

## Happy New Year!

### A message from the Chair of WATMOS, Terry Edis



Welcome to the first Tenants Newsletter of 2008 and may I wish you all a happy and prosperous New Year.

We are approaching our fifth birthday with a real sense of achievement. The successes of WATMOS and the TMOs over the years have demonstrated very clearly what local people can do when they control their own services. All our homes now meet the Government's Decent Homes Standard, our performance in many areas is amongst the best in the Country, we are strong and stable financially and our regulator the Housing Corporation sees us as a reliable and 'low-risk' organisation.

This is a great position to be in and gives us confidence as we look ahead and begin to shape our future.

We want to know your views and ideas about the direction of WATMOS during the next five years so please take a little time to complete and return the feedback survey at the end of the newsletter.

You will notice that a number of the articles in this edition provide examples of our investment in schools and other local groups. I think you will agree that this demonstrates our commitment to creating strong, sustainable communities in Walsall.

I hope you enjoy this newsletter.

Terry Edis  
Chair  
WATMOS Community Homes

# Tenant Panel

**The Tenant Panel is a group of residents who are interested in being involved with WATMOS and the TMOs. The Tenant Panel has been meeting for some time but we are hoping to increase the numbers of people who are involved and in particular to get people involved who haven't previously been a member of the Panel or a TMO Committee.**

The Tenant Panel can get involved in all sorts of things, from arranging a big Summer event for all tenants and residents of WATMOS, to thinking about how we get young people involved and what activities we can provide for them. It can also be an opportunity for you to have a say in new policies and procedures that help us deliver our services to you. There are lots of things the Tenant Panel can do – we encourage the members of the Panel to come up with suggestions and ideas – its up to you really!

***If you are interested in being involved and attending the next Tenant Panel meeting please look out for the posters at your TMO or contact WATMOS on 01922 471910 and speak to Lisa Bayliss or Faye Potter. We look forward to hearing from you.***

## Burrowes Street TMO at the heart of the neighbourhood

Have you ever wondered what it would be like if your local TMO was able to take control of more services within your neighbourhood? Burrowes Street TMO is currently exploring this through a scheme supported by the Government. The WATMOS TMO is one of 5 resident-led organisations from across the country exploring an idea called 'Neighbourhood Management' in which a single organisation manages and co-ordinates a range of important local services. The aim is to improve the area and residents' quality of life by taking a more co-ordinated approach.

Burrowes Street is working in partnership with Birmingham Co-operative Housing Services to come up with proposals that would see the TMO focussing on the following issues which are important to local people:

- The local environment (e.g. litter, street cleaning, graffiti and derelict buildings).
- Traffic and street priorities (e.g. parking, congestion and road safety).

- Neighbourhood Policing and Community Safety (e.g. nuisance, noise, drugs and alcohol, facilities for young people).
- A sense of community (e.g. improving local community facilities, improving community involvement and better links between residents and other agencies).
- Housing (e.g. taking a cross-tenure approach to housing issues).

This is an exciting development that could see Walsall's TMO taking on much more than just housing services in future. Watch this space!



# Available Now

Shared ownership two bed apartments at  
Raleigh Street, Walsall, WS2 8QY



**Shared Ownership enables you to buy your home in stages by part buying and part renting at the same time. It allows you to take that first step onto the housing ladder and provides the opportunity to purchase a home that would otherwise be beyond your reach.**

You can begin by purchasing either a 50% or 75% share of the property and paying a proportional rent on the part that which remains in the ownership of WATMOS Community Homes.

In the majority of cases, the share is purchased by means of a mortgage from a Building Society in the usual way. There are many mortgage providers who offer mortgages for shared ownership purchases

2 bedroom apartments have now become available on a 50% ownership 50% rent basis to first time buyers. Conveniently located near the town centre and bus routes, in an area programmed for regeneration.

## **Apartments will consist of:**

2 bedrooms, fitted kitchen including electric oven, gas hob and hood  
Gas Central Heating  
Door Entry system  
Satellite and TV aerial connection  
Electronic gate to secure car park  
Prices are from £55,000 for a 50% share.



For further details please call on **0121 500 2389** or **0845 370 5330** and ask about the Raleigh Street development

**Matrix**  
housing partnership

## **Leamore : Raising money and having fun**

**Since April 2007, Leamore TMO has successful run three fun days. Not only have these events been entertaining for local residents, they have also raised over £1000 for TMO funds. This money is being used to make improvements on the estate (e.g. new benches at Comwall Close and Pembroke House) and to run more community activities in future.**

The fun days have included competitions, homemade cakes and refreshments, bric-a-brac and tombola stalls together with attractions such as a coconut shy and a bouncy castle.

The Leamore TMO Committee would like to thank local people for their continued support.



# Decent homes for all WATMOS tenants!

**We are pleased to announce that all the major works promises we made to you five years ago have now been delivered. This means that all our homes meet the Decent Homes Standard and we have**

**achieved this a year ahead of our plans and two years ahead of the Government's target .**

Since April 2003 we have invested over £15 million pounds in housing improvements. This has included hundreds of new central heating systems, kitchens, bathrooms, insulation and environmental works. We hope you are please with these improvements!

This is not the end of the story, however, the improvements will continue. We expect to invest around £1 million in your homes each year for the next five years and the details of these plans can be found on page...

A small number of tenants have asked us not to complete the necessary works due to their age or ill health.

## Our housing improvement plans for the next five years

We have met the Decent Homes Standard in all our homes but this does not mean that our improvement plans have ended. During the next five years we are hoping to complete the following major works.

### Avenues TMO

- New Gas Central Heating Systems
- New Bathrooms
- New 'Insulating' External Rendering
- External Chimney Works and New Rainwater Goods

### Burrowes Street TMO

- New Night Storage Heating systems ( )

- New Gas Central Heating Systems (Farringdon House)
- Roofing Replacement ( )
- Repairs to External Brickwork/ Floor Slabs (High Rise Flats)
- New Bathrooms (where needed)
- New Kitchens (where needed)

### Chuckery TMO

- New Kitchens
- Block Structural Repairs
- New Estate Footpaths

### Delves East TMO

- New Gas Central Heating Systems
- Footpath and Drying Area Repairs (Communal Areas).

### Delves West TMO

- New Rainwater Goods, Soffits and Facias

### Leamore TMO

- New Bathrooms
- Block Structural Repairs
- Balcony Repairs
- Parking and Environment Improvements

### Sandbank

- Improvements to Ground Floor Entrance Areas.
- Re-surfacing of Lower Car Park
- Block Structural Repairs

### Twin Crescents

- New Gas Central Heating Systems (flats)
- Re-roofing (1 Bedroom, 2 Storey Flats)
- Improvements to Ground Floor Communal Entrance Areas.

# How would you like to be involved?

**In April we will be starting a major review of the opportunities we offer tenants and residents for getting involved in our organisation. Although as a landlord we are already tenant controlled and local TMOs manage most of our services, we are still keen to improve the way we involve you in what we do.**

The Review, which begins in April 2008 for approximately six months will involve all our stakeholders including Board members, employees, committees and tenants/service-users. Dave Badland a tenant committee member at Sandbank TMO has kindly agreed to Chair the Review Steering Group.

## **The Review will;**

- Consult you on the opportunities we currently provide you with to be involved in the shaping and delivery of the service and how you would like to be involved in the future.
- Compare the way we consult with and involve you with other high performing similar organisations
- Explore how Competitive and cost effective our methods of consultation and involvement are and explore the different ways we could do it.
- Challenge the way we consult and involve you and whether it could be done better

This is an opportunity for you to make a real difference in shaping the way in which we consult with and involve you in the management of your home, your community and your area.

There are a number of ways you can get involved in the review;

- Become a member of the steering group
- Get involved with a specific piece of review work
- Tell us your ideas and thoughts about involvement and consultation
- Attend one of the workshops that will take place over the next 8 months

If you would like to get involved in any way please contact Louise Walker on 01922 471227 (email: [louise.walker@watmos.org.uk](mailto:louise.walker@watmos.org.uk)) or write to her at 29 Stafford Street, Walsall WS2 8DG.

# Come to Walsall's independent living event

An Independent Living Event will take in Walsall Town Hall from 12 noon on Tuesday 18th March 2008. The event has been organised jointly by Walsall Council and Walsall Disability Forum.

Independent Living Events are aimed at older people or people that either have or look after someone with a physical disability, sensory impairment or brain injury. The event is a free information event to raise awareness of services available that can be delivered to you by the council, housing associations or voluntary and community sector organisations at little or no cost.

There will be a wide range of organisations represented at the event, including the Centre for Independent Living, Mobile libraries home service, Occupational Therapy, Royal National Institute for the Deaf, Walsall Society for the blind, Walsall Adapted Housing Services and Walsall People.

If you would like more information about the Independent Living Event please contact Vicki Mann, Policy Officer at Walsall Council on 01922 653802 or [mannvicki@walsall.gov.uk](mailto:mannvicki@walsall.gov.uk)



# It's Pony Power For Delves Youngsters

This year, because the Council was unable to run the usual "Ready, Steady, Summer" programme, Delves TMO decided to explore other ways of putting on activities for children in the area.

With funding provided by WATMOS Community Homes and Delves United Charity, the TMO offered one day courses for youngsters aged between 4 and 18 at a riding school in Pelsall. These courses provided an opportunity for the children to experience owning a pony for a day. During the morning sessions the children learned all about looking after the ponies (including grooming and feeding) and in the afternoon they were taught how to ride.

All the children thoroughly enjoyed the experience and were very proud of the certificates they were awarded at the end of the day



## Garden Competition

**The Avenues TMO ran another successful garden competition in June 2007. The competition was judged by Sarah Lloyd, the Housing Services Manager.**

The entries were of a very high standard, and choosing the winners was difficult.

**The winners were:**

**1st Prize M. Ward**

**2nd Prize N. Thacker**

**3rd Prize D. Dennis**

**4th Prize S. Bird.**

Highly commended:  
A. Timbrell, E. Aldridge,  
M. Fryer and P. Grindrod.



# Sandbank Supports Macmillan Nurses

Sandbank TMO Estate Office Staff held a coffee morning in support of Macmillan Cancer Support on Friday 28th September 2007 between 10 am & 12 noon. The event was really successful and raised £273.77 for this very good cause.

A very big thank you to everyone who supported the Macmillan Coffee Morning!



# Sandbank Soccer Support

**Sandbank TMO has demonstrated its commitment to the local community by supporting Bloxwich FC Special Needs Team with a Community Grant to the value of £300.**



# WATMOS Kits out the Swifts!

WATMOS Community Homes has sponsored a local football team, the 'Walsall Swifts' with a £300 community grant to help them buy their kit.

Here's the team showing off their new strip, sporting the WATMOS Community Homes logo.



# Shaping our future

The WATMOS Group has been in business now for five years. During this period we have delivered all the promises we made to you and have established a reliable and financially strong organisation.

So, what does the future hold for us?

We are now thinking about how the organisation should develop over the next five years.

You can help us with this by giving us your views.

Please complete the feedback form below and return it to the Chief Executive, 29 Stafford Street, Walsall WS2 8DG by Friday 1st February 2008.

All completed forms received will be put into a prize draw for £30 in high street vouchers!

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>1. How would you like to see us improve during the next 5 years?</b>          |  |
|  |  |
| <b>2. If we decided to develop new services or activities what should we do?</b> |  |
|  |  |
| <b>3. Please suggest another organisation that we can learn from and why?</b>    |  |
|  |  |
| <b>4. What do you like about living in a TMO area?</b>                           |  |
|  |  |
| <b>Name</b>  |  |
| <b>Address</b>   |  |
| <b>Date</b>  |  |

## Contact Details

You can find **WATMOS** at:  
29 Stafford Street  
Walsall  
WS2 8DG  
Tel: 01922 471910  
Fax: 01922 612967  
Or email us on  
info@watmos.org.uk

You can contact each of the TMOs as follows:

**The Avenues TMO**  
10/11 Second Avenue  
Brownhills  
WS8 6JA  
Tel: 01543 453659  
Email: avenues@watmos.org.uk

**Burrowes Street TMO**  
Burrowes Street  
Walsall  
WS2 8NN  
Tel: 01922 613292  
Fax: 01922 746949  
Email:  
burrowes@watmos.org.uk

**Chuckery TMO**  
2 Brookes House  
Tantarra Street  
Chuckery  
Walsall  
WS1 2HS  
Tel: 01922 644456  
Fax: 01922 640841  
Email:  
chuckery@watmos.org.uk

**Delves East TMO & Delves West TMO**  
West Bromwich Road  
Delves  
Walsall  
WS5 4NW  
Tel: 01922 720790  
Fax: 01922 638658  
Email: delves@watmos.org.uk

**Leamore TMO**  
1 Dover House  
Providence Close  
Leamore  
Walsall  
WS3 2AW  
Tel: 01922 493266  
Fax: 01922 400219  
Email: leamore@watmos.org.uk

**Sandbank TMO**  
1a Clarke House  
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Tel: 01922 400333  
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sandbank@watmos.org.uk

**Twin Crescents TMO**  
11 Grove Crescent  
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