



GreenSquare

Westlea Housing

CORPORATE PLAN 2008-2011



business for neighbourhoods


WestleaHousing

about us

This is the corporate business plan for Westlea Housing for the three years from 1st April 2008. This section is a summary of who we are and what we will do during this time.

Westlea Housing was set up in 1995 to take over and improve the homes previously owned by North Wiltshire District Council, and achieved charitable status in 2004. Now, as part of the GreenSquare Group, we look forward to continuing to provide homes for people with a range of housing needs, particularly those who cannot afford to rent or buy on the open market. Regulated by the Housing Corporation, we are independent and not-for-profit. As well as taking care of the 'bricks and mortar' of around 6,000 homes in Wiltshire and Swindon, we are committed to working in partnership with others to develop new homes and services to make our neighbourhoods good places to live.

OUR AIMS

Our corporate plan sets out what we want to achieve over the next three years. As part of the GreenSquare Group we can be more ambitious in our aims to be:

- an excellent housing provider;
- an excellent partner; and
- an excellent employer.

A BIT ABOUT US

Our homes

Altogether we own or manage 6,458 homes across North and West Wiltshire and Swindon:

Type of home	Number owned
General needs (for anyone in housing need)	5,202
Older persons' housing	675
Supported housing (for people with particular needs, for example those with mental health issues)	174
Low cost home ownership (part-rent, part-buy homes)	112
Leasehold (properties, usually flats, where the owner has bought the property under the Right to Buy scheme but we still own the freehold to the building)	259
Housing Association or short-term lease properties (where we manage a property on behalf of the owner)	2
Student Rent	34
TOTAL	6,458

about us

Our rents

The table below shows how our average rent in North Wiltshire compares to the cost of renting or buying a house through other methods.

Type of home	Cost per week
Rented from Westlea Two bedrooms	£64.95 (at March 07)
Rented from another housing association (average) Two bedrooms	£65.90 (at March 07)
Westlea low cost home ownership • £140,000 property • 50% bought with £70,000 mortgage • 50% rented from Westlea	£140
Rented from a private landlord Two bedrooms	£150
Bought on the open market Terraced property	£265*

* Mortgage calculated based on the average sale price of a terraced house in North Wiltshire (Dec 2006), assuming a 5% deposit.

Our performance

Performance indicator	Our results (March 2007)
Overall tenant satisfaction	84%
Tenant satisfaction with their opportunities to participate	70%
Current rent arrears	4.1%
Time to relet empty homes	18.8 days
Average energy efficiency rating (SAP) of our homes	74.3
Percentage of our homes passing the Decent Homes Standard	94.5%
Repairs completed within target time:	
• Emergency	• 99%
• Urgent	• 97.1%
• Routine	• 99%
Repairs appointments made and kept	99.7%

For more information about our performance and how it compares to others, please see the *Our Achievements* section.

Our employees

Westlea employs approximately 230 staff in total, within our Neighbourhood Services and Asset Management teams. Central services such as Human Resources and ICT are provided by GreenSquare Group.

our objectives

Westlea will work towards the overall objectives in the GreenSquare corporate plan, and these specific objectives over the next three years. 🏠 **RBP** indicates that this objective delivers targets set out in the Residents' Business Plan.

1. Customer Care

We will achieve a year-on-year improvement in resident and colleague satisfaction with our customer services.

How are we going to deliver it?

- We will maintain the strong cultural focus on excellent customer services both internally and externally
- We will maintain Quality Housing Standard accreditation for our customer services
- The new Orchard ICT system will go live on 7th April 2008 with no drop in service levels. We will further develop the system to meet resident and business needs by April 2009, for example, making sure we can use it to track and monitor service standards 🏠 **RBP**
- We will install a new telephone system in May 2008 and make enhancements to the system by October 2008
- We will continue to monitor performance
- We will complete a satisfaction survey of all our residents by June 2009
- We will use our resident forums to inform service improvement and feed back to residents on what we have achieved
- We will continue to gather up to date on our residents' individual needs so that we can provide a much more tailored service, and use the full resident survey in 2009 to fill in any remaining gaps
- By March 2010, we will run a Customer Care Academy to train and support staff to deliver excellent services RBP Each year, we will make contact with a sample of customers who have not contacted us to check the accessibility of our services

How we will know when we get there?

(Our current performance is detailed in brackets where appropriate)

- We will achieve performance within the top 25% (upper quartile) of local housing associations:
- Maintain our top quartile performance in terms of overall satisfaction with our service (84%); and
- Achieve 80% satisfaction with the outcome of last contact (77%) 🏠 **RBP**
- We will maintain certification level in our QHS scores
- In terms of complaints, we will:
 - achieve at least 60% satisfaction from residents with our complaints handling process during 2008/09 (67% at December 2007);
 - resolve 95% of complaints within target times; and
 - ensure that at least 90% of complaints are resolved informally or at stage one of the complaints process
- 95% of initial contact telephone calls will be answered within five rings (92.5% at December 2007)
- Each year, we will survey a sample of 5% of residents who have not made contact during the previous years

Links: Group customer care strategy; Westlea service standards

2. Resident Involvement

We will establish a more effective dialogue with our residents to: understand and respond to residents' needs; shape our priorities; receive feedback on our services; and be accountable.

How are we going to deliver it?

- We will increase the range of opportunities for people to become involved in shaping our services
- We will review our asset management service user group during 2008 to enable residents to be actively involved in reviewing maintenance services and selecting and monitoring asset management contractors 🏠 **RBP**
- We will work with residents' groups to develop a more effective dialogue and become more representative of their community
- We will use a wider range of methods to consult with residents including telephone surveys, teleconferences and multimedia options
- We will work across the Group to increase accountability by establishing a residents' scrutiny panel, a team of Resident Inspectors and a team of Mystery Shoppers during 2008/09 🏠 **RBP**
- We will use a variety of methods, including the annual impact statement to make sure that residents receive feedback to show how their involvement has changed our services 🏠 **RBP**
- We will consult residents on our corporate business plan each year
- We will establish a group-wide resident training programme by October 2008 and continue to run our Westlearn training programme, including offering free internet access and IT training to improve residents' skills so that they can access employment and voluntary and involvement opportunities
- We will gain accreditation from the Tenants' Participation Advisory Service by November 2009

How we will know when we get there?

(Our current performance is detailed in brackets where appropriate)

- We will maintain our upper quartile performance in satisfaction with the opportunities to participate in management and decision making (70%)
- We will achieve 75% satisfaction with how well we take residents' views into account when we make decisions by 2009/10 (73%)
- We will aim to further increase the number and range of people involved during 2008/09
- Our impact statement for 2007/08 will show that resident involvement activities have had an improving impact on service delivery
- Responses to our surveys and participation in our resident involvement activities will mirror the make-up of our resident population by 2011
- We will maintain the excellent level of resident satisfaction with the information we provide (92%) 🏠 **RBP**
- We will have a Residents' Business Plan in place alongside the corporate plan during 2008/09
- We will see a year on year increase in the number of new attendees on the resident training programmes; the number of residents completing their course and the levels of satisfaction with the training

Links: Group resident involvement strategy; Westlea Involvement Guidelines

our objectives

3. Service Excellence and Continuous Improvement

By 2011, we will have achieved top quartile performance levels in all key service areas.

How are we going to deliver it?

- We will achieve year on year improvements in performance, learning from our experiences and those of others in order to achieve continuous improvement
- We will deliver the third year of our "Building Excellence" continuous improvement programme in order to improve performance and value for money and report on the outcomes to residents
- We will use the new ICT system to improve our performance monitoring at all levels of the organisation
- We will continue to have sufficient and appropriately structured resources on the front line to deliver excellent services
- We will continue to consult our residents on the services they need and respond to their requirements
- We will carry on using the Audit Commission's Key Lines of Enquiry as a method of improving our services
- We will work to the 2012 Construction Commitments

How we will know when we get there?

(Our current performance is detailed in brackets where appropriate)

- We will achieve our upper quartile satisfaction targets detailed in objective one above
- We will achieve or be performing at the level of at least a "good with excellent prospects for improvement" inspection by the end of 2008/09
- Our "Building Excellence" service reviews will show measurable improvements in services to residents

Links: Group continuous improvement framework; Group performance management framework

4. Services for Vulnerable Residents

We will:

- see a year on year improvement in the quality of life of our most vulnerable residents;
- Increase the number and quality of homes and services for homeless people; and
- Offer accommodation and services that meet the changing needs of older people.

How are we going to deliver it?

- We will continue to tender for floating and other support services contracts with our partners, including Community4, to expand the range of services that we can offer to vulnerable residents
- We will set aside an annual budget to adapt homes for disabled residents that reflects the increasing number and needs of residents with disabilities **Ⓢ RBP**
- We will review our aids and adaptations service by September 2008 **Ⓢ RBP**
- We will explore the feasibility of bringing our sheltered properties up to acceptable standards during the life of the business plan **Ⓢ RBP**
- We will improve the information that we hold on our adapted and accessible properties during 2008, so that we can match them more easily to applicants with disabilities
- We will put a homelessness strategy in place and nominate a homelessness champion by March 2009
- We will offer life skills courses through Westlearn to support individuals and help them to maintain their tenancies

How we will know when we get there?

(Our current performance is detailed in brackets where appropriate)

- We will self-assess at least at level B in our supported housing Quality Assessment Framework results by March 2009
- We will put a performance monitoring system in place for our supported housing service by the end of 2008/09
- We will maintain high levels of performance in terms of the satisfaction of our supported housing and floating support clients and set targets when more data is available (100% at December 2007)
- We will complete at least 87 new supported housing bedspaces for homeless people during 2007 and 2008 (we completed 92 units April – December 2007)

Links: Group supported housing strategy

our objectives

5. Value for money

We will improve the quality of life of our residents through efficiency gains in procurement and management initiatives.

How are we going to deliver it?

- We will review potential savings and set internal cost saving targets as part of the budget setting process before preparing our Annual Efficiency statement in May each year
- We will repeat our review against our peers to help us improve our value for money while maintaining excellent services during 2008/09
- We will work with residents to increase their understanding of our financial position and spending priorities via the residents' business plan project and other forums **RBP**
- We will implement changes to our procurement and borrowing practices (including evaluating the provision of in-house legal services) by March 2009 to reduce costs and improve efficiency
- We will continue to explore options for managing our supply chain more effectively within development and maintenance
- We will follow and improve our policies and procedures in relation to rent arrears and letting properties in order to maximise our income and help residents manage money, avoid debt and sustain their tenancies
- We will review our rents and conduct adjustments for all affected tenancies, so that rents will be charged at the Housing Corporation's target
- We will consult on implementing service charges from April 2008, with a view to implementing them in October 2008 and setting targets to maximise recovery
- We will review how we manage our garages to maximise income, minimise the time they are empty and make sure they are in an appropriate condition during 2008

Links: Group value for money strategy

How we will know when we get there?

(Our current performance is detailed in brackets where appropriate)

- Over 83% of residents will believe that their rent equals good value for money (81%) **RBP**
- We will deliver our share of the predicted £979,000 revenue savings from the GreenSquare partnership by 2010/11, and benefit from the annual capital savings of £477,000 made by developing in-house construction expertise
- We will continue to reduce current resident arrears during the life of the business plan, aiming to reach 2.4% or less by March 2012 (2.9% at Mar 07)
- We will reduce former tenant arrears to less than 0.9% by 2012
- We will re-let our general needs empty homes in 22 days (23 days year to date at December 2007) by the end of 2008 and continue to reduce the time it takes to re-let homes for older people (37 days year to date at December 2007)
- We will maintain our upper quartile performance for the percentage of our annual rent roll lost on general needs empty homes (0.6% at December 07)
- Under the new Housing Corporation transitional arrangements, we will have 99% of rents at target by 2010/11 (72.4% at December 2007)
- We will generate £4 of extra income for every £1 that we invest in our debt advice services to make sure that they offer value for money

6. Equality and Diversity

We will offer a service that is fair and equal to all, reflecting the diverse needs of the communities we serve.

How are we going to deliver it?

- We will keep equality and diversity at the forefront of our work, with a specific focus on faith and sexuality during 2008
- We will deliver our disability and gender equality action plans between 2008 and 2011
- We will implement plans to engage with remaining hard to reach groups such as those from black and ethnic minorities (including gypsies and travellers), and of different faiths and sexualities during 2008/09
- We will run our first forum events for lone parents by June 2008.
- We will explore the options to involve and support residents with learning difficulties by working with local support organisations throughout 2008/09
- We will provide fair and accessible services to all our residents, catering for special needs where appropriate, with a budget for service provision that meets the changing needs of our resident profile RBP
- We will continue to deliver equality and diversity awareness sessions to all residents' groups, staff and Board
- Every member of staff will have an equality and diversity objective during 2008/09
- We will improve equality and diversity monitoring in line with implementation of the new ICT system

Links: Group equality and diversity strategy

How we will know when we get there?

(Our current performance is detailed in brackets where appropriate)

- Residents from minority groups will be at least equally as satisfied with the services Westlea provides as the resident population as a whole
- The number of BME and disabled applicants we house will be proportional to the number on the waiting list (4% of lettings against 5.9% applicants in December 2007)
- Our staff and board will fairly reflect all sections of the community
 - 4% from black and minority ethnic backgrounds (1.2% staff, 0% board)
 - 6% with disabilities by the end of this business plan, working towards a longer-term goal of 12.1% (3.5% staff, 9.1% board)
- We will carry out equality and diversity impact assessments in line with our policy review timetable

our objectives

7. Sustaining our Neighbourhoods

We will:

- create sustainable neighbourhoods where people want to live; and
- invest in our neighbourhoods to improve the quality of life and the environment for local people.

How are we going to deliver it?

- We will take a more strategic and joined up approach to improving quality of life in our neighbourhoods
We will do this through: 🏠 **RBP**
 - our Maximum Impact projects;
 - our community investment strategy; and
 - reviewing our grounds maintenance service and funding by September 2008
- We will work with specialist agencies to provide dedicated support and activities for adult and young carers during 2008/09
- We will publish our financial inclusion strategy and roll out measures in key regeneration areas, as well as helping to form a Wiltshire task force for financial inclusion during 2008/09
- We will work with residents on a range of environmental, recycling, energy efficiency and green awareness projects in 2008/09 as part of our sustainability strategy 🏠 **RBP**
- We will identify grant and partnering opportunities to extend our community projects each year
- We will consider local lettings policies for all new developments; and formalise one in at least one regeneration area during 2008
- We will work with young people to understand their priorities, including through a young persons forum and extend our youth partnerships and activities 🏠 **RBP**
- We will roll out healthy living projects and partnerships to regeneration areas and sheltered schemes during 2008
- We will implement a resident incentive scheme by December 2008, to reward residents who keep to the terms of their tenancies

How we will know when we get there?

(Our current performance is detailed in brackets where appropriate)

- We will repeat the quality of life survey on our estates in summer 2009; and see an increase in resident satisfaction as well as areas that were red priority moving down to amber or green levels
- We will achieve 86% resident satisfaction with their neighbourhood and increased satisfaction with grounds maintenance by April 2009 🏠 **RBP**
- We will design and implement two estate agreements with partners in Maximum Impact areas by March 2010
- We will increase the number of partnerships by 15% during 2008/09 (58 partnerships at December 2007) and introduce a methodology to measure the value we gain from these partnerships
- We will also increase our level of external funding
- We will monitor current levels of resident satisfaction with the way that anti social behaviour is dealt with, and benchmark our performance against other landlords (62.5%)
- Less than 10% of residents will see vandalism and drug dealing as a serious problem in the 2008 tenant survey
- During 2008/09, 60 young people will successfully complete the Whatever! project, and we will add another 5 employers to the list of people offering placements (15)
- We will reduce the number of abandoned tenancies (8 in 2005/06, 8 in 2006/07, three year to date in 2007/08)
- Each year, we will agree an annual green budget and track our spending against it 🏠 **RBP**

Links: Group community investment strategy; Group sustainability strategy

8. New Homes

We will maximise the new provision and quality of housing for people in housing need.

How are we going to deliver it?

- We will work with local authorities to provide a range of homes for people in housing need, and maximise the amount of Social Housing Grant we are allocated 🏠 **RBP**
- We will continue to develop low cost home ownership units during the life of the Business Plan, subject to market conditions
- We will continue to purchase, option or gain access in other ways to strategic land for development
- We will continue to have an effective dialogue with residents on all new homes that we build, via the Design Panel and new homes surveys 🏠 **RBP**
- Working with the local authority, we will complete a feasibility study to look at an incentive scheme to enable people to move out of under-occupied homes by March 2009

How we will know when we get there?

(Our current performance is detailed in brackets where appropriate)

- We will consistently deliver around 270 homes per year over the next four years (197 completed April – December 2007), of which around 25% will be low-cost home ownership properties
- We will achieve 77% satisfaction level with our new build homes (75%) 🏠 **RBP**
- We will assess our residents satisfaction with the quality of their new homes and set appropriate targets to achieve a year on year improvement 🏠 **RBP**

Links: Group development and growth strategy

our objectives

9. Investment in our Assets

- we will continually assess our assets and take appropriate action to make sure that they remain sustainable; and
- by 2010, all of our homes will meet the Decent Homes Standard.

How are we going to deliver it?

- We will continue to develop the Geographical Information System to identify how to better use our assets
- We will conduct inspections and improvements to all our properties on a five year cycle, and make adequate provision for replacements in the business plan based on accurate life-cycle costings
- We will implement plans in accordance with the Asset Management and Affordable Warmth strategies to improve the affordable warmth and insulation of our homes, particularly our electrically heated properties, by March 2009 **RBP**
- We will continue our five-year shower replacement programme, giving priority to disabled residents
- We will monitor our new programmed maintenance contracts for resident satisfaction and performance **RBP**
- We will monitor the performance of our responsive maintenance sub-contractors **RBP**
- We will ensure that we comply with gas safety requirements

How we will know when we get there?

(Our current performance is detailed in brackets where appropriate)

- We will maintain our upper quartile performance in terms of satisfaction with accommodation (88%)
- We will maintain our upper quartile performance in terms of overall satisfaction with our repairs and maintenance service (87%)
- We will complete at least 98.6% of emergency, 97.1% of urgent and 97% of routine responsive maintenance jobs within target times (99%, 96.1%, 98.4% at December 2007)
- At least 98% of residents will be satisfied with their last responsive repair job (98.1% at December 2007)
- By December 2008, our estimate of 94.6% of our properties which comply with or exceed the Decent Homes Standard will have been confirmed, and by 2010 we will have achieved full compliance
- The Asset Management Strategy will identify development sites on our existing land that will provide ten extra new homes per year
- Where possible, all homes will exceed the Housing Corporation refurbishment target SAP (Standard Assessment Procedure) energy efficiency rating of 65 by March 2009 (18% fall below) **RBP**
- Every home will have a shower by the end of 2012 where the resident would like one
- Approximately 1200 properties will be improved via our programmed maintenance programme each year
- Our responsive maintenance sub-contractors will perform to the same standards as our own works team
- 100% of properties will have a valid gas safety certificate
- We will install a minimum of 55 solar water heating systems on existing properties **RBP**

Links: Group and Westlea asset management strategy; Westlea affordable warmth strategy; Group community investment strategy

10. Employee Satisfaction

we will see a year on year improvement in employee satisfaction with Westlea

How are we going to deliver it?

- Human resources functions will be delivered centrally by the GreenSquare Group, but in terms of Westlea staff, we aim to achieve the targets listed opposite

How we will know when we get there?

(Our current performance is detailed in brackets where appropriate)

- Staff turnover will remain below the sector average of 18.2% each year (17.2%) **RBP**
- Short term staff absence will not exceed five days per year (3.45 days between March and December 2007)
- We will maintain at least our current levels of front line staff (74%) **RBP**
- The staff survey 2008 will show a return to:
 - 85% staff satisfaction with employment at Westlea (79%)
 - 97% of staff feel we are focused on providing excellent customer service (92%)
 - 71% staff satisfaction with communication from senior management (68%)

Links: Group human resources strategy; learning and development strategy

financial information

This section sets out a summary of Westlea's anticipated financial position and financial objectives for the medium to longer term.

Westlea Housing Association Ltd is a not-for-profit, charitable Registered Social Landlord (RSL) and does not distribute profits to stakeholders. Any surpluses we make are put back into the business. We need to make sufficient surpluses to ensure that the business is sustainable over the longer term, to provide a buffer against adverse financial events and future liabilities, and to demonstrate it can repay the loans borrowed to fund its activities.

Overall, our financial aims are to:

- Grow our asset base and turnover
- Increase our efficiency and operating margins
- Keep the cost of financing our business as low as possible over the longer term.

We will manage the group finances to support and deliver our business plan. Our key objectives are to:

- Get the money in: raising and receiving finances
- Manage the money, for example treasury management
- Have policies that maximise income and efficiency and minimise debt costs
- Account for the finances: reporting against budget, compiling annual accounts, corresponding with the regulator.

The Westlea Housing Association Ltd financial plan is prudent in its approach with reasonable and realistic financial forecasts to deliver an ambitious business plan. From 2008/09 onwards Westlea will be part of the GreenSquare Group and its results consolidated within that group.

The budget fully reflects the ambitions of the business plan. The budget and monitoring processes identify areas of savings and enable improved delivery of frontline services by shifting resources where they are most needed. The 2008 rent plan achieves greater equity between tenants. The financial plan has got the capacity to deliver a development programme without grant.

TREASURY MANAGEMENT POLICY

We review the treasury management policy annually, with quarterly treasury management reports to the Board. At present, interest rate exposure stands at 28% of borrowings and the proportion of loan interest which is subject to variable rates cannot exceed 35%.

Cash is managed on a daily basis, with annual forecasts; borrowings are kept to a minimum both at Association and Group level; full use is made of the £2m overdraft facility and the £50m revolving facility; and any surplus funds are invested with UK institutions of substantial rating.

FINANCIAL COVENANTS

In 2007, a new agreement was reached with funders to increase the loan facility to £190m and to review the covenants. The following targets are agreed with funders and reported on a quarterly basis:

Debt per Unit (Maximum)	32,846
Net operating surplus / deficit: total finance costs (minimum)	Provisionally: 1.1 over 3 years (no less than 0.9 in any one year)
Asset Cover Minimum	Loan less cash does not exceed 5% above charged properties at EUV-SH Valuation Plus 15% above charged properties at MVT Valuation**

*EUV – SH: Existing Use Value for Social Housing: charged properties to which a social housing restriction applies

**MVT: Market Value subject to Tenancies

RISKS AND OPPORTUNITIES

The financial model includes a built-in sensitivity analysis table. Additionally, extensive tests have been carried out to identify risk areas which are:

- A continuing rise of building costs at least 1% or more above RPI
- Increases in interest rates on variable loans
- Delays in housing benefit payments leading to increased arrears
- Increases in voids
- Increases in bad debts
- Increases in pension costs.

financial information

Opportunities for out-performance of the forecasts are:

- Rent increases to Housing Corporation target or up to 5% above
- Effect of operational savings on the forecasts
- Any increase in development grant beyond S106 “free” land
- Buying out of the RTB agreement.

ACTIVITY LIMITS

Development:

- Up to 1,805 units of social housing and key-worker accommodation in the first 7 years
- Up to 130 new development for sale units per annum in Oakus Ltd
- Up to 10 market rents per annum in Oakus Ltd
- Expansion of services generated from income or efficiency savings.

Front-line services:

- Increase of services to be funded from re-allocation of resources and efficiency savings.

NOTE: DETAILED FINANCIAL FORECASTS AND OTHER SUPPORTING MATERIAL AVAILABLE SEPARATELY ON REQUEST

board and management team

MANAGEMENT BOARD

The Westlea Board is made up of four resident board members, six independent members, and one local authority member. There is currently one vacancy for an independent members. The Managing Director of Westlea is also a co-opted Board member.

Angie Clapp

Resident board member

Angela comes from Malmesbury and moved to Chippenham in 1984. She married Roy in 1972 and they spent several years in the hotel and catering industry. After leaving the licensed trade, she attended Chippenham College where she gained a qualification in Business & Finance and a Diploma in IT. Angela has been involved in Tenant Participation since it began, and used to be Secretary of the Chippenham Area and District Panels. She used to be the Chair and a board member of the national Tenant Participation Advisory Service. Angela was elected to Westlea’s Board of Management in September 2000.

Tom Pearce

Resident board member

Tom came to live in North Wiltshire in April 1992 and settled with his family in Chippenham. He was an active advocate and member of Westlea Housing Association from the beginning, becoming involved at the time of the transfer of properties from North Wiltshire District Council. He has served on area panels, the then District Forum and the Board of Management. He studied at the University of the West of England achieving the Chartered Institute of Housing National Certificate in Tenant Participation in 1996.

Daphne Wheeler

Resident board member

Daphne has lived in the area for over 40 years. She was previously Personal Assistant to the Managing Director of an engineering firm, gaining experience in accountancy work. Her voluntary work includes being Vice-Chair of the tenants’ District Panel from 1993 to September 2004 and current Chair of the Calne and District Tenants’ Group. Daphne was Chair of the Association’s Housing Services Committee from September 1995 until September 1999. Daphne also served as Vice-Chair of the Board of Management from 1996-1999; when she was elected as Chair. She served in this post until September 2003, then was re-elected as Vice-Chair until September 2005. She has been a member of the Board since the Association was formed.

board and management team

Ivor Williams

Resident board member

Ivor lives in Wootton Bassett. He has been a Westlea tenant for ten years, and a board member for six. He and his partner have two teenage sons. After leaving the Armed Forces, Ivor worked for the Post Office and then ran his own newsagents. Most of his time is now taken up with voluntary work, and he has been active in local and nation tenant participation for the several years.

Allison Bucknell

Independent board member

Allison has lived in the Lyneham area for 20 years, working in the IT industry where she has developed a wide range of general skills. Allison holds a degree in Maths and Management Sciences. She has a small number of houses that she rents out privately, and her husband develops high-end assisted living homes. Allison and her husband also foster children, mainly from Swindon. She was elected North Wiltshire District Council member for Lyneham in 1997. Allison was appointed member of the Board in July 2003.

Bob Marshall (Chair)

Independent board member

Bob is a qualified accountant now working as a Management Consultant . Until last year he was Chief Executive of North Wiltshire District Council, a post he held for 10 years. He lives in Kingsdown, just outside Box. He has also worked in the private sector with CAPITA. Bob is married with three grown up sons. His interests include travel and keep fit.

David Line

Independent board member

David has recently retired from a management career in the food, airline, holiday, insurance and charity sectors. For many years he headed the Prospect Hospice charity and led it through a major period of development and expansion. He has also been a School Governor, a Director of a Care Home charity and Chairman of his local church restoration appeal. Currently he is also a Trustee and Director of Age Concern Wiltshire. David lives in Burbage with his wife Alison.

Ian Tomlinson

Independent board member

Ian has over 20 years' experience working with various socially excluded groups including young offenders, substance mis-users and people with learning disabilities. Currently employed as Programme Manager for the Wiltshire Children's Fund, Ian is responsible for developing services to work with 5-13 year olds who are at risk of social exclusion. A qualified social worker, Ian has specialist knowledge in user participation, having been employed as National Participation Manager for Mencap and acted as a consultant for various housing associations and local authorities on tenant and user participation and also for the Home Office, developing educational information on drugs for people with a learning disability.

Di Bligh

Independent board member

Di was appointed to the Board in September 2004. She lives just over the border, a mere 200 yards from Wiltshire, working as an independent consultant to a range of organisations, and providing mentoring and facilitation to senior managers and teams. She worked in Manchester, London and Reading in all sorts of housing jobs, and continues to promote the importance of excellent services and respect for residents' views. She is also an Associate Director of a growing company providing performance partnerships to the public sector, and a trustee of the PEP Trust, a new charity promoting local community leadership.

Helena Taylor-Knox

Independent board member

Helena is a business psychologist who runs her own company promoting the sustainable creation of personal wellbeing and successful positive workplaces. She has worked in both the social housing & social care sectors for the last 15 years, including leading the supported housing team at SOHA Housing, and is a member of the Chartered Institute of Housing. Helena has a BSc in Behavioural Sciences from Leicester University and a Masters in Mental Health (Organisational Psychology & Psychiatry) from King's College, London. After completing her clinical training in New York, Helena moved to Swindon which is now home to her and her business.

board and management team

MANAGEMENT TEAM

The Managing Director and Heads of Service form our Management Team, who are responsible for the day to day running of the business.

Ann Cornelius BSc (Econ), MCIH - Managing Director (Westlea)

Ann graduated from Swansea University with a degree in Social Policy and Administration, and after jobs in research and in welfare advice, began a career in housing associations in 1985. She became a member of the Chartered Institute of Housing in 1988. She has worked in associations in the Welsh Valleys, Swansea, and Cardiff. Her last job was the chief executive of Oxbode Housing Association in Gloucester, before moving to Westlea in March 2004.

HEADS OF SERVICE

Shirley Davies BA (Hons), MCIH - Head of Neighbourhood Services

Shirley has a degree in housing and is responsible for managing the teams that provide a range of front-line services for our residents and communities. These include neighbourhood development and services; customer accounts; and supported housing amongst others.

Mike Mehaffy - Head of Asset Management

Mike is responsible for the overall management of the association's property and land assets and ensuring they are properly maintained, improved and reviewed to support the aims of the business.

our achievements

This section tells you about some of the key achievements we made against each of our strategic objectives over the last year, and our performance against our targets.

CUSTOMER CARE

- We achieved Quality Housing Service (QHS) accreditation for excellent customer services in January 2008. We are one of only 17 organisations in the country to have this accreditation.
- The Westlea WOW awards are up and running, with several staff having won awards for excellent customer service.

We said we would...	We achieved...
Achieve top 25% overall tenant satisfaction scores (84% and above)	84% (March 2007)
Achieve at least 60% satisfaction with how we handle complaints	67% (December 2007)
Resolve 95% of complaints within target time	95% (December 2007)

RESIDENT INVOLVEMENT

- We published our third residents' business plan, clearly stating what our residents would like to see us achieve over the next year.
- We published our first impact statement, to show how involving residents has really made a difference to our services.
- We hit our target of achieving upper quartile performance in terms of resident satisfaction with their opportunities to participate in running the business and making decisions, achieving 70%.

We said we would...	We achieved...
Achieve top 25% tenant satisfaction scores for opportunities to participate in management and decision making (70% and above)	70% (March 2007)
Increase the number of tenants involved with us in some way by 5%	An increase of 115% as at December 2007
Increase the number of "new" residents attending training courses	This has increased by 24% since April 2007

our achievements

SERVICE EXCELLENCE AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

- We started the second year of the continuous improvement programme, with more consultation events for residents, and service reviews bringing results such as an extra caretaker, and much improved garage management services.
- We promoted our good practice much more actively, giving several presentations at regional Housemark networking meetings; and having our innovative performance management framework featured as an item of good practice.
- We are working with a tenant associate inspector to really drive our performance upwards to a three star level.

We said we would...	We achieved...
Maintain tenant satisfaction with their last repair job levels of at least 98%.	98.1% (December 2007).
Complete the following proportion of repair jobs within target times: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency: 100% • Urgent: 99% • Routine: 99% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency: 99% (still in top 25%) • Urgent: 96.1% • Routine: 98.4% (still in top 25%)

SERVICES FOR VULNERABLE CUSTOMERS

- We opened Booth House in Swindon, providing 50 bedspaces for homeless people.
- We restructured our sheltered housing scheme manager service to provide facilities coordinators and floating support, in line with Supporting People guidance.
- We extended our Handy Help scheme to offer reduced price help with decorating and small repair jobs for older people and those with disabilities.

We said we would...	We achieved...
Make sure that older people and those with disabilities are not less satisfied than other tenants	90% and 87% satisfaction for these groups respectively compared to 84% overall satisfaction (March 2007)
Introduce a satisfaction survey for supported housing clients and see year on year increases in satisfaction	We introduced this as an exit survey, and of 12 responses to date, 100% are satisfied with the service

VALUE FOR MONEY

- We achieved efficiency savings of £3,446,907 in 2006/07.
- When we compared ourselves with our competitors, we were top quartile performers in the majority of service areas.
- We re-tendered our planned maintenance contracts to ensure maximum efficiency.
- We are actively trying to reduce rent arrears by offering debt and money advice through funding a project worker and Moneyfriend at the Citizen's Advice Bureau.

We said we would...	We achieved...
Reduce rent arrears to 2.4% by March 2012	3.38% at December 2007. We are hoping to use the new ICT system to understand why this is and make improvements
Maintain our upper quartile performance in terms of reletting empty homes (21.7 days or less)	23.1 (year to date December 2007)
Not lose any more than 0.9% of our rent roll through empty general needs properties by March 2012	0.6% (December 2007)

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

We focused on disability during 2007:

- Almost all staff have completed online disability awareness training.
- We published our disability equality scheme, setting out how we are going to make sure that we treat people with disabilities equally, in December 2007.

our achievements

We said we would...	We achieved...
Make sure residents from minority groups were at least as satisfied as other residents with our service	Tenants from black and minority ethnic backgrounds were 88% satisfied compared to 84% overall (March 2007)
Employ a workforce that reflects the local community in terms of ethnicity (target 4% from black and minority ethnic backgrounds) and disability (target 12.1%)	We employ 1.2% staff from black and minority ethnic backgrounds and 3.5% staff who state that they have a disability
House a proportionate percentage of applicants from black and minority ethnic backgrounds to the percentage on the waiting list	We are currently housing 4% of BME applicants, whereas there are 6% on the waiting list

SUSTAINING OUR NEIGHBOURHOODS

- We won the National Housing Federation Neighbourhood Award for local engagement and involvement for our residents' business plan.
- We are running maximum impact projects in several key regeneration areas, to make sure that we are addressing issues in a holistic and joined up way in our neighbourhoods.
- We offered work experience to another 27 young people through our Whatever! Scheme, highly commended in the Regeneration and Renewal Awards.
- We increased the number of partnerships we are working in by 45% between December 2006 and December 2007.

We said we would...	We achieved...
Achieve 86% tenant satisfaction with their neighbourhood	85% (March 2007)
Increase the number of partners that we are working with	Increased by 241% between April 2006 (17) and December 2007 (58)

NEW HOMES

- We completed nearly 200 new homes between April and December 2007.
- We became a lead development partner with the Housing Corporation rather than being a member of a consortium.
- We expanded our low cost home ownership portfolio from 71 to 112 in the first three quarters of 2007/08.

We said we would...	We achieved...
Always have at least 500 homes in the development pipeline	A pipeline of 2,068 in December 2007
Increase our low cost home ownership portfolio	An increase of 57%, from 71 at March 2007 to 112 at December 2007

INVESTMENT IN OUR ASSETS

- Our asset management and affordable warmth strategies are on target to deliver improvements to our homes so that they meet or exceed decent homes and energy efficiency standards.
- We are continuing to install showers in all our homes, and provided an extra £50k last year to meet resident demand for walk-in showers.
- We now hold quarterly site meetings with our contractors, to review performance, quality, workmanship, customer care and service delivery.

We said we would...	We achieved...
Achieve 88% satisfaction with accommodation	88% (March 2007)
Make sure all our properties exceed the national average for energy efficiency by March 2007	97.9% properties exceed the average (December 2007)
Make sure 100% of our properties meet the Decent Homes standard by 2010	94.6% exceed the standard (December 2007)

our achievements

EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION

- All managers received further leadership development training in 2007.
- Our new Human Resources ICT system was rolled out.

We said we would...	We achieved...
Keep staff turnover at or below 14.5%	Tenants from black and minority ethnic backgrounds were 88% satisfied compared to 84% overall (March 2007)
Keep short term staff sickness absence below five days per employee per year	3.45 days (December 2007)
Maintain 85% staff satisfaction with employment at Westlea	79%. However, this is unsurprising in a time of change for staff

WESTLEA HOUSING ASSOCIATION

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