



**Liverpool Mutual Homes (LMH)  
Register Number 29998R**

**Meeting: Board of Management  
(Open Session)**

**Date/Time: 6.00pm or at the rise of the  
Special Board Meeting  
on  
Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> September 2010**

**Venue: Board Room, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor,  
Commutation Plaza, Liverpool**

## **MEMBERSHIP:**

**Bill Lacey – Chair**

**Bryan McAvoy – Vice Chair**

**Tony Barnes**

**Janet Bell**

**Andrew Catterall**

**Tommy Colleran**

**Sue Goodman**

**Mike Harden**

**Ken Hughes**

**Robbie Hughes**

**Hossam Ibrahim**

**Bruce Johnson**

**Cllr Ann O'Byrne**

**Paul Rigby**

**Will Roby**

**Cllr Sharon Sullivan**



**LIVERPOOL MUTUAL HOMES  
REGISTER NUMBER 29998R**

**MEETING OF THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT  
TO BE HELD ON 1<sup>st</sup> SEPTEMBER 2010 AT 6.00pm OR AT THE RISE  
OF THE SPECIAL BOARD MEETING  
IN COMMUTATION PLAZA, LIVERPOOL**

**AGENDA**

**OPEN SESSION**

<b>ITEM</b>	<b>LEAD OFFICER</b>	<b>EXPECTED DURATION</b>	<b>PAGE No</b>
<b>1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b>			
<b>2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b>			
<b>3. NON-CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING</b>			
a) To agree as a correct record the non-confidential minutes of the Board meeting held on 29 <sup>th</sup> July 2010		2 minutes	Page 3
b) To consider matters arising from the non-confidential minutes of the Board meeting held on 29 <sup>th</sup> July 2010		5 minutes	
<b>4. 2009/10 ANNUAL REPORT TO TENANTS AND THE TSA</b>	Cathy Abraham	20 minutes	Page 7
<b>5. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS ACCEPTED BY THE CHAIR</b>			

<b>ITEM</b>	<b>LEAD OFFICER</b>	<b>EXPECTED DURATION</b>	<b>PAGE No</b>
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**6. NEXT MEETING**

- a) The next scheduled Board meeting is due to be held on 28th September 2010 at 5.30pm venue to be confirmed.

## ITEM 3A

### LIVERPOOL MUTUAL HOMES (LMH) REGISTER NUMBER 29998R



### MEETING OF THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT HELD ON WEDNESDAY 29<sup>th</sup> JULY 2010

At the 'Open Session' of the Board meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> July 2010 at Commutation Plaza, the following were:

#### PRESENT:

Bryan McAvoy - Chair  
Cllr Ann O'Byrne  
Janet Bell  
Robbie Hughes  
Will Roby  
Andy Catterall  
Tom Colleran  
Ken Hughes  
Bruce Johnson  
Paul Rigby

#### OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Steve Coffey - Chief Executive  
Angela Forshaw - Director of Housing & Neighbourhood Services  
Peter Fieldsend - Director of Corporate Services  
Sharon Beyga - PA to the Chief Executive

#### APOLOGIES:

Bill Lacey  
Tony Barnes  
Mike Harden  
Cllr Sharon Sullivan

#### OBSERVORS:

Peter McKenna

*(The meeting commenced at 5.30pm)*

The Chair started the meeting by welcoming the observer for the evening Peter McKenna and thanking the team for preparing the papers.

#### **BM10/120      ITEM 2 - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were recorded.

**BM10/121      ITEM 3A – MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 30<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2010**

The minutes of the Board Meeting held on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2010 were considered by the meeting.

***It was resolved that:***

The minutes of the meeting were agreed as an accurate record.

**BM10/122      ITEM 3B – MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 30<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2010**

- i) Apologies  
Robbie Hughes advised he had submitted apologies via email to Bill Lacey and this was accepted.

**BM10/0123      ITEM 4A – CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S UPDATE**

The Chief Executive presented a report which provided the Board with a general update on a range of non-confidential matters including an update on an ASB injunction awarded against a tenant at Carnarvon Court. It also proposed a revised date for the AGM to Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> September with the venue yet to be confirmed.

***It was resolved that the Board:***

- i) Noted the report; and  
ii) Approved the movement of the date for the Annual General Meeting to the 28<sup>th</sup> September 2010

**BM10/124      ITEM 5A – SELF ASSESSMENT AGAINST TSA STANDARDS AND OUTLINE CONTENT OF ANNUAL REPORT**

The Head of Business Development together with Maria Dowling gave a presentation to the Board setting out the outline of the new Annual Report to Tenants in line with the new regulatory framework.

It was agreed that there was quite a lot of editing to be done to the document to make it consistent and flow and members stated that they felt it was unclear what they were signing off.

It was, therefore, agreed to hold a special Board Meeting on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2010 to deal with the sign off of this document.

***It was resolved that the Board:***

- i) Approved the Self Assessment carried out against the TSA Standards; and
- ii) Agreed to hold a special Board Meeting on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2010 to consider the 2009/10 Annual report to Tenants and the TSA

**BM10/125      ITEM 5B – LMH STATUTORY ACCOUNTS FOR 2009/10**

The Director of Corporate Services presented a report incorporating the Annual Accounts for 2009/10. He also stated that the accounts had been approved by the Audit & Risk Management Committee.

***It was resolved that the Board:***

- i) Noted the contents of the report;
- ii) Approved LMH's 2009/10 Report and Statement of Accounts (Annexe 1), and
- iii) Noted LMH's external auditor's KIM report (Grant Thornton) provided at Annexe 2 to the report.

**BM10/126      ITEM 5C – PERFORMANCE REVIEW QUARTER 1**

The Head of Business Development presented a report setting out for the Board the Quarter 1 performance for the financial year 2010/11 across all Business Critical Pls.

***It was resolved that the Board:***

- i) Noted the contents of the report; and
- ii) Approved the circulation of performance to relevant partners

**BM10/127      ITEM 5D – PROPOSALS FOR AMENDMENTS TO THE LMH GOVERNANCE AND COMMITTEE STRUCTURE**

The Director of Corporate Services presented a report to formalise the arrangements agreed by the Board in July.

The Board was also informed that the next Board Away Day is due to be arranged for 15/16 October 2010 at a venue to be confirmed.

Ken Hughes referred to the Board meetings going quarterly and asked if there was an emergency would a special Board meeting be called. This was confirmed.

***It was resolved that the Board:***

- iii) Noted the report; and
- iv) Approved the revised Governance and Committee arrangements as set out in the report together with the consequential amendments to Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.

**BM10/128      ITEM 5E – CUSTOMER FEEDBACK STRATEGY**

The Head of Business Development presented a report and confirmed that the strategy is intended to pull various aspects of LMH work into one cohesive document.

***It was resolved that the Board:***

Approved the Customer Feedback Strategy

**BM10/129      ITEM 5F – REVIEW AND AMENDMENT OF STANDING ORDERS AND FINANCIAL REGULATIONS**

The Assistant Director (Finance) presented a report advising the Board of the outcome of a periodic review that had been carried out to Standing Orders and Financial Regulations. This had been carried out during June and July 2010.

Sue Goodman suggested, and it was agreed, that a sentence is included in Financial Regulations which reflects that the spirit of schedule 1 is still being adopted by the Board along the lines of “which reflect the former arrangements set out in Schedule 1”.

***It was resolved that the Board:***

Approved the amendments to Standing Orders and Financial Regulations subject to the inclusion of a sentence which reflects that the spirit of Schedule 1 is still being adopted by the Board along the lines of “which reflect the former arrangements set out in Schedule 1”.

**BM10/130      ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

No other business was recorded.

**BM10/131      DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

It was noted that the date of the next scheduled Board Meeting is Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> August 2010 at 5.30pm.

*(The meeting concluded at 18:40)*

<b>Board/Committee/Working Group/Area Board:</b>	
Board (Open Session)	
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	
Wednesday 1st September 2010	
<b>Item No:</b>	4



<b>Subject:</b>	Annual Report to Tenants and TSA	<b>Attachments:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Appendix 1 - Draft Report (<i>text only version. A Self Assessment Supplement will be sent separately prior to Board meeting and a mocked up glossy version will be available at the Board meeting.</i>)</li> </ul>
<b>Confidentiality:</b>	Non-confidential	<b>Status:</b>	For Approval
<b>Executive Summary:</b>			
<p>At the Board meeting in July it was agreed that officers would present a final draft of the Annual report for “sign off” prior to distribution to all LMH tenants before the deadline of 1<sup>st</sup> October 2010. The report has been developed through consultation with tenants and reflects their preferences within the content and style. The content of the report has been developed around LMH corporate plan focuses whilst also showing how the work we are doing links in with the requirements of the TSA standards. The second section of the report includes a summarised version of the detailed self assessment against the TSA standards that Board approved in July. A copy of the detailed assessment will be available to all tenants upon request.</p> <p>It is proposed that the report will be distributed to all tenants in the third week of September, subject to any amendments agreed by Board</p>			
<b>Recommendation:</b>			
<p>It is recommended that the Board;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i). Reviews the draft report; and</li> <li>ii). Approves the final version of the annual Report to Tenants for distribution to all LMH tenants by the 1<sup>st</sup> October deadline.</li> </ol>			
<b>Financial implications:</b>			
<p>There will be no direct financial implications as production and distribution of the report will be met within existing budgets.</p>			

**Key risks:**

Not producing the report to the 1<sup>st</sup> October deadline would be a high risk to LMH as the organisation would not be meeting its regulatory requirements.

**Material impact on Corporate Plan 'Focuses':**

The production and distribution of the Annual report impacts across all focus areas.

**Directorate:** Corporate Services

**By:** Cathy Abraham

**Position:** Head of Business Support

## Introduction

This year's annual report provides a good opportunity to report back to you on some of the successes we have had this year. Most importantly, it is an opportunity to share with you the work we are planning to do to keep improving our service and delivering on our promises.

We have involved our tenants in the development of this annual report at every stage, so it reflects what our tenants said they wanted to see. It also takes into account the requirements of the new TSA National Standards, which were introduced in April 2010.

As part of the new set of standards, the TSA has placed a strong emphasis on how the national standards should be turned into 'local offers'. At LMH we think we already 'do local' very well. We have a strong track record in providing services that meet local needs and our tenants have worked with us from the start to bring their local insight to what we do.

However, we also recognise that we can do more to tailor our services to the needs of different local groups and specific local areas. Whether this is shaping a specific service to meet the needs of different groups of people, such as our elderly or more vulnerable tenants, or concentrating our resources on areas where we know there are problems. We also know there are other areas where we could do more, with the youth for example. We need to work with younger people and support the right activities, before problems develop in our communities.

We have included a section in the report on 'going local' – this shows what we are doing to develop more local offers and to make sure that even more tenants, from all areas, are involved. We are working with groups of tenants who are giving their ideas and opinions on how we can shape the development of local offers and services. We want you to have an opportunity to influence our future direction and to be able to judge how we do.

The other big agenda from the TSA is 'tenant scrutiny'. Getting tenants involved has always been a key priority for us and we are now developing this further and setting up a tenant scrutiny panel. This panel will have the job of checking that we do deliver what we say we will, and will have powers to call LMH to account where we fail to do what we say.

Although we are very lucky in having tenants that do get involved and are willing to step forward and be part of what we're doing, we recognise that we still need to get more tenants involved and share the opportunities.

We have also been talking to partners to see if there is a way of working more effectively together in our shared communities. In each neighbourhood there are many different organisations and agencies that are delivering excellent projects and developing new and different ways of working. However, sometimes there is either a lack of communication, or a repeat of information being produced and overloading local residents. So our immediate priority is to look at communicating better with residents and directing them to the services that will support them and their families.

An annual report is of course only one way of keeping you informed and up to date. I hope that the newsletters we produce, the information we publish on our website, the tenant events we organise and the community groups we support, all provide different ways of finding out about how we are doing and ways you can get involved.

Once again, I'd like to put on record my thanks to all the people who have worked so hard this year. It's our staff, partners, and of course all our tenants, who are really making a difference and turning our promises into a reality. With help of everyone we will deliver our mission to have 'Pride in our Homes' and be 'Proud of our Neighbourhoods'!

**Steve Coffey**  
**Chief Executive**

## **Annual report 2010**

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Focus on Governance

Focus on Homes

Focus on Improvement

Focus on Partnerships

Focus on Viability and Value for Money

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Delivering locally tailored services

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What we achieved in 2009 - 2010

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The Area Boards

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## **(A) Foreword**

You will hardly need me to tell you that we currently live in a time of economic uncertainty. Barely a day goes by without conflicting stories that we are either over the worst and heading for better times, or that we are on the verge of another recession.

We have also seen a new coalition government come in and make some far-reaching changes. The abolition of the Audit Commission (the independent watchdog for local public services) has been announced, with potential knock on effects to the inspection process. Our own regulator the Tenants Services Authority (TSA) is currently under review and we do not know who will be our regulator in the future. There's also no underestimating the potential impact of the VAT increase that is being introduced from 4 January 2011. As a housing association we cannot reclaim VAT, so this means our operating costs will rise.

But against this backdrop of uncertainty, there is one thing that *is* certain. LMH will continue to rise to all these challenges and turn them into opportunities for positive change. Our robust financial systems mean we are able to reduce the impact of the planned VAT hike by continuing to make greater efficiency savings and ensuring we achieve value for money across everything we do.

We will always work to make sure any new government policies can be used positively. Whoever the regulator and whatever government is in power, we will continue to strive to be the best that we can and deliver the highest quality of service for our tenants.

Yes, it's a time for treading carefully, but it's also a time for celebrating what we have achieved together. We are proud to have won a number of prestigious national and regional awards this year, and these reflect the hard work of our tenants and our staff.

We have seen new tenant-led events and initiatives born out of our commitment to putting our tenants at the heart of everything we do. It continues to be an honour for me to work with so many enthusiastic and dedicated tenants, who make such a tremendous contribution to improving our homes and communities.

This annual report meets all the TSA requirements. I hope it gives you a good insight into our performance over the last year and our plans for future improvement. As ever, we welcome feedback from all our tenants. It's only through continuing to work together that we will achieve our goals.

**Bill Lacey**  
**Chair**

"Whoever the regulator and whatever government is in power, we will continue to strive to be the best that we can and deliver the highest quality of service for our tenants."

## **About our annual report**

We have involved our tenants in the development of this annual report at every stage. Through a series of meetings and consultation events, we asked our tenants what they liked about last year's report, what they thought we could improve upon and what they wanted to see in this year's report. We have taken all these views into account to make sure that together we have produced an annual report that is a vital information resource for our tenants.

### **A bit of background**

#### **Delivering our promises**

LMH is the largest registered provider of social housing in Liverpool and has been in operation since 1 April 2008. LMH was set up to take ownership of 15,028 general needs and supported council properties and to deliver the promises made to tenants in the 'offer document'.

This offer document contained 135 promises, outlining how we would deliver services to our tenants. These promises now form the basis of the services that we have been providing, and will continue to provide, to our tenants. We have already delivered 100 of our promises and are working hard to deliver the 35 that still remain.

Many of these remaining promises continue to be ongoing, as they are part of an extensive five-year programme and cover long-term objectives, such as the delivery of the Decent Homes Standard and the achievement of the higher LMH standard for all properties.

#### **Aiming higher**

Over the past two years, LMH has developed and extended the original offer document into an LMH offer that goes far beyond what was originally imagined. For example, we have carried out detailed research into each of our neighbourhoods and have produced 29 neighbourhood plans which target interventions where needed.

With the support and involvement of our tenants, we continue to strive to be the best we can. Through our range of communications, different events, and our website, we have kept tenants informed of how we are doing – the successes, the challenges and the hurdles we have faced.

We have also asked for feedback and we have used this to improve and change how we do things. For example, our tenants told us that they were not satisfied with our existing telephone service, which they found to be poor. So, we have spent many months this year developing and preparing for the launch of a new Customer Service Centre, which will be operational in October 2010 and will transform customer access to services.

### **A new regulator**

Since we developed the LMH offer, a new regulator for social housing has been established: The Tenants Services Authority (TSA). To raise the standard of services for tenants, the TSA published its National Performance Standards in April 2010. These are six standards that registered providers like LMH are expected to meet and they cover:

- Tenant involvement and empowerment
- Home
- Tenancy
- Neighbourhood and community
- Value for money
- Governance and financial viability

We have carried out a specific assessment against each of these standards to see how we are doing. The results can be found in the section, 'Taking a close look: how we are performing against the TSA standards' (page x). Through this process, we have identified any gaps in performance, outlined areas that we want to improve on, and have detailed changes that we believe are needed. As part of our ongoing commitment to service improvement, we have already started work on these areas.

### **Keeping focused: about section one**

When we talked to tenants about our annual report, the overwhelming opinion was that they liked the way last year's report was structured around LMH's nine key focus areas. Feedback has shown that the focus areas provide a clear and simple way of understanding what is being done for your homes and your communities.

As the focus areas were agreed with tenants long before the TSA standards were published, we have decided to keep these. However, we have made sure that within each focus area we are also picking up the requirements under the national standards. The benefit of using these developed focus areas is that they are based on what our tenants said they wanted from LMH, they are specific to our Liverpool base, and they are in many ways more far-reaching and locally demanding than the standards.

We have taken this tenant feedback into account and in section one (page x) we have continued to use the nine focus areas to chart our performance and to show how we are doing. At the same time, this section also highlights how each focus area relates to the national standards where relevant.

More detailed information about how we are doing against each of these standards can be found in the section, 'Taking a close look: how we are performing against the TSA standards' on page x.

### **Going local: about section two**

As part of the new set of standards, the TSA has placed a strong emphasis on how national standards should be turned into 'local offers'. The aim of these local offers is to avoid a 'one size fits all' approach and to encourage services to be tailored to the needs of a specific group of tenants or a particular geographical area.

For LMH and our tenants 'thinking locally' is not a new idea. We have a strong track record in tailoring our services to local needs and this local approach has been key from day one. It was our tenants who worked with us to help us develop our original offer document and it's our tenants who continue to work with us to bring their local insights and understanding to any new initiatives.

Section two (page x) of this report shows what we are doing to develop more local offers and to make sure that even more tenants, from all areas, are involved.

### **Encouraging tenant involvement: about section three**

In the new set of standards, the TSA outlines how providers must give their tenants the opportunity to scrutinize services and performance. We are always looking for new ways to make sure our tenants are able to influence and challenge everything we do. LMH has been tenant-led from the start and was founded on the principle of tenants being at the heart of all our decision-making. This can be seen in the structure of the LMH Board, which is unique in the fact that 8 out of the 15 board members are actually tenants.

When looking at our focus areas, we have taken into account what we are already doing to enable our tenants to scrutinize our performance. For example, over the last year a number of our tenants have been trained as tenant inspectors and mystery shoppers and we have set up a range of focus groups for tenants to get more involved in influencing the delivery of our services.

In section three (page x) of this report, we outline our plan to develop this scrutiny role even further and look at how it might play a vital part in a new type of tenant involvement structure.

### **The finer details: about section four**

Section four (page x) of this report captures more detailed information about our performance and our management structure. You can see a summary of our financial accounts, which covers income, expenditure, our balance sheet and other relevant data. We also set out for you what we achieved in 2009 - 2010 and how we have performed against each of our focus area objectives. Finally, there's also key information about our Board, Area Boards and the Executive Management Team.

## **Section one: A focused approach**

### **Our focus areas and the national standards**

Since the TSA's National Performance Standards were published in April 2010, members of our staff have been checking how we are performing against the six new standards, and how we are delivering on the priorities set within all nine of our focus areas.

Taking into account tenant and staff feedback on our annual report, we have decided to retain the focus areas, which were agreed with tenants long before the TSA standards were published. So when looking at how we are doing and identifying where we want to make improvements, we have matched the relevant standard against each of our focus areas.

There is so much to cover since last year's annual report, that we have had to limit each focus area to a good summary overview. This will give our tenants a clear and simple snapshot of how we are doing and where we need to make improvements.

In keeping with the TSA's requirements, we have also carried out a very detailed self-assessment against each of the national standards. This has been a very useful exercise as it has helped us to examine everything we do and compare it to what is generally expected. Our self-assessments show that we do perform well against the standards, but we can certainly do better.

The standards place much more importance on involving tenants in developing local offers and in having a formal tenant scrutiny body. We are now working on developing a scrutiny panel as part of our assessment of our involvement structures and we developing additional local offers to those we already provide.

More detailed information about how we are doing against each of these standards can be found in the section, 'Taking a close look: how we are performing against the TSA standards' on [page x](#).

## **Section one: A focused approach**

### **Focus on Colleagues**

We are committed to the health, wellbeing and professional development of all our staff, to ensure our tenants receive the best possible levels of service.

#### **How does this link to the national standards?**

Although this focus area doesn't cover a national standard, we believe our people are at the heart of the success of our organisation. To achieve the high quality of service we want to give our tenants, it is crucial that we recruit and retain the best people for each role, offer support for all our staff, and deliver on-going training and development.

#### **What have we been doing?**

##### **Setting high recruitment standards**

Our people are important to us, which is why we look to provide the best terms and conditions of employment and working conditions possible. Over the last year we have identified the skills and experience necessary for each role within LMH. This has helped us to recruit the best candidates to deliver the best service to our tenants, and will continue to form the basis for our recruitment.

##### **Training and developing our people**

We want our staff to be motivated and valued employees, who are recognised by our tenants for providing an excellent service. Each member of staff has been set their own specific targets, which will enable LMH to deliver the promises made to tenants. As part of an annual process every member of staff takes part in a performance development review with their manager. As well as discussing their performance and job role, individual training needs are also identified and agreed for the coming year.

In the last 12 months, we have delivered a comprehensive package of staff training. All first line managers have taken part in a management development programme and they have either received a professional qualification or an attendance certificate for completing all the modules.

We were able to secure just over £90,000 European funding to help us deliver training and develop staff. It was identified that customer service training was a priority for LMH and the best use of the funding was to train and develop staff with customer service training. All staff employed were required to attend a one day training session. One of the main objectives of the training was to develop "what can I do for the customer", staff were trained to think much more laterally and out of the "box". Coaching and further training will take place in the next year.

### **Working as a team**

All LMH offices are closed every Wednesday morning from 9.00am to 10.30am to enable team meetings and training to take place. Our teams work with each other across all LMH departments, and with other key partners, to deliver a comprehensive service to our tenants. In order to build on this successful team approach, we have developed a colleague engagement strategy, which we are now starting to put in place.

One of the highlights of the year identified by many staff was the “Environmental day” that all staff participated in during October 2009. Each year LMH has closed all its’ offices for the day whilst all staff take part in an activity aimed at improving the way we work and service to our customers. On a very rainy day, all staff reviewed the communal areas of LMH flats including the gardens both back and front. The information gathered was used to help the process of prioritising improvement work to communal areas and appoint a new contractor to deliver the work. It was a good opportunity in particular for all office based staff to view LMH properties and meet a number of customers whilst on site.

### **Changing our culture**

We are now in our second year of an extensive culture change programme at LMH. As a result, a number of changes have already been introduced to enhance the way we work, and in particular improve our attention to customer care. LMH’s Leadership Team and senior managers will now take this a step further, by identifying the specific standards and behaviours required from all those employed by and working on behalf of LMH.

### **Offering support**

LMH have various mechanisms set up to support staff wellbeing. There is an occupational health service contracted to deliver a range of services, including counselling and regular eye tests for all staff who regularly use computers.

## **What is our focus for the future?**

### **Improvements planned for Year 3**

We will introduce a new reward and recognition scheme for our staff, which will focus on improving performance. As part of their terms and conditions of employment, staff will also be able to choose from a list of flexible benefits to suit their own lifestyle.

We will continue to deliver and evaluate the culture change programme, to ensure that the ‘LMH way’ is fully embedded into everything we do.

We will continue to run the annual staff survey, to obtain honest feedback from staff. Any issues that are raised will be discussed and where possible resolved.

We will apply for the Investors in People accreditation, which reflects both our commitment to the wellbeing and development of our staff, and our five-year aim to become the employer of choice.

## 2009/2010

(1) All first line managers have taken part in a management development programme
(2) 66% of tenants feel LMH staff are able to deal with their problem
(3) 56 new starters between April 2009 and March 2010
(4) 194 total number of training sessions delivered
(5) 1679 total number of delegates trained
(6) 31 LMH staff and volunteers helped plant, paint and build a new playground at Princes Park Primary School for additional needs
(7) 6 Focus awards won by LMH staff
(8) 272 total number employed at LMH

## **Section one: A focused approach**

### **Focus on Communities**

We have a responsibility to help improve social wellbeing and contribute to the wider development and improvement of our communities.

#### **How does this link to the national standards?**

##### **The National Standard for Neighbourhood and Community**

This standard is about consulting with tenants where we have responsibility for the condition of the neighbourhood, local area co-operation and anti-social behaviour. In our focus on communities we meet the National Standard for Neighbourhood and Community, and we make an important contribution to the development and maintenance of sustainable and well-managed estates.

#### **What have we been doing?**

##### **Working in our neighbourhoods**

In consultation with our tenants, we have developed 29 neighbourhood plans. These are tailored to the specific needs of each neighbourhood and this means we can direct our services, and any interventions that may be needed, in the most effective way. These plans have been published and sent to all our tenants and partners.

We work closely with our tenants and partners through the Strategic Housing Partnership to improve our neighbourhoods and together we have achieved some great successes this year, many of which have been acknowledged by the awards we have received.

One example we are particularly proud of is the award-winning Community Payback Scheme, which has been delivered in partnership with the Westminster Estate Tenant and Resident Association, the Community Justice Centre, Merseyside Probation Service, the police and other members of Citysafe.

This innovative project sees offenders who have breached previous community orders, working full-time in the community as a last chance to avoid custody. This scheme won the 2010 Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS) Connecting People Award and the work has resulted in a 50% reduction in the number of reports of anti-social behaviour in North Liverpool, compared to the three months before. Tenants have told us they now feel safer in their homes and have a renewed sense of community spirit.

##### **Ensuring local area co-operation**

LMH has housing in 29 of Liverpool's 30 wards, so our presence and potential impact across the city is significant. We recognise that we have a major role to play in developing local partnerships that will benefit our tenants and improve the services we deliver.

Within our five housing management areas, we work closely with Liverpool City Council's own neighbourhood teams. We participate in a range of steering groups such as the Homelessness Steering Group and provide Family Intervention Tenancies. We have also been working directly with the council's Supporting People Team, so that later this year we can bring back into use four supported accommodation units for up to 40 vulnerable single people.

### **Tackling anti-social behaviour**

Tackling anti-social behaviour (ASB) relies on LMH creating partnerships with a range of organisations and requires strong leadership, commitment and accountability. We are working closely with other associations and Liverpool City Council, to ensure a co-ordinated approach that focuses on prevention, early intervention and tackling ASB directly.

For each of our neighbourhoods we have worked with tenants and partners to identify initiatives to improve community safety. However, it doesn't stop there. At our recent summer consultation event, tenants told us that they want us to make ASB a priority when we develop our local offers this year. So we have now set up a team of senior staff to work on these with tenants.

### **Developing local letting policies**

Working with local tenants in two particular areas suffering from ASB, we have developed and implemented local letting policies to deal with the problems and to help stop the decline in these neighbourhoods.

## **What is our focus for the future?**

### **Improvements planned for Year 3**

We will work with tenants and partners to further develop our approach to ASB and ensure this is a priority in all our local offers.

We will work with our tenants and the local authority to deliver interventions from our neighbourhood plans.

We will work with other associations and the local authority to develop local offers jointly. This is part of the 'Total Place' agenda of working together to deliver cost-effective services.

## 2009/2010

(1) We have developed 29 neighbourhood plans to tailor our services effectively.
(2) We have delivered the first year of a five-year cyclical maintenance programme
(3) We have five Area Boards and 34 fully constituted Tenant and Resident Associations
(4) Our Community Payback Scheme won the prestigious 2010 Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS) Connecting People Award and resulted in a 50% reduction in the number of reports of anti-social behaviour in North Liverpool, compared to the previous three months when it wasn't running
(5) 91.4% of anti-social behaviour cases were responded to within five working days
(6) The direct cost to LMH for dealing with each case of anti-social behaviour is £584.40 per case
(7) 79.9% of our tenants are satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live
(8) The direct cost to LMH for delivering estate services is £79.72 per property
(9) We have a dedicated out-of-hours ASB reporting service, so tenants can inform us of any incidents via telephone or our website 24 hours a day

## **Section one: A focused approach**

### **Focus on Customers**

We are a tenant-led organisation committed to meeting the needs of our customers. We keep our customers fully informed and provide a range of opportunities for them to shape the services they receive.

#### **How does this link to the national standards?**

##### **The National Standard for Tenant Involvement and Empowerment**

This standard requires us to provide our tenants with accessible, relevant and timely information; to ask tenants what they think about our plans for local offers; and to understand and respond to the diverse needs of our tenants. Our focus on customers covers the National Standard for Tenant Involvement and Empowerment, and we are in the process of extending the range and type of involvement through our work with tenants on local offers and developing the scrutiny role.

##### **The National Standard for Tenancy**

Our focus on customers is also relevant to the National Standard on Tenancy. This standard covers key elements of our role as a social landlord, such as complying with the Government's direction on rent setting and publishing policies on tenancy management. This standard also looks at how associations can help local authorities to deliver key elements of their housing function. This includes help with homelessness and nomination rights, which LMH has responsibility for within the city.

#### **What have we been doing?**

##### **Informing our tenants**

We recognise that the first step to empowering our tenants is to make sure that they have good information and are kept informed of what we are doing. We communicate with our tenants in a range of ways. Some of the ways we share information are more traditional, such as customer leaflets, policy documents, newsletters, and home visits. Other methods capture new technology and ways of doing things, such as the interactive website, email news bulletins, and text messaging, which we recognise is the preferred option for a lot of people.

Many of the ways we communicate have been introduced following consultation and feedback from our tenants. We have produced an updated version of our tenant handbook in DVD format and this will be distributed to all tenants in October, to coincide with the launch of our new Customer Services Centre. The DVD was developed with tenants, who helped to write and film it, and it sets out LMH's service standards.

### **Involving our tenants**

Our customer involvement team works closely with tenants and tenant groups in our communities. The team has been looking at how we can provide more opportunities for more people to get involved in a way that suits them. At our tenant event in the LACE centre in June, tenants put many ideas forward. These included having more open days, more links with local schools, and more publicity about our events. Our customer involvement team is now working on taking these ideas forward

A Customer Involvement Steering Group (CISG) has been established to oversee tenant involvement across all service areas and is made up of 25 tenant members. Through 2009 – 2010, the group has made a real difference to how we do things. It has asked other tenants about their experiences of the improvement programme and all feedback has been used to shape the service.

The group has also reviewed the repairs service, which has resulted in us making changes to the repairs call handling processes. It has also looked at our telephone service and proposed we have one Customer Service Centre, which we are now currently developing and this will be up and running in October 2010, with the extended opening hours of 8am to 6pm. All of which demonstrates how tenant feedback and opinion has been turned into real action and service changes for our customers.

This year LMH has also invested in a new software system (the Tenant Participation Tracker) which we are using to increase our knowledge of who wants to get involved and how. We have also been looking at how we can include opportunities for training, through a possible Tenants Academy, which would be open to all tenants. We would also like to set up a support forum for future tenant board members, to give them support and training to help them apply to join LMH's Board. All these ideas have been developed with our tenants, and we will update and advise tenants on how to get involved.

### **What is our focus for the future?**

#### **Improvements planned for Year 3**

We will work with our tenants to increase the number and diversity of people who get involved.

We will provide more tailored opportunities to support the different ways people want to get involved and we will consult with tenants to reorganise our involvement structures to support this.

We will work with existing groups in our communities to provide opportunities for more people to get involved, in a way that suits them.

We will put into action the ideas suggested by tenants for more open days, more links with local schools, and more publicity about our events.

## 2009/2010

(1) 68.8% of our tenants are satisfied that their views are being taken into account
(2) 75.6% of our tenants are satisfied with the overall services provided by LMH
(3) The direct cost to LMH for tenant involvement is £38.65 per property
(4) 78.7% of tenant complaints are resolved at stage one of the complaints procedure
(5) We have 2,817 subscribers to our different email news groups, which keep customers up to date on the things they are interested in
(6) Increased number of TRA's from 5 in 2008 to 22 in 2010

## **Section one: A focused approach**

### **Focus on Diversity**

We are dedicated to maintaining the principles of equality, diversity and inclusivity across everything we do.

#### **How does this link to the national standards?**

There is not one specific standard that covers diversity, as it runs through them all. Like the national standards, diversity is also embedded in all of our focus areas, but we have decided to still keep it as a focus area in its own right. Keeping a clear focus on equality and diversity means these principles are connected across the work we do and the services we provide.

#### **What have we been doing?**

##### **Championing equality and diversity**

We have both a senior executive member of staff and a member of the LMH Board, who have taken on the roles of diversity champions to make sure that this area is given the focus it deserves. This has led to the appointment of a specialist Equality and Diversity Manager and the work she is doing will help us to develop and focus our targets for improvement in the year ahead.

##### **Making it everyone's responsibility**

As well as the importance of champion roles, we believe it is the responsibility of everyone who works with our tenants, to have both the awareness and the training to achieve our aims and aspirations on equality and diversity. To make this a reality, we have introduced an equality and diversity training programme that is being delivered to all our board members, staff, partners and contractors.

##### **Collecting information**

To help us target and deliver our services in the best way possible, we are using a new system that helps us to collect profiling information about the age, gender, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, transgender status and race of our tenants. This information will be used to develop our services to meet emerging tenant requirements.

##### **Supporting partnerships and community projects**

We believe that understanding and responding to the diverse needs of our tenants, has to start with practical action. We have joined forces with other partners and specialists to make sure we are sharing good practice and developing the right opportunities. For example, we are members of the Housing Diversity Network, the North West Equality and Diversity Group, the Liverpool Equalities in Housing Group, the Hate Crime joint action group and we are Stonewall Diversity Champions.

We also provide financial support to local groups, such as the Merseyside Chinese Development Association, and we have sponsored Liverpool's Black History Month and Liverpool Pride. We have also just started working with Homotopia in Liverpool.

### **Learning from the experiences of our service users**

We have successfully achieved the Positive about Disabled People accreditation and we have completed a disability access audit with one of our disabled service users. We will use the information to improve our accessibility wherever we can.

### **What is our focus for the future?**

#### **Improvements planned for Year 3**

We will use the profiling information we collect to help us tailor our services across the different equality and diversity strands.

We will review the services available to our vulnerable customers.

We will deliver the Single Equality Scheme action plan, which is a public commitment of how LMH plans to meet the duties of equality legislation through good practice. This will run for three years from September 2010 to 2013.

We will continue to integrate equality and diversity into all our other focus areas. Many of the improvements we intend to make this year cut across other focus areas. For example, as part of our focus on customers, we will be working to get more tenants from diverse backgrounds involved, and will be implementing our youth strategy to engage young people.

## 2009/2010

(1) We have successfully achieved the Positive about Disabled People accreditation
(2) We have introduced a new profiling system that help us find out more about our tenants and tailor our services to their needs
(3) We launched our brand new Single Equality Scheme in September 2010 which will help us achieve greater equality for all our customers
(4) We have trained all our staff and contractors on our Equality & Diversity Handbook
(5) We use The Big Word translation service which provides 24 hour written, telephone and face to face interpreting in 234 languages
(6) We have sponsored Merseyside Black History Month for the last three years
(7) This year we are very proud to be official sponsors of Liverpool Pride and Homotopia
(8) We have developed easy read leaflets for customers who live in our supported housing accommodation
(9) We make sure older customers have access to advice and information about welfare benefits and income maximisation
(10) We have trained our staff and contractors to make sure they are aware of the cultural needs of people from different faiths

## **Section one: A focused approach**

### **Focus on Governance**

We make sure we run our affairs to the highest standard – it's as simple as that.

#### **How does this link to the national standards?**

##### **The National Standard for Governance and Financial Viability**

This standard outlines how we must adopt and comply with a code of governance, and that we can demonstrate clear reasons for our choice. Additionally, we must establish and maintain clear roles, responsibilities and accountabilities for the LMH Board, Chair and Chief Executive, and produce an annual assessment of the effectiveness of these arrangements. Our focus on governance covers the National Standard for Governance and Financial Viability.

#### **What have we been doing?**

##### **Setting a code of governance**

We have carried out an assessment against the National Housing Federation's Excellence in Governance Code and have decided to adopt this, as it is approved by the TSA and meets our needs. The code provides a framework for the LMH Board based on the principles of setting high standards, being open and accountable, taking account of equality and diversity, and putting customers first.

##### **Defining governance roles and responsibilities**

Our 15 board members are all subject to an appraisal process that feeds into a training and improvement plan. This plan makes a positive contribution to the personal development of members and to the LMH Board as a whole. Board vacancies have been filled in a timely manner and this year saw two new members who have added to the diversity of the group. Profiles of our board members can be found on [page x](#).

##### **Developing a new governance structure**

This year following a review of the LMH Board structure we made a number of changes, including moving to quarterly meetings and developing a committee to look at customer experience. We are also developing a tenant scrutiny panel, which will enable tenants to look closely at everything we do, and will become a formal part of our governance structure. To do this, we are working with a group of 22 tenants who have volunteered to help us set up the panel, define the terms of reference, and run the recruitment process.

### **Empowering tenant board members**

As a tenant-led organisation 8 of our 15 board members are tenants. We need to maintain a successful balance between retaining tenants on the board who have gained valuable experience and recruiting new members. We want to encourage more tenants to come forward and we are looking to set up a support forum for future tenant board members. The aim is to give individuals very specific training before standing for election, in an environment with other interested tenants who can support and encourage each other.

### **What is our focus for the future?**

#### **Improvements planned for Year 3**

We will further empower existing and future tenant board members through appraisals, training, and personal development opportunities.

We will implement the new LMH Board structure, including developing a scrutiny panel to make the governance process more effective.

We will aim to increase the shareholding membership by nearly 100%, from 63 members to 120 members.

## 2009/2010

(1) We have adopted the National Housing Federation's Excellence in Governance Code.
(2) We have been working with tenants to set up a scrutiny panel.
(3) We increased shareholder membership from 24 to 66
(4) 3 tenant Board members were awarded accreditation in Governance from LMH 2008-2009 and 3 more in 2009-2010
(5) 1 tenant board member passed the institute of housing exams in 2009-2010
(6) Board members attended programme of training delivered by Campbell Tickell together with Away days with Executive Annual board members conference and CIH housing conference
(7) All internal audits completed

## **Section one: A focused approach**

### **Focus on Homes**

We have worked with our tenants to create the LMH standard for our homes, which far exceeds the Decent Homes Standard. The quality of our tenants' homes is at the heart of everything we do.

### **How does this link to the national standards?**

#### **The National Standard for Homes**

This standard is all about the quality of accommodation that must be provided. It also outlines our responsibility for delivering repairs, maintenance and adaptations services that meet the needs of tenants. Our focus on homes covers the National Standard for Homes.

### **What have we been doing?**

#### **Setting high quality standards**

We have continued to deliver our improvement programme and used savings from procurement to bring forward our improvement work. This will now enable us to achieve full compliance before the 2013 target.

We agreed with our tenants that we would go beyond the Decent Homes Standard and deliver the higher LMH standard for our homes and we have completed an updated stock condition check this year, to make sure the investment programme remains up to date and relevant. We have also been involving tenants in developing local programmes and standards.

#### **Improving the repairs and maintenance service**

This year's value for money plan has seen us focus on ensuring minimum cost per repair through greater efficiency, whilst at the same time still delivering a higher standard of quality for our tenants.

Our customer focus group on repairs has met several times this year to review our standards and the service we deliver and their feedback is invaluable in helping us to continually look at ways of delivering the best service possible.

We took on board their recent feedback on the post-repair inspection service, which was being carried out by our repairs contractor. In response to this feedback, we have taken this inspection function away from the contractor and brought it back into LMH to allow more scrutiny.

At our tenants' consultation event in June we asked our tenants to identify priorities for local offers on repairs and improvements. They told us what they wanted to see as priorities and there was a specific demand for reducing the repeat visits to resolve a repair, so we are now working on attaining a 'first time fix' approach.

### **Advancing the adaptations service**

Due to efficiencies in other parts of the business, and the fact that meeting the needs of vulnerable tenants is a key priority of ours, we have been able to allocate an additional £0.5 million to fund additional disabled adaptations work. This effectively doubles the budget for this year and means we will be able to carry out significantly more adaptations work than originally planned.

### **What is our focus for the future?**

#### **Improvements planned for Year 3**

We will develop a local offer for repairs that links the repairs service directly with the tenant inspector role.

We will develop a local offer around more consultation locally on the improvement programme, with more local involvement in overseeing the work.

We will develop a local offer as part of our investment review group, taking account of elderly and vulnerable customers needs and asking service users to test the adaptations we provide.

## 2009/2010

(1) 69.6% of our tenants are satisfied with the repairs and maintenance service
(2) 64.6% of LMH properties now meet the Decent Homes Standard, compared to 51.3% for the previous year
(3) 76.7% of our tenants are satisfied with the overall quality of their home
(4) 87.6% of repairs are completed on time, an increase on the previous year's 78.6%
(5) The average number of days it takes to let a property is 35.25 days, compared to 43.23 days for the previous year
(6) 3,757 bathroom improvements have been made
(7) 5,739 central heating systems have been installed
(8) 3,715 kitchen improvements have been made
(9) 13,219 new doors have been fitted
(10) 6,564 double glazing installations have been carried out

## **Section one: A focused approach**

### **Focus on Improvement**

We are committed to investing in the people and systems that will help us improve services for all our tenants.

#### **How does this link to the national standards?**

Although this focus area doesn't cover a specific standard, we believe the concept of improvement runs through all the national standards. Improvement is about working with tenants to identify where our services could be better and then making sure we make these improvements happen. It also allows us to focus on making sure we deliver on our transfer promises, in particular our promise to improve homes to meet the LMH standard.

#### **What have we been doing?**

##### **Reviewing and improving services**

We have a dedicated team who carry out reviews of services with the aim of improving performance and efficiency, and ultimately increasing customer satisfaction rates. This year we also purchased a new computer programme to help us to monitor and manage our performance and produce easy to read reports to inform and focus our staff.

We also keep our tenants informed on how we are performing through many communication methods, including reports to the LMH Board, presentations to tenants groups, regular newsletters, our interactive website, email news bulletins and displays in the reception areas of our local offices.

This year in conjunction with tenants, and supported by external specialists, we have carried out a full review of a number of our services. As a result we have made significant improvements, including reducing the length of time properties are empty when tenants leave, increasing the amount of rent collected, reducing the length of time tenants wait for repairs to be completed, and increasing our investment in anti-social behaviour services and involvement initiatives. Not only has this increased tenant satisfaction, but by improving performance we are also making sure we provide value for money.

##### **Comparing ourselves to others**

We have researched the types of services that organisations who are considered to be excellent provide. We have then used this information to put plans in place to provide at least the same, or even better, levels of service for tenants of LMH.

We believe that it is important to compare our performance with other housing providers and share this information with our tenants. We are a member of Housemark, an organisation that collects performance, cost and tenant satisfaction information from many different landlords, and compares them to each other. There will be an update on this comparison information following the publication of a report by Housemark later in the year.

### **Using customer feedback**

Last year we carried out our first overall tenant satisfaction survey (STATUS). The results showed a significant improvement in satisfaction since the last time the survey was done, which was in 2006 and before the transfer to LMH.

	<b>2006</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>% change</b>
Overall satisfaction with services provided by the landlord	54%	75.6%	+40%
Overall satisfaction with repairs and maintenance	50%	69.6%	+39%
Overall satisfaction with views being taken into account	45%	68.8%	+53%

The survey gave us good information from tenants on where we could improve our services. Tenants told us that they did not always receive a consistent or accurate response to their enquiries. As a result we have purchased a computer software system that clearly sets out all our service procedures for staff, in order to ensure our tenants are given the correct response to their enquiry. We have also installed equipment that records calls made to our call centre, so that we can check the quality of the service given over the phone and use this to improve the service and train staff.

Tenants also told us that we were not managing our complaints service well enough and not identifying where the same service failures were being repeated. In response to this we have purchased a complaints management system that helps us monitor how we deal with complaints and makes it easier to identify the issues that are causing tenant dissatisfaction. We have already seen some improvements and we are going to make our complaints service a continued priority for further improvement this year.

### **Making best use of information technology**

We have continued to develop our website with tenants to ensure they find it useful and informative. We have increased the services available online and made it as interactive as possible. We have also held a focus group with tenants to review the website and they have identified a number of improvements which we will be taking forward this year.

We have also developed a staff intranet, which will significantly improve communication within the organisation and make staff better informed to respond to tenant enquiries.

We know many of our tenants use mobile phones, so we have run a pilot scheme using text messaging as a way of communicating with tenants around rent payments. Feedback from tenants has been very positive and it has shown an improvement in communication, so this will now be developed further.

## **What is our focus for the future?**

### **Improvements planned for Year 3**

We will collect even more feedback from our tenants and make sure they have an even bigger role in checking and scrutinizing our performance.

We will make sure we are making the best use of the investments we have made in technology and ensure that we can demonstrate to tenants that this is improving the services they receive from us.

We will carry out a review of our welfare benefit service to ensure that it continues to provide value for money.

We will invest further in technology to support staff working away from the office, so they can access all the same information they could if they were sat at their desks. This will improve the service we can give to tenants in their own homes or out in the neighbourhood.

## 2009/2010

(1) Out of the 143 complaints received, 85.9% were responded to within the target time of 10 days.
(2) Of all the complaints received last year 50% of complaints were about our repairs and improvement service, 11% about our service when letting homes and the remainder of complaints were spread evenly across other services areas.
(3) Raised and improved housing management contract arrangements
(4) Investment in IT to improve services that are important to tenants
(5) Customer service excellence award achieved
(6) Improvement plans in place for all services in response to tenant feedback and priorities

## **Section one: A focused approach**

### **Focus on Partnerships**

We are committed to working with partner organisations to improve the quality of housing, neighbourhoods and employment prospects for our tenants and the wider community. We are proud of our role as a major influencer at local, regional and national levels

#### **How does this link to the national standards?**

Although this focus area doesn't cover a national standard, we believe creating effective partnerships is crucial to both our success and to the national standards. For example, the National Standard for Tenancy relies on working in partnership with local authorities to help them fulfil their strategic housing function, and the National Standard for Neighbourhood and Community is based on local area cooperation.

#### **What have we been doing?**

##### **Building national, regional and local partnerships**

As a social landlord we have a large number of formal partnerships with the TSA, Liverpool City Council, the Strategic Housing Partnership, our lenders, contractors and many other national and regional agencies. However, as an organisation that works in almost every part of the city, we have also developed a range of local neighbourhood and community partnerships. These help us to be much more than just a landlord and contribute to the social wellbeing of our tenants and the communities they live in.

##### **Nurturing neighbourhood partnerships**

Within LMH's five neighbourhood management areas, our housing teams work closely with the council's teams and we are represented on the Neighbourhood Partnership working groups. We work together to develop safer communities, stimulate economic development, and support social enterprise. We contribute to 'your Community Matters' events and we help to give a voice to local people in determining their priorities.

##### **Developing neighbourhood plans**

Our 29 neighbourhood plans were produced as a direct result of working in close partnership with our tenants and the neighbourhood groups. The plans identify the interventions needed in each neighbourhood and are supported with intervention funding. We recognise that these plans will only be successful if all the partners in each neighbourhood work together to make the changes needed.

##### **Celebrating contractor and supplier partnerships**

Delivering the substantial repair and improvement work on our tenants' homes successfully in such a short period couldn't be achieved without the co-operation of our contractor and supplier partners. The scope and specification of this work is unparalleled in the social housing sector. Our aim is to deliver

not only the physical regeneration of our properties, but also employment opportunities and economic sustainability locally. Our successful partnership with Kinetics Group on the repair and maintenance contract was recognised when we won the Housing Excellence Partnering Scheme of the Year Award.

## **What is our focus for the future?**

### **Improvements planned for Year 3**

We will continue to investigate potential partnerships wherever we can add value for our tenants.

We will develop a community regeneration strategy with Liverpool First partners, focusing on joint projects that will deliver positive benefits for tenants.

We will seek to increase the funding from external agencies to support more partnership activities in our neighbourhoods.

## 2009/2010

(1) We won the Housing Excellence Partnering Scheme of the Year Award for our successful partnership with Kinetics Group on the repair and maintenance contract.
(2) Estate impact days delivered with partners to improve neighbourhoods
(3) Apprentice programme in partnership with repairs partners to employ local people
(4) Working with LCC, English churches and YMCA to support vulnerable people to maintain their tenancy

## **Section one: A focused approach**

### **Focus on Viability and Value for Money**

We take our duties to deliver efficiency savings, secure value for money, and improve the service we provide tenants very seriously, and this is reflected in the robust procurement processes we have in place.

#### **How does this link to the national standards?**

##### **The National Standard for Viability and Value for Money**

This standard outlines how we must ensure that we have effective controls, systems, and financial plans in place to manage our risks and demonstrate value for money. Our focus on viability and value for money covers the National Standard for Viability and Value for Money.

#### **What have we been doing?**

##### **Delivering our promises**

We have out-performed our annual business plan and we are well on track in delivering our five-year aims. We have identified and made cost-savings that have enabled us to deliver a higher quality service, whilst managing and controlling the associated risks.

For example, the recruitment of our own in-house graphic designer to produce service promotional materials has generated cost savings of £40,000, which will part-finance the proposed Customer Service Centre.

The financial information on [page x](#) shows how we are doing against some of our key performance indicators.

##### **Ensuring value for money**

We have continued to deliver the value for money strategy that was developed in 2008. We have carried out value for money assessments and these have made a big difference financially and for our tenants. For example, we completed a review of the Income Service, which has led to the centralisation of the income collection team and changes to our direct debit supplier, which has reduced cost and increased customer satisfaction. Direct debit payment dates have now been increased from two payment dates to any date a tenant prefers, with a variety of options on payment frequency.

There is still work to be done to embed value for money into our culture. In assessing our performance against the national standard requirements, we have identified areas where we can do much more to ensure we demonstrate to tenants how we have achieved value for money.

## **What is our focus for the future?**

### **Improvements planned for Year 3**

We will continue to implement the value for money plan, which includes targets for cost or time reductions, such as avoiding repeat visits for the same repair.

We will continue to develop the value for money ethos within LMH's culture and operations.

We will record and provide evidence of all our cost savings that have been reallocated to improve services.

We will invest £100,000 to support the delivery of the neighbourhood plans, which have been developed with close consultation with tenants.

We will involve tenants in our value for money reviews and use tenant feedback to agree priorities.

We will ensure tenants are able to influence our services and receive reports on how we have delivered value for money savings in practice.

## 2009/2010

(1) The direct cost to LMH for housing management is £325.11 per property
(2) The rent loss due to void properties is £1.078 mil
(3) 100.03% of rent has been collected
(4) The current rent arrears are £3,399,364
(5) The direct cost to LMH for responsive repairs and void works is £916.15 per property, compared to £1,211.18 for the previous year
(6) An additional £1.6m has been invested in the disabled adaptations work after consideration of tenant requirements
(7) The recruitment of a graphic designer to produce service promotional materials has generated cost savings of £40,000, which will part-finance the proposed Customer Service Centre.

## **Section two: A local approach**

### **Delivering locally tailored services**

#### **The national standards**

The TSA has placed a strong focus on how national standards should be turned into 'local offers'. The aim of these local offers is to encourage services to be tailored to the needs of a specific group of tenants or a particular geographical area.

We have an established track record in tailoring our services to local needs and this local approach has been key from day one. Section two (page x) of this report shows what we are doing across our focus areas to develop more local offers and to make sure that even more tenants, from all areas, are involved. We are now working on developing additional local offers to those we already provide.

#### **What we mean by local**

Tenants have been asking us what we mean by 'local', as most people would see it being to do with a local area. Local can refer to a geographical area, but in terms of delivering services, it also means a local grouping of people. This could include people such as the elderly or vulnerable, who in certain circumstances benefit from a different type of service that it bespoke to their needs.

#### **Building foundations**

Over the past five years, LMH has worked with tenants to shape plans and design services to meet our tenants' needs. We have listened to what tenants say and as a result have tailored services where we can to respond to local needs. We do of course have to make sure that what we do is an appropriate use of our funds and is good value for money.

In meeting the TSA agenda to develop locally tailored services, we started by identifying the local services that we already offer and asking tenants what else they would like to see us develop. We have also talked to Liverpool City Council about how LMH, and other local landlords, can deliver local offers together for the benefit of all residents in a neighbourhood. This is particularly important when dealing with anti-social behaviour. We believe that it should not matter who the landlord is, the response should be equally as good.

At a joint workshop with the council in August, we discussed how we could further develop local offers over the coming months, and we agreed that the first local offer that we will develop together is one based on communication. In each neighbourhood there are many different organisations and agencies that are delivering excellent projects and developing new and different ways of working. However, sometimes there is either a lack of communication, or a repeat of information being produced and overloading local residents. We will explore ways of rationalising the flow of information and joining resources to

communicate better with residents and direct them to the services that will support them and their families.

From an improved communication offer, that would see partners using resources together, we would then aim to use this as a foundation for developing further joint local offers.

### **Developing local offers**

Following consultation through customer steering group meetings and focus groups, we set up a tenant consultation event based on developing local offers and considering new ways for tenants to get involved.

The event saw 42 tenants attend and work with LMH staff, to consider a new type of involvement structure that includes a scrutiny panel, and to look at the three standards covering:

- Tenant involvement and empowerment
- Home
- Neighbourhood and community

The local offers that tenants would like to work on developing are covered below. Tenants also prioritised the offers, according to which they would like to see developed first.

### **Priority local offers**

These have been defined as the priority local offers, and will be the ones we will work with tenants to have in place by 1 April 2011:

- **Tenant involvement and empowerment:** more consultation locally around the improvement programme, with local involvement in overseeing the work.
- **Home:** review of standards for repairs service, with the involvement of tenants and linking with the tenant inspector role.
- **Neighbourhood and community:** all partners and agencies working together in neighbourhoods to tackle anti-social behaviour, in the best way for the community.

### **Other local offers**

All of the ideas that were being put forward as potential local offers were felt to be important. These will form the basis of further consultation and development over the next year, and include:

- Delivering better communication about how to get involved locally
- Establishing links to local services and schools
- Running open days and events in local areas
- Introducing service delivery surgeries
- Holding less formal events and more 'festival' type of events
- Raising awareness of environmental issues and estate clean-ups/impact days

- Engaging the community
- Setting up youth based activities and a youth strategy
- Encouraging cultural awareness within and between communities
- Reviewing the investment specification, taking account of elderly and vulnerable customer needs in creating 'Homes For Life' and use these service users to test provision such as adaptations
- Introducing tailored services, such as a gardening service for vulnerable customers

## **Roles and responsibilities**

Through the local consultation event and our other involvement groups, we have identified a group of tenants who have volunteered to work with us to ensure the development of local offers involves tenants at all stages. We are also planning to engage with local communities and groups, who will have the opportunity to shape the local offers that are directed at them personally.

Senior staff members have been assigned responsibility for the priority local offers. They will work with tenants to develop these, ready for implementation on 1 April 2011. We will use these three priority offers as pilots to learn lessons and develop the best approach, before moving onto the other local offers that tenants identified as their priorities after April.

Once we have developed our local offers with tenants, we will publish them in April as part of a revised offer document. Over the next few months we will report progress on how we are doing through our website and our newsletters.

More detailed information about how we are doing against the national standards can be found in the section, 'Taking a close look: how we are performing against the TSA standards' on [page x](#).

## **Section three: A shared approach**

### **Encouraging tenant scrutiny**

#### **The national standards**

The standards place importance on involving tenants through a tenant scrutiny body. Getting tenants involved has always been a key priority for us and we are now working on developing a scrutiny panel as part of our assessment of our involvement structures.

#### **Getting tenants involved**

Over the summer we met with tenant groups and arranged special tenant consultation events to check how tenants want to be involved in developing a scrutiny panel. Tenants told us about the terms of reference they would like to see, how many tenants should be on a scrutiny panel, and how members should be recruited. Involving tenants in how we should develop the scrutiny role has helped us to shape the process, and to set a timetable for moving forward.

Tenants have also told us how they would like to see more tenants involved from different neighbourhoods and with different backgrounds. Feedback has also highlighted that we need to involve more young people in our processes. We have plans to develop these solutions over the coming months, as outlined in our focus on customers section of the report ([page x](#)).

#### **Our focus on scrutiny**

A tenant scrutiny panel will have the job of checking that we do deliver what we say we will, and will have powers to call us to account where we fail to do what we say. The scrutiny panel is seen as a key part of our move to tenant-led self-regulation in the future.

The scrutiny panel will be part of our governance structure and will have real teeth to challenge and change things on behalf of tenants. Details of how to apply to be on the tenant scrutiny panel, or on any other group within our involvement structure, are listed on our website. As this work progresses we will publish more information about how it will work and how you can get involved.

More detailed information about how we are doing against the national standards can be found in the section, 'Taking a close look: how we are performing against the TSA standards' on [page x](#).

## Section four: A measured approach

What we achieved in 2009 - 2010

### 2009/10 Income and Expenditure Account

#### A comparison with the previous financial year

A record of the income received and expenditure incurred during 2009/10. This does not include investment activity which is shown in the balance sheet

	201	2008/09
	(£,000)	(£,000)
Income	68,452	60,910
Operating costs		
Exceptional	0	-16,955
Standard	-86,009	-69,099
Surplus on Right to Buy	251	792
Interest payable on loans	-1,555	-354
Other financing costs	-231	-165
	<b>-19,092</b>	<b>-24,871</b>
Pension Fund - 2008/09 actuarial loss (-) or gain (+)	-4,092	1,541
Stock revaluation adjustments	42	0
<b>Total Deficit for the year</b>	<b>-23,142</b>	<b>-23,330</b>

### 2009/10 Balance Sheet

A record of what assets LMH owns at the end of the financial year and how these assets have been financed

	2009/10	2008/09
	(£,000)	restated (£,000)
<b>What we owe</b>		
Housing Properties	127,000	78,500
Information technology assets, office fixture and fittings	924	761
Cash and money we are owed less money we owe	-23,860	-18,714
	<b>104,064</b>	<b>60,547</b>
<b>Financed by</b>		
Long term borrowing	32,719	12,634
Net pension liability	5,973	1,592
Negative goodwill on transfer	50,067	50,783
Revaluation reserve	61,777	18,868
Reserve - revenue deficit	-46,472	-23,330
	<b>104,064</b>	<b>60,547</b>

LMH's Statutory Accounts are available on request.

Number of staff by salary range

SALARY	2008-2009	2009-2010
60K+	8	8
40 – 60K	20	15
20 – 40K	173	200
-20K	53	37

## Average Rent Charged by Property Type

	<b>LMH</b>	<b>OVH</b>	<b>KHT</b>	<b>HALTON</b>	<b>WIRRAL</b>	<b>HELENA</b>
<b>BEDSIT</b>	<b>£50.60</b>	£41.84	N/A	N/A	£48.57	£53.71
<b>1 BEDROOM</b>	<b>£58.29</b>	£51.14	£60.49	£59.02	£57.07	£61.92
<b>2 BEDROOM</b>	<b>£65.67</b>	£57.65	£69.25	£66.66	£65.20	£69.17
<b>3 BEDROOM</b>	<b>£69.10</b>	£67.20	£72.64	£71.43	£72.06	£74.05
<b>4 BEDROOM</b>	<b>£76.25</b>	£72.99	£74.34	£77.91	£79.73	£77.74
<b>5 BEDROOM</b>	<b>£77.77</b>	£72.46	£87.68	£80.72	£78.27	£85.41
<b>6+ BEDROOM</b>	<b>£87.35</b>	£78.97	£125.64	N/A	£107.18	£98.19

	BEDSIT	1 BEDROOM	2 BEDROOM	3 BEDROOM	4 BEDROOM	5 BEDROOM	6+ BEDROOM
No. of LMH Properties (General Needs)	105	3,097	3,068	7,349	617	11	4

## **Section four: A measured approach**

### **The Board**

Insert the board photos and profile spread

## **Section four: A measured approach**

### **The Area Boards**

**Insert the area board information spread**

## **Section four: A measured approach**

The Executive Management Team

Insert the EMT photos and profile spread