

# Benefit campaign helps residents

As part of our ongoing partnership with the Benefit Take up Campaign which is managed by Gloucester City Council, we are delighted to announce that in 2009 their support has been the most effective so far.

Various events were run over the year which enabled residents to come along, and in a confidential relaxed environment, find out more about entitlements that they may not have been aware of.

Over the last six months of 2009, ten residents were assisted in

putting together claims for disability living allowance, council tax benefit and pension credit to a total amount of nearly £22,000.

If you wish to find out more about how this partnership could help you, please contact either the **Community Investment Officer**,

or the **Financial Inclusion Officer**. You can find their details on the back page.

If you would like to find out more about benefits in your area look on [www.direct.gov.uk/en/MoneyTaxAndBenefit/index.htm](http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/MoneyTaxAndBenefit/index.htm)

## Want to influence how we provide money advice services?

Our Financial Inclusion Steering Group meets four times a year to plan how we continue to develop services to help residents manage their money, and make informed choices about financial products and services.

We would like some more residents to join this group so we can get a better idea of what your priorities are around money matters.

We would especially like to hear from residents who have experienced claiming benefits themselves, and from our younger residents.



If you are interested, please contact our **Financial Inclusion Officer** - her details can be found on the back page. We will pay travel and childcare expenses.



## Revised equality and diversity policy

We have recently adopted the Guinness revised equality and diversity policy.

Some of our residents were consulted on the changes, as part of a Guinness Partnership-wide residents' conference that was held in Oxfordshire.

**Some of the main changes are:**

- It gives more detail on how we will help achieve appropriate, accessible services and facilities to all sections of our communities
- It includes information on how we work with our contractors, suppliers and other agencies to make sure that our values and ethos will extend to them

- It includes detail on how we will consult with our customers, staff, governance structures and other agencies and stakeholders

A copy of the policy is available in the About Us, Equality and Diversity section of our website at [www.glosha.co.uk](http://www.glosha.co.uk).

Alternatively, you can request a copy by contacting our **Head of Business Support**, on **01452 541 867** or by emailing her at [warnerk@glosha.co.uk](mailto:warnerk@glosha.co.uk)

# Tackling anti-social behaviour

## We can help you if you are suffering from anti-social behaviour

In all of the cases below, we were greatly assisted by local residents who were affected by this behaviour and who were willing to give us information. We were able to anonymise their witness statements to protect their identity, and also offered increased security measures where this was applicable and in accordance with the recommendations of the crime prevention officer.



### Recent Successes

- We obtained an **emergency injunction with a power of arrest** against Ms Leander Schrader and Mr Jamie Gould of 8 Hillside, Drybrook. This was the result of allegations of threats of violence and is in place for a year. This injunction provides protection to the local community because if the injunction is breached then Ms Schrader and Mr Gould can be arrested and brought back to court. If found to be in contempt of court, they can be fined or imprisoned.
- During **possession proceedings**, Mr David Capseed and Amanda Townsend of 4 Rosewood Walk, Woodmancote, Cheltenham, abandoned their property.

Possession proceedings were being started on the grounds of the behaviour of both the tenants and their children, including criminal damage, assault and illegal use of their property.

- During **injunction and possession proceedings**, Mr Dean Nawaz of 52 Abbeyholme, Cheltenham, abandoned his property. An injunction and possession proceedings were being sought due to the behaviour of visitors to the property, including loud music, disorder and racial abuse.
- We obtained a **demoted possession order** against Miss S Deeley of 14 Masefield Avenue, Podsmead. This was due to criminal damage to our property and the behaviour of members

of the household. A demoted possession order removes the security of tenure for a year. If within that year there are further incidents of anti-social behaviour, we can request the courts to bring the tenancy to an end. This is the first demoted order that we have obtained in several years and was the result of a joint investigation between us and the Police.

**If you are suffering from anti-social behaviour please contact your Housing Officer for advice and assistance.**

**Additional information about our service can also be found on our website [www.glosa.co.uk/antisocialbehaviour](http://www.glosa.co.uk/antisocialbehaviour)**

## Anti-social behaviour conference hailed a success

**A conference which looked at tackling anti-social behaviour has been hailed a success by one of our residents, and was featured in local newspapers.**

Agencies aiming to tackle troublemakers met at Cheltenham Town Hall for a seminar to talk through problems and suggest solutions.

The event helped to spread the message about how to stop anti-social behaviour getting out of hand. The event was organised by the Department for Communities and Local Government, and

included a series of guests including the police, housing officers, and neighbourhood wardens.

Eryn Cookson, anti-social behaviour co-ordinator for Gloucestershire, said: "It is all about communicating with residents. Hopefully we can show them how they can help to deal with the problem themselves".



Keith Peacock

Keith Peacock, from Hester's Way, said: "I thought it was very instructive. I was asked to come along by Gloucestershire Housing Association so I could give feedback on what was said. I used to have anti-social behaviour problems in my area, but we managed to solve that problem by working with the landlord and authorities".

# Planned Maintenance achievements

**We have performed well against the programme of planned maintenance work for the year April 2009 to March 2010.**

**By mid February we had installed**

- 162 new kitchens
- 108 new bathrooms
- 28 sets of new windows
- 147 new external doors
- 850 metres of new fencing
- new heating to more than 164 properties

- external decorations to 294 properties
- and new vinyl flooring to the communal areas of two schemes

We are also ahead of schedule with preparations for the 2010/11 programme.

## Customer Feedback

We like to get feedback so that we can learn about how we can improve.

159 residents have completed satisfaction surveys about the cyclical painting programme, with 98% satisfied overall with the service. 113 residents responded

about the planned programme, of which 95% were satisfied overall.

If you have work carried out through the planned programme, please take time to complete the feedback forms and send them back to us. They really help.

## Getting involved

We are currently reviewing the planned work we do and ran a consultation event in March.

If you are interested in getting involved in maintenance related issues please contact our **Resident Involvement Officer**. His details can be found on the back page.

## Update on our Response Maintenance Contractors

**Currently we use three main contractors for general maintenance work:**

- A1 Maintenance
- SnapeCall
- Beard and Tandy

Feedback from telephone surveys in 2009 shows a big improvement in satisfaction levels. The number of formal complaints about repairs was just nine, compared to 31 the previous year. Feedback from resident involvement events has also been very positive.



As a result, we are pleased to announce that we have awarded new contracts to all three contractors to run for at least two years.

## Compliments and complaints

**From April to December 2009, we received 25 complaints, compared to 46 in 2008.**

The drop is mainly due to the improvements we have made to our responsive repairs service.

We respond to all complaints within the target timescale. Since we added a link to the complaints form on the home page of our website, we are receiving more complaints through this channel than ever before. From April to December 2009, we received 54 compliments.

The majority of them were complimenting the service by us.

Property Services, Housing, Leasehold Services and Development all received compliments. Some of our contractors were also complimented.

Please keep sending us your comments. Contact our Customer Services Team on **01452 529 255** or **08456 044 529** (local rate), email **complimentsandcomplaints@glosha.co.uk** or contact us online at **www.glosha.co.uk**.



# Office closure

## Good Friday

Friday 2 April

## Easter Monday

Monday 5 April

## Staff Conference

Tuesday 20 April



Our offices will be closed on the following dates:

## May Day Bank Holiday

Monday 3 May

## Spring Bank Holiday

Monday 31 May

## Summer Bank Holiday

Monday 30 August

If you have an emergency repair while the office is closed please call our Repairs Helpline (FREE from a landline) on 0800 318 522.

## Local housing surgeries

We hold housing surgeries in various locations so why not come along to meet your Housing Officer.

You can discuss any questions you might have about your home, tenancy or your local neighbourhood. The dates may change, so please contact your Housing Officer or check our website for updates.

### Coronation Square housing office, Edinburgh Place, Cheltenham

10am – 12pm, every Monday

### Poets Corner, Masefield Avenue, Gloucester

10am – 1pm, the last Wednesday of the month

### 99 Vicarage Court, Vicarage Lane, Brockworth, Gloucester

10am – 1pm, every Friday

**Please note:** the first surgery of each month will be replaced with home visits for tenancy or management issues. To discuss booking a home visit, please contact Sarah Crick on 01452 541 467. This service does not include repairs.

### Joint ASB surgery with the Police: 3 – 4.30pm, the first Monday of the month

### Joint Financial Inclusion and housing surgery: 10 – 1pm, the last Friday of the month (Except bank holidays)



Paul Stone,  
Vicarage Court



Sarah Travis,  
Coronation Square



Richard Hall,  
Poets Corner

## Contacting us

You can contact us in the following ways:

### General enquiries and customer services

Open Monday-Friday 9am to 5pm

Telephone: **01452 529 255 /**

**08456 044 529** (local rate)

Fax: **01452 310 520**

Email: [customerservice@gloscha.co.uk](mailto:customerservice@gloscha.co.uk)

or [info@gloscha.co.uk](mailto:info@gloscha.co.uk)

Website: [www.gloscha.co.uk](http://www.gloscha.co.uk)

### Comments and Complaints

Email:

[complimentsandcomplaints@gloscha.co.uk](mailto:complimentsandcomplaints@gloscha.co.uk)

Telephone: **01452 529 255 /**

**08456 044 529** (local rate)

Fax: **01452 310 520**

### Reporting a repair

Freephone (from a landline only)

**0800 318 522**



### Gas leak

If you smell gas then call Freephone (from a landline only) **0800 111 999**

### Total loss of power

Telephone: **01793 877 777**

### Buying your own home

Sales hotline: **01452 549 779**

Email: [sales@gloscha.co.uk](mailto:sales@gloscha.co.uk)

Website: [www.gloscha.co.uk](http://www.gloscha.co.uk)

### Want to get involved?

Contact your Housing Officer on:

**01452 529 255** or **08456 044 529** (local rate)

Or Martin Beacham, Resident Involvement Officer:

Telephone: **01452 541 821**

Email: [beachamm@gloscha.co.uk](mailto:beachamm@gloscha.co.uk)

### What's going on in your local area?

Contact Catherine Maxwell, Community Investment

Officer: **01452 541 809** Email: [maxwellc@gloscha.co.uk](mailto:maxwellc@gloscha.co.uk)

### Help with money matters

Alison Morgan, Financial Inclusion Officer: **01452 541 825**

Email: [morgana@gloscha.co.uk](mailto:morgana@gloscha.co.uk)

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**Gloucestershire**  
Housing Association

A MEMBER OF THE GUINNESS PARTNERSHIP

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T. **01452 529 255 / 08456 044 529** (local rate) | F. **01452 310 520**

W. [www.gloscha.co.uk](http://www.gloscha.co.uk)