are Circle Anglia?

Circle Anglia is a parent company for a number of Registered Social Landlords and EPIC Trust. By being part of a much larger organisation, EPIC Trust benefits from greater efficiency and cost savings which means that more money can be spent on delivering services to you. Even though we are part of a large group, we still retain our individuality and independence and ensure that our services suit your specific and individual needs.

What about the credit crunch and will it affect the work of EPIC Trust?

You'll no doubt have heard about the credit crunch. We're pleased to tell you that this will not affect the services you receive from us. EPIC Trust and Circle Anglia have a sound financial base, so it's full steam ahead with all our plans.



“For a long time I was looking for a job. I tried so many voluntary jobs and Access to Employment but that didn't work. It was like a ‘merry go round’. Now, through Work Directions, I have a paid job as a Catering Assistant... It's brilliant. I am looking forward to pursuing an NVQ in catering so that I can be a supervisor or manager.”

Richard Fabellar

Facts and figures

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

Circle 33 Housing Trust

Voids and lettings performance

Average re-let time in days	102
Number of units vacant and available to let	69
Dwellings vacant and available for let	4.4%
Number of units vacant but unavailable to let	5
Dwellings vacant and not available for let	0.3%

Rent collection

Rent collected	98.2%
Current resident arrears at year end	5.1%

South Anglia Housing

Voids and lettings performance

Average re-let time in days	63
Number of units vacant and available to let	158
Dwellings vacant and available for let	17.5%
Number of units vacant but unavailable to let	31
Dwellings vacant and not available for let	3.4%

Rent collection

Rent collected	99.2%
Current resident arrears at year end	3.2%

Wherry Housing Association

Voids and lettings performance

Average re-let time in days	48
Number of units vacant and available to let	28
Dwellings vacant and available for let	3.7%
Number of units vacant but unavailable to let	0
Dwellings vacant and not available for let	0%

Rent collection

Rent collected	97.2%
Current resident arrears at year end	4.0%

Service users (EPIC Trust)

Elders	1778
Elders – extra care	0
Young people	63
Independent Living Centres (young people)	81
Alone in London	3740
Tenancy sustainment	627
Mental health	79
Residential care	0
Learning disabilities	58
Total	8015

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

How to contact us

Support Initiatives is made up of EPIC Trust and the Supported Housing Department. EPIC Trust, the group's specialist care and support partner supports more than 5,800 people with a wide range of needs. The Supported Housing Department provides homes and landlord services. It collects rent and service charges, arranges improvements and repairs, tackles problems such as neighbourhood issues and works in partnership with over 25 support providers, including EPIC Trust.

EPIC Trust Board

The EPIC Trust Board represents all EPIC Trust service users and residents living in Supported Housing and meets six times a year. It includes two service users, with a vacancy for one more. The members of the Board are:

Jitinder Kohli (Chair)
 Gaynor Quilter (Vice Chair)
 David Gee
 Pamela Mitcham
 Chander Hingorani
 Sheena Woods
 Liz Anderson
 David Fisher
 Stephen Williams
 Jermaine James

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Customer website

www.circleanglia.org/customers



EPIC Trust

Empowering People through
Independence and Choice

On the front cover:

Joaquim Tumba and Annita Barker

Joaquim Tumba is an ex-resident of the Vineries. Annita Barker is the Project Manager for the Vineries Independent Living Centre and the Mother and Baby Unit.

Thank you for your feedback

The Housing Corporation requires us to run a survey every three years. We did it in 2004/5 and then again in 2007/8. We are looking at the information in detail and it's changing the way we deliver our services. Many thanks to all those who took the time to complete the questionnaire.

EPIC Trust and Supported Housing

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