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## Excellent homes and estates for 2011

With us now starting a new year, it is a good opportunity to look at the progress of three key areas of work.



### Gas

Towards the end of 2010, we achieved our highest ever level of valid gas safety inspections at 99.93%.

We have worked together with our gas contractor Village Heating Limited (VHL) to reach this level and aim to build upon this throughout the year. This level of service is needed to keep you safe in your homes.

### 100% Decent Homes

Ten years ago, the Government set a minimum standard which our homes had to meet. This was called the Decent Homes Standard. All housing associations and local authorities were

given until December 2010 to reach the target of 100% compliance and we are pleased to say that we have met this target.

### Excellent Estates

The Excellent Estates programme was developed to improve estates as a result of tenant concerns. This has developed over the past three years and we have now made improvements to 40 of our estates.

£3 million has been invested into these estates and the work has enhanced the Life Chances and improved the living environment for many of our residents.



Tagore House



Haringey Park - after works (inset: Haringey Park - before works)

Chalcot Road - after works (inset: Chalcot Road - before works)



Isledon Court Bin Storage



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## Need help with your finances this New Year?



There is plenty of free money advice available and organisations that can help you. These include:

The Citizens Advice Bureau: [www.citizensadvice.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk) or [www.adviceguide.org.uk](http://www.adviceguide.org.uk)

The Financial Services Authority: Visit [www.money.made.clear.fsa.gov.uk/publications](http://www.money.made.clear.fsa.gov.uk/publications) or call 0300 500 5000 for a range of free guides on topics including budgeting and borrowing money

Your local credit union

Circle 33 on 0800 073 0417

Don't be tempted by loan sharks, they will only add to any financial problems. If you are approached by a loan shark call the loan shark hotline on 0300 555 2222



# Helping young people prepare for the future



Two years ago we were excited to take advantage of Government funding through the Future Jobs Fund programme. Money became available to create jobs, for six months, for unemployed people. We have now given 22 ambitious people valuable work experience in a range of positions with Circle 33.

Some of these are our residents. Recently we welcomed our final group of ten. They have all shown tremendous enthusiasm and have made real contributions to providing a great service to our customers.

The Future Jobs Fund has significantly increased the Life Chances of these people and many of them have already found employment after leaving. We will continue to take advantage of exciting new proposals to help with unemployment as they emerge from the Government.



Angela (pictured above) has demonstrated that with the necessary time, training and investment gaining full time employment is a real possibility. Towards the end of her six month placement, Angela applied for a permanent job in our Income Team. All of the skills Angela initially brought to the role, and those she has developed since starting as a FJF recruit, has allowed her to develop into a very driven and integral member of the Circle 33 Income Team.

# MD welcome



Welcome to the Winter edition of Home Matters. I hope you find it interesting. Here we report on exciting work we are doing to help young people prepare for work. We have welcomed some bright and hardworking youngsters who have really helped us with our work of providing great customer services. Faye's story is heart warming – she shows how

satisfying it is to get involved with our work, to contribute and to get something back. Tenants working together for change are an impressive force and I welcome this involvement and the time and enthusiasm people like Faye offer. Other articles also show ways to get on board in resident involvement. An emphasis this time too on health and safety. We take our responsibilities very

seriously and in this edition you will find advice on fire and gas servicing. Finally I hope the bad weather hasn't caused you too many problems and at least soon we can all look forward to the Spring. Best wishes  
**Jeff Baker**  
Managing Director,  
Circle 33 Housing Trust

## Get involved and be part of it!!



### Faye Gayle tells us about how she gets involved...

Resident involvement has opened many doors for me and I am so glad that I picked up the phone some years back and got stuck in.

At my first training exercise I debated in the morning

if I should attend or not and when I arrived I found everyone very warm and friendly. I have really enjoyed being involved in the service improvement groups and feeling like our suggestions as a group have made a difference for current and future tenants. For example:

One of the suggestions at the service improvement groups was creating a handy person scheme. Our group focused on frail and vulnerable tenants who needed an extra pair of hands with things like changing light bulbs and decorating.

Another suggestion was to ensure that staff familiarise themselves with local services which might benefit the residents, as needs change and older, vulnerable residents may not be aware of what is out there in the community.

We also made a point that tenants with disabilities and those with impairments should not be left to get on with moving in on their own and homes need to be of good decorative order so they can feel good about where they are moving into. One of the areas that Circle 33 identified was their need to obtain up-to-date information on residents so they could improve their services to meet the changing needs. We agreed as a Group that completing the diversity questionnaire that was sent to Circle 33 residents would help staff to be more responsive towards our needs.

This is just one example of how you can get involved with Circle 33. For further details on ways to get involved contact the Resident Involvement Team on 0800 073 0417.

## Note from editor

### Happy New Year and welcome to the Winter edition of Home Matters.

Did you know you can get involved with the production of this newsletter? We welcome residents to join our editorial panel where you can help to decide what articles go in to the newsletter. Or our readers' panel where you can review Home Matters and other publications before they get sent out to residents.

If you would like to get involved contact the Resident Involvement Team on 0800 073 0417.

If you wish to opt out of receiving this newsletter in paper format and receive it via email instead simply log on to [www.circleanglia.org/optout](http://www.circleanglia.org/optout) and fill in the short form.



# Fun day event



We will be hosting our 5th fun day, where residents living in areas of London will have an opportunity to pop along and gather information, plus have the chance to speak with staff from the departments within Circle 33.

If you live in one of the areas below, keep your eyes peeled for your official invite coming through the post shortly with further information.

#### The areas are:

Camden  
Hammersmith  
Brent  
Fulham  
Kensington  
Chelsea  
Lambeth  
Enfield  
Wandsworth  
Westminster

The event will be held in February at The London Irish Centre in Camden. Either come on your own to make enquiries about the services you receive, or bring the family along. There will be lots of activities to keep the young people entertained while you wander around the market-style information stands, from food growing, face painting, arts and crafts – there really is something for everyone.

If you wish to book your place now, please call Natalie Anderson on 0207 447 3065.



## Leaseholders and Shared Owners



### Circle Living Service Improvement Panel



*The Customer Liaison Team*

Circle 33 homeowners are invited to get involved in Circle Living's new Service Improvement Panel. The new Service Improvement Panel will involve homeowners from across Circle Anglia and aims to review the services Circle Living deliver in order to improve them.

- Are you interested in receiving training to help you understand how Circle Living manages its service to you?
- Would you be interested in reviewing Circle Living's services in depth, including reviewing policies and procedures, interviewing staff and speaking with other residents?
- Would you like to review Circle Living's performance so you can make recommendations about which areas we should be focusing on improving, and get involved helping these improvements happen?

Then the Service Improvement Panel could be just the thing for you!

#### What you'll need to do:

- Contact us for an application form
- Attend an interview with members of the Circle Anglia Leaseholder Forum and senior members of Circle Living staff
- If successful, you will need to commit to being a member for three years and attend four to six meetings annually

We are currently recruiting members for the Service Improvement Panel, so if you'd like further information please get in touch on the details below:

Contact: The Customer Liaison Team

T: 0207 704 5486

E: [customerliaisonteam@circleanglia.org](mailto:customerliaisonteam@circleanglia.org)

### Gas Servicing for Homeowners

As a homeowner it is your responsibility to ensure that your gas fittings are safe. We recommend you have an annual gas safety check carried out by a qualified engineer who is on the Gas Safe Register.



The Gas Safe Register replaced Corgi on 1st April 2009 and is the official stamp for Gas Safety. You can check that any engineer is qualified and registered by visiting [www.gassaferegister.co.uk](http://www.gassaferegister.co.uk)

Customer contact centre 0800 073 0417 or 0207 447 3100

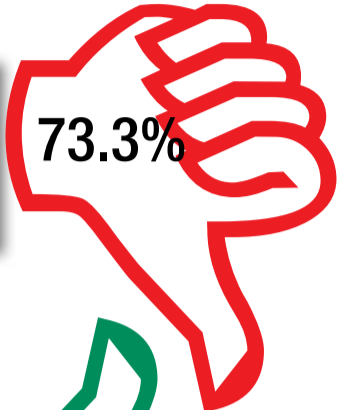
[repairs@circleanglia.org](mailto:repairs@circleanglia.org) (for all repairs enquiries) – [circle33info@circleanglia.org](mailto:circle33info@circleanglia.org) (for all other enquiries)

## How are we doing?

We have performance indicators in place to ensure that we are delivering quality services and providing value for money. The points below give a flavour of how we are performing at the end of September 2010. We know that there are other areas in which we are not performing so well. We are working hard to improve these and will report on them in future editions of Home Matters.

- 73.3% of customers surveyed expressed satisfaction with our overall services

73.3%



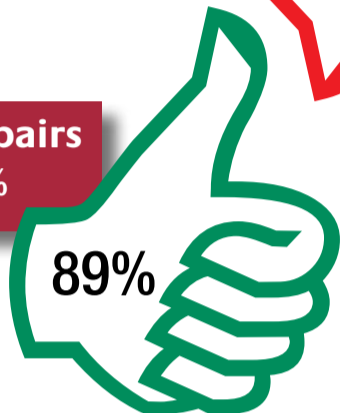
- 99.1% of emergency repairs were completed within the time outlined in our customer service standards

99.1%



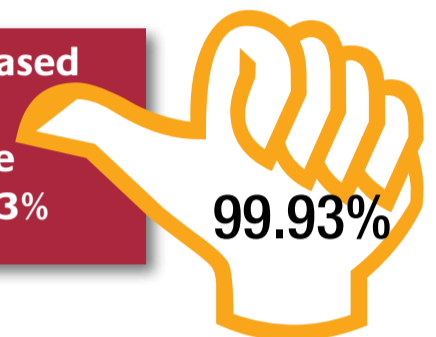
- Satisfaction with the repairs service increased to 89%

89%



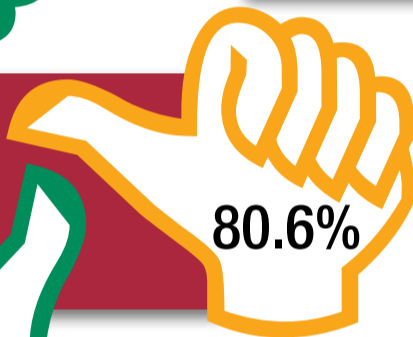
- During the last year we increased the number of gas safety inspections that we were able to carry out from 99% to 99.93%

99.93%



- We improved our telephone service and increased the number of calls answered within 30 seconds to 80.6% and answering 96.6% of all calls

80.6%

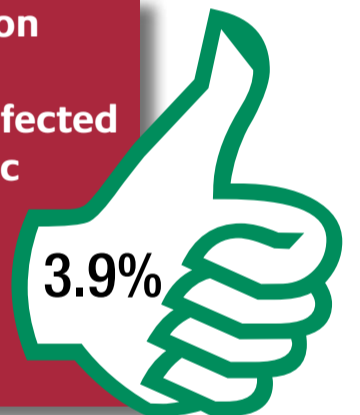


96.6%



- By continuing to focus on financial inclusion and supporting residents affected by the current economic difficulties we have been able to reduce the overall rent debt to 3.9%

3.9%



We have a range of actions in place to improve further on the performance of our services to you.

With the involvement of residents in our improvement groups and with the feedback we receive from surveys and consultation we are confident we will continue to deliver the services you want.

Please continue to tell us about your priorities and we will continue to respond.

## Fire safety checks

The health and safety of our customers is important and we will do all we can to create environments that are safe and secure. As part of our commitment to achieving this we are working in partnership with the fire service to increase the take up of free home safety fire checks.

The purpose of the safety fire check is to;

- ✓ Provide life saving advice in the event of a fire
- ✓ Advise on how to make a fire escape plan

- ✓ Provide practical advice on identifying fire hazards in the home
- ✓ Provide and install **FREE** 10-year smoke alarms where necessary

It is very easy to request a home check, just call our Customer Contact Centre on 020 7447 3100 or freephone 0800 073 0417 and we will complete the referral form with you over the phone. It then goes to the London Fire Brigade who will contact you to arrange to visit you in your home.



If you require this publication in large print, audio, Braille or an alternative format, or you need this document translated into a different language, please call 0800 073 0417 and we will do our best to help.