

Our Promises To You 2008-10



Background

This document aims to provide a summary of Wherry's achievements against the commitments set out in 'Our promise to you 2008-2010' publication to residents.

In 2008 to 2010, we promise:

To invest...

In more new homes. Over the last year we have built 300 new homes. Wherry promises to build a further 600 new homes over the next 2 years.

The actual number of new homes for Wherry in 2008-10 is:-

2008-09 we built 603

Rent	Shared Ownership	Int Rent	Market Rent	Total Units
293	256	22	32	603

2009-10 we built 239

Rent	Shared Ownership	Int Rent	Total Units
139	89	11	239

2010-11 we have built 134 to date

Rent	Shared Ownership	Total Units
121	13	134

£1.3 million over the next 3 years through our Excellent Estates programme; which delivers communal, external and environmental improvements to the area around your home.

In 2008/09, a total of £251,000 was spent and 16 projects delivered.
In 2009/10, a total of £389,000 has been spent and 28 projects delivered.
In 2010/11, to date we have committed a total of £441,000 and delivered a total of 30 projects

This programme has initially focused on identifying hotspot areas where improvement works for environmental and social issues to improve the neighbourhood wellbeing and reduce incidents of anti-social behaviour would be mostly beneficial.

The types of work included are increased security measures, planting and landscaping, improvements to boundary walls/fencing, improved external clothes drying areas, street signage and creating better or more secure parking.

Examples of specific improvements are as follows:

Beavans Court; Great Yarmouth:

- 40% reduction in the levels of crime and ASB
- Behaviour changes and pride in the local neighbourhood
- Participation in community events and estate inspections is high
- Feeling safe and neighbourliness has improved.
- Satisfaction rates with 'neighbourhood as a place to live' has increased from 25% in 2008/09 to 75% in 2009/10
- Satisfaction that 'views are being taken into account' has increased from 50% in 2008/09 to 100% in 2009/10

Leete Way, West Winch:

There has been a high level of co-operation and involvement in the design and management of the estate project which has brought benefits in itself to the community.

Wade Close:

- Satisfaction with 'appearance of estate' has increased from 53.3% pre-works to 66.7% post works

Crompton Road, Aylsham:

- Satisfaction with 'appearance of estate' has increased from 28.6% pre-works to 75% post works

For all projects, detailed consultation with residents took place with residents before work was carried out. Customer satisfaction with landlord was 71.37% which has increased to 82.49% post works; Similarly, satisfaction with 'the appearance of the estates' has increased from 55.21% to 61.8%.

In 2008 to 2010, we promise:

To listen to your views...

You told us you want more involvement ...we promise to increase the ways you can get involved with Wherry, as an individual, a group or panel. We want you to shape the future of Wherry and promise to involve you in the decision making process, the service delivery and future vision for Wherry.

In September 2008 we launched our Resident Involvement strategy and Resident Involvement Agreement which committed us to involving residents in a variety of ways and to influence services and strategy. We have introduced a number of additional ways to get involved since then, below is a list of activities and forums that residents get involved with:

- joining Facebook
- Becoming a Resident Representative and become a member of 'Way Ahead with Wherry'
- Joining and setting up a Residents Association
- Joining the Property Partnership Board
- Joining a Patch Panel
- Becoming a Mystery Shopper or Resident Inspector
- Checking Wherry publications via our Readers Panel
- Younger Residents can join YELL, our Forum for young Wherry residents.
- Coming along to a Fun Day or other Community Event.
- Taking part in our 'Open Days' and meeting staff behind the scenes.
- Taking part in one off Focus Groups
- Completing surveys
- Taking part in Resident Training events
- Joining our Re-Investment or WISE Groups.
- Joining our Resident Scrutiny Panel
- Becoming a Resident Board Member
- Becoming a member of RASP (our Resident and Service User Panel)

Since 2008, resident's feedback and views have influenced decisions and service delivery in the following ways:

- As a result of resident feedback, the telephone system was updated to include a menu system so that callers could get through to the correct people more easily.
- Residents get involved in carrying out estate inspections which provides the perspective from local people to ensure we are targeting our resources to where it is needed.
- Residents carrying out mystery shopping has led to us improving the quality and where to find information on our website and improved communication through our contact centre.
- Residents reviewed the way we deal with reports of Anti-Social Behaviour issues and as a result we have simplified some of the forms we ask residents to complete when problems are occurring. When issues are reported we also now provide more information on other supporting agencies that may be able to deal with the problem. We have also produced a comprehensive Anti-Social Behaviour guide for residents.
- As a result of resident feedback we have introduced incentive schemes for residents who may wish to move to a smaller property (Room to Move scheme) and another for residents leaving their property if they leave it to a certain standard and allow access for certain checks before they leave.
- As a result of our young residents telling us that they would like to be more involved we have set up a youth forum Y.E.L.L. for under 19's to provide opportunities for us to understand more about what we can provide for our younger residents and they can understand more about what we do and the impact on their community. For example, one of the initiatives we have put in place is earning reward points for carrying out inspections in their areas which can be accumulated and exchanged for a range of activities.
- Residents have been involved in the procurement of our new grounds maintenance, tree and cleaning contracts which includes setting out the expected standards and requirements. Once the work commences under the new contracts, residents will be supporting us to monitor the quality and standards.
- Residents reviewed the way we deal with our Disabled Adaptation requests, as a result of their feedback, we now monitor the progress with our partner agencies much more regularly and the outcomes for residents are being delivered well within set out timescales.
- Residents have told us that they would like their complaints to be dealt with more quickly, we have introduced new processes and as a result our response time to the majority of our complaints is improving.
- To help keep the local area clean and tidy, residents suggested that when requests are received for residents to keep a pet, that we ensure we ask them to take responsibility and we have introduced a 'pet pack' to support residents in doing so.

You told us that one of your top priorities is Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) and the fear of crime...

We promise to work with you to create and maintain safe and enjoyable communities. We will do this by creating diversionary and involvement activities or by taking appropriate enforcement action. We aim to prevent and tackle ASB through working in partnership with you; the Police, Local Authorities and other agencies to improve the quality of life in your area.

Since 2008, we have provided a range of diversionary and involvement activities as follows:

- Developed a community football programme – Kickz
- Secured external funding to purchase Kickz equipment (football fun game) that is used by different communities for events and neighbourhood fun-days held by Wherry
- We have held a number of fun-days during 2009 and 2010 for all of the community to get involved but also provided a range of activities for the younger members of the community to get involved
- We have set up a youth forum Y.E.L.L. for under 19's to provide opportunities for us to understand more about what we can provide for our younger residents and they can understand more about what we do and the impact on their community.
- Through our partners, we link in with school holiday schemes such as Tots 2 Teens to advertise events to get involved with.
- We support "Homewatch" schemes to help reduce the level of crime.

We work with the Police Safer Neighbourhood teams to carry out joint patrols where necessary.

To tackle and prevent ASB, each year we complete around:

- 25 mediation referrals
- 15 Acceptable Behaviour Contracts (ABC's)
- 11 injunctions
- 6 committal proceedings
- 3 evictions

For all new developments we implement Good Neighbourhood Agreements.

In 2009, we led a successful bid to the TSA to fund a local standards pilot working with residents and other local providers, including Freebridge Community Housing, Cotman Housing Association, Flagship - Peddars Way, King's Lynn & West Norfolk Borough Council, Norfolk Fire Service, Norfolk Constabulary and Keep Britain Tidy, to put together a Neighbourhood Charter for Terrington St Clement and develop a Neighbourhood Charter in association with Keep Britain Tidy. This is aimed at improving the local environment and actions and priorities are reviewed by residents to ensure that such improvements are being progressed. Surveys are carried out with residents to ensure that a difference is being made and to provide opportunities for them to feed into ongoing improvements. Satisfaction from residents has significantly improved as follows:

	First Quarter	Second Quarter	Third Quarter
Overall satisfaction with your neighbourhood as place to live	86.84%;	91.02%;	96.43%
Taking everything into account, how satisfied are you with the services that your landlord provides	78.57%	79.96%	83.93%
How satisfied are you that your views are being taken into account	70.83%	79.68%	85.71%
How satisfied are you with the street cleanliness in your local area	73.68%	76.75%	87.50%

You told us we need to improve our communication with you...

We promise to ensure you have a positive experience however you choose to contact Wherry by improving our call answering, replying to letters more quickly and spending more time out visiting you.

From April 2008 to the end of December 2010, we answered a total of 149,601 telephone calls. Performance in answering calls has improved from 88.56% in April 2008 to an overall performance of 94.4% for 2010.

We are unable to measure our response time to letters.

Our neighbourhood team carry out visits (tenancy health checks), we have carried out approximately 500 more in total during 2010 compared to the number in 2008.

In 2008 to 2010, we promise:

To offer fair rent...

- **By using the Government's "target rent" or "rent convergence" system. This is designed to ensure that all housing association and council rents are all calculated in the same way, making them; fairer, less confusing to tenants, level with properties of a similar size, location and condition, remain affordable in future.**
- **Where rents are currently different to target rent they will be brought into line or "converged" over the next few years to be the same by 2012, the date the government has set for all rents to reach target rent.**
- **We guarantee your rent will not increase by more than inflation plus 0.5% plus a maximum of £2.00 per week to move your rent closer to the target rent. If your rent is currently above the target rent you will not receive a rent increase until the target rent catches up.**

We ensure that we comply with all these requirements every year when setting rent. In relation to where rents are currently different to target rents, after the increase is applied in the new financial year 11/12, there will be 86% on target.

In 2008 to 2010, we promise:

To provide quality homes...

By ensuring you have a modern kitchen and bathroom that meets the Governments "Decent Homes" standard:

We have now completed our decent homes programme. Since April 2008 we have spent over £5 million which has replaced 1,254 kitchens and bathrooms.

By ensuring you have warmer homes with efficient heating to reduce fuel bills and reduce our carbon footprint:

We have invested over £7.8million since April 2008 on measures such as new boilers and heating systems as well as loft, cavity and solid wall insulation. In June 2010 we developed a WISE (Wherry Is Saving Energy) energy strategy with the aim of continuing to make homes warmer and more energy efficient.

In 2008, we also launched the 'Greening the Box' initiative, a pilot that included adapting a property in the village of Ringland to standards aimed at reducing the carbon footprint. In 2010, the greenhouse gas emissivity reductions have been reduced by 93%.

By investing £2million to upgrade heating to 'A' rated boilers in 500 properties:

Since April 2008 we have actually invested over £7 million on upgrading heating to 'A' rated boilers in 1,423 properties.

By investing £200,000 in the next 2 years to upgrade loft insulation and install cavity wall insulation in 1000 properties:

Since April 2008 we have invested £262,884 on the installation of cavity wall and loft insulation in 1,376 properties.

To enable you to stay and live in your homes, by investing £500,000 to carry out disabled adaptations works, which will vary from small works such as handrails and ramps, to larger more complex work such as stair lifts and level access showers. Any resident can apply if you need this kind of help and we promise to minimise waiting times and keep you informed during the process.

Since April 2008 we have spent £962,762 on disabled adaptation works to over 500 properties. In 2008, we monitored performance from the day we were provided with an order as a referral from an occupational therapist, the average time to complete requests from this point was 186 days. We now monitor the time it takes to complete a request from the day a resident first requests an adaptation, for 2010, this averages at 109 days.