

Seventh Annual Report of the Jersey Homes Trust.

1st January 2003

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

As a number of new housing developments by the Jersey Homes Trust are being completed, the main role of the Trust is changing in emphasis, from that of a developer of housing to that of property manager and landlord. The Trust now has 12 properties or estates under management, comprising 379 units. This will increase to 500 units by the early Spring.

It is of great satisfaction to Trustees to see that all their involvement and activity of recent years in the procurement and development of housing schemes is finally bearing fruit and enabling the Trust to take on its intended role of offering to the community a substantial and alternative choice of decent rental units at an affordable rental.

This is no mean achievement and would not have been possible without the dedication of my Trustees and the co-operation and support of both the Housing Committee and the Finance & Economics Committee. The President of Housing, Deputy Terry Le Main, is to be especially thanked for his continual support and interest. He gives us great encouragement.

The Planning & Environment Committee have shown themselves to be both flexible and imaginative in the consideration of proposed schemes. In particular they are to be commended for the new Island Plan which makes important provision for the development of new Category A housing on rezoned sites. The child of these three Committees, the Housing Task Force, is in excellent shape and working very effectively as the agency ideally constituted and equipped to assess proposed social housing schemes. I look forward to a continuation of my work with the Task Force in the future.

Current developments of The Jersey Homes Trust

Cannon St/Lempriere St, St Helier.

A development of 40 flats and 1 house, with basement car parking.

Completion due in February 2003.

Main Contractor; Dandara (Jersey) Limited. Contract Sum £5,748,975.

Architects; Public Services Department.

Site acquired from the Public on a residual valuation basis.

Ann Street, St Helier

A development of 32 flats with basement car parking.

Completion due in August 2003.

Main Contractor; Charles Le Quesne (1956) Ltd. Contract Sum £4,000,000

Architects; Mason Design Partnership.

Site acquired for £1,490,000.

Town Park Hotel Site, Pierson Road and Lewis St., St Helier

A development of 4 substantial houses and 15 flats,

Completion due in February 2003.

Main Contractor; G F Design & Build Ltd.

Contract Sum; £1,935,000 including professional fees (design & build contract)

Architect for scheme design; Riva Architects Ltd

Site acquired for £2,000,000

The Trust holds title to all the above listed sites.

The Waterfront Enterprise Board is acting as the developer of the following project for the Housing Committee and the Jersey Homes Trust will take over the rental units on completion.

Albert Pier Housing Development. (Waterfront Enterprise Board)

83 rental units are being created as part of this St Helier waterfront housing scheme of 150 units with basement car parking.

Completion due in February 2003.

Main Contractor; Spie Batignolles Cameron Ltd.

Architect; Nigel Biggar & Partners

Projected acquisition cost; £11,400,000.

Property Management Report.

A total of 379 units are presently under management.

Brooklands: Old Trinity Hill, St Helier. 15 units of flats and houses.

La Folie Estate: St Lawrence. 20 units of houses and flats.

Maison de St Nicolas: St Peter. 6 flats.

St Paul's Gate: Dumaresq St, St Helier. 17 flats.

Cherry Grove: Roussel St, St Helier. 12 flats

Kent Lodge: Clarendon Rd, St Helier. 7 flats.

St Saviour's Court: St Saviour's Rd, St Helier. 28 flats.

Belle Vue: Route des Quennevais, St Brelade. 90 houses and flats on this estate.

La Roseraie, Mont Millais, St Helier. An estate of 35 units of houses and 10 flats.

Le Jardin Fleuri: Grouville. An estate of 16 houses.

Berkshire Court, La Motte Street, St Helier. 113 1-bed flats.

5 St Clement's Road, St Helier. 10 flats,

The Trust holds title to all the above estates and properties.

La Folie House has been demolished and site enabling works are presently in hand in connection with the proposed development of 14 new flats. It is also proposed to construct 3 additional units as an extra floor at Warren Court. Planning permission for these developments has been received.

Letting: I am delighted to report that all units under management are fully let with the exception of only 6 remaining flats in Berkshire Court.

Rental: The current annual rental of the Trust's property is £2.8 million.

Void & Arrears: No voids arising from vacating tenants occurred during 2002. Arrears of rental (not including current charging) total £6,600 (0.24% of annual rental).

Nominations and Allocations

The Housing Committee have the right to nominate up to eighty per cent of tenants accommodated by the Trust. The Trust therefore has the right to nominate twenty per cent of its tenants. The Trust, by agreement with the Housing Committee, does have the right to decline to accommodate persons nominated by the Committee. A maximum of two declinations in respect of any one unit of accommodation is permitted. The Trust has circulated its allocations criteria to interested parties. These criteria clearly confirm that, when allocating homes, the Trust is concerned primarily with the relative need of applicants. Discrimination on the grounds of race, poverty, marital status, employment or religion is precluded.

Importantly, any person satisfying the criteria employed by the Housing Committee is deemed to satisfy the criteria of the Trust.

Declinations of Housing nominations are relatively infrequent. There follows a table of information provided by our Managers indicating the actual numbers of nominations made by the Housing Department, the numbers accommodated and the numbers to whom the Trust declined to offer accommodation. This information has been confirmed as correct by the Housing Department. It will be seen at the date of the report that the Trust had declined to accommodate only 9 out of 402 nominations submitted by the Housing Department (plus 5 further cases awaiting more suitable accommodation). The reasons for these declinations are provided in the information. Since the date of the report, Berkshire Court has been let with an even smaller ratio of declined nominations.

The Trust is mindful that it is expected to provide flexibility and to offer accommodation to persons in serious need who may nevertheless fall outside the strict criteria of the Department. Some such cases are, in fact, referred by the Department to the Trust. The Trust is also mindful that there is a growing need to consider cases of hardship for single people and childless couples in an environment of declining private sector provision. The Trust will make careful and sympathetic consideration of all applications falling outside the Department's criteria, on a case by case basis.

It is the case that all the property of the Trust is occupied by families in need who have satisfied the Trustees in such regard.

The States recently set up a Committee of Inquiry into the current allocations policies of Housing Trusts supported by the States. The Jersey Homes Trust looks forward to giving evidence to the Committee of Inquiry.

Jersey Homes Trust
Statistical Information: Nominations and Allocations
 Data correct as at 15th November 2002

Housing Committee Nominations.

In Residence	229	
Ex-Resident	<u>27</u>	
Sub-Total		256

Nominees declining JHT accommodation		
Sub-Total		132

*Temporary Declinations of Nominees by JHT

With pets not suitable for accommodation	2	
Children considered too old	<u>3</u>	
Sub-Total		5

Actual Declinations of Nominees by JHT

With Debt Judgements	8	
Other reasons	<u>1</u>	
Sub-Total		<u>9</u>

<u>Total number of Housing Nominations</u>		<u>402</u>
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*Would be considered for more suitable accommodation.

General Statistical Information: Tenancies

Number of units accommodating children	249	
Single Parents		103
Un-Married couples	15	
Married couples with children	131	
Disabled units	8	
Number of evictions since inception	Nil	
Tenants with known criminal records	4	
Tenants with debt judgements (excluding rates)	6	
Tenants from The Shelter Trust	1	
Tenants under curatorship	1	

Note:

No records of racial or ethnic origin of tenants are maintained. Applicants with housing qualifications are considered on the basis of need, regardless of racial or ethnic origin.

Tenant Relations and Consultation:

I am very pleased to report that a number of initiatives under the above heading have been successfully implemented in the last twelve months. A Jersey Homes Trust handbook for tenants has been produced and distributed. This is a useful and comprehensive reference booklet containing information and advice on the many and diverse subjects and issues connected with Trust tenancies.

New tenants receive a substantial information pack which includes the handbook, a list of useful telephone numbers, a copy of their lease, a parking permit application form, a banker's order mandate, Parish refuse collection information, forms for connection to telecoms and all mains services and a Jersey Electricity information pack.

A satisfaction survey of all our tenants was undertaken in November. An excellent response of 145 returns from 248 questionnaires was obtained. A detailed analysis of the returns was undertaken and a copy was provided to the Housing Committee. It is fair to say that the Trustees were generally well pleased with the results, particularly those concerned with performance related matters, such as maintenance, cleaning, management and the like. Tenants were asked to indicate their agreement to statements which included:

<u>Statement</u>	<u>Result</u>	
	agree/tend to agree	don't know/disagree
My home is well designed and of good quality:	82.6%	14.4%
I enjoy living in my home	88.9%	11.0%
Managers are helpful	90.3%	7.0%
Managers are accessible	90.4%	5.4%
I would recommend a friend to live in a JHT home	92.2%	6.3%

Useful responses were obtained on design, facilities and convenience (or lack thereof) which will be of assistance in the future. A recurring complaint was the lack of amenities for children to play in certain developments, contrasting with excellent provision elsewhere. The Trustees will continue to take the view that, where possible, families with young children should be accommodated in homes offering good provision for them to play.

Tenants are routinely requested to complete a satisfaction response when any maintenance is carried out in their home. Satisfaction of service at excellent or good ratings was recorded at 86.4%, and at fair or poor ratings at 5.8%.

Our logo and new letter headings were introduced and a dedicated telephone line for the Trust was established. The Trust will be publishing a six-monthly newsletter to tenants, commencing later this year, and a Jersey Homes Trust web-site is planned.

As it moves into its growing role of landlord the Trust is successfully establishing presence, visibility and public awareness, as well as the best possible relations with its tenants. I am pleased to acknowledge the considerable contribution made by Marion Falle, our public relations consultant, in these endeavours.

The funding of the Jersey Homes Trust

The following table is a summary of present and projected funding requirements.

Jersey Homes Trust				
Schedule of Capital Funding Requirement:				
	Borrowing		Cumulative	
Completed Schemes:	Requirement	Totals	Totals	Comments
Brooklands	1,575,000			
Cherry Grove	1,475,000			
Kent Lodge	900,000			
La Folie	2,000,000			
Maison St Nicolas	620,000			
St Pauls Gate	1,500,000			
St Saviours Court	3,650,000			
Belle Vue	11,750,000			
Berkshire Court	13,230,000			
La Roseraie	7,650,000			
Le Jardin Fleuri	2,850,000			
5 St Clement's Rd	1,200,000	48,400,000		
Schemes in Progress:				
Albert Pier	11,550,000			Due early in 2003
Cannon/Lempriere St	5,600,000			Due early in 2003
Ann Street	4,300,000			Due in mid-2003
Town Park Hotel	3,200,000	24,650,000		Due early in 2003
Proposed Schemes:				
La Folie redevelopment	4,000,000	4,000,000	77,050,000	

All the substantial funding indicated in the table above is achieved by borrowing in the private sector. The ability of the Trust to enter into such financial commitments, over periods of up to 25 years, depends upon a sound financial and managerial background operating within and supported by a reliable and stable political environment. Schemes for which funding is sought are subjected to close scrutiny and appraisal by lenders, with independent valuation.

The viability of the Trust depends upon projections of rental income and on predictable levels of interest payments. Such predictability is achieved by subsidies received from the Housing Committee and which relate to the level of interest rates payable by the Trust in respect of approved schemes. In the case of some projects, notably those in the urban area involving high site acquisition or development costs, initial capital grants have been paid by the Committee to the Trust.

The Regulation of Housing Trusts

The trustees look forward to further participation in the consultation process that has already commenced prior to the publication of the proposed draft regulations by the Housing Committee.

Pending the enactment of the regulations the Jersey Homes Trust is bound by certain restraints and provisions contained in a legally binding agreement with the States of Jersey. Land acquired by the Trust for development with the financial support of the Housing Committee is subject to covenants protecting the interests of the Public and perpetuating its use for social rented housing. The Constitution of the Jersey Homes Trust provides further well understood and effective checks and safeguards.

Trustees receive no personal remuneration or reward for their services and the Trust pays no salaries or rents. The work of the Trust is out-sourced under a strict Code of Conduct, ensuring best value and full disclosure. The accounts of the Trust (which are fully compliant with Recommended Practice of UK Housing Associations) must be submitted annually to the Finance & Economics and Housing Committees.

Acknowledgements

I am very fortunate to have the continued benefit of the skills, wisdom and loyalty of my original five fellow Trustees. They give me status and enormous encouragement. The demands of their role are increasingly onerous. Thank you, gentlemen.

I would also mention Jim Bailey, who carries out so ably the role of Chairman's Assistant.

The Trust will succeed only if it continues to enjoy a close working partnership with the Housing Department. Although we approach solutions from a different viewpoint our objectives are the same. My very happy relationship with Eric Le Ruez, Chief Executive Officer, continues and is confirmation that there is a strong future for Housing Associations in Jersey.

I would like to mention my esteem for Ray Foster of Treasury, John Young CEO at Planning & Environment, and Paul Tucker and Richard Williamson at Property Services. With the support these gentlemen provide we may yet accomplish a great deal more.

I would also like to thank the many States members who have shown a close interest in our work and have supported the Trust on the floor of the House.

Finally I would like to congratulate the news media of the Island, who have shown a lively but respectful and intelligent interest in what we are doing. I look forward to many future contacts with you.

MICHAEL VAN NESTE CHAIRMAN

The Jersey Homes Trust is a Jersey Housing Association, registered in the Royal Court on 9th June 1995 as an association for the purposes of the law entitled "Lois (1862) sur les teneures en fideicommiss et l'incorporation d'associations". The 1862 law provides for duly registered incorporated associations and trusts to hold land and property for charitable purposes.

The Trustees of the Jersey Homes Trust:

Michael Van Neste, Chairman;

Advocate Steven Meiklejohn, Secretary;

Martyn Scriven, Treasurer;

Ian Moore, Accountant;

Chris Clarke, Developments Director;

Paul Labesse, Estates Director.