

# Annual Report

## 2010-11



## Our “Local Offer” to You

In the Annual Report to Tenants 2010, we said that we were working with Innisfree’s Tenant Scrutiny Panel to review the service standards that you could expect to receive from Innisfree. This is also known as our “local offer” and it states that no matter what type of tenancy you have, you can expect the same level of service from us. This was completed in 2011 and is set out in the Customer Care Service Promise and covers service areas such as;

- How we communicate with you
- How we involve tenants in making decisions
- Rents and service charges
- Repairs
- Anti-social behaviour
- Complaints

Tenants on the Scrutiny Panel were keen that the document was easily understood so we sent it to the Plain English Campaign which made some changes before awarding it their Crystal Mark to show it met their requirements. If you would like a copy, please contact your housing officer or look on our website using the following link:

[http://www.innisfree.org.uk/tsi\\_03\\_key\\_policies.php](http://www.innisfree.org.uk/tsi_03_key_policies.php)

Alternatively go to the Innisfree website, [www.innisfree.org.uk](http://www.innisfree.org.uk) and click on Tenant Services Info, then Key Policies and you will then see Customer Service Promise.



Innisfree Board members, staff and tenants at Clochar Court”

## How well did we do last year?

It isn’t enough to look at our performance in isolation to the rest of the housing sector and we are now comparing how good we are with the Solomon/Solfed benchmarking group and with all other housing associations nationally who are members of Housemark.

Rent loss from empty homes (general needs and sheltered)	
Innisfree	0.48%
Solomon/Solfed average	1.19%
Housemark average	1.12%
Comment on performance	Very much better than average

The tables (left) show a selection of performance data which illustrate how we compare.

Generally, we have performed well within the two benchmarking groups but more work is needed to tackle the level of outstanding rent arrears owed

Proportion of rent collected	
Innisfree	100.61%
Solomon/Solfed average	100.26%
Housemark average	99.84%
Comment on performance	Better than average

Rent arrears as a % of current rent debit	
Innisfree	6.16%
Solomon/Solfed average	5.32%
Housemark average	2.68%
Comment on performance	Worse than average

% of all repairs competed within target	
Innisfree	97%
Solomon/Solfed average	97.66%
Housemark average	97.56%
Comment on performance	Same as average

## What we are doing in 2011-12

Having reported on the work that has been done in the past year, there are a number of areas that Innisfree staff are working on to improve the services provided to tenants.

### Satisfaction Survey

The main area of focus will be implementing the action plan arising from the satisfaction report carried out by a consultant, John Barry, over the summer of 2011. This review looked at why tenant satisfaction in some service areas had fallen, such as repairs and customer service. The consultant interviewed staff, tenants and contractors and found that improvements were needed in the following areas;

- Contact with staff by telephone including when the office is closed
- Response repairs service including contractor code of conduct, management of contractors and satisfaction levels
- Estate management (cleaning and gardening of schemes)
- Out-of-hours repairs service

Officers will present an action plan to the Tenant Scrutiny Panel, Housing Services Committee and Board which will show how Innisfree will address the issues raised in the report.

We hope that you will see an improvement in a number of areas of our service to you and we would welcome any feedback you have, both good and bad.

### Priorities for Spending

Because of low interest rates, we have a small amount of extra money to spend this year and we are looking at how best to use it. We are looking at a number of options including measures to help overcrowded tenants, improve energy efficiency and improve the fabric of our homes. We will let tenants know more about this in our December newsletter.

## The Tenant Scrutiny Panel

Although I had been a tenant of Innisfree Housing Association for 18 years, I really didn't know much about how the organisation was run. When I retired, I decided I would like to learn more about it and see if I could help in any way. I was asked to become a member of the Tenant Scrutiny Panel (TSP).

We are a group of 9 tenants, who meet every 6 weeks or so to look at different issues, raise concerns and discuss any policy changes etc. Everyone is very friendly and we come from different backgrounds. However, we have a shared aim, which is to suggest ways of improving the service Innisfree offers to its tenants. We feel that especially during this time of possible changes to Housing Benefit, security of tenancies and cut backs, it is even more important that tenants have a voice. It has been my experience that staff members are very willing to listen to what we have to say, that they explain changes easily and take on board any suggestions that they feel will benefit everyone.

Why don't you join us? The meetings are very informal and everyone has a chance to say what they want. We have vacancies for another 3 members. If you are interested, please call Matthew Wicks on 020 7692 1244 for an informal chat.

Sue O'Connor



Irish minister visits the Innisfree Library even – March 2010

Des Browne,



Jackie Buchanan



Geraldine Gordon



Back row left to right; Bernadette Gallagher, Sue O'Connor and Sue Brennan. Front row left to right; Gerry Shanahan, Margaret Carroll and Jennifer Rahman

## The Tenant Services Authority National Standards

In last year's Annual Report to Tenants, we said how we met the TSA standards and where we don't, what changes we need to make. This year, we report on where these changes have been made.

Standard 1 Tenant Involvement and Empowerment		
What we must do	What we said we need to change	What we have done
Registered Providers (RPs) shall provide choice, information and communication that is appropriate to the diverse needs of their tenants in the delivery of all standards	Put all relevant policies & procedures on Innisfree website by 31/3/11  Review Customer Care Charter by July 2011. TSP will be asked to contribute to this review  Increase the number of tenants where we hold this information by 31/3/11	Completed on time  Completed on time  Increased across all diversity strands
RPs shall support co-regulation with their tenants by offering all tenants a wide range of opportunities to be involved in the management of their housing, including the ability to influence strategic priorities, the formulation of housing-related policies and the delivery of housing-related services	Specific agreement to be sought with TSP on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What the performance standards/targets should be.</li> <li>• Monitoring &amp; reporting arrangements</li> <li>• What to do if local offers not met.</li> </ul> This to be agreed with Board in Feb 2011. Timetable to be agreed with TSP	Tenant Scrutiny Panel (TSP) involved

Standard 2 Home		
What we must do	What we said we needed to change	What we have done
RPs shall ensure that tenants' homes meet the standard set out in section 5 of the Government's Decent Homes Guidance by 31/12/10 and continue to maintain their homes to at least this standard after this date	Report outcome of Stock Condition Survey (SCS) in October 2010	SCS completed on time and reported to TSP and Board. All Innisfree homes are Decent Homes compliant.
RPs shall provide a cost-effective repairs and maintenance service to homes and communal areas that responds to the needs of, and offers choices to, tenants and has the objective of completing repairs and improvements "right first time"	The TSP asked for further work to be done to improve the quality of the out-of-hours repair service. Work has started and will conclude by October 2010.	TSP consulted on out-of-hours service and new contractor and service will be in place November 2011.
RPs shall meet all applicable statutory requirements that provide for health and safety of the occupants in their homes.	The TSP felt that the service should be publicised more including a newsletter article in July 2010.	Newsletter articles on Gas Safety and Fire Safety in 2010 and 2011.

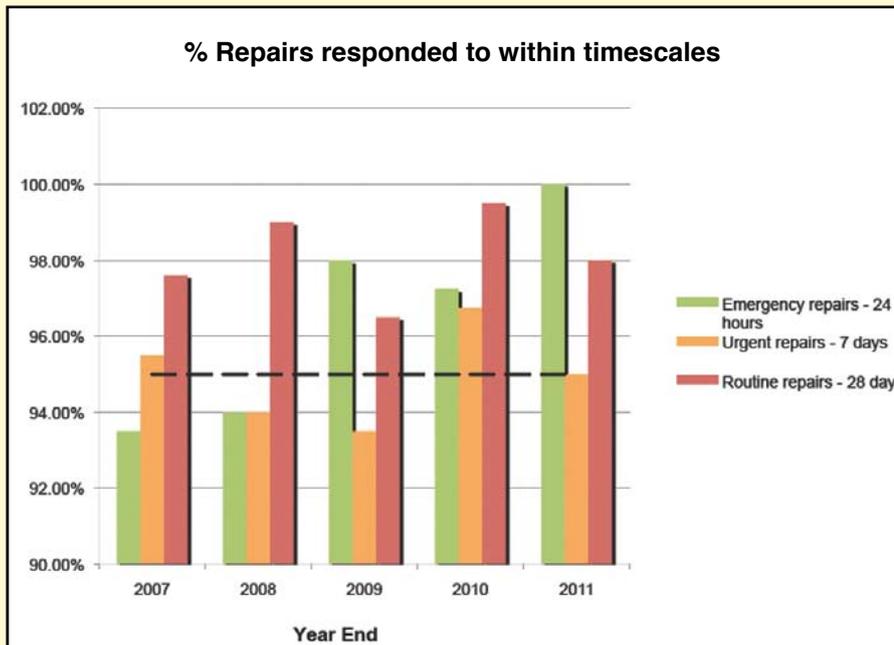
Des Maloney and  
Sheila O'Donovan of  
Kylemore Court



<b>Standard 3 Tenancy</b>		
<b>What we must do</b>	<b>What we said we needed to change</b>	<b>What we have done</b>
<p>RP's shall let their homes in a fair, transparent and efficient way. They shall take into account the housing needs and aspirations of tenants and potential tenants. They shall demonstrate how they make best use of available housing</p> <p>RP's shall charge rents in accordance with the objectives and framework set out in the Government's Direction to the TSA of November 2009</p>	<p>Review in April 2011</p> <p>The TSP requested that the Innisfree newsletter have space reserved for tenants who want to advertise their homes for swapping. This will be considered for the Autumn 2010 newsletter</p> <p>The TSP requested that more information be provided on how rents are calculated and why there is a variation in rents of similar size homes. This will be done for the Autumn 2010 newsletter</p>	<p>Annual Lettings Plan for 2010-11 reviewed in May 2011</p> <p>Policy to be reviewed in 2012</p> <p>HomeSwapper exchange publicised in newsletter. Further work needed on tenants advertising for exchanges to be done in November 2011</p> <p>Newsletter article completed October 2010.</p>
<b>Standard 4 Neighbourhood and Community</b>		
<b>What we must do</b>	<b>What we said we needed to change</b>	<b>What we have done</b>
<p>RP's shall keep the neighbourhood and communal areas associated with the homes that they own clean and safe. They shall work in partnership with their tenants and other providers and public bodies where it is effective to do so.</p>	<p>Review cleaning and gardening contractors by October 2011</p>	<p>Review on-going with additional contractors added.</p> <p>Action plan arising from Customer Satisfaction Survey 2011 includes closer monitoring of contractors through housing officer inspections and reviews.</p>
<b>Standard 5 Value for Money</b>		
<b>What we must do</b>	<b>What we said we needed to change</b>	<b>What we have done</b>
<p>In meeting all TSA standards, including their local offers, RP's shall have a comprehensive approach to managing their resources to provide cost-effective, efficient, quality services and homes to meet tenants' and potential tenants' needs.</p>	<p>TSP to be involved in reviewing this standard.</p>	<p>Customer satisfaction survey carried out 2011 identified areas where value-for-money and improvements can be made including response repairs, customer focus and estate management. TSP and Housing Services Committee members to oversee progress of action plan to address issues.</p> <p>Annual reviews of 2010 and 2011 include breakdown of costs by service area.</p>
<b>Standard 6 Governance and Financial Viability</b>		
<b>No requirement for report on this standard</b>		

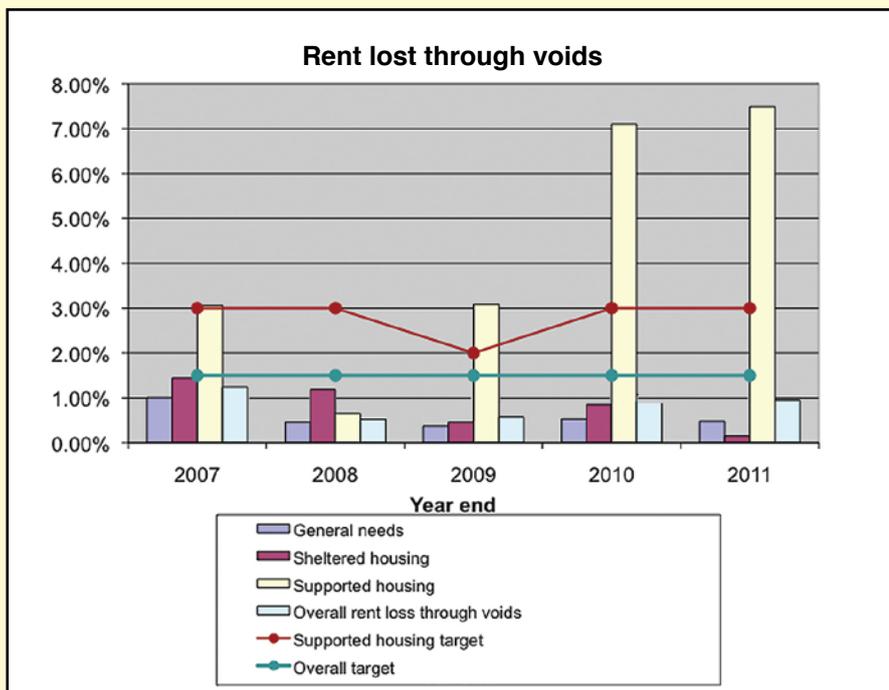
## Performance Graphs

Repairs performance has met or exceeded targets set for repairs completed on time.

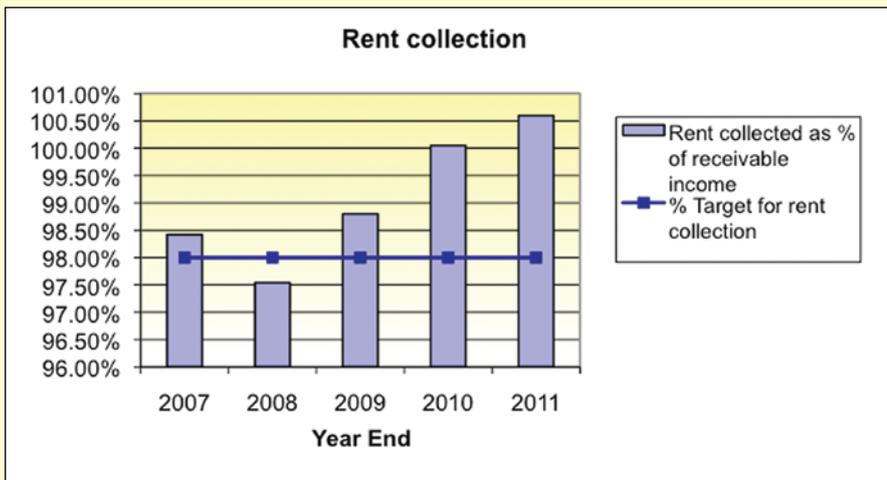


Clochar Court scheme manager Cecilia Greene and resident Margaret Carroll are presented with a currach by Innisfree tenant, Geraldine Gordon. This model boat sits proudly over the fireplace at Clochar Court."

Rent loss overall was within target but loss of income through empty supported housing rooms was higher than expected.



The amount of rent collected was over 100% for the second year running which has a positive effect on the amount of rent owed to Innisfree



Performance on rent arrears has improved overall since 2009. The exception is with money owed by supported housing tenants where the debt increased in 2011

