

Improving estates across Nottingham

We are working hard with our partners to improve neighbourhoods all over Nottingham.



We manage properties on 39 estates in the city. And this month – for the first time ever – our team of tenant inspectors have told us each one is of at least a 'two star' standard.

This means for example the streets are cleaner, there's less graffiti and rubbish, gardens are tidier and paths are clear of weeds.

From improving the condition of our estates to tackling anti-social behaviour and making sure you are safe in your homes – we are

working with Nottingham City Council, the Police, Community Protection and others to make the difference.

Over the last year we've also:

- Reduced crime and anti-social behaviour – through weeks of action, targeted drug operations and 'smartwatering'
- Speeded up the time it takes to re-let properties
- Trained our caretakers to national, professional standards



- Started the Secure Warm Modern programme to improve thousands of homes.

In October we held three events to help us understand what matters to you – and we will use what you tell us to shape our services for 2009 and beyond. Each event showed the power of partnership working to improve Nottingham.

This issue is about what we're doing to improve your neighbourhood. Find out more about the events on pages three, eight and nine, and turn to the centre pages to find out how YOUR estate scored.

New Homes for Nottm



See page 10

Tackling anti-social behaviour



See page eight

Win a new microwave in our competition

See page 11

Welcome

It is important we work together with our partners to help create places where people want to live in Nottingham – and you've been telling us we've improved.

Every few months a team of tenant inspectors tour our estates to assess what condition they are in. They check whether issues they identified before have been sorted out – and whether anything else needs to be put right.

In the centre pages you can see what the tenants themselves have said – for the first time they have

classed all 39 estates as being at least a 'two star' standard.

This reflects a huge amount of work to improve your community – not just by Nottingham City Homes, but by a range of organisations including Nottingham City Council and the police.

It was fantastic to see how well our series of partnership events went in October. From tackling anti-social behaviour to coming together to look at the future of housing across the city, the events were a real success.

Our partners are telling us they can see the difference we are making. I would like to thank everyone who took part in the conferences and all those tenants and leaseholders who came along to have their say.

Why is this important?

In November the Audit Commission inspects us. We are confident that with your support we can achieve a 'two star' rating, just like our estates – and if we do it will unlock £165m, on top of £78m from the council. We'll use the money to improve thousands of homes across Nottingham.



We will know the result of this inspection early next year and will keep you informed of how we get on.

Paul Rowe
Chair of Nottingham City Homes

A real sign of change

Hi everybody,

The new Housing Service Centre officially opened on 28th October. I was given the privilege of cutting the ribbon along with Paul Rowe, Chair of the Board and Councillor Alan Clark, portfolio holder for regeneration.

The centre is a real sign of how Nottingham City Homes has changed and I was impressed with what I saw. You can talk to somebody privately about your housing situation, pick up a variety of different leaflets and information, and search for a property either online (for free) or in the centre itself.

I'm also delighted that NCH has also opened a new resource centre for tenants and leaseholders. This is something I've been advocating for years, and it will really help to all of us who want to make a difference.

This month, Audit Commission inspectors will be coming to Nottingham City Homes. The

inspection will take place for two weeks, from 17th – 28th November. The inspection team will also include a tenant from London, who will be really testing NCH's services on our behalf.

In my view, a lot has changed in the last three years. NCH has a management team who I think are excellent – they're making sure tenants and leaseholders are involved in all services and asking us how we think improvements can be made.

Customer service is better and people are happier. I believe this is a changing company that is working closely with tenants – not perfect yet, but definitely heading in the right direction. We now have a landlord that listens, works with its tenants and a landlord of choice we can be proud of.

We can all make a difference, make it today – get involved, contact the Tenant and Leaseholder Involvement Team:



Address: 14 Hounds Gate, Nottingham. NG1 7BA

Tel: 0115 915 7380

SMS: text INVOLVE to 60066, followed by your name and address

E-mail: gettinginvolved@nottinghamcityhomes.org.uk

Web: www.nottinghamcityhomes.org.uk

Best wishes,

Jean England
Chair, Tenant and Leaseholder Congress

Your local housing team leaflet

Included with your newsletter, this month, is a leaflet called 'Your Local Housing Team'.

The leaflet tells you who your local patch manager and area housing manager is, as well as containing lots of useful contact information for our services and for Nottingham City Council's key services.

Please keep the leaflet handy so that you can contact your housing office quickly and easily when you need to.

Your local housing team

Your housing patch manager

We have a network of housing patch managers covering every street in your community. They are there to:

- provide you with tailored housing advice and assistance on a range of issues including rehousing, home repairs, rent and social advice
- listen to your concerns about your estate and work hard to improve the neighbourhood
- deal effectively with antisocial behaviour, disorder, harassment and neighbour disputes.

Area Housing Manager
 Name: Helen Murrell
 Mobile: 07942 402 225
 E-mail: helen.murrell@nottinghamcityhomes.org.uk

Your local office

We're committed to providing you with excellent services. At your local office you can pay your rent, secure ten and other bills. You can also get advice and support about any housing issues or home ownership behaviour in that estate or housing type.

Address: 14 Drury Road, Nottingham NG5 5AP

Opening hours: 8.30am – 4.30pm Monday-Friday (10.30am – 4.30pm Wednesday)

Phone: 0115 915 2121 – answered until 4.30pm
Fax: 0115 915 2111
Message: 0115 915 2131
Email: help@nottinghamcityhomes.org.uk

Centre stage to improve housing

The future of housing in Nottingham was top of the agenda at a conference held on Friday October 17.

Almost 180 tenants, leaseholders and representatives from the city's public and private housing sectors attended the conference, held at the Albert Hall, Nottingham.

The conference was chaired by Graham Allen (pictured), MP for Nottingham north and Chairman of the ONE Nottingham partnership. There were presentations from Sir Bob Kerslake, Chief Executive of the new Homes and Communities Agency, Cllr Alan Clark, Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhood Regeneration, and Chris Langstaff, Chief Executive of Nottingham City Homes.

Sir Bob Kerslake explained how the new agency – which has a budget of £6 billion – has ambitious plans for the future of housing, and how Nottingham can benefit.

Cllr Alan Clark outlined his top six priorities for the future

of neighbourhood regeneration, showed his support for the work being done under the Secure Warm Modern programme and highlighted the importance of ward councillors to understand the needs of communities.

Chris Langstaff spoke passionately about the commitment Nottingham City Homes has made to improving services, the upcoming Audit Commission inspection and the prospect of a £243m investment in improving thousands of council homes.

He said: "It was great to see so many organisations, tenants and leaseholders come together to look at the future of housing in Nottingham. Our Secure Warm Modern programme will improve thousands of council homes across the city, but it is not just all about bricks and mortar. We must work

together to improve people's lives and their communities."

Local tenant Catherine Shenton was at the conference. She said: "I was really pleased to see so many people who truly care about housing and improving communities across Nottingham. I believe that together they can all make a difference."

Delegates also had a chance to put questions to the panel of speakers before going into workshops where groups looked into our decent homes programme, community empowerment, creating cohesive communities, delivering homes through partnerships, early intervention and the private rented sector.



Early Intervention

Nottingham is set to take a share of £13m of Government money to help break the cycle of deprivation in local families.

Championed by Nottingham north MP Graham Allen, the Early Intervention programme has already helped 50 groups of youngsters and their families. The new funding will enable Nottingham City Council and other partner agencies to help another 50 groups.

Early Intervention is one of a number of projects helping to transform the city through the ONE Nottingham



partnership – of which Nottingham City Homes is a key member.

Early Intervention is used to stop young people drifting into crime and giving those in the poorest families the chance to break the cycle of deprivation and improve their education and skills, as well as learning life lessons.

Part of the project includes nursing support for young mothers, to help them bond with their baby and have help with the everyday challenges a new baby can bring. It also includes teaching children to talk about their feelings rather than resorting to anger and violence, as well as providing them with information about the dangers of drugs.

Find out more at www.onenottingham.org.uk.

Local employment for local people

In October we held a recruitment fair – where more than 80 local people come along to find out about our services and opportunities available.

The event, held at the Council House, was the first of its kind and we hope to hold many more in the future. Those who came along found out about all our vacancies, including training schemes such as our One in a Million apprenticeship programme.

The One in a Million scheme is part of our Secure Warm Modern programme, which started on 1st April 2008. It is a promise from us that for every £1million spent on the programme, we will take on an apprentice.

Apprenticeships combine hands-on work experience with studying for the qualification you need. We will be offering apprenticeships in bricklaying, plumbing, heating

carpentry, joinery, window fitting, electrics, plastering and business administration.

We are keen to employ local people who already live on our estates to help boost employment in these areas.



Swap your home through Homeswapper

Council tenants have been able to swap homes with someone else in Nottingham for years – but you can now swap with people anywhere in the country.



Nottingham City Homes has joined Homeswapper – the largest national 'mutual exchange' service with more than 362 participating social landlords.

The benefits are:

- Homeswapper has more than 150,000 members and is growing
- Any tenant from any social landlord can register
- You can swap with tenants of any registered social landlord and not just NCH
- Homeswapper covers all of the UK, so you can find swaps locally or nationally

And best of all – it's completely FREE!

You can search for a new home at www.homeswapper.co.uk without registering and search results, including maps, to help you work out the location of the home you may want to swap to.

If you register, Homeswapper will automatically search every night for potential new swaps that meet your requirements. You will be sent details of new swaps by email or text.

To join the scheme register at www.homeswapper.co.uk stating that your landlord is Nottingham City Homes.

If you do not have access to a computer, contact your area housing office for help. You can also search on the kiosks at our new Housing Service Centre or access one of the computers in libraries across Nottingham.

Please note: if you are already registered for a mutual exchange with Nottingham City Homes you will still need to register with Homeswapper as, due to data protection, we can't transfer your details over.

Don't forget: you must not exchange properties without first obtaining permission from both landlords.

Bulwell housing office wins Office of the Month!

Congratulations to our team at Bulwell housing office for winning 'Housing Office of the Month' for September 2008.

Our team of tenant 'mystery shoppers' rated Bulwell for providing an excellent service in terms of the office reception area and standards of customer care. The team scored highly for their speed in answering telephone calls, how easy it was to contact the right person and how polite and courteous employees were.

Comments from the tenant inspectors included:

'a really good office'

'staff are impressive and are responsive to the needs to the customer'

'staff continue to impress and score highly'

'an office which has been a consistently top performer'

The offices are judged by 11 tenant inspectors. The judges' criteria included checking all employees were well presented and wearing name badges, telephone calls were answered helpfully within six rings, all enquiries were dealt with promptly, and reception areas were clean and tidy.

Why not become a tenant inspector and help us improve your



services? It takes up little time and you can play a big part in improving your community.

Call us on **0115 915 7423** to find out more,

email **tenantinspectors@nottinghamcityhomes.org.uk**

or visit our website at **www.nottinghamcityhomes.org.uk**

Get Involved Week winners celebrate

As part of our 'Get Involved Week' this September we invited primary school children to enter a drawing competition. They were asked to base their drawings on the theme 'where I live'.

We had a number of fantastic drawings. The entries were put up for public vote at our Old Market Square event on Thursday 25th September. The nine most popular entries will be framed and put up in area housing offices and the new Tenant and Leaseholder Resource Centre.

The winners were:

- Elise Woof
- Mia Walker
- Lucy Nammi
- Samantha Marriott
- Deevon Graham
- David Beinarovich
- Samuel Oldham

- Sophie Harlow
- Keauna James

Presentations were made to the schools by NCH staff and prizes were handed out to the winning artists.

During Getting Involved Week we also held a range of quizzes at events across the city. The winners of these quizzes are:

- Mrs Hardy of Bilborough
- M Wilson of Aspley
- Mrs Silver of Bestwood Park
- Mrs S Anderson of Clifton
- Ms Lynn Bell of Bulwell

For further information on Getting Involved, please contact the Tenant and Leaseholder Involvement Team on **0115 915 7380**, email gettinginvolved@nottinghamcityhomes.org.uk or text **INVOLVE** followed by your name to **60066** and we will call you back.



Photographs of all drawing competition winners are available to look at on our website www.nottinghamcityhomes.org.uk under the Get Involved button.

Youth views wanted

It is important when developing our services that we listen to the people who receive them – you!

We want to hear more from our younger tenants and get people under 25 years old involved in the way we shape our services. So we are holding a series of consultation sessions with under-25s across Nottingham.

The process of getting your first home can be challenging. As part of the consultation we are asking young people what sort of help they need during this time. We will use their responses to help us create new pre-tenancy workshops. At these workshops we will give young people advice and support before they embark on their first tenancy.

The InLiving mobile phone game will also be available soon for our younger tenants. Similar to the 'SIMs' computer game, InLiving involves players creating their own characters and going

through a variety of locations and situations associated with independent living.

The character has to make various life choices in an animated virtual world that includes their own flat, shops, college, job centre, hairdressers and bars to name but a few. They have to make choices about getting a job or staying on benefits, paying bills or going clubbing, and they have to take care of their own health and wellbeing.

If you would be interested in getting involved, or finding out more about the pre-tenancy workshops or InLiving game please contact Claire Reeves on **0115 915 7315**, minicom on **0115 915 7447**, email claire.reeves@nottinghamcityhomes.org.uk or text **INVOLVE** to **60066** and we will call you back.

New services if you need help

A new service was launched in October to make sure tenants with specific problems get the help and advice they need.

We will now refer customers to the new floating support Central Access Point (CAP), which will then direct tenants to the right service for them.

There are a range of support networks – from support for young and single people to advice and guidance for those with drug and alcohol problems and support for members of the travelling community.

The organisations involved include:

- Key Support – for single people and young couples without children
- 3 Ways – for people who use drugs or have been involved with drugs in the past

- Homestraight – for people with alcohol problems who wish to get treatment
- Foundations – young parents and pregnant women aged 16-20 years old
- Travelling Together – for people from Roma, Gypsy and Travelling communities
- Foothold – for families and pregnant women.

The aim of the new floating support services is to help people to:

- Find a home
- Resettle into a home
- Sustain their current home.

If you would like more information about Floating Support Services, please contact CAP on 0800 0556 184

Rents payments explained

You may have read a story in the Nottingham Evening Post last month about rents payments.

We require all tenants to pay in advance – but at the moment up to

1,500 people pay in arrears at the end of each month by Direct Debit.

We've sent a letter advising them that they need to pay extra to bring their accounts up to date, and how to contact their rents account manager for support.

If you have concerns about your rent payments, please call the Rents Contact Centre on **0115 915 4920**.

☆☆ Rising Stars!! ☆☆

How much has your estate improved?

Our team of tenant services inspectors visit all 39 estates managed by Nottingham City Homes every three months – and grade them between zero and three stars.

They do it to check that each estate is a place where tenants want to live – and to identify areas for improvement. We then work with Nottingham City Council, the police and others to make those improvements.



Over the 15 months since we first asked our tenants to get involved in these inspections, every estate has improved. Now, for the first time, our tenants have told us every area is of at least a 'two star' standard.

This means for example the streets are cleaner, there's less graffiti and rubbish, gardens are tidier and paths are clear of weeds.

Here are the results:

- 39 (100%) out of 39 estates are now of a two star standard or above compared to 14 (36%) in June 2007
- 11(28%) out of 39 estates are now of a three star standard compared to 4 (11%) in June 2007
- 28 (72%) of estates are now of a higher standard than in June 2007 and an additional 4(10%) have retained a three star standard throughout the last year

Key

Colour	Meaning
Green	Improved (or 3 star)
Yellow	Stayed the same
Red	Declined

A big well done to everyone who has been involved with the improvements seen on the estates in the past 12 months!

South

Estate	June 2007	Sep 2007	Dec 2007	Mar 2008	July 2008	Sept 2008
Clifton - General	☆☆	☆☆☆	☆☆	☆☆	☆☆☆	☆☆☆
Nobel Road	No Stars	☆☆	☆☆	☆☆	☆☆	☆☆
Meadows	☆☆	☆☆	☆☆	☆☆	☆☆	☆☆
Lenton	☆☆	☆☆	☆☆	☆☆	☆☆	☆☆
St.Anns	☆☆	☆☆	☆☆	☆☆	☆☆	☆☆
Marmion Road	No Stars	No Stars	☆☆	☆☆	☆☆	☆☆
Sneinton	No Stars	No Stars	☆☆	☆☆	☆☆	☆☆
Bakersfield	N/A	☆☆	☆☆	☆☆	☆☆	☆☆
Colwick	N/A	No Stars	No Stars	☆☆	☆☆	☆☆
Cardale	N/A	No Stars	No Stars	☆☆	☆☆	☆☆
0 Star	3	4	2	0	0	0
1 Star	4	2	5	3	0	0
2 Star	0	4	3	7	8	8
3 Star	0	0	0	0	2	2

Citywide results

	June 2007	Sep 2007	Dec 2007	Mar 2008	July 2008	Sept 2008
0 Star	9	9	4	2	0	0
1 Star	13	12	18	13	4	0
2 Star	10	14	13	19	26	28
3 Star	4	4	4	5	9	11

Note: in June 2008 Bakersfield, Colwick and Cardale were not included

Weblink works for tenants



Tenants in sheltered housing will now have the chance to shop online, check bus timetables through the web or keep up to date with friends and family on email thanks to a new scheme being piloted across the city.

Weblink, the new scheme aimed at residents in sheltered housing complexes will first be piloted at Kingston Court in Sneinton.

Kingston Court has now been fitted with a brand new computer that has access to the internet as part of the new Weblink scheme.

It is one of two complexes across the city benefiting from the Weblink pilot before it is rolled out to another eight sheltered schemes.

Not only will the computer be made available to all tenants in the complex, there will be a guide to surfing the web and basic tips on how to use the computer programmes.

This is the first time we have supplied residents in sheltered complexes with the opportunity to access the internet. If the pilots are successful, the remaining complexes will be fitted with computers by early Spring 2009.

Improving St Anns

Tenants and residents across St Anns will soon benefit from a range of regeneration schemes to help build sustainable communities.

The Stonebridge Park regeneration scheme is moving forward as the final planning application is set to be submitted to Nottingham City Council's planning department in December.

This regeneration project is being driven by a Board made up of tenants, residents and representatives from the City Council, NCH and Leicester Housing Association.

St Anns is also set to benefit from a brand new sheltered complex with more care facilities, a day centre, better homes and a restaurant.

The Welland Court development has been boosted by £3m funding from English Partnerships and £3m from the Department of Health. It is hoped work will begin in Summer 2009, with a completion date set for February 2011.

Residents from Kingsthorpe in St Anns are also working with us to make improvements to the area. This scheme is in the early stages, but officers have been surveying homes in Kingsthorpe to find out more about the needs of the tenants and look at what can be done to improve their homes. Regular meetings are being held to inform residents about progress.

'Get Involved' and have your say

At Nottingham City Homes we are committed to empowering our tenants and leaseholders to get involved and influence the way we shape and deliver our services. Area Panels have been set up throughout the city to find out what matters to local people and what we can do to make a real difference.

Check the table below to find your next Area Panel meeting.

Area Panel 9 – Clifton

Date	Venue	Time
9.12.08	Clifton Cornerstone	2pm to 4pm

Area Panel 8 – Lenton and Meadows

Date	Venue	Time
10.12.08	Mayfield Court, Meadows	6pm to 8pm

Area Panel 6 – St Anns

Date	Venue	Time
24.11.08	Kingston Court, Sneinton	6pm to 8.30pm

To find out more about getting involved, contact our Tenant and Leaseholder Involvement Team:

Tel: 0115 915 7380
Text: text INVOLVE to 60066, followed by your name and address
E-mail: gettinginvolved@nottinghamcityhomes.org.uk
Web: www.nottinghamcityhomes.org.uk

Thank you for your feedback

We would like to apologise to all those customers who received their copy of News from Nottingham City Homes, addressed incorrectly. The problems only affected just under half of our tenants in the south of the city.

We would also like to take this opportunity to thank all those tenants who took the time to let us know about the issue. The problem was due to a technical error in processing the data.



Tackling anti-social behaviour together

October saw more than 90 tenants and leaseholders come together under one roof to learn more about how Nottingham City Homes and our partners are tackling anti-social behaviour across the city.

The Police, Community Protection and Nottingham City Council joined us at our anti-social behaviour conference at the Trent FM Arena on Thursday 16 October.

Nottingham City Homes is a key member of the city's Crime and Drugs Partnership (CDP). Chief



Executive Alan Given, pictured right, praised our tough stance against anti-social behaviour, while explaining how crime has fallen in Nottingham by 28% over the last few years.

This event gave people the chance to tell us their experiences of anti-social behaviour and find out what each organisation is doing to prevent it. Presentations were also given on the work already being done across the city and the successes we have had over the past year.

The event was held as part of the Government's Not in My Neighbourhood week. TPAS (the national Tenant Participation Advisory Service) has told us the Nottingham event was the best attended out of all those held across the country.

Thanks to all of you who came to the event and helped us to understand more about your concerns and the challenges you face in your community.

If you are experiencing problems with anti-social behaviour in your area, please call our dedicated hotline on **0115 915 2020**.



Did you know?

There's not many things more distressing than being burgled. But there's a 25% you'll be burgled again within a year.

The solution? Get Smartwater.

Smartwater marks all your property with a unique code – meaning if it stolen the police can trace it back to you if they find it.

Homes which are 'Smartwatered' after being burgled have only a 0.6% chance of being broken into again, according to Nottinghamshire Police. Criminals hate it because they know they are far more likely to get caught.

As part of our Secure Warm Modern programme we're offering Smartwater to every home receiving new double glazing – and making sure the Police know about owner occupied and other homes on estates. This means the entire estate is covered, which helps to drive away the criminals.

Ask your local police officer for more details about Smartwater.

Training courses – spaces available...

Are your IT skills rusty? Do you know what health and safety measures you need to follow to prevent an accident?

We have places available on the following training schemes:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| 9.30am – 12.30pm, 7th November | Health and safety |
| 9.45am – 12.45pm, 2nd December | Committee skills |
| 1.30pm – 4.30pm, 2nd December | How to run a successful meeting |

Housing Service Centre, 14 Hounds Gate, Nottingham. NG1 7BA

We provide lunch, cover the cost of your travel and child care expenses. If you're interested please contact our Tenant and Leaseholder Involvement Team:

Team: Tenant and Leaseholder Involvement Team
Address: 14 Hounds Gate, Nottingham. NG1 7BA
Tel: 0115 915 7380
Text: text INVOLVE to 60066, followed by your name and address
E-mail: gettinginvolved@nottinghamcityhomes.org.uk
Web: www.nottinghamcityhomes.org.uk

Places are limited – so apply soon!



Aiming for excellence

In October we held our 'aiming for excellence' conference. We wanted to hear from tenants and leaseholders about their priorities – so we can develop our plans for 2009/10.



We're committed to involving our customers at the heart of everything we do. The event at the Trent FM Ice Arena brought customers together from across the city.

The conference was opened by Councillor Alan Clark, Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhood Regeneration in Nottingham, who talked about his role as a ward councillor and how that helps him to understand what is needed on our estates.

Nottingham City Homes Chief Executive Chris Langstaff spoke about our key successes over the past year – including the start of our new £142 million repairs contract, how we've reduced the number of empty properties and reduced rent arrears.

Tenants then took part in a range of workshops focussed on improving the quality of repairs, service charges, value for money and improving our neighbourhoods.

Tenants and leaseholders' key priorities included:

- Improving estates and gardens
- Fighting anti-social behaviour through more use of CCTV and security lighting
- Faster response times for repairs
- Improving our call centres

- Better services for vulnerable and Black and minority ethnic people
- Reviewing window cleaning, gas servicing and the handyperson scheme

The results of the event, and consultations with other customers and partners, will be used to help us write our delivery plan for the 2009/10 financial year, which starts in April.

We can all make a difference, make it today – get involved, contact the Tenant and Leaseholder Involvement Team:

Address: 14 Hounds Gate, Nottingham. NG1 7BA

Tel: 0115 915 7380

SMS: text INVOLVE to 60066, followed by your name and address

E-mail: gettinginvolved@nottinghamcityhomes.org.uk

Web: www.nottinghamcityhomes.org.uk

Tenants also heard about the recent results in our STATUS customer satisfaction survey, how we are responding to customer feedback, improving value for money, and contributing to reforming the national housing subsidy system.

Housing Service Centre officially open for business

Our brand new Housing Service Centre officially opened for business on Tuesday, 28th October.

The centre was officially opened by tenant Jean England, Chair of the Tenant and Leaseholder Congress and Paul Rowe, Chair of the Board and Councillor Alan Clark, Portfolio Holder for Regeneration at Nottingham City Council.

Here's a reminder of why you might want to visit the Housing Service Centre:

- it's based in the city centre, so easy to access
- you can find a property via Nottingham HomeLink, using one of three internet pods which are FREE to use
- you can get housing advice FREE
- you can report your repair FREE using our freephone

- you can call any team at Nottingham City Homes FREE using our other freephone

You can also visit our new Tenant Resource Centre, here's why:

- You can access computers and printers to design leaflets for your local meeting or something similar
- You can meet our Tenant and Leaseholder Involvement Team, who can give you advice about how to get more people in your area involved

(Please note that these facilities need to be booked in advance)

Come and visit us – we're open from 8.30am – 4.50pm Monday – Friday.



You said – we did!

The best way to improve services is to know as much as we can about what YOU think.

We have a number of ways to find out – including our 'compliments, comments and complaints' system, and the vision management system (VMS).

VMS involves us contacting a percentage of customers after we've provided a service to find out how we performed. We're always pleased to hear good things – and we always take action when you point out a problem.

Here are a selection of comments we have received recently:

Gas servicing

"I am very pleased with the gas service check. Have peace of mind knowing that my gas boiler is being regularly checked because of the silent killer. Thank you for the safety checks and putting the lives of your tenants first by doing these annual services, it is very much appreciated by me and I am sure by others."

Mrs P Morley

Handling complaints

"The staff handled my complaint very well and the matter was resolved quickly."

Mr P Jacks

Secure Warm Modern

"The workmen carried out the work very well. They keep me informed all the time. And overall the completed work is very good."

Mr and Mrs Williams

Repairs

"Better communication with service centre. Workmen 100% on the ball – tell them to keep up good work".

Mr J Flint

New tenancies

"All information needed was given and explained thoroughly before moving in and starting my tenancy. Thank you."

Miss C Smith

Improving estates

One resident was concerned about the amount of litter and dog mess on the footpaths of his estate. We've now arranged for number of bins to be increased on the estate, and written to residents to remind them about their responsibility to make sure dog fouling is cleared up.

Another tenant wanted something to be done about untidy gardens in her estate. We've now identified which gardens are a problem and



written to those tenants to remind them of their responsibilities. We'll be making sure the gardens are improved.

Rent statements

We send you a statement every three months to update you on your rent account. Some tenants have told us the letters are hard to understand – so we have worked with our Customer Communications Panel to 'plain English' them and improve the format.

Use our compliments, comments and complaints system to tell us what you think of our services. Pick up a leaflet from your area housing office or visit our website.

www.nottinghamcityhomes.org.uk

Jobs, Jobs, Jobs

Have you ever considered a career in housing? Fancy working for Nottingham City Homes?

For our current vacancies please visit www.nottinghamcityhomes.org.uk and click on the jobs link at the top right of the home page, or check out the Nottingham Post jobs pages every Wednesday.

We welcome applications from all sections of the community and are particularly keen to encourage people with disabilities, Asian, dual heritage and other minority ethnic groups to apply as these groups are currently under-represented in our workforce.

New homes for Nottingham

Nottingham has been chosen by the Government to develop a local housing company – to be called 'New Homes Nottingham' – that aims to build an ambitious target

of 5,000 new homes within the next seven years.

A quarter of the new properties will be available to rent through



Nottingham City Homes – which is good news for people on the housing register waiting for a new home.

The city has a shortage of good quality new housing for its expanding population. The new company will give the council and communities a stronger influence over the long-term future of housing development.

Cllr Alan Clark, Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhood Regeneration at Nottingham City Council, said: "Not only will the local housing company provide good and affordable new housing for our communities – it will also provide construction work and training for local people.

"The objective is to give local people access to the quality of housing in which they would want to live and in a community where they would want to live and feel part of."

Developments will be on surplus council land, and at least half the new properties will be 'affordable' homes.

The private sector companies provide the cash and expertise to build the homes. The company will be governed by a board, including representatives from the city council, developers and other experts.

The company should be set up by the end of 2009.

Professional caretaking at your service!

Did you know our team of caretakers are now professionally qualified?

We now have 44 caretakers trained to standards set by the British Institute of Cleaning Sciences and received a nationally recognised qualification. This means you can be sure caretakers are providing you with a top notch service that we can all be proud of.

They were proudly presented with their certificates and lapel badges by Ian Perry, Estates and Caretaking Service Manager in October (left) with Director of Housing Gill Moy (centre) and Assistant Director of Tenancy and Estate Management Kim De Vergori (right).



Caretakers cover high and low rise blocks of flats across the city, including the Victoria Centre. They're dedicated to keeping the blocks clean and tidy and play a vital role in helping to improve communities.

Do you know who your caretaker is? We've recently installed new information boards in all of our blocks. Each panel tells you what level of service you can expect,

who your caretakers are and how to contact them.

Ask your caretaker for an information sheet about what we will do on a daily, weekly and monthly basis – or download one from our website www.nottinghamcityhomes.org.uk

Many of you have told us how much you appreciate the caretaking service.

Here's some of your feedback...

"The caretakers continue to provide a fine and very courteous service".

Mr L Andrews

"Cleaning and caretaking services in the Victoria Centre have always been very good, our cleaners are a wonderful bunch of people".

Ms R Ferris

"The cleaning staff in the Victoria Centre flats are excellent.

"They are extremely helpful when disposing of household rubbish. They are cheerful and nothing seems to be too much trouble. Many thanks to them!!"

Mr A Cartman

Last orders... or final demand?

As the Christmas party season starts it can be tempting to go out and join the revellers at all the celebrations on offer. We all want to enjoy the season and parties, but before you go to buy that drink, stop and think. Have you paid your rent on time this month? Make paying your rent on time your top priority.

Over the last few months you may have noticed our bright rent poster campaign reminding you that if you miss your rent you could lose your home.

Last year alone we evicted 304 people. Don't be one of them.

If you are struggling to pay your rent for genuine reasons we will offer help and advice to get you



back on track. Simply contact our FREE and confidential debt advice number. We are here to help but we will be tough on tenants who won't pay.

Call us on 0115 915 4920, visit your local housing office, or even text the word Rent to 80800 for FREE and we will call you back.

Look out for the posters in your area housing office and libraries across the city!

Competition time

This month we are giving away a microwave. To be in with a chance of winning, simply answer the following question:

How many caretakers are trained to standards set by the British Institute of Cleaning Sciences?

To enter by text simply type: **NCH**, followed by your answer, name and address. Text to **60066** (all entries are charged at standard network rates)

Alternatively, send your entries (with your name and telephone number) to:

The Communications and Marketing Team,
14 Hounds Gate,
Nottingham, NG1 7BA

Deadline for receipt of entries is Tuesday 2nd December 2008.

We have a winner!

We had a record number of entries for our competition last month. Congratulations go to our lucky winner Devinder Mahi of Whitemoor who has won £50 of Argos vouchers.

We asked you 'When does the Nottingham City Homes new housing service centre open its doors for business?' The answer was '13th October 2008'.

