



## Policy Reviews

During February 2007 and March 2007, the Tenant Audit Panel reviewed the following policies.

- \* Anti Social Behaviour Policy
- \* Rent Arrears Policy
- \* Harassment Hate Crime and Domestic Violence Policy
- \* Compensation Policy
- \* Allocations Policy
- \* Resident Involvement Policy

The Maintenance Contractors Code of Conduct was also reviewed and accepted by the panel. Colour schemes for kitchen worktops, floors and walls were also agreed on in the same meeting. We will shortly be sending out updates of these policies which should be kept in your Tenants Information Packs.

## Decent Homes Standard

The Government has a target to ensure that all social housing meets the "Decent Homes Standard" by 2010.

A decent home is one which is weather tight, warm and has modern facilities, according to the four criteria listed below.

- \* Meets the current statutory minimum standard for housing
- \* It is in a reasonable state of repair
- \* It has reasonably modern facilities and services
- \* It provides a reasonable degree of thermal comfort (with efficient heating and effective insulation).

Christian Action is currently on target to ensure that all of its housing meets these standards by 2010 and we calculate that around 8% of our homes currently require further action.

In the 2007/2008 financial year we plan to renew windows in 33 of our homes, refurbish kitchens in 54 of our homes, bathrooms in 19 of our homes, and renew the boilers in 10 of our homes.

## AN INSPECTOR CALLS



As mentioned in last quarter's Talking Points, the Association is due to be inspected by the Audit Commission in June 2007. The Audit Commission is the Government body responsible for inspecting Housing Association services.

As part of the inspection the Audit Commission will want to speak to tenants and residents so they can understand the tenant's view of our

services. If you would be willing to join a focus group of tenants for this important task, please complete and return the form enclosed with this newsletter, using the envelope provided.

The focus group will take place on **Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> June 2007** at our Head Office at Enfield Island Village, commencing at 7.00pm. We can arrange transport and childcare and translation services to enable your attendance—just ask.

### Read all about it!

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### MORE RENT PAYING METHODS

Christian Action Housing Association provides tenants with **SIX** ways to pay rent:

- |                  |           |
|------------------|-----------|
| 1 Direct Debit   | 4 Cheque  |
| 2 Standing Order | 5 Cash    |
| 3 Debit Card     | 6 All Pay |

Please contact the Housing Team if you are experiencing difficulty with paying your rent. Failing to pay rent results in tenants being taken to court and ultimately losing their home. Christian Action wants to avoid this wherever possible. **If you are in difficulty please let us know so that we can help you.**

## Christian Action (Enfield) Housing Association Ltd

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Switchboard Tel: 01992 765900 Fax: 01992 765999 Maintenance Repairs Line: 01992 765990  
Christian Action (Enfield) Housing Association Ltd, a charity incorporated as an Industrial Provident Society under their reference 23577R. The objectives of this Association have been agreed by the Charity Commissioners as charitable objectives. Registered with the Housing Corporation (L0676). A member of the National Housing Federation.



## From the desk of Mark Hayes



As part of the budget consultation exercise before Christmas, senior staff visited each Area Forum where residents suggested priorities for the Association's expenditure, we also wrote to tenants asking for suggestions.

We have listened to what you said and have invested an extra £150k in the areas which you have told us are your priorities.

### YOU SAID—Improve access to the Repairs Service...

**WE DID**—We have allocated more staff resources to customer care, specifically to monitor correspondence and deal with telephone calls and messages at peak times, we hope this will ensure a faster response.

We have also employed an additional member of staff to answer the phones to customers seeking repairs, it is clear that during times of peak demand it is difficult for tenants to get through to the service.

### YOU SAID—Deal more effectively with Anti Social Behaviour...

**WE DID**—We already operate Neighbourhood Wardens in partnership with Enfield Council in the Edmonton area. We have budgeted to use this service at other Christian Action developments where problems of anti social behaviour are reported. This service has already been undertaken on a trial basis, and we will be reviewing its effectiveness. The new project is called *Safe Watch* and will operate outside normal office hours. (More info on page 11).

We are introducing some additional support for our more vulnerable tenants who are not receiving support from other agencies, this will be in the form of a floating support service called *Compass Support*.

In partnership with the Oasis Trust, we have restarted the Bounces Road Youth Team (BRYT) in Edmonton.

### YOU SAID—Provide larger homes for tenants seeking a transfer...

**WE DID**—We have commenced a programme to dispose of some of our smaller 1 and 2 bedroom dwellings to be replaced with more 3 bedroom/5 person, or larger, homes.

This programme is already underway in Enfield and, over a period of time will enable tenants, who would not otherwise be able to secure a transfer, to move to larger accommodation.

### YOU SAID—Provide more advice and support for tenants having difficulty paying their rent...

**WE DID**—We have commenced a service called *Debt Smart* (see page 4) in partnership with the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) to provide on one day a week specialist financial advice to our tenants. This service will be operating in various locations suited to the needs of our customers. Tenants can ask to be referred to this service through their Housing Officer.

We will be monitoring the impact of this new service carefully to see if it meets the needs of tenants in financial difficulty.

Mark Hayes  
Chief Executive



# Safe Watch

## Wardens take to the Streets

Following the success of a pilot scheme, Christian Action Housing is launching its own Neighbourhood Wardens scheme from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2007. The Safe Watch project will work around known areas of anti social behaviour offering reassurance and monitoring activity that

is in breach of tenancy conditions.



## Choice Based Lettings Update

The Association launched its Choice Based Lettings scheme on the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2007 and to date one three bedroom house has been advertised using the Home Connections website. The successful bidder was an overcrowded family from Enfield who were living in a two bedroom flat in Enfield.

The system worked well and we are confident that tenants will find the scheme user friendly and informative.

Tenants who are registered on the

Christian Action Transfer Waiting List wishing to view available properties should log onto:

[www.homeconnections.org.uk](http://www.homeconnections.org.uk)

A computer is available for use at our Benedict House head office. We welcome your feedback and comments in order for us to improve this service. Please contact Andy Chamberlain on 01992 765934 or email

[andychamberlain@christianaction.org.uk](mailto:andychamberlain@christianaction.org.uk)

## Turkish Representation Required

The Community Hall at Bounces Road is managed by a voluntary committee of local people, who determine, amongst other things the rules associated with letting this facility.

The Committee is keen to have representation from the Turkish community and anyone who is interested in being part of this initiative should contact Ian Martin on 01992 765 918 or by email:

[ianmartin@christianaction.org.uk](mailto:ianmartin@christianaction.org.uk)

## Here to HELP

Haringey Council in participation with 'Here to HELP' are offering FREE insulation and security measures to all households.

If you are in receipt of a qualifying benefit you are entitled to have this work carried out FREE of charge.

If you would like further information regarding this, please contact Baring Insulation Limited on freephone 0800 833 826. Alternatively you can also obtain further information from London Borough of Haringey website

[www.haringey.gov.uk](http://www.haringey.gov.uk)

## New Maintenance Contractor—*Erinaceous*

From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2007, the Association will have a new maintenance contractor—*Erinaceous Property Maintenance*. After a lengthy evaluation process which had full input from resident representatives, Erinaceous won the contract to carry out Day to Day Maintenance and Void Works as well as Kitchen and Bathroom Refurbishments.



Erinaceous Property Maintenance has signed up to the Residents Approved Code of Conduct which will define the standards of works and behaviour an operative will adhere to when working in your home.

### Kitchen Refurbishments Increased Choices

Thanks to joint teamwork between the Association and the resident representatives from the Tenants Audit Panel, an increased choice of materials has now been agreed for any planned kitchen refurbishments:

**UNIT COLOURS INCREASED FROM 8 TO 17 COLOURS**

**WORKTOP COLOURS INCREASED FROM 1 TO 4 COLOURS**

**SLIP RESISTANT FLOORING INCREASED FROM 1 TO 3 COLOURS**

Properties due for a kitchen refurbishment in 07/08 will shortly be contacted by the Association's Property Department, so that residents can make their choices and works can be scheduled.

### Tenant Satisfaction— Please let US know!

In order to monitor the new contractor's performance, we will continue to send out tenant satisfaction slips whenever a repairs order is raised. This is your opportunity to inform us of the quality of works being carried out at your home.

*Your feedback is very important...*

### Access to repairs— Our response

In a recent survey of residents, 'access to the repairs service' was highlighted as an important area that needed improvement. It was noted that when residents got through to the repairs team there was a high degree of satisfaction with the service, but actually getting through sometimes took a long time.

In direct response to this resident feedback, the Association will be employing an additional member of staff in the repairs team.

## REPAIRS DIRECT LINE

The most direct way to report a repair is by phoning: **01992 765990** this puts you directly in touch with our team of Property Services Administrators. If the line is busy and you get the answering machine, please leave your name, number and some details about the

repair issue you have, we will ring you back as soon as possible. (Tip - You save on your phone bill doing this, as we will be calling you back.)

APPOINTMENTS ARE OFFERED ON AN **AM (8-1) OR PM (1-5) BASIS.**

## Tenant Audit Panel

The Tenant Audit Panel (TAP) is made up of the five Chairs from each Area Forum, they meet periodically to approve policies and give the Association a tenant's perspective on how services should be provided.

Most recently the TAP has approved the *Customer Care Policy* and the standard used to repair empty property before it is let to new tenants.



Participants and members of staff at a Tenant Audit Panel meeting.

## Area Forums

The Area forums were held in Barnet, Enfield, Haringey and Waltham Forest during March and April 2007. Attendance varied and at some of the forums was not as good as in previous meetings. The forums offer the opportunity for tenants to be involved in discussions on issues with other tenants and senior management of the Association.

Issues raised in the forums are minuted and recorded and are actioned before the next forum takes place. Feedback is given to the forum as part of the procedure.

We look forward to seeing you in the next round of Area Forums—these will be held as follows:-



Recent Area Forums



Barnet	Waltham Forest	Enfield 1	Haringey	Enfield 2
26 June 2007	27 June 2007	2 July 2007	4 July 2007	5 July 2007

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## Debt Smart with the CAB

From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2007, Christian Action Housing tenants and residents are able to get money and debt advice directly from the Enfield's Citizens Advice Bureau through a new partnership project called *Debt Smart*.

This innovative project provides five sessions on one day a week at various locations, where tenants and residents are able to get detailed advice on issues such as dealing effectively with debt, managing money and dealing with rent arrears. The service is available for all our tenants in Barnet, Enfield, Haringey and Waltham Forest. To book an appointment with Debt Smart call Debbie Hart on 01992 765946.

## CONSTANT DOG BARKING !!

Barking comes naturally to dogs, however constant whining and barking can be disturbing and annoying for neighbours. The problem normally happens when the dog's owner is out of the house and until someone complains, the dog's owner will not know that there is a problem.

If you are a dog owner we recommend that you enquire from neighbours if your pet is a nuisance in your absence.

If you are experiencing dog noise nuisance, advise the dog owner politely as they might not be aware of the problem, if the problem persists contact your



## Gas servicing—your safety in mind!

More than 50 home deaths result every year from Carbon Monoxide poisoning caused by faulty heating appliances.

### What is it?

Carbon monoxide is a poisonous gas. It can be given off by appliances that burn fossil fuels such as gas, coal or oil.

### Why is it so dangerous?

Carbon monoxide is odourless, colourless and tasteless, which makes it difficult to detect—but its effects are deadly. On average, 50 people a year are killed by carbon monoxide poisoning due to faulty heating appliances.

### Gas appliances – Annual Safety Check

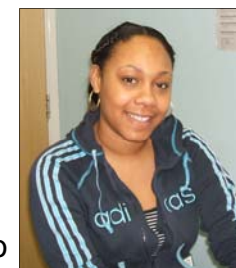
The Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 place a **LEGAL** duty on landlords to make sure that appliances and flues are kept in good order and checked for safety at least once every 12 months.

### Help us to help you!

Christian Action Housing Association will contact you before your next Gas Check is due. You will usually receive a letter in the post requesting a convenient appointment date. Once received, please get in touch with us as soon as possible so that we can ensure the safety of you and your family in your home.

# Enfield Foyer News

## Meet Nadine Benjamin



Twenty year old Nadine, who holds a foundation degree in Art & Design, moved into Enfield Foyer in mid 2006 after a short stay at a young peoples' homeless hostel. Nadine hopes to go to university next year to pursue her studies in Fashion & Textiles and at the time of my interview with her was going through the UCAS application procedure.

Nadine feels that there are restrictions placed on young people concerning study and housing, young people are only granted a maximum of 16 hours per week study in order to qualify for benefits, this limits the courses available for study

and ultimately resulting careers. It is Nadine's plea that the government reviews this policy so that more young people could take up serious study.

We wish Nadine the best of luck as she starts on her journey to be a Textile Designer and embark on a Masters' Degree programme by the age of 24.

Enfield Foyer residents who underwent training in Food & Hygiene and First Aid, received their certificates during a recent meeting attended by staff and service users.

All residents attend compulsory skills training from 9am to 5pm every Tuesday and Thursday. Foyer tenants attend monthly house meetings and key work sessions as part of their tenancy agreement. Amongst the skills imparted to the young people are:-

- \* Understanding and appreciation of equal opportunities
- \* Living in a diverse society
- \* Sustaining tenancy
- \* Food & Hygiene
- \* Health & Safety



## Parking permits introduced

In response to serious parking problems at Foxglove Close we carried out a consultation with the tenants on whether to introduce a parking permit system. Most tenants were in favour of the proposal.

Permits have been issued to all residents. Proof of ownership and valid road tax is required before a permit is issued. Each household is eligible for 2 visitors permits.



## Turkish delight!

I received this recipe for Turkish Green beans which you might like to try.

### Ingredients:

Fresh green beans, onion, tomato, potatoes, oil, margarine or butter, salt and lamb.

### Method:

Cut and boil the beans and potatoes. Add butter to the beans and potatoes after boiling.

Cook the onions and lamb in oil for 10 minutes. Add tomatoes to the onion and lamb and cook for a further 5 minutes.

Add the beans and potatoes to the lamb and cook on low heat for 5 to 10 minutes.

Enjoy.



**WANTED  
YOUR  
VIEWS—  
CONTACT THE EDITOR**



*I have.....*

New build house  
Quiet area in N9 Edmonton  
2 large bedrooms,  
Nice size kitchen  
Large sitting room newly decorated  
Separate bath & toilet upstairs:  
2 car open garage  
Large back & front garden  
Close to Jubilee Park & Houndsfield  
Primary School

*I want.....*

3 Bed house in Edmonton / Enfield  
Must have garden  
Must NOT be in N18

## **BOUNCES ROAD COMMUNITY HALL YOUTH CLUB HAS REOPENED**

**T**he youth club at Bounces Road Hall has opened again and runs every Wednesday from 6:30pm till 8:30pm.

The club will be run in partnership with Oasis Trust. This facility provides an important social outlet for young people in the area.

## REPAIRS - OUR PERFORMANCE IN 2006/2007

Our aim is to provide our residents with performance information on the repairs service. In this way, we hope to keep you involved and aware of the work carried out by the Association on your behalf.

REPAIRS FROM APRIL 2006— MARCH 2007

	Target	Completed on time
<b>EMERGENCY JOBS:</b>	<b>95%</b>	<b>95%</b>
<b>URGENT JOBS:</b>	<b>90%</b>	<b>91%</b>
<b>ROUTINE JOBS:</b>	<b>90%</b>	<b>92%</b>
Appointments made for responsive repairs that were kept	98%	98%

### What you told us about our repairs performance

Based on the repairs carried out in 2006/2007, residents have returned satisfaction sheets. These sheets enable you to comment on various parts of the service that we provide, this ranges from the person taking the call to the contractor carrying out the work. It is this type of feedback from you that helps us shape and improve our services.

	TARGET	ACTUAL
Were repairs staff polite and helpful?	95%	97%
Did repairs staff offer you an appointment?	90%	87%
Did repairs staff inform you of the name of the contractor?	80%	82%
Did repairs staff give you the order number as a reference?	N/A	79%
Did the contractor arrive on time?	95%	95%
Did the contractor produce ID?	N/A	77%
Was the contractor courteous	95%	96%
Did the contractor keep the site tidy?	N/A	94%
Did the contractor complete the work within the target date?	90%	89%
Was the work completed satisfactorily	90%	88%

# CAHA Tenant Involvement Menu

Christian Action offers a menu of options for tenant involvement—we hope that all residents will find an option that appeals, and we are always open to suggestions as to how we can tailor our menu to suit your tastes.

## AREA FORUMS

We have five Area Forums: two are held in Enfield and one each in Barnet, Waltham Forest & Haringey, each of these is chaired by one of our tenants. Participating in these Forums enables you to voice your own issues and those of your local community, thus helping to set the Association's priorities and influencing how we spend our resources.

## RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATIONS

We currently have Residents' Associations established at Twist House in Waltham Forest and Barnabas Court in Enfield. We are always willing to support the establishment of new Resident's Associations so if you are interested in taking this forward please contact Endu Kapfunde (details below).

Residents' Associations give the opportunity for tenants in a particular neighbourhood, estate or building to get together in order to influence the Association's work, improve their area, and discuss general issues of community concern.

## FOCUS GROUPS

From time to time the Association uses Focus Groups, comprising of small groups of residents, who get together to comment and review specific areas of our work.

Focus Groups help the Association to improve services in line with customer suggestions and to establish good practice.

We will shortly be establishing a Focus Group to look at anti-social behaviour and the Government's "Respect Agenda", to influence our review of these areas of our work. Please contact Endu if you are interested in helping us with this review.

## TENANT AUDIT PANEL

The Chairs of our five Area Forums meet on a regular basis to help the Association review various policies, procedures and areas of work.

## TENANT BOARD MEMBERS

The Chair of the Association's governing body, our Board of Management, is currently a tenant, and we have two other tenants currently serving on our Board.

Membership of the Board enables tenants to participate at a strategic level in the Association's policy formation and to help direct the business of the Association. The Board is keen to encourage applications for membership from our tenants.

## SATISFACTION SURVEYS

Christian Action sends out questionnaires covering a variety of topics in order to gather the views of residents. These help us monitor our service standards and measure tenant satisfaction with these.

The information collected helps shape our future services and the allocation of resources.

Regular Satisfaction Surveys include our Repairs Service, satisfaction with improvements made to individual homes, satisfaction with new developments, and satisfaction with our estate services.

## TALKING POINTS

This newsletter seeks to cover what is happening within Christian Action and the communities in which we operate. It is an opportunity for the Association to communicate with all of our residents and also an opportunity

for you to express your views on any subject. We welcome your participation and will shortly be seeking to establish a tenant led Editorial Panel.

To order from our set menu or for an "a la carte" experience, contact Endu Kapfunde on 01992 765942 or [endukapfunde@christianaction.org.uk](mailto:endukapfunde@christianaction.org.uk)

Enjoy! Bon appetit



## CAHA STAFF CHANGES

We have had the following staff changes at CAHA recently:

### Leavers:

Chris Bennett,  
SHP Housing Officer

### New staff:

**Billie Sutherland**  
Temporary Team Leader  
Deborah Tempest House

**Vivienne Nwalema**  
Temporary Team Leader  
Retirement housing

**Debbie Hart**  
Temporary Team Assistant Housing

**Geetha Ganeshwaran**  
Office Assistant

**Ayo Solanke**  
Temporary Neighbourhood Officer

**Elisha Odumosu**  
Temporary Neighbourhood Officer  
covering Rowena Ferro's patch

*Rowena Ferro, Housing Officer recently went on maternity leave and is now proud the mother of a little boy.*

# SMOKE ALARMS SAVE LIVES

**You are twice as likely to die in a fire at home if you do not have a smoke alarm.**

A smoke alarm is the easiest way to alert you to the danger of fire, giving you precious time to escape.

If you do not have a smoke alarm in your property, please contact the housing team on 01992 765900.

*Christian Action Housing Association will be happy to supply and fit one for you.*