

www.circleanglia.org



So much more



An exciting, award-winning year!

It's just a year since the merger and Circle Anglia has hit the ground running.

Highlights of the year include record levels of funding from the Housing Corporation, the success of our expanding development programme and several major achievements in pursuing stock transfer opportunities.

On top of this, Circle Anglia received prestigious awards from the National Housing Federation, the Royal Institute of British Architects and Community Care. The group also passed its first Housing Corporation assessment with four green lights.

Integrating two organisations is another challenge that Circle Anglia has taken in its stride, and is on the way to completing this within its target.

Building on these firm foundations, we have been able to demonstrate our strong commitment to service delivery by engaging with our residents to find out how we can improve on what we do in the future.

We are pleased to report that almost 1,000 residents sit on the group-wide Have Your Say panel. Through this work, and other face-to-face initiatives like our Customer Satisfaction Day survey, we are able to effectively listen and respond to the needs of our residents. And we're delighted to say that, having listened, we've already made progress in improving our responsive repairs.

We have also put extra resources into a network of Neighbourhood Teams. This means that there are now more staff on the ground, working with local residents and organisations to tackle the issues that matter most to the communities we work in.

The message is clear. Not only is Circle Anglia a leading affordable housing and care provider – we also work with residents, local people, partners and stakeholders to build thriving communities and give them the quality of life they deserve.

This report gives just a small flavour of what we've achieved during a very exciting year in Circle Anglia's history. And there's so much more to come!

Jon Gooding Chair

Mark Rogers Group Chief Executive



As part of our major Have Your Say consultation panel, we have worked with almost 1,000 residents, as well as hitting the streets on a group-wide Customer Satisfaction Day. We listened to residents' concerns and will be tackling their key priorities by introducing a new anti-social behaviour policy, investing more in the management of our estates and working closely with contractors to improve our service.



Strengthening our local Neighbourhood Teams to provide more responsive and co-ordinated services, by working with a wide range of partners, including health and social services, the police and voluntary agencies. Developing a sensitive lettings policy that responds to changing local needs and tackling anti-social behaviour are just two areas that benefit from this highly focussed local approach.



Valuing our stakeholders by involving them in the way we work. At Brightwell Court, one of our sheltered schemes in Islington, we demonstrated that by listening to our partners we can improve on the construction process. In this case, effective partnering with Willmott Dixon and PRP Architects led to significant time and cost savings. Lessons learnt can then be easily passed onto the next scheme.



Launching House Exchange to meet the needs of residents who want to move, for health, family, work or personal reasons, but don't have a high enough priority on our transfer list. Developed by group partner Wherry Housing Association, the website has proved so popular that we've now extended it to other RSLs, including housing associations and local authorities.



Holding our first Community Spirit Awards, which attracted 127 nominations for local heroes, ranging from seven year-old children to residents in their nineties. Winners included Karl, who has overcome Down's Syndrome to become a successful film actor, busy mum Andrea who runs a charity despite having two disabled children and good neighbours Doug and Eileen.

Circle Anglia believes in putting people first. And involving them in how the merged organisation develops is essential. That's why we've spent the last year going back to basics – asking people what they think and making sure that our systems and services are fit for purpose.



People



Winning the National Housing Federation's iNbiz Local Government Partnership Award for the way EPIC Trust's specialist support and care service helps Haringey Council's more vulnerable residents to maintain their tenancies. We also picked up a 2005 UK Community Care Award, with our partners, for our Sonali Gardens extra care scheme in Tower Hamlets (pictured).



Launching our Business Growth team and scoring a number of major successes, including preferred partner status for nearly 8,500 stock transfer homes on the Mardyke Estate in Essex, Mole Valley in Surrey and Fenland in Cambridgeshire. We also won the ballot for 2,300 homes on the Parkside Estate in Tower Hamlets and are preparing for ballots on a number of other estates in the Borough.



Tackling local housing need through a new partnership with Rockingham Forest will produce 150 much-needed affordable homes a year in Northamptonshire. And an innovative leasing agreement in Waltham Forest will generate over £40 million to refurbish local properties and improve the supply of high-quality affordable housing in the Borough.



Winning the Higgins Construction Project of the Year award which recognised our success at partnership working. Circle Anglia was praised for the way it worked closely with Higgins, the surveyors and the local council to complete the development, Roberts Place, in Dagenham, on time and within budget.



Circle Anglia is committed to regenerating communities so that residents get the quality of life they deserve. For example, in East London, we have transformed open spaces in the local area by commissioning pieces of modern artwork in consultation with residents, while in Barking & Dagenham a shelter for young people has made a real difference in tackling anti-social behaviour.

Strong partnerships provide us with a solid foundation for our current success and future growth. We work with residents, staff, partners and other stakeholders, ensuring that they share our commitment to great homes, reliable services and local solutions.



Partnership



Establishing Circle Anglia as a major housing group while maintaining the local focus that our residents tell us they want. The group's size means that we are well placed to diversify the services we offer, as well as providing a wide range of expertise and abilities. At the same time, however, we're proving that we can deliver locally.



Developing commercial projects so that we can provide services to strengthen our affordable housing provision, through Your Lifespace, our innovative and exciting private developer brand. Proximity (pictured) in Stepney Green, East London is one of several schemes, marketed through Your Lifespace, that celebrate great design, desirability, affordability and high quality housing.



Creating and maintaining sustainable communities by providing residents with the care and support they need. Our supported housing department provides homes for 3,354 people, while EPIC Trust, the group's specialist care and support partner, supports more than 4,500 service users. This includes tailored care packages for group residents and tenancy support services for a number of local authorities.



One of our biggest successes to date is Fabrika, an innovative mixed-tenure project in London's East End, which recently won its second prestigious RIBA architectural award in recognition of its stunning design and substantial contribution to the local environment. The scheme has also attracted widespread media attention, in national, international and trade press.



Circle Anglia has taken the lead on financial inclusion by providing people on low incomes, who are denied access to basic financial services, with the support and advice they need. For example, we have helped London residents by offering affordable loans through our CHANGE programme and Norwich residents are benefiting from a money advice service launched in partnership with the local Citizens Advice Bureau.

A Brand isn't just about how an organisation looks. It's about establishing a clear picture of where we're going, how we plan to get there and then communicating that internally and externally. Creating a vision that everyone can share with us is essential.



Brand



Being awarded £106 million from the Corporation's preferred partners programme for 2006/8 – the seventh highest allocation in the country and enough to build 681 homes in London and a further 1,475 in Norfolk, Essex, Cambridgeshire, Suffolk and Hertfordshire. We also received four green traffic lights, from the Housing Corporation, in our first assessment since the merger.



Circle Anglia is committed to going the extra mile in supporting our residents. In East London EPIC Trust hosts an annual event that has done much to break down the barriers and prejudice between different cultural groups, while Wherry Housing Association's dedicated tenancy support team has helped over 1,000 residents to overcome a range of problems, in the past 3 years, including debt issues, depression and drugs misuse.



We encourage high calibre staff to work at Circle Anglia as we feel that the people who work for us make a real difference. To provide a high quality of service for our residents, we invest heavily in our staff by offering competitive salaries, flexible working hours, attractive benefit packages and excellent training and development programmes.



Meeting the Decent Homes Standard by the Government's deadline of 2010. 74% of Circle 33 Housing Trust's homes now meet the Standard, together with 80% of South Anglia Housing's, 81% of Wherry Housing Association's and 88% of Old Ford Housing Association's. We plan to upgrade our outstanding homes at a rate of 1,300 a year to meet the deadline.



We believe passionately in transforming people's lives by providing them with high quality housing. For example, 82 year-old Albert Fallows moved to a bungalow in Dagenham's Ron Todd Close development after nearly 30 years in a third floor flat without a lift. And Constance Mulimira escaped the prospect of being homeless with a new baby thanks to The Vineries' pioneering parent and baby unit (pictured).

We believe that Circle Anglia has a key role to play in the future of affordable housing, support and care. These are exciting times and we feel that we have the enthusiasm, energy, strength and experience to make a real difference to people's lives.



Belief