

Moments that made the year

Mole Valley Housing Association Residents' Review 2007/8



It's been all about new beginnings this year, with our launch in October 2007 and, knowing that 86% of you voted in favour of the transfer to Mole Valley Housing Association (MVHA), we were able to get off to a cracking start.



We made a number of promises to you at the time and since then I'm pleased to say that we've been making sound progress against them, many within six months. We have regular reporting, helping us to keep a close eye on our progress. We've listed the key promises again within this review and added notes to give you an update. One of the key achievements from my point of view is the bigger team in place now. Without them we couldn't do the work we've promised to deliver.



Please keep letting us know how we're doing, the good and the not so good. Your feedback is crucial to making sure all the work stays on the right track.

We're really proud to have been a part of all this change. We have a fantastic team of staff who are enthusiastic about delivering improvements to homes and services.

We are also very fortunate to have excellent residents, many of whom continue to work very hard to help us monitor and develop MVHA's services.

It's been an excellent start and we look forward to delivering more services and improvements as the year rolls on.

We hope you enjoy reading this review and that you think it's useful too – at the back you'll find all our contact information.

Best wishes,

David Searle Managing Director
Alan Catterick Chair of the MVHA Board

Resident's view



The past 12 months have been a real rollercoaster ride for both staff and residents, starting with the ballot vote, which carried all those involved in the transfer project on a wave of excitement. There was the prospect of more funds available and we were all looking forward to the can do attitude of the new organisation. After just a few days it was apparent there was still an enormous amount of work to be undertaken and that was before we could even catch our breath.

Since then the Residents of the Mole Valley Tenants Action Group (MVTAG) have continued to work in partnership with the MVHA board, staff and other resident representatives to ensure the services provided by MVHA are of a high quality and relevant to the residents receiving them. We meet with the staff and contractors regularly to ensure the 'right first time' ethos is achieved. There is also a great deal of work going on behind the scenes to ensure the programme of improvements can be rolled out across the borough. Residents in Fetcham have started to see new kitchens and bathrooms installed, community groups across the borough have been encouraged to apply for grants never available before, grants which may change the life of many of our residents.

We have been directly involved in the design of the new MVHA offices and proudly use our new Residents' Resource Centre to assist in our involvement activities.

We're definitely looking forward to a brighter future with our new association and as part of the Circle Anglia group.

Michelle Mundy
Chair of Mole Valley Tenants Action Group (MVTAG)

Promises in action

We made a whole range of promises in October 2007 and this is where we're up to on 11 key promises.

Major home improvements

Delivering a £52m programme to improve your homes over the next five years and giving you as much choice as possible at the same time.

So far...

Three contractors have been appointed; Mears, Apollo and United House. Pilot schemes are in progress and will set standards for delivery. A 'Meet the contractor' event took place in Dorking Halls to make sure residents are involved when the new contracts are set up.

Estate improvements

Improving security in our neighbourhoods with £1m towards street lighting and mobile CCTV.

So far...

Lighting installations planned for completion during summer 2008, ready for winter. The mobile CCTV unit has already helped bring one person to court for criminal damage.



Disabled adaptations

Investing £1m in providing aid and adaptations service for disabled residents.

So far...

At June 2008, 57 applications were being assessed, with plans for level access showers being assessed by Property Services.

Electrical rewiring

£3m rewiring programme in your homes.

So far...

It's been agreed that wiring will be "chased in" as standard, with any redecorating to be done by residents.

Skip service

A skip service for the disposal of unwanted bulky goods.

So far...

This has been a popular service with trials undertaken in Goodwyns, Chart Downs, Fetcham and Ashtead.

Decorating service

Introducing a free decorating service for older residents and residents with disabilities.

So far...

We've worked out the criteria and will invite those eligible to apply.

Mobile Housing Service

Launching a new mobile office service so we can come to you - especially if you can't come to us.

So far...

We're waiting to take delivery of the vehicle which will make this service possible. It's expected to be in action from Autumn 2008.

Resident involvement

To involve residents in everything we do.

So far..

We have six residents on our board and we're working closely with the Mole Valley Tenants Action Group too. The budget has been increased to open up options for resident involvement. There's a whole range of groups you can become involved in such as Repairs Group, Policy Group and Operations Working Group. For more information please contact the residential involvement team on 01306 505529.

Additional staff

New team members to enhance our service.

So far...

All vacancies have been filled and the team is in place. You'll still see the familiar faces of the original team from the last year but we couldn't ask them to deliver on all the promises we made without some help. So we've added an extra 20 people to the team including:

- New customer services staff
- Property manager
- Two new community wardens
- Asset management surveyors
- A community development officer
- Resident involvement officer
- Handyman

And we've invested in training them too.





Community development

£500,000 has been committed to community development work over the next five years as well as additional social funds for sheltered schemes, to help ensure we provide much more than homes.

Our community development plan is focused on:

- Children and young people
- Safer and stronger communities
- Economic development and environment
- Healthier communities and older people

So far...

Sheltered scheme social fund purchases include a snooker table, dartboard, days out, meals out and arts and crafts groups. There are many others in the pipeline too.

New affordable homes

To set a target to build 300 new affordable homes over the next five years in what is one of the most expensive areas in the UK.

So far...

Work has started on Clifton Heights, Dorking, the first development.

More promises in action

- A choice of tiles and fixings for your bathrooms and kitchens
- Doors, windows and fencing repairs/replacement has started
- Loft conversions and outdoor storage – in discussion with residents
- Help with moving home
- Review of the DLO service underway
- The target for emergency repair response is now four hours
- DLO apprentice scheme
- Handyman service
- Mobile housing service to help those in rural areas
- Community Wardens
- Skip service
- Rent guarantee in line with government policy
- Fairly priced home contents insurance
- Clarity on service/property charges
- New tenancy agreements to protect rights
- Resident Resource Centre provided at Regent House

Our aim is to provide a housing service that is responsive, caring, friendly, approachable, innovative and inclusive

Developing in Dorking



Our priority is to provide affordable housing in an area where the average house price was estimated at £445,850 in 2007 by the Halifax. Even allowing for the recent squeeze on house prices, an average home will continue to be out of reach for many and our aim is to make it possible for people to stay in the area where they grew up.

The first development is Clifton Heights which will provide seven new homes of one to two bedroom flats for shared ownership. These are the first of the 300 we've committed to for the next five years and work started in January 2008. MVHA is also committed to providing as many rented homes as possible.

Repairs partners

It's not just who we appoint but how they'll do the work. With three partners plus our own DLO in-house team, we can manage the workload and quality much better.

Meet the contractor event

This took place in March at Dorking Halls and allowed residents to meet the contractors and view the plans. Feedback was used to help finalise the specification for the improvement works.

The Handyman can

It's the new Handyman Service and he's here to fix those little jobs. Call 01306 50555 if you need help.

£52 million of investment where do we start?

£2.5m on installing new quality modern bathrooms in 1300 homes

£7.6m on fitting new kitchens in over 1900 homes

£3.2m to upgrade, install or replace heating systems in over 1300 homes

£515,000 to fit new, more secure, doors to over 900 homes

£1m on new double glazed windows with better quality locks where needed

£1.1m for erecting or replacing fencing at over 1100 homes

£1m for enhancing the environment, for example improving street lighting





Barry Davies, Goodwyns Community Group Secretary, with Fran Stone and Margaret May, discussing the daffodil planting project for September 2008

New affordable homes being built at Clifton Heights, Dorking



You might like to know...

In a nutshell

Mole Valley Housing Association was formed in 2007 and became a Circle Anglia partner, following a stock transfer from Mole Valley District Council. Mole Valley Housing Association owns approximately 3,500 homes, including 17 sheltered housing schemes.

Who are Circle Anglia?

Mole Valley Housing Association is now one of 10 partners within Circle Anglia. By being part of one of the UK's top 10 providers of affordable housing, we benefit from greater influence, efficiency and cost savings which means that more money can be spent on delivering services for all our residents. The good news is that even though we are part of a large group, we still retain our individuality and independence, running local services to deliver local solutions.

What about the credit crunch and will it affect our work?

You'll no doubt have heard about the credit crunch by now and in case you're wondering if it will affect what we're doing for you, the answer is no. Circle Anglia and Mole Valley Housing Association have a sound financial base which will allow us to continue to have the flow of investment we need to deliver our improvement programmes. So it's full steam ahead on all our plans.

If you're happy, we're happy

In March 2008, 78% of you told us you were satisfied. Overall we'll be looking to increase this figure to a much higher level as fast as possible.

Facts and figures

The figures below have been included in line with guidelines from the Housing Corporation and the National Housing Federation*.

Voids and lettings performance

Average re-let time in days	75.8
Total number of dwellings	3496
Total number of dwellings vacant and available to let	48
Dwellings vacant and available for let	1.37%
Number of dwellings vacant but unavailable to let	26
Dwellings vacant and not available for let	0.74%

Rent collection

Rent collected**	103.7%
Current resident arrears at year end**	4.5%

Resident satisfaction with repairs

Satisfaction with the last repair	98%
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Reactive repairs

Number of emergency repairs notified 4hrs/24hrs	15/957
Number of urgent repairs notified	3798
Number of routine repairs notified	2796
Urgent repairs (includes 24hr emergency) completed within target	77%
Routine repairs completed within target	79%
Number of homes with a valid gas safety certificate	2405
Homes with a valid gas safety certificate	98%

Decent Homes Standard and SAP (energy efficiency) rating

Average SAP rating	59
Homes failing Decent Homes Standard	35.7%

Who we house – lettings in the last year

White British	96.4%
White Irish	0%
White other	1.8%
Mixed	0%
Asian	0.9%
Black	0.9%
Chinese or other	0%
Chose not to say	0%
Total	100%

Lettings to residents with a disability

Percentage of lettings	24.55%
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*The figures above are correct as at 31 March 2008 (** 21 March 2008).

How to contact us

Board members

Alan Catterick (Chair)
Brian Creamer
Bernadette Griffin
Anne Howarth
Abbas Kordbagh
Victoria Lock
Michael Pateman
Jean Pearson
Peter Smith
Peter Stringer
Heather Ward
Sheila Whitty
David Williams
William Williams

General enquiries

For general enquiries
please contact us on:
[Tel 01306 505555](tel:01306505555)
[Email info@mvha.org.uk](mailto:info@mvha.org.uk)

General repairs

[Freephone 0800 634 9876](tel:08006349876)
or 01306 505 555.

For out-of-hours emergencies
(after 5pm and before 8.30am)
please ring 01372 376 533

Hot water or heating repairs

Quality heating direct on
0800 138 3744 (press option 6)

Rent information

If you require information about your
rent account, please go to the
website or call 01306 505555

Customer website

www.mvha.org.uk



On the front cover:

Pauline Ramsden with Mrs Gladys Edser

Mrs Gladys Edser, known to everyone as Mary, has said that she is very happy at Norfolk Court and it doesn't seem four years since she moved in. Pauline Ramsden is the Scheme Manager.

Thank you for your feedback

The Housing Corporation requires us to run a survey every three years to find out what you think of our services. We did it this last year and have received the results. We're looking at the data in detail to help guide the way we deliver our services. Many thanks to all residents who took the time to fill in the questionnaire.

Mole Valley Housing Association

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www.mvha.org.uk
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