

**Resident
Checked** ✓





How has the last year

Managing Director **David Searle** and resident and Chair of RIG, **Roy Hobson** discuss the highs and lows of the year gone by.

Interviewer: It's been three years since Mole Valley Housing Association made their promises to residents. How do you think the last year has gone - what's gone well? What hasn't gone so well?

David Searle (DS): It's been an extremely busy year with lots of achievements, many challenges and difficult things to deal with too. We have especially enjoyed the way residents have worked with us to improve services.

Roy Hobson (RH): There has been such a lot achieved and we could be here for ages but just to name one – our ASB forum which includes residents in the community, MVHA staff, the police and other agencies.

(DS): Yes, the ASB forum is a great example. We are lucky that compared to other areas the amount of ASB we experience is low – but to those who are affected, it is a real issue. So the development of our offer around ASB and partnership working is really important.

(RH): The Resident Involvement Group (RIG) has had such support from staff and we've had various speakers covering topics such as lettings and child protection. The action planning day we had was a huge success and helped us develop our plans for the year ahead.

So have you seen an increase in the number of residents getting involved?

(RH): We certainly have – our new open meetings have really helped as anybody can attend and get involved without committing to being a regular member.

(DS): Actually I think you're being quite modest there Roy. It can be hard to get people involved and RIG have had some hugely well attended events this year.

And are residents helping to shape services?

(RH): Now where to start?..there are so many examples but the biggest was in the shaping of the local offers that we wanted MVHA to deliver. These were ASB, Decent Homes Standard and the Lettable standard.

gone at Mole Valley?

(DS): This is great as it means that MVHA are really looking at areas that are most important to residents.

Fantastic, so come on tell me what do you think hasn't gone so well?

(RH): Communication is something that always comes up with residents! Sometimes a lack of communication means things take much longer than they should.

(DS): Communication is always difficult as everybody likes to be communicated with in a different way. When we ask people, most will say they want to be contacted in writing, however for many this doesn't work. Our younger residents want to be contacted in different ways and we are currently working hard to develop modern communications including facebook and texting.

So what are your hopes and plans for the year ahead?

(DS): Well, we are looking forward to bringing all residents' homes up to the Decent Homes Standard. We really want to continue to deliver new homes and this is always a big challenge in an area like Mole Valley. My main hope is to fulfill all the promises we made to residents when MVHA was first set up. We will continue to get residents involved in everything we do - celebrating our achievements and tackling our challenges together.

(RH): All I want is for RIG to play its part in helping MVHA deliver the promises and ambitions that we all share.



Getting you involved

Performance 2010- 2011

Our performance has been compared with four other local housing providers so you can see how we are doing.

	MVHA	Elmbridge	Raven	Rosebury	Saxon Weald
Satisfaction with views taken into account	77.5%	76%	66%	51.3%	67%
Satisfaction with landlord services	83.9%	86%	78%	81.5%	85%
Complaints resolved at first stage	87.9%	Data unavailable	Data unavailable	Data unavailable	Data unavailable

My say

Last year **Keith Fairweather** put himself forward to become a Resident Inspector.

“I decided to join up as I wanted to see how open MVHA really were”.

Following training there was an inspection of MVHA’s customer service.

“I was pleasantly surprised with what we found. Staff were generally very helpful and honest and this was proved by the fact we found some shortfalls”.

“Resident inspection really works. We found out where the service was good and where things weren’t so good and MVHA has agreed to act on our findings. I’ve learned a lot from being an inspector and would definitely recommend it to others. All you need is an interest and be prepared to be part of a team. MVHA provide all the training and support.”

Highlights from 10/11

We have:

- jointly agreed an annual action plan for resident involvement with RIG
- held successful events to engage younger people, people living with disabilities and residents from the black and minority ethnic community
- produced a resident involvement impact assessment that shows the difference resident involvement is having on service improvements and accountability
- set up our resident inspection group and completed the first inspection of our Customer Services in January 2011
- agreed three Tenant Services Authority (TSA) Local Offers with residents:
 - Decent Homes Standard
 - Lettable Standard (the standard of your home when you move in)
 - Anti-social behaviour Standard

Plans for 11/12

We will:

- develop the resident inspection group and complete two inspections, including an inspection of the repairs service
- publish a residents' training programme to support residents who want to be involved
- deliver a further TSA Local Offer on Estate Inspections
- explore the options for resident scrutiny (taking resident involvement a step further)

Giving you what you asked for...

Continue to support and develop our current local offers and deliver a further offer on Estate Inspections which you have asked for

We support our local offer monitoring groups to scrutinise our performance so residents can see whether we are delivering what we said we would



Looking after your homes

Performance 2010- 2011

Our performance has been compared with four other local housing providers so you can see how we are doing.

	MVHA	Elmbridge	Raven	Rosebury	Saxon Weald
Repairs completed on time	98.6%	Data unavailable	Data unavailable	Data unavailable	Data unavailable
Satisfaction with repairs	94.1%	82%	72%	78.1%	79%
Homes meeting Decent Homes Standard	86.6%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Homes with valid gas safety certificate	100%	Data unavailable	Data unavailable	Data unavailable	Data unavailable

My say



Diane Renous from Leatherhead had a new kitchen fitted last year through the Decent Homes programme. Diane is a wheelchair user so it was really important for her to have a new kitchen that met her needs. Diane said “I am so happy with my new kitchen. The staff listened to me and they gave me exactly what I asked for”.

It was also important for Diane that the work was done quickly with as little disruption as possible. Diane was pleased with the service saying “they did the work more quickly than they said they would and they were clean and tidy.”

Highlights from 10/11

We have:

- o completed year three of our five year Decent Homes programme – 85% of internal works promises have been completed
- o delivered over £31 million worth of improvements to your homes to date
- o completed high priority fire safety works to blocks of flats and sheltered schemes
- o introduced a proactive programme of home checks (Property MOTS)
- o produced a detailed programme of Decent Homes works to ensure we meet the Decent Homes Standard by March 2012 (nine months ahead of deadline)

Plans for 11/12

We will:

- o complete our programme of Decent Homes works concentrating on works to the exterior of our homes and cavity wall and other insulation programmes
- o complete internal works to homes in line with our promises
- o review and agree a local standard for Responsive Repairs with our residents

Giving you what you asked for...

This year we have worked on our Decent Homes offer which residents asked for. This is a higher standard than the Government requires for improvements to homes and focuses on those things you told us were important

We have trained our Decent Homes Monitoring Group to scrutinise our performance. The group will be holding regular meetings to make sure we are doing what we agreed




Providing homes

Performance 2010- 2011

Our performance has been compared with four other local housing providers so you can see how we are doing, when it comes to re-letting vacant homes?

	MVHA	Elmbridge	Raven	Rosebury	Saxon Weald
Average re-let times (days) for empty homes	29.8	32.6	23.4	16.1	10.8
Empty homes (% of total homes)	0.7%	2.1%	0.8%	0.9%	0.2%

My say



Ron and Edna Agent have worked with our Welfare Benefits Advisor this year and managed to improve their income and get some much needed home improvements in place.

”Debbie has been wonderful. She helped us claim benefits including Disability Pension and Housing Benefit that we didn’t even know we could claim. She has also helped us get much needed adaptations to our home which has really helped us. The money has made such a difference to our lives. I’d recommend anyone to contact Debbie”.

Debbie Hills began her new role in September 2010 of Welfare Benefits Advisor. Debbie has made a fantastic start, managing to increase income for MVHA residents by in excess of £100,000 in just six months! You can contact Debbie by ringing 01306 505520 or e-mailing: deborah.hills@mvha.org.uk

Highlights from 10/11

We have:

- improved satisfaction with the lettings process, with 92% of residents saying they are satisfied
- improved performance monitoring, communication and standards around empty properties
- improved the time we take to turn around empty homes and reduced the cost of this

Plans for 11/12

We will:

- support the resident monitoring group to test our lettable standard (to ensure good standards for new tenants moving in)
- produce an action plan for a targeted approach to addressing overcrowding
- continue our project on under occupation initiatives in order to release more family accommodation
- raise the profile of House Exchange to encourage increased tenant mobility across all social housing

Giving you what you asked for...

We will continue to deliver our Lettable Standard which we agreed with you last year

We have supported residents in setting up a monitoring group for our Lettable Standard


We have given the monitoring group the information they asked for so that they can test our lettings process



Building communities

We have a duty to maintain and safeguard neighbourhoods and communities, working with partner organisations and agencies where necessary.

My say

A circular portrait of Debbie Downer, a woman with brown hair tied back, wearing a blue headband and a blue top. The portrait is set against a background of green foliage. The portrait is overlaid on a larger graphic consisting of several overlapping circles in shades of orange, pink, green, and grey.

Debbie Downer joined one of our residents groups working on our offer to residents for anti-social behaviour (ASB). Debbie joined the group because she wanted to see things improve. “MVHA’s approach to dealing with ASB has changed since the stock transfer and improvements have been made.”

“Residents may not always be happy with the outcome of their ASB complaint. But knowing there is a monitoring group overseeing complaints relating to ASB is a step in the right direction for all parties involved”.

Highlights from 10/11

We have:

- o worked with residents to introduce the new Cleaning Contract for communal areas and the new Grounds Maintenance Contract
- o set up a new Neighbourhood Agreement following major improvements at The Oaks, Goodwyns
- o agreed a Community Development Plan with residents which includes:
 - activities for older and younger people
 - promoting health
 - helping with financial advice
 - providing training and employment opportunities

Plans for 11/12

We will:

- o work with residents to introduce a new Local Offer for Estate Inspections as requested by RIG
- o deliver our Community Development Plan

Giving you what you asked for....

We will compare our performance with other landlords who are part of the ASB Local Offer

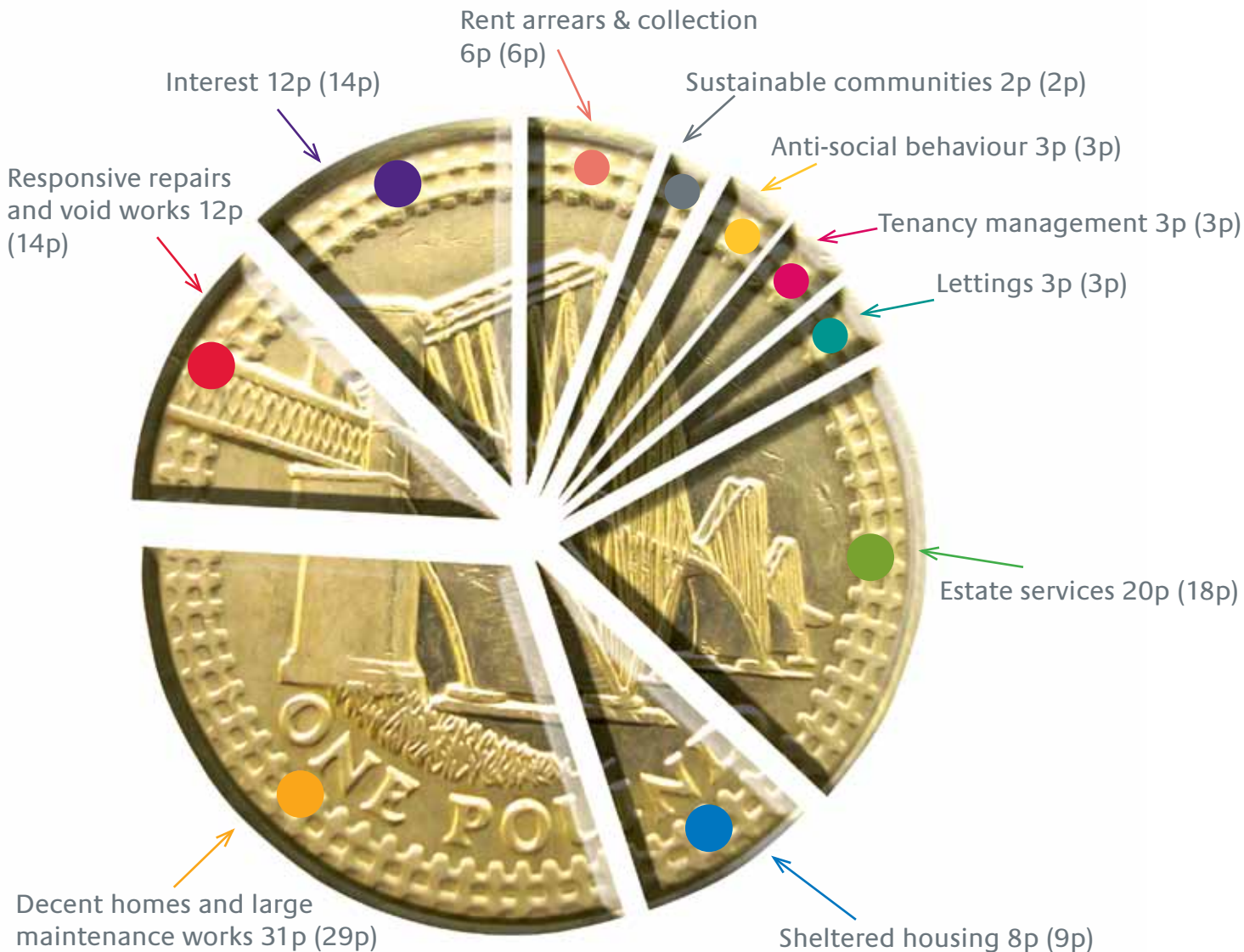
We have trained our ASB Monitoring Group to scrutinise our performance, so they can see whether we are doing what residents asked for

We have developed, in partnership with residents, a new Local Offer for anti-social behaviour that outlines our approach to this issue and what residents can expect. Residents are clear about the improvements they want to see and we'll be working on these throughout 2011/12



Offering value for money

Every pound of your rent money goes into the services we provide. Here is how we spent it in 2010/11. The figures in brackets are from 2009/10.



We have reduced the average cost of repairs and invest more in the services and improvements to our homes and estates.

We have also been able to maintain significant decent Homes investment in improving the standards of our homes.

Highlights from 10/11

We have:

- o introduced our new grounds maintenance contract at a lower price and a higher standard of service
- o introduced a brand new communal cleaning service at a competitive price
- o reduced the cost of our repairs service and have improved resident satisfaction with it
- o invested over £76,000 in community development projects and estimate these delivered benefits worth more than double our investment

Plans for 11/12

We will:

- o introduce a garden voucher scheme to help tenants who find it hard to maintain their gardens
- o deliver across the board savings of 13% on our 2010/11 costs
- o continue to improve and reduce the cost of our repairs service and develop our repairs team
- o complete our Decent Homes programme ahead of deadline saving just over £1 million by doing so

Performance 2010- 2011

Our performance has been compared with four other local housing providers so you can see how we are doing.

	MVHA	Elmbridge	Raven	Rosebury	Saxon Weald
Rent collected as % of rent due	101.3%	Data unavailable	Data unavailable	Data unavailable	Data unavailable
Current resident arrears as % of rent due	2.2%	2.7%	2.2%	4.1%	2.4%



Making decisions

Our board has 15 members, six are residents, including the Chair. It's their job to ensure MVHA is well managed, financially viable and performs to a high standard.

Members of the Board attend RIG meetings and RIG members also attend training sessions with the Board ensuring that residents' views are given top priority.

About you

Age:
15% of you are
under 25.

Ethnicity:
78% of you are white
British.

Disability:
27% of residents said
they have a disability,
40% said they do not
have a disability and
the other 33%
did not reveal that
information.

Age:
Over 40% of you
are over 60 years
old.

Gender:
46% of you are
men.

How have residents have been involved in this document?

A copy of last year's residents' review was sent to every resident. Within it we included a survey asking for feedback and offering the chance to join our Communications Connectors group.

Based on what you told us we have made several changes this year. This includes simplifying the text to be more resident friendly, not using technical jargon and reducing the corporate feel of the document.

Feedback from this group means that this year we will not send this document to every resident. A summary version will be included within the Autumn 2011 edition of our resident newspaper Home Matters. Copies of the full document will be sent to any resident that requests one and a downloadable version of the document will also be available on the Mole Valley Housing Association website.

Our Communications Connectors group now has nearly 300 residents signed up and we asked them what format they would like this document to take this year and what information should be included.

By not sending copies to every resident we will save paper and money that can be spent on the services you want to see improved.

The Chair of the Resident Involvement Group took part in an interview for the introduction to this document. This was to give an honest and transparent view on how the last year has gone.

This document was taken to RIG for final approval in September 2011.



Part of the Circle Housing Group

We're one of 12 partners within Circle. Being part of a larger group means we have more financial security and more influence to achieve better deals with suppliers to deliver value for money for you.

We are first and foremost a Registered Housing Provider and charity. We retain our individual and independent approach and run our services to meet your needs.

You can view our policies, publications and your tenant handbook on our website www.mvha.org.uk

If you would like this document in large print, Braille, audio, an alternative format or in a different language contact us.



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