



Garden Scoops Outstanding Award for Accessibility

Children from Preston assisted residents from Church Brook sheltered scheme in designing a garden which received an 'Outstanding' award at this year's Britain in Bloom.

The award winning design included creating a vegetable garden for residents to use, which is accessible for people with special mobility requirements; and a maypole, which the children danced around in celebration.

Diversity E Panel Takes off

Harvest are pleased to announce the creation of an E-panel, made up of over 10 volunteers (staff and customers). This has been set up to give customers the opportunity to ask any questions, work related or general, about Equality or Diversity.

To ask your e-panel a question, simply email – diversity@harvesthousing.org.uk

All personal details will be treated as confidential and customers' details will not be disclosed to the E panel.

If you feel you have an expertise in an area of Diversity and would like to be on the e-panel yourself, please contact Shameem for more information – Shameem.khan@harvesthousing.org.uk

Multifaith calendar for October 2011

All dates are shown using the Gregorian (Western) calendar. The calendar is accurate, but some dates may vary regionally because they are determined by the lunar calendar. Jewish festivals usually begin at sundown on the previous day.

October Sunday 9

Birth of Guru Ram Das (Nanakshahi calendar) (Sikh) Guru Ram Das (1534-1581) was the fourth of the Sikh Gurus.

October Thursday 13

St Edward's Day (Christian) Edward the Confessor was King of England 1042 - 1066. He built Westminster Abbey where there is a shrine to him - and where the saint is also celebrated on January 5 each year, the anniversary of his death.

Sukkot (Jewish) Sukkot or The Feast of Tabernacles, commemorates the years that the Jews spent in the desert on their way to the Promised Land, and celebrates the way in which God took special care of them under impossible conditions. Sukkot lasts for seven days, and work is not permitted on the first two days.

October Wednesday 19

Hoshanah Rabbah (Jewish) The 7th day of Sukkot.

October Thursday 20

Shemini Atzeret (Jewish) Shemini Atzeret can be translated as "the assembly of the eighth (day)." In Israel the festival is combined with Simchat Torah.

Birth of the Bab (Bahai) Celebrates the birth of the precursor of the founder of the Baha'i faith.

October Friday 21

Simchat Torah (Jewish) Simchat Torah means "Rejoicing in the Torah." This holiday marks the completion of the yearly cycle of weekly Torah readings.

October Wednesday 26

Paryushana (Jain) The most important Jain festival, it consists of eight (Swetambara) or ten (Digambara) days of intensive fasting and repentance. A time of reflection.

Diwali (Hindu) Diwali, the festival of lights, is the most popular of all the festivals from South Asia. It is an occasion for celebrations by Hindus as well as Jains and Sikhs.

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Diwali (Sikh) For Sikhs, Diwali is particularly important because it celebrates the release from prison of the sixth guru, Guru Hargobind, and 52 other princes with him, in 1619.

October Monday 31

Samhain (Hallowe'en) (Pagan) Samhain (pronounced 'sow'inn) marks the Feast of the Dead. Many Pagans also celebrate it as the old Celtic New Year (although some mark this at Imbolc).

Hallowe'en (All Hallows' Eve) (Christian) The night before All Saints' Day (All Hallows' Day). Its origins date back over 2000 years to the ancient Celtic festival of Samhain. It was celebrated as a Christian festival by the 8th Century.

If you would like the help of an interpreter to understand this document, or to talk to us, please contact your local Neighbourhood Office or Harvest Response on **LoCall 0345 345 0272** or Minicom 0345 345 7484.

This newsletter is also available in other formats, such as Braille, large print or audio (CD or tape).

French

Si vous souhaitez recevoir l'aide d'un interprète pour comprendre ce document, ou pour entrer en communication avec nous, veuillez contacter le bureau local de votre quartier ou le numéro assistance de Harvest au 0345 345 0272 (appel à tarif réduit) ou au 0345 345 7484 (service Minicom).

Ce bulletin d'informations est également disponible sous d'autres formats, tels que le braille, le grand format ou la version audio (CD ou cassette).

Russian

Если вам потребуется помощь переводчика для понимания данного документа или вы захотите поговорить с нами, обратитесь в местную службу Neighbourhood Office или позвоните в справочную службу Harvest Response по номеру LoCall 0345 345 0272 или Minicom 0345 345 7484.

Этот информационный листок также предоставляется в других форматах, таких как шрифт Брайля, крупная печать, а также в виде звуковых файлов (на компакт-дисках и аудиокассетах)

Punjabi

ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਸ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਨੂੰ ਸਮਝਣ ਲਈ ਇਕ ਦੁਬਾਸੀਏ ਦੀ ਮਦਦ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ, ਜਾਂ ਸਾਡੇ ਨਾਲ ਗੱਲ ਕਰਨੀ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ, ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਡੇ ਸਥਾਨਕ ਨੇਬਰਹੁਡ ਦਫਤਰ ਜਾਂ ਹਾਰਵੈਸਟ ਰਿਸਪਾਂਸ ਨਾਲ ਲੋਕਲ 0345 345 0272 'ਤੇ ਜਾਂ ਮਿਨੀਕਮ 0345 345 7484 'ਤੇ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ।

ਇਹ ਨਿਊਜ਼ਲੈਟਰ ਹੋਰਨਾਂ ਰੂਪਾਂ, ਜਿਵੇਂ ਕਿ ਬ੍ਰੇਲ, ਵੱਡੇ ਅੱਖਰ ਜਾਂ ਅੱਡੀਓ (ਸੀਡੀ ਜਾਂ ਟੇਪ) ਵਿਚ ਵੀ ਉਪਲਬਧ ਹੈ।

Farsi

اگر به کمک مترجم نیاز دارید که این اطلاعیه را بتوانید متوجه شوید، یا میخواهید با ما صحبت کنید، لطفاً با دفتر نیبر هود آفیس LoCall 0345 345 0272 یا هاروست ریسپانس Neighbourhood Office محل خود یا با شماره لو کال 0345 345 0272 یا مینیکام Minicom 0345 345 7484 تماس بگیرید.

این اطلاعیه همچنین به اشکال دیگر، مثل بریل، چاپ بزرگ یا صوتی (سی دی یا نوار) موجود میباشد.

Polish

W celu uzyskania pomocy tłumacza w zrozumieniu niniejszego dokumentu lub w celu przeprowadzenia z nami rozmowy, prosimy skontaktować się ze swoim lokalnym biurem ds. mieszkaniowych lub zadzwonić do Harvest Response LoCall pod numer 0345 345 0272 lub minicom 0345 345 7484.

Niniejszy biuletyn jest dostępny również w innych formatach, pisany brajlem, dużym drukiem lub nagrany na nośnik audio (CD lub taśmę).

Gujarati

આ દસ્તાવેજને સમજવા માટે જો તમારે દુભાષિયાની મદદની જરૂર હોય, અથવા અમારી સાથે વાત કરવા ઇચ્છતા હો, તો તમારી સ્થાનિક નેબરહુડ કચેરીનો અથવા હાર્વેસ્ટ રિસ્પોન્સનો, લોકલ 0345 345 0272 પર અથવા મિનિકોમ 0345 345 7484 પર સંપર્ક કરવા વિનંતી.

આ મુખપત્ર અન્ય સ્વરૂપોમાં ઉપલબ્ધ છે, જેમ કે બ્રેઇલ, મોટી પ્રિન્ટ અથવા ઓડિયો (સીડી અથવા ટેપ).

Urdu

اگر اس دستاویز کو سمجھنے یا ہم سے بات کرنے کے لئے آپ کو کسی ترجمان کی مدد درکار ہو تو برائے مہربانی لوکل آفیس LoCall 0345 345 0272 پر یا مینی کام پر 0345 345 7484 اپنے مقامی نیبرہوڈ دفتر یا ہارویسٹ ریسپانس سے رابطہ کریں۔

یہ نیوز لیٹر دیگر فارمیٹ جیسے بریل، بڑے حروف یا آڈیو (CD یا ٹیپ) میں بھی دستیاب ہے۔



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Celebrating Diversity

The Newsletter from Harvest Housing Group

ISSUE 5

Welcome



I hope you have all had a pleasant summer I am pleased to be able to welcome you to the fifth edition of 'Celebrating Diversity' - the magazine that informs of the work Harvest are doing to promote equality.

I am proud to say the magazine is successfully into its third year of production and I hope it will continue to update you about the work over the coming years.

One of the most common questions residents ask is why Harvest want to know about a customer's age, race, disability and sexual orientation. The answer is that Harvest use the information to try to improve and tailor services for all its customers. The article below on customer profiling gives some examples of how Harvest are doing this.

As always, Harvest welcome your comments on this edition and encourage you to get in touch if you have

suggestions for future editions. The next edition will be produced in the New Year.

I hope you enjoy this edition.

Peter Harrison
 Head of Service Delivery



Customer Profiling Reaps Benefits

Collecting profiling information about customer's disability, vulnerability and the way residents prefer to receive their communications is benefiting the way services are tailored at Harvest. Which is:

- Working with Breakthrough UK to pilot the 'Right to Control' project in Greater Manchester, where customers who have a disability, vulnerability or mobility issue will be able to choose and access specific services that help them.
- Using the preferred communication data, the production of automated letters is being piloted in large print for those who have requested information in this format.
- Identifying customers who have expressed an interest in getting more involved, in monitoring the current

cleaning and grounds maintenance contracts and becoming members of our scrutiny panels, new customer inspectorate and repairs satisfaction focus group.

- Ensuring that staff from the community safety team have contacted or visited customers who have told us they are victims of harassment due to disability, race, sexual orientation or domestic violence.
- Identifying customers who have a disability, vulnerability or mobility issue to provide more targeted advice and assistance to help improve their quality of life.

The above are just a few of the projects that have come out of making use of the information customers have provided. Thank you for continuing to support Harvest in providing your information and look out for future developments.

Changes to the law - equality

Recent changes in equality law have seen stronger protection for people. There are now nine protected characteristics under the new Equality Act, which includes the seven strands of diversity.

These nine characteristics are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender
- Gender reassignment
- Race
- Religion
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage / civil partnership
- Pregnancy / maternity.

The law ensures organisations offer services in a way that everyone can access and that people with a protected characteristic are not at a disadvantage.

Harvest carries out Equality Impact Assessments on all of its policies, procedures and plans to determine whether any areas may cause a disadvantage. This means the Group can address this and ensure services are provided free of discrimination and are accessible to all.



Stoke Pride Gay and Lesbian Charity Ball 2011

The fantastic Stoke Pride Charity Ball was held earlier this year at Victoria Hall in Hanley.

The event was attended by over 250 people and celebrated those individuals who have been instrumental in developing the LGTB community.

Mick Taylor from Moorlands who attended the event said: "The event was a wonderful opportunity for Harvest to mark its support and commitment to equality and diversity by joining in the festivities."



Danielle Bell, Future Jobs Fund Success

Over 10% of these individuals have now secured a permanent post within the Group, with many more securing employment elsewhere following the experience gained through Harvest.

Danielle said: "Working for Harvest on the Future Jobs Fund scheme was great. It gave me the confidence and experience to move my career forward. When I got a job at Harvest I was really pleased, I've been here two years and it has made a big difference to my life."

Future Jobs Fund Success



Routes 2 Work was set up in 2005 by Derwent & Solway, a member of Harvest Housing Group, to reduce unemployment by engaging residents in training and learning.

The team has been working across West Cumbria and so far helped over 3,500 people back into employment.

The project also enabled Harvest to get involved in the Future Jobs Fund initiative which ran in three phases between 2009 and 2011. The Future Jobs Fund initiative has seen over 80 young people secure six months paid work within Harvest.



Crudens continue to encourage females

Harvest's partnering contractor Crudens Property Services is proud to welcome its first female plumber onboard – Lisa Hou. To support Lisa, who joined the team as a qualified plumber, one-to-one mentoring has been set up to help her settle into her new role. Lisa is enjoying her role and progressing well, and has really fitted in to the team.

Senior management at Crudens are proud and supportive that Lisa is now on board! This follows on from their celebration in 2010, when another female member of the team scooped the apprentice of the year award.

All Hallows School and Otterburn House join forces!

Pupils from All Hallows School in Salford were invited to Otterburn House over 55's sheltered scheme to help out with a variety of gardening tasks, thanks to an initiative funded by Salford Youth Foundation.

A group of students also from the school are visiting the scheme once a week to offer pampering sessions to residents in return for lessons in knitting so that they can make patchwork blankets for the children's hospital. The school hosted an Easter party for residents of Otterburn House to thank them for welcoming the school into their scheme.



Harvest supports all inclusive Adventure Playground

An exciting and innovative play area for children and young people with special needs has been developed with Harvest Housing Group's help. The playground has been designed with and for the local disabled community and boasts both a large outdoor and indoor play area.

The playground is run by a voluntary committee with a team of experienced paid staff to assist visitors.

In March, Moorlands Housing presented the North Staffs Special adventure playground with a cheque for £1200. The donation was made to assist in the development of new specially adapted toilets and changing facilities on site.

Paul Seymour, Moorlands Director said: "Harvest have contributed to this worthy cause as many of our customers, their children and families access the playground which is located in Newcastle under Lyme"

If you would like to take your family/children to the playground then please contact the playground on 01782 717 612 or www.specialadventureplayground.co.uk



Mentoring Programme is a Great Success.

For several years Harvest has been delighted to offer its staff the opportunity to participate in the 'Housing Diversity Networks' mentoring programme, which runs between September and July annually. The one year programme aims to help housing personnel develop their skills and achieve promotion and make the housing sector more diverse and representative at all levels.

In September 2010, Mel Martin and Al Ul Haq, started the programme and were both individually matched with mentors from other housing organisations. Below are their experiences.

Mel joined Harvest when she was 16 and has now been with the Group over 12 years. A few years after starting as an Administrative assistant, Mel secured a post as a Customer Support Officer and is now interested in taking her first step into housing management.

She said: "I felt as though I had the knowledge and I have gained lots of housing experience, but I just wasn't sure how to make the step. The programme has made me realise that if you want to further yourself, you have to take the step yourself and be proactive. My mentor helped me put an action plan together which will put me in a better position, the actions are all ones that I can take control over. I have already volunteered myself to be involved in an additional project and I am currently discussing shadowing with my manager".

Al has worked as a resident scheme manager for the past 16 years and whilst he enjoys his role, he was keen to learn more about other areas of the sector and talk to others in the profession.

He said: "The programme really helps you recognise where you are and where you want to be. I particularly found the personality profiling useful, as this helps you analyse yourself and how others may see you. It identifies your strengths and the areas where you need to develop. The other bonus is you get to meet people in the same profession, but from different fields and organisations. I would recommend this programme to anyone; it's great that Harvest supports it."

Harvest is pleased to confirm that a further 14 members of staff have been accepted on to the programme for 2011/2012 which started in September.



Harvest help ACCA Develop

The African & Caribbean Community Association (ACCA) was set up in Stockport in 2006 with the aim of promoting and supporting the black and dual heritage community by working in partnership with agencies and services across the borough.

ACCA arranges events such as the Black History Month celebrations, cultural activities and family fun days. It also signposts clients to a broad range of services and offers a befriending service.

The organisation is run by committed volunteers, Tolu Fiberesima is the chairperson and M&D recently met with him to give a small donation towards the work they do. Tolu is pleased to be working in partnership with M&D.

For more information about ACCA take a look at their website – www.accastockport.org.uk or ring your neighbourhood regeneration officer Jan Brown on 0161 475 2682.

