



THAMES VALLEY HOUSING

Annual Residents' Report

2010/11

Look inside to see how we did...

Homes to improve lives



Geeta Nanda,
Chief Executive of TVH

Welcome to the Annual Residents' Report 2010/11

A message from Geeta Nanda, Chief Executive of TVH

This is our second annual residents' report, which lets you know how we are doing. Last year we told you what improvements we would make and the standards we would deliver. As part of our pledge to customers, this report tells you how we got on. Not everything was achieved and we will be focussing on getting these things right in future. We have continued to listen to you and welcome the challenge this brings. We need to make sure we get better at the things which matter most to everyone, and your input helps us do this.




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Kennet Island play group, Reading.
 With our help TVH residents use the scheme for free.

This year, we've included these symbols to provide an at-a-glance view of our performance in each area. Here's what they mean:

We have met or exceeded our target	
We have narrowly failed to meet our target	
We have significantly underachieved on this target	

Service Pledge

We introduced our service pledge last year. The service pledge was drawn up with a group of residents. In each section we have shown how we have met our service pledge. Where we have not met a target we will have a plan for how to meet the target in future years.

This report and the service pledge have been discussed with a group of residents who have influenced the content of this report and our targets.





Dani, a TVH resident from Bracknell
and furniture donation recipient

Resident Involvement and Customer Services

Resident involvement activities have gone from strength to strength this year with new activities being introduced at no additional cost.




The Resident Auditors have completed four reviews this year which you can find on our website. You can also phone us on 0800 358 7767 and we will send a copy to you.

Our estate inspectors have increased in number and we have also introduced a new resident group monitoring how we feedback to residents. Another group now looks at how we plan our future strategy. We worked with small groups of young people in their neighbourhoods to organise many positive activities including football coaching, film production and street dance and we had a successful event with our involved residents who spent the day looking at communication – an area picked up by the auditors as being weak.

We have also made various improvements to our services including a pilot to provide appointment slots for repairs at weekends and Thursday evenings to offer additional choice and convenience to residents. We also reviewed our complaints leaflet to provide more information. Overall satisfaction with the service from our customer service centre was 85% which exceeded our 80% target, although we did not meet our Service Pledge target on complaints handling.

Did you know?

The Tenant Services Authority (TSA) requires all Registered Providers of Social Housing to publish an Annual Residents Report by October 1st each year.





What we said we would do during 2010/11	How we did in 2010/11	
Use the information we have to shape our services around the individual needs of customers	We held a series of leaseholder focus groups and reviewed the way we communicate with residents. Focus groups aimed at helping residents deal with debt were also held. A repairs 'MOT' process was agreed to target vulnerable groups of residents, starting with wheelchair users. The MOT involves visiting these residents to proactively identify any repairs needed and assess the overall suitability of their home.	
Review demand for late night/Saturday access to services	<p>We piloted a project to offer extended appointments for repairs on Thursday evenings and Saturdays. The take up was good, but the Saturday appointments increased our costs. A full report is being prepared before we go back to residents to agree how to roll this out.</p> <p>We have introduced a late night telephone enquiry service for leaseholders when they receive their rent and service charge increase letters or balancing charge statements.</p> <p>We now offer many resident involvement meetings and activities during the evening or on a Saturday.</p>	
Hold an event for involved residents to look at feedback and communication	We held the event with residents in May. Some of their suggestions have been approved and will be implemented over the next 12 months. We have set up a new resident feedback group which has met 3 times this year, and they are reviewing the methods and extent of feedback to residents from resident involvement activities. Next the group will monitor the service to ensure that we deliver what has been agreed and that TVH is using the feedback to improve or change services.	












TVH kids from Drayton Avenue in Hounslow get involved in an estate clean up



A TVH revenues officer gives financial advice at a money road show

What we said we would do during 2010/11	How we did in 2010/11	
Put in place actions from our last complaints review and increase satisfaction levels with how complaints are handled to 50%	We put the actions in place, and new actions have been added following recommendations by the resident auditors. Satisfaction with how we handle complaints dropped from 44% in 09/10 to 38.2%. We know this is an area we need to improve as we aim to achieve our 50% target. One positive in this area was that we saw a 30% overall drop in the number of complaints we received.	
Involve residents in setting our company goals and priorities	A new residents' group has been set up. They have already started working with us on our goals and priorities for 2012/13.	
Establish a group of residents to monitor performance and help produce this report in future years	A residents' group has met twice to consider how we have performed against the Service Pledge and has had an input into the content and design of this report.	
Carry out a cross-departmental review of communication to improve how we handle resident queries and handovers when staff leave	This has been completed and we now have procedures that will provide greater continuity of service when staff leave.	

Service pledge	Target	Performance	
Percentage of calls to CSC answered in 5 rings	80%	80.1%	
Respond to letters within 10 days	95%	97.5%	
Office visitors wait no more than 5 minutes to be seen with an appointment, or 15 minutes without	96%	92.6%	
Respond to emails within 2 days	95%	93.0%	
Satisfaction with service received from CSC	80%	85.0%	
Satisfaction that the CSC could resolve the issue	70%	65.0%	
Calls returned within published timescales	90%	96.6%	
Respond to complaints within 10 days	90%	97.9%	
Satisfaction with quality of complaint handling	50%	38.2%	





Trafalgar School kids in Twickenham with their building site safety posters

Improvements planned for 2011/12

For all residents:

- Increase satisfaction with complaint handling to 50%.
- Complete a review of resident scrutiny to see if we are meeting our requirements.
- Increase the number of Resident Estate Inspectors to 120.
- Resident Auditors will carry out audits on the website, estate inspections, voids and communal areas.

For leaseholders:

- Improve communication by having a separate publication for leaseholders.
- Implement a new grounds and cleaning service which offers better value for money.
- Provide clearer service charge statements.

For tenants:

- To improve Link Up in consultation with residents.



Repairs to your home






Improvements were made to services to your home, including texting you reminders of repairs appointments, increasing the number of checks with tenants that repairs have been carried out properly, and improving the energy efficiency of homes.











The majority of repairs were completed to your satisfaction: overall satisfaction with our repairs service was just over 92% during last year, and 94% of tenants were satisfied with our repairs appointments service.

A repair being carried out by a plumber

Did you know?

The survey results featured in this report are based on a monthly phone survey of TVH residents.

What we said we would do during 2010/11	How we did in 2010/11	
Increase satisfaction with decorations to shared areas by reviewing what we do based on resident feedback	A review of cyclical repairs was completed with resident input and a number of recommendations were made which will be implemented in the next round of contracts. These changes will improve how we monitor the quality of the work carried out.	
Test ways to make existing tenants' homes more energy efficient and affordable to run	We carried out energy improvement works to 45 properties last year. These were a combination of ground source heat pump, air source heat pump and solar thermal panel installations. We have also looked at all of the energy performance certificates which were completed over the last two years and found that many of our homes have a good level of energy efficiency. We are currently reviewing the worst performing ones to see if we can improve this in our future planned works.	
Increase the number of tenants we call after a repair has been completed to check that it has been carried out properly	We did not meet our target of 50% and we know we need to improve in this area.	
Start texting tenants to remind them of repair appointments	This was implemented during the year for all Mears' repair appointments and has been well received by tenants. We will continue to provide this service.	
Improve our gas safety procedure	We carried out a review of our procedures and introduced new working practices for staff and contractors.	

Service pledge	Target	Performance	
Satisfaction with repair appointment	80%	74.0%	
Satisfaction with repairs	85%	95.0%	
Percentage of repairs right first time	85%	88.4%	
Satisfaction with contractor behaviour	90%	95.0%	
Technical post inspection of repairs	50%	36.0%	
Satisfaction with kitchen/bathroom colour choices	85%	97%	
Satisfaction with kitchen/bathroom process	85%	98%	
Time taken to conduct assessments for adaptations	2 weeks	4 days	
Satisfaction with gas safety checks	80%	98.3%	
Percentage of gas appliances serviced each year	100%	100%	





Residents in Hook, Hampshire, discuss their ground source heat pump installation with a TVH staff member



Contractors carrying out grounds maintenance

Improvements planned for 2011/12

For all residents:

- Offer residents the opportunity to monitor cyclical external decoration work on their scheme.
- Advertise a direct contact with the contractor who is carrying out external decoration (cyclical) work at your scheme.
- Offer residents the opportunity to attend a meeting with the contractor before works begin.

For tenants:

- Announce our approach to Saturday and Thursday appointments having agreed this with the Property Maintenance Group of residents.
- Improve inspection of works to 50%, either by a home visit or phone call.
- Complete energy efficiency works to the homes which need it most.
- Review the best way of delivering the repairs service in future.

For leaseholders

- Offer a service to have your gas appliances checked by our contractor at the cost price.



TVH Tenancy Support Officer
Alison Heaslewood with resident Patrick Goodacre

Living in your home






We completed the objectives set for last year, which were aimed at providing practical assistance to residents in these difficult economic times.

These included assisting residents who require smaller properties, and helping others who need larger homes; preparing to launch a financial inclusion strategy in 2011 and improving the information provided about service charges.

During 2010/11 we let 546 homes, of which 265 were newly built. We improved our efficiency in letting homes, with properties being empty for an average of only 18 days between occupancies. At the end of March 2011, 20 properties were empty and available to let.

Did you know?

To obtain the survey results interviews were undertaken with 1,920 of our customers over a period of twelve months, split between leaseholders, tenants and key workers.

What we said we would do during 2010/11	How we did in 2010/11	
Review our approach to dealing with under occupation and overcrowding in our rented homes	We have put in place a new process for encouraging and assisting tenants to move to smaller properties. We have set a target of 20 moves with a staff member facilitating this for residents. An article in Link Up produced interest and 10 moves have taken place at the half year point, meaning we are on course to achieve the overall target.	
Assess the impact of any changes to Housing Benefit and review what support is in place	We have analysed the impact of Housing Benefit changes and reviewed our financial inclusion strategy with the aim of ensuring we can offer the best assistance and advice to residents affected by these changes. A review of services provided by voluntary agencies was also completed, and the financial inclusion strategy was re-launched in the summer with various events on our schemes.	
Map our estates before renewing our cleaning and gardening contract to ensure accurate and competitive service charge costs.	This was on target at the end of March, and has since been completed. The mapping covers all estates included in the contract and was used to re-tender the cleaning and grounds contracts, which means we will have accurate and competitive costs for each site.	
Publicise process for refunding residents where cleaning and gardening services have not been delivered.	A new process has been agreed, but will not be publicised until the new contract is in place.	
Produce information explaining how we set and collect service charges.	New detailed information leaflets have been produced for each tenure type explaining everything to do with service charges. They have resulted in fewer enquiries. All leaflets were circulated to the resident auditors and have been approved by them.	



New TVH development, St Andrews in Surbiton



TVH shared owner in his new home

Service pledge	Target	Performance	
Re-letting empty properties	25 days	18 days	😊
Mutual exchange decisions notified	42 days	23 days	😊
New tenant visits within 4 weeks	90%	96%	😊





TVH resident Katie Mierins and her daughter Freya in their Fleet home

Improvements planned for 2011/12

For tenants:

- We will consult with you and then introduce a transfer list for our tenants.
- We will move 20 under-occupiers to smaller properties to free up family homes.
- We will launch our Financial Inclusion strategy that will aim to improve financial awareness and tenants' ability to sustain their tenancy.

For leaseholders:

- We have introduced a new target that 90% of service charge statements are within 10% of the estimates.
- We will set up a specialist money advice referral service for leaseholders who are in particularly difficult financial circumstances.
- We will set up reserve funds for specific schemes to enable longer payment plans for major works.



Make your mark, bike theft prevention event in Hammersmith

Your neighbourhood and community

We sought to improve your neighbourhoods last year with the help of residents, and we now have 98 resident estate inspectors. We have also improved communication with residents when dealing with complaints about antisocial behaviour.

We are pleased that satisfaction with estate cleaning and gardening services at 64% exceeded our target of 60%, although satisfaction with communal repairs was below our target. We are seeking to improve satisfaction with the re-tendering of the contract.

Homes to improve lives

Did you know?





The [sample bias](#) in our telephone survey is restricted to +/- 5% which means it's statistically valid.



THV Customer Services Manager Sarah Revett with residents at a communication consultation event



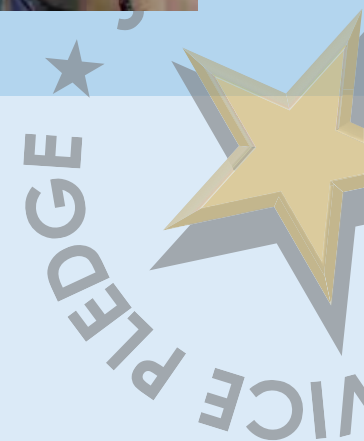
Mr and Mrs Marshall from Windsor, winners of TVH's first Gorgeous Garden Competition

What we said we would do during 2010/11	How we did in 2010/11	
Increase the number of resident inspectors on estates to 85	We now have 98 residents signed up to the scheme, which represents approximately 20% of our estates that receive cleaning and gardening services.	
Improve communication with residents when dealing with antisocial behaviour	Monthly calls are now made to victims and perpetrators. We send follow-up letters after every visit confirming what was discussed and any follow-on action.	
Promote and support the gardening competition for residents	A gardening competition for residents was held in the summer in partnership with Quadron, our grounds maintenance contractors. Four prizes were awarded, including prizes for best vegetable plot, window box, communal garden and street garden.	
Improve the information in communal areas about who your neighbourhood officer is, when they visit your site and how you can be involved in site inspections	Notice boards have been provided in many TVH estates. Information provided includes contact details for TVH, who your neighbourhood officer is and information on cleaning and gardening. There are still estates where we are yet to install notice boards.	



A group of TVH residents visit the theatre as part of an event for older residents

Service pledge	Target	Performance	
Communal repairs within response times	90%	88.0%	☹️
Satisfaction with cleaning and gardening	60%	64.0%	😊
Percentage of sites meeting standards	90%	97.0%	😊





Culture Splash community event in Slough

Improvements planned for 2011/12

For all residents:

- We will develop our resident training on scrutiny to become a CIH (Chartered Institute of Housing) qualification.
- We will put a new estate services cleaning and gardening contract in place following a re-tendering process. This process will involve residents.

For tenants:

- We will help residents into work through the new work programmes, signposting, training and volunteering opportunities.
- We will develop our resident training on scrutiny to become a CIH (Chartered Institute of Housing) qualification.
- We will train 3 staff to become mediators as part of their role to support managing neighbourhood issues.
- We will pilot a new community empowerment programme to help residents make their local neighbourhoods better places to live.
- We will deliver a range of community investment projects in Rushmoor, Reading and Hounslow to help improve services that are important to residents.
- We will deliver year 2 of the Neighbourhood projects on 5 schemes in terms of physical improvements as well as neighbourhood / community based enhancements.



A Resident Auditor gathering the views of a resident

Value for money

A new value-for-money strategy was implemented last year. This enabled some significant savings to be achieved.

These included:-

- Driving greater value out of the repairs partnering contract to the value of £80,000 in 2010/11.
- Savings on gas and electricity procurement of approximately £185,000, which will assist reducing service charge bills for residents.
- Changes to arrangements for VAT consultancy provided savings of approximately £600,000.
- Savings in legal costs for tenancy enforcement, antisocial behaviour and tracing former tenant arrears amounted to approximately £15,000.





These efficiencies either directly reduce costs passed on to residents, or reduce our operating costs, which mean we can invest more in improving front-line services.



A TVH Customer Service Centre Officer



Residents at a consultation event

What we said we would do during 2010/11	How we did in 2010/11	
<p>Improve how we report on value for money to residents</p>	<p>The first residents' annual report published in October 2010 included a report on how we deliver value for money. We have met with a group of residents to discuss how we can involve residents in decisions on how to prioritise expenditure. We need to do more to improve our performance in this area and we will continue to report our progress in these reports and in Link-Up.</p>	
<p>Work with our repairs contractors to reduce costs and improve services</p>	<p>We obtained greater value from the repairs partnering contract to the value of £80,000 in 2010/11 and £150,000 over 3 years.</p>	
<p>Hold an event for resident inspectors to shape the new cleaning and grounds maintenance contracts</p>	<p>An event was held with residents, but this was opened up to non-inspectors as there were not enough interested inspectors on their own. The event was successful and we built on this with further consultation to ensure all the residents' priorities were included in the new contract.</p>	
<p>Improve the accuracy of cleaning and gardening specifications with more detailed measurements</p>	<p>We have improved the data we hold to ensure we get an accurate and competitive price.</p>	



A TVH Resident Auditor meets with residents to gather views on complaints and customer care

Improvements planned for 2011/12

For all residents:

During the current year we intend to continue to improve value for money by reviewing how we provide our housing management and repairs services to ensure they are as cost-efficient as possible. We will also continue to work with residents to get your views on how we should prioritise expenditure.

- Review our housing management services to see how we can avoid duplication and offer a better service to residents.
- Award the contracts for cleaning and gardening to achieve the best quality at the lowest cost.
- Promote free energy advice and energy conservation measures for tenants.

For tenants:

- Offer a transfer list scheme at no extra cost to residents.
- Offer a wider decoration voucher allowance for new tenants at no extra cost to residents.

Have your say

We'd like to hear your views so as many residents as possible are involved in shaping our service. We'd like to know:

- whether you agree with the standards in the service pledge
- if you think there are any other areas where you'd like to see us doing better

Print out this page, fill in your details and feedback and send it to our Freepost address as below:

Thames Valley Housing
FREEPOST TK1763, 52 London Road,
Twickenham, TW1 3BR

Customer Service Centre: 0800 358 7767
Opening hours 8am - 6pm Mon-Fri
Fax: 020 8607 9923
Email: info@tvha.co.uk
Web: www.tvha.co.uk

Your details:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____

Telephone Home: _____

Telephone Work: _____

Mobile: _____

Email: _____

Please give details of your feedback: _____

Signed: _____

Dated: _____

October 2011