

HOME

NEWS

100 and not out!

**Green fingers
at the ready!**

WELTON

**Community
celebrates new
development**

**Book a day out for the
Acis summer fayre**

WIN!
VOUCHERS
TO BE WON
INSIDE!

INSIDE



Green fingers at the ready!

Acis in Bloom is back, so get your entries in today.



'Walk this Way' raises £3,000

Our walking group took part in the London Moonwalk on Saturday 13 May.



Out & About with Anna

Meet Anna Cooper our Energy Management Officer.



Eshings Community comes together

We held a 'meet your neighbour' day at our new Eshings development in Welton.

Book a day out for the Acis summer fayre

We're holding our annual summer fayre again this year at the Gainsborough Uphill Community Centre. The event is due to take place on Saturday 29 July 11am until 3pm, and is free to attend. The event is set to be jam packed with fun activities and games.

There will be a bouncy castle, tombola, dance performances and lots for people to get involved in. For more details please contact our Customer Contact Centre on

0800 027 2057 or via email on **info@acisgroup.co.uk**.



Councillors and our customers living in the development met at the Welton Manor Sports Park and enjoyed afternoon tea and cake.

The development cost over £4million to develop and the first homes were completed in May 2016 with the last homes being completed in October 2016. And has a mixture of properties including affordable rent, shared ownership and market sales.

Claire Tunstall, our Customer Engagement Coordinator, helped to organise the event. She said: "The 'come and meet your neighbour day' was a great success. We had very positive feedback from the customers, local community

group members and local Councillors, not just about the event itself but, also about The Eshings development and how happy customers are living there."

“The ‘come and meet your neighbour day’ was a great success

These events are a fantastic opportunity to celebrate new developments and for people in the community to meet and talk to neighbours, build relationships and get involved in local groups and societies.

We want to say a huge thank you to everyone who attended and helped make the day so enjoyable, including customers, community groups, local Councillors and our customers.



Customers satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live

90%



Target as at
31 March 2017: 80%

Green Fingers *at the ready!*



Summer is finally here and it looks like it's going to be a scorcher. It's the perfect time to get out in your garden and get some jobs done such as clearing out the shed, cutting the grass and enjoying the sun.

If you're reading this sat in your deckchair taking pride in your fabulous garden then we want you to enter our Acis in Bloom competition. We want to celebrate our amazing gardens and reward those who look after them the best.

It's free, simple and takes no more than a few minutes to enter. This year we are running three categories: best flower garden, best fruit and veg and best use of your outside space. There are first, second and third place prizes for each category with winners getting **£50 in shopping vouchers**.

All you need to do to enter is take a picture of your garden and send it to **marketing@acisgroup.co.uk** along with the award category you want to enter and a short paragraph of why you love your garden.

You can also submit your pictures via our website at **www.acisgroup.co.uk/acis-in-bloom-2017** or through the post by cutting out and using the form below.

We're also sharing our very best garden hints and tips on our Facebook page and Twitter page and our latest garden entries on our Instagram. Make sure you give them a like and follow to keep up-to-date with all our latest Acis in Bloom news.

Don't forget! The deadline for entries is 11 August 2017 so don't delay and get your entries in today!

P.S. if you don't have a camera or you're struggling to take a picture of your garden we can help! Give us a call on **0800 027 2057** and we will arrange for a photo of your garden to be taken so you can enter the competition.



For further information visit **www.acisgroup.co.uk/acis-in-bloom-2017**

Acis In Bloom 2017 entry form

Name:.....

Address:.....

.....

.....

Telephone:.....

Award Category:.....

Why do you love your garden?:.....

.....

Send your entry form and photos to: Marketing and Communications,
Freepost RTSH-THEK-SRRJ, Acis, Acis House, Bridge Street, Gainsborough DN21 1GG

an interview with **EVA** **JOHNSON**

Over the past one hundred years a lot has happened that has changed the world we live in.

In that time we've had two world wars, the invention of the telephone and at the time of writing this 20 different Prime Ministers. This is something only a few can say they have lived through, but one of these people is Eva Johnson, a tenant at Acis who currently lives in her home at Oswalds in the Lincolnshire village of Bardney. We sat down with her and asked her a few questions about life, what has changed and what makes her happy.

What is it like getting a card from the queen?

It is quite nice really and I got another one from the Secretary of State. It is very nice of her Majesty to send it, I just wonder if I have to write back to say thanks!

How much change have you seen through your life?

It is a different world. Sometimes you get mixed up with facts and fantasy. At the time, everything was fine for

what it was but there wasn't a telephone, double glazing and a television - practically nothing compared to now. But, that's how it was.

What did you do during World War Two?

I was conscripted during the war to be a police officer in Scunthorpe for two to three years. I had to go to London for my training. It was a very interesting time during the war. Back home - there were more female drivers on the roads, no streetlights, no street directions, everything was taken down - but we just got on with it.

What is so different from back when you were young to now?

Everyone rode bicycles or walked everywhere. I cycled a lot and I cycled from Bardney to Skegness just for pleasure! After the war, technology just came amazingly fast. And everything just became very different in a short space of time.



To read more visit
[www.acisgroup.co.uk/
our-news](http://www.acisgroup.co.uk/our-news)



DO YOU WANT TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

Volunteering - give a little, **gain a lot**

National volunteering charity TimeBank have given us some helpful tips to highlight the benefits of volunteering.

While you'll want to make a real difference when you volunteer, it's not just about what you can do for others. Volunteers get a lot out of the experience too. TimeBank says good volunteering is rewarding for everyone involved.

Here are some things volunteering can do for you:

- **Give your CV a boost** - we did a survey of some of the UK's leading businesses and 73% said they'd employ someone who's volunteered over someone who hasn't
- **Get back into work** - it's a great way to get a reference and fill gaps in your work experience. You can try out different types of work to get a taster, which can really help if you're looking for a job or want to change direction
- **Improve your confidence** - you'll learn and do things that you might not normally get the chance to - this can be a real confidence boost
- **Improve your health** - while you're busy giving back to your community you could also be getting healthier. Research has found that volunteering can do

Overall customer satisfaction
with Acis and its services

83%



Target as at
31 March 2017: 84%



Volunteering is a great way to give something back, but it also helps you gain new skills and experience. In this feature, find out more about volunteering, and how we have developed opportunities for our customers and our people to volunteer.



Take part in our online survey about text messaging go to www.acisgroup.co.uk/say-it

everything from helping you to sleep better to boosting your immune system

- **Meet new people** - you'll meet a whole bunch of new people - volunteering is a great way to make friends

What could you do?

Even if you don't have a lot of time to spare there are lots of different things you could try,

from driving a mini-bus to teaching someone to play the guitar or helping an older person get online. You don't even have to leave home to be a telephone befriender or help with publicity for a local motocross rally. Try searching www.do-it.org for volunteer roles near you.

Doing our bit for Volunteers' Week

Our workers are aiming to give up a collective one thousand hours of their time this year to volunteer for community projects.

As part of Volunteers' Week in June, we launched our own 'Volunteers Bank' to capture the amount of time our people dedicate to charity and voluntary work.

Jill Dickson, Acis' Volunteer and Employability Coordinator, said: "We know that many of our people go above and beyond for our customers, and have done so for many years. This 'bank' will help us to celebrate exactly how much we do

and demonstrate the wider social impact we have on our communities."

The organisation also took part in numerous events to celebrate Volunteers' Week. We held a LIVES training session in conjunction with BBC Radio Lincolnshire, doing our bit to help train 10,000 people across Lincolnshire in basic CPR techniques.

If you are interested in volunteering please contact Jill Dickson our Volunteer Coordinator through our Customer Contact Centre on **0800 027 2057**.

Get involved in our marketing project

discuss it

We're on the hunt for customers to take part in an exciting new project.

We want you - our customers - to take a lead in our latest Annual Review. We keep informing you of our official performance figures and telling you how great we think we are - but we want to hear your thoughts and share them with others.

Our Annual Review has been transformed into a website over the last couple of years, but now we're wanting to go even further and use technology to enhance it even further.

We're on the lookout for people who want to lead and take part in this exciting new project and learn new skills. If you're interested in marketing and communications, this project could be perfect for you.

To get involved, email marketing@acisgroup.co.uk or call us on **0800 027 2057**.



Customers satisfied with the quality of their home

84%



Target as at 31 March 2017: 75%



A focus on...
your voice

Our Tenant-Led Scrutiny Panel (TLSP) is on the hunt for new members

Former quality control expert Ann Pennington from Stow is a current TLSP member and is urging people to get involved and reap the benefits, just as she did.

Ann, 70, has been an Acis customer for 16 years, and first got involved by taking part in focus groups before joining the TLSP.

She said: "I remember getting a letter through the post inviting me to a focus group.

Acis wanted people's views on customer experiences and I jumped at the chance to have my say. It was perfect for me

and I did a few more of the focus groups before I found out about the scrutiny panel."

The scrutiny panel works to assess the work we do and makes recommendations to our Board as to how our services should be improved.

Ann added: "We look at everything. If something's not quite right, we're here to look at it and see if improvements can

be made. We've done some great work recently on the quality of empty homes, grounds maintenance work carried out by contractors and recently on gas safety within the home.

"I was a quality controller when I worked so I find this work really interesting. It's like opening a tin of beans and checking that inside it is what it says on the

tin. And then checking again. And if there's a problem with it, looking to see what can be done to make it right.

"But I've also picked up a lot of new skills as well. I didn't know anything about the digital world before but now I do and it's really helped me. I've picked up a lot of skills from the other people around me as well. We need more diversity within the group. We need some fresh thinking and some fresh ideas."

How the TLSP is having an impact:

Gas safety - improvements to be made

The latest service to be reviewed by the TLSP is gas safety, with the group successfully making a series of recommendations to our Board.

The panel undertook months of research, held focus groups and conducted surveys to gain your views on how our annual gas safety checks were carried out.

Many of the issues identified had already been resolved by the implementation of our new Prime service, but some areas for improvement have also been identified. The panel took these recommendations to our Board who have agreed to:

- Look at offering appointment slots, including out of hours and at weekends, to help tenants not miss appointments while they may be at work.
- Look at self-serve options so tenants could book their own appointments.

- Investigate whether schedules could be better managed to ensure value for money.
- Communicate more effectively about the need for gas servicing to take place within certain timeframes, including information about how much missed appointments cost the organisation.
- Introduce a text messaging facility to remind customers of their appointments.



If you're interested in picking up some new skills and joining the TLSP, call us on **0800 027 2057**



or email **info@acisgroup.co.uk**



Repairs completed right first time

98.32%



Target as at
31 March 2017: 97%

'WALK THIS WAY' RAISES £3,000

Our 'Walk this Way' walking group took part in the London Moonwalk on Saturday 13 May.

Five of our people took part in the walk that kicked off at midnight to raise money for breast cancer charities.

Penny Shaw, Debbie Clubley, Maria Jones, Sandra Toyne and Tracy O'Neil joined around 15,000 other walkers around the capital.

The team is part of the walking group 'Walk this Way' which was formed after our successful Three Peaks challenge last year. This group consists of our people, Lincolnshire Police and their friends and family.

The team arrived in London late at night and after inspirational messages from the founder of the Moonwalk, Prince Charles and breast cancer survivors the team took to the start line at 10.30pm and finished together

at about 6.20am - under their eight-hour target.

Penny Shaw, Safer Communities Officer, who took part in the walk, said: "So far team Walk this Way has raised £2,566 but this is without adding cash from our sponsor forms so we now expect to raise over £3,000 smashing our £1,000 target. Anyone who would like to join sponsorship for this amazing cause are more than welcome". Penny added

"There will be lots more walks in the future as we start planning the Three Peaks challenge again in September and there has been mention of the Edinburgh, Iceland or even Peru Moonwalks in future years."

“There will be lots more walks in the future as we start planning the Three Peaks challenge again



You can sponsor the team at www.moonwalklondon2017.everydayhero.com/uk/team-walk-this-way



Easter madness!

More than 80 parents and children attended our Easter Fayre at the Gainsborough Uphill Community Centre in April.

There was plenty of fun activities to do including card decorating, Easter egg hunts, bonnet making and a dance from the Performing Arts Club of St John's.

There was also a generous donation of food and hampers from Morrisons, Tesco and Sills and Betteridge solicitors. Members of the Prince's Trust team also helped on the day.

Bryony Roberts, our Talent Match Area Ambassador, said: "Seeing the smiles spread across the centre was the highlight of the day. We are so happy that people came and enjoyed our activities, the response was outstanding and we loved every second of it."

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We are building new homes in Cherry Willingham

We're working with local developers Lindum Homes to bring 16 new two and three bedroom homes to the picturesque village of Cherry Willingham near Lincoln.

All semi-detached, each home on the new Waterford Meadows development has:

- modern fitted kitchen
- gas central heating
- uPVC double glazing
- family bathroom
- front and rear gardens
- off-street parking
- includes a ten-year NHBC warranty.

The homes are currently in development, expected to be completed in September 2017. You can take a look at the properties on our website and keep up-to-date with the progress of the development. If you, a family member or friend are looking to own your own home. Simply go to **www.acisgroup.co.uk/waterford-meadows-cherry-willingham** for details.

Visit our show homes at
**Kingfisher Close,
Cherry Willingham**

**Saturday 5
& Sunday 6 August 2017**
10am to 2pm

Customers satisfied with the overall repairs and maintenance service provided

73%



Target as at
31 March 2017: 84%

Out & about

with Anna Cooper

Anna Cooper is our Energy Management Officer. It's her job to look into ways our customers can save on their energy. We sat down with Anna to see what she loves about her job and how she can help you.

What do you do in your job?

It's my job to identify people who may be struggling with their energy bills and give them practical help. This help might be different in every case - from installing insulation or upgrading heating systems to helping people switch energy suppliers or finding funding to alleviate any debt.

What's the best thing about working for Acis?

I enjoy working with all the different departments at Acis, including the finance team to monitor income from the renewable energy systems we install and the Area Service Managers to identify where help is needed.

How do you help our customers in your job?

There are a variety of ways I can help customers through my role.

“It's my job to identify people who may be struggling with their energy bills and give them practical help

This may be through giving one to one energy advice and support in a customer's home, submitting a funding bids to alleviate debt on their behalf or arranging for practical improvements to their home to make it more energy efficient.

I coordinate the delivery of energy saving initiatives such as the new 'Plug in Project', which will see the installation of water saving devices within empty homes in partnership with our Prime team.

I also work closely with community partners and funders to identify new funding channels and facilitate applications to these schemes. For example, through an application to The Big Energy Saving Network in 2015/16 we supported a hundred customers to become more energy efficient saving customers over £5,000 in total.

I have recently been developing a series of energy fact sheets for customers to display on the new Infohub section of our website to help customers to manage energy better.

What ways can customers save on their energy?

Anyone wanting advice can contact me through our Freephone number 0800 027 2057.

Simple changes can have a big impact on energy bills. For example:

- Simply turning down your thermostat temperature by 1°C, this could cut heating bills by up to 10% and typically saves around £50 per year.
- Using energy saving bulbs, this can save you £45 over the lifetime of the bulb.
- Installing a smart meter, this is a good way of ensuring you are only paying for the energy you use as you will no longer receive estimated bills.
- Contact us to get a free water saving pack.



What ways can customers learn more about saving energy?

Anyone wanting advice can contact me through our Freephone number 0800 027 2057.

New energy saving advice guides will be appearing on the Infohub on our website later this year. The library of guides will feature information on how to apply for debt relief, explain the different tariffs and payment methods in the current market and how to work heating controls.

acis

better homes and better services for better lives

Home maintenance



Mould treatment
and prevention

acis

better homes and better services for better lives

Home maintenance



How to bleed a
radiator

acis

better homes and better services for better lives

Home maintenance



Adjusting loose
board doors

Introducing

Infohub

Self-help guides making your life easier

Infohub is a new self-help section of our website, dedicated to making your life that little bit easier.

Our Infohub is full of household solution guides offering handy tips and advice for problems around your home. We'll be adding to it all the time to give you support with health and wellbeing, money management and energy efficiency.

You'll find some easy-to-use fact sheets and some short videos to help guide you through some of the little jobs you might need to do around the home - from tackling sink blockages to topping up your boiler.

Infohub can be found on our website under 'At Home'. Take a look and see what you think. Let us know if there's something you're struggling with and we'll do our best to help you fix it.



Visit our infohub at
www.acisgroup.co.uk/infohub

Customers satisfied with the value
for money of services provided

87%



Target as at
31 March 2017: 84%

Every penny counts...

As an organisation, we're committed to ensuring you get good value for your money.

Each year, we work to a budget but aim to make savings along the way so we can reinvest more money into providing better homes, better services and, ultimately, better lives for you – our customers.

But as well as saving money, value for money is also about raising efficiency and effectiveness in everything we

do, directly improving our service to you.

We've been tracking what we spend, how we spend it and what the impact has been. For every £1 we spent in 2016/17, we achieved £16 worth of social value. Here's a look some of our value for money achievements last year:



Gained **£42,000** in external funding to deliver special programmes



Renegotiated a series of contracts, such as our grounds maintenance contract, to ensure you get **value for money**



Through our community initiatives, we have made a positive impact worth over **£2 million**



Launched our new tenancy support programme Supporting Foundations, delivering **£500,000** worth of social value



Launched Prime - our new repairs and maintenance organisation to save **£1 million** a year



Saved around **£11,000** in mileage costs



Saved people an average of **£250** a year on their energy bills and easing customer debts by **£4,000**



Saved around **£16,000** in bathroom supplies



Our homes generated about **£300,000** worth of energy



Invested **£196,000** in our communities via our Better Places programme

We're proud of our achievements, but we're not complacent. We're building on this to keep providing value for money services to you. In particular, in this next year we're starting a three-year transformation programme to overhaul the way we deliver our services – all focused on improving customer satisfaction. We'll bring you more on this in future editions of Home News.

In the meantime, if you have any ideas on how we can save money or improve our services, call us on **0800 027 2057** or email **info@acisgroup.co.uk**

Repair appointments kept

97.19%



Target as at
31 March 2017: 97%





view it

Our estate walks are a great opportunity for you to get involved and talk face-to-face with a member of our neighbourhoods team.

If there's something in your community you're not happy about, these walk arounds give you the chance to speak to us about the changes you would like to see.

These 'view it' walks have helped make improvements in the community including fixing fences, picking up rubbish and clearing gardens.

Join us for one of our 'view it' estate walks, we meet at:

Sheffield, South Yorkshire

Lower Manor

Third Friday of every month
10am start, meet at the Lidl
supermarket, Alison Crescent.

Woodthorpe

Second Friday of every month
10am start, meet at Nodder
Road shops.

We also carry out 'view it' walks in Dinnington, Auckley, Wath-upon-Deane, Mansfield, Thurgroft and Kilnhurst for dates and times of the next 'view it' in these areas go to the events page on our website.

Gainsborough, Lincolnshire

Park Springs Estate, Gainsborough

Fourth Thursday of every month
10am start, meet up at the
Gainsborough Uphill
Community Centre

For information about all 'view it' walks please call our Customer Contact Centre on **0800 027 2057** or email **info@acisgroup.co.uk** you can also find out about 'view it' walks on our website at **www.acisgroup.co.uk**

Making a difference on Lower Manor estate

The Lower Manor Tenants and Residents Association (TARA) are on the hunt for a new Secretary, Vice Chair and more members to join its team.

The TARA is a group of people living on the Lower Manor area who have come together to make the community a better place to live.

The TARA is currently down to only two members and there is a real need for new members to join.

Dorothy Duroe, Treasurer at the TARA, said: "We're looking for new members who are in good health and are passionate about helping people. In TARA meetings people can speak to housing providers, the police and other services around Lower Manor. It's one of the only places you can get your voice heard."

The group meets once a month between 6pm and 8pm on the second Tuesday of the month except August and December. Meetings are held at the MaTReC (Manor Training and Resource Centre) located on Prince of Wales Road in Sheffield.



If you are interested in getting involved then please contact Dot Duroe on **07531 204 966**

Customers satisfied that their views are being taken into account

60%



Target as at
31 March 2017: 75%

QUIZ *time!*



We've thought of some questions about some of the stories that have appeared in this issue of Home News, can you spot the right answer? If you don't know the answer straight away you can always check back to find the answer in the stories. Don't forget the competition is free to enter and you could win a £20 shopping voucher. Good luck!

Just circle your answer to each question, fill in the entry form and return to the address below.

How much does the 'Walk this Way' group expect to raise?

- a) Over £200
- b) Over £3,000
- c) Over £4 million

What is our new self-help section of our website called?

- a) Infohub
- b) Dataplace
- c) Acisgoogle

Name:.....

Address:.....

Telephone:.....

How many parents and children attended the Easter funday in April?

- a) More than 20
- b) More than 50
- c) More than 80

What is the percentage of customers that are satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live?

- a) 75%
- b) 80%
- c) 90%

What role does Anna Cooper have here at Acis?

- a) Energy Management Officer
- b) Director of Saving a Bunch of Energy
- c) Energy Saving Officer

AND THE WINNERS ARE...

Satisfaction survey winners

Our quarterly satisfaction survey winner draw winner is **Mrs Bemrose, Caistor, Lincolnshire.**

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.

Spring wordsearch competition winner

Congratulations to **Mrs Bateman from Gainsborough, Lincolnshire** who found all 10 words.

Why not have a go at our quiz?

It's free to enter and you could win £20 of shopping vouchers.



Customers satisfied that we get back to them and keep them informed

70%



This is a new measure we're currently monitoring

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 8 September 2017.



Acis Group Limited,
Acis House, 57 Bridge Street,
Gainsborough DN21 1GG



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