



Delivering our promises to you

Enhancing Life Chances

Welcome from the Managing Director



Mark Jones
Managing Director

I am really pleased to introduce this Annual Review 2009/2010 which contains examples of how we not only comply with the new Tenant Services Authority (TSA) standards, but also where we surpass them.

It has been another busy year with many achievements we can be proud of. We have worked continuously with residents to form a strong partnership that has taken the services we provide to a new level. We have developed a new mission, “Enhancing Life Chances” of our residents. We will continue to place residents at the heart of everything we do and this will influence the way we work and behave.

We were awarded the “Customer Service Excellence” (CSE) accreditation. The CSE is the Government’s main customer service award and reflects our drive to provide excellent services.

We were delighted to hear in September 2009 that our application to the TSA to develop a local standard pilot in Terrington St. Clement, near Kings Lynn was successful. The

pilot to create a common standard for Neighbourhood and Estate Management for everybody living in the village, irrespective of their landlord or if they are an owner occupier has been very successful. The local MP, Henry Bellingham signed the charter and is a strong supporter, calling for our approach to be replicated nationally.

We have also been busy using the information we have collected about you to tailor our services, specifically to your needs. New services include:

- our new Family Intervention Project that will support our most vulnerable residents
- the new Young Carers Scheme that helps and supports young people with elderly or disabled parents
- the enhanced Wherry Care scheme that carries out adaptations for residents

with a disability so that they can live independent lifestyles

- YELL, our young resident scheme that is helping raise aspirations and provide opportunities
- Mow and Grow scheme that maintains gardens for residents who are unable to look after them for themselves
- apprenticeships to work directly in Wherry whilst studying for an NVQ through our new partnership with Great Yarmouth College.

We will make sure our services are providing value for money, effective and tailored to what you want and need.

Through our partnership of staff and residents we will continue to build on the success of the previous year to aspire to be the best housing provider in the East of England.

I look forward to reporting further progress to you in the future.

Mark Jones

Managing Director



Terrington Estate Inspection

Message from WAWW



Jane Wright

Vice Chair Way Ahead with Wherry

It's a pleasure to have the opportunity to introduce this Annual Review on behalf of all residents. Having been the Vice Chair of "Way Ahead with Wherry" (WAWW) for two years, as well as being on the RASP Board (a Circle Anglia Group wide residents group) and a member of the Norwich Patch Panel, I understand how important it is to be involved as a resident.

I have been lucky enough to see first hand the progress Wherry has made over the last year and have enjoyed being able to make a difference to my neighbourhood and help other residents in the area.

Along with other residents in the WAWW group I have had the chance to help shape this document, having a say in what information should be published. WAWW have tried to ensure that residents will have a clear understanding of what the TSA is and means for them.

These standards will benefit all Wherry residents as they will provide us with a level of what

to expect when it comes to the way services are delivered, including the quality, cost and time scales and help to focus on priorities for the current year.

There are lots of ways to get involved at Wherry from joining groups like WAWW and Patch Panels, attending the Fun Days or even becoming a mystery shopper, and these are just to name a few. You can make a real difference so don't delay, contact the Resident Involvement Team today.

With best wishes,

Jane Wright

Vice Chair Way Ahead with Wherry



Working to meet the TSA Standards

Enhancing Life Chances

Nick Walker, Community Warden

Introducing the Tenant Services Authority

The Tenant Services Authority (TSA) is responsible for regulating all social housing providers.

For more details on the TSA and the standards visit www.tenantservicesauthority.org

Note: For residents living in sheltered and supported housing EPIC Trust will make sure you are consulted and involved in discussions on local offers by setting up a series of events and focus groups to seek your views and develop local offers that meet your needs.

Enhancing Life Chances

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

On 1 April 2010, the TSA launched its new standards which all social housing providers must comply with.

The new TSA standards are as follows:

- Tenant involvement and empowerment (page 8)
- Home (page 11)
- Tenancy (page 14)
- Neighbourhood and community (page 17)
- Value for money (page 20)
- Governance and viability (not included in this document)

This publication gives an overview of the new standards (excluding Governance and viability) and details how Wherry is meeting each standard. This will include examples of ongoing work that we are undertaking to enhance the lives of our residents. Where Wherry already meet the minimum standards required, we will strive to make further improvements for our customers.

It also sets out the ways we will consult with residents on the local offers, which are linked to each standard. A 'local offer' is a service provided by Wherry which residents have asked for.



Consulting with residents in West Norfolk

Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard

Wherry must offer all residents the opportunity to be involved in the management of their housing and services.



2009/2010 performance

Performance Indicator	Result	Rank*
Satisfaction with views taken into account	76.70%	Top 10%
Satisfaction with landlord services	89.50%	Top 25%
Complaints resolved at first stage	88.00%	No data
Residents participating in involvement groups	6.82%	No data

*This score is based on TSA banding data and is a comparison of Wherry's performance against other UK housing associations

Highlights from 2009/2010

We have:

- more ways of getting involved and influencing services than ever before. We offer residents traditional methods of involvement such as; focus groups, local area panels (Patch Panels) and Residents' Associations. In addition, in the last year residents got involved in Fun Days, mystery shopping, our Readers' Panel, and our new youth forum, Y.E.L.L
- helped residents get involved by offering a comprehensive training package and peer support
- developed a new Scrutiny Panel giving residents the unique opportunity to look in depth at our performance and help us to improve services.

Plans for 2010/2011

We will:

- offer more courses to residents, including a range of courses to help build self confidence and IT skills.

Local Offers

- Further develop our Facebook group to offer residents a different way of getting involved. By becoming a 'fan' you can hear about the latest events and activities, give us instant feedback and post questions
- In April 2010 we launched a new Estate Inspection programme where residents are inspecting communal areas on their estates
- We also want more residents to help with inspecting empty properties to check that they meet the required standard. Ask your Neighbourhood Officer for details.



Estate inspection at Terrington St Clement

Y.E.L.L Group in Action

“Out of our 10262 residents – 34% are under 18”

Back in 2009 we spoke to over 90 Young Wherry Residents who told us they were bored with nothing to do in their neighbourhood. They asked for more fun activities including a young persons group. So we created Y.E.L.L - Youths Engaging in Learning & Lives.

16 young residents are now part of the Y.E.L.L group who met for the first time in February 2010 when members told us they wanted to:

- help out with Estate Inspections
- tell us about their experience of ASB
- see more Fun Days.

Daniel – a member of Y.E.L.L from Old Catton says; “I really enjoy being part of the Y.E.L.L group, I’ve made friends and feel like I have made a real difference to the area where I live.”



Home Standard

Wherry must ensure that all homes are warm, weatherproof and have modern facilities. An efficient and cost-effective repairs and maintenance service must also be in place.



2009/2010 performance

Performance Indicator	Result	Rank*
Repairs completed on time	97.40%	No data
Satisfaction with repairs	94.10%	Top 10%
Homes meeting decent standard	94.51%	Bottom 50%
Homes with valid gas safety certificate	100%	No data

*This score is based on TSA banding data and is a comparison of Wherry's performance against other UK housing associations

Highlights from 2009/2010

We have:

- completed 87% of day to day repairs at first visit
- recharged the cost of repairs back to residents who have caused damage to their homes
- offered residents a choice for kitchen and bathroom replacements. These were decided by residents at our resident fun days
- prioritised planned works as requested by residents in data collected from surveys.

Plans for 2010/2011

We will:

- work with our partners to reduce the overall time taken to complete aids and adaptation works

continued overleaf...

Plans for 2010/2011 continued...

- increase the amount of quality checks on works completed to ensure residents are receiving a good standard of repairs
- set up a cyclical external decoration and repairs contract to ensure each property is visited every six years
- launch a residents internal decorating scheme for vulnerable residents to decorate one room per year.

Local Offers

- Kitchen and bathroom replacements are installed to the Wherry Standard which is above the Governments Decent Homes Standard
- 'Wherry Care' is a dedicated service to provide aids and adaptations to residents who are disabled, vulnerable or have mobility issues so they can live safely and independently in their homes.



Christine Hagg, Customer Services Advisor

Helping residents with disabilities

“31% of our households have one or more disabilities with the most common being limited mobility”

Audrey Waters from Drayton has had her life improved this year thanks to a new level access shower being fitted in her home.

Audrey was on the waiting list for a home carer as she was unable to get in and out of her bath unaided, when she decided to apply to Wherry for an adaptation to her home.

“It’s fantastic, in less than three months my new shower had been fitted. This has made a huge difference to me and my life. I have kept my independence and there is now no need for a carer at all,” says Audrey.

Audrey Waters enjoying her new shower room

Tenancy Standard

Wherry must provide residents with information regarding allocations of housing, rents and tenure.



2009/2010 performance

Performance Indicator	Result	Rank*
Average re-let turnaround times	17.3 days	Top 10%
Dwelling Vacant	0.6%	Top 10%

*This score is based on TSA banding data and is a comparison of Wherry's performance against other UK housing associations

Highlights from 2009/2010

We have:

- set up a specialist Voids and Lettings team that can assist with any questions or concerns you may have about your need to move home. If you need more specialist or intensive support before or after you become a Wherry resident, we can arrange this for you
- set up joint waiting lists with other landlords and councils to make it easier for you to access affordable housing. Whenever we can, we offer choice to people waiting for a new home through the use of Choice Based Lettings schemes
- agreed with our partners that some priority be given to people who wish to move home and are currently living in homes that are too large or small for their needs

- spoken to all applicants shortly before they become a Wherry resident and visited everyone soon after they have moved in to make sure everything has gone well. We also visit around 1000 residents every year to see if we can help in any way.

Plans for 2010/2011

We will:

- launch an incentive scheme to encourage and help people move from homes too large for their needs, in order to free these up for families on the waiting/transfer list
- publish our “Moving Home Guide”
- publish a new Allocations Policy.

Local Offers

- We have our own mutual exchange website for people wishing to find someone to swap homes - www.houseexchange.org.uk
- We offer starter tenancies to help us ensure new residents are happy in their community. We visit all starter residents at least twice in the first year of their tenancy to make sure they have settled in and are getting all the help they need
- We have added a benefits calculator to our website and will complete a benefit assessment with you if you would like us to.



Young residents from Evans Way, Norwich

Family life improved with new home

“36% of our residents are in full time or part time employment with just under 5% seeking work”

The Alexander family recently became Wherry residents. Early in 2010 Matthews job in IT changed which caused a significant drop in their monthly income resulting in them being forced to sell their family home.

With two young children, living in temporary accommodation wouldn't suit them, so they registered their interest in a new housing development in Wymondham.

“I called Wherry desperate to know if I was successful. I was so impressed with the customer service I received,” says Rachel.

“When we found out we had been successful we were so delighted. It all happened so quickly and we were signed up immediately. Wherry has given me and my family a chance to enjoy our lives again and we love our new home.”



Neighbourhood and Community Standard

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



Highlights from 2009/2010

We have:

- agreed with residents new standards for our grounds maintenance and cleaning services
- changed the way we inspect our estates and communal areas to make it easier for you to be involved
- provided a dedicated named officer for you and your home that can assist with any questions or concerns you may have
- responded to reports of serious anti social behaviour (ASB), domestic abuse and hate crime within 24 hours, otherwise we responded within five working days
- maintained our membership of Norfolk Constabulary's Community Safety Accreditation Scheme
- investigated all reports of ASB and contacted you at least every 15 days to see how you are and keep you informed about the progress with your case
- set up a Community Warden Service
- set up a vulnerable persons gardening scheme, Wherry "Mow & Grow".

Plans for 2010/2011

We will:

- publish a policy for maintaining and improving our neighbourhoods

continued overleaf...

Plans for 2010/2011 continued...

- publish the results of Estate Inspections and the performance of the grounds maintenance service on our website
- develop victim and witness support packs for victims of ASB
- publish a 'Residents Guide to tackling ASB' on our website.

Local Offers

- We have a 24/7 ASB and domestic abuse hotline for residents, the number is 0800 013 2328 or you can report on line www.wherryhousing.org/ASB
- We offer a free mediation service to any residents who are in dispute to help them resolve their differences
- We visit every new resident at 9 months to make sure they have settled into their new home and discuss any issues before the tenancy is changed to an assured tenancy after a year
- We work with other agencies to remove bulky items and fly tipping within 5 working days (unless a Health and Safety issue) and offensive graffiti within 24 hours. Where possible we will take enforcement action.



Wherry Community Wardens: Andy Bridge, Trevor Nelson & Nick Walker



Working to tackle ASB

“In 2009/2010 there were 624 successfully resolved ASB cases – that’s 92% of those reported”

For more than two years residents of a small community in Great Plumstead suffered from appalling ASB caused by one resident.

Residents were subjected to verbal abuse, intimidating behaviour and harassment, making them fearful of being out and about and uncomfortable in their own homes.

Wherry worked with the community to gather evidence and obtained statements from the police and households to take legal action and put a stop to this appalling behaviour.

Mrs Pitt, Resident Representative said “I’m so happy that this has now been resolved. So many lives have been affected by this disgraceful behaviour. It’s a relief to the community, knowing there is an ASB Injunction in place and he can be arrested if he behaves like this in the future.”

Value for Money Standard

We must manage resources to provide a cost effective, efficient and quality service. We must also inform residents how we are managing and prioritising use of income from your rent.



We aim to make sure that the income we receive from rents and service charges provides services which offer value for money. We use your feedback from resident involvement, surveys and complaints to identify what is important to you and build these priorities into our plans.

Our priorities are set out in our Life Chances Plan (business plan) which is developed jointly with residents. The plan and the budgets for delivering these priorities are considered and approved each year by the Board which includes three resident members.

We compare our services to other housing providers and use this information to highlight where costs are high and/or performance is low to review services with residents.

When residents were last asked if they were satisfied with the value for money of the rent they pay, 81% were satisfied.

2009/2010 performance

Performance Indicator	Result	Rank*
Rent collected as % of rent due	99.80%	Top 25%
Current resident arrears as % of rent roll	3.30%	Top 50%

*This score is based on TSA banding data and is a comparison of Wherry's performance against other UK housing associations

Highlights from 2009/10

We have:

- completely reduced the number of temporary staff employed by Wherry. This means we are not paying any costly agency fees and have a stable workforce that is providing a consistent level of service
- reduced the level of rent arrears to the lowest level in our history
- managed the vast majority of improvement contracts in-house, thereby avoiding paying external consultants to manage our contracts
- reduced the amount of time that homes are left empty from an average of 23 days in 08/09 to 17 days. This has reduced the amount of rent lost and provided more homes to rent, more quickly
- been successful in bidding for £38,000 from the Government to establish a rural outreach Family Intervention Project. For more information please call 01603 703581.

Plans for 2010/11

We will:

- continue to benchmark our costs and performance with other housing associations and identify any areas for savings or more effective working
- develop a framework of VFM indicators for each area of service in Wherry and positively encourage residents to scrutinise their cost and effectiveness

- explore joining a group of Housing Associations operating in East Anglia to collectively purchase improvement works. This could see significant cost savings for new kitchens and bathrooms
- implement a cost reduction with our gas contractor for carrying out the annual service of gas appliances. The cost reduction comes into effect in 2010/11.



Residents enjoying the Wherry Fun Day

Our residents

The information we collect on diversity is important to us. This data is used to make things better, it tells us where we should direct our services, or tells us if certain people aren't making the most of services. There are strict laws which govern the use of this information and we handle this data responsibly.

Age

- More than 50% of our residents are under 45
- The largest age group is 35-44 which equates to 23% (1,639) of all residents
- 3,467 of 10,262 residents are under 18 – that's 34%

Disability

- 31% (1,766) of our households have one or more disabilities
- The most common disability experienced by our customers is limited mobility followed by mental health

Ethnicity

- 92% (6,322) of our residents are White British
- The next largest category of ethnic origin being White Other at 3% (175)
- English is spoken by 98% (6,654) of our residents
- Polish is the next highest language spoken at 0.4% (27)

Economic Status

- 36% of our residents are in full time or part time employment
- Just under 5% of residents are seeking work and almost 19% are retired



Residents at Palgrave House, Norwich



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

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

Wherry residents were involved in reviewing and contributing to the content of this document via the Way Ahead with Wherry (WAWW) group and the Readers' Panel.

Part of Circle Anglia

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

Even though we are part of the 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.

Wherry Housing Association

6 Central Avenue
St Andrews Business Park
Norwich
NR7 0HR

Tel: 0800 694 0165

www.wherryhousing.org
wherry.info@circleanglia.org

Wherry Housing Association Limited is a charitable housing association.
Industrial & Provident Society Number 26622R
TSA Registered Number LH3866



The Government Standard

