

reading this annual report

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annual report 2010/11



welcome

Welcome to the BCH Annual Report for 2010-11

The growth in tenant involvement over the last year has been excellent. The BCH Academy has trained over 30 tenants who now work with our staff and other involved tenants to look at how we can continually improve the services we provide. We would like to say a huge thank you to everyone who gives up their time and makes such a big contribution to how we develop as a company to deliver ever improving services to all our customers.



Another success has been the Tenants Project Fund which was launched during 2010-11. Funding to the value of £86,000 was awarded to projects during the year and the BCH Board has agreed to continue to support the Fund in the current year 2011-12 at the same level as last year.

Last year was also a very challenging time for BCH. Following the change of Government the amount of funding previously allocated for the Decent Homes Programme was reduced and spread over a longer period. We have been working closely with tenants and the Council to develop future programmes to reflect the reduction in funding but also maximise its effectiveness.

We are very proud of what we have achieved but there is still more to do and we look forward to working with you, our customers. It is only with your continued support that we will achieve our joint aim of delivering the quality services that you ask for and of being a top performing housing organisation.

Peter Jefferson Chief Executive

Developing the Annual Report

Our Annual Report has been specifically designed by our customers for our customers. A group of 12 customers helped to evaluate last year's report and to oversee the production of this, the 2010-11 report.

The group first looked at a report produced by National Tenant Organisations that reviewed 257 Annual Reports. It identified examples of good practice and areas for improvement from annual reports published by ALMO's, Councils and Housing Associations. The group then looked through what the review identified as the best four annual reports to help create a wish list for our new BCH annual report. Two main improvements they requested were:

- Including performance figures from the previous year so that customers can see if BCH are improving
- Including a section to show how BCH compares to other similar social landlords in the North West

Another important improvement the group requested was that customers sitting on our Service Improvement Panels should be given the opportunity to comment on and sign-off their particular service section and that has been done.

Finally, the report has been approved as tenant friendly by our Reading Panel members who have ensured that it is easy to understand and avoids jargon.

We hope you enjoy reading this year's report. If you have any comments or suggestions for improvement please contact the Customer Involvement team on 477911.

Mike Glennon Customer Involvement Manager

the board



BCH Board of Management 15 Directors

Doreen Wightman
(Chair)

Our five Councillor Directors joined the Board in May 2011 following the outcome of the local election held then. We currently have two vacancies on the Board, one for a Customer Director and one for an Independent, and we expect to fill those posts soon.

Finance, Audit & Corporate Services Committee Members



Diane Bellinger



Paul Whitehead
(Chair)



Cllr
Martin Mitchell



Bill Rogers



Cllr
Andrew Stansfield



Cllr
Adrian Hutton

Service Delivery Committee Members



Cllr Lily Henderson
MBE



Alan Marsh
(Chair)



Judith Mills



Janet Stirling



Alison Stringer



Cllr
Christine Wright

Tenants at the heart of Blackpool Coastal Housing – as a Board that is what we believe in and strive for. We welcome the increased number of tenants getting involved and we have encouraged the development of Service Improvement Panels and the Assembly from the outset. We look forward to incorporating the needs and aspirations from the Assembly into strategies for the future of BCH.

Last year we reviewed our Governance Arrangements to help identify our strengths and show where we could improve. One major outcome has been a change in the Board's structure by reducing the Committees from four to two, as shown above. The pictures show the current Board, including new Members who joined us in 2011 as a result of the outcome of the local election.

All Board Members went through an appraisal process last year to help improve performance by identifying training and personal development needs to shape

training plans. It also helped the development of strategies that inform and are incorporated into the Business Plan, which aims to give Tenants sustainable, quality services that they say they want, and which also fit in with the overall aims and aspirations of Blackpool Council.

BCH and its staff have continued to win national and local awards in recognition of their innovative ways of working. The awards give recognition from colleagues in other housing organisations of sustained hard work and innovation. The Board are very proud of all BCH staff and their achievements, which result in improved services to Tenants – Tenants who are at the heart of everything BCH does.

Doreen Wightman BCH Board Chair

A Year in Pictures

April - September 2010

A Year in Pictures

October 2010 – March 2011

April



BCH staff from Housing Services and Repairs raise over £3,000 in a 24 hour football match for Sport Relief.

May



BCH win 'Best Community Initiative' at the NFA Awards for the Travellers Community Centre Project.

June



The £100,000 Tenants Project Fund is launched allowing customers to decide what projects and services will benefit Council tenants and leaseholders.

October



A group of 8 customer representatives undertake the BCH Academy 2 to enhance a variety of skills including teamwork and information technology.

November



BCH move into new town centre offices at Coastal House (formerly Harveys furniture store). The offices include a brand new Homestop property shop, meeting rooms and space for around 70 staff.

December



Three customer representatives complete a CIH Level 2 qualification in Housing at the Blackpool & Fylde College.

July



BCH Staff and our contractors take part in the 65 mile Manchester to Blackpool cycle challenge, raising money for the Trinity Hospice.

August



Our contractor Mears transforms a disused piece of land at the rear of Tarnside Community Centre into a wonderful new community garden.

September



Over 100 customers attend our Annual Tenant Conference and complete over 700 individual consultations throughout the day.

January



Over 200 invited guests attend our Community Involvement Awards in the beautiful Empress Ballroom.

February



Members of our 'enGAYge' group complete a mystery shopping exercise to scrutinise BCH staff's knowledge of LGBT issues and services.

March



Following an in-depth tender process which included customer representatives, Fylde Borough Council are announced as our new grounds maintenance contractor.

customerservice choice and complaints

Delivering excellent customer service to all our customers is an important aim for BCH and something we are always trying to achieve.

This year has seen a huge change to the way we deliver our services with the opening of our new Head Office at Coastal House in the heart of Blackpool town centre. The new office not only provides modern facilities for a large number of our staff but a brand new, easily accessible Homestop Office for customers wanting to use our Choice Based Lettings service to find a new home.

Another big change has occurred with the implementation of our new computerised housing management system called 'Orchard'. This new system is still in its early stages of use but it already allows us to provide improved customer services and better understand how we can tailor our services to meet our customers' needs.

Dealing with Customer Complaints is an area that we want to improve. Complaints give us a fantastic opportunity to improve services and, following a Value For Money review, we will now handle all BCH complaints internally. We have also been reviewing our complaints policy with customers. As a result this year will see the introduction of a new complaints policy with a new 'appeal stage' and a role for a small number of customers who will be trained to take part in the appeal process and scrutinise our performance.

This year will see a number of other improvements and investments to ensure that we continue to meet our aim of delivering excellent customer service.

Denise Williams Housing Operations Manager
Approved by: Tenant Liaison Forum



2009/10: 78.62%

Customers were very or fairly satisfied with how enquiries are generally dealt with by BCH.

74.73%

2009/10: 109

BCH compliments received

77

2009/10: 60

BCH complaints received and resolved

57

2009/10: 12

Tenants recruited and trained as Mystery Shoppers

3



2009/10: 83%

Mystery shoppers rated their experience as either Excellent or Good

81%

2009/10: 32

Mystery shops carried out across BCH this year

42



How are we performing against our Local Offer?

Last year we worked with our customers to develop a series of Local Offers that clearly define what can be expected from BCH within each key service area.

Our Customer Service Local Offer is:

"To provide all our customers with outstanding customer service by; tailoring services to meet individual customers needs, embracing comments and complaints and keeping customers fully informed of our service offers and performance."

We have detailed below how we are currently performing against the outcomes for this Local Offer:

A range of different ways customers can contact BCH, such as telephone, internet, text messaging.

- We are in the process of reviewing our Local Area Housing Offices to ensure that they provide a quality service and also provide Value for Money.

A Customer Charter setting out clear customer service promises.

- The Customer Involvement Team co-ordinated a large scale consultation exercise across all BCH services to develop our new Local Offers. The Local Offers set out exactly what level of service customers can expect from BCH based on the priorities identified by customers.

Collect detailed information on our customers across the nine Protected Equality Characteristics to better inform service improvements and investment decisions.

- Our Policy and Performance Team conducted a large scale information gathering exercise to collect important information on our customers relating to ethnicity, disability, family composition and communication needs. Over 1,400 customers took part in the exercise and this information has been used to inform a number of investment and improvement decisions.

A comprehensive Customer Newsletter and Website that provides detailed information on all our services, performance information and relevant information from partners

- Our quarterly newsletter 'Viewpoint' has continued to develop, providing more information on community news, partner agencies, BCH services and BCH performance information. This year we have worked with a number of partner agencies including; NHS Blackpool, Police, Fire Service, Housing Benefit and the Census.

What are we improving this year?

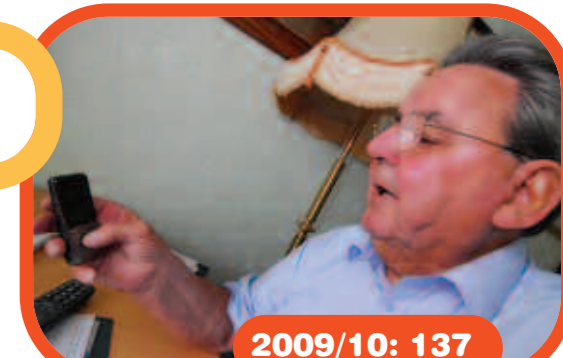
To ensure we meet the outcomes contained within the Involvement Local Offer we will:

- Implement a new Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system that will improve the way we handle customer enquiries and provide us with lots of information on what people are contacting us about and how they contact us. This information will then be used to help shape future services and better meet the needs of our customers.
- Launch a new section of our website that will allow customers to look at their rent account, check and amend personal information, order a repair and check on the progress of current repairs.
- Form a new Complaints Review Panel where a small number of customers, trained by the Tenant Participation & Advisory Service, will scrutinise how BCH resolves customer complaints. This new group will meet quarterly to analyse complaint performance and scrutinise a number of recently resolved complaints.
- Implement a new computerised complaints system to ensure that all complaints received by BCH will be dealt with consistently and ensure that we learn from complaints and make improvements as a result.
- Launch a new Choice Based Lettings service that will allow our customers to bid for properties across the Fylde Coast area. This new system will be in partnership with other social landlords in the area including; Regenda, Muir Housing, Great Places, New Fylde Housing and Places for People.

2009/10: 92%

Mystery shopping calls answered within 5 rings

75%



2009/10: 137

BCH enquiries received through a Councillor / MP / Ombudsman / solicitor

170

2009/10: 4

Specific changes made to services as a result of mystery shopping

11

understanding and responding to the diverse needs of tenants

Our customers come from all walks of life and backgrounds and we are committed to making sure that we do our very best to meet the needs of everybody. We try to ensure that access, services and opportunities are equal, regardless of race, religion, culture, nationality, ethnic background, physical or mental disability, gender, sexuality, age, literacy, income level, and marital status.

We take the view that the moral, legal and service obligations that we are placed under are an opportunity to demonstrate our commitment to equality, and to go beyond meeting minimum standards and work towards excellence that makes a real difference in our community.

All of our staff and Board Members have a central role to play in ensuring equality issues are integral to our performance and strategic aims and to use our knowledge of the needs of our different communities to help us improve.

Just as important is the role that our customers play in helping us to learn about our communities. We can't make things better or get things right first time if our customers don't tell us what they need and help us to understand the best way to do things.

Michael Watson

Policy & Performance Officer
Approved by: The Disability Forum
and enGAYge



2009/10: 15

Members of the LGBT community actively involved in the enGAYge group

20



2009/10: 22%

The percentage of people rehoused in the last year with some form of disability

28%



2009/10: £642,000

Spent on adaptations for disabled people in the last year

£347,932



How are we performing against our Local Offer?

Last year we worked with our customers to develop a series of Local Offers that clearly define what you can expect from BCH within each key service area.

Our Understanding and Responding to Diverse Needs Local Offer is:

'To provide tailored services that meet the specific needs of our customers and actively promote diversity within our communities.'

We have detailed below how we are currently performing against the outcomes for this Local Offer:

A culture that values the differences of others and actively promotes all diversity strands.

- We have reviewed our Comprehensive Equality Policy to make sure that it is compliant with the Equality Act 2010.
- Staff members attended the annual Pride event to show our support for our Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) community.
- We have assessed ourselves against the Equality Framework for Social Housing and identified where we need to improve.
- We have completed a number of Equality Impact Assessments to check that we are not discriminating against anyone.
- We have achieved the Navajo Charter Mark in recognition of the way we engage and work with our LGBT customers.

Information available to tenants in a variety of formats relevant to their individual need.

- We have issued free 'magnifier sheets' to customers with sight impairments to help them to read the documents and newsletters we send to them.
- We have improved the Equality & Diversity pages of our web site so that we can provide evidence that we are meeting the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

Services that can be tailored to the diverse needs of our customers.

- We have installed a new computer system, which is helping us to make sure that we have enough information to ensure that our services are meeting the needs of our customers and communities.
- We have provided our front line staff with Safeguarding training to help them recognise and help vulnerable adults more effectively.
- We have made particular efforts to identify and engage with hard-to-reach and disadvantaged groups including the LGBT community and people with disabilities.
- The level of support and frequency of contact our sheltered customers receive is now tailored to their specific needs.

What are we improving this year?

To ensure we meet the outcomes contained within the Understanding And Responding To Diverse Needs Local Offer we will:

- Continue to provide good customer care by ensuring that services are provided by knowledgeable and well-trained staff who understand the needs of their communities.
- Review the ways that customers prefer to make contact with us and make sure that our access arrangements provide the best possible Value-for-Money.
- We will complete the development of our Customer Charter and implement it.
- Monitor progress on the equality objectives set out in our Single Equality Scheme and report back on them.
- Work as Navajo champions to the agreed action plans made by them to address the needs of our LGBT customers.
- Ensure that we meet our duties under the Equality Act 2010.

2009/10: 73%

The percentage of customers who have provided us with equality and diversity information such as their age, gender, ethnicity or disability to help us shape our services.

77%



2009/10: 371

Major and minor adaptations carried out last year for disabled tenants

243

2009/10: 71

Customers who have told us they are members of the LGBT community

142

customer involvement and projects

Involving our customers in the design, improvement and development of every BCH service is one of our important objectives. We want to ensure that our customers have the opportunity to take part in involvement activities at a time and level they want.

This year has seen the Involvement Team working very closely with the Tenant Liaison Forum (TLF) and Blackpool Council to develop brand new Involvement structures that will provide our customers with the opportunity to scrutinise our services and hold us to account for any failures. The new structures provide real power to customers to hold us to account for the services that we provide.

We have worked hard this year to continue to promote involvement across the whole of BCH and ensure that when our customers do get involved we make changes as a result. We have 178 customers who are regularly involved with us and they have taken part in 2,019 'units of involvement'. In recognition of the improvement to the Involvement Service over the last few years the Involvement Team was also very proud to be shortlisted for the Tenant Participation & Advisory Service National Awards for 'Team of the Year'.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all those customers who got involved with us this year; your involvement is greatly appreciated and is the most important factor in improving existing and developing new services.

Mike Clennon Customer Involvement & Projects Manager
Approved by: Tenant Liaison Forum



2009/10: 1824

The total number of involvement activities completed this year by our tenants

2019

2009/10: 18

Number of tenant representatives that have graduated from the BCH Academy

13



2009/10: 63%

Satisfaction that your views are taken into account

77%

2009/10: 78%

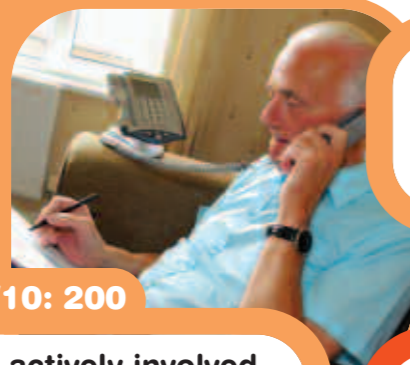
Satisfaction with BCH keeping you informed

84%

2009/10: 151

Total improvements made as a result of tenant involvement this year

174



2009/10: 200

The number of tenants actively involved with BCH at the end of the year

178

2009/10: 105

The number of new tenants recruited to get involved this year

7

How are we performing against our Local Offer?

Last year we worked with our customers to develop a series of Local Offers that clearly define what can be expected from BCH within each key service area.

Our Involvement Local Offer is:

"To provide our customers with the skills, confidence and opportunity to influence and scrutinise BCH services at a level that suits them."

We have detailed below how we are currently performing against the outcomes for this Local Offer:

A new customer-led scrutiny structure that is independent, formal and has authority.

- We have been working alongside the Tenant Liaison Forum and Blackpool Council to develop our new formal scrutiny arrangements.

A wide range of involvement activities that allows customers to influence all BCH services at a level and time that suits them.

- Over 100 customers attended our Annual Tenant Conference to help BCH develop our new Local Offers for each service area by completing over 700 individual consultation activities.
- Customers helped to select our new Gas Maintenance contractor, Environmental contractor, Cleaning contractor and Security contractor.

A network of involved tenants that feel empowered to effect change.

- In partnership with the TLF, BCH developed a new Customer Complaints Policy. A small team of involved customers will now help us to monitor, scrutinise and resolve complaints.
- The Tenants Project Fund panel allocated £86,000 to 14 projects that would enhance the lives of Council tenants and leaseholders.

A network of involved tenants who are confident and have the correct skills to participate effectively.

- 13 Customers graduated from the BCH Academy and Academy 2.
- Three of our original Academy Graduates have successfully studied for and passed a CIH Level 2 qualification in Housing at Blackpool & Fylde College.

A network of involved tenants that accurately reflects our customer base.

- The Disability Forum and 'enGAYge', our LGBT group, completed mystery shops to test BCH staff's knowledge of diversity issues, services and support.

Meetings that are well organised and promote an inclusive culture.

- We have developed our Service Improvement Panels and these will form the basis of our new involvement structure.

What are we improving this year?

To ensure we meet the outcomes contained within the Involvement Local Offer we will:

- Develop a new BCH Customer Involvement Agreement that will be a contract between Blackpool Council, BCH and our customers detailing how they can influence the services they receive from BCH. The new agreement will detail the new involvement structures, training and support for involved tenants and how community groups can formally work alongside BCH. The Agreement will be signed by Blackpool Council, BCH Board of Directors and the Tenant Liaison Forum.
- Recruit a team of customer volunteers who will become Scrutiny Champions and lead the new Blackpool Tenants & Leaseholders Assembly (BTLA). Following their recruitment the new BTLA members will undertake an intensive, bespoke training programme to ensure that they have the necessary skills, knowledge and confidence to undertake their scrutiny activities and hold BCH to account for its performance and behaviour.
- Review all involvement activities to ensure that they allow customers to have a real impact on service delivery and provide Value For Money. Some activities will be redesigned and re-launched including Green Wardens and Tenant Inspectors.
- Complete a large consultation exercise with all involved customers to ensure that they feel their involvement is valued and has a positive impact on BCH Services. The consultation will also include a skills analysis of involved customers to help develop an annual training programme.
- Launch a new Involvement Newsletter that will keep all involved customers up to date with what the Involvement Team are doing, what we have changed or improved as a result of involvement activities and how they can get more involved with BCH.
- Launch the Get Involved Panel that will formally take over responsibility for developing Customer Involvement from the Tenant Liaison Forum.
- Develop specific involvement activities for under represented groups including young tenants and families.

2009/10: 5.88

The average number of involvement activities completed by each tenant

8.42



decenthomes

The Government's Department for Communities and Local Government originally set a target for 95% of all social rented housing to meet the 'Decent Homes Standard' by the 31st December 2012.

Following the General Election last year and the subsequent change of Government, the Homes and Communities Agency carried out a spending review. The review reduced the funding available to BCH but extended by two years the date by when homes are required to meet the 'Decent Homes Standard' to the 31st December 2014.

The impact of the reduced funding means that BCH is working closely with Blackpool Council to look at the long term sustainability of some of the properties that we manage and future programmes of work are being developed to reflect the reduction in funding.

Our partnership approach to carrying out the Decent Homes work again generated increased employment opportunities for local people, with 86% of the workforce being employed from areas with FY postcodes.

BCH has recently carried out a tendering exercise with the contractors within our Partnering Agreement. The tendering exercise was essential to ensure Value For Money is achieved over the next two years programme of work. As a result of this tendering exercise BCH has reduced the number of Partnering Contractors from four to three. The three successful contractors are Forrest, Read and Errington and Mears. BAAS, who were unsuccessful, will have the opportunity to tender for some of the external works and BCH actively encouraged the re-deployment of local staff from BAAS to the successful contractors.

In recognition of our partnership working, BCH won the Best Community Initiative at the National Federation of ALMO's (NFA) awards for the Travellers Site Community Centre.

Ian Grimshaw Stock Investment Manager
Approved by: Property Improvement Panel



2009/10: 495

The number of new Heating installations

401 Gas & 134 Electric Heating



2009/10: 1,696

The number of homes that received replacement Doors and Windows

657



2009/10: 899

The number of new Kitchens and Bathrooms fitted

795

2009/10: 97

The number of homes that received render and external works

59

2009/10: 255

The number of homes that received Roofline and Pointing works

436

How are we performing against our Local Offer?

Last year we worked with our customers to develop a series of Local Offers that clearly define what you can expect from BCH within each key service area.

Our Home Local Offer is:

"To provide a cost effective repairs & maintenance service that keeps homes safe, healthy and decent and completes repairs on-time."

This is how we are currently performing against the outcomes for this Local Offer:

BCH complies with all legal and regulatory responsibilities.

- 2010-11 was the third year of the Decent Homes Programme and by the end of it there were 3119 homes, 59% of the total housing stock, that had met the Decency Standard.
- BCH works with Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service to improve our management of fire safety and ensure that BCH complies with the Regulatory Reform Act.

Customers are provided with services in the way they want them provided.

- The Stock Investment Team worked with Tenant Inspectors to carry out independent quality surveys on properties improved under the Decent Homes Programme.
- The survey results were very positive with no issues being raised about the quality of work or customer liaison and service. Overall customer satisfaction was 96.24%.

BCH operates within set budgets.

- The Stock Investment Team managed a total budget of £16.201M during 2010-11, which was invested in improvement works to a total of 2,454 properties.

BCH provides a Value-for-Money service to customers.

- A new tendering exercise with Partnership Contractors ensured we received Value-for-Money. It created £600,000 of savings that will be re-invested in improving homes.
- We reviewed the provision of "comfort zones" for customers and looked at how we could use existing flats as alternative accommodation whilst work is carried out.

Key performance indicators are improving and customers are aware of our performance.

- We worked closely with our Service Improvement Panel to develop services and scrutinise performance. The meetings helped to support positive service improvements.
- The Stock Investment Team met regularly with other social landlords to compare BCH performance with similar organisations and to adopt identified best practice.

What are we improving this year?

- We will undertake further analysis of the long term sustainability of properties, and look at the opportunities to re-model, convert or re-develop properties that are proving unsustainable in the long term. We will be submitting bids to the Government to help fund these potential changes.
- Working with our partner organisations, we will look to increase our community initiatives. This will involve each organisation committing labour, materials or funding towards providing improvements to communities.
- We will address the effects of climate change and fuel poverty within the properties that we manage. This will involve identifying grant funding opportunities, undertaking cost analysis of potential schemes and implementing works to properties that will help reduce running costs for our customers.
- We will advertise for new contractors to undertake the remaining Decent Homes works. This exercise is expected to take 15 months to complete and customers will be involved in the selection process.
- We will review and update Fire Risk Assessments and action plans and develop specifications to ensure compliance with the Fire Reform Act.



2009/10: 94.31%

The percentage of tenants satisfied with the work on their home

96.24%

2009/10: £15.9 million

The amount of money spent on making homes decent last year

£16.2 million



repairs

The Repairs & Maintenance Team carried out 22,800 repairs to BCH managed properties, including works to prepare 700 properties that came empty to our Empty Homes Standard ready for re-let.

We implemented a remote working solution using Personal Digital Assistants (PDA) for all the on-site trades operatives and managers. The PDAs have enabled us to effectively perform cost tracking and task valuing. This information has helped to generate efficiency savings through overspend identification and cost monitoring.

Increased efficiency gained through the development of the mobile working strategy has helped us to raise customer satisfaction, as Performance Indicators show. In recognition of the implementation of the remote working solution and use of the associated software through Telecetra The National Housing Maintenance Forum gave BCH the award for Best Direct Labour Organisation 2011.

Our remote working solution also enabled us to achieve the 'Innovation in Housing Technology Award' presented at the Housing Excellence Awards 2010.

We were also finalists at the North West Contact Centre Awards 2010 in the Best Technology Partnership category.

Through our excellent mentoring and training programme we have helped one of our apprentices achieve recognition by being named Apprentice of the Year 2010 by the Association of Public Service Excellence.

Ian Fairclough

Technical Services Manager
Approved by: Repairs Service
Improvement Panel



2009/10: £79

Average cost of a repair completed

£79



2009/10: 97.86%

Number of repairs completed on time

98.53%

2009/10: 96%

Satisfaction with repairs completed

90%

2009/10: 98%

Satisfaction with gas servicing

99.1%



How are we performing against our Local Offer?

Our Home Local Offer is:

"To provide a cost effective repairs & maintenance service that keeps homes safe, healthy and decent and completes repairs on-time."

BCH complies with all legal and regulatory responsibilities.

- Our performance in completing work under the statutory 'Right to Repair' scheme has improved.
- Repairs performance is now reported and discussed at our Repairs Improvement Panel.
- We have reviewed our empty homes repairs process to better co-ordinate our resources in order to meet the re-let target times set out in the performance indicators.
- We have 4,943 properties with completed Landlord Gas Safety Record equating to 99.8% of our properties.

Customers are provided with services in the way they want them.

- We held eight Repairs SIP and four Empty Homes SIP meetings, resulting in initiatives that such as property MOT's, a Rechargeable Repairs Policy, planned and batched maintenance, and priority empty homes scheduling.
- Satisfaction surveys have shown us that satisfaction with repairs is high in every aspect, from reporting the repair in the first instance to the length of time taken to do the work.
- Customer Satisfaction was also high in relation to the quality of workmanship within the home and the attitude of the trades staff who carried out the repair.

BCH operates within set budgets.

- The repairs budget was allocated between four teams and each team's expenditure was monitored and reported to the Operations Manager on a monthly basis.

BCH provides a Value-for-Money service to customers.

- We have changed where we get our building supplies from to get better value for money.
- Work with our Service Improvement Panel has resulted in the provision cleaning packs to allow the earliest possible date for the start of new tenancies.

All Key Performance Indicators are improving and customers are aware of our performance.

- Our Key Performance Indicators are presented at both the New Home and the Repairs Service Improvement Panels.

What are we improving this year?

- We have successfully re-tendered our Out of Hours emergency service and Read & Errington are now providing BCH customers with a 24hr emergency repairs service.
- In order to promote a proactive approach to maintenance we have introduced Property MOT's to ensure reactive maintenance items are kept to a minimum through a programme of planned maintenance.
- Through a recent tendering process organised by Blackpool Council's Care & Repair Team, BCH has been successful in winning some of the adaptations work as part of a framework of contractors. We are now working closely with the framework team to deliver an efficient and cost effective adaptations service to Blackpool residents.
- We are investing in new PDAs for all the on-site trades operatives and managers. The extra investment will increase efficiency and help develop our remote working approach.
- Our repairs and maintenance workforce are being trained towards our aim of 100% multi-skilling capability. This increase in multi-skilling will reduce the need to allocate more than trades operative to attend a repair and will help deliver our Right First Time Policy.
- We are revising our rechargeable repairs process in order to recover costs from tenants for items that are not BCH responsibility. This will enable us to focus resources on improving our service to BCH customers overall.

2009/10: 50

Number of workforce operatives

50

2009/10: 99.55%

Number of homes with a gas safety certificate

99.8%



Lettings

It has continued to be another extremely busy year for the Homestop Team.

Firstly we have moved into our new office accommodation. The team is now based at the BCH Head Office, Coastal House on Abingdon Street in the centre of Blackpool. Now that we have a town centre presence we have noticed an increase in the number of visitors calling in to find out more about the Homestop Service and how it works.

It has been an exciting year for the team because, for the first time in over 30 years, Blackpool Council was successful in applying for funding to build new houses, which the team has been responsible for letting. The sites identified for the new build developments were garage sites on Portree Road and Cranbrook Avenue along with unpopular deck-access flats on Draycot and Forshaw Avenues on Grange Park, for which demand was low.

The Homestop Team worked closely with colleagues in the Customer Involvement Team to support 33 tenants to move by agreement from the unpopular flats on Draycot and Forshaw Avenues into other homes.

In total 42 new properties have been built. There is a mix of two, three and four bedroom houses and one five bedroom house. All the houses have:-

- Double glazing
- Gas central heating with solar thermal panels to pre-heat the hot water
- Private garden, including a shed and secure bicycle storage
- Off road parking

Paul Dillon Area Housing Manager
Approved by: New Home Service Improvement Panel



2009/10: 46,010

Total number of bids placed on Homestop in the past year

55,899



2009/10: £2,513

Average cost to repair an empty property

£2,119

How we are performing against our Local Offer?

Last year we worked with our customers to develop a series of Local Offers that clearly define what you can expect from BCH within each key service area.

Our Local Offer is:

“To provide our customers with choice when requiring a new home. Our customers will be provided with the most appropriate form of tenure such as an Introductory Tenancy or a Secure Tenancy.”

We have set out here how we are currently performing against the outcomes for this Local Offer:

- BCH provides and operates a Choice Based Lettings (CBL) Scheme.
- Properties are advertised on a weekly basis via a newsletter and on our website www.homestop.co.uk
- We have met on a quarterly basis with customers on our New Home Service Improvement Panel to discuss improvements to the service and we are performing.

Customers are provided with information on how to participate in the CBL Scheme.

- We have made changes to our weekly newsletter to include tips for customers to follow before placing bids on Homestop.
- On 2nd August 2010 we launched our Golden Goodbye Scheme. A cash incentive was offered to customers to leave their homes in excellent condition and to allow viewings to take place during the notice period. This allowed us to re-let those properties within 17.5 days on average. We also saved £1000 per empty property.
- The Smaller Home Scheme, was also launched on 2nd August 2010. By offering incentives to customers living in houses that are too big for them we have been able to make better use of three bedroom, family type homes.

Customers are provided with the most appropriate form of tenure.

- All new customers start out with an Introductory Tenancy. This means that they are on a 12 month probationary or trial period.
- If a customer has been a Blackpool Council tenant for 12 months or more before moving into their new home they will continue to be a Secure Tenant.

2009/10: 2.40

Average number of offers made before a property is let

2

What are we improving this year?

To ensure we meet the outcomes contained within the Allocations and Tenure Local Offer we will:

- Continue to work on a Sub-Regional CBL scheme with our colleagues in Fylde and Wyre Councils and with Housing Associations in the Fylde Coast area. This will result in more choice for customers who wish to express an interest in a property belonging to any of these landlords throughout the Fylde Coast.
- Work on creating a single application form for customers to complete when they require housing on the Fylde Coast through the Sub-Regional CBL scheme. You can learn more about Sub-Regional CBL by visiting www.myhomechoice.org
- Review the information collated as part of our Exit Surveys to ensure this helps us to improve our services.
- Publish updated information on how to apply for a home.
- Review, discuss and agree the Local Offers for the next financial year, in consultation with customers.
- Review the questions on our satisfaction surveys to ensure that we can accurately report on our Local Offers following feedback from customers.
- Review the Tenant Induction process to ensure value for money.

2009/10: 705

Number of homes coming empty in 2010/11

836



2009/10: 33.5 Days

Average turnaround time

29.7 Days



rents

The past year has been one of the most challenging and difficult in recent times for the Rents Team. The new Coalition Government carried out a Comprehensive Spending Review in October 2010 and the changes announced in the review may have already had a financial impact on our customers that is likely to continue. At a local level the Team has also faced challenges in the way they work following the introduction of two new computer systems, new rent cards and the cancellation of the Advice Link Contract.

BCH and Blackpool Council's Housing Benefit Team both implemented new computer systems in October 2010. We worked closely with Blackpool Council to minimise the impact these changes had on our customers. Blackpool Council also changed the supplier of its payment cards and there was a delay in the new cards being issued to our customers. This meant that our customers were unable to order new rent cards for over six months. The combined effect of all these challenges was an increase in our overall arrears and the number of tenants with arrears of over £1,000. By the end of the year the performance of the Team started to improve as we grew accustomed to using the new systems and we were able to issue new rent payment cards. These changes were necessary and have ensured that we continue to provide a modern service that makes it easier for our customers to pay their rent and other charges.

We have worked closely to provide the service our customers want by ensuring that they are represented on the Rents Improvement Panel. The panel meet regularly and some of the service developments we have agreed are explained in more detail later in this report.

The Rents Team have gathered valuable information about our services and customers by carrying out Rent Surveys, telephone questionnaires, Tenancy Audits and a Mystery Shopping exercise. We would like to thank all of our customers, including the Rent Improvement Panel, who have helped us make a difference in the last twelve months.

Andrew Walker
Area Housing Manager
Approved by: Rents Improvement Panel



2009/10: ££17,485,000

Total rent, service charges, court costs and responsive repair recharges collected, including outstanding amounts from previous years

£17,239,000

2009/10: -£37,003 (reduction)

The amount by which current tenant arrears have changed in the past year

+£33,473 (increase)

2009/10: 60

Number of tenants with arrears over £1,000

76

2009/10: 27

Number of tenants evicted due to rent arrears

32



How are we performing against our Local Offer?

The information provided to us by our customers has been used to develop our "Rents Local Offer", which is:

"To provide a service that makes it as simple as possible for our customers to pay their rent and other charges. Our tenants should be able to contact us in the knowledge that we will deal with them in confidence and work with them if they are having difficulty paying their rent or other bills."

We have detailed below how we are currently performing against the outcomes for this local offer:

Customers are provided with a range of ways to pay their rent and other charges that is flexible to their needs.

- We carried out a satisfaction survey which showed that the majority of our customers (84%) who responded were satisfied with the information provided about how to pay rent.
- We reviewed the content of the Rent information Leaflet with the Rents Improvement Panel.

Customers are provided with information about their rent account and any changes made to the rent they are charged.

- The Rents Improvement Panel helped us to develop a new Rent Statement that is easier to read and understand.
- In our satisfaction survey, 78% of our customers were satisfied with the information available on their Rent Statements.

We will work with our customers to get their payments back on track if they are experiencing difficulties.

- We invested in a new computer system to make it easier to identify and help tenants with arrears who are not making payments.
- We have created a Rent Intervention Officer (RIO) post to provide support to tenants in financial difficulty.

Our customers have access to services that could make their money go further.

- We are working with Adult and Community Learning to allow our customers to attend courses on confidence building and budgeting.
- All of our customers have access to affordable loans and access to a savings account via the Blackpool Fylde and Wyre Credit Union.
- We can now provide vulnerable customers with access to the United Utilities Social Tariff, which provides lower energy tariffs.
- Customers are now given advice on how to use their gas appliances in the most efficient way to reduce the cost of use and reduce fuel poverty.

What are we improving this year?

To ensure we meet the outcomes contained within the Rents Local Offer we will:

- Provide information to our customers about the different ways they can pay their rent by cash.
- Encourage more of our customers to use the Blackpool Fylde and Wyre Credit Union.
- Promote the benefits of taking out Home Contents insurance.
- Provide our customers with information and advice that could maximise their income, including, raising awareness of employment and training opportunities and making referrals to agencies that have access to funds to help customers experiencing financial difficulties.
- Provide information and advice at tenancy sign up time to ensure prospective new customers can afford to move into accommodation they have been offered.
- Develop the role of the Rent Intervention Officer so we can provide appropriate advice and information to tenants who have fallen into arrears with their rent account.
- Develop our new computer system so we can demonstrate that we are fair and consistent when we are working with tenants with arrears.
- Develop our new computer system to show that we make affordable payment arrangements with tenants who have fallen behind with their rent payments.
- Use the results of our Rents Survey to identify which customers are more likely to have difficulty paying their rent so we can then provide them with appropriate help and advice.
- Continue to develop the Rents Improvement Panel so it has a real impact on service delivery. Work with our colleagues in the Repairs department of BCH to recover rechargeable repairs.

2009/10: £13,300

The total amount of savings BCH tenants have made with the Blackpool, Fylde & Wyre Credit Union in the past year

£22,661



2009/10: £334,467

The total amount of current tenants' rent arrears

£367,940

estate management

The Neighbourhood and Community Standard cuts across two significant service areas within BCH. The standard sets out the required outcomes for both our Anti-social Behaviour and Estate Management Services. The standard also measures how we will work in partnership with other public agencies and relevant partners to help promote social environment and economic well being in the areas where BCH owns and manages properties.

Estate Management

It's been a year of change for the Estate Management Service. Towards the end of 2010, we parted ways with our Grounds Maintenance and Cleaning contractors. We did this in response to our customers who told us the contractor's performance was failing to reach the high standards that we set at BCH. As a result of listening to the views of our customers we terminated the contract with Fountains and then carried out a rigorous procurement exercise to find a contractor able to provide high quality, Value-for-Money services that we expect our customers to receive.

From very strong competition we were able to appoint Fylde Borough Council to deal with the maintenance of our communal gardens, verges and open spaces and Superclean Wothorpe Limited for the cleaning of communal areas within buildings three storeys or more in height.

The Fylde Parks and Leisure Team bring with them considerable experience of parks management, grounds maintenance and community initiatives such as 'In Bloom'. Fylde currently have 4 Green Flag Quality Awards and have gained international success in the 'In Bloom' initiative, having won the Royal Horticulture Society Gold for Lytham in summer 2010, as well as numerous Silver Gilt awards around the Borough.

Superclean Services Wothorpe Limited is a national company with a proven track record of providing excellence and has promised to deliver a first class service to our customers.

We are confident that we now have the "right people" in place to maintain and clean the blocks and communities where our residents live. We are looking forward to working with both Fylde and Superclean in the coming year.

Richard Scholes Area Housing Manager, Mereside
Approved by: Neighbourhood Improvement Panel



2009/10: 83.33%

The percentage of graffiti removed within 5 working days

100%



2009/10: 49.37 Days

Average number of days before a Welcome Visit to new tenants is made

36.79 Days

2009/10: 0.98 Days

Average time to remove bulky items, like fridges or washing machines, dumped on land managed by BCH - target 3 days

1.33 Days

2009/10: 2.38 Days

Average time to remove graffiti - target 5 days

0.66 Days

How are we performing against our Local Offer?

Our Neighbourhood and Community Local Offer is:

"To work with partner agencies to create neighbourhoods that our customers enjoy living in by keeping them clean, communal areas well maintained and ensuring our customers feel safe in their home and the local community"

Blocks and communal areas are cleaned and maintained.

- We have carried out block cleaning to our three-storey communal blocks at least once a month. Where there have been "hot spot" areas, we have listened to our customers and cleaned the blocks as frequently as every week.
- Our Estate Management Officers carry out a routine programme of checking the contractor's performance. Block inspections are carried out the day after the contractors have cleaned the blocks which helps us to monitor the work and ensures the contractors are following their contractual obligations.
- We have put up notice boards in all three-storey plus blocks showing the contractor's cleaning schedule.

BCH works with customers to keep estates tidy and free from rubbish and dog fouling.

- In partnership with the Dog Warden Service we successfully resolved a longstanding dog fouling issue at one Housing Scheme at Argosy Court, Grange Park. The Estate Management Officers also dealt with and successfully resolved 98 animal nuisance complaints, the majority of which were dog fouling issues.
- The Estate Management Officers carried out regular monthly walkabouts where residents are invited to take part. Whilst on the walkabouts they identified a number of concerns including untidy gardens, dumped rubbish in communal areas, abandoned vehicles and other issues that bring down the appearance of a neighbourhood. During the year our Officers dealt with 101 untidy garden complaints.
- We successfully increased the number of Green Wardens to monitor our contractor's performance. We also reached a milestone in September when we celebrated the first anniversary of the Green Warden Service.
- In 2010-11, we launched our first ever gardening competition. The competition celebrated the hard work our residents do to make their area a great place to live in.
- We made sure that a fly tipping collection service was included in the new Block Cleaning and Grounds Maintenance contracts, saving us £16,000. Previously we had to pay for this as an additional service.
- By retendering contracts we were able to reduce the cost of the Grounds Maintenance contract by £11,021 and the communal cleaning contract by £1,638.

What are we improving this year?

- We will continue with the programme of block inspections ensuring that they are kept clean tidy and free from any obstructions.
- We will continue to carry our monthly walkabouts on our estates with resident involvement, and we will identify untidy gardens, vehicles, abandoned cars, dumped rubbish, graffiti, dog fouling and take the appropriate action.
- We will carry out a full pets audit of the Queens Park Estate to identify and register those tenants who are keeping pets in the high rise tower blocks.
- We will publish our first Pets Policy, encourage tenants to register their pets with BCH, and promote responsible animal ownership.
- We will recruit Clean Wardens to monitor the standard of cleaning in our three-storey blocks of flats.
- We will hold our second Annual Garden Competition.



2009/10: 90.91%

Percentage of hazardous and unsightly waste, like food or dog mess, cleared within 24 hours of notification

98.21%

2009/10: 0.44 Days

Average number of days to clear hazardous and unsightly waste

0.27 Days

partnership working

BCH is a strong advocate of partnership working. It is a vital part of our culture and a fundamental aspect of the way we work, educate staff and achieve our goals. Successful partnerships bring opportunities and benefits that cannot be achieved by BCH alone. Working together with other agencies helps the communities where our customers live, work and spend their leisure time to become safer, stronger, healthier, wealthier and more sustainable in the future.

At BCH we are excited about the partnerships we have developed. Our relationship with Muir Housing, whose staff share the Grange Park Housing Office with BCH, continues to flourish. Sharing the office is particularly useful when dealing with issues of anti-social behaviour. It means our Officers can exchange information and knowledge, avoid duplication and communicate effectively.

During the year, our partnership with Community Payback went from strength to strength. Thanks to £1000 of funding from the Ward Councillors, BCH has been able to secure the services of the Payback Team every Wednesday throughout the year. We have been able to direct the Payback Team to carry out jobs that are of benefit to the community and residents.

BCH maintained its presence on the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) which involved the public, private and voluntary sectors. BCH was specifically involved in the Housing Sub Group but, with the economic cuts throughout Blackpool Council, progress was limited. The meetings however provided an opportunity for information to be exchanged. With the new administration coming into power

towards the end of 2010/2011, this year will see significant changes to the LSP. It was acknowledged that prior to the political turnaround, the LSP needed more structure. There is currently a review being undertaken to enable stronger partnership working with greater outcomes.

Unfortunately due to the spending cuts, we lost our dedicated Reassurance Plus Officer who was based at Grange Park. The Officer was responsible for co-ordinating and facilitating community engagement on the estate. However, not to be deterred by this, BCH still continues to work with its partners to engage the community. We demonstrated this earlier this year in January when we delivered the "Down Our Street" community engagement initiative. Working in partnership with Blackpool Council, the Dog Warden Service, the Residents Association and the Police, we carried out a door knocking exercise to identify community issues. During the three day initiative, BCH and its partners consulted over 500 tenants. From the information we received, we were able to develop an action plan to resolve the concerns raised.

This year we will be working towards delivering our Local Offers. To achieve the standard it is important for BCH to continue working hard at maintaining and enhancing the partnerships we already have whilst developing new ones.

Richard Scholes

Neighbourhood Manager

Approved by: Neighbourhood Improvement Panel



Young people spoken to about their behaviour jointly by Police and BCH staff during the "Operation Adjoin Plus" partnership

67



How are we performing against our Local Offer?

The Neighbourhood and Community Standard as previously stated cuts across three areas of service delivery. The local offer is:

"To work with partner agencies to create neighbourhoods that our customers enjoy living in by keeping them clean, communal areas well maintained and ensuring our customers feel safe in their home and the local community."

BCH will play a prominent role in the Local Strategic Partnership.

- We successfully obtained £1,000 of funding from the local Ward Councillors, which enabled the Community Payback Team to dedicate one day a week to carrying out community tasks, including repairing fences, tidying gardens, painting walls, and litter picking.
- Our Estate Management Officers (EMOs) worked closely with the Dog Warden Service to tackle dog fouling in our communities.
- We continued to work closely with the Police to tackle anti-social behaviour and to exchange valuable information for resolving neighbour complaints, noise nuisance, drug dealing and other ASB issues.
- In partnership with the Princes Trust, Fire Service, Reassurance Plus, Blackpool Council and local Councillors, we helped volunteers to transform a community garden.
- With Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service we have actively increased smoke alarm provision within accommodation, thus contributing to the prevention of fire fatalities, injuries and serious fire damage to homes.
- In partnership with Reassurance Plus, the Police, Ward Councillors, local Schools and others, BCH produced and hosted a community play. The play, which was finally named "Dr Who and the Heart of the Park", was a great example of many agencies and individuals working together.

Multi-agency ASB meetings held, chaired by BCH and attended by Environmental Protection, Police, Fire Services, Youth Services and Springboard

18

Our partnership plans for the coming year?

- In partnership with the Fire Service, we will continue to support tenants in increasing their awareness and knowledge of basic fire safety and smoke alarm provision within the home.
- We will work with Groundwork, the local Councillors, residents and community groups to develop youth provision on the Grange Park Estate by providing training for community members to deliver youth activities which will be sustainable in the long term.
- We will continue to work closely with Blackpool Council to ensure that ensures the streets are clean, well maintained and free from litter.
- We will continue to work closely with partners on issues such as environmental protection, noise nuisance, pest control and reducing anti social behaviour and crime levels.
- With Blackpool's Crime Reduction and Drugs Partnership we will support a "Bag it and Bin it" campaign aimed at promoting and encouraging the responsible disposal of dog waste.

Items of safety equipment installed under the Child Accident Prevention Scheme funded by NHS Blackpool and run for them by BCH

1,680



Families receiving intensive support after being referred to the Springboard Family Intervention Project

12

anti-social behaviour

Tackling anti-social behaviour (ASB) and its underlying causes is a key priority for BCH and our customers. We are committed to providing a high quality ASB service and being accountable to our customers for its delivery.

This year we are proud to announce that our service has succeeded in achieving HouseMark ASB Accreditation in recognition of the way we deal with ASB. Our service was assessed against our commitment to doing things; for example how we work towards preventing ASB, how we tackle it when it does occur and how we support victims and witnesses. We were also assessed on how we encourage individual and community responsibility and get customers involved in influencing how our service is delivered.

We know that if ASB happens to you it can have a big impact on your quality of life, and we have continued to use our strong local partnerships with organisations such as Blackpool Police and Environmental Protection to investigate and tackle ASB. In particular, we have strengthened our commitment to supporting victims of ASB. This year we became key members of Blackpool Council's Anti Social Behaviour Risk Assessment Conference (ASBRAC). This group was set up following the tragic death of Fiona Pilkington and her daughter, which was reported in the National Media. The group aims to assess the needs of vulnerable victims and provide appropriate services and interventions.

We have set up our Service Improvement Panel named the Safer Communities Panel to monitor, challenge and develop the ASB service in line with local and national standards. We want to continually improve and have been busy during the year working with our Safer Communities Panel to make improvements to our service. We especially want to ensure that all of our customers can access our ASB services as easily as possible and that they feel supported through the process of making a report of ASB.

I would like to thank all of our partners, staff and members of the Safer Communities Panel for helping us achieve the HouseMark ASB Accreditation and for their continuing support.

Janet Flint ASB Manager
Approved by: Safer Communities Panel

2009/10: 10

Notices of Proceedings Pending issued

3

2009/10: 902

Total number of cases

754

2009/10: 17

Notices of Seeking Possession issued

25

2009/10: 21

Acceptable Behaviour Contracts signed

25

2009/10: 14

Possession Orders obtained in Court

12



How are we performing against our Local Offer?

The information provided to us by our customers has been used to develop our Neighbourhood Local Offer, which is:

"To work with partner agencies to create neighbourhoods that our customers enjoy living in by keeping them clean, communal areas well maintained and ensuring our customers feel safe in their home and the local community."

We have detailed below how we are currently performing against the outcomes for this Local Offer:

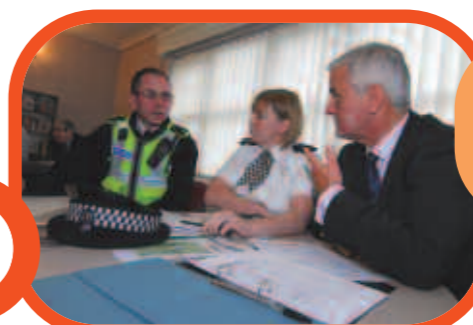
BCH takes action to prevent, deter and tackle anti-social behaviour.

- Our Safer Communities Panel suggested that our response times to ASB cases should be prioritised depending on the severity of the case so that customers would be better informed of timescales. In April 2010 the Panel agreed three priorities; high, medium and low. Customers are now told when they make their initial complaint which priority band they are in.
- In January 2011 we made it easier for customers to report instances of ASB by providing pre-paid envelopes to return diary log sheets. We also provided dedicated telephone numbers for customers to report instances of ASB, including an out of hours hotline.
- We issue a customer satisfaction survey after every ASB case is closed. The results are used to measure the level of satisfaction with our service and make improvements.
- In October 2010 we carried out a Value for Money exercise on provision of mobile phones for our Buddy Service. This resulted in five contract mobile phones being replaced with two pay as you go mobile phones.
- In March 2011 we carried out a Value for Money exercise on the serving of legal documents. Legal documents historically, were served by private process servers. We trialled the service with Blackpool Council who worked more efficiently and for less cost.
- We have a dedicated page in Viewpoint, our customer newsletter, written in partnership with the Safer Communities Panel.

2009/10: 4

Introductory Tenancies extended

6



What are we improving this year?

To ensure we meet the outcomes contained within the Neighbourhood Local Offer we will:

- Explore the possibility of developing a Local Lettings policy for blocks of flats on Mereside where there have previously been anti-social residents.
- Introduce a new service contract with Blackpool Council for serving legal documents.
- Ensure that annual training for ASB Officers takes place so that they are up to date with the relevant tools and powers.
- Develop a publicity strategy with customers that promotes BCH's vision of intolerance to ASB and its championing of positive behaviour.
- Carry out regular briefings on the Respect Standard with non ASB specialist staff, so they know what is expected of them and the organisation in the BCH stance against ASB.
- Provide customers with explanations of decisions of how we are managing their report in their preferred method of contact.

2009/10: 11

Evictions carried out

8



2009/10: 5

Anti Social Behaviour Injunctions granted in court

3

2009/10: 84%

Overall level of satisfaction with the ASB service.

76%

our performance

how we compare

Measuring performance is an important part of the way we manage the delivery of the services BCH provides to its customers. Reporting on performance is also important of course and we do that on a regular basis. The Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that customers tell us they want to know about are published in every issue of Viewpoint and we report every quarter to the Board and Committees.

However, measuring on its own is not enough to drive service improvements. We compare our performance against other housing organisations – not just ALMOs like BCH but Councils and Housing Associations too. We see who performs well, ask how they do it and apply what we learn to BCH customer service delivery.

We try to compare “like with like”, seeking housing organisations similar to BCH in terms of the areas they work in, the number of homes they manage and the issues they deal with. The Customer Panel who helped to design this Annual Report asked that we try to make local comparisons but that has not been fully possible because other housing organisations do not always report on the same KPIs that BCH does.

In the tables here we compare BCH performance with Muir Housing Association, who operate in the Blackpool area, plus Calico Housing in Burnley and Barrow-in-Furness Council, both of whom have to deal with similar issues to BCH.

However, when looking at managing Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) issues we have included Wigan & Leigh Housing in the comparison because ASB performance information for Calico Housing was not available. Similarly we have had to include Bolton At Home and Lancaster City Council when comparing Average Re-let Time.

Peter Whittaker Company Secretary



INVOLVEMENT & EMPOWERMENT STANDARD

Percentage of tenants satisfied that their views are taken into account

1. Calico Homes Burnley	92.06
2. Blackpool Coastal Housing	77.07
3. Barrow-in-Furness Council	76.00
4. Muir Group Housing Association	75.00

HOME STANDARD

Percentage of tenants satisfied with Repairs and Maintenance

1. Blackpool Coastal Housing	89.62
2. Barrow-in-Furness Council	88.00
3. Muir Group Housing Association	84.00
4. Calico Homes Burnley	79.50

Percentage of Emergency Repairs completed within target time

1. Muir Group Housing Association	99.90
2. Blackpool Coastal Housing	99.43
3. Calico Homes Burnley	99.20
4. Barrow-in-Furness Council	99.00

Percentage of tenants satisfied with the Landlord's Services overall

1. Muir Group Housing Association	89.00
2. Barrow-in-Furness Council	87.00
3. Blackpool Coastal Housing	86.03
4. Calico Homes Burnley	84.20

TENANCY STANDARD

Percentage of Rent Charged that was collected

1. Calico Homes Burnley	101.48
2. Barrow-in-Furness Council	100.97
3. Blackpool Coastal Housing	99.23
4. Muir Group Housing Association	98.67

Average Re-let Time in calendar days General Needs Housing only

1. Blackpool Coastal Housing	29.70
2. Calico Homes Burnley	30.00
3. Bolton At Home	33.00
4. Lancaster City Council	39.12

Average percentage of tenants for whom Equality & Diversity information is held

1. Muir Group Housing Association	93.00
2. Calico Homes Burnley	80.00
3. Blackpool Coastal Housing	77.00
4. Barrow-in-Furness Council	64.00

NEIGHBOURHOOD & COMMUNITY STANDARD

Percentage of Anti-Social Behaviour cases that were resolved

1. Blackpool Coastal Housing	99.71
2. Wigan and Leigh Housing	89.00
3. Barrow-in-Furness Council	72.00
4. Muir Group Housing Association	53.85

Percentage of tenants satisfied with Estate Services

1. Calico Homes Burnley	87.80
2. Blackpool Coastal Housing	85.71
3. Barrow-in-Furness Council	81.00
4. Muir Group Housing Association	66.33

valueformoney

In the current economic climate BCH is more than ever committed to providing a Value for Money (VfM) service for all of our customers. It is very important to ensure that we have the right approach to VfM so we need to:-

It is very important to ensure that we have the right approach to VfM so we need to:-

- Be clear about the purpose of BCH and be sure of what it is we are trying to achieve
- Focus any limited resources on the right things to deliver the best results
- Do things right by being efficient and economical in the way we do things
- Continue to monitor and evaluate – What has been learnt and how will this affect future plans?

It is our aim to involve customers as much as possible in the decision making processes about how money is spent and where we should target the savings we make to improve services. Two good examples are:

- Ensuring that VfM is a standing agenda item to be considered at all Service Improvement Panel (SIP) meetings
- Tenant Representatives being members of Procurement Panels, such as for the recent Gas Maintenance, Grounds Maintenance and Cleaning contracts.

All efficiency savings, no matter how small, release funds that can be reinvested in the organisation for the benefit of customers. We believe that no matter how much we have achieved in the past there is always more that can be done.

Jacki Smith Capital & VfM Accountant
Approved by: Tenant Liaison Forum

The estimated value of savings that will come from better repair work scheduling through the use of mobile communications technology

£90,000



Savings made in 2009-10 through new contracts for Grounds Maintenance, Cleaning and Security

£140,000



Savings made by being members of a "procurement club" for office supplies, vehicle fuel and building repair materials

£50,000

What we have achieved:

The total revenue costs for managing and maintaining Council Housing in 2010-11 were £11.217M compared to £11.208M in 2006-07, an increase of only £9,000. This small rise was equal to 0.1% compared to inflation rising during the same period by 15%. This shows that increased costs over the last four years have been covered by savings throughout the organisation. Over the last year we have:

- Reduced staff absence levels and saved approximately £85,000.
- Replaced a contractor that went into administration with another prepared to complete the work at cost, saving £20,000 for the Decent Homes programme.
- Covered vacant posts with existing staff resources, saving £59,000.
- Saved nearly £140,000 through competitive procurement exercises for external services such as; specialist services relating to the major capital works programme, the grounds maintenance contract, lift maintenance and communal lighting.
- Saved £23,000 by reducing the number of sub contractors we use.

Added Value

Schemes, initiatives or additional services provided to our customers by BCH and our partners at no extra cost have included:

- Provision of Christmas and Easter presents and hanging baskets.
- Provision of skips for Tidy
- Day trips for Mereside teenagers as incentives for good behaviour.
- Using the Community Payback scheme to undertake work such as gardening, litter picking and decorating empty properties.
- As added value to the new Grounds Maintenance contract, Fylde Borough Council agreed to include clearing fly tipping at no additional cost to BCH.
- Staff agreeing voluntarily to changes to terms and conditions of employment, saving £68,000.

The increase in management and maintenance costs since 2006, even though inflation over the same period was 15%

0.1%

The value of efficiency savings made since 2004

£4.7 million

What we are doing this year

In common with many public sector organisations BCH has had funding levels reduced and is having to reduce costs whilst trying to protect front line services. The total savings during 2011-12 are expected to be in the region of £1.2 M. This will include:

- £600,000 saving from the review of Decent Homes contracts
- A reduction in our Governance and Board budget of £30,000
- Rationalisation BCH's corporate subscriptions - £5,000
- Reviewing "back office" support costs, saving £100,000

Saving £60,000 by reviewing and renegotiating new and existing contracted services throughout BCH.

Reviewing our approach to repairs to save £300,000 by fixing problems before they become costly, changing our suppliers, reducing the number of sub contractors that we use.

The value of the Tenant Project Fund created by using efficiency savings

£100,000



Savings made by using our multi skilled, in house work force instead of paying sub-contractors

£400,000

show me the money

Like other local housing authorities, Blackpool Council manages the income and expenditure for its stock of rented and leasehold homes through the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). There's a summary of 2010-11 HRA income and expenditure on the next page.

Income items, like rent and service charges for homes and garages or housing subsidy and grant income from the Government, are accounted for directly in the HRA. There's also a small amount of income from interest earned on bank balances.

Expenditure items include the cost of depreciation in the overall value of the housing stock and other capital costs, which are mainly funded from loans and the annual interest payments on them are charged to the HRA. A small amount of spending covers bad debt provision for rent and other charges that cannot be recovered.

The other two major items of expenditure in the HRA are the day to day costs of repairing, maintaining and managing Blackpool Council's housing stock, which is done for them by Blackpool Coastal Housing (BCH). These two items include the cost of the management fee paid to BCH by Blackpool Council.

As a separate company, BCH manages its own finances. Its latest audited accounts (currently for 2009-10) are available to be inspected if requested and can also be seen on the BCH website (www.bch.co.uk/AboutUs/PerformanceInformation.htm). The audited accounts for 2010-11 will be published in November 2011.

Lisa Murphy Management Accountant



housing revenue account

income & expenditure summary for 2010-11

Total Income £18,750,000

Total Expenditure £18,487,000

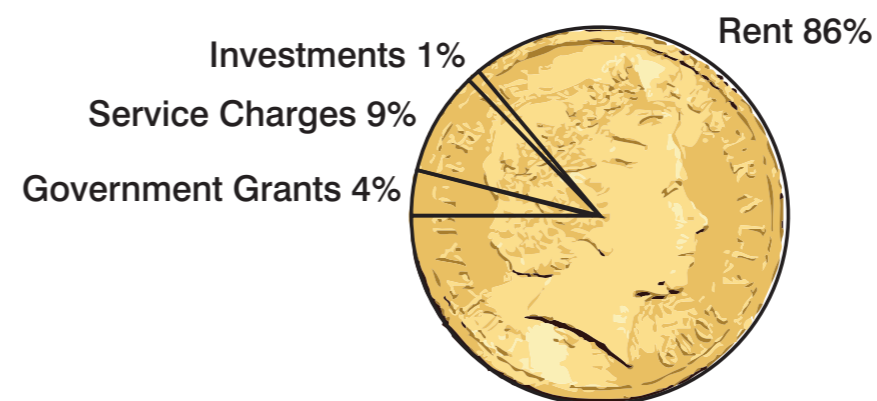
Total Surplus £263,000

Surplus

This is the money leftover at the end of the year. It is put into the Housing Revenue Account reserves for future spending. This could be on property improvements, new services or major capital projects.

Income

This shows how every £1 of income is received



Expenditure

This shows how every £1 of expenditure is used

