



Inside this  
Summer issue...



**Updated Services  
Standards**  
See page 3



**Getting Involved**  
See page 3



**Work, rest & play**  
See page 6

## Down at the farm

**Thomas loves spending  
time at Bridge Inn  
Community farm in  
Formby.**

He works there two and half days a week and enjoys working with the animals – especially feeding and cleaning out the pigs and chickens.

The farm is expecting some new additions as some baby goats are due to arrive soon. Thomas will be helping to make them some pens to keep them safe.

The farm offers a qualification in Animal Husbandry and Horticulture. Thomas is hoping to start his training in the autumn. This means that he will get to work at the farm full-time.

**Good luck with your studies  
Thomas!**



## World Autism Awareness Day

**What is Autism?** Autism is much more common than you may think. There are over half a million people in the UK with autism - that's around 1 in 100 people. To help raise awareness of the condition, we held autism awareness sessions at our offices in Leyland and Lytham St Annes to mark World Autism Awareness Day in April.

Progress Care Housing tenant and scrutiny panel member David Robinson was our guest speaker. He is, in his own words, "an expert witness and highly proactive in promoting autism awareness".

Alongside the sessions, a fundraising cake-baking contest was held, with staff invited to bake their own masterpieces. David very happily volunteered to judge

the presentation, creativity and, of course, taste of the cakes. Although it was a hard choice due to the high quality of the entries, Progress Housing's Fundraising Officer Aimi O'Donnell was crowned cake baker of the year!

All cakes entered into the competition were sold off to raise funds for the National Autistic Society.



▲ Aimi O'Donnell and David Robinson

# Your new-look newsletter – chosen by you...

(Left - Right) Wendy Jones, Teresa Selby,  
David Simpson and Trevor Smith



You may have noticed that 'Progress People' has changed. The fresh new look is the result of a six-month consultation process with tenants up and down the country.

**But why did we decide to refresh the newsletter?** We spoke to our Tenant Services Manager, Andrea Wilson, to find out...

"We wanted to make sure that we were getting good value for money, especially as we will now be producing four issues a year. We also wanted to reduce the production time of the magazine and give it a striking new design as it had not changed since it was first published in 2003.

"We are now working closely with a new company who came up with two new designs – both with a modern look that is more appealing to our customers.

"We asked almost 100 tenants what they thought. They chose the design they liked best – which is the one you hold in your hands right now. Their feedback was very positive, especially about the new colours and layout.

"We will be talking to tenants again to see how they like the new look and if there is anything we need to change next time."

If you have any comments about the new-look newsletter, please write to us using the contact details on the back page.

## Making models is my hobby

Gary, who lives in Lancashire, has been making models for over ten years. He started with simple models and has now become something of an expert model maker.



Gary Snowden

He explains: "I started making models in 2001 with some plastic clip together models. This got me interested in model making as a hobby. I soon progressed to making models from balsa wood. My models have become more complicated over the years."

Gary often builds more than one model at a time. He said: "I like to have a few different ones at different stages so I do

not get bored. At the moment, I'm building three models – a Tyrannosaurus Rex, a ship and a tank I also have a working model Spitfire plane that flies."

He added: "I used to live in a small one bedroom flat and didn't have the space to make these big models. I'm really happy where I'm living now because I've loads of room to work. Plus I can display all the ones I've completed!"

## COMPETITION

There is a £10 shopping voucher up for grabs in our Summer competition!

**How many sunshine's can you find in the newsletter?**

Count how many, then fill in the form below with your name and address. Cut it out and return it to Andrea Wilson, Tenant Services Manager at the address on the back page.

I found  sunshine's 

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Tel no: \_\_\_\_\_

**Closing date for entries is 5th August 2011.**



(Left - Right) Debbie Cash from Wyse Money, David Robinson, Support worker Diane Pennington, Tracy Lord, Clare Cowell and Andrea Wilson



# Communities get together

In March Progress Housing Group held a Tenant Conference based around the theme of “Communities Together”. It brought together residents from across Progress Housing Group.

The day was a great success with a packed program of speakers, workshops, interactive sessions and information stands. A range of housing issues was discussed as well as changes affecting housing services and tenants.

During a question time session, tenants were able to ask Progress Housing

Group’s Managing Directors questions about services and how they can get more involved.

**If you are interested in taking part in a future event or have any suggestions on how we can improve our services, please contact us on 01772 450896.**

## Updated service standards are launched!

The Progress Housing Group’s new service standards were announced at the annual tenant conference in March. The new service standards were put together after consultation with tenants across the Group. All comments were taken into account and the Scrutiny Panel approved the final version.

**So what do the new standards include?**

Well, here are just some examples of the services you can expect:

- ▶ We will provide a handbook for all new tenants.
- ▶ We will answer most telephone calls within 20 seconds.
- ▶ We will publish regular tenants’ newsletters.
- ▶ We will reply to letters and e-mails within 5 working days
- ▶ We will carry out satisfaction surveys following all major repair works.

We will be putting together a special Progress Care Housing Association version of the leaflet very soon.

**If you would like to help us, then please get in with Andrea Wilson on 01772 450896.**



(Left - Right) John Madden, Bill Coulton and David Robinson

# Checking the condition of your home

Since July last year, our Property Services Division started to carry out property condition surveys on all the homes we manage.



When we visit your home we will look at the condition of things like your:

- ▶ Kitchen
- ▶ Bathroom
- ▶ Roof
- ▶ Windows
- ▶ Doors and walls

We will not be looking at things provided by us like:

- ▶ White goods, e.g. fridges
- ▶ Furniture
- ▶ Televisions

We are doing this so that we can plan our repairs and maintenance budgets to make sure we can repair your home when it needs it. The condition surveys also let us know when parts of your home might need something replacing such as the kitchen or roof.

If you have not had your survey yet, the Progress Care Housing Surveyors will contact you soon. They will let you know when they are coming and will give you as much notice as they can.



# Getting involved

As a tenant, you have a right to be involved in how your housing service is run. Every year we encourage and support even more tenants to have a say in the service we provide.

*Tenant Services Manager  
Andrea Wilson*



## So how have tenants got involved over the past year?

Tenants have been attending meetings and letting us know what they think about our services, and what is important to them. This year:

- ✓ We held 84 tenants' meetings.
- ✓ 532 tenants attended these meetings.
- ✓ We met with 106 more tenants than last year.
- ✓ We increased the number of tenant groups from 24 to 29.
- ✓ Tenant forum groups met in Doncaster, Lancashire and Norfolk.
- ✓ Tenants took part in four 'Mystery Shopping' events.
- ✓ Two Progress Care Housing tenants were recruited onto the Scrutiny Panel.
- ✓ Tenants helped us to produce the tenants' annual report.
- ✓ Tenants helped design the new-look newsletter.



## What are our aims for the coming year?

Each year, we update our tenant involvement plan. Over the next year we want to listen to even more of our tenants by:

- Having 30 tenant groups.
- Getting more tenants to meetings.
- Setting up another tenant forum group.
- Producing leaflet on service charges.
- Producing a Progress Care Housing Association 'Service Standards' leaflet.
- Involving more tenants in 'Mystery Shopping'.
- Training tenants to inspect property standards.
- Recruiting another tenant to the 'Scrutiny Panel'.



**Have your say!!**

# My favourite recipe

Judith from Nottinghamshire sent us in a delicious recipe for glazed strawberry and rhubarb pie. It sounds like the perfect treat for a summer's day!



As a diabetic, Judith has to be careful about what she eats. She says: "Instead of using sugar, butter and icing sugar for toppings, I use other ingredients that are healthier. I use buttermilk and vegetable oil instead of butter. I use bananas, prunes, apple sauce and sweetener instead of sugar. Healthy cakes aren't just for people with diabetes – my house mates think they taste great!"

**The recipe contains sugar, but for a healthier option you could try using sweetener. Just remember to adjust how much you use.**

## Glazed strawberry and rhubarb pie

### Ingredients:

- ▶ 1 and a quarter cups of sugar
- ▶ plus one tablespoon of sugar (for the topping)
- ▶ 1/8 teaspoon of salt
- ▶ 1/3 cup of flour
- ▶ 2 cups of fresh strawberries
- ▶ 2 cups of fresh rhubarb cut into 1-inch or 2 1/2cm pieces
- ▶ 2 tablespoons of butter or margarine
- ▶ 1 packet of ready-made short-crust pastry

### Method:

- ▶ Combine one and a quarter cups of sugar, as well as the salt and flour to make your sugar mixture
- ▶ Line a 9-inch pie dish with pastry
- ▶ Arrange half the strawberries and rhubarb on top of the pastry in your pie dish.
- ▶ Sprinkle with half the sugar mixture.
- ▶ Repeat with the remaining fruit and sugar mixture.
- ▶ Dot the top of your mixture with small pieces of butter.
- ▶ Cover the top of your pie with a pastry lid.
- ▶ Flute the edges to make a high-standing rim.
- ▶ Brush the top of the pie with cold water and sprinkle on 1 tablespoon of sugar.
- ▶ Cut steam vents in your pastry lid.
- ▶ Bake in a hot oven (gas mark 7 or electric 220°C/425°F) for 40 to 50 minutes or until the rhubarb is tender and the crust has browned.



### How can I get more involved?

- ✓ Send us a story for this newsletter.
- ✓ Come to a newsletter advisory panel meeting.
- ✓ Fill in a newsletter feedback questionnaire.
- ✓ Help us record audio versions of the newsletter or other information.
- ✓ Come to a tenant group meeting.
- ✓ Assess our services through 'Mystery Shopping'.
- ✓ Complete a satisfaction survey.
- ✓ Talk to your Housing Officer when he or she visits your home.

If you want to know more then contact our Tenant Involvement Team and ask for our 'Getting Involved' leaflet – see the back page for details.

**Look out in the next issue for more details.**



Judith from Nottinghamshire ▲

# Work, rest and play

If you have a job, hobby or sport you like doing, we would love to see a photo of it. Send your photo to the address on the back page, along with your name, address and telephone number and a short description of what you are doing in the photo. Your support worker may help you with this. You might see yourself in the newsletter!

## Cindy watches a football match

Cindy from Norfolk enjoyed an exciting football match when she went to see Norwich play at home against Preston. Cindy was helped by her support staff and went on the supporter's bus where they listened to the pre-match discussions on the radio. The teams drew 1 – 1 and Cindy really enjoyed the day. She cannot wait to go again soon. Next time, she would like to take some friends too!



## Peter gets creative

Tenant Peter from Yorkshire loves arts and crafts. He said: "I do all sorts of things, such as pastel drawings, oil painting, pottery and needlework."

**So what does he do with all his finished work?**

"Well, I use them to decorate my home. I also like to send things I have made to my brother who lives in America."



## Emily visits the Sea Life Centre

Emily from Norfolk recently enjoyed a holiday to Hunstanton with her support staff. She said: "It was great fun. We stayed in a hotel and I even had a beer after a busy day out visiting the Sea Life Centre!"



## Michael's holiday in Paris

Michael from Nottinghamshire recently enjoyed a holiday to Paris with his support worker. This is the first time Michael has been abroad, so the ferry crossing to France was particularly exciting. Yet, there was still more to come! While he was there, he visited Disneyland Paris, went up the Eiffel tower and even tried some French food!

## Albert keeps on trucking

Albert from Newcastle is a big fan of trucks. Especially those of the UK's biggest name in transport, Eddie Stobart. So much so, he has been in the Eddie Stobart fan club for over eight years.

As a member of the fan club, Albert likes to wear the official uniform and gets a calendar sent to him every Christmas.

Plus, every year, Albert gets to visit Carlisle to tour the Eddie Stobart depot. Albert said: "My favourite truck is the Mercedes and each truck is given a ladies name as the drivers think of them like friends!"



# Carol swims with Dolphins!

Carol who lives in Lincolnshire recently enjoyed the holiday of a lifetime in Florida, USA, where she got to fulfill her wish to swim with dolphins.

Carol went with her two support workers, Maggie and Jean. They took Carol clothes shopping before the trip to buy lots of summer clothes for the hot weather!

On the day of the holiday, the three of them had a very early start, getting up at 5am to catch their 8-hour flight from Manchester Airport.

Carol said: "As I use a wheelchair I was taken onboard first by airport staff who helped me to my seat. Before going to Florida I'd taken a couple of shorter plane journeys in recent years to get used to flying. I ended up really enjoying the flight – even though it takes a long time to get to America, there were lots of films, games and tasty meals to keep us all occupied!"

**Carol certainly fitted a lot into her trip, visiting five theme parks!**

"The best park was Discovery Cove, where I got to swim with the dolphins. I had to transfer out of my wheelchair into a special beach wheelchair with big tyres!"

"We were in the water for 40 minutes. I was a bit scared at first but Maggie and Jean gave me lots of encouragement. They went in first and were patting the dolphins. I soon joined in with the fun and we all got to swim with the dolphins. It was a great experience!"

“ The best park was Discovery Cove, where I got to swim with the dolphins ”



## Could Amit be the 'Fifth Beatle'?

Many people have claimed to be the 'Fifth Beatle'. However, Amit from Norwich has evidence of his claim with a painting on his bedroom wall.

The picture shows the classic image of the Fab Four standing next to the Yellow Submarine. Only this time it has a new member, as Amit can be seen relaxed and chatting to his favourite Beatle, John Lennon.

Amit is a massive Beatles fan. His room is a shrine to his favourite group with pictures of John Lennon and the rest of the band.

He says: "I think the Beatles are the best band in the world. I recently went to Liverpool for a holiday. I did the Beatles tour and visited the houses where John Lennon and Paul McCartney grew up."

So, though, he may not quite be the 'Fifth Beatle', Amit is certainly their number one fan!





**PROGRESS CARE**  
HOUSING ASSOCIATION LIMITED

## Useful Addresses and Telephone Numbers

### Head Office

Progress Care Housing Association  
Warwick House, Kilnhouse Lane,  
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Friday 8.45-16:45

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**Fax No.** 01253 642001

**Web:** [www.progressgroup.org.uk](http://www.progressgroup.org.uk)

**Email:** [enquiries@progressgroup.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@progressgroup.org.uk)

### Leeds Office

Progress Care Housing New Pudsey  
Court, 101 Bradford Road, Pudsey,  
Leeds, LS28 6AT

### Opening hours:

Monday-Friday 9.00am-17:00pm LILAC  
tenants Tel: 0845 241 6041

### Progress Care Housing tenants living in

Leeds, Harrogate, Northallerton, Norfolk,  
Suffolk, Rotherham, Cambridgeshire,  
Knaresborough, Selby and York

**Tel.** 0845 241 0208

**Fax No.** 0845 241 6042

**Web:** [www.progressgroup.org.uk](http://www.progressgroup.org.uk)

### Repairs

There are now a number of different  
arrangements for repairs, so please  
check the details given to you when  
you signed for your tenancy to find the  
correct telephone number to ring.

**Remember:** Repairs lines are usually  
very busy first thing in the morning. If your  
repair is not urgent please try phoning  
after 11am.

This newsletter is available in audio  
CD, large print, Braille or an alternative  
language.

To request your alternative format  
please contact the Tenant Involvement  
Team 01772 450890 or write to our  
Tenant Involvement Team at our Head  
Office address (details above) or e-mail  
[progresspeople@progressgroup.org.uk](mailto:progresspeople@progressgroup.org.uk)



# Introducing two new faces!

Progress Care would like to welcome two new employees, Claire Baker and Annette Stevens.

### Claire Baker

"My name is Claire Baker and I am the new Supported Housing Assistant based in the Leeds Office. I am thrilled to be working for Progress Care Housing and enjoying my new role. I previously worked for a housing association in the West Midlands for 8 years."



### Annette Stevens

"I am Annette Stevens, the new Supported Housing Manager (Operations) and I will be working alongside the Housing Services Manager to make improvements to the services you receive. I have previously worked very closely with tenants groups, so have a good understanding about the important role you play in helping us improve of our service."



## Winners Corner

Here are the names of the lucky tenants who have won prizes since the last newsletter.

**Spot the egg competition** Claire Lavis - Lancashire,  
**Newsletter Questionnaire card** Barrie Haywood - Nottinghamshire.  
**Progress Group Quarterly Draw** Jan - March 2011 -  
New Fylde Housing Tenant from Kirkham.

## Jokes

If you know any jokes,  
please send them in!

**What's black and white and red all over?** A sunburnt zebra.

**What do frogs like to drink on a hot summers day?** Croak-o-cola.



'Progress People' is published by Progress Care Housing Association and sent to our supported housing tenants, support agency partners, service commissioners and tenants' relatives. If you have anything to say about the newsletter or our service, or a subject you think would make a good article, please get in touch.

You can write to: Tenant Involvement Team, Progress Care Housing Association, Warwick House, Kilnhouse Lane, Lytham St Annes, Lancashire FY8 3DU.

You can email at: [progresspeople@progressgroup.org.uk](mailto:progresspeople@progressgroup.org.uk) or telephone on 01772 450890.