

Moments that made the year

South Anglia Housing Association Residents' Review 2007/8



I'd like to start by thanking all the residents who have given us feedback last year. We've been listening carefully and using this information to help us to reshape the services we deliver to you.



I know that there have been some areas of services which have not been what they should be, and the South Anglia Housing team has been taking some steps to fix this. I'm really pleased to say that recent feedback has been showing that you're starting to feel the benefits of these changes. In this review you'll see what action has been taken and what to expect over the coming year.

As this is a Resident's Review, three residents, Victoria Nadauld, Norman Pascoe and Rita Youens, will also give you a view on what last year has been like from their perspective.

In 2007 we grew too and I'd like to welcome the residents living in 1,349 properties in Luton and Beds, who've joined us from Circle 33. We made the promise of better services and significant improvements to your homes and I hope you're starting to see the results.

Overall last year has been about lots of positive changes, focused on improving the way we deliver services and making things happen. Looking ahead this continues to be our main focus and we need your help by telling us how we're doing - tell us where we're falling short and also please don't forget to tell us when we're doing a great job. If we're getting it right, it really makes our day.

I hope you enjoy having a quick look through this review. It's useful too as you'll find practical information in the back pages.

Best wishes, Chris Ellison
Managing Director

Residents' view

The highlight for me last year was when the Excellent Estates project came into action. It's going to bring benefits to everybody, improving quality of life. There's been lots of groundwork and planning and I'm really looking forward to seeing real results on the ground.

Victoria Nadauld
Resident and Board Member

It's been good news from my point of view that during 2007 South Anglia Housing provided opportunities for resident involvement in a broad range of initiatives. In particular the South Anglia Residents' Forum (SARF) has provided an opportunity for residents to participate in policy making and reviews. I'm looking forward too, to the October 2008 combined Tenants and Community Spirit Forum award event, all being planned by SARF members.

Norman Pascoe
Resident representative on SARF and Excellent Estates Group



Norman and Jean Pascoe
with Alan Hall (middle)

I've been invited to join quite a few groups last year and it's been brilliant for me, meeting new people and working with them. One example I've been involved in, is setting up the Residents' Association on the Bullfield Estate. What has been really positive, are the opportunities I've had to speak directly to managers and directors about issues that affect all of us. There's lots in the pipeline and whilst it will take time, I do feel I can say that South Anglia are really involving residents now and taking our suggestions on board.

Rita Youens
Member of Residents' Association Bullfield Estate, SARF, Excellence Estates, Maintenance Operational Group and Disability Group

Moments that made 2007/8

Community Spirits Awards in November 2007

Over 80 people turned up and it was a great night. Preparations started in summer with over 100 nominations rolling in. There were so many deserving people but it had to be just one winner for each category and here they are:

Local Community Award

Dean Barrick

Being a Hero Award

Ryan Gardner

Inspiration to Others Award

Mr and Mrs Burton

Support to the Family Award

Deborah East

Support to Neighbour Award

Jack Farrow

Welcome to residents from Luton and Beds

Residents living in 1,349 properties in Luton and Beds have joined South Anglia Housing from Circle 33 and one key action, amongst several, has been to set up a new local office, making it easier for residents to speak to us. Our other priorities are to tackle repairs, estate management and anti-social behaviour.

Your say, your way

Making sure that residents have different ways of getting involved and influencing work and planning, has been a major ambition for South Anglia Housing last year. It all started with two Friends' Meetings last year and now it works like this at three levels:

South Anglia Residents Forum (SARF)

Five quality action groups

- ASB
- Access
- Customer Care Disability
- Property Repair
- Complaints

Residents' Associations

It's all fairly new and still taking shape. SARF currently has 12-15 members and the plan for the future is that the panel will be elected by residents. The current group are heavily involved in organising the Residents' Conference. If you want to join in at any of these levels it's easy. Just contact your local office to find out more.

Regeneration

£1.6 million Vange regeneration programme

There's been some good progress with this programme and 12 new homes have been completed. The plan is to build a total of 90 new homes and this could be increased to 120. The majority will be for shared ownership to give people a chance to get on the property ladder, providing homes for young single people, first time buyers and families. If you're interested please call 0845 304 1007. We're also upgrading the footpaths, introducing better security and improving the drainage works.

Excellent Estates

This is a new initiative with £2 million to spend in 2008 on improving estates and pilots are underway in two areas. Roadshows have been held in Luton and Bishops Stortford to obtain the views of residents and leaseholders. Work will be undertaken to improve internal and external community areas and improve security on estates where it's most needed. South Anglia Housing and United House will ensure that lessons learned are taken into account in achieving successful completion of works on other estates.



To mark the opening of the new South Anglia office, children from Bardfield Primary made a fantastic commemorative plaque

Winning ways

Well nearly – we were runners up in the UK Housing Award for the category 'Making Neighbourhoods Safer' and that's pretty good! We entered our project 'Safer Communities' based on Operation Horizon run in partnership with Essex Police. The competition is from across the UK so we know we're in the top rank.

A new home

The South Anglia Housing office at Ravenscourt Drive was demolished (see picture overleaf), making space for 12 new affordable homes for local people. The office is now in new premises at 22 Pitseville Grove which is shared with Essex Police.

We're spending £1.6 million in Vange building new homes, new footpaths, increasing security and improving drainage works



Bricks and mortar, tiles and taps 500 new homes over five years

Business Plan 2008/9

Residents are influencing the business plan for 2008/9.

Tell us all about it

It's your home and your neighbourhood – please help us to get things right by giving us feedback through surveys and by talking to your resident representatives.

The Doorstep Challenge Roadshows

The challenge is how do we best deliver services, as different approaches work for different people. With the Doorstep Challenge we put together a mixed team representing all our services and we come to you and see if we can fix something on the spot. It could be a dripping tap or filling in a form. You've told us this is great, so we'll be doing more Roadshows.

Face to face

The phone isn't always best, so just to let you know, we're looking at increasing the opportunities by which you can speak to us face to face.

Fixing how we fix your homes

It's been recognised last year that the repairs and maintenance service needs to improve. As a direct result of the feedback we have received from you, we have entered into an innovative management arrangement between Mears Group PLC and Anglia Maintenance Services. This new agreement brings strict targets for our contractors to deliver what they promise when they promise. New IT systems will improve monitoring of appointments and repairs with a greater focus on completing the repair during the first visit. You should be seeing a visible improvement over the next year.

We replaced
302 kitchens
159 bathrooms
511 boilers
183 doors

We also completed
120 electrical upgrades
154 new complete
heating systems
58 cavity wall
insulations





People in focus

Walk on the Wales side

Eleven young people, including Ronnie opposite, went to Wales with Essex Police, Caroline Kaldani, Head of Community Development and Neighbourhood Officer, Kellie Smith. They'll tell you it wasn't a picnic though. They had to keep their own sleeping spaces clean and tidy and during the day they tried outdoor activities. But it did increase their confidence and self esteem and they got to know the team as people. It's just one of those steps in our efforts to nip anti-social behaviour in the bud.

Out with the old Outlook

It's in with the new scheme now that the old Outlook Scheme has closed. We're building new facilities, much needed by families in the area, as well as explaining the potential for some more supported housing.

Thank you for your feedback

The Housing Corporation requires us to run a survey every three years. We did it in 2004/5 and then again in 2007/8. We're looking at the data in detail and it's changing the way we deliver our services. Many thanks to all the residents who took the time to fill in the questionnaire.

Big cats and setting up a new office in Vange Estate

This office was a joint venture with Essex Police and it was the base for Operation Leopard which has had national press coverage. Operation Leopard is an intensive 'in your face' surveillance programme pioneered by Essex Police in a bid to cut anti-social behaviour by young people, by constantly monitoring them.

Call centre ups response level

Response levels have improved dramatically with 95% of calls answered and 80% answered within 30 seconds.





You might like to know...

In a nutshell

We're made up of the former Stort Valley, Vange and Ryeland Housing Associations, which were all set up to handle transfers of homes, as well as Blackwater, and Barking and Dagenham. South Anglia Housing now manages a little under 7,000 homes in over 26 local authority areas throughout Essex, Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire.

Who are Circle Anglia?

South Anglia Housing is one of 10 partners within Circle Anglia. By being part of a much larger organisation we benefit from greater clout, efficiency and costs savings which means that more money can be spent on delivering services for all our residents. Even though we are part of a large group, we still retain our individuality and independence, running our services to suit your specific and individual needs.

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 has 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.



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	36.3
Number of units vacant and available to let	201
Dwellings vacant and available for let	3.3%
Number of units vacant but unavailable to let	57
Dwellings vacant and not available for let	0.9%

Rent collection

Rent collected	99.3%
Current resident arrears at year end	6.4%

Resident satisfaction with repairs

Satisfaction with the last repair	88.2%
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Reactive repairs

Number of emergency repairs notified	2789
Number of urgent repairs notified	4175
Number of routine repairs notified	9194
Emergency repairs completed within target	95.2%
Urgent repairs completed within target	89.8%
Routine repairs completed within target	97.2%
Number of homes with a valid gas safety certificate	5131
Homes with a valid gas safety certificate	99.5%

Decent Homes Standard and SAP (energy efficiency) rating

Average SAP rating	68
Homes failing Decent Homes Standard	9.3%

Who we house – lettings in the last year

White British	87.2%
White Irish	0.3%
White other	2.6%
Mixed	3.1%
Asian	1.8%
Black	4.1%
Chinese or other	0.9%
Chose not to say	0%
Total	100%

Lettings to residents with a disability

Percentage of lettings	9.7%
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*The figures above are correct as at 31 March 2008.

How to contact us

South Anglia Housing is part of Circle Anglia, which was formed by the merger of Circle 33 Housing Group and Anglia Housing Group on 1 July 2005.

Stort Valley, Blackwater, Vange, Ryeland and Barking and Dagenham all merged to form South Anglia Housing.

The Board

Alan Hall (Chair)
Lynne Milligan (Vice Chair)
Patrick Pedder
Victoria Nadauld
Simon Yule
Fiona Cornell
Graeme Parsloe
Cllr Simon Walsh
(local authority nominee)
Cllr David Andrews
(local authority nominee)

Customer services

Following your feedback we've added more numbers to keep your costs down when you call us.

Tel 0845 600 1543

(Low-cost local number)

0800 694 0159 (Freephone from local number)

For Type Talk service add 18001 in front of any of the above numbers

Fax 01279 504603

Minicom 0800 7311888

Out of hours' emergency repairs

Tel 0845 600 1543

(Low-cost local number)

Write to

South Anglia Housing
Number One Building
The Causeway
Bishops Stortford
CM23 2ER

Email

southanglia.info@circleanglia.org

Paying your rent

Tel 0870 243 6040

(Over the phone – 24-hour service)

Set up a direct debit

Tel 01279 714799

Rent advice tel 01279 714799

Talk to us about your rent account

Tel 01279 714799

Email

incometeamshared@circleanglia.org

Customer website

www.circleanglia.org/customers

Anti-social behaviour website

www.circleangliarespect.org

Delivery of promises website

www.deliveryofpromises.org.uk

Complaints

Email complaints_sa@circleanglia.org



On the front cover:

Danielle Kreпка and Steven Mullins

They were delighted to be able to buy their first home, a brand new two bedroom flat in Wickford near Basildon, through the New Build HomeBuy scheme.

South Anglia Housing

Number One Building
The Causeway
Bishops Stortford
CM23 2ER

Tel 0845 600 1543 (Low-cost local number)

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Email southanglia.info@circleanglia.org

www.circleanglia.org

Part of Circle Anglia.

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