

Issue number 17, Summer 2016

HOME FRONT

JERSEY HOMES TRUST



JERSEY HOMES TRUST NEWSLETTER

'housing people'

Thumbs-up for the Jersey Homes Trust

- **Vandalism down**
- **Anti-social behaviour down**
- **Managers performing well**

The recent JHT Tenants' Survey demonstrated once again that tenants are happy living in their homes.

Just over one-third of our tenants (247) completed and returned the questionnaire,

exactly the same number as in 2011. Of those who replied 72% agreed with the statement "I enjoy living in my home" with a further 22.6% "tending to agree". In response to the statement: "My home satisfies the needs of my family", 70% agreed and 17% "tended to agree".

Tenants are generally happy with the cleanliness of the communal areas, lifts and bin stores within their estates, however there are some estates where specific concerns have been raised

and these will be addressed in due course.

As in previous surveys, the statement, "I would recommend a friend/relative to live in a JHT home" resulted in an extremely positive response with 75.7% of respondents agreeing with the statement and a further 16% "tending to agree". In 2011 the same question resulted in 77.7% and 14.2% respectively.

Responses relating to the managers continue to be

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Two new estates will provide 40 homes

The Jersey Homes Trust is delighted to announce that work on two new estates is progressing and there are a number of other exciting developments in the pipeline.

For some years provision of new social rented accommodation was halted whilst a review into the Island's housing situation was carried out. This is now complete and means that we can continue with our mission to provide homes for Jersey residents, nearly 1,000 of whom are listed as in need of housing.

At a small development in Rue du Haut in St Lawrence, the JHT will have four two-bedroom flats and a detached two-bedroom bungalow with its own garden. All the homes will have a car



Artist's impression of the Grouville estate

parking space. The development will also comprise five three-bedroomed houses which will be for sale to first-

time buyers. The estate is to be named Millbrook Gardens and is due for completion in December of this year.

Meanwhile, we are also delighted to announce that planning permission has now been received for 35 homes to be built on the site of De La Mare's nursery on Rue a Don in Grouville, 29 of which will be owned and managed by the Jersey Homes Trust, the remainder being sold to first-time buyers.

Negotiations about other sites are ongoing and we hope to have more exciting news soon.

Commenting on the progress being made, JHT Chairman Michael Van Neste said: 'We are delighted that things are moving again and pleased that we can continue with the work we started over 20 years ago.'

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extremely positive with 81% of tenants agreeing with the statement that the managers' representatives are "polite and courteous" (compared to 73% in 2011). Tenants are also happy with the way maintenance issues are handled with 73% agreeing that they are dealt with efficiently and a further 18% "tending to agree" (compared to 69% and 22.6% in 2011). Of those who responded, 79% agreed that maintenance staff were courteous.

Incidences of vandalism on estates appear to have fallen with 65.5% of tenants saying that it is "not a problem" (compared to 49% in 2011). In 2011 9% of tenants disagreed

with the statement that "Vandalism is not a problem on my estate", whereas this time only 2.8% agreed with that statement.

There was a similar fall in inconvenience caused by anti-social behaviour with 65% of respondents agreeing with the statement that it is not a problem on their estate. This compares with 53.8% in 2011. During the last 12 months 15 tenants who completed the survey reported 23 instances of anti-social behaviour to the managers, however in 2011 30 tenants reported 47 instances. There is also a marked drop in the number of tenants reporting anti-social behaviour to the police (States or Honorary). In 2011,

31 tenants said they had reported 78 instances, however respondents to the 2016 survey showed 14 people reporting 20 instances.

There were 93 specific comments or concerns raised by tenants in the general comment section of the questionnaire. Many of these were compliments about the service we provide. However, some related to particular issues and these will be addressed. Where possible, tenants who completed this section of the form will receive an individual reply from Brunel. In other cases, their concerns will be addressed through the medium of the newsletter.

The Chairman of the JHT, Michael Van Neste, is encouraged by the latest findings. 'This is an important exercise for us as Trustees,' he said. 'It demonstrates that we are on target in our efforts to provide quality social rented housing for the residents of the Island.'

'This year we are particularly delighted to see a drop in vandalism and anti-social behaviour on our estates. We are also very pleased to see that our managers are highly thought of amongst our tenants.'

'I would like to thank all of you who took the time to complete the questionnaire. Your thoughts and opinions are valuable to us.'

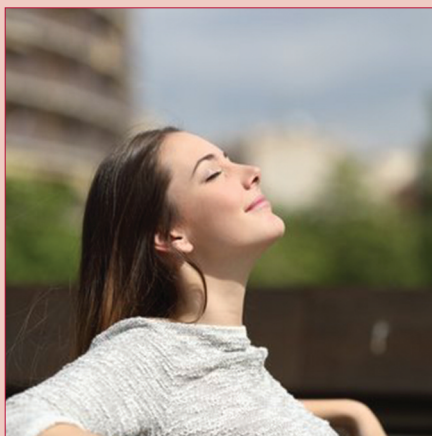
Everyone has a right to clean air

Smoking was highlighted by several of you in the recent survey as a problem. Areas of concern in this respect include smoking in lifts, communal corridors, stairwells and on balconies. People are also concerned about the litter caused by smokers.

Smoking in lifts and communal areas of blocks of flats is illegal under Jersey Law as these areas are classified as "places of work". Delivery people, postmen, cleaners and tradesmen all have to use

the communal areas to reach their destination and, under the law, should not be exposed to hazards of smoke.

As landlords we have a duty of care to all our tenants and the people whose



work necessitates them visiting our premises so we would ask that the smokers amongst you are considerate to your neighbours and others who use your building. Please do not smoke in the communal areas and take care to put your smoking litter in the bins provided. Please also be aware that if you smoke in the communal areas you are actually in breach of your tenancy agreement with the JHT.

Balconies are private spaces which are not covered by law, however please be aware that your neighbours may not like the smell of smoke wafting up or across to their balconies or the associated well-documented health hazards. Again, doing anything which may cause inconvenience or annoyance to any neighbour or nearby residents is in breach of your tenancy agreement.

Telephone List:

Jersey Homes
Trust Managers:
01534 750270

Jersey Water :
01534 707300

Crimestoppers:
0800 555 111

Department of Employment
and Social Security:
01534 445505

Health and Social Services
(all enquiries):

01534 442000

Jersey Gas (main switch)
01534 755500



Summer living

Now that the finer weather has finally arrived and we begin to spend more time outside, don't forget to consider your neighbours when organising outdoor pursuits. Be aware that your activities might impinge on others' enjoyment of their homes and outside spaces.

Balconies: It's fantastic to see colourful plants and home-grown veggies on balconies, but when watering spare a thought for those below you. Ensure that you trap any excess water from pots and growing bags so that it doesn't drip down onto your neighbour's balcony below.

BBQs: Eating al fresco is a great way to wind down at the end of a busy week. But please remember your BBQ etiquette. Watch the way the wind is blowing so that bits and pieces don't fly into your neighbour's garden; remember to clear away all left-over food to avoid being plagued with seagulls; and don't stay outside too late in the evenings – your neighbours might be trying to get their children off to sleep or people on shift work might be trying to get to sleep. Do NOT light a barbecue inside your home or on balconies or patios.

Children: Many of our estates have play areas where children can play safely. Ensure that your children respect these areas by not causing a nuisance and by removing any litter when they leave.



Who is your next of kin

We are asking all our tenants to please notify us of your next of kin. It is important that we know who to call in the case of an emergency or should you pass away. We need this information so that we can ensure that only the people you wish to enter your home have YOUR permission to do so.

There have been a couple of occasions where a tenant has died and someone claiming to be the next of kin has asked for access to the property. Unless we are absolutely sure that the person is authorised by you, then we cannot give

permission. As you can imagine this can cause upset which could be avoided if you take action now.

Please contact our managers as soon as possible to inform them of the name and contact details of your next of kin.

The best way of ensuring that all your wishes are carried out in the event of your death is to make a will. Even if you don't think you have much to leave, it's best to have everything written down legally to ensure that your wishes are properly carried out.

To find out more about making a will in Jersey go to:
http://www.step.org/sites/default/files/Branches/jersey/pdfs/STEP_wills_booklet_revised.pdf

In Brief

Noisy floors

The installation of laminate or similar floor coverings is expressly forbidden in JHT flats with the exception of the ground floor. This is clearly stipulated in your tenancy agreement. However a number of people raised this as an issue in the recent survey. If you are being inconvenienced by the people above you having fitted hard floors please contact the managers who will be able to help.

Don't stint on insurance

Many of us need to reduce household expenditure but we would urge you not to cancel your household contents insurance. We, as your landlord, insure the actual building in which you live, but it is up to you to insure the things that belong to you. If, for instance, a pipe bursts and your home is flooded, the Trust (or its insurers) will pay for the repairs to the pipe and any damage caused to the structure of the property, but it is not responsible for damage to your carpets, furniture, belongings or decorations – that's down to you. Insurance companies can be flexible and many will allow you to pay your premiums quarterly or in some cases monthly, so helping to spread the cost. So, if you are not insured or if you are thinking of cancelling, please think again.

Keeping up appearances

As part of our commitment to maintaining our properties in tip-top condition all our estates are part of a rolling programme of redecoration and refurbishment. The next estates to get a makeover are Maison de St Nicolas, Clement Court, Clos Du Ruisseau and Kent Lodge.

al Services

Jersey Gas
(emergency 24 hour service):
01534 755555

switchboard):

Citizens' Advice Bureau:
0800 735 0249

Jersey Electricity
(main switchboard):
01534 505460

Fire Service:
01534 445951

Jersey Electricity
(emergency 24 hour service):
01534 505050

JT:
01534 882882

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'housing people'



Window maintenance

Windows and doors need regular cleaning to ensure they are in good working order. We recommend that the following steps are undertaken twice a year in the spring and autumn.

- Open the window or door and vacuum and brush around the edges to clear any accumulated debris.
- Wipe and clean all parts of the window or door.
- Use a silicone spray (not WD-40) on all moving parts such as hinges and mechanisms to ensure that the window or door functions properly.
- Finally wipe with a clean damp cloth.

Problems in the bin stores

Bin stores are continuing to cause problems on some of our estates. Issues highlighted in the recent survey range from rubbish not being placed in bins to large items of household furniture being dumped in or near bin stores.

Bin storage areas are provided on estates for the clean and safe disposal of domestic refuse. Unfortunately, a small minority of people continue to abuse the system by clogging up the areas with large items of unwanted household furniture and equipment such as prams, washing machines and even beds.

There are also instances where people cannot be bothered to place their rubbish in the bins provided and simply throw their bags in through the door, which is unpleasant for people coming in after them and unhygienic too.

When this happens the managers have to pay to have these items collected and dumped properly which diverts funds from other projects such as gardening and general maintenance. Another effect of this random dumping is that the parish refuse collectors

are unable to access the rubbish bins to empty them, which causes more problems.

'It is such a shame that the actions of a few people are making life difficult for the majority of tenants who abide by the rules,' commented Stephen Van Neste of managers Brunel. 'I would urge anyone who is having a new appliance fitted to ask the supplier to remove the old one. Any tenant who is unsure about where to dump large items can seek advice from us. We can't shift the item for you but we can give you the name of someone who can help. Sharing communal facilities such as bin stores needs co-operation and consideration from everyone.'

It can be costly to remove items of furniture. A tenant recently left a settee out. The managers had to arrange for it to be dumped resulting in a bill of over £100 for the tenant concerned.

- If you have large items to dispose of it's worth contacting your parish hall as some parishes have arrangements in place for this. You will be still be charged for the service.

Our pet policy

Tenants sometimes ask what the policy is regarding pets in Jersey Homes Trust properties and the matter was raised in the recent survey.

As responsible landlords we would be failing in our duty of care to our tenants if we allowed everyone who wanted pets to have them so anyone wanting a pet of any sort must first seek permission from the managers who will consider requests on a case-by-case basis. If you go ahead and purchase a pet without first seeking permission, you will be in breach of your tenancy

agreement. Please note that permission to have a dog in a flat will not be granted under any circumstances.

The sort of things you should think about when considering taking on the responsibility of a pet include:

- Whether or not your home is suitable for a pet.

- Will keeping a pet in your home negatively affect you neighbours

- Will the pet be left at home alone when you are at work and if so what arrangements will you make to ensure that it is looked after whilst you are not there

- Can you afford a pet?