



“Providing a quality home around which individuals with a learning disability can build their lives”.

Annual report 2009



Golden Lane Housing

working in partnership with  **mencap**



Making a *real* difference

These are exciting times at Golden Lane Housing (GLH). Working in partnership with Mencap, we continue to evolve and are now firmly established as one of the leading providers of housing for people with learning disabilities.

We have worked hard to balance our commitment to continued growth and development with improvements in the quality of services we offer in order to make a *real* difference to the lives of the people we provide homes for and support.

Keeping our tenants, their families and support networks, our partners and other key stakeholders informed on GLH's progress and performance is an important priority for the board of trustees and leadership team. We have, therefore, produced this review summarising GLH's recent achievements in a way which we hope you will find both interesting and informative.

We wish to express our sincere thanks to our staff for their hard work and determination to provide high quality homes and services to all GLH tenants. They are the people who make visions become reality. Also, to our partners and key stakeholders without whose encouragement and support we could not have achieved all that we have to date.

The trustees and members of the leadership team wish to acknowledge the outstanding efforts and achievements of Roger Gatelley who retired in June 2009 after 37 years of tireless and devoted work as a Mencap trustee and founder trustee of GLH.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Neil McCall".

Neil McCall
Chairman

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Simon Parkinson".

Simon Parkinson
Director GLH



Where we have come from

GLH is an independent charity which specialises in housing people with a learning disability. Established by Mencap in 1998, we now provide good quality homes and services for over 1000 tenants throughout England and Wales.

Our main office is based in Manchester which provides support to our staff teams based across the country.

A clear focus

GLH is much more than just a landlord - we work hard to develop close and supportive relationships with all of our tenants, their families and support networks. 'Our Promise' represents GLH's unique values based approach to working with and alongside people with a learning disability.

Our achievements

Much of our focus during the past year has been on helping GLH tenants whose payment of rent has been affected by changes in how the housing benefit rules are interpreted. Our housing team has worked tirelessly in putting together detailed portfolios of evidence to achieve successful outcomes. To date, we have secured the tenancies of more than 56 tenants in 7 local authority areas and are confident of doing so for many others.

We have also successfully implemented a new system of quality service reviews through which we are able to assess the well-being of tenants and their living environments; and to identify any actions needed to improve either or both.

Building on opportunities

GLH has continued to develop its housing portfolio - not only in terms of numbers but also in design quality, standards and efficiency. Despite the challenging economic climate and increasing pressures on rental income, GLH successfully provided 24 additional homes for 67 people with learning disabilities over the past 12 months including 7 leased properties. A further 29 homes are in the development pipeline. This growth has been achieved mainly through working in partnership with primary care trusts and local authorities to complete re-provisioning work.

Projects included:

- 3 leased flats providing homes for 6 people in Wandsworth, London
- 6 properties for 18 people in Kent
- 1 leased bungalow for 3 people in Nottingham
- 4 properties for 13 people in Bristol



We are committed to using new forms of construction and materials to help drive down costs, increase efficiency and also to make the homes we provide more energy efficient.

GLH is extending the ways we support people to secure the housing solutions they need. We were successful in securing funding from the Department of Communities and Local Government for a pilot project to increase access to private sector accommodation across South-West London. Over the next two years we will be aiming to secure appropriate private rented accommodation for over 200 people with learning disabilities.



“Jeff has got to know his local police community support officer after GLH arranged a home visit so he could find out how they could help him.”

Maintaining standards

For most tenants, their families and support networks, how we respond to maintenance problems is critical and largely determines their view of GLH as a whole. In 2008/09 we placed over 4600 works orders and spent nearly £1.1 million maintaining our properties.

We intend investing over £1.2 million in property maintenance in 2009/10.

All repairs calls are handled through a dedicated team based in our Manchester office; and we provide an out-of-hours emergency response service. We have arrangements in place with selected contractors who understand the particular needs of our tenants and provide good value for money. Much of our maintenance is now carried out under a planned works regime.

However, we recognise the need to further improve the quality of our maintenance service and are taking steps to achieve this through the recruitment of new staff, investing in new technology and implementing a rolling programme of stock condition surveys.

Our tenants get involved

Tenant involvement is central to GLH’s approach to the delivery of services. Understanding their views, priorities and aspirations is a vital first step in meeting their needs and improving services across the board. GLH forms close relationships with tenants, support networks and family members.

During the course of the year our tenant inclusion officer arranged meetings of the tenant forums we have established around the country which have been well attended.

Each of these themed meetings has been chaired by a different GLH tenant. The objective is to discuss their well-being, share information and ascertain the views of tenants and their support networks on a number of key issues relevant to their home and the services we provide.

GLH works in partnership with other organisations including the emergency services to provide specialist advice to the tenants at their forums and homes. The knowledge gained can be utilised by GLH tenants in their homes and in their communities.

Creating a better place to live

CASE STUDIES



Paul's story

Paul lived in residential care at Trevean Gardens before GLH helped him to move into his own flat in Penzance. Paul has become more independent since living in his own home and this has enabled a reduction in his support needs.

Paul has a very busy and active life. He told us, "I am also a volunteer at the hospital in Hayle for a couple of hours each week and I went on a protest march to save the hospital and the result is that the hospital is still open."

"Paul's independence and skills have grown over the last 10 years and no longer needs as much support."

Paul told us more about his independent life style, "I don't have much support now, just one half hour visit every two weeks, apart from this I do everything myself like my washing, cooking, cleaning and shopping. Over the years, with help, I have also learnt how to manage my money. I am much more independent now than when I was living in the care home - one of the good things about living in my own home is that I can choose what I want to eat for my tea!"

Becky, Paul's housing support officer at GLH said, "I mainly meet Paul at his flat to check that everything is alright. Sometimes we go out to tea and have a really good chat. Paul really likes it when we do that. Because I am the one who mainly meets with Paul I know about him and how much support he is receiving from other agencies and this helps me to judge how well he is managing. I know what is going on in his life and about the things that matter to him."

Paul is a character name as GLH is respecting the wishes of our tenant who would like his name to remain anonymous.



Ruth, Marie and Rosemary's story

GLH was approached by the supported living team at Nottinghamshire County Council to lease a bungalow in Bingham. The property was subject to a large scale refurbishment and the finished bungalow is completely unrecognisable. The Council had set aside monies to fund the required works which GLH agreed to project manage.

Ruth, Marie and Rosemary were fully involved in the development of their home; choosing the colours of the communal areas, designing their own bedrooms and selecting their own white goods.

Leading up to the move, the ladies' care provider, United Response, spent months helping them to build up strong relationships. This has proved to be invaluable to the ladies and their families.

In June this year, Ruth, Marie and Rosemary moved into their home. They could not be happier! The bungalow has been adapted to meet their needs, including an appropriate bath and wheelchair access throughout.

Had the move not taken place, Rosemary would still be living in a small bedroom within a registered care home; having little independence, Ruth would still be living with her elderly father and Marie would still be living with her elderly mother.

“The ladies are having lots of fun learning new things.”

“Since moving in the ladies have developed their independent living skills. Everyday brings a new challenge and everyone gets involved and we have lots of fun. Working here is excellent; I couldn't ask for a better job!” Kelly, team manager.



By working together; GLH, Nottinghamshire County Council and United Response have helped to change these ladies lives forever.

A shared responsibility

Board of trustees

Continuing to provide strong leadership, our board has overseen another successful year for GLH. We shall be seeking to recruit some new trustees during 2009/10 to further strengthen our governance arrangements.

Trustees in office as at 30th September 2009 were:



Neil McCall



Ann Crook



Stuart Kelly



Jock Lennox



Jan Tregelles
Company secretary

Leadership team

The board continues to work closely with members of the leadership team who are responsible for the day-to-day running of GLH. Reflecting the board's commitment to continuous service improvement, the team has recently welcomed Lloyd Bradshaw MRICS into the newly created post of head of operations.

The leadership team comprises:



Simon Parkinson
Director GLH
simon.parkinson@glh.org.uk



Lloyd Bradshaw
Head of operations
lloyd.bradshaw@glh.org.uk



Mark McGoogan
Head of business
development
mark.mcgoogan@glh.org.uk



Lindsey Owen
Finance manager
lindsey.owen@glh.org.uk
**Maternity cover for
Marilyne Davis.**

Meeting the challenges

The next 12 months will be extremely demanding for us. However, we have every confidence the board and leadership team will respond positively so as to ensure GLH continues to flourish as a high performing organisation in which partners can continue to invest with confidence and which makes a *real* difference to people's lives.

Strength in numbers

GLH finished the 2008/09 business year in surplus and with a cash positive result. The record low Bank of England base rate had a positive impact on the 2008/09 results but we are mindful that this is only a short term benefit. GLH continues to satisfy all of its lenders' covenants and is well-placed financially to meet the ambitious targets as set out its five year business plan.

		2009	2008
		£000s	£000s
1	This is what we own:		
	We own houses and equipment	63,916	58,604
	Money owed to us in rent and grants	891	1,545
	We have this much cash in our bank	2,876	1,233
	Total	67,683	61,382
2	This is what we owe:		
	Money to our contractors and others	3,195	2,925
	Grants we have received and not yet spent	295	244
	Loans on our properties	40,011	40,700
	Total	43,501	43,869
3	This is what is left and it is made up of:		
	General reserve	3,564	2,312
	Designated reserve: property development	4,885	4,031
	Restricted funds: property acquisition	15,733	11,170
	Total	24,182	17,513
1	This is where the money came from into GLH this year:		
	Rental income	7,648	7,202
	Capital and works grants	5,358	5,298
	Other income	116	571
	Total	13,122	13,071
2	This is what GLH spent this year:		
	Services, repairs, staffing and running costs	4,321	4,036
	Interest we paid to the bank	2,132	2,566
	Total	6,453	6,602
3	This is the money left after GLH's costs:		
	Money left to go into general reserve	1,252	1,361
	Money designated: property development	854	302
	Money restricted: property acquisition	4,563	4,806
	Total	6,669	6,469

The above figures are extracted from GLH's annual accounts for the financial year ended 31st March 2009 which received an unqualified audit opinion. A full copy of the accounts is available from GLH's finance manager.

Looking forward with confidence

There's a real buzz around GLH! We have strengthened our teams and created a culture and workplace where staff feel valued and proud to work. Central to our strategy is to remain a market leader throughout our areas of operation. To do so, we recognise the importance of ensuring our products and services are innovative, efficiently delivered to a high standard and competitively priced.



Developing and providing services

GLH remains committed to providing a customer-focused approach and developing the range of services we offer. Some of these will involve GLH continuing to provide housing directly - others will see us providing advice and guidance to people with a learning disability who are not tenants of GLH, their friends, relatives and support providers. We will also offer services to a range of partner landlords and support agencies. We are now piloting a series of exciting new initiatives which we believe have huge potential including:

- **Ordinary houses in ordinary streets**

A further development of GLH's rented model with properties remaining in GLH ownership.

- **Our house**

A legacy and inheritance planning initiative to enable the family home to be used as a way of securing accommodation for people with a learning disability.

- **Great tenants**

A vehicle for introducing people with a learning disability into the private rented market and supporting them and the private landlords to create sustainable housing solutions.

- **My place**

Shared ownership opportunities for people with a learning disability.



We recognise the importance of striving for further improvements in all that we do; and will be implementing further significant changes and developing new strategies over the coming months as we continue our evolution.

We will continue working in partnership with Mencap in raising the profile of learning disability and highlighting the need for additional investment in providing homes and support services for people with a learning disability.

Securing tenancies will continue to form an important part of our work – this is of vital importance in providing peace of mind to GLH tenants, their families and support networks. We will continue to build on our successes following some recent Tribunal decisions and appeals.

In summary, GLH is fully committed to making a **real** difference to the lives of people with a learning disability.

Contact us

If you would like any advice or further information about Golden Lane Housing please contact us:



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An accessible version is also available on request.

A special thank you to everyone that has taken part in the photographs used in this report.



This report been produced on recycled paper.



What do you think? At GLH, we are keen to ensure the information we provide in our publications is both interesting and informative. We would appreciate feedback from you on the style and content of this report using one of the options above.
Thank you for your time.