



southessexhomes

working together

TOWARDS EXCELLENCE SOUTH ESSEX HOMES STRATEGIC VISION 2010 – 2015



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On 23 October 2005 we established South Essex Homes as an Arms Length Management Organisation (ALMO) that is committed to putting residents at the heart of everything we do.

Early in 2009 we were delighted to be advised by the Audit Commission that they considered us to be a two star, good organisation with promising prospects for further improvement. Achieving this result has enabled us to unlock £57.8m to bring all Southend Borough Council's properties up to the Government's Decent Homes Standard.

We are naturally, and I believe justifiably, proud of our achievements but we could not have got this far alone. Our partnership with individual residents, the Tenants and Residents Federation, Southend on Sea Borough Council, the Audit Commission, Communities and Local Government, GO-East, Contractors and a whole range of other organisations has been the platform on which our success is built. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the organisations and individuals who have contributed to our journey so far.

It is those partnerships, and the understanding we have developed of the needs and aspirations of our customers that forms the starting point for the next stage of our journey. We face the challenge of continuing to improve services and deliver the Decent Homes Programme in a demanding and unpredictable economic environment.

This document represents our strategic vision. It has been developed in full partnership with our stakeholders and sets out our aims and aspirations for the future. A future in which South Essex Homes continues to make a positive and wide reaching contribution to the local community with residents increasingly at the heart of our business. I believe the experience of our journey so far and the strength of our partnerships means that we can face the future with optimism and confidence. I look forward to working with you to create excellent services and a sustainable future for South Essex Homes.

Phil Lyons
Chair, South Essex Homes



ABOUT US

OUR PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

South Essex Homes manage over 6200 affordable homes, 500 leasehold properties and 75 hostel units on behalf of the residents of Southend Borough Council.

We also provide services to other business customers including:

- Circle Anglia Housing Group
- Castle Point Borough Council
- Estuary Housing Association
- Southend Borough Council Care Leavers Team

As part of our drive to achieve excellence and create a sustainable future for our business we plan to provide services to a wider range of customers. The services we provide include:

- Comprehensive housing management for residential accommodation with expertise in:
 - Income Management
 - Anti Social behaviour
 - Tenancy Sustainment.

All our Tenancy Management team are Community Safety accredited with Essex Police and we have three directly employed Tenancy Sustainment Officers.

- Mobile Caretaking Services operating 7 days a week 365 days a year through British Institute of Cleaning Sciences accredited Caretakers. Our Caretaking Service also offers a rapid response Bulk Refuse and Graffiti Removal Service.
- The delivery of high quality repairs and maintenance services through effective contractor management, asset management and quality control. We are among the best in the country at managing Gas Safety and also deliver a reinvestment programme with a value in excess of £15M per year. All our Asset Management, Stock Condition Surveying and Engineering expertise is delivered through our in-house team.
- Telecare Services accredited Careline Services providing emergency response telephony based services to a wide range of people in the Community. As well as providing services to residents of Southend Borough Council properties, Careline provides passive response and Telecare services to other organisations and private homeowners allowing people to stay in their homes longer and enjoy an enhanced quality of life.



- Specialist accommodation for vulnerable people including Older People and Care Leavers as well as people experiencing homelessness.
- Resident Involvement Services which allow residents to engage in a wide range of ways both collectively and individually such as our Sounding Board, focus groups, mystery shopping, telephone based surveys, and resident associations. Through our Regional Champion status we provide support and training to a wide range of similar organisations.
- A fully integrated “One Stop Shop” providing an immediate response to over 80% of the enquiries made by Customers across the full range of services we provide.



As well as the service we deliver to our Customers directly we also have a team of specialists in:

- Equality and Diversity
- Service Improvement
- Governance
- Performance Management
- Health and Safety
- Human Resources

OUR MISSION

Since our creation South Essex Homes has been an ambitious and creative organisation driven by a desire to involve residents, use resources effectively and make a real difference to local people. This is captured in our mission statement:

Working together to:

- Involve residents
- Invest in Decent Homes
- Improve Services

and build strong, proud communities

ABOUT US

CONTINUED

OUR VALUES

We realise that our success is about who we are and how we behave as well as what we do. Our approach is underpinned by a set of values developed through consultation with staff and residents capturing the things that are important to us:

- Customer Focus
- Excellence
- Efficiency
- People
- Sustainability



OUR AIMS

This document sets out a framework for our ambitions and aspirations over the next five years. The objectives for achieving our aims are set out below:

Ensure fair and equal access to excellent services for all our residents and business customers.

To achieve this we will:

- Deliver the year on year performance set out in our 'Plan for Excellence' and achieve an "Excellent" rating at our next regulatory inspection
- Increase our ability to design services around our Customers by achieving resident profile coverage of 87% in 2010 and increase this by 1% year on year thereafter
- Demonstrate our commitment to Equality and Diversity through the achievement of an Excellent rating by March 2011

Bring all homes up to the Decent Homes Standard by 2013 and ensure they continue to be maintained at a level that meets residents' expectations:

To achieve this we will:

- Deliver the planned Decent Homes Programme on time and on budget in accordance with the targets agreed by Council, Residents and Board
- Achieve the 'Plan for Excellence' year on year increases in satisfaction levels with improvement works to residents homes

Contribute to meeting housing need and increasing the supply of affordable homes locally.

To achieve this we will:

- Deliver 15 affordable homes through the Empty Dwelling Management Order programme in partnership with Southend Borough Council over the next five years
- Work in partnership with Southend Borough Council to develop a strategic approach for the provision of new homes by December 2010
- Create access to a further 100 affordable homes over the next five years through partnership with public and private sector organisations

Increase our local customer base to create a healthy, sustainable future for our business.

To achieve this we will:

- Develop a strategy and action plan to raise awareness among potential business customers about the range and quality of the services South Essex Homes can provide
- Identify an additional range of services we can provide for other organisations in the first year of this plan in line with our New Business and Marketing plan
- Increase the number of homes we manage on behalf of other landlords in line with our New Business and Marketing Plan

Further develop our contribution to local neighbourhoods to improve the quality of life for our residents.

To achieve this we will:

- Develop a Positive Neighbourhoods agenda and action plan in partnership with residents and community stakeholders by July 2011
- Develop standards for our neighbourhoods in line with Tenant Services Authority expectations
- Improve satisfaction with neighbourhoods in accordance with the targets set out in our 'Plan for Excellence'



ABOUT US

CONTINUED

Promote environmental sustainability and minimise the negative impact we have on the climate.

To achieve this we will:

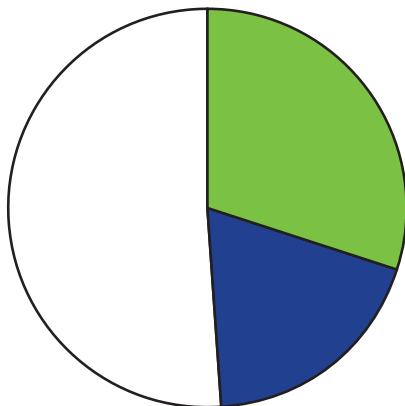
- Develop a sustainability strategy and action plan by December 2010
- Achieve continuous improvement against the measures of energy efficiency contained in our 'Plan for Excellence'
- Review our procurement arrangements by April 2011 to ensure they maximise the use of products and procedures that minimise damage to the environment

In creating this vision we have taken into account feedback from our customers and also from the wider operating environment.

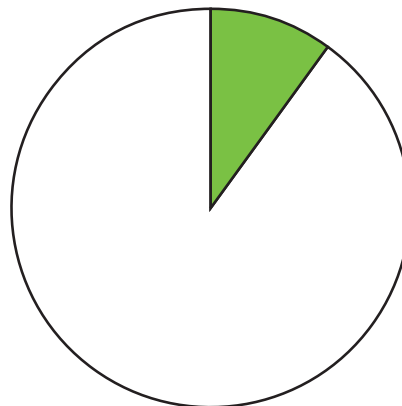
OUR RESIDENTS

Southend has an increasingly diverse population. The detailed information we now have on the needs of over 85% of our residents is integrated into our approach to service delivery. Some of the headlines from our profile are: (Shown graphically)

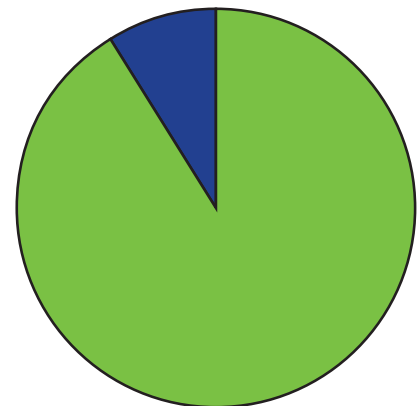
- 30% of residents have a longstanding illness or disability compared to 19% of the residents of Southend borough as a whole.
- 10% have mobility issues.
- 91% of tenants consider themselves to be white British, with the largest ethnic minorities being African and Bangladeshi.



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10% of our residents have mobility issues



91% of tenants consider themselves to be white British

In the consultation to develop this vision residents have made clear to us that they recognise services have got better and they want South Essex Homes to continue to deliver improved services. They have also told us what their priorities are:

- High quality Repairs and Maintenance Services
- Clean and Safe Neighbourhoods where people want to live and action against Anti Social Behaviour
- The provision of more affordable rented homes for local people to meet a wider range of needs
- A sustainable future for South Essex Homes to enable us to continue to deliver high quality services

OUR TRACK RECORD

SOUTH ESSEX HOMES' JOURNEY SO FAR...



OCTOBER 2005: SOUTH ESSEX HOMES SET UP FOLLOWING OPTIONS APPRAISAL



OPENING OF NEW 'ONE STOP SHOP'



BUSINESS AWARDS WINNERS- EXCELLENT CUSTOMER SERVICE AND BEST BUSINESS IN THE COMMUNITY



LEADING ON INTERNATIONAL WOMENS DAY 2007



ENGAGING WITH RESIDENTS THROUGH THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE



AUDIT COMMISSION INSPECTION – 'GOOD SERVICE, PROMISING PROSPECTS'



£10 MILLION DECENT HOMES INVESTMENT IN 2009/10



SECURING OF NEW PARTNERSHIP WITH CONNAUGHTS TO PROVIDE DAY TO DAY REPAIRS AND PH JONES FOR GAS SERVICING



JOINT WORKING PARTNERSHIP ESTABLISHED WITH CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU



INTRODUCTION OF 7 DAY A WEEK CARETAKING SERVICE AND BICS QUALIFICATION FOR CARETAKERS



ESTABLISHMENT OF TENANCY SUSTAINMENT COURSE



ALMO TEAM MEMBER OF THE YEAR NOMINATION



COMMUNITY SAFETY ACCREDITATION



DOUBLE ACCREDITATION FOR ASB AND CARELINE SERVICE



NEW BUSINESS – PARTNERSHIP WITH CIRCLE ANGLIA

LOOKING OUTWARDS

CONTINUED

OUR BUSINESS PARTNERS

We recognise that increasing the volume and range of local services we provide is fundamental to a healthy business and can add value to the services people receive at a local level.

Building on our existing business-to-business relationships we commissioned some research to improve our understanding of the circumstances in which other organisations might commission our services. This research told us that potential Business Partners:

- are interested to see what comparative services would look like and how they could add value
- believe the local focus of South Essex Homes is positive and the relationship with our Business Customers should be separate from that with our residents.
- would be happy to consider South Essex Homes carrying out services on their behalf providing we could offer improved quality or reduced cost.

They also told us that they needed to know more about South Essex Homes and they would be even more likely to see us a potential Business Partner if we were rated as excellent by the regulator.

OUR STAKEHOLDERS

As part of the development of this document we carried out extensive consultation with our key stakeholders including:

- Residents
- Southend Borough Council
- Business Customers
- Contractors
- Partner Agencies
- Staff – Our people



Our stakeholders felt the environment in which we would be working over the next five to ten years would be characterised by:

- Increased demand for affordable housing resulting from economic, social and land supply pressures.
- A wider range of needs from increasingly vulnerable applicants and a requirement for more multi-agency provision.
- Greater rationalisation within the affordable housing sector following the drive to reduce expenditure and regulatory pressure.
- A wider role for social landlords in promoting and supporting community cohesion.
- Increased pressure on the finances of all social landlords requiring new and more diverse sources of income.



FUNDING

South Essex Homes is owned and funded by Southend on Sea Borough Council primarily through the Housing Revenue Account. The Government has undertaken a review of the Housing Subsidy System the purpose of which was “to develop a sustainable, long term system for financing council housing, one that is consistent with wider housing policy”

We recognise that the outcomes of the review will provide us with both challenges and opportunities. We continue to work closely with the Council to keep our management fee competitive and use externally generated income to allow us to reduce our management fee in real terms and continue to improve services.

NEW HOMES

The Homes and Communities Agency has been created as the new funding body for affordable housing and a range of organisations will be able to apply for funding from the National Affordable Housing Programme (NAHP) including the Council and South Essex Homes. We anticipate working closely with the Council to enable us to make a real contribution to the provision of new affordable housing.

LOOKING OUTWARDS

CONTINUED

REGULATION

In 2010 the Tenancy Services Authority became responsible for regulating all affordable housing, whether it's provided by local authorities, arm's-length management organisations or housing associations. We see the establishment of the new regulator as a positive step and will be working closely with the Tenant Services Authority to contribute to the raising of standards in affordable housing.

ALMO SECTOR

ALMO's, like South Essex Homes, are a comparatively new type of organisation but have been developing rapidly and adapting to changing circumstances. We have given considerable thought, in partnership with our stakeholders, to what the future might hold for us. Through this vision we are aiming to realise our potential to:

- Deliver new services for our host Council
- Provide Services for other organisations
- Participate in New Build affordable housing initiatives
- Participate in wider regeneration activities



CLOSING REMARKS FROM OUR CHIEF EXECUTIVE

South Essex Homes is determined to continue growing and delivering excellent services to our residents and business customers well beyond the completion of the current Decent Homes Programme. I appreciate the support that has been given to South Essex Homes over the last four years and recognise the value this has added to our business.

I believe "Towards Excellence" sets a positive vision for our organisation that will enable us to make an even greater contribution to the communities we serve. Furthermore, because of the extensive consultation we have undertaken I am confident this vision is shared and supported by all our stakeholders.

Thank you for your support on our journey so far.

Mike Gatrell
Chief Executive, South Essex Homes



Bengali

যদি আপনার মাতৃভাষায় এই ডকুমেন্টটির একটি কপি পেতে হান অথবা যদি আপনি আমাদের সাথে যোগাযোগ করতে হান অথবা অনুবাদ করে নিজে মনুস্করে মোল করান। আমাদের টেলিফোন অনুবাদক আছেন যারা আপনার প্রশ্নের উত্তর নিতে পারবেন।

Albanian

Nëse dëshironi një kopje të këtij dokumenti në gjuhën tuaj ose nëse dëshironi të na kontaktoni, ju lutemi telefononi në numrin e mëposhtëm. Ne kemi përkthyes nëpërmjet telefonit të cilët mund t'iu përgjigjen pyetjeve tuaja.

Gujarati

જો તમારે આ દસ્તાવેજની નકલ તમારી પહેલી ભાષામાં જોઈતી હોય, અથવા જો તમારે અમારો સંપર્ક સાધવો હોય, તો નીચે આપેલ નંબર ઉપર કોલ કરો. અમારી પાસે અનુવાદકો છે, જે તમારા પ્રશ્નોના જવાબ ફોન ઉપર આપી શકે છે.

Cantonese

如果你想要一份中文譯本，請撥打以下號碼與我們聯絡。我們有翻譯人員透過電話來解答你的提問。

French

Si vous souhaitez obtenir une copie de ce document dans votre langue maternelle ou si vous souhaitez nous contacter, veuillez téléphoner au numéro indiqué ci-dessous. Nous avons des traducteurs qui peuvent répondre au téléphone à vos questions.



0800 833 160

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