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as he puts the finishing touches to
an empty home ready for a new tenant. 06

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A focus on your voice

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Following feedback from you, we've launched our new website.

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Complete our festive wordsearch correctly and you could win a £20 shopping voucher.

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Welcome to our shared ownership customers

This is the first issue of Home News to go out to our shared ownership customers. Most of the information in the magazine is relevant to all our customers, but from time to time there'll be

specific information about rented properties and shared ownership properties. If you'd like to see anything specific in any future issues of Home News, let us know at marketing@acisgroup.co.uk

Award winners... again

We scooped the 'excellence in community action' award at the Chartered Institute of Housing Midlands Awards for our work redeveloping the Gainsborough Uphill Community Centre.

Lucy Picksley, Community Engagement Coordinator, said: "I was thrilled to collect this award and represent Acis and our steering group at the awards ceremony. It's fantastic to see so many people using the centre and participating in the activities on offer."

"Winning the award is an accolade for all of the hard work and determination shown by people, without local people taking such a keen interest in their facilities we wouldn't have

the vibrant community space we have today."

This is the third time our work on the community centre has been recognised by our peers, resulting in an award.



Making a difference in Gainsborough

Some of our people and residents from the Gainsborough Uphill community took time out of their weekend to do a 'Big Tidy Up' event as part of 'Make a Difference Day' in October.

Volunteers split into two groups with one group cleaning up around the new Multi-Use Games Area and the other going to the play area and skate park near Sturgate Walk.

Around 15 Morrisons trolleys were collected from the area and were returned to the supermarket later that weekend. Other interesting finds included a radiator, a vacuum cleaner, a pushchair and two push bikes.

Volunteers were then rewarded with free hotdogs and sweets at the Gainsborough Uphill Community Centre. There was also a prize of two free family tickets to go and see Gainsborough Trinity Football Club rewarded to the team who picked up the most litter.

Hannah Taylor-Dales, who helped organise the event, said: "Thank



you to all the volunteers who came out to help with the Big Tidy Up event. It was brilliant to see the community come together and tackle rubbish in the area. We did a brilliant job of collecting so much rubbish and hopefully our actions will encourage others to get involved."

We are looking at hosting other Big Tidy Up events in Gainsborough, Sheffield and surrounding rural areas in the near future so make sure you keep up-to-date on our Facebook and Twitter page.



Hikers take on Three Peaks Challenge

Five of our people have raised over £500 for charity after completing the Yorkshire Three Peaks Challenge.

The quintet of Penny Shaw, Claire Hill, Debbie Clubley, Geoff Senscall and Stephen Hall took on the 5,200ft ascent of Pen-y-ghent, Whenside and Ingleborough in September.

The group managed to raise a whopping £539.25 for our charity of the year, the Teenage Cancer Trust.

Three Peaks organiser Penny Shaw said: "As a few of us enjoy walking, it provided us with the opportunity to undertake a personal challenge and to raise money for the Teenage Cancer Trust. The most enjoyable part of the challenge was spending time with and getting to know colleagues better away from work and the sense of achievement both individually and for the team."

To donate you can visit www.justgiving.com/fundraising/Acis-3-Peaks



Thanks for that, as soon as I sent the message a guy turned up who was in the area - boy that was quick - nice job - thanks to all. **Mrs W of Market Rasen**



A focus on...

your voice

We're committed to continually improving our homes and services we offer.

The best way to help us provide the services that you really want is for you to have your say on what really matters to you, your family and the community around you. At the end of the day, who knows the place where you live better than you?

We want to get as many of our customers involved in decision making as possible. Over the past few months we've carried out a big review involving almost 100 of our customers. As a result, we've widened the scope of many of our involvement activities and made them more accessible than ever before.

We're launching a new range of opportunities for customers to have their say on what matters - whether that's our performance, reviewing our processes and policies, looking at where we work, or even just giving us views on projects we are working on. There are lots of ways to make a difference, so if you're interested, get in touch and make your voice heard.

If you're interested in getting involved in any of these activities, call us on 0800 027 2057 or email info@acisgroup.co.uk

say it

How to get involved

Online
Face to Face
Over the phone

5 mins



Overview

- General feedback
- Compliments
- Complaints



Skills

- Communication

view it

How to get involved

Online
Face to Face

1 hour



Overview

- Community checks
- Estate walks
- Tidy ups
- Tell us what needs fixing improving rather than fixing



Skills

- Knowledge of your community

talk it

How to get involved



Face to face



1 hour



Overview

- Discuss topics affecting your community
- Chance to be part of a formal group



Skills

- Knowledge of your community
- Communication
- Problem-solving

review it

How to get involved



Online



30 mins



Overview

- Have your say on our policies and strategies
- Do it in your spare time



Skills

- Digital skills
- Communication

discuss it

How to get involved



Face to face



1 hour



Overview

- Regular group workshops
- Share your thoughts and ideas
- Shape our services



Skills

- Communication

improve it

How to get involved

Online
Face to Face

4 hours



Overview

- Be part of a well-respected group
- Assess our performance
- Undertake research and make recommendations



Skills

- Enthusiasm
- Commitment
- Comfortable working to deadlines

improve it

Thank you for your views

The Tenant Led Scrutiny Panel would like to thank all the people who participated in their latest project, which looked at improving gas servicing in our properties.

Panel members have been out and about in the community, collecting tenants' views to try and understand what gas servicing meant to you, if we communicate enough about its importance and why some tenants are initially reluctant to allow engineers into their homes to get the annual safety checks done. The panel also ran an online campaign through by email our website and Facebook

for the first time to obtain tenants' views on the subject.

At the time of going to print, the panel had prepared a detailed report to be presented to our Board in January that includes your thoughts, summarises findings and offers recommendations as how to improve the service.

The panel is also seeking more tenants to take part in its activities by answering quick surveys. It's really simple, and all they need is your email address. If you're interested, email info@acisgroup.co.uk

Tenants help with tendering process

Four tenants have been involved in the decision making process in the next stage of tendering for our grounds maintenance contracts.

Following the Tenant-Led Scrutiny Panel's report into

grounds maintenance, two customers from South Yorkshire and two from Lincolnshire supported Acis in evaluating and scoring tenders for the new contract.

David Winn former Acis Board Member

David, one of our tenants on the Woodthorpe Estate in Sheffield, sadly passed away in October. He had served on the Acis Board as a Tenant Member from 2007, when the Sheffield stock transferred to Acis from Sheffield City Council, until his retirement from the Board in September 2013. At transfer, David was a member of the TARA – the local Tenants and Residents Association; he then joined the Acis Resident

Advisory Panel, later known as the Local Management Board. David was always keen to represent his neighbours and the wider community to ensure Acis delivered on its promises to tenants, providing safe and secure homes in which to live.

David will be sadly missed by everyone who knew him at Acis and our thoughts are with his family at this time.

Speak to us at the TARA drop-ins



We have started up a drop-in surgery at the Woodthorpe Tenants and Residents Association (TARA) building on Ulley Road in Sheffield. This will tag onto the end of the coffee mornings TARA residents have set up on a Thursday every other week. Customers are welcome to pop in and discuss various issues they have in the area.

For more information, contact our customer contact centre on 0800 027 2057 or email info@acisgroup.co.uk



Thank you



Our newly launched repairs, maintenance and improvements service Prime is now settling in. We'd like to thank you for your patience over the past couple of months since the launch in September.

Prime repairs and maintenance service is offered to our customers in our rented homes.



Out and

with our Prime engineer Chris Senior



"I really think it helps that a tenant has that familiar face they see while working"

about...

Chris works as a Prime engineer which means he does a number of jobs including, plumbing, carpet fitting and everyday repairs. We spent the morning with him as he made some home improvements to an empty property.

How did you start your career at Acis?

I first started working for Acis two days a week. That was four years ago. I am now full time.

What has the change to Prime been like for you?

The change to Prime has been really good, the atmosphere has been really friendly and the welcome day where we got bacon butties was a really nice gesture from Acis.

What is rewarding about your job?

Being able to do a really decent job and making peoples homes and places better. Yesterday I was working in Welton and a tenant was really over the moon with how we had fitted her new bathroom. I had been working on the property for the three days we were there and I was the one she saw the most of. I really think it helps that a tenant has that familiar face they see while



working rather than having several people coming in at different times.

What's the best thing about working in the trades industry?

You're never in one place which I really like. There's no two days the same and you have different jobs and different challenges each day.

Is there anything you're most proud of?

When you walk to a job for example a kitchen or bathroom on the first day and you're there to the last day and you can look back and be proud of what

"The change to Prime has been really good, the atmosphere has been really friendly"

you've done. You can see the transformation from when you walked in to when you leave.

How do you deal with empty properties?

I've worked on kitchens and bathrooms in empty properties and we add some finishing touches and improvements for it to go back on the market. It's great to see the final product and be proud when you see the property ready to let and go to a family that needs it.



Celebrating the past on the Middlefield estate

A celebration event was held at the Gainsborough Uphill Community Centre in October to celebrate the success of the Middlefield archaeological dig back in May. During the event, Ian and Carenza appealed for residents to share their stories of the estate to support the findings at the dig.

Ian said: "I grew up on this estate so I'm really fascinated in what we found here. I want to continue to research on the area and dig on the estate to find things from my childhood.

"We made some intriguing discoveries on the dig including finding several toys for boys like toy soldiers and wheels from toy

cars but no toys for girls at all. It would be great to discover why this is.

"What I see in the estate today is exactly how I remember it back in the 1960s, things really haven't changed. From the film we showed you can see they lived in a close community and that's something that has remained the same here. It's a great community to grow up in and it was brilliant to see the area being active and taking part in the dig."

Carenza and Ian are hoping to take part in another dig on the estate soon if they can obtain funding. They want to get the memories of people who lived on the estate to piece together

the history of the area. If you lived on the Gainsborough Uphill estate and you want to share your memories, please contact Carenza Lewis on clewis@lincoln.ac.uk or Ian Waites on iwaites@lincoln.ac.uk.



You're brilliant people to work with. I love the Acis offices and you have done it up really nicely.
Mr H of Gainsborough



Your new website

You may have seen that we've launched a new website - and it's all because of you.

Following feedback from our customers, we've redesigned the site, made it easier for you to find the information you need and added a host of new features.

We'd found that even though the old website was full of information, that information was often hard to find - even though it was sometimes duplicated in various sections. This new website still has all the information you need, but in more manageable chunks and in an easy-to-follow navigation. Everything you need should be within three clicks of the homepage.

The new website uses our new branding, and also information on our 'wrap around' services which compliment our day to day work as a landlord as well as details of the new ways you can help to shape our services (also see page 4).

And early next year we'll be launching our InfoHub pages in collaboration with our partners. These pages are designed to give you all the information you need on energy efficiency, finance, family life, careers advice and much more. We'll be adding new content all the time, so keep checking back to see what's going on.

**We really like it.
We hope you agree.**

**You can
see it for
yourself at
www.acisgroup.co.uk**

We're looking for customers to get involved in writing articles and blogs to be included on our new website. Contact marketing@acisgroup.co.uk or call our customer contact centre on 0800 027 2057.



Benefit cap changes

The government's new benefit cap came into force in November, meaning the maximum any person can claim in benefits has been reduced from £500 to £384.62. And those living independently will have their benefits capped from £350 to £257.69 per week.

However, there is no benefit cap for households where a single parent works a minimum of 16 hours per week, 24 hours per week for a couple with children and 30 hours per week for single claimants with no children.

If you feel you might be affected by this new benefit cap, there are organisations which can support you. Citizens Advice can offer you financial advice and there are several Credit Unions around our regions offering budgeting classes and saving schemes to help you manage your money better.



Continuing to provide better places for you

More works to improve the environment and communities around our homes have been completed.

Under the Better Places programme, we've now completed a refurbishment of balconies, walkways and bin areas at Trinity Court in Gainsborough, and provided additional car parking and landscaping to alleviate traffic issues at Cow Lane in Tealby.

The Better Places project kicked off earlier this year with fencing and boundary work at Danewood Gardens and Normancroft Drive in Sheffield – and this work will continue into 2017.

A project to refurbish balconies and walkways at Park House in Welton and work to concrete repair work to properties at Lincoln Road in Fenton will start in January 2017 while

improvements to Castlebeck Avenue and the rest of Lower Manor will commence in April 2017.

The Better Places programme is a five-year scheme which will see us investing in our neighbourhoods as we aim to improve customer satisfaction, decrease the number of customers leaving their home with Acis and reduce incidences of antisocial behaviour.



Firecracker goes off with a bang

More than 60 young people attended this year's Firecracker activities designed to provide positive activities for young people on the Gainsborough Uphill estate.

Firecracker is a weekly activity night for young people aged between 11 and 16 which ran for four Friday nights in October and November, aimed at getting young people off the street and in a safe indoor environment.

This project saw multiple volunteers host activities such as nail art, biscuit making, t-shirt designing and much more.

Also helping with the event was Gainsborough Trinity FC who helped in a wide range of activities each week and Super Kitchen which provided free food and drink to the young people.

Safer Communities Officer and Firecracker organiser Penny Shaw said: "Firecracker has shown how partnership work between agencies and services can be effective in our community with volunteers and people from Acis, Lincolnshire Police, Gainsborough Trinity Foundation and Bread and Roses. By working together we can provide an



exciting provision which has clearly engaged with young people. We have had our most successful year yet with more than 40 attendees at every session and more than 60 young people attending two or more sessions.

"Not only does Firecracker provide a safe, healthy and active place for young people, it has also helped us get to know the young people in our community and encourage them to get involved in other activities.

"Firecracker volunteers and participants are grateful to the West Lindsey Community Fund and the Thonock Trust who provided funding for some of the food and activities. Following on from Firecracker 2016 we will be meeting with our partners to review the event and plan for the future."



MUGA officially opened

A new Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) has been officially unveiled on Riseholme Road in Gainsborough. The £85,000 games facility was developed thanks to the work of six dedicated volunteers.

With financial donations from us, Igas Lincolnshire Police, West Lindsey District Council and Morrisons, the MUGA hopes to provide young people a space to play games in a safe and fun environment.

The facility has outdoor exercise equipment, two basketball hoops and two football goals suitable for ball games and is free to use for the whole community.



Repair man was brilliant - you can send him again! He was lovely. He left the bathroom better than he found it. He's one of those that does a little bit more than he needs to. **Mrs B of Lincoln**



view it

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' walk in these areas go to the events page on our new website.

Gainsborough/ West Lindsey and Lincolnshire

Park Springs Estate, Gainsborough

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

For information about all our 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

Our 'view it' estate walks are a fantastic opportunity for you to get involved and talk face-to-face with one of our team. If there's something in your community you're not happy about, these walkarounds give you the opportunity to speak to us and get the changes you want made.

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

The walks happen throughout Sheffield and Lincolnshire and are led by our Neighbourhood Wardens. Customers are encouraged to join us on these walks to check out the local area

and to raise concerns that you might have.

We spent the morning with Rob on his estate walk in Woodthorpe and he told us about the importance of 'view it' walks for the community.

He said: "The walks are important for the local community to get involved and to bring forward suggestions and improvements for the area. It's also an opportunity to highlight any concerns or information people have about antisocial behaviour."

"On the walks we go around the estate in approximately one hour. We do try and get as many people involved as possible and we try to cover as much of the estate and do a full inspection noting down any problems we see of that area.

"We have a very structured audit here and we want to show that we do pick up customer concerns that happen in the estates on a regular basis.

"We encourage customers to get involved as it's their opportunity to speak to us face-to-face. We can look at the estate as a group pointing out where improvements need to be made and it's an opportunity for people to express their concerns with us".



Kilvington Avenue

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 allow 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 beating our target



84%

Overall customer satisfaction with Acis and its services

Target as at 30 September 2016: 80%



84%

Customers satisfied with the quality of their home

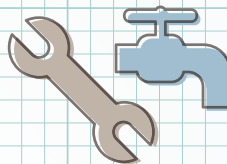
Target as at 30 September 2016: 70%



68%

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

This is a new measure we're currently monitoring.



68%

Customers satisfied with the overall repairs and maintenance service provided

Target as at 30 September 2016: 80%



66%

Customers satisfied that their views are being taken into account

Target as at 30 September 2016: 70%



84%

Customers satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live

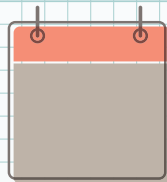
Target as at 30 September 2016: 76%



85%

Customers satisfied with the value for money of services provided

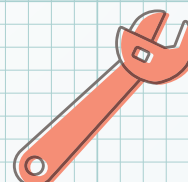
Target as at 30 September 2016: 68%



97.25%

Repair appointments kept

Target as at 30 September 2016: 97%



97%

Jobs completed right first time

Target as at 30 September 2016: 97%

Bardney Playgroup given over £200 to refurbish play area

We donated more than £200 to Bardney Playgroup that went towards refurbishments of their building.

The funding was used to create a homely, welcoming environment



in the new play area so that children can settle in easily.

Items purchased included a sofa, rugs, curtains, curtain poles and family tree wall stickers.

Kim Dove, the Playground's Administrator, said: "We use the play area everyday, the sofa is a great area for children to sit and play. The response from parents was overwhelmingly positive. Parents said the new area was stimulating, relaxing and is a bit like a home from home."



Providing affordable food for those in need

A new voluntary group is proving they have the recipe for success by providing affordable, tasty food for people in Gainsborough.

Super Kitchen is run by a team of volunteers who make fresh meals for sale at reasonable prices.

Sheila Goodall, the project manager at the Super Kitchen, said: "We're passionate about working on the (Uphills) estate. There are more than 40 Super Kitchens in the East Midlands and we're aiming to do more around Lincolnshire."

"The meals we make are made out of surplus food, the food that supermarkets don't want. We get this food donated to us from numerous places including

Tesco and Fair Share a food supply organisation.

"We provide a lot of food at the Gainsborough Uphill Community Centre and we hold Light Bite Lunches every Monday at midday. We also hold the Super Kitchen Social Eating Event every other Friday at 4pm for three courses at £2.50 per adult with accompanied kids under 15 years eating for free.



"The unique thing is that the Super Kitchen events is that they bring people together"

"The volunteers who help out here all get a qualification in first aid and food hygiene so there's a real incentive to get involved and improve on your skills."

"The unique thing is that the Super Kitchen events bring people together, all generations come along to the events and it's great to see people socialising when they wouldn't normally."

To find out the latest about the Super Kitchen check out the Gainsborough Uphill Community Centre Facebook page.



Be Smart

...say goodbye to estimated readings

Smart meters which track your energy usage and attempt to save you some money are coming to your home.

All energy suppliers are fitting optional smart meters to their customers' homes for free - and every home is entitled to one. You may even be living in one of the four million households to have had one installed already.

Smart meters are replacing the traditional meters, including prepay key meters, and they're needed to help us keep up with the technological advances of the industry. They'll also help to reduce carbon emissions and conserve energy. It's estimated that the installation of smart meters will save customers a total of £17 billion over the next 15 years.

The devices will show you the energy you are using in real time, making it easy to identify situations when you are using a lot of energy and change your behaviour accordingly. They'll also show you the cost of your next bill, so you can plan your budget easily. And for people with prepayment meters, it will mean you can easily see your remaining credit and you'll be able to top up easily.

The science bit

Smart meters work by sending automatic meter readings directly and securely to your energy supplier via a secure national network which is solely for smart meters using wireless technology. This works in the same way as other wireless



systems like car remote keys or TVs, using radio waves. Though it is a wireless system, you don't need Wi-Fi in your home for it to work and it won't use your Wi-Fi if you do have it. The government will also be able to accurately match supply with demand, reduce energy wastage and plan more accurately for the number of power stations we will need in the future.

Because bills will be accurate, there'll be no more estimated readings.

How can I get a smart meter?

Your energy supplier will contact you to arrange your installation, though some people will have to wait longer than others to get your meter depending on where you live and what type of home you live in. However, you can

ask your energy supplier directly to see if you can have yours fitted now.

And even though your supplier will have fitted the device, you'll still be free to change suppliers at any point. What's more, smart meters should make switching easier, as you'll have the information you need to make an informed decision and choose the best tariff and supplier for you.

For more information, contact your energy supplier or contact our Energy Management Officer Anna Cooper on 01427 675772 or email anna.cooper@acisgroup.co.uk

Festive wordsearch competition



Can you find all
the words below?

HOLLY SNOWMAN
RUDOLPH SLEIGH
TURKEY CAROLS
SANTA TINSEL
MISTLETOE GIFTS



R	C	E	N	S	L	M	A	N	L
O	E	O	T	E	L	T	S	I	M
G	E	F	C	T	L	N	H	O	S
H	I	H	L	R	A	R	E	E	I
G	O	P	T	M	E	I	L	U	T
I	S	L	W	Y	O	S	R	I	O
E	A	O	L	H	E	I	N	A	U
L	N	D	S	Y	S	S	O	U	O
S	T	U	R	K	E	Y	S	I	N
C	A	R	O	L	S	E	T	C	T

Name:.....

Address:.....

Telephone:.....

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: 10 February 2017.



Our lucky winners are...

Satisfaction survey winner

**Our quarterly satisfaction survey draw winner
is from Langworth, near Lincoln.**

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.

Autumn Spot The Difference
competition

**Congratulations to Ms R Fish from Fiskerton,
Lincoln who found all 10 differences.**

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

