

# What you achieved with us: resident involvement report 2010/11



# Summary report

Every year we report to residents and to other stakeholders on what we have achieved with your input. By putting our customers at the heart of our decision making and being responsive to local priorities, we make sure we continue to deliver excellent services.

Although Affinity Sutton provides services to 55,000 homes from the north east to the south west of England, we want to be flexible to local needs and your influence and ideas are vital. Involving residents is at the heart of what we do.

Residents can be involved in a range of activities which influence how we shape our services. A key role is residents' ability to scrutinise what we do and to influence decision making.

This report tells you about the differences you made in the year 2010/11.



## Cost of resident involvement activities

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In 2010/11, our budget for resident involvement across Affinity Sutton was £250,000. This covered the costs of events, training, focus groups, resident expenses such as travel, and providing grants to recognised residents' groups.

This is approximately 0.4% of Affinity Sutton's total budget, and as residents it costs you approximately £4.50 a year per household – or 9p per week. We managed to stay within that budget.

## Our resident involvement strategy

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In 2009 we worked with residents and with the Tenant Participation Advisory Service to draw up a new resident involvement strategy for Affinity Sutton. You might have been one of the thirty residents who came to the two awaydays at the Birmingham Hippodrome that year, to identify priorities and voice your opinions on how we should involve residents.

We've come a long way since then. Back in 2009 the resident area panels were just an idea, albeit one which was greeted with enthusiasm. After holding

a host of information events across the country, we now have fourteen resident area panels, commonly known as RAPs, covering the following areas:

### In the North and Midlands:

- The North East
- The North West
- Yorkshire
- East Midlands
- West Midlands.

To recruit to the RAPs we held five information events in Bradford, Cleadon, Birmingham, Nottingham and Salford.

In the East region:

- Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire and Essex
- Hertsmere.

To recruit to the RAPs we held two information events in Borehamwood, and a two-day roadshow which covered Stevenage, Milton Keynes, Hemel Hempstead, Potters Bar and Chelmsford.

In London:

- Bromley
- East and south-east London
- West and south-west London.

To recruit to the RAPs we held twelve information events for Bethnal Green; Penge; Croydon, Sutton and Merton; Kingston, Bracknell & Leatherhead; Islington & Hackney; Bromley; St Pauls Cray; Orpington; Lewisham; Rotherhithe; St Quintin estate and Chelsea.

In the South region:

- East — Kent, Brighton and Hove and East Sussex
- West — Berkshire, West Sussex, Hampshire, Oxfordshire, Wiltshire & Surrey (excluding Felbridge, Lingfield and Oxted)
- Central — Mid-Sussex.

To recruit to the RAPs we held twelve information events in Ashford, Brighton, Petersfield and Haywards Heath.

In the South West:

- Plymouth, Exeter and Bristol.

To recruit to the RAPs we held a series of information events and fun days throughout the South West.

Chaired by residents, the RAPs have attracted 370 members at last count and meet every quarter to decide on and review priorities for their local area.

Residents also sit on task teams for specific service areas including asset management (repairs and maintenance), voids and lettings, environmental sustainability and antisocial behaviour.

In 2010/11 we enabled the RAP chairs to get trained in chairing skills. In July 2010, five residents from Affinity Sutton attended the annual, national TPAS conference in Birmingham.

At a local level, resident association members in Derby, the north east and Rugby took part in training on committee skills.

Resident Patricia Riley said she felt more confident to complete the role and was no longer scared of getting it wrong, and was looking forward to the group training. Another resident, Sue Appleby, said she had learnt a lot and it would be great if her group's grant funding came through.

Residents in Bromley and Lewisham, south-east London, learnt how to create their own newsletters, and now two are regularly producing good newsletters.

A few residents got involved in staff training. In 2010 and 2011 we undertook a massive staff training programme of roadshows to ensure awareness of resident involvement. One of the highlights of this was a DVD showing active resident Kate Warlow-Hughes talking about how she got involved and how residents have worked together to improve things on their estate. Staff feedback showed that this was one of the most popular and effective parts of the roadshows. Residents Pam Bardouille and Bob Skipp attended our conference for neighbourhood staff, with Pam speaking about her involvement and Bob writing a piece for *Shine*.

All our actions to implement the strategy are approved by the resident involvement strategy working group, who meet bi-monthly to discuss progress. Resident representatives from each region sit on this group and monitor our progress.

# Housing management

## Improving the appearance of our estates

Residents took part in bulb planting events to complement the planting works taking place on their estates. Bulb banks, offering flower bulbs and 'how to plant' guides were also placed in the local offices, so that residents who had their own private

gardens, or where there was little communal land, could also get involved.

So far we have completed 88 landscaping projects across the country, and held 38 planting events and workshops which engaged over 560 people.



### Case study: Perth Road, Beckenham

At Perth Road 13 people came out to plant bulbs and flowerpots at the event. Two of the children that came to Perth Road were keen to help out planting bulbs around the estate and even brought their own tools, wellingtons and gardening gloves.

They started out by helping Dave (one of our grounds maintenance staff, who started with us as a Future Jobs Fund employee) plant in front of the blocks of flats. They then went to the large communal garden at the back of the estate to plant around the large tree there, as well as in some of the beds.

The grandparents said that both the boys really liked gardening and they were really keen to come when they saw the flyer.

We also had Grow Time Group from London Borough of Bromley making herb plants for us, which residents came out to collect to grow on their windowsill.

## Estate improvements

Where?	What residents said or did	What happened next?
Kirkland Terrace, Beckenham	Residents suggested erecting railings as they were fed up of people just walking across their driveways, making them feel less secure in their homes.	New railings create an individual outside space for everyone. Some residents have planted flowers and shrubs on their driveways which would not have been possible previously. This project has significantly reduced antisocial behaviour caused by families spilling onto each other's driveways when socialising outdoors.
Orchard Gardens, Lewisham	Residents told us what they wanted to see in terms of environmental improvements and security.	Entry phone systems were installed for the first time and residents chose their fencing in Lewisham Road.
Riverside, Forgefield and Woodchurch Court in Cray	Local residents gave their input on the location and species of trees and plants to be planted. We also held group planting sessions and educational workshops with local residents and their children.	We worked in partnership with Trees for Cities, a charity which undertakes tree planning and greening initiatives in urban areas. We match funded the £15,000 they put towards the work and created a new ball court for local residents children to enjoy.
Fulmer Place, Bexhill-on-Sea	Residents proposed an exposed front lawn be turned into a safe communal space.	Their proposal won the Blooming Spaces competition, with their proposal to tackle antisocial behaviour and to link with local schools really impressing the judges.
Farriers Hall and Fulton Court, Borehamwood	Residents looked at proposed environmental improvement planting schemes. They requested that the planting should be low, slow growing plants which are drought resistant.	Following the consultation the proposals were changed and the planting was carried out to the residents' specification.
Turner Court, Hull	After resident input in estate inspections we consulted residents on improvements to the courtyard.	Improvements to the courtyard are now underway.
Tyne Dock, South Shields	Residents reported problems with security.	We worked with residents, the council and the police to obtain additional fencing.
Saltersgill, Middlesbrough	Residents requested a disused play area was removed.	We removed the play area and are consulting residents about an allotment project.
St Budeaux, Plymouth	Residents and young people decided the equipment to be installed in a new play area.	Residents decided on the layout of a new play area in the park at Sunnydene.
South region	Residents were involved in the allocation of the environmental improvement budget.	£114,000 was spent on improvements such as fencing, lighting, bin areas, water butts and bike stores.

## Tenants' and residents' associations, events, community projects and fun days

Where?	What residents said or did	What happened next?
Chelsea estate	Residents and staff held a fun day on the estate.	The residents' association was relaunched and the event featured local police, a computer training scheme for older residents and football for younger residents.
Benwell, Newcastle	A cultural awareness event took place, which included residents cooking food from around the world, henna painting, African drumming and children's activities.	The residents' group have secured lottery funding for activities and trips which are open to the wider neighbourhood – encouraging integration and promoting the sheltered scheme within the area.
Widnes	Residents reported that ball games were being played and disturbing the residents.	Working with the residents' association, we created a community garden to tackle the issue in a positive way. It includes fruit and vegetables as well as flowers. The ball games stopped in this area.



## Improving estate services

Where?	What residents said or did	What happened next?
Leybridge and Newstead estates, Lewisham, south-east London	Via a parking survey, residents gave us their views on arrangements for parking and the number of cars on the estates.	We received mixed views on permits and arrangements for commercial vehicles.  This is an early indication of views for us to act on.
The North West	Concerns raised by residents about grounds maintenance standards has led to us re-tendering this contract first and residents have been consulted and involved in this process.	We have started to re-tender our grounds maintenance services in the North region; one resident project group member's input has led to changes in our communication and consultation plans.
Rugby, Leicester, Derby and Nottingham	Residents attend the grounds maintenance meeting with the respective contractors.	Residents help manage and improve the services contractors provide.
Barrack Road, Newcastle	The residents' association suggested we introduce a caretakers' rota.	This has been introduced and caretakers now team up twice a month to tackle 'hot spots'.
Derby and Rugby	Residents have been involved in a project to improve open spaces such as allotments and play facilities.	Residents are attending project meetings applying for funds.
The North East	Residents fed back on the profile of neighbourhood officers.	We have run coffee mornings for residents to meet our team.
Hertsmere, Hertfordshire	Residents complained about paper invitations and feedback following walkabouts being sent to all residents on the estate. They felt it was a waste of money and some were not interested in the content.	We sent a postcard to residents to ask them if they wanted to be included on the mailing list for the estate walkabouts. Several returned the postcards with email addresses, so the amount of paperwork has been reduced.
Hemel Hempstead Grovehill estate	Residents observed on estate walkabouts that litter on the estate was a problem and the contractor who was in charge of litter picking was not effective.	The responsibility for litter picking was given to our local estate staff. Since this has happened there have been no complaints about litter.
Hertsmere	Complaints were received from residents across the region about bulk items and refuse in the communal areas of estates.	Caretakers now use stickers to place on items which need removing, which are blocking communal areas. The problem is becoming less across the region.

<b>Where?</b>	<b>What residents said or did</b>	<b>What happened next?</b>
Stevenage	Following complaints of fly-tipping we negotiated a contract with "Any Junk" who now carry out bulk refuse collections in the Stevenage area as a trial. They provide a quarterly report to show how much is recycled.	Residents have been very pleased with the work of Any Junk since they took over.
Barne Barton, Plymouth	We introduced a new Responsible Dog Ownership policy with residents forming a "Dog Squad".	The behaviour of dogs on the estate is monitored to ensure dog owners keep to the policy.

## Tackling antisocial behaviour

<b>Where?</b>	<b>What residents said or did</b>	<b>What happened next?</b>
The Groves, south-east London	A resident raised an issue about antisocial behaviour. We worked with the crime prevention officer and police, and sought residents' views before getting railings fixed around a 'dead end' area in the neighbourhood.	This has stopped fly tipping which was costing thousands of pounds per year to remove, and stopped the use of this area for taking and dealing drugs. It cut off a 'rat run' where people could run through or hide in the gardens of vulnerable residents.
Benwell, Newcastle	We have worked with a new residents' group.	We have set up a joint group to discuss and resolve antisocial behaviour issues on the estate.
Hull	Residents expressed concerns about antisocial behaviour.	We have responded by making contacts and doing more partnership working with other agencies.
Brownings Avenue, Chelmsford	Residents were complaining about antisocial behaviour being caused by people sitting on the fencing along the road.	Working in consultation with residents, we have replaced the fencing with a design which cannot be sat on. This has helped to drastically reduce the number of complaints in the area about antisocial behaviour.



## Case study: Valletort Place, Plymouth

In central Plymouth a group of residents have come together to form the Valletort Action Team (VAT) and through taking part in estate inspections with housing staff, and providing feedback, they have worked together to turn an overgrown courtyard into a tidy space.

Previously the courtyard was a dull and barren space between the buildings but now the VAT have stepped in and spruced the area up, adding a touch of green and bringing some life to the area.

Their work continues with their next project being a communal green area bordering the courtyard. Thanks to some help coming from the local probation service, the area is now clear ready for the residents to give it a makeover.

The VAT has grand plans to shape the area into an even nicer location for all the residents. We wish them the best of luck and hope to support them every step of the way.

## Supported housing

In consultation with our residents and clients, we reviewed our support offer. We changed the language and simplified our literature, improved our assessments process so that residents can access our services as soon as they need them, and streamlined the offer.

We introduced a new kite-mark on literature and procedures which have been written in consultation with our customers. Our focus groups reviewed our procedure on pets and on safeguarding, our leaflet on adult abuse, our service standards and the questionnaires we ask residents who leave us. They also reviewed our support documents which include pictures to make them easier to understand. 58 residents were involved in these focus groups this year.

This year 45 residents have been involved in making a library of images of the people we work with. They have been included in leaflets and literature used across the organisation, making them really feel part of the work we do.

In our retirement schemes, our staff have held 442 resident and local service meetings in 2010/11, involving the people we support in the work we do.

Some outcomes from these meetings have been:

- Getting residents involved in green initiatives — 32 schemes held green-related events during the year, involving 300 individuals
- Resident consultation in developing our service standards and performance measures.
- Residents helping us to organise our 'drop-in' sessions.

- Consultation with residents about our accessibility and availability of support.
- Identifying twelve residents to become mentors and help provide support to residents.
- Involved residents in our accommodation schemes in helping us carry out health and safety inspections.
- At our Foyer in Croydon, the residents helped organise the 10th Anniversary celebrations.
- Twelve residents attended ten agencies and spoke about how our support has helped them.
- Over a hundred residents were supported in producing their own service newsletters.

We introduced a way to help our customers have a voice. This meant that the people we supported were able to influence and change how we delivered our services, improving the things that matter to them. Improvements this year have included:

- New drop-in services in London and the East regions.
- A 'buddy' system, where existing residents buddy a new resident and inform them about the area and the service/scheme they have moved to.
- Garden projects across the country, where our residents identified they wanted to get involved in a garden and vegetable area we assisted the set-up and sought funding.
- Recycling furniture in the south region — the project is part of a move-on service for residents to learn how to refurbish old furniture.



## Community investment

Where?	What residents said or did	What happened next?
St Budeaux, Plymouth	We consulted local young people about the renovation of the Sunnydene Park.	A launch was organised with a number of partners. Devon and Cornwall Police said that anecdotally, antisocial behaviour is down by 70%.
South and South West region, including Ashford, Basingstoke and Haywards Heath.	We ran twelve bulb-planting sessions across the region.	Over 100 young people participated and helped plant over 300 bulbs.
Bentswood, Haywards Heath/Meadowview and Tenantry estates in Brighton		Residents worked with us on three 'Big Tidy Up' community clean up days.
St Quintin's, west London	In consultation with residents we submitted a funding application to the local council to convert a disused area, known to attract antisocial behaviour, into a community kitchen garden.	Residents have taken ownership of this area and were involved in the design and planting. Seven residents have been allocated plots to grow their own edible produce.
Lee and Orchard Gardens, Lewisham	The residents' boards worked with us to develop a post for a dedicated community development officer.	Residents influenced the provision of a resource for their community to help build community spirit.
Hertsmere	Residents at the Windsor Club Community Centre told us they'd like to see activities for young people.	We are working alongside the Hertsmere Play Rangers to provide a programme of outdoor activities for young people.
Rugby	Residents were heavily involved in the ongoing regeneration of the Bilton estate.	We completed work on a multi-use games area (MUGA), fitness trail, wildflower area and new play area.
Derby	The residents' group secured funding from the National Lottery Community Spaces for play area improvements.	Allotments are being developed with environmental charity Groundwork, and planning permission has been secured from Derby City Council for allotment and play area improvements.
Leeds, Bradford, Hull and Sheffield	Individual residents submitted ideas for making a difference in their community via the Bright Ideas Challenge.	15 residents benefitted from Bright Ideas awards. Projects including a film club and DVD about gender dysphoria.

<b>Where?</b>	<b>What residents said or did</b>	<b>What happened next?</b>
Salford	Residents and local partners worked with us to create a community garden.	The garden commemorates two victims of violent crime.
Tamworth	The residents' group in Tamworth bid for People's Millions funding.	They won a bonus prize and funding was secured to convert estate office and workshop in Tamworth into a community gym.

In June 2010 we launched the national Affinity Sutton Community Grants Programme. So far £175,126 has been awarded to community groups and organisations to support the delivery of exciting initiatives to benefit their local communities and it is estimated that 5,400 Affinity Sutton residents have benefitted. RAP members have played an instrumental role in assessing the applications and allocating resources across the regions.

After community consultation we refurbished some of our community centres as community hubs, in conjunction with local residents' associations. These included:

- Turpington Lane (Bromley)
- Farriers Hall (Borehamwood)
- Salford Social Hall
- Ward Close Community Centre, Alum Rock, Birmingham
- Tyne Dock, South Shields community centre.





## Environmental sustainability

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We asked residents what their environmental concerns and priorities are. 'Knowing how to heat your home efficiently' ranked highest and in response we are developing the EnergyFit programme to give residents better information on using their home in the most efficient and affordable way.

We are also recruiting residents to our environmental task team, the Green Voice, and have over 30 volunteers to consult on our environmental strategy and projects. In the last year over 70 residents were engaged directly in our Great Outdoors and Green Stories competitions.

## Voids and lettings

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We listened to what new and prospective tenants told us about their homes to help us find ways of making our less popular properties more desirable. We decided to offer an 'enhanced void' standard and during the year we did extra works to 218 properties. We also upgraded the communal areas of four of our retirement housing schemes. The time it takes us to re-let our homes has reduced significantly and new customers are more satisfied.

We held two focus groups with new tenants in Bromley and Borehamwood to review our procedure for signing up new tenants. While generally being very happy with the procedure, some felt that less paperwork and information could improve things. We have streamlined the process so it takes less time and uses less paper.

We needed a new policy on what help or incentives we could offer to existing tenants in homes too large for their needs who want to move to a smaller home. Residents on our voids and lettings task team suggested we offer to pay for removals, redirect post and do the administration to change address with

utility suppliers. All these suggestions now form part of our assistance to residents who need to downsize.

We asked the members of several RAPs whether we should discontinue home visits to people who have applied for housing in their area, telling them the benefits and potential disadvantages. There were some really useful debates and we implemented the decision of each RAP for their area. Where home visits have ceased, neighbourhood housing officers have been able to spend more time working on their patch.

We send a satisfaction survey out to all our new tenants, asking how satisfied they felt with the lettings process, the sign-up meeting and their new home. We've used the same set of questions for more than two years, so held two focus groups with residents in Bromley and Borehamwood, asking them what questions we should ask new tenants about the service they received. This year we're changing the survey and will use questions residents suggested. The survey results help us understand what we do well and where we need to do better.

## Leasehold

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This year more leaseholders have joined our Leasehold service task team in Bromley through an interview process. With input from the task team, we have rewritten the leasehold and shared ownership handbooks and have amended some of our letters. We have also recruited a service task team in the Borehamwood area.

## Development and regeneration

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<b>Where?</b>	<b>What residents said or did</b>	<b>What happened next?</b>
Bromley	We invited all local residents and stakeholders to a consultation event to show the design proposals for Alkham and Horton Towers, in Orpington.	Feedback was very positive and we submitted the designs based on the information displayed to the residents.
Stratfield Road, Hertsmere	We invited all local residents and stakeholders to a consultation event to show the design proposals.	The event was not well attended and the feedback received was mainly negative, and we adjusted our proposals following feedback.
Cale Street, Chelsea, west London	Residents have been invited to four consultation events regarding the redevelopment of the estate.	Residents' views were formally recorded through feedback questionnaires and have influenced the design proposals. Approximately 80–100 residents attended each of these events.
Cale Street, Chelsea, west London	A group of residents attended a benchmarking trip to see other major redevelopment sites in London, and to meet residents from estates that had undergone major redevelopment.	Residents' opinions about what they liked and did not like about these redevelopments were recorded and fed back to the design team. Some residents who attended this trip fed back their findings to the wider population of residents.
Anerley, south-east London	We are working on a new community centre in Castledine Road, St Hugh's estate.	A group of residents have been closely involved in the design and plans for the management of the centre, which will be completed in summer 2011.

## Communications

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We carried out a phone survey of 600 residents by telephone. 81% are happy with the information we provide and think it is clear and easy to understand. Just over half of you told us you would like us to provide more local information.

We also carried out an e-survey of nearly 3,000 residents to feed back on the resident handbook. We then held a focus group which looked at design ideas, content layout and topic order. The copy was also sent to the residents' reading panel for comments. In our survey (see above) 77% of residents remembered receiving the new handbook and had kept it for reference.

The chairs of all 14 RAPs and our residents' reading panel members are involved with the content of *Shine*, from submitting articles to commenting on copy.

Through the reading panel and an online survey, residents were involved in producing the residents'

annual report — 14 different versions were produced, one for each RAP area. Our residents' reading panel now get involved with all new leaflets, providing feedback on content and clarity.

Residents helped us develop our resident consultation leaflet on simplifying our organisation — a draft was circulated to a number of involved residents, the reading panel and put on the website for comment on content and ease of understanding.

To help us improve our website we conducted focus groups with 13 residents and then tested the outcomes of this through an online survey among 165 residents. We used this information to improve the site, including new online services and local pages. Before making these live we tested them with residents to ensure they were user-friendly.

The RAPs have their own newsletter, *Rapport*, which goes out quarterly and features pieces by the RAP chairs.

## Customer services

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Many of you told us you were not always sure which phone number to call us on, so now we have just one single number for non-repair enquiries — 0300 100 0303. You also expressed concern about the cost of calling us, so calls to this number are charged at a low rate, and it costs the same to call from a mobile as from a landline.

To respond to the needs of residents who work or who cannot contact us in office hours, we have extended the hours you can call us from 8am to 8pm.

We presented our new single complaints policy to each RAP, explaining how we've adopted good practice and listened to what our residents had told us about our complaint handling performance.

We invited interested RAP members to a series of complaint panel training sessions. This course has been designed to prepare them and build their confidence to take part in this crucial activity.



## Business improvement

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In 2010, William Sutton Homes was inspected by our regulator, the Tenant Services Authority. A group of residents was very involved in the inspection, which found that all areas inspected were either 'good' or 'very good', with the exception of equality and diversity, where we knew we needed to improve.

Residents helped us create an improvement plan, which resulted in us being described as having 'excellent prospects for improvement'.

Some of our achievements so far include:

- A new set of service standards developed in partnership with residents.
- A new team of staff to deal with complaints, and a new process to identify what we can learn from customer complaints.
- The launch of new domestic violence, racial harassment and hate crimes policies.
- An online form to enable you to report repair requests via our website.
- The appointment of an independent organisation to undertake gas checks.
- A programme to review all our key services to make sure all our customers have fair and equal access to them.

- With residents, we formulated a single compensation policy which is soon to be launched.

You continued to give us your views via our monthly satisfaction survey. Key areas for improvement focus on 'keeping promises and commitments' and the service provided by neighbourhood housing teams.

Some of you also give us your views via monthly repairs surveys, and we have started working closely with partnering contractors and maintenance managers on improvement plans for the service.

Residents also feed back to us via satisfaction surveys covering antisocial behaviour and complaints handling, new customer experience, newly-built properties, and planned maintenance. In March 2011 residents reviewed the new customer satisfaction survey by means of a series of workshops.

Using this feedback with that from the satisfaction surveys, we established learning points from our complaints and launched a new Customer Action Plan.

# Asset management

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- Residents from the Asset task team met up with the repairs contractors, to help to monitor contractor performance and raise residents' concerns with the contractors. One resident has gone on to join the group of residents evaluating the repairs retender.
- Residents visited voids in Middlesbrough to add resident input into the new void standard, and they continue to be involved in the review of this standard.
- After feedback from new residents, improvements have been made to the voids process. For example resident dissatisfaction with decoration vouchers has led to us trying out a new product — Dulux Paint Packs — in one neighbourhood. If this is successful we plan to introduce this nationally.
- With our maintenance partner CBS, we introduced regular repair roadshows on our estates in the South West where residents met the work force, talked about repair issues and arranged for work to be undertaken during the road show.
- In June 2010 a group of residents met us to discuss the current layout of the website, and what information residents would like to see there for major works. We've agreed to publish our five year plan and work on this is underway.
- In January 2011 a group of residents met us to create a new, shorter resident satisfaction form (now agreed and in use), and tell us what residents' priorities are for major works.
- In March 2011 a group of residents advised us how we could communicate with residents during major works, what documentation we issue to residents (such as letters and information packs). We're creating a standard pre-works resident information pack for use by our contractors Apollo and Keepmoat.
- We've standardised our customer satisfaction questionnaires across planned investment and regeneration teams, and have used the feedback to improve our service — e.g. keeping customers informed, showing ID, keeping appointments.

- Residents have been involved in some of the property investment procurement selection processes — e.g. setting and evaluating customer care questions.
- We hold bi-monthly meetings with a group of residents to discuss current and possible new regeneration projects.
- Residents visited two sites in Lewisham to see a new project where we are working on tower blocks and maisonettes, and to meet the contractor, Mulalley. That gave our group a better understanding of how we work closely on making sure our residents are involved and kept informed.

Asset management staff have fed back to residents on queries raised at the RAPs, for example:

- Responding to a query on whether we are still achieving the Decent Homes Standard.
- Timescale of renewal of items of work.
- Publicise how much is allocated for this RAP area for planned investment.
- Involve residents in planning ongoing maintenance (e.g. boilers, kitchens).
- Clarifying to residents what falls under the responsibility of day-to-day repairs and what comes under planned investment. A joint response is being arranged by day-to-day and planned investment.
- As part of the FutureFit energy efficiency project, residents in Borehamwood, Plymouth and East Grinstead met staff to decide on packages of energy upgrade works to be installed to three vacant properties. They attended a workshop introducing them to the energy efficiency agenda and the FutureFit project. They then inspected the vacant property before deciding on the most appropriate package of works including insulation, new boilers and solar panels. Residents can see their decisions in action and once the works are complete, the groups will get the chance to see the final results and then monitor the property's energy performance for the year.

## Acknowledgement and thanks

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We'd like to extend a big thanks to all residents and staff who've worked together to make these changes and activities happen.



### Jargon buster

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- **Asset management** — repairs and maintenance
- **E-survey** — a survey carried out electronically, by web or email
- **IT** — information technology, i.e. computers, email, the internet
- **Mutual exchange** — a process where tenants can swap homes
- **Procurement** — obtaining goods and services
- **RAP** — resident area panel — a group based in a local area to look at local issues and monitor services
- **Reinvestment** — bringing property up to standard
- **Service task team** — a team of residents and staff looking at a particular department or area of work
- **TPAS** — Tenant Participation Advisory Service
- **TSA** — Tenant Services Authority — our current regulator
- **Void** — an empty property.

# How to contact us

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