



# ANNUAL REPORT 2012

# Welcome to the CityWest Homes annual report 2012

We have celebrated many successes over the past year. By keeping our corporate values at the core of everything we do, we are truly on our way to becoming the leading provider of housing services.

Amongst our many achievements this year, CityWest Homes attained Gold status in Investors in People. We achieved further recognition with our entry into the Sunday Times Top 100 list, this year jumping all the way from 61 to 18. We also won a National Federation of ALMOs Award for the 'Most outstanding resident' category and were shortlisted in the Sustainable Housing Awards 2011. For the fifth year in a row, we continue to be the only social housing provider to wave the Green Flag Award.

As we provide housing services to 22,000 properties on behalf of Westminster City Council, it's important that we keep residents at the heart of everything we do. This has seen overall satisfaction with our service increase every year. In 2011-12 we achieved 79% – our highest yet. Satisfaction with our repairs is consistently high too, reaching 94% overall and 99.4% for keeping appointments.

Our other successes over the past twelve months include establishing four area service centres, which bring specialist housing services such as housing management, repairs, better homes and resident engagement closer to our residents. They also provide all our usual housing services, from complex anti-social behaviour cases to debt and financial advice.

To further encourage resident engagement, we introduced a resident engagement structure made up of four area management committees. The committees are made up of local residents who meet to decide service priorities and ensure that we're tackling issues of concern. In addition, we have actively encouraged tenant involvement by developing a complaints process which has received accreditation from Housemark.

With fuel poverty high on the UK agenda in 2011, we delivered a city-wide 'economy heating campaign'. Working with Westminster City Council, we gave fuel poverty advice to 500 residents. We also addressed sustainability by installing 2,022 new photovoltaic (PV) panels on 49 blocks city wide. The PV panels are expected to save residents in these blocks an estimated £600,000 off their services charge bills over the next 25 years.

Using innovative solutions and the latest in design, we delivered the first new council housing in Westminster for 30 years through our 'community build' programme. The programme has transformed under-used and redundant spaces into quality homes for families, as well as developing two brand-new, eco-friendly and sustainable homes. These were allocated to two severely overcrowded families in Queen's Park. The project signalled our commitment to build new homes which are sustainable for the future.

The 'community build' programme is part of Westminster City Council's house building programme. It will see new affordable homes in Westminster as part of the council's initiative to help tackle overcrowding. We look forward to taking these exciting projects forward in 2012-2013 and finding ways to benefit the local community in Westminster.

**It has been with your continued support over the past year that we've been able to achieve so much. I'd like to thank our residents, board members, employees and strategic partners for supporting us and we look forward to working with you over the coming years.**

**Mark Hoyland**  
Chief executive



# All about the customer

Teams across CityWest Homes were very busy working on a series of projects called Customer Excellence – a new and exciting programme to deliver a quality service to all our customers.

Customer Excellence aimed to improve and streamline services, encouraging customers to get more involved in their housing service and to save money. The project included:

- **Splitting up Westminster into four service areas, each with its own service centre, where residents can access newer, improved services such as debt and financial advice and help tackling anti-social behaviour problems**
- **A new provider partnership, reducing four providers to one, saving £1million this year alone**
- **The refurbishment of 18 local estate offices, creating a more welcoming environment for residents**
- **A complete review and restructure of resident consultation, resulting in the set up of four area management committees who also have access to up to £40,000 in 'community chests' to spend on helping local community groups**

- **A new cleaning and grounds maintenance contract saving £1.5million over five years**
- **A central repairs call centre service which has increased repairs satisfaction to 92% in 2011.**

In 2011-12 we achieved 86% overall tenant satisfaction, with our service and repairs satisfaction reaching 94% overall and 99.4% for keeping appointments. However, there are areas for improvement, particularly in providing services to leaseholders. The next five years will be dedicated to improving this.

After consultation by Westminster City Council, residents also agreed to keep CityWest Homes as their housing provider. The council then renewed our management agreement to continue to provide housing management services to Westminster residents. This is a particular achievement and endorsement of our work at a time when many ALMOs, especially in London, are being brought back in-house by their parent councils.



## Gold star case study – building great communities

The pressure on housing services was a key topic this year with the list of people needing housing growing ever longer. In an area like Westminster, one of the biggest single challenges is actually finding suitable sites in the first place as land is at such a premium. We identify and use every nook and cranny, redundant scrap of tarmac or unused garage on our own land to build on.

Our community build programme delivered the first new homes for social rent in Westminster for a generation in early 2011. The first scheme transformed under-used and often problematic redundant spaces under tower blocks into 14 good quality homes for local families.

A very special achievement was the development of two brand-new, four-bedroom, eco-friendly and sustainable homes, built by CityWest Homes and allocated to two severely overcrowded families in Queen's Park.

Our partnership with Westminster Community Homes means that we can ensure that families in need are getting into their new accommodation quickly and with little impact on their home life.

The project shows that we are committed to building new homes and making sure they are sustainable for the future.

Queen's Park resident Rhoda Abdullahi (pictured receiving keys from Councillor Jonathan Glanz), who has six children, was given one of the two large new homes which she was thrilled with. She said: "I get to stay in my local area and the children don't need to move schools. I didn't tell them we were moving so when we walked in, they all cried they were so happy. Our home is so amazing, we are very happy here."

# A great place to work

"I feel CityWest Homes is a good place to work because of its ambition and enthusiasm to improve and become the leading housing management organisation. I find that goal exciting and enjoy being part of a company that is striving to be the best"

**Source: Your say survey 2011**

Our people are our greatest asset at CityWest Homes. Year on year, they have been instrumental in our achievements and 2011 saw our workforce increase by a third following changes to the way we deliver our services.

In line with our commitment to development, 32 of our people were promoted internally in 2011-12. We also continue to support individuals in achieving Chartered Institute of Housing qualifications and 12 members of staff have already enrolled on the programme. A further 13 have now completed NVQ qualifications.

## **Gold Investors in People award**

We were thrilled to achieve Investors in People (IIP) Gold status. This is the highest possible level, putting CityWest Homes in the top 3% of organisations in the UK to have been awarded this prestigious accolade.

**"82% of staff say their contribution to the organisation is valued"**

**"91 % of our staff are proud to work at CityWest Homes"**

We obtained high results in many of the areas of the IIP assessment. In particular, the assessors felt that senior managers at CityWest Homes have made direct links between learning and development which can benefit our residents. These include our customer care activities which have led to a considerable reduction in complaints. The relocation of our staff to the new area service centres has also improved resident satisfaction, and we will be looking for more ways to help benefit our residents and increase satisfaction even further in 2012-2013.

## **Sunday Times Top 100**

We once again made it into the Sunday Times 100 Best companies to work for list, with a significant leap from 61 in 2011 to number 18 in 2012. Our people responded positively in the areas which focused on how they felt about their teams, how CityWest Homes supports their personal growth and development, and leadership.



**“81% of our staff  
love working at  
CityWest Homes”**

## **Case study – Promoting the growth of our people**

Chris Richardson joined CityWest Homes in 2007 as a senior leasehold income officer. He recently completed his Master of Business Administration (MBA) and is now working as an energy strategy manager.

“I’d been in my former role for a while and wanted to give myself the best opportunity to develop my career and move into management. CityWest Homes helped me to realise my aspirations by supporting my learning and development, contributing to the cost of my MBA, giving me time off for studies and allowing me access to information needed to complete a number of projects on my course. I was able to utilise the learning gained and give back to the organisation by basing my final project on a business need.

CityWest Homes is a great company to work for. They promote the learning and development of its people so everyone has a chance to grow. I’m really pleased that I can use the management theories learned on my MBA in my new role and contribute to the success of the organisation.”

CityWest Homes is a great company to work for. It promotes the learning and development of its people so everyone has a chance to grow.”

# Keeping our promises

Over the past twelve months, we have had some real successes in ensuring our estates are a safe and welcoming environment for our residents. Our key achievements include:

During the London riots last summer, our estate-based youth clubs proved to be an incredible asset. Working with over 30 young people from three youth clubs in Ebury Bridge, Churchill Gardens and Lillington and Longmoore, we developed an action plan to ensure CityWest Homes maintained a service to the young people on our estates. By working closely with parents to offer support and keep the youth clubs open late, we ensured young people had a safe environment to go to.

We further advised parents through reassurance and advice messages sent to them via text messaging and social media. This method of communication has been widely praised by residents, Police and the housing sector.

With over 1,000 applicants with priority for re-housing in Westminster, we can't afford to have tenants illegally subletting their flats for profit. Before 2011-12, we carried out annual tenancy checks on 10% of our stock (about 2,200 properties) to find illegal subletters. This year we increased the annual target to a third of our stock (about 7,260 properties), with the aim to check 100% of our stock within three years.

Our anti-social behaviour specialists are now established in each of our four area service centres, providing a dedicated resource tackling ASB through casework management and partnerships with the police and council. Residents continue to see the benefits of this co-ordinated and pro-active approach.

We have focused our attentions on households that are causing a menace to the wider community through anti-social behaviour, violence and other threatening activities. We aim to be fair but firm with families who consistently cause trouble and refuse the help that is available to them. This is to ensure our response is as robust as possible and sends out a clear message to our residents that ASB will not be tolerated.

Eviction of problem families is only used as a very last resort after all other options and offers of help have been exhausted. In most cases, the council's range of intervention programmes can offer families a way out of a life of crime and anti-social behaviour, including its Family Recovery Programme and the Your Choice gangs strategy.



## Gold star case study – taking a stand against anti-social behaviour

Last year, Marie Froggatt, a resident of CityWest Homes-managed Soho and Covent Garden estate, bravely stood up for her neighbours. She took action when the residents of William Blake House were suffering extreme anti-social behaviour from a tenant. There were visitors to the building causing serious problems with drugs, prostitution and vandalism. While many complaints had been made about the activities, residents were afraid to come forward and go to court, especially as many of them have families or are vulnerable tenants.

Marie said: “My reason for taking the initiative and getting involved was that residents felt threatened in their own homes. In this building there are young families and elderly, vulnerable people. I wanted to ensure that people, especially the vulnerable, are

looked after. Why should we be terrified in our own homes? It was scary stepping forward, but it had to be done.”

Working closely with the police and CityWest Homes, Marie helped to gather crucial evidence which she then gave in court in person.

The police advised that Marie’s courageous stand and tireless efforts were crucial in the successful removal of the tenant.

Marie has been shortlisted for two national awards for her courage and commitment to helping her local community. These include the ‘Inspirational tenant/resident of the year’ category in the UK Housing Heroes Award and ‘Resident of the year’ in the National Federation of ALMOs Award.

# Responsible with money

Fuel poverty was high on the UK agenda in 2011 and we used our position as an ALMO to obtain funding and grants to help our customers through a particularly difficult financial time.

We obtained funding to provide fuel poverty advice in the home to 500 residents, including looking at whether they are on the right tariffs, providing free gadgets to help them reduce their consumption and doing an assessment of their home.

Our city-wide economy heating campaign provided advice and information on how to save energy and manage rising fuel costs. It also included grant signposting, demonstrations of energy saving devices at local events, and give-aways such as temperature gauges, scarves, hats and hot soup.

We continued to successfully obtain grants for upgrading boilers, heating systems and insulating homes to make them more energy efficient. Last year we spent £2.9million on these improvements and will be spending a further £1.3million this year.

We will continue to explore the possibility of solar panel installations during 2012 as well as many other energy saving initiatives, such as LED lighting and communal heat and power.

In the long term future, we hope to install more innovative solutions like this to tackle fuel poverty and provide our residents with homes which are cost effective, comfortable and sustainable.

## Other annual highlights

- **CityWest Homes' fee to the council for managing Westminster estates reduced by over £1million in the last three years. This demonstrates that we have been able to deliver an excellent service for less money.**
- **We were able to pilot our own complaints process, bringing the three stage process down to two stages. The approximate cost of a formal complaint is £285, and we expect the new process will bring cost savings as well as faster complaints resolution for residents.**



## Gold star case study – installing solar panels across our estates

Our solar panel project installed 2,022 new photovoltaic (PV) panels, worth almost £1.3million on 49 blocks city wide. The PV panels will help residents save money by feeding electricity to the building's communal areas during the day. This means using daylight to power lights, lifts, alarms and door entry systems. It is expected to save residents in these blocks an estimated £600,000 off their services charge bills over the next 25 years.

The PV panels are expected to produce approximately 9 million kilo watts of electricity. This is enough to power a fridge, microwave and dishwasher non-stop for 371 years. They will also reduce carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions by approximately 4,500 tonnes.

The project will help meet Westminster City Council's carbon reduction targets in London to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> over the coming years.

# Finding better ways

Leading through creativity and innovation, we develop new projects and methods which will provide our residents with the best possible service.

## A centralised repairs service

In 2011 we reorganised our award winning repairs and maintenance team into one, centralised call centre. This way we have been able to give our residents a more efficient, streamlined and cost effective service.

Since its launch, the call centre has taken over 80,000 resident's calls and works to resolve over 7,000 repairs calls a month. When residents were surveyed on the performance of the call centre, it obtained a fantastic satisfaction result of 94% overall and 99.4% for keeping appointments.

## The latest in retrofit design

CityWest Homes officially opened the doors in June 2011 to our first 'Retrofit for the Future' home. Our house at 88 Lothrop Street, on the Mozart estate, Queens Park, has been fitted with the latest technology to help cut the carbon emissions of the house by 80%. This will help reduce fuel costs for the occupants while leading the way to a greener future for housing.

The exciting project was part of a £10million 'Retrofit for the Future' competition, launched in 2009, by the Technology Strategy Board. Number 88 Lothrop Street was allocated £150,000 for its own eco-makeover and is the first project of its kind for CityWest Homes.

The latest in eco-design includes energiKare Legacy vacuum double glazing, a 'Combined Heat and Power Unit', the latest LED lighting and the innovative Wattbox controller, which learns the occupants' behaviour patterns. By memorising their patterns, it can automatically control the electricity and hot water, making it easy to use and more efficient in heat and power consumption.

88 Lothrop Street will be monitored over the next two years to see how successful the technology has been and if it will be possible to introduce it to more social homes in Westminster.



## Gold star case study – still waving the green flag

Lillington and Longmoore estate, Pimlico was once again recognised as one of the best parks in the country in 2011. For the fifth year in a row, they were awarded the prestigious Green Flag award, a sign to visitors that the park is well-maintained and managed, with excellent facilities. To date, CityWest Homes is still the only social housing provider to wave the Green Flag.

Alison Weller, green spaces manager, CityWest Homes, said: “I am proud of the work the green spaces team has put in over the years to achieve the award. This means we have the same high standards as many other green spaces across the country. Our team will

continue to work to meet the many criteria specified by the award, such as encouraging community participation and biodiversity.”

Phil Barton, Green Flag Plus Partnership chairman said: “I would like to congratulate this year’s winners, who have worked hard throughout the year to keep their parks and green spaces at a high standard and ensure they are pleasant and enjoyable spaces for the whole community.

The Green Flag Award Scheme, and its growth, is essential in driving up the standards of our parks and green spaces. Access to quality green space is something we all desire and the scheme plays a key role in providing it.”

# CityWest Homes board of directors



## **Adam Humphryes**

Chairman, independent  
board member  
Appointed February 2008



## **René Carayol**

Independent board  
member  
Appointed February 2008



## **Andrew Havery**

Councillor board member  
Appointed  
September 2003



## **Mark Hoyland**

Chief Executive  
Appointed February 2009



## **Neil Garrett**

Resident board member  
Appointed August 2007



## **Adam Hug**

Councillor board member  
Appointed June 2010



## **Ian Adams**

Councillor board member  
Appointed October 2010



## **Gwyn Gilmour**

Resident board member  
Appointed October 2010



## **Carole Spedding**

Resident board member  
Appointed March 2011



## **Abdul Adamu**

Resident board member  
Appointed August 2007



## **Gwyneth Hampson**

Councillor board member  
Appointed  
September 2007



## **Richard Reynolds**

Independent board  
member  
Appointed February 2008

# Financials

## Profit and Loss Account (excluding FRS17 Pension adjustments)

for the year ending 31 March 2012	2012 £000	2011 £000
Turnover	24,540	21,205
Operating costs	(24,525)	(21,172)
Operating surplus	15	33

In 2012, CityWest Homes expanded our in-house management services, increasing homes which are under management from over 100 to 350 homes.

The increase in cost shown in the table above reflects this expansion. There were significant savings achieved as a result of bringing more housing services in-house which are not shown in CityWest Home's statutory account, but are reflected elsewhere in the housing review account.

## Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2012

	2012 £000	2011 £000
<b>Fixed Assets</b>		
Tangible assets	86	171
Current assets		
Debtors	2,639	4,233
Cash at bank and in hand	2,488	1,597
	5,127	5,830
<b>Creditors:</b> amounts falling due within one year	(4,456)	(5,167)
<b>Provisions:</b> amounts falling due within year	(209)	(126)
Net current assets	462	537
Total assets less current liabilities	548	708
<b>Creditors:</b> amounts falling due after one year	0	(175)
Total Net Assets Excluding Pension and Other Post Retirement Liabilities	548	533
Pension and Other Post retirement Liabilities	(18,230)	(12,570)
Total Net (Liabilities) Including Pension and Other Post Retirement Liabilities	(17,682)	(12,037)
Reserves		
Retained deficit	(17,682)	(12,037)
Shareholders's deficit	(17,682)	(12,037)



CITYWEST HOMES

CityWest Homes Ltd

21 Grosvenor Place

London SW1X 7EA

Tel: **020 7245 2542**

Email: **communications@cwh.org.uk**

Website: **www.cwh.org.uk**

