

Music to his ears

A shared love of music has sparked tenant David Robinson and his support worker Andy Slatter to discover new ways of communicating and connecting with other people.

David and Andy produced a unique video by editing together film clips of David on holiday to a sound track of his favourite George Formby music. David wasn't very interested in his holiday photos before, but now he is keen to watch the video and share his memories with his housemates.

Andy explains: "David has always responded to music. He doesn't communicate verbally very much, but when there's music on he will take notice of what's going on. He's got his own music box that's filled with percussion instruments like maracas, tambourines and drums. We have a great time playing together, I'll play George Formby songs on the ukele or guitar and David



David watches himself on video with support worker Andy

will accompany me on the maracas or hum the tune on the kazoo."

David and Andy started the video when they went on holiday together earlier in the year: "We went to CenterParcs in Nottingham in April, where we started the video, then to Blackpool last month where we did some more," said Andy. "Now we've started to add pictures of other residents in the house, cooking, playing the instruments, doing other activities. They all love to watch themselves on TV with their favourite music in the background."



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“You never know what you can do unless you try.” That’s the message from Blackpool tenant John Whitham who has faced his own personal challenges and boosted his self-esteem in the process.

Taking on a challenge

John Whitham tapes his letters instead of writing them

John used to struggle to start a conversation because of a speech impediment, which badly affected his confidence. An ardent pen pal, John set himself the challenge of recording his letters on tape, instead of writing them.

John explains: “I used to write letters to my friends, but I got the idea of recording my letters, thinking it would help with my speech. I could never start a conversation before but taping my letters has helped me get my

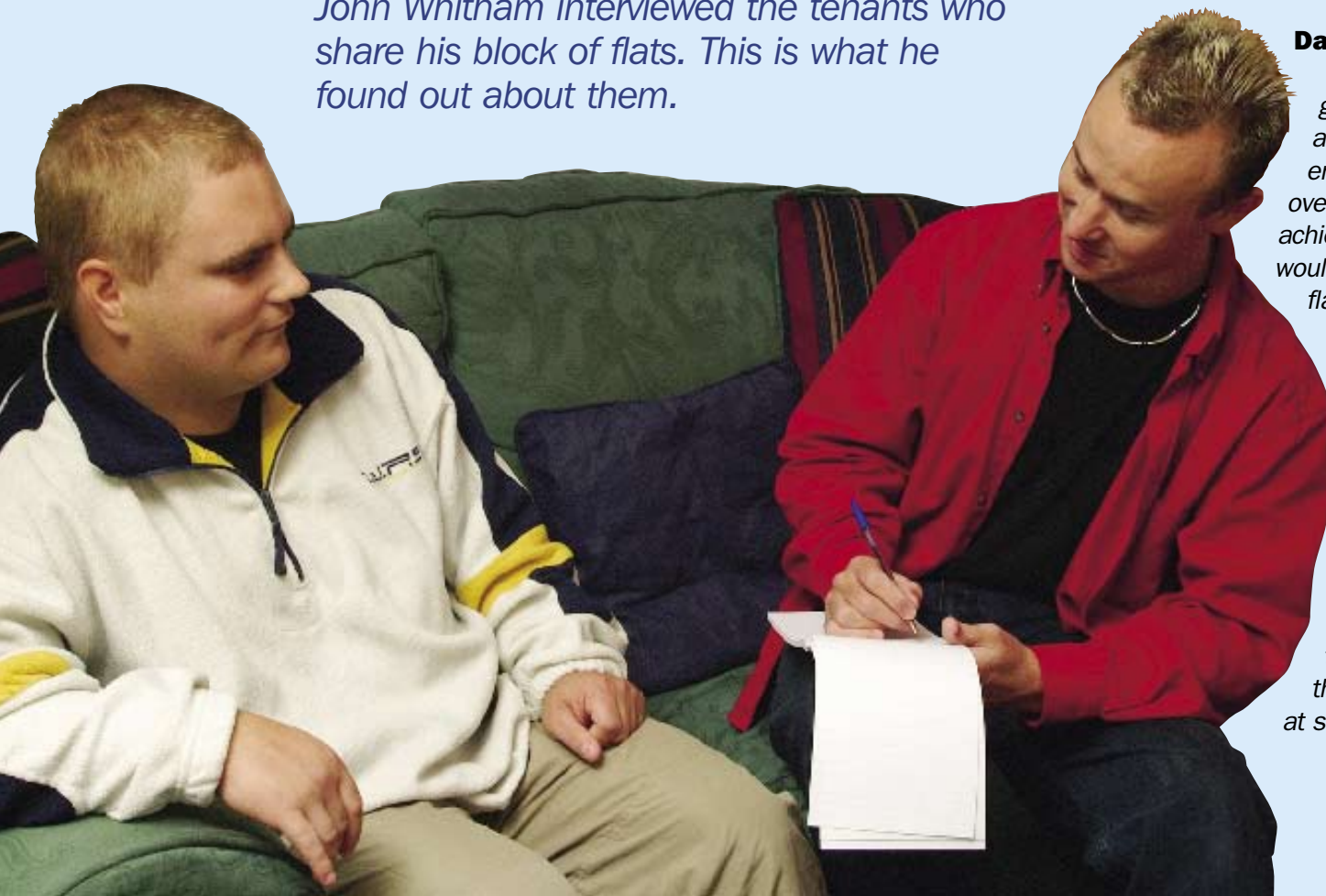
words out. I’ve been doing it for quite awhile now and it keeps on getting better and better.” John’s letters have even led him to meet his girlfriend Helena, a former pen pal, who is now his fiancée.

We heard about John because he filled in our newsletter questionnaire. As a result we invited him on to the newsletter panel. Apart from telling us about his own inspiring story, John interviewed his fellow tenants

for the newsletter. This gave us the idea of inviting tenants to be our ‘roving reporter’ for future issues of the newsletter. John said he enjoyed writing the article because he likes getting involved. He said: “I was quite nervous about coming to the newsletter meeting but it turned out better than I’d expected. I would say to other tenants if I can do it, so can you – you never know what you can do unless you try!”

Our roving reporter

John Whitham interviewed the tenants who share his block of flats. This is what he found out about them.



Damien Jones

Damien’s hobbies are going to the gym, swimming and listening to music. He enjoyed a holiday in Ibiza over the summer. Damien has achieved his independence and would now like to have his own flat.

Marion Langford

Marion has had an interview recently for a voluntary job and hopefully it might lead to a paid job which will be a real achievement. It involves looking after animals, which is her special interest. Over the summer Marion went to the zoo and also went to look at some horses.

John interviews fellow tenant Damien



Robert Wright cooks up a meal in his kitchen'

Can't cook, can cook

Former chef Robert Wright says cooking is good for you! Robert, who lives in a self-contained flat in Preston, is urging fellow tenants to try cooking for themselves.

Robert has travelled the world as a chef in the RAF and has cooked for diplomats, ship captains and even the Royal Family. But he says cooking doesn't have to be complicated: "Everyone can cook if they take their time, prepare carefully and do it step by step. And if you cook for yourself rather than buy ready-made meals it is more nutritious, and it's a lot cheaper."

Robert suggests going shopping later on in the week to help save money. He said: "If you go shopping on a Saturday afternoon you'll find fruit and veg shops and indoor markets have food they can't keep over the weekend and you'll get it cheap." Another tip from Robert is for tenants to get together and buy in bulk.

Robert gave us his recipe for a cheap and nutritious meal, Spanish omelette. Why not try it and let us know how you get on?



Recipe for Spanish Omelette

Ingredients

- 4oz/110g cooked potatoes, sliced
- Half a red pepper, sliced
- Quarter onion, sliced
- 1oz/25g cooked peas
- 1oz/25g cooked sweetcorn
- 1 tomato, sliced
- 3 eggs
- Salt and pepper
- Mixed herbs

Serves 1 - 2

Method

Preheat grill. • Heat frying pan with a little oil. • Fry onion until soft. • Whisk eggs in a bowl and season with salt and pepper. • Add potatoes and red pepper to frying pan. When potatoes, red pepper, and onions are slightly browned, add the eggs and a pinch of herbs. Keep stirring constantly. • Once omelette thickens lay the sliced tomato on top. Put it under a medium grill until brown. • Serve with the crispy salad below.

Salad

Place in a bowl: • one small lettuce, (torn or sliced into pieces), • two tomatoes (cut into quarters), • half a red pepper (sliced), • a bunch of spring onions (chopped). • Toss together with a squeeze of lemon juice and a sprinkle of olive oil.



Giles Morgan

Giles leads a busy life working at both Sainsburys and the talking newspaper at the blind centre. He is a member of CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ales, and enjoys going to football, cooking and going out. He studies at college. Over the summer he went to the Isle of Man and also celebrated his 40th birthday and a family reunion. Giles has achieved a lot both at work and in gaining his independence - he's even got his own motor scooter, proving others wrong who said he wouldn't manage to ride a bike.

You could be our next 'Roving reporter'. Interview and write an article about the people in your house or scheme and send it to Lynda Mason at Progress Care (see back of newsletter for address). Don't forget to include your name, address and telephone number.



Tenant members of our Newsletter Advisory Panel:
Left to right: Geoffrey Dearden, Andrea Jackson,
Shirley Ryder, John Whitham and Stephen Dickinson

Your newsletter

Our third newsletter panel met in Leyland during the summer. We discussed what tenants liked about the previous issue and how the next issue could be improved.

Everyone said it was good to have lots of photos and liked the way the newsletter was set out. They told us they particularly liked to read articles about other tenants (as you will see we've got even more in this issue!) and they thought the fact sheet about repairs was very useful. Some people asked us to use pictures where possible to help get our written message across. In this issue we have used cartoon figures to illustrate the article 'Get involved'.

We want to get our newsletter right for you so if there is anything you like, or don't like, please tell us. And if you have an interesting story about something you have done in or outside of your home, let us know and we might be able to feature it in the next newsletter.

Our newsletter advisory panel members were:

- Shirley Ryder of Salford, accompanied by support worker Stephanie Brice of Paragon Care
- Stephen Dickinson of Oswaldtwistle, accompanied by support worker Alex Haran of Paragon Care
- Andrea Jackson of Salford, accompanied by support worker Hazell Stead of Independent Advisory Services
- Geoffrey Dearden of Lancaster, accompanied by support workers Andy Slatter and Mike Tolson of Lancaster Social Services
- John Whitham of Blackpool

Meet the Supported

Philomena Cunningham is Head of Housing and Support at Progress Care HA. We asked her about the staff tenants are most likely to have contact with and what they do.



Who are the staff who manage Progress Care HA's properties?

Philomena: There are five Senior Supported Housing Officers, each covering a different part of the country (see column opposite). They receive back up in their work from four Supported Housing Assistants.

When are tenants likely to meet the housing officer for their area?

Philomena: People will meet one of the housing officers when they become a new tenant. We have to fill in a legal tenancy agreement and explain what becoming a tenant means.



Housing Team

Are there any other times when they will see their housing officer?

Philomena: Yes. The housing officer will visit a new scheme within 4 months of it opening to make sure things are running smoothly. Then tenants and their support staff can expect a visit at least once a year.

What exactly do these visits involve?

Philomena: We work with various partners who provide support to our tenants. The annual visit is an opportunity to make sure that tenants are living in well-maintained and well-run homes that still meet their needs. The housing officer will talk about general satisfaction with our service, outstanding repairs, vacant rooms and so on. It is also an opportunity to meet tenants and to discuss their involvement in the running of their own home. Tenants are free at any time to phone or write to their housing officer. They don't have to wait until the annual visit.

So what else do the housing officers do?

Philomena: Behind the scenes, the housing officers work with the staff who support our tenants about matters, such as reletting empty rooms, resolving neighbour disputes, or managing service charges. They will also check we are receiving the rent due and try to resolve any arrears that may have arisen. Housing Officers can also offer advice and assistance with Housing Benefit claims.

Finally Philomena would you like to introduce us to the team?

Philomena: The team is a relatively new one, except for Frances Aspinall who has worked in supported housing for six and half years. Karen Lowde has just completed her second year in the job, and Mary Grigg almost twelve months. Whilst Paula Brown and Simon Anstey only joined the team in August of this year.



Senior Supported Housing Officers

Areas Covered

Frances Aspinall
Tel. 01772 642157

Liverpool
Scotland
Trafford
Wigan



Mary Grigg
Tel. 01772 642166

Lincolnshire
Norfolk
Rutland
Aylesbury



Karen Lowde
Tel. 01772 642158

North Lancashire
Devon
Salford



Paula Brown
Tel. 01772 642164

Cumbria
Leeds
Sheffield
East Lancashire
Bolton



Simon Anstey
Tel. 01772 642165

Rochdale
Stockport
Tameside
Central Lancashire
West Lancashire
North East
Doncaster
Scunthorpe



What is tenant involvement all about?

Involvement is where you tell us what you think about our service and if we can do better. We will listen to what you have to say and act on your suggestions, where possible.

Why tenant involvement is important to us:

Your views will help us deliver the best quality service possible that reflects your needs and wants.

What you could get out of becoming more involved:

- You could develop your skills and self confidence, you might learn how to run, or take part in, meetings or write articles for our newsletter
- You could meet other tenants
- Receive a better service from us that is more likely to reflect your needs and wishes

How it works:

You can choose how to tell us what you think about our service.

Some people want to have more of a say than others and some people have different communications abilities. Some tenants may not want to say anything.

So we came up with a 'menu' system, so you decide how much or how little you become involved. Over the next 12 months we will be improving how we involve tenants in the running the service.

Get involved

Level 1

What's going on?

This is about Progress Care HA telling tenants, and the support staff working with them, what is going on.

We do this now with:

- the tenants' handbook
- fact sheets on various topics, like 'How to make a complaint'
- our tenants' newsletter 'Progress People' and accompanying audio tape
- our video 'Welcome Home: An introduction to your tenancy agreement'
- giving feedback from surveys



Our newsletter advisory panel allows tenants to get involved



Level 2

What do you think?

This is about Progress Care HA asking you for your opinion or ideas.

Examples of how we do this already are:

- using surveys
- the tenants' newsletter advisory panel
- repairs satisfaction questionnaires
- face-to-face meetings with you



Did you know you have a right to be involved in the running of your housing service? In May this year our Board of Management gave the go ahead to a new tenant involvement plan. Here we explain what tenant participation is all about and how you can get involved.

and have your say

Level 3

What shall we do?

This is when you tell us your ideas for how to improve the service. To help you get started we have set aside some money to pay for the costs of tenants' group meetings and any training they might need.

We will do this by:

- developing tenants' groups which can bring about change and address tenants' concerns
- holding 'speak out' groups on certain topics, eg, redesigning the tenants' handbook
- encouraging tenants to write newsletter articles

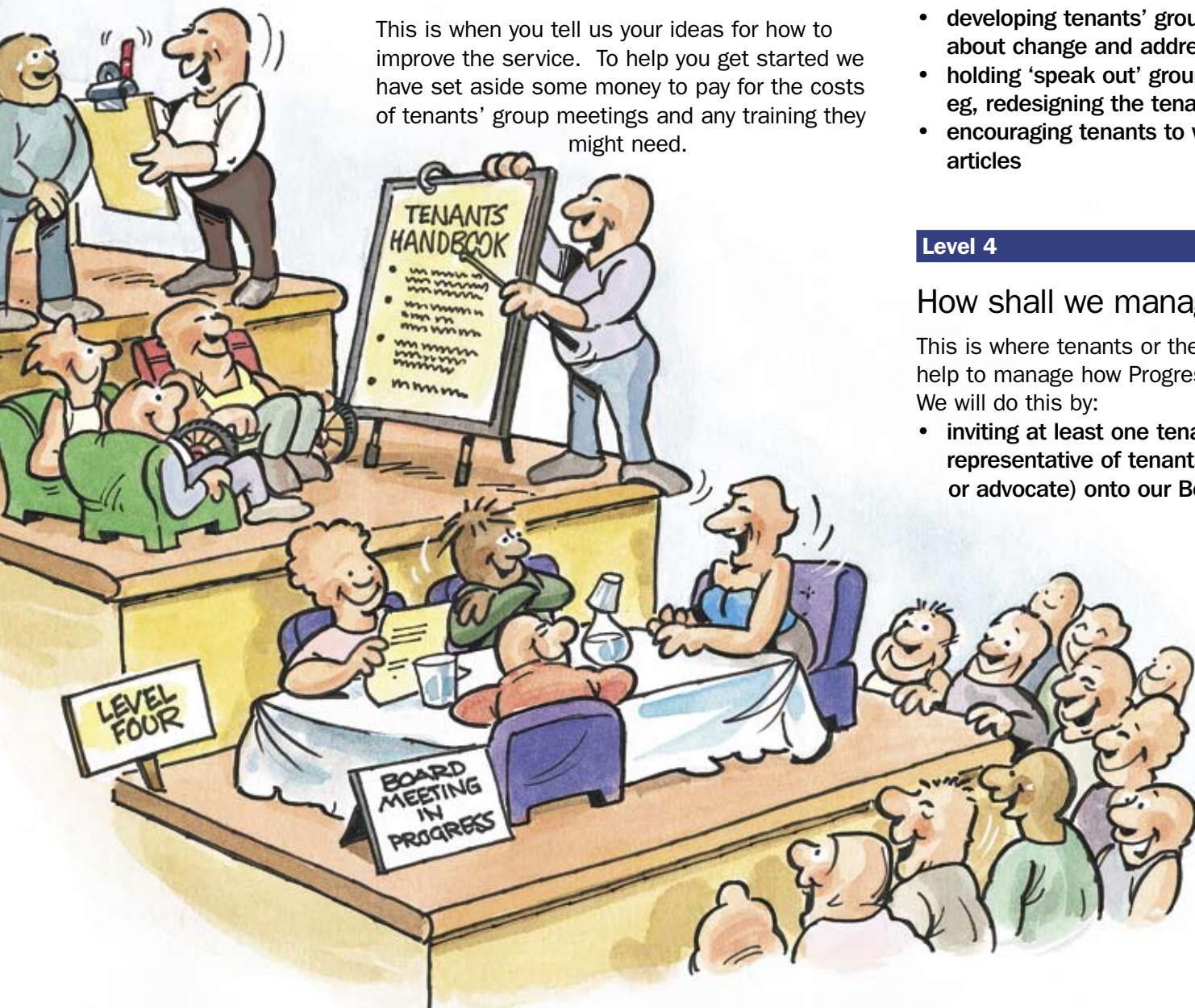
Level 4

How shall we manage it?

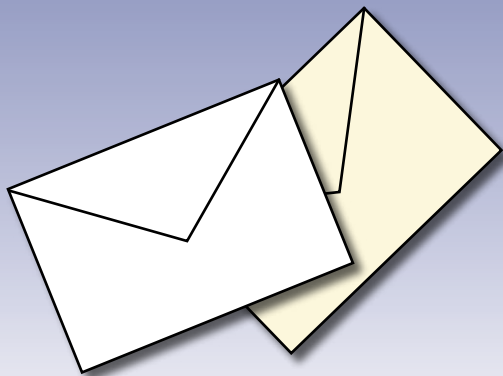
This is where tenants or their representatives help to manage how Progress Care HA is run.

We will do this by:

- inviting at least one tenant and one representative of tenants views (eg a relative or advocate) onto our Board of Management



Lynda Mason, our Projects Manager, is in charge of our tenant involvement plan, so if you have any comments or would like to get involved more she would love to hear from you. Find out how to get in touch on the back page.



Pen Pals

At our second newsletter advisory group meeting Stephen Dickinson, who lives in Oswaldtwistle, suggested we start a pen pals page. Other tenants agreed that this would be a good idea, so here it is!

If you want to write to any of these tenants call Kate Child, Tenant Participation Officer, on 01772 642150, or write to her at Progress Care HA (see back page). She will pass your address on. If you would like to be a pen pal, please send Kate a short description of yourself and your interests and what type of person you would like to write to you, plus a photo of yourself, if possible.

Stephen Dickinson, Oswaldtwistle, Lancashire

Stephen is 37 years old. He likes animals and has 4 hamsters, 2 gold fish and a ginger cat called Marmalade. His favorite pop group is S Club 7. Stephen enjoys watching videos and DVD's in particular crime stories, comedies and science fiction. He likes reading crime novels and is a big fan of Buffy the Vampire Slayer. He supports Manchester City and would prefer a female pen pal.



Leonard Bayman, Blackburn, Lancashire

Leonard is a keen gardener. He enjoys planting hanging baskets and looking after the garden where he lives. He likes listening to music and his favorite group is Simply Red. He also enjoys watching TV and his favorite soap is Emmerdale. Leonard likes to go walking and enjoys a pint. He would like to hear from anyone of any age from any part of the country.



Ben O'Keefe, Blackburn, Lancashire

Ben is 24 years old and likes football, swimming and music. His favourites are Kylie Minogue, Ronan Keating and Emma Bunton. He also likes Blue, Britney Spears and 80's music. Ben likes watching the soaps and films on TV, and going to the pub. He likes children and animals, especially cats. He would like a pen friend aged 20 – 25 who also lives in Lancashire.



Geoff Dearden, Lancaster, Lancashire

Geoff is 50 years old. He likes music, shopping and going to church on Sundays. He likes going to the pub for a drink and meeting people of all ages.



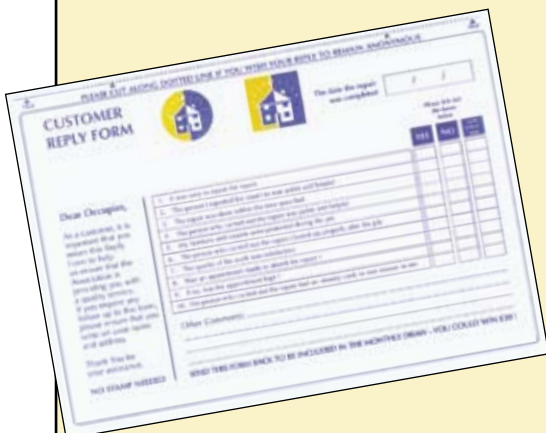
Jacqui Johnson, Salford, Manchester

Jacqui enjoys listening to music and playing computer games. She is also a keen collector of unusual things like lighters, teddy bears and ornaments of dogs. Jacqui would like to write to any of our female tenants, aged about 35 to 40.

Got to be in it to win it!

Don't forget to send back your repairs satisfaction reply form when we have done a repair for you. You could win a £20 gift voucher in our monthly prize draw! Here are the latest four winners:

- **April** - Lily Ellis of Farnwoth, Bolton
- **May** - Lisa Jonathon of Darwen, Lancs
- **June** - Ernest Houghton of Wavertree, Liverpool
- **July** - Martin Doncaster, Gary Secker and Graham Triggs of Poringland, Norwich





Left: Andrea at the mouth of the cave
 Below: Early photos of Andrea's parents Gordon and Dorothy helped Andrea retrace their footsteps
 Below right: How Ilfracombe looked when Andrea's parents stayed there



In their footsteps

Salford tenant Andrea Jackson has fulfilled a long-held dream by retracing her parents' footsteps to their romantic honeymoon location.

Andrea had always wanted to go to Ilfracombe in Devon where her mother and father had spent their honeymoon. Sadly both her parents are no longer alive, but this year she was able to make her wish come true.

Andrea takes up the story: "My dad died when I was little, and my mum died just last year. My mum once told me they had carved their initials in a cave on a beach while



they were on their honeymoon. I thought I'd go there someday, that was my dream. So when my support worker Margaret asked me where I wanted to go on holiday, I chose there."

Andrea and Maragaret stayed in a hotel and began their search. Andrea said: "Ilfracombe was very hilly, it was also a special Victorian week, so lots of people were dressed up in Victorian clothes. We found the caves, there were three of them and they were lit up. I looked for the initials and couldn't find



them at first, but then I noticed 'D' for Dorothy, that was my mum's name. I felt all emotional, but then I felt alright. It felt like I was walking in their footsteps years later".

By studying some old photos Margaret was also able to help Andrea locate a church that Andrea's parents had visited. But Andrea is sure she went to lots of other places they had visited as well. She said: "I am glad that I did it, it was my dream."



What you told us

Progress Care HA has carried out a survey to find out exactly what method of communication our tenants prefer.

We would like to thank all our support agency partners for the excellent 95% response rate to our survey. This has given us valuable information about better ways of getting our message across.

Our survey showed that whilst the majority of tenants are happy to receive written information, a large number of you were interested in receiving information on audio tape. We have sent out a lot more tapes of this edition of the newsletter and

intend to put other information on tape in the future.

Quite a lot of tenants told us they would like to see information on video. Unfortunately it is too costly to produce a video newsletter, but we have recorded a video version of our tenancy agreement 'Welcome Home'.

We also learned that some tenants like pictures to help them understand our information and we will include these more from now on.



Our newsletter is also available on audio tape



*Lorraine McIntyre.
Resettlement Support Worker, helps
Alexis decorate her new home*

New post continues support

A new post has been set up at Clare House women's refuge to help women and children when they move out into their own accommodation for the first time.

Lorraine McIntyre is the new Resettlement Support Worker, and since she started in March she has helped 11 women and 22 children find their feet outside the refuge.

The refuge is a 'safe house' offering women and their children escaping domestic abuse somewhere temporary to stay. But when the time comes to leave it can be hard to set up home again on your own. This is where Lorraine comes in. She can help women find somewhere to live, find furniture and make the property homely.

Lorraine explains: "Often the

women are moving into an area for the first time, so I help them build links and get to know the area. A lot of the women have come out of a relationship and are used to having another adult living with them so when they move out on their own it can be very lonely. When they are offered their new accommodation I go with them and view it, help them with signing the tenancy, and give them a hand to get the basics together. If they want I can go round with them to find furniture and help them with budgeting. If they have no family support I will help them decorate

their new homes and make their house a home. My support is ongoing as long as they want it."

Lorraine can also help them apply for any grants and benefits they are entitled to, give advice on training courses and employment and work with other organisations such as schools, doctors and social services to make sure women and their families get all the support they need.

Lorraine says she finds her job extremely rewarding: "I love to see the differences I can make to people's lives."

Progress Care HA already has many properties in Lincolnshire but over the last few months we have expanded our work here even further.

We recently made nine properties ready for 23 tenants with learning difficulties in the Spalding area, working



Reaching more people

with one of our current support provider partners, Northern Life Care. We also worked with them to develop a home for two tenants with autism in North Kesteven earlier in the year.

As we went to press we had found 10 of 19 properties needed for 68 people with learning difficulties in the Bourne area of Lincolnshire. Heritage Care will provide the support needed to enable these tenants to live successfully in their own homes.

Finally, we were delighted when we were chosen by North Lincolnshire Council to provide supported homes to nine new tenants in and around Scunthorpe. We are looking forward to

working with a new support partner, MENCAP, on this particular scheme.

More success in Norfolk

In our summer edition of 'Progress People' we reported how we had successfully provided homes needed for 33 patients following the closure of Little Plumstead Hospital in an article entitled 'Pushing Boundaries'. This work meant we fostered an excellent working relationship with Norfolk County Council and we are delighted to have been chosen to work with them as one of their approved housing providers in the county.

One of nine newly developed properties in Spalding, Lincolnshire



Independent shopping

A scheme that provides electric wheelchairs and scooters to people with a physical disability is encouraging more people to take advantage of the service

Lancashire Mobile Shopmobility is run by Preston Community Transport and is paid for by the local councils that use it.

In Preston it is called Preston Shop Mobility and has a permanent base in Fishergate, Preston which operates Monday to Saturday. You can hire a mobility scooter to use around the city for £2.50 for up to seven and a half hours. The scooters are transported in a lorry out to other areas for one a day each a week. The scheme visits Clitheroe on a Tuesday, Blackburn on a Wednesday, Morecambe on a Thursday and Lancaster on a Friday. You can hire a scooter for £1 for the morning or afternoon.

Marc Livesey is the Project Coordinator who takes the vehicles round each week. He says the scheme gives people a sense of independence and freedom: "The scheme allows people to do the general day to day things that most people take for granted. It gives them independence so they don't have to rely on someone else to do it for them."

Marc has set up a registration scheme so that members can book the scooters ahead once they have registered. Geoff Dearden is one of our tenants who enjoys a regular booking on Friday mornings in Lancaster.

If you would like to find out more about the registration scheme or would like to book a scooter, telephone 01772 204667.

Shopmobility Project Coordinator Marc Livesey organises a scooter for Geoff Dearden

Plants for Christmas

Bob McLintock of BM Landscapes in Bolton picks his top three plants for Christmas and gives tips on keeping them looking attractive and healthy.

Poinsettia

Variety: Euphorbia pulcherrima

The poinsettia with its large scarlet flower-heads is surely the symbol of Christmas indoors.

Secrets of success:

- **Temperature:** Average warmth, minimum 55 – 60°F during the flowering season. Keep away from draughts
- **Light:** Maximum light during winter
- **Water:** Water thoroughly, wait until compost is moderately dry before watering again.
- **Air humidity:** Mist leaves frequently through the flowering season.

Primula

Variety: Primula malacoides

The Primula group contains some of the best of all winter and spring flowering pot plants. Remove dead flowers and feed regularly.

Secrets of success:

- **Temperature:** Cool, keep at 55 – 60°F during the flowering season. Keep away from draughts and heat
- **Light:** Maximum light but protect from direct sunlight
- **Water:** Keep compost moist at all times during flowering season
- **Air humidity:** Mist leaves occasionally.



Winter Cherry

Variety: Solanum capsicastrum

The Winter Cherry is a familiar sight at Christmas. The orange or red berries among the dark leaves give a festive touch, and if placed on a sunny windowsill in a cool room the berries will last for months.

Secrets of success:

- **Temperature:** Keep cool, 50 – 60°F in winter
- **Light:** Bright light with some direct sun
- **Water:** Keep compost moist at all times
- **Air humidity:** Mist leaves frequently



Useful Addresses and Telephone Numbers

HEAD OFFICE

Progress Care Housing Association
Progress House
Lancashire Enterprise Business Park
Centurion Way, Leyland, Lancashire
PR26 6TZ

Tel. 01772 642150

Fax No. 01772 642151

Web: www.progresscare.org.uk

Email: enquiries@newprogress.co.uk

LINCOLN OFFICE

Progress Care Housing Association
1 Sixfields Close
Skellingthorpe Road, Lincoln
Lincolnshire LN6 0EJ

Tel. 01522 507208

Fax No. 01522 507211

REPAIRS

Property Repairs Hotline

Monday - Thursday

9.00 am - 5.15 pm

and Friday 9.00 am - 4.45 pm

Tel. 01772 642199

Out-of-office-hours

(Emergency repairs only)

Tel. 01772 436756

Repairs to furnishings,
kitchen or laundry equipment

Tel. 01772 642150

This newsletter is available on
audio tape. For a free copy,
either phone or write to Lynda
Mason at our head office address
above, or you may e-mail her at
lmason@newprogress.co.uk

If you need the newsletter in
another format or additional copies,
please let Lynda know and we may be
able to produce it for future editions.



Andrew Law was the winner of our summer newsletter prize draw

He told us and won

Tenant Andrew Law filled in our newsletter questionnaire and won £25 shopping vouchers.

Andrew, who lives in Norwich, said he is going to use the vouchers to buy CDs.

Please keep sending in your questionnaires, they really help to guide us and this time they were also a source of good stories. Most people said they liked getting the newsletter and continued to find it interesting, especially stories about other tenants. Some tenants suggested we include articles about disabled clients and their interests, so we have included an article in this issue about a shopmobility

scheme, and we will be looking at more topics like this in future issues.

So don't forget to send in your questionnaire – you could be the lucky winner next time. And now there's even more reason to send back those questionnaires because if you win we will send your support workers a box of chocolates! If there is more than one person in your house who wants to fill in a questionnaire, please ring Lynda Mason on 01772 642161 for more copies.



'Progress People' is published by Progress Care Housing Association and sent to our supported housing tenants, support agency partners and service commissioners. 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: Lynda Mason, Project Manager, Progress Care Housing Association, Progress House, Lancashire Enterprises Business Park, Centurion Way, Leyland PR26 6TZ. You can email Lynda at: lmason@newprogress.co.uk or telephone her on 01772 642161.