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marvelously in this year's
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Fun at the fair

More than £300 has been raised for charity at two events at our Gainsborough Uphill Community Centre.

Despite the wet weather, the local community turned out in their droves for July's fun day. Volunteers worked really hard

and put on lots of fun activities for people at the event, which raised £217 for our charity of the year the Teenage Cancer Trust.

The following month, the centre hosted a strawberry tea party to raise money for Breast Cancer Care. In total £101 was raised with help from the youngest visitor Haydn aged five and the event's oldest visitor Dilys aged 100.



Finance team highly commended

Our finance team have been highly commended by judges at the Housing Association National Accountancy Awards in the Finance Team of the Year category for small and medium sized associations.





Growing Potential in Gainsborough



Students from Gainsborough Academy have joined sheltered accommodation residents and some of our people to celebrate our Growing Potential garden project.

The event saw residents and students engage with each other and take part in bingo, a quiz and a group photo.

The Growing Potential garden project saw green-fingered students from the Gainsborough Academy help transform the communal areas at Pillared House and Newlands Court - our sheltered accommodation residencies.

The students joined up with us as part of the school's Compass project, after we were awarded funding to deliver our Growing Potential project from IGas.

The celebration event saw Pupil Sinead Delancy make a speech

about how the project had improved her skills and how she enjoyed engaging with the older generation.

Joe Timmins, our Head of Homes, said: "The gardens look amazing and the students' commitment and drive from start to finish was fantastic. They did extremely well especially through the appalling weather on the second day of the project at Newlands Court."

"The gardens look amazing and the students' commitment and drive from start to finish was fantastic"





Recycling

Your guide to living sustainably

Recycling and making environmentally conscious purchasing choices is the first step to living sustainably and having a positive impact on the world in which we live.

Did you know the average household in the UK produces more than a tonne of waste every year - and 60% of it can be recycled. Combining all UK households this is equivalent to the weight of three and a half million double-decker bus.

With dwindling supplies of natural resources, recycling can significantly reduce unnecessary waste and give products a new lease of life. For example, recyclable paper and card make up about a fifth of the typical household dustbin. If we put this into our recycling bins, we could use it again and again.

As the population increases, so does the amount of waste we produce - by around 3% each year. This means we will double the amount of waste we produce every 25 years.

Living by the three principles - **reduce, reuse and recycle** - can help you cut down on unnecessary waste and save you money at the same time.

- Some 24 trees are cut down to make just one tonne of paper
- One plastic bottle takes 500 years to decompose
- There are over 1,500 landfill sites in the UK and these sites produce a quarter of the UK's emissions of methane

We've put together some handy tips to help save you cash, and save the environment.

1

Buy products made from recycled materials or eco alternatives.

You can now purchase many products that are made from recycled sources including paper towels, glass bottles, plastic containers, crayons, ink cartridges and even furniture. To purchase products made from reused materials, simply look for a recycling symbol and language on the product's packaging.

2

Reduce the amount of waste you create.

Try cutting down on the amount of non-recyclable materials you throw out, including reusing carrier bags, wrapping paper and packaging.

3

Manage your accounts online.

This reduces paper waste from bills and statements and gives you the added freedom of accessing information on a real time basis.

4

Compost your food waste.

You can only compost food items which do not contain oils or meat. This will not only create a much cleaner smelling kitchen but also produce great nutrients for your garden.

5

Recycle electrical and electronic waste properly.

E-waste is toxic if disposed of improperly. Due to rapid technology change, electronic items tend to get thrown out quicker than ever. Instead, items can be sold or donated to prolong their useful life.





(L-R) Bonnie Henton with baby Fergus Henton, Tracy O'Neil from Galatia, Lucy Picksley Acis' Community Engagement Coordinator and Matron for Inpatients Maternity Julie Bulteel

Donation is sew cute



A Gainsborough sewing group has knitted dozens of hats ready for new-born babies.

The Sew Social club which meets regularly at our Gainsborough Uphill Community Centre, has knitted and donated 65 hats to the Nettleham Ward at Lincoln County Hospital.

Lucy Picksley, our Community Engagement Coordinator, presented the hats to Matron for Inpatients Maternity Julie Bulteel.

Julie said: "Hats like these are really helpful as babies lose a lot of heat from their head. The knitted hats will help keep the babies warm and at a

reasonable temperature. We really appreciate the donation and want to say a huge thank you to everyone at the Sew Social for their help."

Lucy Picksley said: "We are a new group that was only set up in March but we are always keen to give something back to the community. We felt that giving the knitted hats to the hospital could be an ideal starting project for our group because beginner knitters were able to join in too. We are now trying to decide what to do next, we'd like to make some trauma teddies and we would like to encourage anyone if they'd like to get involved.

We would also appreciate a simple donation of some wool or material."

For more information, contact Lucy at lucy.picksley@acisgroup.co.uk



Acis in Bloom

This year we've had a record number of entries into our Acis in Bloom competition.



ACIS

IN BLOOM

2016

With more entrants than ever before, judges were impressed with the creativity of our residents and spent hours whittling down the entries to find this year's winner.

The awards were judged by our Chief Executive Greg Bacon, A Place to Call Our Own's Alan Withington and gardening expert Colin Bates. Colin said: "The competition was incredible. There were so many beautiful gardens and you could really tell people put a lot of effort in making their gardens unique. Everyone who entered should be very proud and it was a joy to judge."



Best creative use of a small space:
Winner: Mrs Margaret Conway, Gainsborough



Best creative use of a small space:
First runner-up: Ms Annie Leigh, Sheffield





Best creative use of a small space:
Second runner-up: Ms Michele Robinson, Retford



Best summer garden: Winner:
Ms Claire Blount, Sheffield



Best summer garden: First runner-up:
Mr Kendrick Lilly, Gainsborough



Best summer garden: Second runner-up:
Mrs Margaret Conway, Gainsborough

Think you
have what it
takes to win?

Keep an eye out for Acis
in Bloom 2017 and you
could be one of the lucky
Acis residents to win up
to £50 in vouchers.

Introducing Prime



In case you missed it, we've launched your new repairs, maintenance and planned improvements service - Prime.

Prime is now responsible for all major works in your home, including gas servicing and repairs. You should have received some information in the post about this change so if you did not receive our letter, please let us know and we'll resend you the information.

You'll no longer have work carried out by Galatia or our own Acis team, but you'll still see some familiar faces. Prime is fully-owned by us, and the change enables us to make some improvements to your services.

You can immediately benefit from a speedier repairs process, and you are also now able to book appointments easier. After making improvements to equipment and material stocks, we are better placed to get things fixed first time around. And if you have made approved improvements to your home, Prime will take over the maintenance to ensure everything's working right once things are out of warranty.

Our Chief Executive Greg Bacon said: "We're delighted to launch Prime, which will bring a wealth



of new services to our customers. The change is part of our commitment to delivering better homes, better services and better lives for our customers.

"We'd like to thank Willmott Dixon Partnerships as they were instrumental in helping us form a successful joint venture, which provided a first class service to our customers.

However, the environment in which we operate has changed and we feel the time is right to deliver these essential services through a 100% Acis-owned subsidiary.

"While most of our customers said they were satisfied with our services, we know there's always room for improvement. We don't just want them to be satisfied, we want them to be happy. We're really excited by this new venture."



Watch out for more news as we will be improving our service with Prime in the coming months.

For more information, visit www.myprimerepairs.co.uk

"We're delighted to launch Prime, which will bring a wealth of new services to our customers"



Fun at the festival

We attended a sunshine filled day in Sheffield at the Everyone's Festival in August.

Left to right is Rebekah Kelly, Dorothy Cunningham and Lianne Shepherd.



Your rent and its impact – what we did in 2015/16

You know we like to make a positive difference to people's lives. We're committed to our promise of providing better homes, better services and, ultimately, better lives for you and the community which you live in.

These promises match our ambitions to be one of the best organisations in our sector. But to get there, we need to track how we're performing. Each year we take a look back at 2015/16 and the impact we've had on people's lives. This pull out is to share just a snapshot of what we've done. You can read even more online at www.acisannualreview.co.uk

We're proud of what we're achieving but we have a plan to achieve even greater things – and in everything we do, we'll have you in mind.

Providing value for money is an important part of what we do. We have a duty to you to ensure every penny we get is used wisely to produce the best standards and services possible.

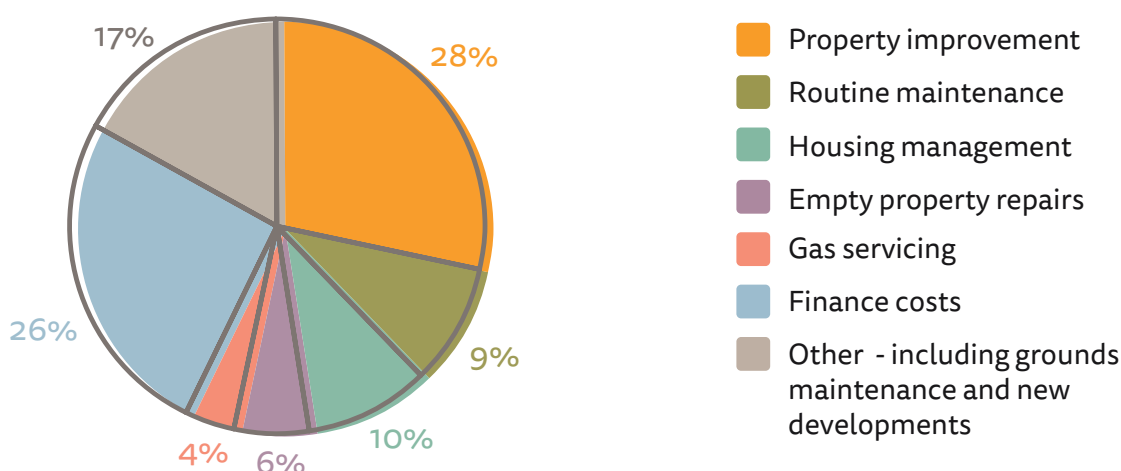
Within 2015/16 your rent has contributed not only to ensuring your home is safe and secure,

but to helping us deliver wider impact within the neighbourhoods and communities you live in.

It's important to us to ensure we are always aiming to deliver the best service we can for our customers. And a way of us checking this is by ensuring we strive to be one of the top performers in our sector. That's why we check our performance regularly against those top performers nationally. And so you can see how we are doing we've shared this with you in the column labelled 'benchmark'.

Our full customer satisfaction survey was completed in 2014/15. So to ensure you can see how we are doing more recently, we've also shared with you our latest figures from a survey carried out in June 2016 – this is labelled Q1 16/17.

How your rent is spent





better homes

Key indicators	Benchmark	Target 16/17	Survey results	
			Q1 16/17	2014
Percentage of customers satisfied with the overall quality of their home	90%	83%	85%	77%



Percentage of rent loss due to empty properties

2015/16 results

0.94%

Target 16/17

0.85%



We see all our properties as much more than buildings. We see them as homes. Homes that you want to be proud to live in. That's why, year after year, we invest in keeping them up to our standards. Last year, we spent more than £5m improving your homes on 1,025 different works like kitchens, bathrooms and central heating systems.

This, coupled with a refocus on what our customers want, has undoubtedly had an impact on us having fewer empty properties and reducing the time taken to re-let any standard properties when they do become empty.

In total, we developed 78 new homes last year and made big plans to create even more homes in the coming years.



We picked up the Best Social or Affordable Housing Scheme prize at West Lindsey District Council Building Awards along with our partner Gelder Group for our work on the Saracen Mews development in Gainsborough.



better services

Key indicators	Benchmark	Target 16/17	Survey results	
			Q1 16/17	2014
Percentage of customers satisfied with the overall service provided	92%	83%	84%	79%
Percentage of customers satisfied with the repairs and maintenance service	87%	83%	75%	78%
Percentage of customers who say their rent provides value for money	87%	83%	86%	76%

Over the last 12 months, we have made huge strides in making sure you get good value for money from us.

While some housing associations have planned to cut back on their services following the government's rent reduction programme, we haven't. We feel that services we provide, while falling outside of a landlord's traditional remit, play a vital part in overall community wellbeing. We're at the start of a five-year strategy which puts customer service at the heart of everything we do.

We have put in place a new organisation structure which saw increased investment in customer facing roles and a modernised approach to delivery of office based services.

We've started to identify partnership opportunities so we can deliver more services to you while remaining focused on the things that really matter to you.

Our aspiration is to deliver a great customer experience to all customers all the time. There has been some improvement to our satisfaction scores over the past two years, but we know we should and can do better.



Our finance team were highly commended at the Housing Association National Accountancy Awards in the team of the year category.



Number of complaints

2014/15	2015/16
77	50

Number of repairs

2014/15	2015/16
18,500	19,635



Customer calls handled

2014/15	2015/16
78,678	65,946

Percentage of customers satisfied with the handling of a complaint

2014/15	2015/16
82%	88%



Key indicators	Benchmark	Target 16/17	Survey results	
			Q1 16/17	2014
Percentage of customers satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live	91%	85%	86%	85%
Percentage of customers who say their views are listened to and acted on	77%	75%	66%	64%

Welfare reform has undoubtedly changed the circumstances of many of our customers. Our priority is to work with you to make sure you can sustain tenancies and meet rent payment obligations. We have launched our Tenancy Support service to help with all aspects of daily life, and started to build partnerships with relevant organisations to offer further help where necessary. So far we've helped over 100 people, with a 100% success rate in providing services to support their daily lives.

Moreover, we recognise that some customers require help to improve their employability, skills and financial independence. Work has been carried out through the year to offer these services; including apprenticeships, work experience programmes and links to local schools, colleges and training partners. We'll be doing more things like this in the future.

Our broader community investment programme also continues to thrive, with a number of estates-based projects and initiatives delivered through the year.

We know that tackling antisocial behaviour is another key priority for you. Our standards have remained high in this area this year, thanks to the work put in by our dedicated community safety team. Our consistently high satisfaction rates for case handling and outcomes achieved compare favourably to national benchmarks.



We scooped the Community Engagement Award at the DN21 Awards for our work in developing the Gainsborough Uphill Community Centre.



Money spent on improving estates

2014/15

£35,000

2015/16

£404,000



Number of customers volunteering

90



Number of antisocial behaviour issues resolved

2014/15

393

2015/16

326



Percentage of customers satisfied with the outcome of an antisocial behaviour case

2014/15

84%

2015/16

93%



Look out for the signs of troublesome

SCAM MAIL

Postal scam mail affects hundreds of thousands of us across the country every year and it's essential to know the signs to help us.

Scams are big business. Its estimated British consumers lose around £3.5 billion to scams every year - that's the equivalent of £70 for each adult living in the UK.

Victims of scam mail can be anyone but often these scammers will target the vulnerable, elderly generation of people aged 70 years and older.

Scam mail can come in any shape and size promising money, health cures and even the services of spiritual mediums predicting your future. These promises can be very persuasive to some people and the scam mail they receive can look very authentic and official. People respond to these scams believing they may get a financial gift for their family, often if they think they have nowhere else to turn.

A typical scam mail victim will be bombarded with letters promising cash prizes or lottery wins, catalogues offering products for sale and appearing to offer a substantial prize if they place an order, and letters from clairvoyants or psychics threatening bad luck or promising good fortune.

And once someone engages with spam mail, the chances of them receiving more scam mail increases rapidly. The National Trading Standards team has identified almost 200,000 victims whose names appear on a list scammers use to target their next victims.

Unfortunately, people are specifically targeted by these scammers because of their vulnerability, especially elderly. With many people trying to keep their responses a secret, try to keep a lookout for anyone who has:

- large amounts of post everyday
- phone calls promising cheques will be delivered
- many letters waiting to be posted
- cheque book stubs with acronyms and empty cheque books
- Lots of low value items such as cosmetics, biscuits and vitamins.

If you suspect someone is a victim of scam mail it's important to alert your local Trading Standards team know as soon as possible. You can find your local Trading Standards office on www.gov.uk

You can also contact your local Credit Union who can provide you financial advice and help you manage your money better. Two of your local Credit Unions are Lincolnshire Credit Union (01522 873 550) and Sheffield Credit Union (0114 276 0787).





Out and

with Andrew Phillips, Marketing and Communications Intern

"I've learnt so much in my short time here and I've developed so many skills"



about...

What attracted you to Acis?

I've always had a passion to work in the non-profit industry and I've always wanted to help those in difficult circumstances especially those in the Lincolnshire and Yorkshire area. My previous work with LEAP (Lincolnshire Employment Accommodation Project) and the Lincolnshire Credit Union have taught me an awful lot about working in the not-for-profit sector and the ways I can use my skills in marketing and communications to help others. When the intern role arose at Acis I jumped at the chance as it would be a fantastic opportunity to develop my skills and learn from others.

What's the best thing about working in the non-profit industry?

The feeling that the work you do is there to help others is hugely rewarding. It's great to know that any profits are recycled back into the business rather than to increase the pocket size of the mega-rich. It's fantastic to see the work you do have a positive impact on someone's life and to know the work you do is helping those in need.

Looking back at your career, what are you most proud of?

While I may only be 22 I have already worked at three charities around Lincolnshire. I'm proud of making a difference and helping others in the work I do and helping charities to develop their marketing and digital communications. I've redesigned websites, gained media coverage and got messages across in new and exciting ways.

How are you settling in?

The past few months have been a rollercoaster of excitement. I've learnt so much in my short time here and I've developed so many skills. It's a very exciting time to be working for Acis and there's plenty going on here to keep me more than busy.

What have you been doing so far?

I've been part of so much in my time here it's difficult to keep track some times. When I first started my time here one of my first tasks was to organise our Acis in Bloom competition.

When I took on the project we only had around 15 entries but I tried my best to encourage our residents to get involved and by the last day of the competition we got an Acis record of over 40 entries! It was fantastic to engage with residents and take pictures of their gardens. They have some amazing stories and it was a joy to speak to them about their gardens.

I was also involved with the Growing Potential project where I worked at Newlands with the trades' team to fill in flower beds. I also helped out with the celebration event that saw students from Gainsborough Academy and residents from Newlands and Pillared join together to play bingo and take part in a quiz. It was great to see them bonding together despite the generation gap, its projects like these that make me proud to work for Acis.

"It's fantastic to see the work you do have a positive impact on someone's life"

Committed to providing Better Places



Phase one of a programme to improve our properties in Lower Manor in Sheffield is underway.

As part of our annual Better Places programme, which aims to improve the environment and communities around our homes, we've started to undertake around £200,000 worth of work on Normancroft Drive and Danewood Gardens.

The first phase, which launched in September, saw new fencing being installed to the rear boundaries of properties to provide additional security.

The second phase, which will start soon, will see the street scene in front of our properties be improved.

The Better Places programme is a five-year scheme which will see us investing in our neighbourhoods as we aim to improve customer satisfaction, increase tenancy sustainment and reduce incidences of antisocial behaviour. All work is agreed by our customers through our Local Management Boards.

As well as the work on Lower Manor, work is already underway

at Trinity Court, Gainsborough and rural areas to make improvements to the estates.

"we've started to undertake around £200,000 worth of work on Normancroft Drive and Danewood Gardens"

Are you eligible for £140?

A third of households eligible for pension credit are not claiming £140 a year that they're entitled to.

The government's Warm Home Discount offers an annual payment of up to £140 applied to your energy bill, or top-up voucher, if you meet a series of criteria.

In 2016-2017 you can qualify for the discount if, on 10 July 2016:

- 1 your supplier was part of the scheme (check on uSwitch.com), and
- 2 you or your partner's name was on your energy bill, and
- 3 you fit into either the:
 - Core group: If you are receiving the Guarantee Credit element of Pension Credit (even if you also get the Savings Credit).

- Broader group: If you are in receipt of certain benefits, your annual income is below a certain amount and you are spending more than 10% of it on fuel; or you have a disability or illness and do not pay for your prescriptions.

If you fit into the core group, the government should write to you soon. If you fit into the broader group, you should contact your energy supplier for more information.

However, if you apply for a Warm Home Discount but then change your energy supplier before this has been credited to your account, you will no longer be eligible to receive the discount.

For more information, contact the Warm Home Discount team on 0345 603 9439 or write to them at: Warm Homes Discount Scheme, 2.1.P, Peel Park, Brunel Way, Blackpool, FY4 5ES.

If you need help or advice about Warm Home Discount call our Energy Management Officer Anna Cooper on 01427 675772.



How we're doing

We're committed to providing a good, value for money service to all our customers.

Feedback we get from you helps us shape our service and make improvements where we need to, so if you've experienced anything good or bad we want to know about it - please let us know.

We understand that every now and then things go wrong and we need to learn from these experiences. Our formal complaints procedures allows us to investigate in a fair and honest

way and change things where we need to so we do things better next time. You can get in touch with us by using the contact details at the top of the page.



We're beating our target

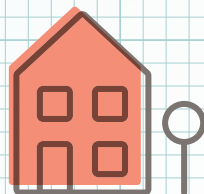


We're not meeting our target



84%

Overall customer satisfaction with Acis and its services
Target as at 30 June 2016: 80%



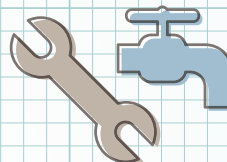
85%

Customers satisfied with the quality of their home
Target as at 30 June 2016: 70%



69%

Customers satisfied that we get back to them and keep them informed
This is a new measure we're currently monitoring.



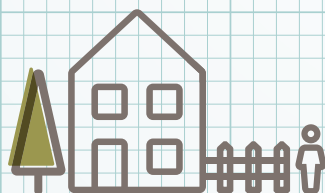
75%

Customers satisfied with the overall repairs and maintenance service provided
Target as at 30 June 2016: 80%



66%

Customers satisfied that their views are being taken into account
Target as at 30 June 2016: 70%



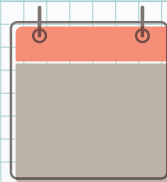
86%

Customers satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live
Target as at 30 June 2016: 76%



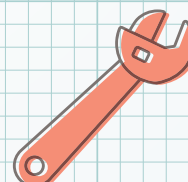
86%

Customers satisfied with the value for money of services provided
Target as at 30 June 2016: 68%



95%

Repair appointments kept
Target as at 30 June 2016: 97%



98%

Jobs completed right first time
Target as at 30 June 2016: 97%



Tenants get involved



Panel scrutinises more of our services

Feedback from tenants will be at the forefront of our decision making when renewing our grounds maintenance contracts next year.

Our Tenant-Led Scrutiny Panel has conducted a review of the current situation to ensure tenants are involved in shaping and influencing the specification and contract procurement process.

Through a series of interviews, meetings, focus groups, surveys and some desktop research, the panel collected a wide range of information to help shape future services.

They found that current satisfaction levels among tenants varied widely but many tenants had a clear vision of how they'd like communal areas to be treated going forward.

In the final report submitted to Acis' Board, the panel made 20 recommendations, which have been included in the forthcoming procurement process.

The recommendations varied, from clearing paths from moss through to blowing grass off paths and to the corporate social responsibility of the successful contractor.

The panel will now be looking into the topic of gas servicing and are keen to hear your views on how we could improve services for you. They'll be exploring tenant experiences through focus groups and questionnaires and will be examining whether we communicate gas safety checks effectively enough. They'll also be looking at other providers to see what we might be able to learn from them.

**If you would
like to share
your views please
complete our online
questionnaire on our
website.**

Join us!

The panel is looking for new members, giving tenants a great opportunity to make a difference and help to improve the services we deliver. Could this role be for you?

You'll join new panel chairman Russell Coughlin, pictured, who lives in one of our properties in Sheffield. He said: "I've lived in an Acis property for 20 years and have been involved in the panel's feedback recently and wanted to get a bit more involved. I'd seen what work they were doing and found out that I could become a member.

"I'm really excited about being part of the panel. People say 'somebody should do something about that' but someone needs to be that somebody. I'm looking forward to throwing myself into it."

If you'd like more information on becoming a panel member, call Lucy Picksley on 01427 675806 or email lucy.picksley@acisgroup.co.uk



Russell Coughlin

Focus groups

We've started to run focus groups with our new build properties to help us understand how new residents feel when they move into one of our new developments.

Feedback from one of the recent developments, at Priory Mews in Worksop, was really positive.



Breathing life into Sheffield building

Woodthorpe Tenants and Residents Association (TARA) is developing ambitious plans to breathe more life into its building.

Its committee is working with the community to understand what's needed from the Ulley Road building and bringing their vision to life. The building has rooms for hire and the TARA has recently launched a weekly coffee morning each Thursday from 9am to 11.30am. We will be

providing advice and guidance to the committee throughout the process and are really excited to see the developments as they happen.

Committee member Stacey Wade said: "We are starting off with coffee mornings, hopefully this will encourage local residents of all ages to come together for a cuppa and a chat and then we can start finding out exactly what our community wants and needs."



Robert Weighell

Robert Weighell, one of our tenants in Lower Manor in Sheffield and known to many as 'Bob' sadly passed away in August. Has been a resident on the estate most of his life, becoming an Acis tenant in 2007.

Bob has served on the Local Management Board to represent Lower Manor tenants since 2007 as well as being the chairperson of the Lower Manor Tenants and Residents Association. Always keen to be involved and get the views of local tenants heard, Bob was also a member of our Tenant Led Scrutiny Panel for a short time.

Spot The Difference Competition



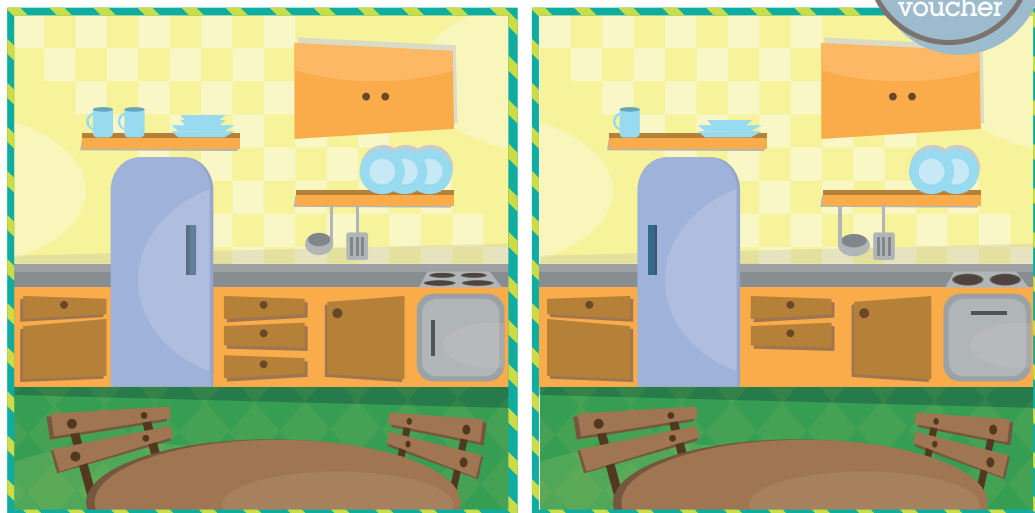
Can you find
and circle all
10 differences?

Please complete
your details for a
chance of winning a
£20 voucher.

Send your completed
entry form to:

**Marketing and
Communications,
Freepost RTSH-
THEK-SRRJ, Acis,
Acis House,
Bridge Street,
Gainsborough
DN21 1GG.**

Closing date: Friday,
4 November 2016



Name:.....

Address:.....

.....

Telephone:.....

Our lucky winners are...

Summer 2016 Wordsearch
competition winner

Ms J Smith from Market Rasen

Why not have a go at our autumn crossword
competition? It's free to enter and you could
win £20 of shopping vouchers.

Satisfaction survey winner

Mr Yewen from Gainsborough

We want to keep improving, our satisfaction
survey cards help us to do this. If you get one
please complete it and return it to us and
you could win £50 in our quarterly draw.



Committed to clean neighbourhoods



We're committed to creating
good neighbourhoods for you to
live in. This means acting when
things aren't right.

Have you noticed an area filled
with rubbish? Seen some
fly-tipping? Aware of something
that needs a good clean or tidy?
Tell us and we'll sort it.

Our neighbourhood wardens
carry out monthly estate
inspections across all our areas,

giving you an opportunity to
tell us about any issues or
concerns you have.

You're invited to accompany
with us on these tours so we can
identify exactly what needs to
be done in your area.

To find out what's going
on in your area, visit our website
or call us on 0800 027 2057.