



South Anglia
Housing

Residents' review 2007



Providing local services



When Circle Anglia was established two years ago, we promised you that you would continue to receive local services delivered by local staff.

Everyone at South Anglia Housing has been working hard to achieve that and to tackle the key local priorities you identified during our recent Have Your Say consultation.

We have also been busy strengthening our Neighbourhood Teams and are working with other local agencies to tackle all sorts of issues, including anti-social behaviour.

However, not everything went smoothly during the year. For example, we did have some teething problems with our new rent system – which have now settled down – and apologies to any residents who were inconvenienced by that.

We were also hit by the national shortage of fencing panels after the New Year storms. Our contractors have been working hard since to clear the backlog.

Listening to what you want and need is very important to us.

For example, residents who took part in last year's annual review survey told us the top items they wanted to see in this year's review were: how to contact staff (90%), what we've done to improve your homes (90%), how we're performing on issues like repairs and rents (89%), what we've done to improve communities (86%) and overall achievements during the year (80%).

You will find those items and many more in this review.

Chris Ellison Managing Director

Key achievements



Taking the Delivery of Promises road show to the streets so that residents can see what their homes will look like after work to meet the Government's Decent Homes Standard has been completed. During the year ending March 2007, we replaced 246 kitchens and 187 bathrooms, carried out heating replacement and upgrading work to 293 homes and rewired 189 properties.

85%

of our homes met the Government's Decent Homes Standard

As part of the Delivery of Promises programme Keith and Doreen Whitehouse, from Westmill, had a new bathroom, kitchen and heating and their home was completely re-wired. They are absolutely delighted with the results. Doreen says; "We are so happy in our newly modernised home and plan to stay here for the rest of our lives."

Opening our new one-stop office in Bishop's Stortford, which brings together customer services staff, property asset staff and our contractors AMS all under one roof. Working together in this way enables us to deal with repair problems more efficiently. The office also provides a more pleasant environment for staff and residents and includes full disability access.

Improving our repairs service by setting up appointments so that you know when the work is going to be done and calling you after work has been completed to make sure you are happy.

Strengthening our Neighbourhood Teams so that they can work with you and other local organisations to tackle the issues that matter most to you. And providing you with their direct contact details so that you can speak to them more easily.



Organising a wide range of community events, including meet your neighbour parties for new schemes, a DJ workshop and dance session for young residents, tea dances and concerts for older residents and a wide range of activities to keep youngsters occupied during the summer holidays.

900

home improvements over the last year

The Mother and Baby Unit and the Independent Living Centre at The Vineries in Dagenham supported 74 young people over the last year.



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	28
Number of units vacant and available to let	16
Dwellings vacant and available for let	0.3%
Number of units vacant but unavailable to let	22
Dwellings vacant and not available for let	0.4%

Rent collection

Rent collected	99.0%
Current tenant arrears at year end	6.2%

Resident satisfaction with repairs

Satisfaction with the last repair	85.2%
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Reactive repairs

Number of emergency repairs notified	2,815
Number of urgent repairs notified	4,367
Number of routine repairs notified	3,300
Emergency repairs completed within target	97.1%
Urgent repairs completed within target	80.4%
Routine repairs completed within target	89.7%
Appointments made and kept	89.0%
Number of homes with a valid gas safety certificate	3,989
Homes with a valid gas safety certificate	97.6%

Decent Homes Standard and SAP (energy efficiency) rating

Average SAP rating	71
Homes failing Decent Homes Standard	15.1%

Who we house – lettings in the last year

White British	94.4%
White Irish	0.2%
White other	2.1%
Mixed	0.5%
Asian	0.7%
Black	1.2%
Chinese or other	0.4%
Chose not to say	0.5%
Total	100%

Lettings to residents with a disability

Percentage of lettings	12.5%
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* The figures above are correct as at 31 March 2007.

How we performed



Despite the high volume of calls we received, staff answered 80% of them and 71% were answered within our 30 second target. We resolved 60% of the queries or problems we dealt with straight away.

86%

of complaints received were resolved at the first stage of our complaints procedure

Call Centre staff handled just under 90,000 calls between April 2006 and March 2007 – that is an average of 15 calls for each home we manage and a massive increase on the 30,500 received the previous year.

We collected 99% of the rent we were owed during the year and nine residents were evicted for rent arrears. Residents currently owe us more than £1.2 million in rent arrears and former residents owe us more than £150,000.

98%

of our properties now have a valid gas safety certificate

We completed 88% of repairs within our timescales, which is lower than the 95% target we set ourselves. By the end of March 2007 we were completing 97% of emergency repairs on time, together with 80% of urgent repairs and 90% of routine repairs.

Customer satisfaction with the repairs services improved from 75% in the quarter ending June 2006 to 85% in the quarter ending March 2007.

After they had been vacated it took us an average of 28 days to re-let each of the 180 empty properties, which means that we met our target. We hope to reduce this figure to 21 days during the next year.

only 1%

of our properties were empty at the end of March 2007

Tackling anti-social behaviour

When we asked you about key local issues during our Have Your Say consultation, anti-social behaviour (ASB) was high on your list. Thirty-nine per cent of residents were satisfied with our response to ASB issues, 35% were dissatisfied and 26% held no strong views.

But we all agreed there was room for improvement and you told us that you wanted staff to have a more visible presence, for us to get tougher on people causing problems and for us to do more with young people.



South Anglia has taken the lead on an initiative to tackle ASB in Bishop's Stortford and is working with the local police and council on a wide range of preventative measures.



Appointing a full-time Anti-Social Behaviour Co-ordinator, Steve Kensington and increasing the number of Neighbourhood Officers are just two of the ways we're helping to tackle ASB.

“My role is to ensure that residents have the quality of life they deserve,” explains Steve who started his new role in April 2007. “It is crucial to identify and tackle problems early to stop them escalating.”

We have also introduced starter tenancies which mean that all new residents have a 12-month trial period. During the first year new residents have to prove they are a good neighbour and can face eviction if they cause problems. But if everything goes well they become an assured resident after a year.

Circle Anglia signed up to the Government's Respect initiative to tackle ASB in May 2007 and has launched a special residents' website at www.circleangliarespect.org

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

Graeme Parslow

Les Warder

Cllr Lesley Rideout (Local Authority Nominee)

Cllr Simon Walsh (Local Authority Nominee)

Cllr David Andrews (Local Authority Nominee)

Cllr Tony Ball (Local Authority Nominee)

Customer services

Tel 0845 600 1543

(Low-cost local number)

Fax 01279 714766

Minicom 0800 7311888

Out of hours' emergency repairs

Tel 0845 600 1543

(Low-cost local number)

General issues

Write to

South Anglia Housing

PO Box 3335

Anglia House

Norwich NR7 7FZ

Email

southanglia.info@circleanglia.org

Paying your rent

Tel 0870 243 6040

(Over the phone – 24-hour service)

Set up a direct debit

Tel 01603 703587

Talk to us about your rent account

Tel 01603 703583

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

