

HOMEfromHOMES

A magazine from Newark and Sherwood Homes

Autumn 2011 Issue 25

Harvesting the Sun



Tenants continue to play a very active part in getting the best for their homes, whether its quality kitchens, peace of mind in choosing the right heating contractor or helping to secure funding that will benefit their community in many ways.

Harvesting the Sun is just one fantastic project that will continue over the next 25 years to improve tenant services that benefit the whole district.

Want to see how tenants are making sure Newark and Sherwood Homes continue to increase their performance – read on!

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Spending time



A record number of people attended the Hawtonville Fun day held at St Mary's Gardens, Newark on the August bank holiday to take in the sights, sounds and activities on offer.

Richard Tracy, tenant and Vice Chair of the Board of Newark and Sherwood Homes and Patrick Mercer MP took great pleasure in welcoming everyone and opening the event. The proceeds raised from the day will be donated to the Newark Patriotic Fund which supports the families of injured service personnel.

Kate Carter, Chair of the Hawtonville Estate Tenants and Residents Association said: "We are very pleased with what we have achieved. The children have enjoyed it and that was the whole point, to give them something to do during the holidays."

The day had something for everyone! A number of agencies were on hand offering tenants support and guidance and how to become involved to provide better services, finding out how to save money on energy bills and how to insure your personal possessions to taking part in the fire service quiz.

Other stalls involved creating food art, to the very popular cake stall, a tombola, wine or water and bric-a-brac stalls! Also, twenty seven young budding footballers signed up as part of the police football team!

Once the steel band finished entertaining, it was the chance for the crowds enjoying the music to have a go and produce their own colourful sounds.

The highlight of the day for everyone attending was the opportunity to get up close and personal with the fantastic birds of prey.

having fun

The Hill family demonstrated the natural beauty and agility of the birds as they flew hawks, owls, falcons and an eagle.

They entertained the crowds by observing the view from the top of the homes at St Marys Gardens then swooping low over everyone as they returned to the safety of Charlotte and John.

Thank you to everyone who gave generously on the day as over £455 was raised for the Newark Patriotic Fund.



How does your garden grow....?

With record entries from all ages, your green fingers made it incredibly difficult for the judging panel to short list and decide on the final winners of each category.

The Judges this year were Jean Clark, Tenant and Director of the Board and Tony Straw, Chair of the Federation of Tenants and Residents Association.

Jean Clark said: "The final judging was very close, it was clear the passion people had in creating beautiful gardens and it was appreciated. The hard work involved meant that tenants worked alongside each other to create results especially in the communal gardens."

Start planning now for next year's competition and we will look forward to receiving your entry next year.

After careful deliberation the winners were chosen:



Best Front Garden
Mrs Mitchell from Southwell



Best Rear Garden
Mr Todd from Rainworth



Best Patio Display
Mr Pemblington from Clipstone



Special Judges Award
Miss Moran from Newark



Best Communal Garden
Burgage Close, Southwell



Most Improved Garden
Mr & Mrs Thompson from Collingham

You could be a winner!

Performing way above

Each year Newark and Sherwood Homes goes under the microscope to review and compare performance to ensure we continually learn and improve how we deliver better cost performance, customer and service satisfaction.

In striving 'to deliver excellent housing services' not only do we listen to what you have to say, we are also open to scrutiny through the tenant services inspection team and we compare our performance with other housing providers annually.

We measure our performance with other housing providers by looking at performance relating to; how tenants get involved and are empowered in shaping services, your repairs and maintenance services, your housing management services and how well we manage your local neighbourhood and communities. Newark and Sherwood Homes are high performing, delivering low costs and achieve high customer satisfaction ratings.

This information enables you to compare how well money and resources are being managed to deliver your housing services. The Value for Money group and the Board of Newark and Sherwood Homes look at the results and to find ways in all areas to improve for those that are performing well and not so well. The results show even against the large housing providers, we over perform for our size, and that we are running very cost effective services relating to letting homes, rent and income recovery, managing the local offices and our tenancy and estate services. We also perform well with low costs for responsive repairs and void works when compared against other housing providers.

The Board of Newark and Sherwood Homes and the tenant 'Value for Money' Group were pleased to see the positive financial performance results and actions are already in place to ensure delivery is maintained and improved. Graham Tomlinson,

Chair of the VFM Group said "the Value for Money Group is going well, new members are joining and progress is being made on a number of important issues such as self financing."

Our focus on improvement has continued during the year and we have delivered over £1million pounds of efficiencies and inward investment through a range of innovations across the Company. These gains continue to be put back into the services to drive up standards and improve tenant satisfaction and meet tenant priorities.

Our journey continues as we put together 2010/11 results, so with your help we can continue to find ways to improve performance, drive down costs and improve your satisfaction with your home and your neighbourhood.

If you would like to get involved in any way, call our Customer Service team on **0845 258 5550** who will be able to help.



Members of the VFM Group - Ron Havelock, Richard Hayward, Simon Phillips, Graham Tomlinson, Joan Tracey, Maurice Tracey, Suzanne Williamson and John Franks



Customer Service Success

Newark and Sherwood Homes has been recognised again for the high quality services it provides to its customers and has successfully maintained its Customer Service Excellence award. Customer Service Excellence is the Government's standard for customer service which Newark and Sherwood Homes first achieved in 2009.

The company was assessed by an independent external examiner in August who found that we fully met all elements of the standard – quite an achievement as there are 57 in total!

Customer Service Excellence recognises those organisations who have a good understanding of their customers and who deliver services which meet their needs and preferences. It focuses on the things that matter most to customers:

delivery; timeliness; information; professionalism; and staff attitude.

Newark Sherwood Homes has achieved the award through working with you, our customers. Our new Local Service Standards clearly set out the standards we have agreed with you and which our staff work to meet. In addition, all staff at Newark and Sherwood Homes are trained in Customer Service techniques.

Customer Service Excellence recognises that we continually work to improve the services we provide to customers. Our performance in many areas is amongst the best in the country. We also get high scores for customer satisfaction, so it seems that many of you agree!

Newark and Sherwood Homes is proud to be independently recognised as an organisation that continues to put our customers at the heart of what we do.

New face on the block

Tenants and residents will be seeing new faces in the district as Newark and Sherwood Homes welcomes new partner Liberty, who have taken over gas servicing works from Powerminster/Lovell Respond from 1st November 2011.

Liberty were selected by a procurement panel which consisted of tenant representatives and Newark and Sherwood Homes staff. The new contract will provide great improvements to you, to what is an already excellent service.

Liberty will carry out gas servicing, smoke detector, oil, solid fuel, air source and ground

source servicing as part of the new contract.



Residents Challenge Suppliers across the East Midlands

Newark and Sherwood Homes are committed to making efficiency savings to ensure that the public pound goes as far as possible, so that we can continue improving the services that we deliver to tenants.



The purchasing of materials that are used to repair and improve your homes is one of the areas where it is important that we ensure we get the best possible value for money.



To achieve best value Newark and Sherwood Homes were instrumental last year in setting up a group of similar housing services providers from across the East Midlands so that collectively we can improve our buying power. This group is called Efficiency East Midlands (EEM) and has now grown to 16 members who added together manage nearly 150,000 homes across the Midlands.

Tony Straw Chairman of the Federation of Tenants who has actively supported the work of EEM commented 'The group were positive about this development and are keen to support any changes where possible and it is great to continue to raise the quality and standard on the products that are used to maintain and repair tenants homes. Whether it is a boiler, roofing materials or doors and windows, we can see real value for our money spent'.

Through the first contract 'Valueworks', which is estimated to save over £100,000 per year, tenant and Newark and Sherwood Homes representatives met with the



kitchen suppliers Rixonway to examine a range of quality kitchens that will be fitted into homes across the district.

Ray Wright, a Tenant who visited Rixonway kitchens said: "It was brilliant, a really interesting day, I was very impressed with the quality and value for money of the kitchen units. The company were very customer and tenant focused. Changing to this supplier will realise financial savings."

This feedback from tenants is invaluable to Newark and Sherwood Homes and gives us confidence that not only are we providing improved value for money and efficiency savings and that we are not doing this by compromising the quality of the materials we are fitting into your homes.

These savings will allow Newark and Sherwood homes to continue to invest this money in additional improvements or tenants services that will benefit all.

HOMEfromHOMES Message

Harvesting the Sun reaps tenant reward

August saw Newark and Sherwood Homes commence an innovative solar photovoltaic (PV) installation programme which upon completion by November 2011 will have installed systems to over 250 suitable homes owned by the Council.

In delivering this project, Newark and Sherwood Homes will be one of the first in the UK to complete such a scheme in social housing and take advantage of the Government backed grant scheme called the Feed in Tariff (FIT).

The first installation was carried out in Bilsthorpe where Tenant and Resident Association member Shirley Moody commented, "I have been impressed with the whole process and the involvement the Tenant and Residents have had throughout the project. I have been working with the staff of the asset and investment team from contractor selection through to installation and beyond, I have only received positive comments about Newark and Sherwood Homes and the Council's foresight in providing these systems."



Stephen Feast, Rebecca Rance, Suzanne Williamson, Jo Gray and Anthony Dudley from Newark and Sherwood Homes, along with Russell Cowan and Alex Fellows from Nationwide Solar



ards!

Properties that received the installations were selected through a survey completed by a specialist Company and funded through a government grant. The specialist surveyors identified which properties had the most suitable south facing aspect to maximise the solar energy and were not overshadowed.

Tenants will benefit from solar generated electricity, helping to reduce energy bills as the Government through the energy companies will pay a FIT payment to each property for the electricity generated on a quarterly basis over a 25 year period.

Through the government's Feed in Tariff scheme the annual inward investment payment to Newark and Sherwood District Council for the next 25 years is estimated at over £200,000 per year. This extra investment is extremely welcome especially in the current economic climate. Newark and Sherwood Homes will be able to use this extra money to continue to improve tenant's services for all tenants and benefit the community as a whole.



Hawtonville Work Club



Research shows that the best way to find another job is through friends, family or social networks. With this in mind, a self-help group for people trying to get back into work has recently opened in Newark.

The Hawtonville Work Club is based in the media suite at Bowbridge Primary School, Bailey Road, Newark NG24 4EP and is open each Wednesday from 9.30am to 11am (during term time).

The aim is for attendees to support each other in finding work and developing skills by planning sessions that meet the needs of the group.

Professionals will be invited in at the group's request to give advice on interview techniques, CVs, covering letters and even volunteering opportunities.

It is informal, voluntary and free to attend so feel free to drop in for a cuppa and a chance to share experiences of job hunting with other people looking for work.

If you are interested in attending please contact Rachel Moffoot on **07960 121 027** or at rachel.moffoot@hawtonville.notts.sch.uk

What you think about Newark and Sherwood Homes

Every year we like to ask our tenants what they think about Newark and Sherwood Homes and the services we provide by carrying out a detailed satisfaction survey.

The results of the survey were very good and mean that Newark and Sherwood Homes' tenants are some of the most satisfied in the country!

Some of the key scores from the survey were as follows:

- 86% of tenants are satisfied with the services Newark and Sherwood Homes provide
- 88% are satisfied with the quality of their home
- 86% are satisfied with their neighbourhood
- 82% feel their rent is good value for money
- 81% of tenants are satisfied with how Newark and Sherwood Homes deals with enquiries

Your views are very important to us and help to shape our services. We use the survey results to identify the things which you are happy with and those which we may be able to improve.

“ Newark and Sherwood Homes has to watch the pennies like we all do but I feel we definitely get value for money. Keep up the good work. ”

Mr & Mrs B, Rainworth

Going walkabout....

Across the district, at coffee mornings tenants have been sharing a coffee and a chat about the activities in their area or raising their concerns and reporting improvements needed in their community with the Directors of Newark and Sherwood Homes as part of the walkabout schedule.

This has given all the Directors an opportunity to see how the services not only delivered by Newark and Sherwood Homes but other agencies like the District Council, Town Council and Nottinghamshire County Council, local police, and Hawtonville Estate TRA; all who are working towards better and safer communities in which to live.

Walkabouts are a good opportunity to spot faults and repairs. Tenants and agencies joining the walkabouts hear the update on the previous issues logged, when they were completed and if they have not been completed a progress report is given.

Tenant and Director of the Board of Newark and Sherwood Homes, Arthur Fell commented on his latest walkabout visit, "I can see the improvements that have taken place; the walkabouts are a vital part of keeping on top of things. Having the Housing Officer on hand to answer any enquiries or questions is invaluable."

Between April and August this year 22 walkabouts have

been completed and 244 issues raised, of those 172 were resolved by Newark and Sherwood Homes and the remaining 72 were referred to other agencies for street lighting, pavement issues or where properties are privately owned and in an unacceptable condition.



Jo Ozimek, Newark & Sherwood District Council, Geoff Warner and Terry Bailey, Newark and Sherwood Homes, Arthur Fell, Director of the Board, Cllr Trish Gurney, and Jean Clark, Director of the Board

Save Money by Saving Energy

You will by now have received your free booklet full of tips on how you can save energy and at the same time save yourself some money!

Do you easily want to save over £100?

Here are 3 easy things to do to save

£50 turn down your thermostat by 1 degree

£40 turn off the standby button

£20 turn off lights and use energy efficient light bulbs

Well it's never too late, to start saving both energy and up to £200 every year!

You can view the booklet on-line at our website www.nshomes.co.uk or we will send you another copy if you telephone us on **0845 258 5550**.



Would you like somewhere more **secure** to park your **car**?

We now have garages available to rent on various sites throughout the Newark and Sherwood District.

Please contact a member of the local office staff for details:

- Hawtonville Local Office: 01636 655503
- Ollerton Local Office: 01623 860740



VALUING YOUR VIEWS YOU SAID, WE DID....

Actions we have taken as a result of the feedback we receive from customer complaints and suggestions:

YOU SAID...

People are parking their cars on the grassed playing field in our area.

WE DID

We thanked you for bringing the matter to our attention and visited the site to assess the situation. We then wrote to all the local residents asking them not to park on the grassed area. We are now monitoring the area regularly and will take further action if the problem continues.

YOU SAID...

Why did you contact my elderly mother about a problem with her rent payment when I had asked that all contact should be through me?

WE DID

We apologised for the mistake and have had our computer system amended so that it now alerts us when a customer should not be contacted directly, but instead through a known family member.

YOU SAID...

The grass on the playing field next to my house is very long. Why has it not been cut recently?

WE DID

We thanked you for bringing this to our attention and apologised. The grass has now been cut and we will monitor the situation closely. We also discussed with you possible improvements to the grassed area.

YOU SAID...

Why have some of my neighbours been given parking permits when they don't have a car, whilst other people have two permits?

WE DID

We explained that all of the tenants on your particular street were issued with a parking permit regardless of whether or not they had a car, to enable their family and friends to park when visiting. Requests for additional permits are considered individually, and permits may be issued for example where someone has a carer visiting on a regular basis.

And also...

WE DID

We arranged a Fun Day in your area as part of our Diversionary Events programme – this aims to divert children away from anti-social behaviour, particularly during the school holidays.

YOU SAID...

I would like to say a big “thank you” for the recent Fun Day at our estate. I also believe that all the kids that attended would agree with me. Well done! More of the same would be nice for the kids.

WE DID

We arranged for a level access shower to be installed as you were finding it difficult to use your bath.

YOU SAID...

The shower was completed last Friday and I am delighted with everything. I have no complaints and nothing but praise for the lady plumber who installed it – she was the best work-person I've ever had in my home!



Why not follow us on Twitter?

www.twitter.com/nshomes

or text:

‘More’ for updates **80011**

or email:

more@nshomes.co.uk

STOP! Fire Alert

Have you a Beko fridge freezer produced between January 2000 and October 2006?

Take two minutes to look for your fridge freezer's serial number, found inside the fridge compartment, to see which year the appliance was manufactured.

The individual model numbers are listed below.

Standalone Beko fridges or freezers are not affected or newer fridge freezer models produced after 2006.

How do I know when my Beko fridge freezer was made?

If your model's serial number begins with 00, 01, 02, 03, 04, 05 or 06 you should contact Beko.

Here's where to look for it.



Model numbers:

- CA 5411 FFS (silver), FFW (white), FFX (stainless steel)
- CA 7014 FFX
- CA 7015 FFW, FFS, FFX
- CDA 539 FS, FW, FX
- CDA 543 FS, FW, FX
- CDA 645 FW
- CDA 647 FS, FW
- CDA 648 FS, FW
- CDA 653 FS, FW, FX
- CDA 659 FS
- CDA 751 FS, FX
- CDA 752 FS, FW, FX
- CS 460 FF, FFS, FFSD
- CS 461 FFW, FFS
- CSA 4706 FFX
- CSB 4606 FFSD, FFS, CSB FFW

I have one of the affected Beko fridge freezers. What should I do now?

If you have one of the highlighted models, you need to contact Beko to ask what steps need to be taken and to arrange a date for a Beko repairer to make a free-of-charge modification to your appliance's defrost timer. Beko says the work will take around 30 minutes.

How do I contact Beko?

- You can call Beko's helpline on 0800 009 4837 between 7am and 11pm, Monday to Friday.
- Alternatively you can visit the Beko website at <https://refsafety.beko.co.uk/> and enter your model and serial number to check online whether your fridge freezer is affected.

Should I stop using my Beko fridge freezer?

The reported number of incidents involving Beko fridge freezers so far is very low compared with the number of at-risk fridge freezer models - so Beko has not recommended you stop using your fridge freezer.

Lec fridge freezers also affected

The discontinued white Lec TF2304W, manufactured between January 2004 and October 2006, features the same faulty defrost timer as the affected Beko models. Owners are being urged to contact Lec to arrange for a repairer to carry out a free modification. This is the only Lec model affected. You can call Lec's parent company GDHA on 0800 110 5728 (between 8am and 6pm, Monday to Friday).

Future Procurement Panel

Are you a Newark and Sherwood Homes tenant or resident that would like to be part of a future procurement panel?

Contact either the Federation of Tenants and Residents Association on **01636 684343** or kate@newarkfed.co.uk, or Jo Gray, Asset Management & Investment Team, **0845 258 5550**, email jolene.gray@nshomes.co.uk

Tenants and Residents Association Contact Numbers

Hawtonville Estate

Kate Carter
07813 251191

Balderton

Dinah Clawson
01636 679536

Bilsthorpe

Marian Bradbury
07876 027307

Bilsthorpe Youth

Mike Cater
01623 870604

BOTRA

Derek Batey
01623 836410

Coddington

Diana Jones
01636 706266

Collingham

Joan Curtis
01636 892890

Farndon

John Clark
01636 705241

Lovers Lane

John Franks
01636 650871

Lowdham

Maurice Tracey
0115 966 3539

Rural

Graham Tomlinson
01623 883083

Sutton-on-Trent

Doreen Stapleton
01636 821723

Winthorpe Road

Maureen Wilcoxson
01636 684655

Yorke Drive Young Crew

Ginnette Hardy
07956 677525

Federation of TRAs

01636 684343

Forthcoming Events

All tenants are invited to come and listen to what is discussed – most of which affects you.

Public questions are invited prior to the Board meeting. Please telephone Karen on 01636 655992.

Date, Time & Place...

Annual General Meeting

24th November 2011 at 2.00pm
Carriage Court, Kelham Hall

Board Meeting

24th November 2011 at 5.00pm
Lady Chapel, Kelham Hall

How to Contact Us



NEWARK AND SHERWOOD HOMES

Kelham Hall, Kelham, Newark on Trent,
NG23 5QX
Tel: 0845 258 5550 (Local call rate) -
Fax: (01636) 655514
Minicom: (01636) 655651.

Opening times -

8.30am - 5.15pm Monday - Thursday
8.30am - 4.45pm Friday

HAWTONVILLE OFFICE

77c Eton Avenue, Newark on Trent,
NG24 4JH
Tel: (01636) 655503
Minicom: (01636) 655583.

Opening times -

9.00am - 4.30pm Monday - Friday

OLLERTON OFFICE

Sycamore Road, Ollerton,
NG22 9PS.
Tel: (01623) 860740 -
Fax: (01623) 860729 -
Minicom: (01623) 837819.

Opening times -

9.00am - 4.30pm Monday - Friday

REPAIRS FREEPHONE

0800 561 0010

EMERGENCIES OUT OF HOURS FREEPHONE

0800 561 0010

COMMENT ON THE SERVICE YOU RECEIVE Tel: 0845 258 5550

Our website address is: www.nshomes.co.uk Email us at: housing@nshomes.co.uk

If you would like this document in another language or format, or if you require the services of an interpreter, please contact us.



Prosimy skontaktować się z nami, jeśli chciał(a)by Pan(i) uzyskać ten dokument w innym języku lub formacie albo też potrzebuje Pan(i) skorzystać z usług tłumacza ustnego.

(Polish)

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(Mandarin)

Se gostaria de ter este documento noutra idioma ou formato, ou se necessita de um intérprete, contacte-nos.

(Portuguese)



Signing



The Big Word
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Audio Tape

V.8