

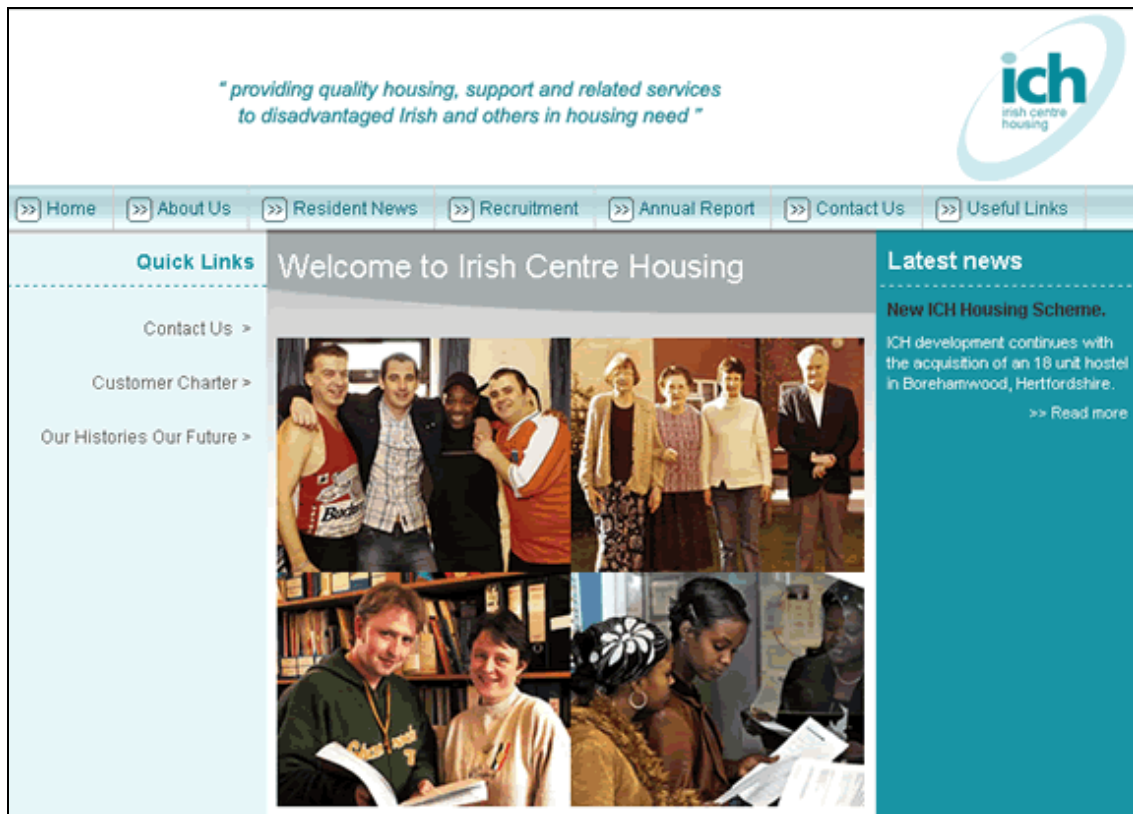
The Informed

The newsletter for the residents of
Irish Centre Housing

Issue 5

October 2004

ICH in Cyberspace!



www.irishcentrehousing.org

Irish Centre Housing now has its own website. www.irishcentrehousing.org is the address. The "Homepage" (pictured) is the first page that you will come to, and by clicking on the tabs below the logo you can navigate around. The sections are:

About Us – gives a summary of the various services that we offer.

Resident News – is a space to highlight resident activities.

Recruitment – to list any vacant posts within the organisation

Annual Report – the last issued annual report

Contact Us – how to contact us at the various sites

Useful Links – websites for other organisations and regulatory bodies.

This is an exciting new development for ICH and we encourage residents to have a look for themselves and to give us some feedback. The Resident News section we hope to develop further and would truly appreciate any ideas that you may have.

If you would like to comment then either email us on feedback@irishcentrehousing.org or phone Steve Webb at Head Office on 020 7485 8889.

Employee of the Year - Raising the Standard

Our Motto “Excellent Staff providing Excellent Service”

We aim to provide a housing and support service that is of the highest standard and we need excellent staff to help us to do that.

Our Employee of the Year award is designed to reward staff who go above and beyond the call of duty and really strive to provide the best possible service. We need your help to identify and reward those staff.

If you know of a member of staff who has really made a difference to you personally or to the service where you live, now’s your chance to say “thanks!” Nominate them for the Employee of the Year award.

Just fill out a simple form (enclosed with this issue of *The Informed*) saying who you are, who you wish to nominate and why and then return it to our Chief Executive – Antonia Watson, by 30th November 2004. Or you can just write us a letter. But remember, you must tell us who you are, who the member of staff you are nominating is and what they have done to deserve the award.

The nominations will be judged by our Chief Executive, a Board member and a resident.

Come on, help us say thanks to the people who have helped you!

Children in ICH Hostels

Following discussion with a number of you, ICH has taken the decision not to allow any person under the age of 16 access to our hostels for single homeless people.

The reason for this is on the grounds of health and safety. We cannot guarantee the safety of a child in a shared environment. Whilst this is a

Thank You

The staff at ICH would like to thank Gerard Finnegan who wrote a letter to the Camden New Journal supporting ICH, following an article in the newspaper the week before. It has been very much appreciated.

change at some schemes, it is common practice in similar hostels.

I am aware that a number of residents may have children with whom they are trying to gain access, and wish to remain in contact. We will endeavour to help residents pursue this and find alternative meeting space for visits.

We hope you appreciate that this is to protect all concerned.

Neighbourly Behaviour

We have received a number of complaints recently from some of our neighbours regarding excessive noise. ICH takes pride in being a good neighbour and we always do our best to foster good relationships with those who live close by.

We would like to ask all of our residents, from all locations, to keep noise to a minimum so that you do not disturb our neighbours, or indeed each other!

Thank you for your co-operation.

Did you spend Part of Your Childhood in a Residential Institution in Ireland?

An Act has been passed by the Oireachtas (Irish Parliament). You may be entitled to claim compensation from the Residential Institutions Redress Board and access to other services.

For further advice or assistance contact Phyllis at **London Irish Survivors Outreach Service**, 50/52 Camden Square NW1 9XB. **Telephone 020 7916 7300** or Fax 020 7692 5598.

The Outreach Service is **free and completely confidential**, and is funded by the Dept of Education and Science in Ireland.

Customer Satisfaction Surveys

Thank you to all who completed the survey earlier in the summer. The results will be available soon and featured in the next issue of *The Informed*. Congratulations to the three prize winners, who have each been notified.

Anyone for Coffee?

Following on from the great success of the Coffee Mornings held at our hostels, an additional one has been organised at Head Office for our other residents. The events organised by Tyrone Black our OSP Housing Manager and Warren Bartholomew of Job Powerhouse. The Coffee Mornings are already underway, and take place in the Ground Floor Meeting Room at Head Office every Thursday at 10am.

Meanwhile the Coffee Mornings continue at St Louise, Conway House and Bethany House and are well attended.

All residents are encouraged to attend if possible, as these events act as a useful opportunity to meet other residents and to discuss anything you like relating to either ICH or the world at large! Needless to say, that all coffee, tea & biscuits are free of charge.

Coffee Mornings: Timetable of Events

Head Office	- 10.00am on Thursday
Bethany House	- 10.00am on Wednesday
Conway House	- 11.00am on Friday
St Louise	- 10.00am on Thursday

Resident Internet Access at Hostels – Security Issues

We know that some of you have been waiting patiently for internet access to be installed at the hostels, and we at ICH apologise for the delay.

The initial delays were due to the problems that we had with the installation of our new business software on the main computer server, which unfortunately took a lot longer than anticipated to resolve. Due to this we have become increasingly sensitive about protecting the organisations data, and therefore are giving due consideration to *additional security measures*.

From existing staff use of PCs etc there has been an *increase in the number of viruses* which have been causing us problems lately. We do not want to expose the organisations computer network to any additional security

threats. Additionally, for the protection of both staff and residents we are installing a "*Content Filter*" to ensure that no inappropriate material is downloaded, and that our system is not instrumental in causing offence to others.

We still intend that hostel residents can have access to PCs with Internet access, and we are working towards that goal.

Update from the Outside Projects

At long last a concessionary TV licence has been granted so eligible residents will only have to pay £5.00 per annum. Residents already holding a full TV licence may wish to apply for a refund and can get details from Geraldine.

Refurbishments at Dunne Mews have been completed. We previously had three bed sits that shared a kitchen. We joined one bed-sit to the kitchen area giving it sole access to the kitchen & garden. We then converted the two remaining bed sits into a self contained unit with separate bedroom. Both residents were very happy with the completed works.

We are now considering installing a laundry at Dunne Mews and have commissioned contractors to investigate the practicalities.

Forde House – Joel continues to offer residents resettlement support whilst Ty delivers housing management services. Outside visits, residents are welcome to call at head office Holmes Road with any queries they may have.

Caulfield Court's proposed increased security programme is currently underway. We've already had the reinforced door frames fitted and improved existing lighting. Once we receive planning permission to erect iron railings we will engage contractors to carry out the works. The intercom system will be improved to cater for this. But please remember we can have the world's finest security system but it's rendered useless if resident's let strangers in. So for the security of both yourself and other residents please note; "**If you don't know them don't let them in!!!!**" Mute buttons have been fitted to existing intercoms in an attempt to overcome the problem of late night visitors persistently ringing buzzers into the wee small hours.

The internal decorations (and re-carpeting) of the communal areas have been completed.

We've had two new residents to Caulfield Court we wish them every happiness in their new homes.

Whilst at Highgate Road the damaged wall in the car park is in the hands of our insurers. We have a new resident at Highgate Road we also wish him every happiness in his new home.

Hope to see you all soon. *Ty*

Flu Jabs

As winter beckons doctors are advising elders and those living in hostels to protect themselves from that highly infectious virus - The Flu. Sharing bathrooms, kitchens and bedrooms means that the virus can spread very quickly, so hostels and sheltered housing schemes need to be careful they don't have an epidemic.

Staff at St Louise have been very pro-active and have organised for a nurse to come to the hostel to do a flu jab session. A flu vaccination lasts for about a year, so even if you had one last year you will need to have another one this autumn. **Pop along to your doctors surgery and ask for your free flu jab.**

Don't Break The Elastic

When I was in my younger days, I weighed a few pounds less

I needn't hold my tummy in to wear a belted dress

But now that I am older, I've set my body free
There's the comfort of elastic where once my waist would be.

The inventor of those high-heeled shoes, my feet have not forgiven
I have to wear a nine now, but used to wear a seven.

And how about those pantyhose! They're sized by weight, you see
So how come when I put them on the crotch is at my knee?

I need to wear these glasses, as the print's been getting smaller
And it wasn't very long ago; I know that I was taller.

Though my hair turned to grey and my skin no longer fits,

On the inside, I'm the same old me, it's just the outside's changed a bit.

Hayley Naim – Bethany House

Townsend House Fun Day



Team photo (Charmaine bottom right)

Townsend House in Borehamwood had been planning a fun day for two months. Charmaine Maudner, Kim Jeffs, Dawn Benson worked really hard together to make this a great day. Our fun day was on 25th July 2004. We had a football tournament, BBQ, raffle and quiz going on.

We invited St Louise, Bethany House and our neighbours. It was really great meeting other residents and our neighbours and I really wanted this to work. It was my first big event to plan.

At the end of the day I was happy because everyone else was. I would like to thank everyone that helped out, because it was a great fun day!

Charmaine Maudner
(Townsend House resident)



Prize giving