



Resident Involvement Statement 2009/10

We are the
GreenSquare Group.
We are made up of
Oxford Citizens
Housing Association
(OCHA), Westlea
Housing Association
and Oakus. We are
committed to
involving you, and
answering to you.



Resident Scrutiny Panel

What we said we'd do in 2008/09

We would recruit and train a group of residents to be a Scrutiny Panel – they would check if we are achieving our aims as a housing association. They would look at evidence from the mystery shoppers as well as the inspectors.

What we did in 2008/09

We advertised the creation of the Panel to all residents, and recruited and trained its first members. An independent person was appointed to chair the meetings to help Panel members, and an independent organisation to evaluate progress.

What we are doing & will do in 2009/10

- The Scrutiny Panel started in April. They have completed their first inquiry which was to look at the electric heating in Westlea properties. They did this by reading relevant papers and interviewing key staff. The Scrutiny Panel will carry out further inquiries during the rest of the year
- We will continue to support the Scrutiny Panel during its first year
- Panel members and staff will look at the results of the independent evaluation to see how we should go forward.



Resident Inspectors

What we said we'd do in 2008/09

We would recruit and train a group of residents to be resident inspectors – they

would inspect our services in detail (like school inspectors).

What we did in 2008/09

We recruited and trained 16 residents to be inspectors and start their first trial inspection of empty properties. They will feedback to us and we will work with them to review how it went to see how we can improve and better support the process and how we can improve the service on empty properties.

What we are doing & will do in 2009/10

- Resident Inspectors have completed the first inspections
- Feedback details of the inspection to residents
- Continue to train and support resident inspectors to carry out more inspections.

Mystery shopping

What we said we'd do in 2008/09

We would recruit and train a group of residents to be mystery shoppers that will check on how well we run our services.

What we did in 2008/09

We have recruited and trained 20 mystery shoppers and they have carried out their first mystery shop by telephone.

What we are doing & will do in 2009/10

- Continue to train and support mystery shoppers
- Run an annual programme of mystery shops to inform how we deliver services.

Residents' training

What we said we'd do in 2008/09

We would give information to and will support and train all our residents who take part in involvement activities.

What we did in 2008/09

We advertised to all residents the new involvement opportunities and have provided professional training to support those who wanted to take part.

What we are doing & will do in 2009/10

- Review training needs with residents who are participating
- Continue to develop training that gives residents the support they need
- Ensure residents are able to apply their training
- Offer coaching to our resident board members.

Residents' interviewing staff and board members

What we said we'd do in 2008/09

We would recruit and train a group of residents who will help to interview people who apply for a job with us, to make sure that key staff and board members understand residents' views.

What we did in 2008/09

We did this in some of our partnership projects. The chief executive and directors of GreenSquare, Board members, and the new managing directors of the associations were interviewed by residents, so we started at the top!

What we are doing & will do in 2009/10

- We will recruit residents in 2010 to be involved in interviews of high level staff and key front line staff across Westlea and OCHA.

Continuous improvement of resident involvement

What we said we'd do in 2008/09

We would make sure that all staff know how to involve residents and review how they are doing.

What we did in 2008/09

All staff at Westlea and key staff at OCHA have received training this year in resident involvement and how to make sure that residents influence what we do.

What we are doing & will do in 2009/10

- Continue to check on the results of resident involvement and that residents

have had a real impact on what we do and how we do it.



Helping residents to get involved

What we said we'd do in 2008/09

We would pay reasonable travel and care expenses, make sure all venues were accessible and provide translating and interpreting services.

What we did in 2008/09

We have continued to pay for travel costs, arrange taxis and pay care allowances for residents involved. All venues that are booked have access for the disabled. We can provide documents in any language, large print or Braille. We can provide visible note taking or sign language for the hard of hearing; and interpreters for anyone whose first language is not English.

What we are doing & will do in 2009/10

- Continue to use these ways to help residents to get involved
- Review the policy to make sure that all expenses and incentives are reasonable
- Support all residents with special needs.

Ways of involving residents

What we said we'd do in 2008/09

We would make sure that everyone can take part in making decisions about how we provide homes and services.

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What we did in 2008/09

Both associations used a range of ways to involve residents within their communities – from filling in surveys to helping shape the Residents' Business Plan.

What we are doing & will do in 2009/10

■ Continue to offer a range of ways for residents to get involved ■ Fully implement new methods of involvement ■ Review the involvement methods and how well we are doing; take the results to the Management Boards and publish them for residents.

Clear leaflets

What we said we'd do in 2008/09

We would produce information in plain English and in a clear style that it is easy to understand.

What we did in 2008/09

Both Westlea and OCHA are corporate members of the Plain English Campaign and have had many leaflets and letters 'crystalmarked' for clarity. However, we recognise we may still have some way to go.

What we are doing & will do in 2009/10

■ Continue to produce information in plain, clear English ■ Review our methods of written communications during 2009/10.



Alternatives to holding meetings

What we said we'd do in 2008/09

We would make sure you can contact us by phone, our website and with video conferencing equipment as alternatives to

travelling to meetings.

What we did in 2008/09

■ Our websites reviewed and updated to make them more user-friendly.
■ Video conferencing used for some sessions with staff and residents.

What we will do in 2009/10

■ Use more teleconferences and video conferences ■ Continue to develop our websites to support contact between, and with, residents.



For more information, or if you would like to have any part of this document explained, translated, or in a different format such as in large print or on audio tape, please contact one of the following:

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