



St. Leger Homes  
OF DONCASTER

# House Proud

ISSUE 4 MAY 2006

Çeviri mümkün

ترجمه دستیاب ہے

अनुवाद उपलब्ध है

Tradução Disponível

Доступен (Есть) перевод

نیہ نامادین کے نوسرا کاتی نیو وریگیٹین

Traduction Disponible

ترجمه موجود است

可提供翻译

可提供翻譯

অনুবাদের ব্যবস্থা রয়েছে।

Translation Available

الترجمة متوفرة

Përthimi në dispozicion



## There's nothing small about our Compact!

**W**e launched our Compact 2006 this month and took the opportunity to promote it in Doncaster Town Centre.

Since St. Leger Homes took over the management of your homes last October, we've demonstrated our commitment to consult with you, and to make sure that you're included in the decisions that affect your neighbourhoods. You can be as involved as you like, from simply having a chat on the phone with us to being on our Board of Directors. Whatever level you choose, you can be sure that we'll give you all the help and support you need to be involved in a wide range of housing related issues.

Compact 2006 ensures that tenants and residents have full consultation and participation rights with us.

As you can imagine, the full Compact document is quite lengthy, but a summary of it will have been sent to you in the last few days. If you'd like to have a look at the full document, copies are available at all our local offices as well as at the Doncaster Federation of Tenants' and Residents' Associations' office at the Haywood Room, The Council House, Doncaster.



## New Initiatives

### What can you buy for 16p a day?



*an apple*



*a glass of milk*



*half a daily newspaper*

... or contents insurance giving you peace of mind knowing your possessions are covered in the event of a fire or theft.

**S**t. Leger Homes has recognised the problems that tenants face in getting insurance, so we have arranged a contents insurance scheme which is geared towards your needs. The scheme is set up with Marsh and Royal & SunAlliance, and offers you the following:

- **Easy weekly payments from just £1.08 per week**
- **No excess payable in the event of a claim**
- **No security requirements on your property**
- **New for old cover**
- **Cover for theft, flood, fire, water damage, freezer contents and vandalism**
- **Accidental damage cover for TV's,**

**video recorders, mirrors and fixed glass in furniture**

- **Cover for theft or loss of keys**

To join the scheme you must fill in an application form. These are available from your local St. Leger Homes Office. The completed forms should be returned to us.

Once accepted on the scheme we will send you details about your policy and you can pay the weekly premiums with your rent.

**The amount of the premium will depend on how much cover you have requested.**

Should you need to make a claim, then just contact St. Leger Homes for a claim form – the procedure is quite simple!



**M**r Cresswell of Balby was the first tenant to sign up to take advantage of our Direct Debit service.

Mr Cresswell said *“this is great — an even more convenient way to pay my rent than the Standing Order I’ve used in the past”*.

If you would like to take advantage of Direct Debit, you can obtain a form from any St. Leger Homes Office or by telephoning 01302 862868.



# Value for Money

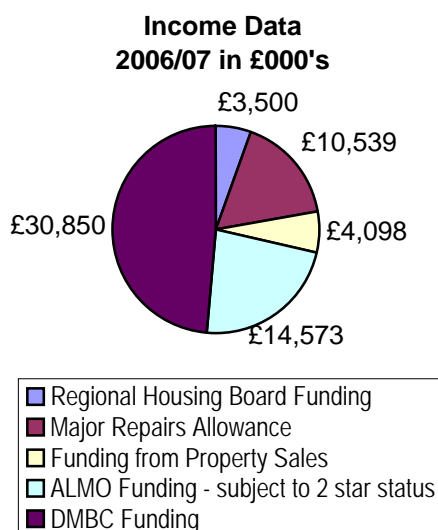
## Where your money goes...

Whenever you buy something for your home, no doubt you like to make sure that you've got good value for your money. At St. Leger Homes, we feel exactly the same; we won't compromise either! We want the very best value for the money we spend so that we can provide you with the highest possible standard of service at the most reasonable cost.

Over the next few issues of House Proud, we'll be showing you the steps we take to

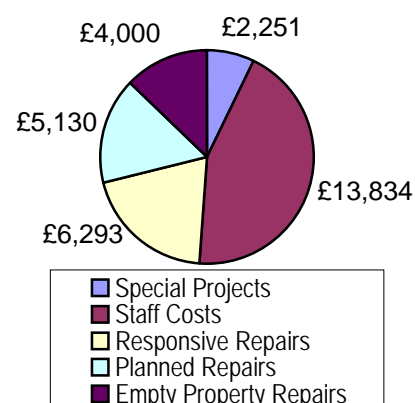
make sure we get value for money.

For the financial year 2006/7, we have a total income of £64,560,000. This is made up of:

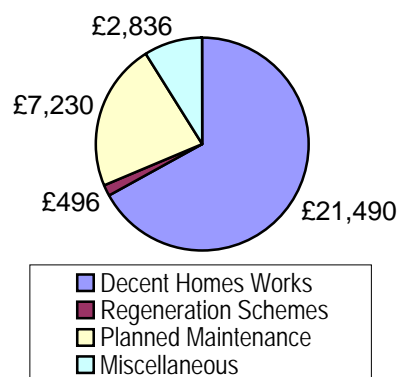


We plan to spend this on the following services:

## Revenue Expenditure Budget 2006/07 in £000's



## Capital Expenditure Budget 2006/07 in £000's



To help our organisation with the job of purchasing the vast range of goods we need, we have a Procurement Team, which is managed by John Brayshaw, the Procurement Manager (pictured left).

John answers some Public Sector Procurement questions.

### Q. What is Procurement and why is it important?

A. Procurement means buying goods and services for our organisation at the best possible price, taking into account their quality so that they breakdown less often - causing you minimal inconvenience.

### Q. What do you mean when you talk about value for money?

A. In simple terms, its about delivering the best and most cost effective solution over the entire life of the product/service.

### Q. Is Public Sector Procurement regulated in any way?

A. In the Public Sector, we are responsible for spending public money and our actions are governed by both UK and European legislation.

### Q. How do you achieve 'Value for Money' ?

A. Like everyone else, we have to try to make money go as far as possible. To do this we follow a number of procurement rules whenever we buy anything. This can range from obtaining quotes from a number of suppliers to the formal Contract Tendering Process that involves advertising both nationally and within Europe.

More information in the next issue.

# Winners Page

*Thank you, that'll do nicely!*

Winners of our first ever Tenant Reward Draw are:



Mr Corcoran of  
Rossington

Mrs Marshall of  
Conisbrough



Mr Allinson of  
Scawthorpe

Mr Hill of  
Moorends



These Tenants each received £250 of Argos vouchers as a thank you from St. Leger Homes for keeping their rent account up to date.

Further draws will be made later in the year, with the **£1,000 Grand Draw** at the end of the year - make sure you keep your rent account clear to be in with a chance of winning.

## Design a Mascot Competition



**1<sup>st</sup> Prize Winning Entry**  
**Martine Hepplewhite**

### UNDER 8'S

1<sup>st</sup> PRIZE

**Martine Hepplewhite of  
St James Street**

2<sup>nd</sup> PRIZE

**Brooke Coy of Thorne**

### UNDER 12'S

1<sup>st</sup> PRIZE

**Heather Clark of Hexthorpe**

2<sup>nd</sup> PRIZE

**Rachel Smith of Dunscroft**

3<sup>rd</sup> PRIZE

**Becky Smith of Dunscroft**



**1<sup>st</sup> Prize Winning Entry**  
**Heather Clark**

Under  
8's — 2nd  
Prize



Under  
12's — 2nd  
Prize



Under  
12's —  
3rd Prize



Pictures of the winners receiving their prizes will be featured in the next issue of House Proud.

Don't be disappointed if you didn't win this time - watch our for more competitions we'll be running!

## Meet A Board Member - semi regular feature

**M**rs Lyn Ralph, is a Tenant Member and Vice Chair on our Board of Directors and is a member of the West Area Board. Lyn is also The Chair of The Doncaster Federation of Tenants' and Residents' Associations. Lyn serves as the Federation's Representative on many groups including the Doncaster Strategic Housing Partnership. She has recently accepted a supporting role with the Black and Minority Ethnic Focus Group and says *"realising the problems this group of people experience, things you and I would take for granted, have been a real insight"*.

Lyn started her life's work of pursuing tenants' rights many years ago when she called in to the Conisbrough office. She noticed a sign asking for volunteers to form Tenants' and Residents' Associations. She took up the invitation and has been a voice for tenants ever since.

On a personal level, Lyn is an avid reader of sagas and fictional social history, and is a fan of Catherine Cookson and Anna Baker. Lyn says her passion for reading means that her home is wall-to-wall books. Lyn also enjoys TV and has the usual soap suspects on her list like Coronation Street, The Bill and Eastenders. She has had Sky Plus installed, but says that she now has about 10 weeks of The Bill saved!!

Lyn is very proud of her family and has 2 daughters, one works for St. Leger Homes and the other is a Chiropodist, a son who is an actor and has appeared in a variety of programmes, and 2 granddaughters who help to keep her busy.

In the past, Lyn has had jobs in industry, retail, and accounting. She was a senior cook for many years, and for 7 years, was the Chair of the National Union for Public Employees (the forerunner to UNISON). She also worked for B&Q in its early years, and

was the one who actually instigated their kitchen planning and design service. Lyn says that all the jobs she's had have given her a wide range of life skills and experience. Lyn considers that the skills learned while working for B&Q have come in especially handy with the property improvements under the Decency Programme, as she now has an excellent understanding of the technical terms.

Always keen to learn, Lyn is a Housing Practitioner and Member of the Chartered Institute of Housing, is a qualified cook and has a City and Guilds in Teaching. She is currently studying for her Training qualification at Northern College, which she finds very stimulating and says that working with her peers is exhilarating.

Lyn says that she is *'very humbled'* to have been elected as Chair of the Federation, a role which she has held for the past 9 years or so. She says that she loves the involvement and the rapport that the Federation have been able to build up with Elected Members and the staff of DMBC and St. Leger Homes. Lyn says *"There's been substantial progress, we're now consulted on and participate in everything that's happening on the estates"*.



Lyn Ralph

## Staff Focus - regular feature

### The Diversity Team

The Diversity Team is based at St. Leger Court in our Customer Services section. It's important that we ensure all our customers get a good service from us. As our customers come from a variety of backgrounds, speak a multitude of languages and have wide and diverse needs, it's crucial that we learn what these needs are and ensure they're included in our service planning and delivery.

The Manager of the team, Mahroof Hussain said *"I believe, if we treat our customers as they want to be treated, then we can help deliver quality homes in quality neighbourhoods"*.

The team deal with the requests we get for information in different formats or alternative languages. They're also busy developing

strategies such as Equalities and Diversity, Race Equality and the Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Housing Strategy, to help ensure we continue to improve our services and to help us monitor our progress.

To make sure that language isn't a barrier to accessing our services, Doncaster Interpretation and Translation Unit (DITU) have been contracted to serve our translation and interpretation needs. All frontline staff will be fully briefed on how to access the service, and will take part in an Equalities Training Programme to ensure that equalities is part of all our activities.

A Black and Minority Ethnic Focus (BME) Group has been set up to help us learn how we can better involve and consult our BME customers. Translation and interpretation services are provided at the meetings to make sure that all members can

fully participate in shaping our services.

Action plans are being formed to engage with other under represented groups such as Young People Groups, Disabled Groups, Rural Communities and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Groups.

We're working in partnership with Doncaster Council (DMBC) to tackle racial incidents, and will be rolling out a new Racist Incident Protocol, which will allow customers to report racist incidents at any of our local offices and in total confidence.

To make sure we deliver appropriate services and customer care, we need to know more about our customers' needs. The Team have worked with staff and customers to develop a Customer Profile Questionnaire to be used by all frontline staff. This will help us obtain relevant information about our customers, including specific needs such as language preference, format preference (ie. Braille, large print or audio), disability and contact preference.

If you would like more information, or would like to join any of our Focus Groups, please contact us:

email:

[diversity@stlegerhomes.co.uk](mailto:diversity@stlegerhomes.co.uk)

or telephone:

**01302 862739**



The Diversity Team

# Improving Services



## SHOP TILL YOU DROP!

### NEW MYSTERY SHOPPING SERVICE

Would you like to help us to set up a “mystery shopping” service?

We listen to all of your comments about the services we provide - good or bad. To build on this we think that it's now time to introduce “mystery shoppers” so that we can be sure we are giving you an excellent service every time you contact us.

As a Mystery Shopper, we'll ask you to make notes on the service you receive from us

each time you contact us, whether by phone or when visiting one of our offices. We'll make sure you get training and all the help you need, and as a member of the scheme, you'll qualify for an incentive!

The information you give us about particular parts of our services will help us to identify any problems and to make sure they're rectified. Interested? Then please call Lynsey Hind on 01302 862740 or email [community.liaison@stlegerhomes.co.uk](mailto:community.liaison@stlegerhomes.co.uk) for more information.

## HELP IS AVAILABLE

Would you like to be considered for one of the Council owned, St. Leger Homes that already benefit from additional facilities such as level access shower, stair lift etc?

If so, then you need to complete a housing application form giving details of your particular needs. When a property with these facilities becomes vacant, a computer is used to find the applicant whose requirements form the closest match. If you would like to know more, please contact our **Registration Team** on **01302 736640**.



Ms Gisbourne of Doncaster Council viewing the facilities of a vacant property with Murray Hall, a St. Leger Homes Allocation Officer

***Can you suggest a name for this matching process that reflects its objectives of widening customer choice and convenience? Get your thinking caps on - we'll be having a competition in a later issue!***

# Customer Services



## *Leaseholders!*

**WE NEED TO KNOW  
YOUR VIEWS on our  
services - PLEASE CONTACT the  
strategy development team ON  
01302 736308**

## **ANNOUNCEMENT**

Members of the SJC and all staff at St. Leger Homes would like to congratulate Moira on being elected as Councillor for Wheatley Ward—well done Moira—we'll all miss you!



Moira Hood, Wheatley

## **VOLUNTEERS WANTED**

We're trying to make your newsletter interesting and informative – but you're the best people to tell us what you really want to see in the newsletter. Would you be interested in joining our Newsletter Development Group? The Group will meet for about 2 hours every 2 months. We won't expect you to write any articles, but as a member of the Group, we will want plenty of input from you about what you would like to be included in each issue.

If this sounds like something you'd like to do, give **Gail Harris** a ring on **01302 862732** and have a chat.

## **Chat or Chart?**

Did you find the performance information on rents of any interest that we put in the last issue?

Do you find the charts we've used in the Value for Money article easy to understand?

Let us know what figures you want to see and how you want to see them – maybe charts or tables - we'll do our best to present the information how you want it. Please contact Sally Moverley on 01302 862731.

## **New Headquarters**

We've now moved to St. Leger Court on White Rose Way. This is the building that was previously called Enterprise House. This move is an important step for our company as it's allowed us to bring together some key areas of our business to provide you with improved services. It also demonstrates that we are working at arms length from the Council.

## **Got Room To Talk?**

Do you have a problem with privacy in any of our receptions? Do you feel that we could do something to improve things? If you have any suggestions or comments, please get in touch with us. Please contact **Gail Harris** on **01302 862732**.

