

## Housing and Asset Management Equality Outcomes

### Homes that Meet Residents Needs

Equality or Inclusion Aims / Issues to be Addressed	Service Area(s)	Action or Activity	Equality / Inclusion Outcome(s)
Meeting the needs of disabled tenants and overcrowded families.	Allocations and Lettings	Utilizing chain moves to meet the needs of residents and increase internal transfers by 56%.	Swan has used chain lettings to enable overcrowded families and tenants with a disability to move to homes that are appropriate for their needs, as sited in the August 2010 Report of the Mobility Taskforce.
Meeting the needs of residents with a disability within the home, particularly amongst under represented communities.	Asset Management	<p>Providing Adaptations.</p> <p>Further promoting the availability of aids and adaptations to ethnic minority communities.</p> <p>Promotional articles were included in The Communicator and the Exmouth and Bow Cross newsletters advertising service. The Exmouth and Bow Cross news letters are translated into Bengali as we know this is a key</p>	<p>During the year 2008-2009, ethnic minority communities were under represented in access to aids and adaptations. In 2010 representation increased by 11% following targeted promotion of the Policy and the service.</p> <p>In 2010 100% of aids and adaptation satisfaction questionnaire respondents reported being fairly satisfied or very satisfied with the aids and adaptations undertaken. Therefore no significant disparities in satisfaction exist between</p>

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		community language in these areas.	equality groups for aids and adaptations.
Helping residents who are older or who have a disability to decorate their homes.	Asset Management	The Assisted Decorating Scheme where decoration is undertaken for residents who meet the criteria outlined in the Policy.	<p>Swan recognises that our older residents and those in receipt of benefits associated to a disability are less likely to be able to undertake internal decorations themselves. Swan seeks to assist these residents through the Assisted Decorations Scheme.</p> <p>15 Swan residents and 13 Forest Gate (Newham) residents have taken up the Assisted Decorations scheme so far during 2010 – 2011 and have provided positive feedback.</p>

## Equality and Repairs

Equality / Inclusion Issue	Service Area(s)	Action or Activity	Equality / Inclusion Outcome(s)
<p>Ensuring that the repairs process is delivered in a way that is appropriate for Supported Housing residents.</p>	<p>Asset Management Axis Supported Housing</p>	<p>The introduction of a Supported Housing Champion at the Axis Call Centre.</p>	<p>The Supported Housing Champion is able to provide additional support to both residents and Axis Staff to ensure that the repairs process is delivered in an appropriate way. This approach has been welcomed by residents and Axis staff.</p> <p>The Champion has also been able to increase awareness amongst Axis staff of the needs of Supported Housing residents.</p>
<p>Increasing accessibility for Supported Housing residents reporting repair issues.</p>	<p>Asset Management Supported Housing</p>	<p>Repairs and Decoration easy read guide for Supported Housing residents with learning disabilities.</p>	<p>The easy read guide uses Makaton symbols and pictorial guides to better provide information on reporting repairs, timescales and the responsibilities of Swan and of residents.</p> <p>A number of service users were involved in the development of the guide to ensure that the publication was appropriate for the needs of residents.</p> <p>The guide has received positive feedback from Service Users who feel the guide has helped them to better understand the</p>

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			repairs process.
Increasing accessibility for residents reporting repair issues.	Asset Management Axis	The introduction of a new and improved repairs portal through which residents can report repairs.  The Portal has also been promoted in The Communicator.	The improved repairs portal allows residents to report repairs online and includes language translation and large print features. This has increased accessibility in reporting repairs, particularly for residents who have a hearing impairment, speak another language or prefer to read text in larger print.
Access to the repairs service and satisfaction with the repairs service.	Asset Management Axis	In March / April 2010 and equality analysis of access to repairs was undertaken.  During 2010 satisfaction with repairs was also measured and analysed by equality group.	Access to repairs is reflective of the wider resident profile, indicating that there is equality in access to the repairs service.  During 2010 satisfaction surveys indicated that residents from an ethnic minority background were less satisfied with repairs. A range of activity has been built into the Diversity Action Plan to increase satisfaction.

## Increasing Accessibility

Equality / Inclusion Issue	Service Area(s)	Action or Activity	Equality / Inclusion Outcome(s)
Increasing information available to diverse residents at the point of sign up.	Allocations and Lettings  Housing London / Housing Essex	The production and distribution of a Swan sign up DVD with interpretation in key community languages.	The DVD has increased access to information from the point of sign up. Positive feedback has been received from residents.
Increasing information available about key services to diverse residents.	Housing London	The introduction of Talk Sign Machines in London offices for residents in July 2010.	<p>The Talk Sign Machines have provided basic service information for residents in an audio format. Scripts are available in English, Bengali and Somali. Reports showing use of the machines indicate that they have been well used to access information.</p> <p>On the Exmouth Estate the Talk Sign was used 141 times between June and September 2010. 53.2% of use was in English, 26.9% was in Bengali and 19.9% was in Somali.</p> <p>In Chrisp Street the Talk Sign was used 49 times between June and September 2010. 67.3% of use was in English, 18.4% was in Bengali and 14.3% was in Somali.</p>

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Increasing information available to diverse residents.	Housing London / Housing Essex	The development and use of a new Translation and Interpreting Guidance for Housing Staff from October 2010.	<p>The Guidance has consolidated information about the factors to be considered and the steps to be taken when using translation and interpreting services.</p> <p>The Guidance has also facilitated a move towards offering a face to face interpreter to talk through larger documents with residents rather than providing written translation (where appropriate). This can offer a better level of customer service as well as being better value for money. This approach has also been endorsed at recent CIH and Capita equality conferences.</p>
Increasing access to customer facing office areas.	Housing London / Housing Essex	Mystery Shopping (throughout 2010)	<p>Mystery shoppers have been briefed to look out for equality related factors when undertaking mystery shopping.</p> <p>In December 2010 a number of points around improving disability access were addressed as part of the Mystery Shopping Action Plan.</p>

## Increasing Representative Involvement

Equality / Inclusion Issue	Service Area(s)	Action or Activity	Equality / Inclusion Outcome(s)
Increasing the involvement of young people	Resident Involvement and Community Development	Two youth forums were developed in Essex during 2010.	The development of the youth forums has begun to address the under representation of younger people in resident involvement structures. The RICD Team are now exploring the development of a youth forum in London.
Increasing the involvement of younger people and people from ethnic minority backgrounds in formal resident involvement structures.	Resident Involvement and Community Development	Targeted promotion of formal involvement opportunities through advertisements for the Resident Consultative Committees and Regional Committees and other recruitment mechanisms.	Recruitment of a new female BAME (Black, Asian Minority Ethnic) Regional Committee Member in Essex.
Increasing the involvement of BAME women in London, particularly from the Bangladeshi community.	Resident Involvement and Community Development	Development of a women's BAME Forum in London.	<p>Successful forum now in place which has increased engagement with BAME women, particularly from the Bangladeshi community.</p> <p>Having a forum with women only membership provides a suitable environment for women for whom a mixed forum may be unsuitable.</p>

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<p>Providing flexible resident Involvement opportunities to meet the needs of diverse residents.</p>	<p>Resident Involvement and Community Development</p>	<p>A number of flexible involvement opportunities have been provided for residents in addition to the formal resident involvement structures. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus groups</li> <li>• Open meetings</li> <li>• Estate inspections</li> <li>• The Customer Feedback Panel</li> <li>• Block surgeries</li> <li>• Residents' conference.</li> </ul>	<p>The use of flexible opportunities has enabled the involvement and engagement of a diverse range of residents across equality groups.</p> <p>74% of respondents to the Short Notice Inspection Consultation Survey said that involving residents does make a difference at Swan. The equality monitoring analysis showed that the majority of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heterosexual, lesbian and gay respondents</li> <li>• Both men and women</li> <li>• Respondents across the different ethnic groups</li> <li>• Respondents across the different religious groups</li> <li>• Respondents with a disability felt that involving residents makes a difference at Swan.</li> </ul>
<p>Providing appropriate involvement opportunities for supported housing residents and floating support service users.</p>	<p>Supported Housing</p>	<p>Specific forums have continued throughout 2010-2011 which have enabled floating support service users and supported housing residents to have an input in the</p>	<p>Service users and supported housing residents have influenced policy, strategy and service provision, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supported Housing Fun Day Project</li> </ul>

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		way services are delivered and the way in which information is published.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Swan Life Newsletter</li> <li>• Boundaries Policy Review</li> <li>• Consultation during draft stages of Makaton repairs guide</li> <li>• Learning Disability Personalised Support Packages- clients provided ideas which have fed into a new menu of services</li> <li>• Repairs issues</li> <li>• Keeping safe consultation sessions.</li> </ul>

### Increasing Social Inclusion and Building Community Cohesion in the Community

Equality or Inclusion Aims / Issues to be Addressed	Service Area(s)	Action or Activity	Equality / Inclusion Outcome(s)
<p>Increasing English Language skills for residents who speak another language.</p> <p>Fostering integration, social inclusion and community cohesion.</p>	Resident Involvement and Community Development	ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) Classes held and promoted in London in partnership with the Limehouse Project.	11 residents successfully completed their Entry Level 1 ESOL certification. An awards ceremony was held in the Bow Cross Community Hall on the 8 <sup>th</sup> of December 2010. Participants fed back that their improved English language skills had enabled them to be more independent and interact with others to a greater extent.

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Building community cohesion and community spirit at estate level.	Resident Involvement and Community Development and other housing teams	A series of fun days have been held during the year in both Essex and London areas.	<p>The fun days which have been either supported or delivered by Swan have provided successful community events for the diverse communities Swan serves.</p> <p>These events have been particularly good for bringing people of different ages and ethnic and religious backgrounds together.</p> <p>Positive feed back has been received from residents.</p>
Providing fun, active and inclusive activities for supported housing and floating support service users.	Supported Housing	Supported Housing Fun Day in September 2010.	<p>A successful fun day was delivered providing a range of inclusive activities for residents and service users.</p> <p>The event also enabled wider Swan staff to meet and interact with service users whilst participating in activities.</p> <p>Positive feedback was received from both service users and wider Swan staff who attended the event.</p>

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<p>Creating positive activities for young people in the local community, increasing inclusion and building community cohesion.</p>	<p>Resident Involvement and Community Development</p>	<p>A three month long pilot football project in partnership with West Ham United was completed in 2010.</p> <p>The coaching sessions have continued in 2011 following positive feedback from young people and parents. The project covers the Craylands, Churchview and Five Links areas in Essex.</p>	<p>Created opportunities for young people to develop sports skills and participate in community sports activities.</p> <p>Indirectly contributing to community cohesion.</p> <p>Contributing to a holistic approach in tackling anti-social behaviour through the provision of diversion activities.</p> <p>Promoting healthy and active lifestyles through community based activities.</p>
<p>Creating positive activities for children, young people and women in the local community, increasing inclusion and building community cohesion.</p>	<p>Resident Involvement and Community Development</p>	<p>The delivery of summer activities for children and young residents in London in 2010.</p> <p>The delivery of recreational, exercise and sports activities for young people and women on the Exmouth Estate in London through Newark Youth (From January 2011).</p>	<p>Created opportunities for local young people and women to participate in community activities.</p> <p>Indirectly contributing to community cohesion.</p> <p>Contributing to a holistic approach in tackling anti-social behaviour through the provision of diversion activities.</p> <p>Promoting healthy and active lifestyles</p>

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			<p>through community based activities.</p> <p>Holding women's only activities also provides a suitable environment for women who would be unable to attend mixed gender activities for cultural reasons.</p>
<p>Supporting and encouraging young people to get involved with Swan and participate in local projects.</p>	<p>Resident Involvement and Community Development</p>	<p>Swan in partnership with 6 other Registered Providers in Tower Hamlets successfully developed an award scheme to recognise community champions amongst residents who live in Tower Hamlets. Swan had 8 nominations and 2 winners, including a 15 year old resident from the Bow Cross estate. The ceremony was held on the 10<sup>th</sup> November 2010 in the Winter Gardens, Canary Wharf, hosted by the Chief Executive of National Housing Federation.</p> <p>This has also been publicised to residents via The Communicator.</p>	<p>Formal recognition for a young Community Champion – receiving the Young person of the Year Award.</p>

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<p>Supporting residents to develop and deliver activities and projects in their own communities, fostering social inclusion and community cohesion.</p>	<p>Resident Involvement and Community Development</p>	<p>The funding of local community projects and events through the Community Grant.</p> <p>The Community Grant is designed to help overcome economic barriers to completing community initiatives or projects where Swan residents benefit from them. The Grant objectives and criteria mean that there are few restrictions on the types of projects that can be successful in obtaining a grant, whilst ensuring that the grant is used appropriately.</p>	<p>Projects / Project Outcomes included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brackendale Court Easter party / coach trip / summer activities - Delivering tailored activities for older residents.</li> <li>• Busy Bees Fun day - Delivering creative activities for families and young children, bringing families together and disseminating information about local support services.</li> <li>• Exmouth Estate Residents Board (EERB) - Increasing access to key local news from the EERB by translating the newsletter into Bengali – a key community language in the area.</li> <li>• International One World Puppet Festival (Noak Bridge) - Providing a positive activity for children that promoted equality, diversity and community cohesion.</li> </ul>

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			Please see Appendix 1 of the Community Grant and resident Expenses Equality Impact Assessment for further details of Community Grant funded projects.

### Tackling Financial Exclusion

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Supporting residents to claim the welfare benefits they are entitled to.	Benefits Advice Service	<p>The ongoing provision of benefits advice and support, including a targeted Pension Credit Campaign for older residents.</p> <p>Welfare rights / benefits advice services play a key role in improving take-up and delivery of critical extra resources to low-income households, helping to prevent further financial and social exclusion.</p> <p>The Advisor based in London is also fluent in Bengali and Urdu,</p>	<p>Between April 2010 and January 2011:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Welfare Benefits Advice Service in Essex secured £375,334 in benefits for residents who were entitled to benefits that they were not receiving.</li> <li>• The Welfare Benefits Advice Service in London secured £453,430 in benefits for residents who were entitled to benefits that they were not receiving.</li> </ul> <p>In many cases this welfare benefits support</p>

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		enabling Swan to provide advice and support to residents who speak one of these key community languages and have limited English language skills.	provided has led to reductions in rent arrears.
Targeting support at equality groups more likely to be in arrears.	Housing Essex / Housing London	An equality analysis of tenants in arrears was completed in 2010, so that targeted action to support equality groups more likely to be in arrears could be planned.	The equality analysis demonstrated that there are currently no significant disparities between equality groups in terms of arrears.
Removing financial barriers to resident involvement.	Resident Involvement and Community Development	Continuing to reimburse expenses involved with resident involvement such as travel to meetings and child care in line with the Resident Expenses Policy.  Training opportunities are also provided free of charge.	Covering the expenses involved in attending meetings has enabled a broad range of residents to stay involved and participate in the scrutiny of Swan's services.
Using the Financial Inclusion Strategy to tackle exclusion.	Housing Essex / Housing London	The Financial Inclusion Strategy was introduced in April 2010. A range of actions have been put in place or continued as part of the Strategy. These included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of the benefits</li> </ul>	Although the impact of the Financial Inclusion Strategy is difficult to quantify. Figures for arrears and evictions appear to indicate a positive impact.  So far in 2010-2011 arrears in Essex have

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		<p>calculator assessment tool for new tenants and sign posting to the Benefits Advice Service and external agencies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Tenant Reward Scheme, which encourages tenants to keep their rent accounts clear</li> <li>• Support for young people within Swan foyer schemes on maximising income, budgeting, money management and life skills</li> <li>• Advice and support for residents in receipt of floating support services, which includes maximising income, budgeting, money management and life skills</li> <li>• Financial awareness workshops.</li> </ul>	<p>decreased from 5.20% to 4.11% and in London from 4.25% to 3.59%. Whilst evictions have reduced by 42% in comparison to the previous year (as at 28<sup>th</sup> February 2011).</p>

## Training and Skills

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<p>Providing, supporting and signposting to training and skills development opportunities for residents.</p>	<p>Resident Involvement and Community Development</p>	<p>A range of training opportunities and resident workshops have been provided for residents during 2010. (Please see the training handbook for more detailed information.)</p> <p>Residents also attended a training awards ceremony on the 20<sup>th</sup> of January 2011 and contributed to a review meeting where planning for the 2011-2012 programme was discussed.</p> <p>(Please note: training and workshops are free of charge to the resident.)</p>	<p>Positive feedback received from residents indicates that the training provided has increased:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The skills and capacity of involved residents</li> <li>• Life skills</li> <li>• Confidence</li> <li>• Employment prospects.</li> </ul>
<p>Providing, supporting and signposting to training and skills development opportunities for residents.</p>	<p>Resident Involvement and Community Development</p>	<p>Providing free of charge access to Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH) qualifications for residents and additional support from staff.</p>	<p>Two residents successfully completed CIH qualifications in 2010. They also discussed their personal views and experience of the course and resulting qualification at the training awards ceremony in January 2011. Both residents felt that it had:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased their employment prospects</li> </ul>

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enabled them to be better involved in service improvement as involved residents</li> <li>• Helped them to further develop their skills.</li> </ul>
Helping residents into employment.	Resident Involvement and Community Development	<p>An employment project has been delivered in partnership with Arbour, much of which is based in the Bow Cross Community Hall. This included the provision of soft skills training and an NOCN Accredited Level 2 preparation for work training course.</p> <p>Gender specific training programmes were also provided and targeted promotion took place on the Bow Cross Estate.</p> <p>A targeted youth employment project for young people aged 18 to 25 year olds not in employment, education or training (NEET) also commenced in February 2011.</p>	<p>100% of participants felt they were more confident in their ability to find work and had improved their interview skills.</p> <p>90% of participants felt they better understood the job market.</p>