



**Nottingham  
City Homes**

# Press Release

## **New Annual Report shows progress across the board**

The Nottingham City Homes Annual Report is now available. It shows how we have stabilised the organisation over the past year and begun on the path of improvement.

Over 2007-08 we focussed on improving our customer service, giving tenants more ways to get involved and improving the quality of our estates and repairs service.

Improving our customer service took us back to basics. Our 'lets make the difference' campaign used workshops, focus groups and discussion to help train employees. We wanted to use this foundation plan to embed basic principles of good customer service across the organisation.

Our repairs team carried out more than 114,000 repairs during 2007-08. We have also been successful in winning the £142 million Nottingham City Council tender to carry out all repairs for the next five years. We beat a number of private sector companies to win this tender, being picked for quality of repairs and value for money.

Making sure our properties are not left empty is very important. We now have a dedicated team that has reduced the number of lettable vacant properties

across the city – known as voids – by 31%. This has resulted in £500,000 extra rent, which is put straight back into improving our services.

In June 2007 we launched our Tenant and Leaseholder Participation Compact 2007-10. This agreement between us and our tenants marked the start of a whole new culture for Nottingham City Homes.

Tenants and leaseholders now inspect our estates, take part in mystery shopping exercises and even become part of our forums and the Board. From tenants who fill in questionnaires at home, to members of the local Area Panels, there is always a way to have your say.

Homelink, our choice-based lettings service, offers an open, fair and transparent process for anyone making an application. It has been operating for 12 months, during which we have carried out a comprehensive review of the service, which has provided us with valuable feedback to help us further improve it.

This November we will be inspected by the Audit Commission. In preparation for this, last October an independent organisation, the Housing Quality Network, carried out a mock inspection of our services. It highlighted 'some really positive improvements' and said it believed that 'NCH can achieve two stars at its inspection'.

A successful inspection will release £243m of Government and Nottingham City Council funding. We will use this to improve the standard of council homes in Nottingham under our Secure Warm Modern programme.

Chris Langstaff, Chief Executive of Nottingham City Homes, said: "The improvements we have made over the past year are helping us to build a strong foundation for the future of Nottingham City Homes.

“If we achieve two stars in our November inspection, we won’t become complacent. We must continue to develop and improve our services.

“Our vision is to create ‘homes and places where people want to live’. To achieve this we must strive to be a stable organisation that provides excellent services and is a good place to work. I believe we are making great strides on the way to achieving this.”

**Ends**

**Notes to editors:**

Nottingham City Homes was created on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2005 as an Arms Length Management Organisation (ALMO) to manage Nottingham City Council's rented and leasehold homes. We are now working hard towards bringing Nottingham's council houses up to the Government's Decent Homes standard by 2013.

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