



ISSUE 1 ■ 2010

RESIDENT AND SERVICE USER Annual Report

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Welcome to your annual report for 2009/2010

THIS IS THE FIRST TIME ST MARTINS HAS PUBLISHED AN ANNUAL REPORT, ESPECIALLY FOR RESIDENTS AND SERVICE USERS, WHICH HIGHLIGHTS THOSE AREAS OF WHAT WE DO THAT ARE OF MOST INTEREST TO YOU. WE HOPE YOU FIND IT INFORMATIVE.

As a regulated provider of social housing, St Martins has a duty to keep you informed of all matters relating to your tenancy or care or support. We do this through keyworking, tenant meetings, the Service User Forum and Connect - the service user newsletter published 3 times a year.

From this year, we will also provide you with an annual report of St Martins' performance in a number of key areas of service delivery. These areas, called "Regulatory Standards for Housing Providers", cover a range of different things which are important to your receiving a good service from us. They are all things which affect you and which you are likely to have a view on.

Look inside for a description of the regulatory standards and information on how St Martins has performed against them over the past year.

If you wish to comment on anything in this report please feel free to e-mail me at johnth@stmartinsoftours.org.uk or telephone 0207 704 3820. Alternatively, write to me at:
St Martins, 318-320 St Paul's Road, London, N1 2LF.

John Thompson
Chief Executive



What are the Standards against which we are measured?



1. **Tenant Involvement and Empowerment**

This standard looks at how well we know you, how we are responding to your needs and how you are involved in the planning and running of your services.

2. **Home**

This standard sets out what we are doing to provide you with a safe and comfortable home and a good repairs service.

3. **Tenancy**

This standard looks at how we allocate our homes, and our rent levels.

4. **Neighbourhood and Community**

This standard focuses on our role as a landlord in improving people's daily lives within the community.

5. **Value for Money**

This standard looks at how cost effective we are, and what we are doing to make further improvements.

6. **Governance and Financial Viability**

We want to make decisions about our homes in a fair and open way, keeping you involved and well-informed. This, and running the organisation, is called good governance. This standard looks at the measures we are taking to achieve this.

HOW DID WE PERFORM?

tenant involvement and empowerment

ST MARTINS IS ALWAYS LOOKING FOR NEW WAYS TO INVOLVE YOU IN WHAT WE DO AND TO GIVE YOU MORE CONTROL OVER YOUR LIFE.

INVOLVEMENT

There are many opportunities for you to be involved in decisions about how St Martins is run and how services are delivered.

- In 2009/2010 we successfully began a process of consulting on all new policies with you through the Policy Forum.
- Connect, your newsletter,

was published 3 times over the course of the year. Some of you took part in redesigning the layout and content and, as a result, Connect is now longer and features more articles about your interests and hobbies.

- 20% of St Martins' Board of Management are ex-service users.

COMPLAINTS

We take a positive approach to complaints and view them as providing valuable feedback to help us improve the quality of the services we deliver.

- In 2009/2010 there were 32

complaints.

- All complaints were investigated and resolved within the timeframes laid down in the complaints policy.

SUPPORT

- 100% of you have support plans in place to help you lead the life you want to.
- 97% of you feel that you have better life choices available to you by the time you leave our services.
- 92% of you who have identified a need to better manage your mental health have, with our

help, done so by the time you leave our services.



diversity and equal opportunities

St Martins has a very diverse service user population.

- 60% of you are men and 40% women.
- 24% of you are under 24 years of age and 50% are over 30.
- 47% of you described your ethnic origin as Black or Black British, 35% as White, 7% as Asian, 6% as mixed ethnicity and 4% as Chinese or other.
- Our staff broadly mirror the ethnic backgrounds of our residents and service users.
- We have trained all our managers in equality impact assessment. We now assess all our policies to make sure they

do not inadvertently discriminate against any group protected under the terms of the Equality Act 2010.

- We are revamping our website to make it more visually interesting, accessible and relevant to your needs.
- We are working this year towards providing free internet access for all residents who live in schemes with 24 hour support.
- St Martins has become a "Stonewall Champion" - protecting the rights of service users to receive the best possible services irrespective of their sexual orientation.

"St Martins is particularly proud of the vibrant diversity of its staff and residents. It certainly helps us make sure that every resident and service user receives personalised support"

JOHN THOMPSON, CHIEF EXECUTIVE



your home

ST MARTINS IS COMMITTED TO MAKING SURE THAT YOUR HOME IS WARM AND WEATHERPROOF WITH MODERN FACILITIES. ALL OUR PROPERTIES ARE COMPLIANT WITH THE *DECENT HOMES* STANDARD

This year, as part of a larger-scale refurbishment programme, we have upgraded all the bathrooms and toilets on the upper floors of Wilton Villas and New North Road.

REPAIRS

824 repairs were carried out over 2009/2010. The percentages of repairs carried out within target timescales was:

Emergency:	100%
Urgent:	97%
Routine:	98%

HEALTH AND SAFETY

St Martins takes its responsibilities to provide a safe environment very seriously. In 2009/2010 we were 100% compliant with all health and safety legislation. We carried out gas and electrical checks and risk assessments on every one of our buildings.

In the coming year we intend to:

- implement the first part of our new environmental strategy and improve thermal efficiency in those older homes that do not meet modern building regulations.
- upgrade the ground floors of Wilton Villas and New North Road.
- Replace the roof at Wilton Villas.



your tenancy

St Martins is a specialist provider of housing and support services to people with mental health problems, people with offending backgrounds and vulnerable young people.

We provide short term accommodation and support, usually of between two and three years, to enable you to get back on your feet and live more independently. All referrals to our supported housing come from local authorities and all referrals to our care homes come from social services or the NHS.

Our approach to housing

management is based on sustaining tenancies, minimising evictions and ensuring that our tenants and residents move on to independent accommodation.

- 123 (52%) people moved on from our accommodation in 2009/2010.
- The average time spent in any of our services is 2 years.

RENT

Our rents are within target rents as defined by our regulator and we only increase our rents annually by an amount determined by our regulator. This is calculated

using a standard formula based on the Retail Price index (RPI).

FUTURE PLANS

We will develop 3 units of move on accommodation for residents of New North Road through the purchase and refurbishment of 45 Wilton Square.



neighbourhood and community

ALL OUR SUPPORT SERVICES ARE FOCUSED ON ENCOURAGING YOU TO TAKE PART AND BE INVOLVED IN YOUR LOCAL COMMUNITY. WHETHER THIS MEANS USING LOCAL HEALTH OR SOCIAL SERVICES, OR LOCAL LEISURE, COMMUNITY OR EDUCATIONAL SERVICES, WE ACTIVELY ENCOURAGE YOU TO ENGAGE IN ACTIVITIES AND SERVICES OUTSIDE OF ST MARTINS.



· Our properties are clean and tidy and we deal swiftly with litter, graffiti and vandalism.

· During 2009/2010 we developed a new post of Social Inclusion Worker in St Martins to assist you to identify and take advantage of opportunities and services in your local community.

· We took part in an Artist in Residence project organised by Islington Exhibits as part of a wider art project in Islington.

FUTURE PLANS

· We will seek to improve training and vocational opportunities for you through partnership with other voluntary sector providers.

· We are establishing formal links with Islington and City College and will provide access to literacy, numeracy and basic IT skills training.

value for money



Providing you with good value services runs through all the standards. We are continuously looking at ways of using our resources more efficiently and cutting our costs. In 2009/2010 we reduced our costs through the following measures:

- We tendered out our cleaning services and reduced the cost of cleaning by 20%.
- We tendered out our electricity contracts and reduced the cost of electricity by 27%.
- We made a substantial investment in our IT infrastructure which will allow us to do more for less and roll out our digital inclusion strategy in 2011.

· Our rent arrears for 2009/2010 were 5.5%; down from 11% in 2008/2009. This is important as it reduces the amount of bad debt we have to write off.

· Our voids (empty properties) were 3.3%; down from 4.5% in 2008/2009 (excluding registered care homes).

FUTURE PLANS

- We will further reduce energy costs by 20% through implementing our environmental strategy.
- We will tender out our gas contracts.
- We will reduce our rent arrears to 4% of rent receivable.

governance and financial stability

GOVERNANCE

During 2009/2010 we sought to improve our governance structures and processes by developing and implementing a structured training programme for board members.

- In 2009/2010 this included a strategic planning day and training on equality and diversity for all board members.
- As part of the ongoing renewal of the board, three new board members were recruited in 2009/2010, bringing a range of skills and experience to the board.
- The new regulatory framework places a greater responsibility on housing association boards and expects boards to co-regulate their associations. This means that the board has a key responsibility to ensure that the organisation meets regulatory standards.

To help the board with this, it set up an internal audit sub-committee, and the Internal Audit Association (TIAA) was commissioned to carry out a three year internal audit programme.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY

Turnover	£4,187,000
Assets	£7,781,000
Capital and Reserves	£5,040,000
Operating surplus	£113,000

FUTURE PLANS

- We will continue the board development programme through provision of risk and audit training.
- We will implement the second phase of the internal audit programme focussing on the management of voids, payroll, tendering of contracts and contract compliance.
- We will improve our operating surplus level.

If you need a large print, audio or other language version of this report please let us know.