

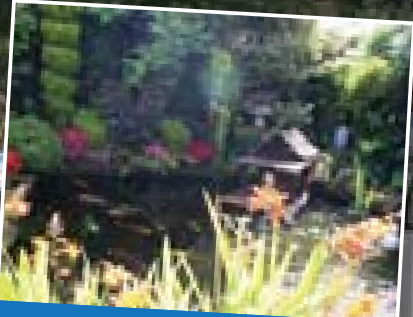


Golden Gates
Housing Trust

News and Views

Issue 31 Autumn 2011

GGHT & Wolves partnership



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scheme – page 19

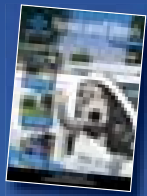


www.gght.org.uk

Free phone 0800 25 26 27

Editorial

In this issue you can find out about our performance for 2010/11, garden competition results and much more...



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Follow GGHT on Facebook...

Why not follow us on Facebook? Following on from the success of using Facebook to promote our Apprentice and employment opportunities, **GGHT** have launched a new Facebook page: www.facebook.com/goldengateshousingtrust



Tenants and residents who use Facebook and 'like' our page will be kept informed about local news, events and employment opportunities. They will also get the chance to get involved by giving us their views on our services and policies. We look forward to seeing you on our page!

GGHT Contact details

Telephone: 0800 25 26 27 (free)
(Mon to Fri, 8am – 6.30pm)

Mobile phone users:
01925 452452 (standard rate)

Textphone: 18001 0800 25 26 27
(standard rate)

Emergency out of hour's service:
Free: 0800 25 26 27

Website: www.gght.org.uk

Email: info@gght.org.uk

Post: GGHT, PO Box 1181,
Warrington, WA1 9FB

Word from the Chair



I hope everyone had an enjoyable summer

The Board have been busy recruiting new Members and I can confirm that Sue Smith has been selected to join the Board as an Independent Board Member from the Annual General Meeting (AGM) in September. Sue is a Chartered Accountant and works at Halton Housing Trust. The Board have also appointed 2 Co-opted members, Greg Bones and Greig Lees, to provide additional skills and knowledge to the Board to ensure that we are meeting our promises to tenants. Both work in housing and have financial and regeneration experience.

The Board have been busy over the summer months and have agreed the pilot of the fitting of photovoltaic panels (solar panels) to some properties to help us to achieve our vision of being a leader in energy efficiency and help to reduce the financial burden on households. Also, as part of the offer document promises the Board have approved the Shareholding Membership Policy, see Page 8 for further details.

Best Wishes

Fran Murray

Board vacancy...

Due to a recent retirement from the Board, we currently have a vacancy for a Tenant or Leaseholder. If you are interested in becoming a Board Member or would like an information pack please contact, Charlie Martin, Board Support and Development Officer free on **0800 25 26 27** or email charlie.martin@gght.org.uk

Garden tidy for vulnerable tenants...

Over the last few months our Caretaking Team have again worked hard to tackle some much needed maintenance on gardens for our customers who are struggling to complete the works themselves. Through working together, Neighbourhoods have now completed over 10 gardens throughout the borough for elderly or vulnerable customers. Please see below before and after photos of one of the gardens. Well done to both the Neighbourhoods team and the Caretaking team for working together and providing a very fast turn around. Keep up the good work!



Golden Gates Housing Trust and Warrington Wolves Foundation Celebrate Partnership Launch...



GGHT tenants in Lymm got a surprise this week when Warrington Wolves mascot “Wolfie” turned up to deliver their new kitchens. “Wolfie” was on hand to help celebrate the launch of the Trust’s partnership with the Warrington Wolves Foundation.

GGHT and Warrington Wolves Foundation have entered into a long-term partnership to benefit the local community. Over the next 12 months the partnership will see the two organisations working together to deliver a range of activities for young people in Warrington aimed at promoting health and physical activity and reducing anti-social behaviour.

Staff from **GGHT**’s pre-tenancy team will be based at the Wolves Halliwell Jones stadium and will be working closely with their colleagues from the Wolves Foundation to deliver skills courses for pre-tenants and younger tenants to help them into work and improve their quality of life.

The Wolves Foundation are also helping to reward work placement volunteers who will be helping to carry out an estate clean up in Longford. This will include hosting training, providing them with Wolves kits and match tickets and giving them the opportunity to take part in rugby leaders’ awards.

Further activities linked to the launch included **GGHT** Chief Executive Peter Mercer joining The Foundation’s Chair Cllr Terry O’Neill and the Wolves Young Trustees on the pitch during the half time interval of the Wolves match against Wakefield Wildcats. The Trustees are heading out to Gambia in November. The match saw Warrington Wolves run out 66-12 winners.



GGHT Chief Executive, Peter Mercer, said: “Warrington Wolves Foundation is doing excellent work with young people helping them to develop their skills, gain qualifications and improve aspirations. We believe that our partnership with the Foundation will bring many benefits to our tenants and their families and will be a springboard to improve their quality of life.”

Warrington Wolves Foundation Director, Neil Kelly, added: “We are delighted to announce our partnership with Golden Gates Housing Trust. The two organisations are both committed to working within the local community of Warrington and share many values. We look forward to working together on a number of projects to strengthen the local community”.

Garden Competition Winners 2011

2011 saw some fantastic entries to our competition and with the standard so high the judges found it hard to choose the winners in the categories...

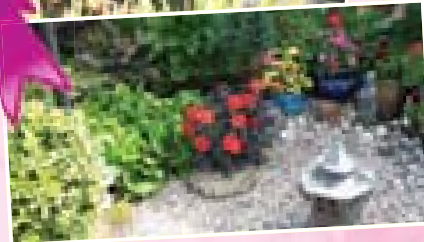
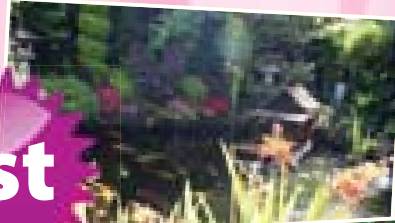
B&Q



Innovative & interesting garden:



1st



❖ **1st – Buttermere Avenue – Doreen Gleave**

Doreen has put 30 years hard work into her beautiful garden. Her winning garden is a true oasis of colour, water and wildlife. Doreen does both her front and back garden so neighbours and passers by can all enjoy her innovative use of planting and colour.



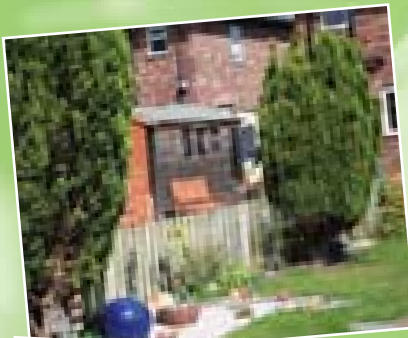
2nd

❖ **2nd – Buttermere Crescent – Duncan**

❖ **3rd – Allen Street – Mona Dagnall**

❖ **4th – The Crescent – Pat Whiting**

Most improved garden:



❖ **1st – Alder Lane – Erica Lightfoot**

This garden is a success story for both Erica and **GGHT**. Erica has been supported by her Neighbourhood Housing Officer since February 2011 to transform her garden. The garden was cleared by caretakers then she worked day and night and has taken great pride in creating a wonderful garden.

The garden now has a vegetable patch, flowers, play house with play area for the kids and much more.

She admits herself it has changed her life and she is so proud of all her hard work and her friends and family who have helped. Winning the most improved garden competition is the icing on the cake for Erica who saw it as a final testament to her hard work and success.

The garden had been identified as being in need of improvement.

1st



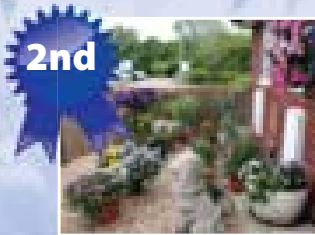
Most improved garden:

- ❖ 2nd – Moston Grove – Communal Garden - Margaret Harrison, Roger Parker, Dennis & Maureen Parkin-Bowes, Florence Clout and Margaret & William Nesbitt.
- ❖ 3rd – Melville Close – Mrs Hobson
- ❖ 4th – Sandy Lane – Brian & Michelle Gower



Tidy garden:

- ❖ 1st – Harbord Street - 2 Neighbours: Jean Errigadoo & Pauline Browne



- ❖ 2nd – Orange Grove – Mrs Kendrick
- ❖ 3rd – Orange Grove – Mr Taylor
- ❖ 4th – Pentland Avenue – Bessie Wood



Colourful garden:

- ❖ 1st – Hill Top Road – Ray Smith



- ❖ 2nd – Snowdon Close – Marie Bacon
- ❖ 3rd – Sandy Lane – Julie Liptrott
- ❖ 4th – Strawberry Close – Michael Fisk

In addition to the above winners we also gave out 7 runner up prizes of £10. Congratulations to our winners and a big thank you to everyone who entered.

Also thank you to **GGHT** Customers Alf Waring & Sylvia Barcock (Tenant Board member) who along with Board member Roy Smith helped judge the competition.

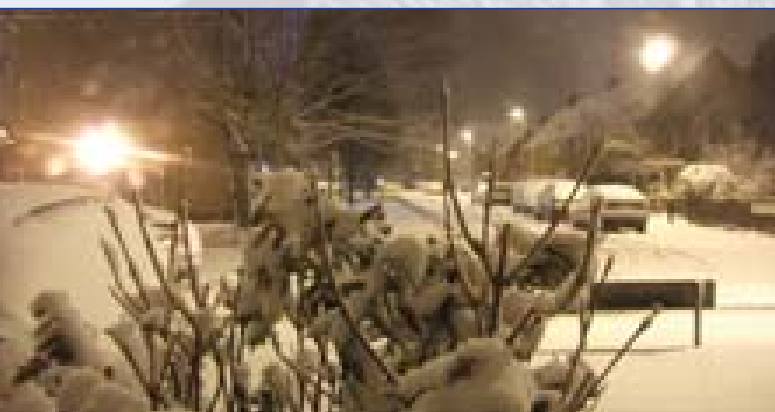
Competition winners... Summer News & Views Competition

Congratulations to Joe Barnes, aged 10 from Bewsey.
Who won a play tent. Answers were:

- ❖ Bees have 6 legs
- ❖ BBQ is short of Barbeque
- ❖ SPF stands for Sun Protection Factor
- ❖ Apart from summer the other 3 seasons are spring, autumn and winter.



You, your home & the cold weather...



We all know how cold it has been over the last couple of winters, with this in mind GGHT is keen to ensure that both people and their homes are prepared to tackle any severe weather this year.

Cold weather can be dangerous for everyone. Even in a normal winter, there are tens of thousands of deaths caused by the cold. Extremely cold weather can cause mild hypothermia, which increases the risks of some illnesses – including heart attacks, strokes and respiratory disease – and the likelihood of falls.

Who is at risk?

Some people are more at risk of becoming ill during cold weather. A number of factors can determine who is more vulnerable during winter:

- ❖ Older age – especially people who are over 75 years old
- ❖ Young age – particularly children with respiratory problems, such as asthma
- ❖ Chronic and severe illness – including heart conditions, respiratory problems, asthma and COPD
- ❖ Fuel poverty – over 12 million people, or 6.4 million British households are likely to be in fuel poverty following the latest increase by energy suppliers
- ❖ Inability to adapt behaviour to keep warm – this affects people with disabilities, babies and the very young.

Planning ahead to help prevent illness

In a typical winter, temperatures are low enough to affect the health of vulnerable people. Cold snaps can happen suddenly, and rapid drops in temperature quickly affect vulnerable people. So it is best to be prepared before cold temperatures are forecast – ideally by the beginning of November. Follow these tips to keep your family warm and well during cold weather



- ❖ Have regular hot drinks and at least one hot meal a day, if possible. Eating regularly helps keep energy levels up during winter.
- ❖ Wear several light layers of warm clothes (rather than one chunky layer).
- ❖ Keep as active as possible.
- ❖ Keep your main living room at around 18-21°C (64-70F), and the rest of the house at least 16°C (61F). If you can't heat all the rooms you use, heat the livingroom during the day and the bedroom just before you go to sleep.
- ❖ Close curtains as soon as it starts to go dark.
- ❖ Cover yourself with a blanket when watching television.
- ❖ Invest in a hot water bottle or electric blanket. But do not use them at the same time.
- ❖ Stock up on tinned and frozen foods to reduce the need to go out during extreme cold weather.
- ❖ Ensure that you keep an adequate supply of any prescribed medication.
- ❖ If you have a pre payment meter for gas or electricity, ensure that you keep as much credit on the meter as your budget allows.
- ❖ Where possible keep a watchful eye on your neighbours and if you have any concerns contact **GGHT** free on **0800 25 26 27**.

- ❖ Make sure you are maximising your income, for a free benefits check call our money advice team free on **0800 25 26 27**.

Protecting your home and possessions

With all the problems of the snow and ice, the last thing you want is the additional problem of burst or frozen water pipes. Check out our quick tips guide below to help prevent burst or frozen water pipes.



- ❖ Ensure you have your central heating system serviced annually. This is a legal requirement for landlords and a condition of your tenancy with **GGHT**. A leaking radiator valve can also cause water and damp problems.
- ❖ In cold weather, check all your taps from time to time. If little or no water flows there may be frozen water in the pipes.
- ❖ Know where to find your stop tap! Then you can cut off the flow of water if a pipe starts leaking.
- ❖ If you go away, leave the central heating on 'constant' (set your thermostat to low) to prevent freezing. Whatever you do - do not turn it off.
- ❖ Ask a friend, neighbour or relative to check your home while you are away. This will ensure burst pipes are spotted early and damp and water

damage is minimized.

- ❖ Turn off any indoor valves on pipes that lead to taps outside your home. Then open the outside tap and leave it open to let any water drain. This ensures there is no water in the pipes to freeze.
- ❖ Ensure you have adequate content insurance to cover the event of a flood or burst pipe. For further information on **GGHT** Tenants content insurance scheme, please contact us free on **0800 25 26 27** or visit our website **www.gght.org.uk**



If you have the unfortunate experience of waking up to frozen pipes you should turn on your taps, as this will relieve the pressure as the ice melts inside the pipes. You can use appliances such as a blow dryer or a heat lamp to defrost the pipe. Under no circumstances should you use a blow torch or candle. In addition, you can leave your water running a very small, slow trickle through the pipes to prevent them from freezing again. If you have tried to defrost the pipe yourself, or are unsure what to do please call us free on **0800 25 26 27**. There will also be regular cold weather update information and advice on our website **www.gght.org.uk**

Could you save money with a water meter?



Having difficulty paying your water rates? **GGHT** are working alongside United Utilities to help reduce the cost of water rates. If you live alone or have a small family you could save up-to a third on your water bill.

Save up to £132 per year off your water rates - compare average savings in the table below:



| Property type | Average water rate charge | Average water charge with a meter | Saving over the year |
|----------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------|
| 1 Bed Flat | £5.44 | £3.66 | £192.56 |
| 1 Bed Bungalow | £5.36 | £4.53 | £43.16 |
| 2 Bed House | £6.66 | £4.06 | £132.50 |

- ❖ United Utilities will fit the meter free of charge
- ❖ Apply any time of year
- ❖ Change your mind? No problem, you can go back to your existing charges as long as you tell United Utilities within a year.
- ❖ 210 **GGHT** customers have requested a water meter, between them they will save an estimated £35,000 per year.

For more information and to find out if a meter may be right for you contact Jay in our Income Management Team free on **0800 25 26 27** or alternatively visit **www.unitedutilities.com/meters**

News in brief...

DIAL 101

TO CONTACT THE POLICE



Police – NEW non-emergency number

Everyone knows that in an emergency, the number to dial is 999. But what if you want to speak to the police, but it isn't vital that you receive an instant response? From November you can dial 101, and it will take you straight through to the operator who will take your details. Keep your eye on local press for details of when it will be introduced!

GGHT E-Bulletin...

GGHT is introducing a new 'email bulletin' as another way of letting people know what is going on at GGHT and other local organisations, such a training, events and much more. The bulletin will not replace existing methods, but will hopefully get to more people and different groups of people. If you would like to receive the bulletin email your name and address to communications@gght.org.uk

Roll out of Shareholding Member Policy

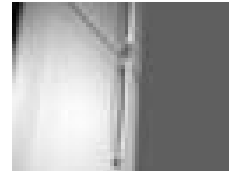
As part of the offer document promises GGHT's Board, in consultation with tenants, has approved the Shareholding Membership Policy. Fully Assured Tenants and Leaseholders are able to apply to be shareholding members of the company.

Shareholders have the right to attend and vote at the AGM on issues such as changes to the company constitution and the appointment of external auditors. It is hoped that tenants and leaseholders applying for membership will have the best interests of the company and tenants as their primary motivation. There is no financial gain to being a shareholder and members agree to pay £1 liability if the company is wound up.

To find out more about shareholding or to request an application form please contact Alison Foy, on **0800 25 26 27** or email Alison.foy@gght.org.uk All applications are considered by the Appraisal, Remuneration and Selection Committee.

Warning: Household Appliance Recall

GGHT would like to raise tenant awareness in relation to certain household appliances which are currently under recall from the manufacturers and are highlighted



by Trading Standards due to the possibility that they may overheat and in very rare cases cause a potential fire hazard. The following household items have been identified and it is advised that you check your appliances to see if they match those on the list. If you have an appliances that matches those listed, you are advised to contact the manufacturers who will advise you what to do next.

- ❖ BEKO Frost Free Fridge Freezers (Manufactured between January 2000 and October 2006)
- ❖ BOSCH, NEFF and SIEMENS dishwashers (Manufactured between 1999 and early 2005, the affected dishwashers are certain models in the batch number range from FD2901 and FD8504)

If you think you own one of the products mentioned above, please contact the manufacturer direct. BEKO can be contacted on **0800 009 4837**. NEFF, BOSCH and SIEMENS can be contacted on **0800 561 0082**.

Update on the Scrutiny Panel

Members of the panel have completed Equality & Diversity Training to help them to ensure that GGHT doesn't have any barriers to the services we are providing. To help the panel to understand the issues facing GGHT and our tenants they have visited a number of empty properties to see how repairs are completed and what properties are like when they are allocated to tenants. The panel have also focused on complaints and have recommended that GGHT make sure that tenants are informed if their complaint cannot be responded to in time. In the forthcoming months the panel will be scrutinising the investment programme and the performance of the organisation. GGHT currently have a vacancy for a tenant member to join the Scrutiny Panel. For further information on the work of the panel or to express an interest in joining the panel please contact Charlie Martin on **0800 25 26 27** or email charlie.martin@gght.org.uk

Neighbourhood News

Estate Inspection & clean up days schedules –

Come and join in - everybody welcome... Come along and help us maintain a high standard on our estates.

October – November 2011

| Estate | Date / Time | Lead Officer | Meeting Place |
|------------------------|--------------|-------------------|--|
| Cabul & Quebec | 18 Oct, 11am | Claire Caulfield | Former Community House |
| Longford C | 19 Oct, 10am | Mike Claffey | Marriot Café - Longford |
| Mid Poplars C | 25 Oct, 11am | Mike Claffey | Howson Rd Shops |
| Top Poplars C | 26 Oct, 11am | Adam Timothy | Poplars Pub Car Park |
| Dallam | 1 Nov, 11am | Daniel Richardson | Community Centre – Harrison Square |
| Longford A1 | 2 Nov, 10am | Karen Mannion | Marriot Cafe |
| Vulcan & Valiant | 3 Nov, 10am | Anne Marie Walsh | Community Centre – Fearnhead Shopping Parade |
| Mid Poplars A | 8 Nov, 10am | Mike Claffey | Capesthorpe Road shops |
| Longford A2 | 9 Nov, 10am | Karen Mannion | Longford Housing Office |
| Westy A | 10 Nov, 10am | Natalie Gillbanks | Community Centre – Bridgewater Avenue |
| New Road | 15 Nov, 10am | Melissa Jackson | Community House – New Rd |
| Mid Poplars B | 16 Nov, 10am | Mike Claffey | Buttermere Avenue - corner |
| Sankey Bridges | 22 Nov, 11am | Claire Caulfield | Subway entrance Wellfield Street |
| Grappenhall & Thelwall | 23 Nov, 10am | Natalie Gillbanks | Co-op Knutsford Rd |
| Lymm A | 24 Nov, 11am | Adam Timothy | Northway Garage Site |

Clean up days October – December 2011

| Estate | No. Skips | Date |
|--|-----------|--------|
| Poplars | 12 | 19 Oct |
| Great Sankey | | 26 Oct |
| Grasmere Ave/ Greenwood Cres | 5 | 1 Nov |
| Vulcan Close/ Valiant Close/ Orange Grove/ Avery Close | 6 | 2 Nov |
| Cabul Close / Quebec Rd | 4 | 3 Nov |
| Sankey Bridges | | 9 Nov |
| Winwick | | 23 Nov |
| Watkin St | 4 | 30 Nov |
| Alder Lane | 3 | 7 Dec |
| Bewsey B | 5 | 14 Dec |
| Mid Orford | 5 | 21 Dec |

For more information on any of the above, including skip locations contact the Neighbourhood Service Team free on **0800 25 26 27** or email info@gght.org.uk. Reports on previous estate inspections can be viewed on www.gght.org.uk

Summer Mela fun for all...

In July Warrington held its very first Mela organised by Warrington Ethnic Communities Association (WECA) and event partners GGHT, WBC, Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service and STiW.

WECA chose to hold the event as their main aim is to engage with the different ethnic communities of Warrington from the various Asian communities to the Russian, Polish and the Chinese communities amongst all others. Melas are a stereotypically Asian celebration but WECA decided to break away from the stereotype and instead celebrate the rich and diverse cultures of Warrington.

Events included:

- ❖ Bhangra, Polish & Russian dancing
- ❖ Tabla performance
- ❖ Bollywood Music
- ❖ Drum procession
- ❖ Traditional foods, information and cultural goods stalls
- ❖ Inflatable army assault course & bouncy castle
- ❖ Fairground rides
- ❖ Henna tattooing

Local schoolchildren got involved in a drawing competition ran by WECA, GGHT & WBC. The competition asked for local schoolchildren to draw what their community looked like and to show what makes it great. The three winners were presented with their prizes by the Mayor, with one living in a GGHT property.

Peter Mercer, Chief Executive from GGHT, attended the event and said: "GGHT is proud to have been involved in Warrington's first Mela and will continue to support this great event."



Free training from GGHT... Coming up soon is...

- ❖ Wednesday 26 October, 10.30-12.30pm: Basic Decorating. An interactive session covering preparation, removing and refixing radiators, using the right materials and much more (venue to be confirmed).

To book your free place or to find out more please contact Vikki Jones, Tenant Participation Officer on **0800 252627** or email vikki.jones@gght.org.uk



Gareth scoops national apprentice award

One of **GGHT**'s top apprentices, Gareth Williams, has been crowned 'Apprentice of the Year' at a national awards ceremony for his outstanding achievements.

Gareth, who started work on the **GGHT** decent homes programme as a labourer in 2007, went on to hone his skills as an apprentice joiner with one of our key contractors Bramall Construction.

Gareth was presented with the award at an awards ceremony hosted at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in London by the UK Contractors Group.

The awards reflect Gareth's dedication to his role, which has seen him achieve distinctions in his NVQ Levels 2 and 3 exams in joinery and gain an excellent attendance and punctuality record at Warrington College of 98%.

Gareth, who lives in Dallam, was given the golden opportunity to launch his career with **GGHT** when he walked into the housing offices as a 20-year-old asking for work.

Now 23-years-old, Gareth has been practicing his skills in everything from timber framing to roofing, fitting locks to properties and first and second fix joinery.

He recently worked on a new build scheme with Bramall Construction to construct 111 properties at Ratcliffe Park in Rainhill and is currently working on bathroom refurbishments as part of our capital investment programme.

Gareth said: "I'm delighted to win this award as it's a fantastic achievement in the industry and it wouldn't have been possible without the opportunities that **GGHT** and Bramall Construction have provided me with.

"Where I grew up there's a high level of unemployment and people rely on benefits but I found work by knocking on Bramall and **GGHT**'s

door and I haven't looked back since.

"People in the family say I take after my grandfather who was a builder so I think the trade runs in my blood, my mum's especially proud of what I've achieved."

"Winning the UK Contractors Group award is another feather in my cap as I have ambitions to become a Site Manager one day and hopefully this will stand me in good stead."

Chief Executive Peter Mercer, said: "My warm congratulations go out to Gareth, he thoroughly deserves to win this award and we are very proud of what he's achieved."

Robert Bailey, site manager for Bramall Construction, added: "I think that what really stands out with Gareth, both through his work at **GGHT** and Bramall Construction, is his fantastic attitude as well as his academic success, which has led to him gaining distinctions in his NVQ Level 2 and 3 exams."

"Gareth is extremely punctual, his former site managers have praised his work which they say is always perfect and one of his colleagues said he's the best apprentice he has worked with in his 12 year career. Gareth thoroughly deserves to win this award and has a promising career ahead of him."





Solar Energy Scheme given 'GREEN' light

GGHT and Warrington Borough Council have entered into a partnership to install a form of renewable energy that generates electricity from sunlight. The initial pilot scheme will consist of 600 properties.

The systems are designed to generate 'free' electricity from sunlight through panels fitted to the roof area. The cells contained within each roof panel convert the sunlight into electricity which can be used to run customers household appliances and lighting.

Savings on customer's energy bills are estimated to range from £70 to £120 per year dependant upon the size of the system and roof orientation. A south facing roof at 30 degrees pitch is the most effective.

As well as lower energy bills this 'green' technology will reduce the amount of carbon emissions (Co2) released into the atmosphere. Once the installation programme has been completed it will reduce our carbon footprint by over 500 tons per year for an estimated 25 years.

Over the next few months feasibility surveys are taking place to determine locations for the pilot scheme. Watch this space for updates.

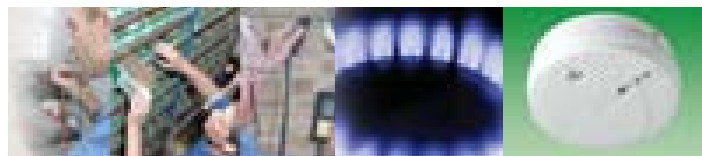
Gas servicing – help us to help you be safe!!

Let us in on the first visit and you could win £100...

We are legally responsible for making sure your gas appliances, gas piping and flues in your home are well maintained and safe. This is why we do a gas safety check, service and smoke alarm check **every 12 months**.

You will receive a letter from PH Jones or Sure AMS to let you know that your service is due and appointments can be made in a variety of ways at a time to suit you.

Even if you **do not** have a gas supply or any appliances we still have to visit your property to check your home is safe.



Did you know?

As part of the gas service, we have arranged for the Gas Contractors to also check the operation of your smoke alarms. These details are logged, and any defects or failures found are then reported back to **GGHT** for a repair or replacement.

The prize draw takes place every 4 months, so to be in with a chance of winning £100 make sure you allow us access on our first visit!!

Recent winners of the £100 1st time access prize draw have been:

- ❖ Mrs R Bretherton, Dallam (Sure Winner)
- ❖ Miss B Curley, Orford (PH Jones Winner)

Monitoring our gas service...

A company called Morgan and Lambert have been appointed to carry out some quality inspections on our gas contractors PH Jones and Sure AMS. This is to ensure that any gas work carried out as part of the annual gas service is completed to the highest standard. They will be contacting customers direct to arrange an inspection following the completion of the annual service. Morgan and Lambert will also be carrying out a 10% audit of all new installations as part of **GGHT** investment program.

Save money on fuel bills

A free energy efficiency advice service to help GGHT tenants save energy and lower fuel bills...

Take a look at some of our tenants who've saved money following a free energy assessment:



Annual Saving £175: Miss M & 2 Young Children, Three Bedroom Semi-Detached House, Orford –

GGHT's Energy Officer recommended using the heating controls more efficiently, installing low energy light bulbs in all rooms, turning appliances off standby and purchasing A-Rated and Energy Saving Trust recommended products in future. She also installed a free electricity monitor that details the usage and cost of appliances when turned on. By taking the Energy Officer's advice Miss M will save £175 on her fuel bills and 210Kg of carbon dioxide a year.

Annual Saving £190: Mr & Mrs M, One Bedroom Bungalow, Cinnamon Brow –

The tenants wanted to save money on fuel bills and improve the comfort of their one bedroom bungalow. The Energy Officer calculated that the couple could save £100 a year by turning off appliances when not in use, using the boiler more effectively and taking advantage of GGHT's free loft insulation programme to top-up the existing insulation. The Energy Officer also identified that due to the couple's income, they were eligible for a social tariff that gave them a 15% discount against standard rate tariffs resulting in a further saving of £90 a year on gas and electricity bills.

Small measures can make a big difference to your energy bills. Take a look at the examples below and start saving those £££!

- ❖ Switching off your television rather than leaving it on standby could save you up to £25 per year.
- ❖ Turning your thermostat down by just 1°C can save up to £55 per year.
- ❖ Use energy saving light bulbs throughout your house, they last ten times longer than ordinary bulbs and could save you up to £40 over the lifetime of the bulb.

Did you know?

- ❖ Every GGHT tenant is entitled to free loft insulation where it does not currently meet the recommended 270mm depth? A properly insulated loft will prevent 25% of heat escaping through the roof and will save up to £150 a year on heating bills.
- ❖ All energy providers offer social tariffs to help their most vulnerable customers cope with the high costs of gas and electricity. These typically offer a 15% reduction against standard rate tariffs.
- ❖ Most energy suppliers provide trust funds for their customers which may be a source of further assistance when in financial difficulty.

For a free appointment on how you can save money and energy contact Stacey Clarke, Energy Officer free on **0800 25 26 27** or email **info@gght.org.uk**

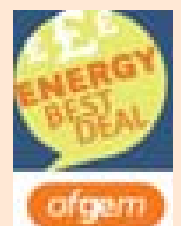


Saving money - energy best deal

Ofgem and Citizens Advice have been working together since 2008 developing and delivering face-to-face consumer advice through the Energy Best Deal scheme. The scheme has proven to be a real success in helping consumers with advice.

They have produced a series of seven short films covering the scheme's key messages - how you can reduce your energy costs and what help is available from both suppliers and Government if you are struggling to pay your energy bills.

More information is available on www.ofgem.gov.uk



'The Good 'The Bad And 'The Ugly

THE UGLY TRUTH ABOUT DRINKING TOO MUCH: YOUR NIGHT OUT MAY END IN HOSPITAL, OR IN CUSTODY.

Cheshire Police tackles the issue of alcohol-driven violence and crime by protecting possible victims - including the drinkers.



The Good

Fewer drink-related crime and disorder incidents across Warrington. The "ArcAngel" approach by Cheshire Police and partner agencies uses enforcement and education to improve behaviour.

"Direction to Leave" notices are issued to move people out of the town centre or areas on estates when they are beginning to cause problems.

Officers use "brief intervention" techniques with the NHS to warn people on a night out that too much alcohol may make them vulnerable or possibly lead to arrest.

Under age drinkers using fake ID to buy drinks are called to a meeting with the police to understand their actions and the dangers of alcohol.

Police Officers and staff from other agencies visit schools and talk to young people on the street. They spread the message that not drinking allows you to be an individual. It is not boring.

The Bad

If you have too much to drink you may present a danger to other people. You are certainly a danger to yourself.

Alcohol makes you vulnerable to crime. Robberies, assaults and sexual attacks often involve victims who have been drinking.

Drink encourages you to take risks. People who have been drinking are more likely to be involved in a fight.

Alcohol is a contributory factor in more than fifty per cent of domestic abuse cases.

Binge drinking or drinking under age puts you on the police radar.



The Ugly

Cheshire Police treats drunken violence and anti-social behaviour as a serious issue. If you drink and cause trouble you will be arrested.

Drunken behaviour could result in a criminal record which may affect your job, your home, your life.

If you drink under age and are involved in anti-social behaviour you may be arrested or referred to the Police Licensing Officer and partner agencies.

As a parent, ignoring drink-related anti-social behaviour by your child may result in court appearances and the loss of your home. You may also see your child suffer permanent physical damage caused by alcohol.



Cheshire
Constabulary

BE SAFE, FEEL SAFE

Annual Tenants' Summary Report 2010/11

DELIVERING OUR PROMISES



Introduction

This is a summary of our 2010/11 Annual Tenants Report. The report has been developed with tenants and includes information that they would like to see.

A full version of the report can be viewed on our website www.gght.org.uk. If you would like to receive a full version of the report then please contact us by phoning **0800 25 26 27** or alternatively emailing us at info@gght.org.uk



INVESTORS IN PEOPLE | Gold



FOCUS ON REPAIRS

From April 2010 to March 2011 we completed a total of 38,795 repairs to tenants homes with 36,468 being completed in time (94%).

Gas Servicing

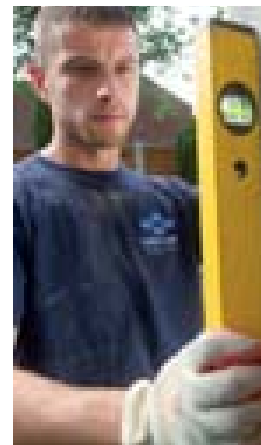
During 2010/2011 our partners;

Sure AMS completed 5,675 gas services, completing 99.89% in time.

PH Jones completed 2,977 gas services, completing 99.87% in time.

Improving the service

We are investing in new technology to increase the number of repairs completed right first time.



Top 10 promise Improved times

We promised that after transfer, our repair targets would be improved. New targets were introduced in April 2011. In the first 3 months of 2011/12 we completed;

- ❖ 1,780 emergency repairs, completing 99.21% in time
- ❖ 2,069 urgent repairs, completing 98.16% in time
- ❖ 2,428 non urgent repairs, completing 98.64% in time.



Top 10 promise Providing a Handyperson Scheme

Between February and June 2011 our handyperson service, which is provided to disabled and vulnerable tenants, tenants over 65 and new tenants, had completed 53 jobs, of which 96.23% were completed in time. If you would like to use this service, please contact our freephone number for more information.

THE WARRINGTON STANDARD

Since transfer we have completed the following investment works (between 29 November 2010 and 1 June 2011)

Fencing programme



- ❖ 950 Windows and Doors.
- ❖ 122 Kitchens. ❖ 321 Aids & Adaptations.
- ❖ 66 Fences ❖ 80 Central Heating Units.
- ❖ 781 Security Lighting Units.

Providing Job Opportunities.



We said we would use the increased level of improvement work to help create more employment and apprenticeships, within the inner wards, covering technical and office roles.

By June we had recruited 23 posts and should have 10 new apprentices in place by September this year.

FOCUS ON ENERGY EFFICIENCY

In 2010/11 we completed 935 loft insulations and 225 cavity wall insulations.

Since January 2011 we have given 'one to one' energy advice to 190 customers. Energy advice given over this period has saved our customers over £21,000.

FOCUS ON INVOLVING TENANTS

We are committed to involving tenants, in 2010/11;

- ❖ Tenants carried out 174 inspections of our services.
- ❖ Tenants and residents were involved in a total of 136 events and meetings.
- ❖ 256 customers got involved with us who had not previously been involved.

Improving the service.

In 2011/12 we plan to work more at a local level to understand the priorities in neighbourhoods and communities.



We would consult with tenants on the design and layout of improvements to their home.

We work with customers to develop choices and the type of products to be used for improving your home. We offer choices to customers where we can including – security lighting, doors, kitchen units, flooring and tiles.



FOCUS ON CALL HANDLING

In 2010/11 the service centre, GGDirect, received 154,460 calls from customers. They also made 37,702 outbound calls which included customer consultation and measuring satisfaction. They answered 80.5% in time.



Improving the service

We are upgrading the telephony system to allow integrated call handling and increasing promotion of alternative channels such as text, email, GGHT website and Looking Local TV site.

FOCUS ON COMPLAINTS

- ❖ GGHT received 494 complaints in 2010/2011.
- ❖ 243 of these complaints were upheld.
- ❖ 84% of complaints were responded to within the target of 10 working days.
- ❖ We paid £720 in monetary awards to cover compensation, loss and damage.



Graffiti Wall event, Bewsey Housing Office, April 2011

FOCUS ON YOUR RENT AND SUSTAINING TENANCIES

In 2010/11 we collected 99% of rent payable by tenants.



Top 10 promise – Expanding the Money Advice service

We employed additional Money Advice workers to provide financial and budgeting advice and to help those tenants likely to be affected by the Welfare Benefit Reforms.

Bewsey Neighbourhood



FOCUS ON EMPTY HOMES

In 2010/11

The average time a property was empty for was 18 days, compared to 19 days the previous year. In 2010/11 there were 946 properties which became empty compared to 1,029 in the previous year. During the time a property is empty essential repairs are carried out. The shorter time a property is left empty the less rent we lose.

The average cost of repairs to an empty property was £1,021.

Improving the service.

We are reviewing how we manage our flats and will work with customers in flats to sustain tenancies.

FOCUS ON NEIGHBOURHOODS

The main types of anti-social behavior (ASB) recorded in 2010/11 were:

- ❖ Noise – 318 cases – 28%
- ❖ Verbal abuse / harassment / intimidation / threatening behaviour – 231 cases – 20%



Top 10 promise – We would employ extra front line staff to give a faster response to complaints about anti-social behaviour

Additional staff have been recruited allowing officers to contact complainants of anti-social behaviour more quickly and we are now contacting 90% of complainants within 5 working days.



Top 10 promise – We would spend more time reassuring victims of anti-social behaviour about how we are dealing with their complaint

The recruitment of additional officers has allowed us to reduce staff caseloads and therefore spend more time with complainants and target ASB hotspots.





CUSTOMER INVOLVEMENT – HOW IT IMPACTS YOUR SERVICES...

Housing Associations, including **GGHT** are required to assess the impact customer involvement is having on service delivery and performance. Impact reports focus on the outcomes of activities – what has changed as a result of customer involvement in programmes, projects, services and initiatives. By getting involved with **GGHT** customers can make a difference. They can:

- ❖ Change the way **GGHT** works and improve the services they receive.
- ❖ Gain new skills and increase their confidence by working with other customers.
- ❖ Improve the area and community they live in.

WHO IS THE IMPACT REPORT FOR?

- ❖ **Customers (tenants & residents)** – it tells them what has changed because of their involvement.
- ❖ **GGHT** – it helps evaluate areas that have benefited from customer involvement.
- ❖ The **Tenant Services Authority (TSA)** our regulating body – it shows that we have met good practice guidelines.
- ❖ **Partners & stakeholders** – it illustrates the benefits of partnership working and continuous improvement.

WHY IS AN IMPACT REPORT IMPORTANT?

Customer involvement is central to the Government's approach to delivering housing services. Customer involvement has been shown to benefit tenants and residents by helping improve services, homes and communities. By assessing changes to services following customer involvement, the value of customer feedback can be fed back to tenants and stakeholders, and used to establish future priorities for further improvements.

WHAT IS 'IMPACT'?

The 'impact' information is split into three categories, not all of which will apply to every activity. They are:

Social Capital, or 'Bonding, Bridging & Linking – What difference is it making to helping communities function better? Are we doing the

right things to help improve customers' general quality of life? **GGHT** believe there is value in both the formal and informal interaction between members of the community and the public and private organisations that provide services. To understand the definition of social capital is to think of it as the 'glue' that binds us all together.

Accountability – **GGHT** want to include customers in the decisions made about the organisation. Customers should be able to influence decisions and as a social landlord we aim to demonstrate that we are answerable to our customers and the communities we serve. Everything we do is open and honest.

Service Improvement – This is the effect customer involvement can have on improving the delivery of services. We aim to continually improve your satisfaction with our services and your feedback is vitally important if we are to keep moving in the right direction.

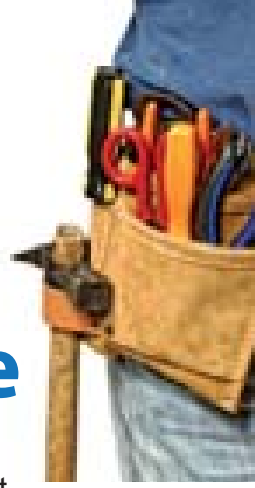
The report outlines customer involvement activity across 2010/11 and how the time and commitment given from our customers has made improvements across all our services. It includes:

- ❖ Meetings with us – consultation panel, tenant inspectors etc.
- ❖ Becoming a Housing Trust
- ❖ Neighbourhoods – Estate Inspections
- ❖ Fun & kids activities
- ❖ Surveys
- ❖ Complaints and much more!!

The full report is on www.gght.org.uk and a hard copy can be requested from the **GGHT** Tenant Participation Team free on **0800 25 26 27** or emailing tenant.participation@gght.org.uk



Take advantage... GGHT FREE Handyperson Scheme



We now have 2 handypersons Karl & Neil who are helping **GGHT** tenants with minor home repairs and small jobs. It is currently available for:

- ❖ All new tenants within the first 12 weeks of their tenancy
- ❖ Customers who are registered and receive tenancy support through **GGHT**
- ❖ Customers with a disability
- ❖ Customers who are aged over 65.

The scheme is aimed at small jobs that take less than 2 hours and can be completed by one person safely and no reasonable request will be refused.

GGHT will not provide the materials but we will provide the handyperson and tools to carry out the job. This service may only be used once in a 12 month period. For more information contact us free on **0800 25 26 27** or check out **www.gght.org.uk**

GGHT Money Advice Service

Changes in health, employment or family circumstances can often lead people into financial difficulty with them feeling worried and helpless not knowing who to turn to for help or advice.

Our Money Advice Service is proud of its 20 year track record of supporting tenants who find themselves in this situation, providing practical help and advice in a caring and sympathetic way.

In one of many recent cases a tenant contacted the Trust to discuss his rent account; he was unable to carry on working due to health problems and was worried about the drop in his weekly income and how he was going to meet his rent and council tax payments in future.

He attended an appointment with one of our money advice workers and after a short chat about his current finances was surprised to find out he was entitled to an additional £121.00 per week in pension credit and £93.28 per week in housing and council tax benefit, increasing his weekly income by £214.28.

If you would like to obtain more information or to have a chat with one of the money advice team please do not hesitate to contact us free on **0800 25 26 27** or for mobile users **01925 452452** (standard rate).

In addition to this he could be entitled to a further £104.60 per week depending on the outcome of a claim the money advice worker has helped him make based on his wife's health grounds and his caring responsibilities.

Our money advice team can provide help and advice on:

- ❖ Maximising your income
- ❖ Checking if you are entitled to any benefits or tax credits
- ❖ Help you to complete claim forms
- ❖ Help you to manage your money better and maintain regular affordable payments on your priority bills like rent, council tax and utilities
- ❖ Signpost you to organisations that provide specialist debt and financial advice.



Leaseholders update

The special section for our leaseholder customers:

Leasehold Building insurance

The buildings insurance policy for leasehold flats was previously covered by WBC, which expired in June. We have since carried out a tender exercise and appointed a new provider, which is Zurich Municipal. The value covered is full reinstatement value up to £350,000.

You should have all received your insurance certificate by now. Please check the details contained on this form and let your leasehold manager know if there are any changes to be made. The insurance is for Buildings cover only. It does NOT cover contents. It is your responsibility to obtain cover for your contents.

Important:

You must inform GGHT:

- ❖ If you have let your property to tenants
- ❖ If your home is used for any business purposes (other than clerical)

Failure to inform us of any changed circumstances may result in your insurance no longer being valid and claims not being met.

Unoccupied properties:

In your policy a number of general and specific

exclusions apply to your insurance cover. In particular, if your property is left unoccupied for more than 30 consecutive days, the following Insured Risks (as detailed in the Statement of Policy Cover) will be excluded:

- (4) Malicious damage;
- (7) Escape of water from any fixed tank, fish tank, pipe or appliance and damage caused to such by bursting or freezing;
- (9) Theft or attempted theft.

Please refer to your Statement of Policy Cover for full details. This can be found on our web site at www.gght.org.uk under the 'Customer Information' section.

You should consider what precautions you could take to minimise the risk of loss or damage to your property if it is unoccupied. For out of hours emergency service please call **0800 159 329** Quoting your policy reference **10/006460/05500363**

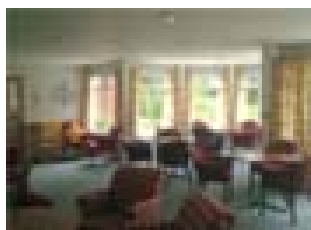
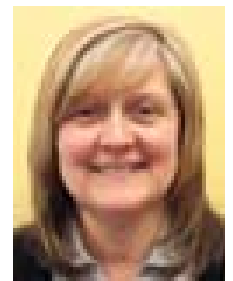
If you have any queries on any of the above, please contact Pauline Cuddy, Leasehold Manager free on **0800 25 26 27** or email info@gght.org.uk



GGHT older persons services...

GGHT has its own dedicated older person's services manager, Alison Young. Alison has worked for GGHT for 16 years and is passionate about ensuring GGHT offers excellent services for our older customers. These services include:

- ❖ Retirement living – sheltered schemes and bungalows
- ❖ Falls prevention
- ❖ Money matters
- ❖ Being safe & secure
- ❖ Care Call
- ❖ General tenancy support
- ❖ Aids & Adaptations



If you feel you need any of the services above please contact Alison Young for help and advice free on **0800 25 26 27** or email info@gght.org.uk

Want to move home? Why not try HomeSwapper?



HomeSwapper is the UK's largest and most successful home swap service. HomeSwapper is free to all tenants and is an easy to use and exciting new way to move home. Each week thousands of people living in social housing register online and advertise their homes, looking for another tenant who would like to swap.

As a tenant of **GGHT** you can swap homes with another tenant using HomeSwapper and best of all it is FREE! Better still, finding a mutual exchange through HomeSwapper means you won't have to wait months on a housing transfer list and you will get to choose the home you want for yourself.

HomeSwapper has the UK's largest database of people looking to swap homes with 225,000

users across the UK. In the past 12 months 25,000 families have swapped homes thanks to HomeSwapper.

HomeSwapper uses the details you supply to automatically match you to other tenants who may have a home that you'd like and who would also be interested in your property. When HomeSwapper finds you a match you will be alerted by SMS text or email. You can then log onto HomeSwapper, look at the home you have been matched with and if you like the look of it you can arrange to visit it.

You can use HomeSwapper straight away by logging on to www.HomeSwapper.co.uk and registering to use the service.

Good luck in your search for a new home.

New GGHT Tenancy Agreement

If you were a Secure Tenant of Warrington Borough Council before the transfer of homes to **GGHT**, you will shortly be receiving a new **GGHT** Assured Tenancy Agreement (with Protected Rights) from us. It is important that you complete and return it as soon as possible. The letter you will receive with your Tenancy Agreement will explain what you need to do in more detail.

Investment programme update...

We are continuing to invest the £105million into your homes and neighbourhoods. Here is where we are up to...

| Package | Units Complete (July 2011) | Customer Satisfaction | Update |
|---|----------------------------|-----------------------|---|
| Security Package – doors, windows & lighting | 1420 | 97% | We have completed most of the properties in Latchford East & West and the work has now moved on to Bewsey, Whitecross and Dallam. |
| Bathrooms and Aids & Adaptations (A&A) | 20 | 100% | Bramalls are currently on site installing new bathrooms in Fairfield and Howley. |
| Kitchens | 171 | 99% | GGHT's in house team are installing the kitchens. The feedback from tenants who are having the kitchens installed has been fantastic. |
| Fencing | 88 | 97% | We are currently on site in Birchwood. |
| Central Heating | 0 | n/a | This started in August. Bramall have been appointed to carry out the installations. The work commenced in Great Sankey North and South. |
| Castle Walls – replacing the Castle Walls in Longford and Alder Lane. | 0 | n/a | The Castle Walls project is progressing well and a pilot scheme is due to be on site in September. The contractor is expected to be fully on site in October. |



Fencing consultation...

We have just completed a consultation exercise with tenants to finalise the product selection for the fencing. The team evaluated the existing

products and new products including fencing panels, posts, and gates for the front and rear gardens. The consultation event was held at our Bewsey office. The outcome of the event is that tenants will have a greater choice in styles and colours of front and rear gates, and we will be installing concrete post and panel fencing as part of the fencing programme.

Getting access...

It is important that you allow us access so that we can improve your home. We can make arrangements with the contractors to work around your holidays and access arrangements. If you have any queries regarding access then please contact us free on **0800 25 26 27**.

What we expect from you...

We will be checking all customers rent accounts prior to starting any work. It is important that your rent account is kept clear or that you make and keep to any payment agreement so as not to run the risk of being removed from the investment programme.

Investment Programme handbook...

We have also completed 'Your guide to improvements in your home'. These will be given to tenants who are having work done in their home, giving lots of information on what you can expect, health & safety, contact information, frequently asked questions, handy tips and much more. It is expected that you keep this handbook for the durations of the work and use it to store all related information.

The full programme of work was in the special 'pull out' in the summer edition of News & Views. It is also on www.gght.org.uk. If you have any queries contact us free on **0800 25 26 27** or email info@gght.org.uk



GGHT Community Fund 2011/2012: £5000 available for local initiatives!

We have introduced a Community Fund as promised in the offer document. The fund is designed to provide support or sponsorship for local community groups. The budget fund from July/August 2011 to March 2012 is £5,000.

The fund provides up to £500 to support community groups and individuals in local initiatives.

- ❖ Funding is not limited to **GGHT** customers, any groups/individuals that operates in the borough of Warrington can apply but priority will be given to projects/initiatives that target estates that include **GGHT** customers.
- ❖ Applicants must state on the application form how their project/initiative will be promoted to **GGHT** customers.
- ❖ Applicants should state current involvement in their project with **GGHT** tenants/**GGHT** estates.
- ❖ A panel will determine the allocation of funding.
- ❖ The community fund can only be accessed once every two years if an application is successful.

The information below shows the deadline dates programmed for this year (2011/12) and the dates applicants can expect a response.

If completed application received by:

13 October 2011
29 December 2011
25 February 2012

A decision will be given by:

10 November 2011
12 January 2012
11 March 2012

If a group/individual wishes to apply to the Community Fund the relevant application form must be completed. For further information or an application form please contact the **GGHT** Tenant Participation free on **0800 25 26 27** or email tenant.participation@gght.org.uk





“Working Together” Awards GGHT’s first annual equality, diversity & inclusion awards – 2011

GGHT will be holding it’s first annual equality, diversity and inclusion awards for tenants & partners on the 24 November 2011.

The awards ceremony will take place at the Gateway and the programme will include lunch, networking with staff, tenants and partners and also a talk from **GGHT**’s Chief Executive – Peter Mercer.

Deadline for nominations: 4 November 2011.

The categories for entry are as follows:

Tenant categories

❖ **Individual Achievement Award**

An award for an individual who has shown themselves to be openminded, understands the principles of community and works with other tenants to remove barriers to inclusion.

❖ **Community Champion Award**

An individual who has made a positive difference to their community.

❖ **Excellence in Equality & Diversity for an involved Tenant Award**

An award for an involved tenant who has championed equality & diversity in their meetings.

If you would like to nominate anyone for any of the above categories, you can:

❖ Use the nomination form below or on www.gght.org.uk (news page)

❖ Use the phone and call Cam Kinsella free on **0800 25 26 27** (you must have all the details about the nomination, including who you are nominating and their details), which category the nomination is for, and also why you are nominating this person/organisation).

Email all nominations to Cam Kinsella by email cam.kinsella@gght.org.uk or by post to Golden Gates Housing Trust, PO Box 1181, Warrington, WA1 9FB

You can nominate as many people as you like and you can even nominate yourself! Go on, spend 5 minutes filling in a form and give someone the recognition they deserve so they can be rewarded for doing a great job.

“Working Together” Awards Nomination Form

What is your name and contact details?

Who are you nominating? (Name / email address / phone number)

Which category are you nominating the person in?

Why are you nominating the person for an award?

(What makes them fit into the category you nominated them in? Do you have any evidence or a story?)

Have your say - FREE PRIZE DRAW!

It is important to us that we know we are delivering services which meet your expectations and customers are satisfied with what we do. Whilst we measure satisfaction across specific services, we do a general survey every couple of years.

In Autumn, **GGHT** will be phoning a random selection of tenants to take part in a short telephone survey that will provide us with valuable insight into the services we provide to you. This will help us to identify which aspects of the service you feel we can improve on and which services we do well.

It is a short questionnaire and should only take a few minutes to complete, so why not take this

opportunity to have your voice heard.

Don't worry! All your personal information will be kept confidential!

If you want to ensure that you take part in the survey please ensure we have your contact details by calling us free on **0800 25 26 27** or emailing **info@gght.org.uk**

As a token of our gratitude for your co-operation, we will enter all completed surveys into a prize draw.

Remember, the services we provide are for your benefit, so have your say and help shape the future of GGHT.

GGHT supporting Junior Warden scheme



GGHT have donated £400 to support the junior wardens, who are involved in a number of activities, including:

- ❖ Making our estates cleaner and brighter
- ❖ Litter picks and patrols on our streets and parks
- ❖ Town centre trail
- ❖ Working with the Neighbourhood Wardens
- ❖ Environmental and gardening projects
- ❖ Sponsored walk for Age UK
- ❖ Police and Fire services training days
- ❖ Running stalls at community events and fund raising
- ❖ Trips to museums, Llandudno, Gullivers World, New Brighton.

The scheme for 9 to 13 year olds has been running for 4 years (during school holidays) and aims to inspire, motivate, educate, build confidence and encourage pride in oneself and

the community. The scheme also includes Senior Wardens that support the juniors.

The Junior Wardens were one of only 10 schemes across the country to take part in a national warden's event and this year one of the juniors has been nominated to carry the Olympic torch.

For further details about the warden scheme please contact Tracy Williams (Stronger Together) on **01925 241360**



A golden opportunity to learn about the Trans community



GGHT currently monitor the profile of their tenants and recently found that a number of their tenants occupying their housing stock were transgender.

In July we held a training session for staff including the Chief Executive – Peter Mercer and Chair of the Board – Fran Murray to raise awareness of the issues surrounding being transgender. The event was facilitated by Penelopi Bassi a co founder of TransWirral - an organisation set up to help and educate people about the issues surrounding being transgender.

Staff members found the event “interesting and eye opening” whilst also “informative.” **GGHT** want to ensure our staff are well equipped to deal with the changing profile of the Borough and are able to offer the best possible service to all of our tenants.

Be a champion inspector... make a difference!

We have lots of customers who get involved in housing, attend meetings and give their views on **GGHT** services so we can improve them for YOU. You don't have to attend meetings to give your views, so why not cut out and return the champion inspector card with your comments about:

- ❖ Positive things you have seen **GGHT** do
- ❖ Areas that need investigating
- ❖ Comments and Compliments
- ❖ Areas for improvement

(Please do not use the card to report repairs or make a complaint – to do this contact us free on **0800 25 26 27**).

You can return the forms to:

- ❖ A GGHT housing office
- ❖ Post to: **GGHT**, TP Team, PO Box 1181, Warrington, WA1 9FB
- ❖ Or email comments to: **tenant.participation@gght.org.uk**

Name: _____ Date: _____

Meeting/Event: _____

I noted...

Please return to a member of the GGHT Tenant Participation Team, at a GGHT housing office or post to GGHT, TP Team, PO Box 1181, Warrington, WA1 9FB





Support For All (SFA) – getting involved with customers



Summer Service User Forum:



Support For All held their latest service user forum in June. The event was themed 'Healthy Living' and featured speakers from

Leisure Warrington, Reach for Health, Warrington Disability Partnership, Warrington Wolves and the Wellbeing Team.

A total of 48 current and previous service users attended, making it bigger than previous events. Information and activities provided to the group included:

- ❖ information on healthy eating and the

importance of a healthy lifestyle through regular exercise

- ❖ local gyms offering free six week passes
- ❖ free blood pressure tests
- ❖ information on the Pre-Work Club from WDP to help service users build their confidence and receive training on interview skills and C.V writing
- ❖ prize bingo, raffle – with prizes donated by **GGHT** staff and partners...and much more.

A healthy buffet lunch and free smoothies were enjoyed by all and the service users thanked the **GGHT** Support For All team for arranging the event.

Service Users Panel:

The panel currently has 15 members and meets once a month to give customers a voice in helping to shape our service. The recent forum recruited nine new members to the panel.

The forums and panel are growing in popularity and size - the number of Service Users attending the forum has grown by a record amount to 29% in a 12 month period. Those who attended the forum had a great time, saying:

"It was brilliant. Thankful of the time out of the house."

"Thank you for the hard work and organisation and input that brought about a really enjoyable day. It was good to see so many people there... really appreciated."

"I really enjoyed it. I've met 2 friends that I haven't seen for years!"

"It was perfect – wouldn't change anything."

Having your say... complaints

| Complaints April – June 2011 | |
|--|--------------------|
| Number of complaints responded to within 10 working days | 77 |
| Number of complaints responded to outside of 10 working days | 18 |
| Progress towards target of 90% | 81% |
| Compensation paid | £220 (8 incidents) |

What did we find?

Most complaints related to communication or outstanding work.

What lessons did we learn?

To offer customers the choice of having secure by design patio doors as well as french doors.

Winner...

Winner of the Jan-Mar 2011 prize draw for completed returned complaints surveys was Mrs Vale of Lymm who wins £25.

