

Part of Circle Anglia



**Delivering our  
promises to you**

*Enhancing Life Chances*



Circle Anglia



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Missions: Get involved or service provider mission



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# Welcome from the Managing Director



**Anne Anketell**  
Managing Director: EPIC Trust

EPIC has had a successful year with many notable achievements, some of which you will find detailed in this review. Our service users are at the centre of everything we do: our key focus for the year has been on strengthening resident and service user involvement in service delivery and working with you to shape and improve services. It has been particularly interesting and enjoyable for me to get out and listen to you and hear your experiences and stories.

During the year our umbrella Group, Circle Anglia, carried out a review of the services provided by EPIC and Invicta, which are the two largest Care and Support providers in the Group. The outcome of this review was to bring these two organisations together to create one care and support provider with a new name and brand. As a result, EPIC will change its name to Circle Support in January 2011. This change of name clearly defines our close working relationships with our partner housing associations in Circle Anglia and will help ensure a better understanding of this for service users.

Like many other organisations we have faced a number of challenges, particularly in view of the current economic climate. However, we believe that Circle Support is well positioned and ready for the future and we look forward to working with residents and service users to ensure our continued success.

Best wishes,

**Anne Anketell**  
Managing Director: EPIC Trust

# Message from service user Audrey Waters



**Audrey Waters**  
Resident and Service User  
Panel (RASP)

I live in Norfolk in a sheltered scheme and have been actively involved with EPIC forums for many years. I am also one of two EPIC representatives on the Circle Anglia Resident and Service User Panel (RASP) - the voice of residents and service users within Circle Anglia.

Being a member of RASP allows me to represent the interests of EPIC service users and to hear the concerns of residents who live in all of the different types of housing provided by Circle Anglia. Getting involved doesn't have to just be about long meetings, though. Giving feedback to your Scheme Manager or Supported Housing Officer can help EPIC to know what it is doing well or know when you are unhappy with the service; you don't even have to leave your home to do this! Taking part in what happens at your scheme means you have

a voice. I would encourage anyone who is interested in being involved to do so as you can make a difference.

With best wishes,

**Audrey Waters**  
Resident and Service User  
Panel (RASP)



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# Working to meet the TSA Standards

*Enhancing Life Chances*

# Meeting Standards

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## Introducing the Tenant Services Authority

The Tenant Services Authority (TSA) is responsible for regulating all social housing providers. As EPIC Trust works in partnership with seven of Circle Anglia's housing associations, it is important that service users living in accommodation provided by Circle 33, Merton Priory Homes, Old Ford, Roddons, Russet, South Anglia and Wherry Housing Associations know about the TSA and the new standards being introduced.

The TSA works with Circle Anglia to ensure that residents are involved in improving the overall standard of service being delivered. Together, Board Members and residents will agree what services should be delivered, to what quality, cost and time scale. This is called co-regulation.

Full details on the standards and how housing providers must comply with them will be included in your landlord's Resident Review publication so please remember to look out for it.

## Care and Support Standards

EPIC have standards in place for our services and we place great importance on staff meeting the standards of service you expect.

Current standards are to:

- Provide you with a named support worker and a support agreement, which gives details of your rights and responsibilities when you take up a service.
- Agree a personal support plan with you within two weeks of you taking up a service.
- Review your support plan at least every six months.
- Send you an organisational report each year.

These standards, along with additional customer care service standards, have been in place since October 2007 and are due for review in 2010. We will consult with service users on the new standards and look forward to receiving your views.

# Empowering and Involving our Customers

A key focus of our work is making sure that service users are at the centre of everything we do. We shape services and make sure we deliver them in the way that you want by offering choice and a high level of personal service.



Surveys carried out during the year show that 79% of service users are satisfied that we take your views into account. We want to increase this level of satisfaction and have been working hard to make sure we continue to create new opportunities for service users to be involved. You have been helping us to raise standards in the following ways:

## Service Improvement Groups

These groups, which have been set up in the London, South Anglia and Norfolk regions, give service users the opportunity to help scrutinise our performance and set learning action plans by looking at the feedback they give us through customer surveys and complaints. The groups have been hugely successful in making a real difference to the plans we set and have directly influenced our Life Chances Plan for 2010/11. This is the plan that sets out the actions we want to take over the next 12 months to improve services and take EPIC forward as a leading Care and Support provider. This is the first year that service users have been directly involved in the Life Chances plan and we value their contributions. We will continue to involve service users in this way in the future.

## Mystery shopping

Service users carried out mystery shopping on our services throughout the year. Your input has helped us to have a better understanding of how you experience the service we provide. It has also given clear information and direction to staff on what they need to do to provide an improved customer focussed service.

## Policy Forums

These continue to go from strength to strength, are well attended and have helped to shape a significant number of policies over the year. The Policy Forum meets quarterly in London, South Anglia and Norwich and has reviewed more than 10 policies during 2009/2010.

Over the next year we will be working with service users living in Fenland to set up similar forums.

### David Gresty, Valley Court, Bishop's Stortford says:

I am a member of the South Anglia Sheltered Housing and Advisory Panel (SHAP) and have found the experience stimulating. We have only recently been formed so although discussions are widespread and results have yet to appear, I have no doubt that in the near future we shall be able to accomplish more and certainly the exchange of views from different schemes is very interesting. It is also useful to take those views to our own tenants' meeting and return to the next SHAP with the views of your own scheme. I am also on the Policy Forum and have recently been deeply involved with the new draft Pets Policy, particularly with regard to new tenants bringing pets into sheltered housing blocks of flats. I feel that the views of my scheme have now been given serious consideration.



David Gresty, Valley Court, Bishop's Stortford

## Local involvement at schemes and services in all regions

Many of you have chosen to get involved as the statistics below show:

Service Area	Number of Opportunities offered	Total number of involved service users
Learning Disabilities*	10	80
Mental Health	18	34
Older People	325	1150
Tenancy Sustainment^	5	24
Young People	328	31

\*We are working towards offering Board and RASP membership and Mystery Shopping opportunities to Learning Disabilities Service Users in 2010-11

^Many informal opportunities are not available in these services, but we are working towards providing more informal opportunities in Tenancy Sustainment services in 2010-11

## Types of opportunity offered

Formal

- Board Membership
- Resident and Service User Panel (RASP)
- Policy Forum
- Service Improvement Group
- Mystery Shopping
- Involvement in Staff Recruitment

Informal

- Learning Disabilities Forum
- HARTS for Families Forum
- Resident Council Foyer for Ipswich
- Sheltered Housing Advisory Panel (SHAP)
- Social Group Committees
- Health and Safety Inspections
- Scheme/House meetings
- Housing Management Surgeries
- Estate Inspections
- Communal area refurbishments
- Focus Groups
- Young People's Service Review

All informal opportunities are offered more than once a year and many are across different service areas.

# EPIC Services

EPIC Trust received a '3 Star Excellent' rating in its Annual Assessment by the Care Quality Commission (CQC). The CQC is responsible for monitoring and regulating care services. The assessment praised the changes being made by EPIC Trust "as a result of listening to people who use the service."



EPIC provides a wide range of services to older people, young people, people with mental health problems and people with a learning disability. We also support families in their own homes. Read on to find out more about successes in our services, some of the ways we provide support and how we make a difference to the lives of people we work with.

## Older People's services

### A Civic Award – recognition for our work

In October 2009, De Carle House in Thorpe St Andrew, Norwich received a prestigious Civic Award for its continuous care and support for the community. The sheltered housing scheme was nominated by people in the community and Town Mayor Russell James presented the Scheme Manager and residents with the award. The Mayor said, "Although the Town Council has no direct input, it recognises and applauds the work done for residents." Maxine Gedge, who has worked at De Carle House for two years, said, "What a great honour. The Civic Award is a wonderful recognition of the work we do here to help enhance the life chances of our residents, which is something we all love doing. It is our goal to help the service users to be as independent as possible and make their own life choices."

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### **Get Digital – funding success**

We received grants between £4,000 and £5,000 to buy communal computers and provide training for older people to get online. Two sheltered schemes in Norwich, one scheme in Fenland and one scheme in the South Anglia region will benefit from this funding and we are continuing to look for new funding opportunities to provide internet access in all our schemes.

### **Life at Cherry Tree Court**

Jim Brannigan moved into one of our sheltered housing schemes at Cherry Tree Court two years ago. Before this he was renting a small room with very poor facilities, as well as suffering from a back problem, which only made things worse.

Since moving into Cherry Tree Court Jim has told his Scheme Manager that it is like living in a 5 star hotel!

“I love the independence that living at Cherry Tree Court has brought me. I have a new lease of life and enjoy getting involved in scheme activities,” says Jim.

His move into supported housing has turned his life around. Jim has now taken computer classes, joined a local theatre group and taken up painting classes.



Jim Brannigan - Life at Cherry Tree Court

## Enjoying and achieving

Palgrave House, one of EPIC's sheltered schemes, has been enhancing the Life Chances of four of its residents.

Four residents told the Scheme Manager Julie Green that they would love to be able to use a computer.

Julie did some research and helped their wish become a reality by finding a 10 week basic computer skills course not far from Palgrave House. All four residents successfully completed the course and now use the computer as part of their every day life.

George said, "It's fantastic. I never thought in a million years that I would be able to even switch a computer on, let alone anything else. I'm so thankful to Julie for what she helped us achieve. If I hadn't moved into supported housing I would never have had the confidence to do something like this."



### **Food growing and gardening project at Cope House**

Cope House, one of our sheltered schemes in Islington, was awarded a grant through the Edible Islington Programme. The purpose was to help and encourage people to grow food in their gardens.

The food growing and gardening project at Cope House has seen tenants from different backgrounds working together and supporting each other to achieve the same purpose. This has helped to foster a stronger sense of community living.

Service users are growing tomatoes, carrots, potatoes, parsnips, beetroot and various kinds of spices in raised beds which have been designed to take the strain off gardening!

The food growing project is a breath of fresh air and provides something new, different and exciting for everyone to do. Some of the service users cannot go far from the scheme, so this is something to keep their fingers green and very busy.

Joan (Flat 26) has grown 'Moneymaker' tomatoes and once she harvests and sells them, she plans to donate the proceeds from her takings to the local club that she attends.



Cope House

## Happy, thanks to HARTS!

Before HARTS started working with her, Mary Addotey and her two young children had been living with a friend in her property and sleeping in her lounge. She had been refused accommodation on numerous occasions, was not in receipt of any benefits and had to borrow money from friends to survive. Mary's young son also has Down's Syndrome and suffers with breathing difficulties.

When HARTS (EPIC's service for families in Haringey) became aware of this case, they worked with local agencies to help get a three bedroom property for Mary and her children. As well as this, she is now receiving the benefits she is entitled to, has had her utility bills reduced and her son now attends a mainstream school with learning support.

"HARTS really has made a difference to our lives. We are so comfortable and settled in our new home. I now have so much support as well as my own network of friends. It's fantastic; I'm so happy."



## Tenancy Sustainment – Services for Families

### Packington Family Project

EPIC's Islington Families service has been involved in a successful partnership project with adults' and children's services. The project was a 12 month early intervention and prevention pilot, working in a social housing estate in Islington. The estate was one of the most deprived areas in the borough and was undergoing regeneration, with every family moving to a new home. The project brought together services from across the borough, including Islington Families, housing services and adults' and children's services to work effectively as a team.

A Support Co-ordinator from Islington Families was based on the estate, ran a weekly drop-in and played an important role in signing up families, as well as co-ordinating the support provided by a number of agencies to over 20 families. Almost all the families interviewed as part of an evaluation report which looked at how well the project worked felt that having a caring individual with whom problems could be discussed was an important benefit of the project.

The project was very successful, meeting the key outcomes of swift access of support to families, an increase in the number of parents or young people on training, volunteering or paid employment,

increased income and an improvement in children's attendance at school.

Many families commented positively on the difference the Islington Families Support Co-ordinator made to them and their families:

“[The Support Co-ordinator] got the school to provide some additional support for my son... his reading went up from level 3 to level 5 with one month's intensive input.”

“Now you can go to the office and whatever you need, they help you. They help you with everything, even debt, or to find a job or study.”

“I did not know there were all these people out there who could help. The only person I talked to before was the doctor. It all happened through the project.”

For Islington Families the success of this project is further proof of the importance of providing 1-1 support to vulnerable families. Families appreciated the fact they had someone who was neutral, who would listen to them and help them deal with the official procedures and red tape involved in working with a number of different services. The project has received more money from the Local Authority so that it can continue to provide support to families and is a great example of how EPIC works to achieve our mission of enhancing the Life Chances of the people we work with.

## Young People services

### Jack's story

Milton Keynes Children's Social Care Services referred me to The Vineries in Barking and Dagenham as I was very close to my grandmother who lived in the area and I missed not seeing her regularly. My school life was difficult because I had moved home so many times and I felt I didn't fit in anywhere. Constantly moving schools affected my behaviour and I was always getting into trouble with teachers for not listening and not doing my homework. I was extremely nervous when I first came to live at The Vineries and I had a few problems settling in but over a period of a couple of months I gradually learnt to trust and this was made easier by the friendly and helpful members of staff. With the help of my support worker I have learnt to be more assertive and confident. I had regular meetings with my support worker and a member of staff from the Options for Independence Team at Milton Keynes and with their help and encouragement I have completed a two year college course and have gained certificates in Motor Mechanics, Literacy, Numeracy and Communication. I also studied Bakery and Retail. I didn't really enjoy Bakery but the staff made short work of the fruit loaf I made...so I think I did OK in that subject! I have decided not to go back to college as I think I am ready to find full-time work.



### Jack

I am looking to find employment in an office and hopefully join a company in which I can progress. My goal is to pass my driving test and buy myself a car... watch this space!

## Learning Disabilities service

### You've got a friend...

Supporting people with learning disabilities to lead independent lives and become involved in the community in which they live is very important to us.

Following consultation with 26 people from our Learning Disabilities services and with funding from the Circle Anglia Foundation and the Baily Thomas Charitable Fund, EPIC Trust's Volunteer Service has set up a Befriending Project aimed at people with learning disabilities who are experiencing social isolation.

Befrienders provide an independent means of social activity that can boost a person's self esteem and confidence. People often go on to be much more involved in their local communities and this provides them with opportunities to form other new friendships.

20 people will benefit from this project over the next 18 months. During this time, we also hope to have developed a befriending model of support for vulnerable and isolated people that can be provided to other EPIC Trust service users and the wider community.



## Alone In London service

### Someone there for you...

Mandy called Alone in London from a public payphone, distressed, disorientated and scared. She had just £1 and a plastic bag with a few clothes. She had not eaten or drunk anything all day. She had a number of issues including substance abuse, which made it hard for her to focus and talk to us about the trouble she was in. After a number of long silences, she told us that her father was currently in jail for abusing her and her mum was in a mental health hospital. She had no friends and nobody she could trust.

Mandy was only 17 and for the last two years had been under the control of a pimp who was using drugs to keep her tied to a life of sexual exploitation. Mandy had tried to escape but was scared that he would find her. She made a desperate request to us, saying:

“...I have to take drugs now... He gives them to me and it’s the only way I can get through it... I’ve got nowhere else to live... Can you help me?”

By talking and listening to her, we were able to understand her immediate needs. We then identified five agencies in her area that could help: a Domestic Violence Unit, Victim Support, Social Services, NHS and Sapphire (support and care for victims of sexual assault). Mandy got the

crisis support she needed and was able to secure safe accommodation. She is making good progress in coming to terms with the difficulties she has experienced and is taking steps to build a new life.



# How are we doing?

Key Performance Indicator	End of 09/10 Performance	09/10 Target		Comments
Satisfaction with views taken into account	<b>79%</b>	70%	😊	We are happy to have met target on this, but we want to keep on improving.
Satisfaction with Care and Support services	<b>83%</b>	95%	😞	83% is a good level of satisfaction but we want to be even better which is why we set a high target. We want to improve on this.
Complaints resolved at first stage				
● EPIC Care and Support	<b>81%</b>	98%	😞	We are working hard on resolving complaints as soon as you raise them with us and want to do better.
● EPIC SHM* London	<b>93%</b>	95%	😊	
● EPIC SHM* South Anglia	<b>100%</b>	95%	😊	We are pleased to have achieved 100% satisfaction and want to maintain this level.
● EPIC SHM* Wherry	<b>100%</b>	95%	😊	
Positive Outcomes at Point of Departure	<b>80%</b>	85%	😊	We fell quite a bit short of target and are setting plans to improve performance.
Support Plans in Place	<b>97%</b>	99%	😊	We fell a bit short of target and are setting plans to improve performance.
Risk Assessments in Place	<b>98%</b>	99%	😊	We fell a bit short of target and are setting plans to improve performance.

\*Specialist Housing Management

# Equality and Diversity

We have collected a lot of diversity information about our service users this year and are using this to help shape services and tailor them to individual needs.



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## Profile of EPIC Service Users - Equality and Diversity Strands

Age	Profile %
17 - 24	8%
25 - 34	10%
35 - 44	15%
45 - 54	9%
55 - 59	3%
60 - 64	5%
65 - 74	15%
75 - 84	19%
85 and over	15%
Disability	Profile %
Yes	48%
Ethnicity	Profile %
White British	57%
White Irish	4%
White Other	11%
Mixed White and Black Caribbean	1%
Mixed White and Black African	0.40%
Mixed White and Asian	0.31%
Mixed Other	0.86%
Asian or Asian British Indian	0.77%
Asian or Asian British Pakistani	0.86%
Asian or Asian British Bangladeshi	3.00%
Asian or Asian British Other	1.30%

Ethnicity - continued		Sexual Orientation	
	Profile %		Profile %
Black or Black British Caribbean	8.00%	Heterosexual	83%
Black or Black British African	7%	Gay man	0.28%
Black or Black British Other	1%	Gay woman/Lesbian	0.43%
Chinese or Other Ethnic Group, Chinese	1%	Unable to Say/Don't Know	0.62%
Chinese or Other Ethnic Group, Other	1%	Bisexual	0.37%
Gypsy/Romany Irish Traveller	0%	Other	0.59%
Prefer Not To Say	0.96%	Prefer Not To Say	12%

  

Gender	
	Profile %
Male	35%
Female	65%
Transgender	0%

  

Religion	
	Profile %
Christian	63%
Buddhist	0.40%
Hindu	0.77%
Jewish	0.40%
Muslim	10%
Sikh	0.15%
Prefer Not To Say	8%
Any other religion	5%
None	9%
Unable to Say/Don't Know	1%

# A bit about us

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Our mission is to enhance the Life Chances of the people we support.

We provide services to more than 5,000 people with a wide range of needs living in 9 London boroughs, as well as Cambridgeshire, Essex, Hertfordshire, Luton, Norfolk and Suffolk. We have an established approach to support and care planning, and facilitate and promote service user involvement in all areas of our work.

Our Specialist Housing Management team provides housing management services and works in partnership with a number of other support providers.

## Circle Anglia

We are one of 12 partners within Circle Anglia. Being part of a much larger organisation means that we have more financial security and can continue with the investment projects in our business plan despite the economic climate. It also means we have the financial muscle to negotiate good deals with suppliers and combine our resources to do things more efficiently. This is essential if we are to get good value for money and use the cost savings to benefit our service users. Even though we are part of a large Group, we are first and foremost a charity. We retain our individuality and independence, and run our services to suit the specific needs of our service users.

## EPIC Trust Board

The EPIC Trust Board represents 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.

## EPIC Trust Board Members in 2009/10

**Jitinder Kohli** (Chair)

**Gaynor Quilter** (Vice Chair)

**Chander Hingorani**

**David Gee**

**David Fisher**

**Liz Anderson**

**Pamela Mitcham**

**Phil Stevens** (Service User Representative)

**Stephen Williams** (Service User Representative)





You can view our policies, publications and your tenant handbook on our website.

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

### **Part of Circle Anglia**

Although EPIC Trust is part of the Circle Anglia Group, we are first and foremost a Registered Provider and charity. We retain our individual and independent approach and run our services to meet your needs.

### **EPIC Trust**

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