

## DID YOU GET WHAT YOU WANTED FOR CHRISTMAS, NO?

Are you suffering from a Christmas debt hangover?

Why not join Lincolnshire Credit Union (LincUp) and start saving for Christmas now in our Christmas Savings Club, save what you can when you can and it will soon mount up. See table below.



Amount per week	Number of Weeks	Total Amount to Spend
£2	45	£90
£5	45	£225

All a potential member has to do to join is provide some ID (national insurance card, wage slip, bank statement, utility bill, driving license) then it's just a simple case of filling in a short membership form. Elaine at Lincolnshire Rural Housing can help with the form, ID and your £1 to start your account is already paid for you by your Housing Association. You can save by standing order, local collection point, Lincoln Co-Operative Dividend card or paying in book at the Post Office.

*"It's helping me save for a nice Christmas for my daughter, as she'll be 10 months by Christmas - I'll be able to buy her that big Christmas list without scrimping at the last minute to get the money together a week before Christmas - that's the brilliant thing about LincUp - that could also be YOU!"* Said one of our young mum members.

Your money is safe with us as we are covered by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme you will even get a dividend on your money, all we ask is that you keep your money in the account until the 1st November. If you haven't quite saved enough money you could even apply for a small low cost loan to tide you over the Christmas period.

Telephone **01522 528886/845100** or talk to Elaine at Lincolnshire Rural Housing on **01790 754219** for more details or check out the website [www.lincup.org](http://www.lincup.org)

## I.C.E.- IN CASE OF EMERGENCY

ICE is a national campaign being championed by the Emergency Services.

Programme the word ICE into your phone contact list with the name of the person you would want to be contacted in an emergency.

The emergency service would go through your phone at the scene of an emergency and immediately have details of your nearest and dearest-a really simple idea but could save a whole lot of time.

## RURAL GOLD STAR WINNERS



Four lucky winners had a lovely surprise just before Christmas... **£250 cash!**

Make sure you are a member for our next draw in June... you have to be 'in it to win it'.

Ring the office for an application form or any further information.



## BANK HOLIDAYS



Our office will be closed for the following dates and times over the Spring and Summer

- Good Friday **April 22nd**
- Easter Monday **April 24th**
- Royal Wedding Day **Friday May 29th**
- May Day **May 2nd**
- Spring Bank Holiday **May 30th**
- Summer Bank Holiday **August 29th**

**If you have an emergency repair while the offices are closed, please call 01790 755755**

Please remember that these numbers are for emergencies only.

Emergency repairs are repairs which could affect your health, safety or security or cause structural damage to your home if not rectified i.e. total loss of hot and cold water supplies, total loss of heating, insecure or broken windows, insecure external doors or broken locks, fire damage, blocked drains, severe leaks.

## CONSULTATION AND PERFORMANCE OFFICER

The Consultation and Performance Officer (CPO) Eve Roach left the Association at the end of March 2011. Eve had met with many of the Association's tenants and provided valuable support, advice and assistance. She also organised tenant consultation leading to the agreement of the Local Offer. Also more recently the forming of a Tenant Scrutiny Panel. We wish her success in her future career and whilst recruitment of a new CPO is underway, Elaine Lowe will be progressing tenant consultation and involvement.

## GOOD NEWS STORIES

What a difference a great partner can make to someone's life... and we have got some great partnerships within your Housing Association. As I have been travelling around and talking to you I have been amazed by hearing about some real heart-warming partnerships and wanted to share some of those good news stories with you all. If you know of any similar stories of 'triumph against all odds' or just something that makes you smile give me a ring and we'll have a chat. It's really not all 'doom and gloom' out there, read on.

Our First story involves a partner of the four legged variety, a very handsome chap called Robin. At almost ten years old (or 70 in dog years) Robin is getting slightly long in the tooth these days but none the less is just as diligent in his role as companion and guardian to a blind lady who is one of our longest residing tenants in the lovely village of Mareham Le Fen.

Robin, during his long career as a Guide dog, has gone above and beyond being a faithful companion and has actually saved Brenda's life on more than once. On one occasion Robin literally pulled Gillian back away from the enormous wheels of a parked lorry that had pulled out without seeing her.

*"It's a two way thing" said Gillian, "I can't begin to tell you how much different my life would have been without my dogs". Gillian has been blind since birth and Robin is her fourth dog. "The first time I ever walked out with my first dog in bustling Leamington Spa was a revelation...the dog just weaved between traffic, people and everyday things that to a blind person can be insurmountable hazards. I realised at that point that the freedom and confidence that I never thought possible would change my life forever".*



Not only when he is working is he an inspiration, his loyalty and companionship has lifted Gillian through some very difficult times. He is looking forward to a well-deserved retirement in the new year when he will be 'adopted' by his original puppy walker, and Gillian, well, she has a new long and happy partnership to look forward to, with her fifth dog.

## COMMENTS? SUGGESTIONS? IDEAS?

Do you have any comments, suggestions or ideas for your Newsletter? If so, please email them to [elaine@lrha.co.uk](mailto:elaine@lrha.co.uk)

Alternatively, you can post them to: LRHA, Markime House, Pooles Lane Spilsby PE23 5EY

Tenant Matters is also as a talking newsletter on cassette and on our website, [lrha.co.uk](http://lrha.co.uk), please contact us if you know of anyone who would benefit.



Poole's Lane • Spilsby  
Lincolnshire PE23 5EY  
Tel 01790 754219  
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YOUR LOCAL OFFER IS HERE!

Tenants MATTER  
Spring 2011 • Issue 11

## THANK YOU!!!

During the past few months you have taken the opportunity to give your views which have shaped our Local Offers. This gives you our clear commitments on the services you can expect from the Association.

We feel the best way to deliver excellent standards is to talk to and to listen to our tenants. It is our aim to provide an excellent service and to continuously improve by involving tenants.

A full version of our Local Offers is available on our web site: [www.lrha.co.uk](http://www.lrha.co.uk) or you can request a hard copy in the post by contacting the office.



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# Tenancy Standard

# Involvement & Empowerment

# Home Standard

# Neighbourhood & Community

What is needed? We must...	Our Offer to you. We will...	What you can expect.
1 Have no empty properties.	+ Keep relet times to a minimum.	= Best use of our homes.
2 Look at under occupation and overcrowding.	+ Consider helping tenants interested in downsizing.	= More housing options for tenants and applicants. Best use of our homes.
3 Ensure new tenants understand their rights and responsibilities.	+ Take the time to explain to new tenants all aspects of their tenancy, followed by a home visit within 12 weeks of moving in. Home manual issued to all tenants.	= Clear and consistent standards to help new tenants maintain their tenancy.
4 Ensure our Allocations Policy is fair and transparent.	+ Make sure our policy is easy to understand and fair to all applicants.	= Properties are let taking into account local policies and housing need.
5 Set rents and service charges in accordance with government formula.	+ Explain how our rents are set.	= An annual notice explaining how we have set your rent and services.
6 Maximise collection of rent and service charges.	+ Offer a range of ways to pay your rent and service charges.	= Convenient ways to pay your rent.
7 Offer confidential advice and support to tenants to help them maintain their tenancy.	+ Give advice, support and refer you to other agencies as appropriate. Actively promote access to low cost credit.	= A reduction in the number of tenancies that fail.

What is needed? We must...	Our Offer to you. We will...	What you can expect.
1 Provide choice in how and what services we provide.	+ Involve and listen to our tenants.	= Opportunities to become involved with how we shape our services.
2 Help our tenants to be involved.	+ Provide training and support.	= Free training courses. Travelling expenses paid.
3 Show courtesy, respect and sensitivity at all times.	+ Ensure staff are polite, helpful and provide a consistently high level of service.	= To be satisfied with how staff deal with your queries.
4 Investigate and resolve complaints as quickly as possible.	+ Follow our complaints policy and procedure and report on outcomes.	= Satisfaction with complaint handling. To be informed of performance.
5 Keep our tenants well informed.	+ Send out the Tenant Matters' newsletter three times a year to all our tenants. Provide each tenant with a copy of our annual report.	= To be kept informed of a wide range of issues and information in an accessible way.

## Value for Money Standard

What is needed? We must...	Our Offer to you. We will...	What you can expect.
1 Make sure that we compare prices for all services which deliver and achieve value for money.	+ Monitor and deliver an efficient and effective service.	= Good quality services that meet the needs of tenants within the available budgets.
2 Set targets and monitor our performance.	+ Monitor and review our performance and make sure we are on target.	= Performance figures publicised in our newsletter.

What is needed? We must...	Our Offer to you. We will...	What you can expect.
1 Maintain properties to our 'property and lettings standard' and to 'decent homes' standard.	+ Monitor and inspect homes to ensure they meet the required standards.	= A consistently high quality home.
2 Assist and liaise with other agencies to provide adaptations for disabled tenants.	+ Support and guide you through the referral process subject to local authority funding.	= Your property will be adapted to meet your needs.
3 Support elderly and vulnerable tenants to remain living independently.	+ Access a range of services to enable independent living where possible.	= To remain independent in your home for as long as possible.
4 Provide an excellent, efficient repairs service with clear completion targets.	+ Monitor, report and improve targets where possible.	= Emergency repairs to be dealt with within 24 hrs and other repairs within an agreed time span. The majority of repairs completed first visit.
5 Comply with all health and safety legislation and regulations for your home.	+ Fully comply with all our statutory duties and monitor health and safety requirements.	= A safe home.

What is needed? We must...	Our Offer to you. We will...	What you can expect.
1 Ensure all tenants are aware of their rights and responsibilities regarding anti-social behaviour.	+ Ensure all tenants feel able to report anti-social behaviour in the knowledge that it will be dealt with effectively.	= Clear and concise information for tenants on anti social behaviour. The opportunity to be involved in reviewing asb policies and procedures.
2 Acknowledge and discuss in confidence your anti-social behaviour complaint, keeping you informed of progress and action taken in dealing with your case.	+ Deal with all reports in accordance with the approved policy and agree how the issue will be dealt with and update you on progress.	= Advice and support in resolving your anti social behaviour issues.. We will involve you in reviewing and developing anti social behaviour policies
3 Work with police, local authorities and other agencies to resolve anti- social behaviour.	+ Liaise with police and other partners to improve resolution of anti social behaviour.	= An effective arrangement to deal with and resolve all anti social behaviour reports.
4 Ensure your neighbourhood remains a safe, clean and pleasant place to live.	+ Regularly inspect developments to ensure they are clean and tidy and remove graffiti and rubbish within 7 days of notification.	= A safe and pleasant neighbourhood.
5 Maintain regular links with all tenants	+ Regular visits by association staff.	= Improved communication with the association.