

# Newsletter

The Newsletter from **Leeds Homes Construction Partnership**



leeds  
ALMOs

Council rewards  
contractors that...  
“Put something back”



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We would like to thank BERMAR BUILDING and the LEEDS RUGBY FOUNDATION for sponsoring this publication.

## Contact Details

### Leeds Homes Construction Partnership

Postal Address:	Property Management Services, Unit 5, Landmark Court, Elland Road, Leeds LS11 8JT
Telephone:	0113 395 7235
Email:	lhcp@leeds.gov.uk

### Aire Valley Homes Leeds

Postal Address:	FREEPOST RRLU-UYBZ-UHKH, Aire Valley Homes Leeds, Navigation House, 8 George Mann Road, Leeds LS10 1DJ
Telephone number for all repairs (this includes out of hours), enquiries, comments, compliments and complaints:	0800 915 6660
Email Address:	avhleeds.enquiries@avhleeds.org.uk
Website Address:	www.avhleeds.org.uk

### East North East Homes Leeds

Postal Address:	Freepost address: East North East Homes Leeds Feedback, Freepost RRJX-YRTK-TACE Leeds LS7 3YY
Telephone number for all repairs (this includes out of hours), enquiries, comments, compliments and complaints:	0800 915 1600
Email Address:	enehl.enquiries@enehl.org.uk
Website Address:	www.enehl.org.uk

### West North West Homes Leeds

Postal Address:	Freepost address: RRJX-TUHK-JKAA, West North West Homes Leeds, Westfield Chambers, Lower Wortley Road, Leeds LS12 4PX
Telephone number for all repairs (this includes out of hours), enquiries, comments, compliments and complaints:	0800 915 1113
Email:	wnwhl.enquiries@wnwhl.org.uk
Web:	www.wnwhl.org.uk

# welcome..

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## TO THE LEEDS HOMES CONSTRUCTION PARTNERSHIP NEWSLETTER.

The newsletter informs you of the work carried out by our contractors and how these organisations are going that extra mile to put something back into the communities in which they work.

Substantial investment is being injected into the city to bring the housing stock up to the Decent Homes standard, as well as contractors working in partnership to deliver Responsive Repairs and Maintenance works.

I hope that you find the information contained within this newsletter, both interesting and informative.

**Councillor Les Carter**  
Executive Member for  
Environment and Neighbourhoods



CHARTERED  
BUILDING  
COMPANY



keepmoat



# PROPERTY MANAGEMENT SERVICES

Property Management Services are the professional consultancy arm of Housing Services within Leeds City Council.

They provide project management / contract administration, technical support and advice, as well as contribute to best practice for a range of clients both within the Council's Environment and Neighbourhoods Department, and to other clients.

PMS employ a number of staff who deliver the following functions to it's client's

- Account Management
- Project Management
- Building Surveying
- Quantity Surveying
- Asbestos Surveying
- Mechanical and Electrical Services
- Clerk of Works
- PFI
- Commercial Asset Management
- Regional Working
- Procurement and Programme Management
- Business and Support

At the peak of decency works the service turned out in the region of £80m to £100m per annum by the implementation and management of major capital works and revenue programmes on behalf of its clients. They have been actively involved in providing the services as part of the £450m investment programme to bring the Council housing stock up to Decent Homes Standard on behalf of the ALMOs.

Property Management Services have also obtained the following accreditations:

- enrolled on the CORGI Register of gas installers
- enrolled on the NICEIC register for the Verification and Inspection of electrical installation work
- assessed by the NICEIC for self certification under the 'Domestic Installer Scheme (Building Regs. 'Part P' compliance)
- corporate membership of the Association for Project Safety APS.
- an Investors in People organisation



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# COUNCIL & ALMO's REWARD CONTRACTORS THAT 'PUT SOMETHING BACK'

The Leeds Homes Construction Partnership (LHCP), a partnership between Property Management Services and Leeds ALMO's to deliver the Decent Homes works programme in Leeds, are involved with the Precious Metal Awards for Equality and Diversity across the city. This involves contractors giving something back to the communities they work in by partnership working between Leeds City Council and the ALMO's. This award is unique to Leeds, no other city has this award in England.

Everything from sponsoring children football kits to the decorating of community halls have been undertaken by firms that have signed up to "The Precious Metals Award" an Equality and Diversity framework, which

rewards contractors for incorporating equality & diversity within their practices and being socially responsible.

The Precious Metal Awards is a unique framework of encouraging the Council's & ALMO's construction partners' to consider the needs of communities and work closely with our diverse communities when working in people's homes. There are 4 different levels within this award, these being Starter, Bronze, Silver and Gold.

To celebrate the success of the scheme on 10th June 2008, an awards ceremony was held at the Royal Armouries, where 13 contractors received a range of "Precious Metals" certificates. The certificates range from

Starter through to Bronze and Silver and were presented by Neil Evans, Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods, Merran McRae, Chief Executive, Aire Valley Homes Leeds (ALMO) and Marie Milner, Head of Property Management Services.

The Precious Metals Award was also entered for the Leeds City Council's, Making A Difference Award, and was successful in achieving this award. This project has been managed through the collaboration of Aire Valley Homes Leeds, West North West Homes Leeds, East North East Homes Leeds and Property Management Services, tenants, specialist advisors and the Contractor Partners undertaking the £450m Decent Homes works programmes citywide.

## **Cllr Les Carter, Executive Board member for environment and neighbourhoods, said:**

"At any one time, Leeds City Council in partnership with both ALMO's and contractors are working on dozens of projects across the city. That's a substantial investment being injected into the city, but we have been encouraging our contractors to do more. That's what our Precious Metals Award, equality and diversity framework has been about – encouraging these firms to go the extra mile and put something back into the communities they work in. We are rewarding those that appreciate that regenerating the city is not just about contracts, it's about people.

## **Neil Evans, Director of Leeds City Council's Environment and Neighbourhoods department said:**

"Leeds is determined to reach the highest possible levels of Equality and Diversity for all the people of Leeds, and this progressive and unique project is a huge step forward in achieving this."

## **Merran McRae, Chief Executive for Aire Valley Homes, Leeds on behalf of all the ALMO's in Leeds said:**

"We are pleased with the commitment from our contractors by embedding equality and diversity within their work. We will continue to ensure that they are considering the needs of our diverse communities."



# Livett Cartwright phase 1

## End of scheme coffee morning



Bermar Building in partnership with West North West Homes Leeds and Property Management Services held an end of scheme coffee morning for the Livett Cartwright contract in Leeds. This was to say a big thank you to residents for all their patience and co-operation whilst working in their homes.

The coffee morning was successful, staff from Bermar Building, West North West Homes Leeds and Property Management Services attended.

Bermar Building sponsored a raffle in which the winners won vouchers for ASDA. Pictured above are the residents who won the raffle. All residents were really pleased with the work carried out to their homes.

## Environmental Issues



**Bermar Building Company Limited is one of the smaller construction companies working in the Leeds Homes Construction Partnership.**

The company is a Chartered Building Company and is Quality Assured to ISO9001.

In response to the requests of the Leeds West North West and Leeds East North East ALMOs and other local authority and government departments, environmental issues have been placed high on the company's agenda.

The company's managing director Rob Moon has qualified as a Chartered Environmentalist and the company has achieved the ISO14001 (Environmental Management Systems) standard.

This impacts on the sites and head office with reduced waste, an increase in waste segregation, and a reduction in emissions.

# Apprenticeship Schemes



Nick Pitts



Taymur Farooq



Mark Parkin



Tassaduq Hussain

**Bermar Building in association with Construction Skills, Youth Build, Leeds College of Building and other Local Colleges is pleased to confirm that its Apprenticeship Scheme continues to flourish.**

The company is involved in several Framework Agreements with Local Authorities, Housing Associations and Health and Education Departments.

Pictured are Nick Pitts, Taymur Farooq, Mark Parkin and Tassaduq Hussain.

Most of the Apprentices have worked on the Leeds ALMOs including Leeds West North West and Leeds East North East.

Bermar also sponsors an annual prize for students at Leeds College of Building.

The company has run the scheme for over 30 years.

## Sensitive Approach Case 1

Margaret (name changed to maintain anonymity) was worried about the works taking place and was anxious at allowing work people into her property.

Bermar's Resident Liaison staff (Sue and Sam) arranged to spend a good deal of time with the lady before the works commenced in order to gain her confidence.

The works were explained to Margaret in detail and she was assured that they would work closely with her to prevent her feeling vulnerable.

Arrangements were made to move her pets to a temporary home.

Margaret was visited early every day and her immediate concerns were discussed and taken into account.

She is now settled after the works and expressed her gratitude for the finished product and the fact that her

special needs and opinions were acknowledged during the progress of the works.

## Sensitive Approach Case 2

One family on Bermar's Burley & Hyde Park Refurbishment scheme suffered a bereavement during the course of the works.

The Site Manager Matthew suspended works on three separate occasions in order to provide the bereaved with some peace when necessary.

In addition a team was assembled to fast-track the works to have the property in an acceptable state of completeness for the funeral.

# FHM's commitment to Community Regeneration

**Our involvement in all aspects of employee development whether craft apprenticeships, community driven initiatives, work experience etc. is undertaken firstly with long term employment in mind and secondly with transferable skills and knowledge to serve the industry and future wealth creation.**

Within all the partnership areas that we work, we are committed to providing local employment and training opportunities. Through the

provision of these opportunities we can contribute not only to the physical regeneration of communities through improvements to housing but to sustainable economic regeneration.

Working with LHCP has enabled us to make long term plans for the provision of career opportunities for those living in the Leeds area.

We currently have 13 apprentices recruited from the Leeds area through our partnership working with the various organisations.

Via the Leeds Construction Skills

Learning Centre we have recruited 9 apprentices, male and female, who are working towards Levels 2 and 3 of their NVQ's in both Bricklaying and Joinery. One female recruit has just recently finished her NVQ Level 3 in Joinery and also her Site Supervisors Qualification.

Through Leeds re'build we have recruited a further two operatives, one of whom is also studying for NVQ in Joinery and a further 2 school leavers recruited this summer who have just begun their apprenticeship programmes.

## FHM donates community kitchen

**"We were working in the nearby area so we jumped at the opportunity to provide a much needed facility in the village."**



Staff from FHM, have donated and installed a brand new kitchen at the Stanhope Community Centre in Thorpe, Leeds.

The Stanhope Community Centre has been a thriving community facility offering bingo, coffee mornings, councillor surgeries and local events to residents in the area.

Following several years of decline, a new centre committee was formed with the assistance of the Tenant & Resident Team from Aire Valley Homes.

"The new committee desperately required a kitchen for the centre," explains Juliet Bennett, Community Liaison Manager for FHM. "We were working in the nearby area so we jumped at the opportunity to provide a much needed facility in the village."

A representative from Stanhope Community Centre said: "We're delighted with the new kitchen that Frank Haslam Milan has given us. The community centre is now back on its feet and we're looking forward to putting on some great events for residents in the future."



## Girls' football team nets new kit courtesy of **Keepmoat**



A girls' football team in Weetwood, Leeds has netted a new kit and tracksuits, thanks to a generous donation from community regeneration specialist Keepmoat.

Old Modernians AFC Girls turned to Keepmoat, who are carrying out refurbishment work to council homes in the area, when it needed to buy a new strip for its young players.

Keepmoat responded with £1,300 sponsorship to pay for the new kit, embroidered with the team's name, plus tracksuits and kit bags.

Team manager Tony Shaw, who has coached the U12's team since it was set up two years ago, said: "Our existing kit was getting a bit worn around the edges and a lot of the girls

had begun to outgrow theirs. The Keepmoat site offices are on the corner of the playing fields where we train so one day I just decided to pop over and ask.

"The response we had from them was brilliant. It's quite hard to get sponsorship for girls' teams so I don't know what we would have done if they hadn't stepped in. It's made such a difference for the girls to be able to walk out onto the pitch in a new kit."

The girls, who play in the West Riding League's Division One, were presented with the new kit by Keepmoat Community Liaison Manager, Juliet Bennett this week as the Euro 2008 football championships kick off in Austria and Switzerland.

Juliet said: "While carrying out refurbishment work to properties in this area of Leeds we're also keen to be a good neighbour to local residents and to support community projects where possible.

"Old Modernians AFC's request for a new football kit seemed an ideal opportunity to do that. The new kit looks great and we're proud the girls will be sporting the company logo the next time they walk out on the pitch."

Keepmoat began refurbishment work on behalf of West North West Homes Leeds in February to bring properties in the area up to the Decent Homes Standard. The work will mean new kitchens and bathrooms for tenants as well as rewiring work where needed.

## Milestone Handover



Lorraine Barnett's house in Swillington was the scene of a recent celebration to mark a milestone for both Frank Haslam Milan and Aire Valley Homes.

The 5,000 handover was marked with an 'official' presentation of keys by Aire Valley Homes Regeneration Officer, Steve Whitaker.

Lorraine, who's home has recently undergone improvement works under the Aire Valley Homes Decent Homes programme, was delighted with the work. "All the people involved in the work were lovely", said Lorraine. "Especially Jamie and Stan, who really looked after us. I couldn't be happier."

Lorraine's story is, thankfully, typical and is evidenced by the satisfaction levels being reported by residents on this programme. Tenant satisfaction is currently running at 95% on a response rate of 74%. 5,000 homes down the line that's a pretty impressive score.

You can play your part in ensuring we continue to provide service of this standard by letting us know how you think we have done. Please make sure that you complete and return the satisfaction survey which you will receive after work on your home has been completed.

# Leeds Homes Construction Partnership

The primary contractor partners are:

Bermar Building  
Connaught Baldwins  
Keepmoat Plc  
Lovell Partnerships  
Kirklees Building Services  
ENEHL Construction Services  
Alternative Windows  
Kingfisher Windows  
West Gas

P H Jones  
Heat  
British Gas  
Foster Electrical  
Southern Electrical Contracting  
Williams Roofing  
Cummings Roofing  
H H Hanson  
Jennings Roofing

Selkirk and Westmoreland  
Breyer Group  
Frank Stubley  
Wharfedale Decorators  
Crown Point Decorators  
Kier  
Blackie's  
Mears



The Leeds Homes Construction Partnership (LHCP) was set up in October 2005 with the principal aim of bringing Leeds' 58,000 properties up to the Decent Homes Standard by 2010. The partnership is made up of the Leeds ALMO's and Belle Isle Tenant Management Organisation, Leeds City Council Property Management Services, and a mix of large and small building contractors.

Since the partnership was set up the following elements of work have been carried out in each ALMO area.

NUMBER OF ELEMENTS PER ALMO

<b>West North West</b>	
Windows	10,890
Doors	10,551
Roofs	4,900
Kitchens	5,094
Bathrooms	4,247
<b>Total</b>	<b>35,682</b>
<b>Aire Valley</b>	
Windows	7,269
Doors	6,492
Roofs	1,648
Kitchens	5,567
Bathrooms	1,561
<b>Total</b>	<b>22,537</b>
<b>East North East</b>	
Windows	9,937
Doors	8,602
Roofs	3,476
Kitchens	4,880
Bathrooms	4,335
<b>Total</b>	<b>31,230</b>

# MIKE'S PARIS DASH TO RAISE SOME CASH

"It's great to have done something I love for such a great cause, which also happens to be KBM Leeds' selected charity for the year! This is my first charity endurance event and I'm now keen to take part in many more."



Mike Askew, a joiner for Kier Building Maintenance (KBM) Leeds, has recently completed a 500 kilometre charity bike ride from London to Paris, in aid of Kier's charity of the year, Macmillan Cancer Support.

Mike, from Headingley, has had a real passion for bike riding since he was four years old, and has been training rigorously since the beginning of the year. This has involved 100 miles of bike riding a week, plus countless

visits to the gym to endure gruelling spinning sessions.

Mike cycled the 500 km with his next-door neighbour and 90 other budding cyclists from around the country. They will set off from London on 16 July and finish four days later at Paris. Mike has managed to raise over £3,000 for Macmillan Cancer Support.

Mike comments, "My original target was £2,000, however I have exceeded this thanks to generous donations from our client Aire Valley Homes and

subcontractors C. D. Robinson, Boundaries, I. McLennan Electrical Contractor, Alternative Windows, PRM, Britannia Services and Inner-city Roofing. Kier has also promised to double whatever my colleagues donate!

"It's great to have done something I love for such a great cause, which also happens to be KBM Leeds' selected charity for the year! This is my first charity endurance event and I'm now keen to take part in many more."

## Kier Building Maintenance Leeds is a RoSPA Occupational Health & Safety Award winner

Kier Building Maintenance (KBM) Leeds is celebrating winning one of the prestigious RoSPA Occupational Health and Safety Awards in 2008.

The Gold Award will be presented at a ceremony at the Hilton Birmingham Metropole Hotel, National Exhibition Centre, on Wednesday 14 May, alongside Safety & Health Expo 2008, the UK's premier health and safety at work exhibition.

RoSPA awards manager, David Rawlins said: "KBM Leeds has shown a commitment to protecting the health and well-being of its employees and others. We hope other businesses and organisations will follow its lead and strive for continuous improvement in health and safety management."

KBM Leeds health and safety advisor Mark Nickolson said: "We are extremely pleased to have achieved this recognition, especially as our Leeds ALMO partnership is three years old. This award builds on last years gold award and is a continued recognition of the effort put in by everyone connected with the business so far. The RoSPA

award supports our business aim of providing a safe environment for employees and customers."

The RoSPA awards are not just about reducing the number of accidents and cases of ill-health at work; they help to ensure that organisations have good health and safety management systems in place. Entering the awards scheme reinforces the message that good health and safety is good business and clearly demonstrates an organisation's dedication to the achievement of high levels of performance in this crucial area.

The RoSPA Occupational Health and Safety Awards 2008 are sponsored by NEBOSH (The National Examination Board in Occupational Safety and Health), the leading health and safety professional examining body.

The president of RoSPA, Baroness Anne Gibson of Market Rasen, deputy president, Lord Jordan of Bournville, and vice-president, Lord Brougham & Vaux, will host gala dinners on May 13 – 15 for representatives of award-winning organisations. Entertainment will come from one of the country's top live acts, comedian Ed Byrne.

# FIVE APPRENTICES SECURE NEW JOBS AT KIER BUILDING MAINTENANCE

Five pupils from the Leeds College of Building Young Apprentices in Construction programme have successfully secured the first places on Kier's three-year apprenticeship scheme.

The college programme is part of the City Stewardship scheme hosted by Kier Building Maintenance in Leeds, which sees 14 to 16-year-olds studying construction-related qualifications at either Leeds College of Building or Joseph Priestly College.

Kier's programme allows the pupils to carry out hands-on work experience with the company in many areas of the construction industry, including joinery, brickwork and painting and decorating.

After two years the pupils that qualify have the opportunity to apply for an apprenticeship with Kier.

Sixteen-year-olds David Wiltshire, Daniel Wiltshire, Chris Owen, Chris Ward and James Watson are now full time employees at Kier carrying out repair and maintenance works to 24,000 homes across the city, which are managed by arms length management organisations (ALMOs)

Aire Valley Homes and Leeds West North West Homes.

Apprentice joiner and former City Stewardship learner Chris Owen won the Young Apprenticeship of the Year category at this year's Leeds Further Forward Awards. The accolade recognises Chris' commitment and outstanding achievement in higher / further education.

Chris commented: "Not only am I really proud at winning this award, I am pleased to have got the apprenticeship placement at Kier. I think it is brilliant and I am really looking forward to the next three years.

"Being on the City Stewardship programme has helped me a lot by giving me the confidence and experience to go onto a full modern apprenticeship."

The three-year apprenticeship programme will enable the apprentices to combine day and block release with Leeds College of Building working towards the full apprentice framework which includes key skills and NVQ level 2, with the option of going into level 3.

Kier training manager Christine Wilson says: "This is Kier's first intake of apprentices in Leeds, and the calibre of applicants from the City Stewardship programme was high.

"We are really thrilled at how successful the City Stewardship programme has been since it launched in 2006, as proven by our five exceptional new apprentices."

Deputy principal of Leeds College of Building, Derek Whitehead, says: "We cannot thank Kier enough for its involvement with our students.

"The City Stewardship programme is an invaluable opportunity to provide real work experience to help young people make informed choices about entering the building trade and provides opportunities at both trade and professional levels. The students are really keen to learn and have produced quality work with the skills they have gained to date.

"We are also impressed with Kier's commitment to health and safety for our young learners in the workplace, demonstrating that barriers to such work experience can be overcome by companies."

**"We are really thrilled at how successful the City Stewardship programme has been since it launched in 2006, as proven by our five exceptional new apprentices."**



## SAFETY FIRST FOR LEEDS SCHOOL PUPILS

One pupil at a Leeds school is to have her design for a safety advice poster framed to act as a permanent reminder to fellow pupils of the dangers to be aware of on active building sites.

Shannon Nicholson (11) was chosen as the winner of a design a poster competition that was part of a Safety Day held at Raynville Primary School to highlight to pupils the dangers to be aware of while improvement works are ongoing to their homes. Shannon is now to be presented with a framed version of her poster in a ceremony on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> June, before it goes on permanent display at the school.

The Safety Day was hosted by social housing maintainer West North West Homes Leeds (WNWHL) and Connaught, who are currently installing new bathrooms and kitchens in approximately 250 homes and carrying out electrical rewiring to bring homes on the Broadleas Estate in Bramley up to the government's Decent Homes Standard.

Neil Fox, Connaught operations manager, and Claire Tabert, project

officer for West North West Homes Leeds, hosted the event for approximately 30 children and started proceedings by showing images of how a construction site is put together, after which followed an explanation of the dangers associated with not operating safely on building site compounds.

The children were then tested on their existing knowledge of safety aspects to



be aware of as they were asked to place stickers within the outline of a house drawn on the classroom board to illustrate how electricity, wood and water are used around the home.

The group were joined by Connaught operatives working on the Broadleas estate to give practical demonstrations of how electric lights work and how pipes transport water.

In the afternoon session the pupils were dressed in high visibility vests before watching a safety video presented by Stephen Dale, Connaught safety and environment officer. The children then become 'hands-on' by taking part in activities involving buzzers, batteries and piping before enjoying the day's finale of an 'It's a Knockout' race featuring the activities they had enjoyed during the day.

After the event the pupils were asked to produce safety signs and posters highlighting what they had learned, with Shannon selected as having produced the most eye-catching design.

Neil Fox, operations manager at Connaught said: "Interactive workshops such as these make a long lasting impression on the children and help avoid injuries on estates in which we work. The children's response was excellent and the Safety Day proved to be such a success that I have since been approached to visit more schools in the area along with our other partners in the Decent Homes schemes."

**Connaught will be hosting a Safety Day at Holybank Primary school in July.**

## CONNAUGHT BALDWIN OFFER A CUP OF KINDNESS TO LEEDS COMMUNITY CENTRE

Residents of a sheltered housing complex in Leeds can now brew-up in style after their old kitchen was replaced with a stylish new one completely free of charge.

Connaught Baldwin, the Leeds based social housing asset management company, has installed a brand new kitchen at the Cookridge Community Centre in Leeds after a request for help from a representative of the resident's panel.

John Lince explained "I approached Connaught Baldwin at the Harrogate Conference in June to ask for a donation of a raffle prize to help raise funds for a new kitchen at the community centre. They came along and inspected the kitchen for themselves and said they could do better than just give us a raffle prize – they could install a new kitchen as well. I couldn't believe it."

Connaught Baldwin staff and local subcontractors subsequently renovated the kitchen area by removing the old facilities prior to laying a new floor and completing plastering works. A new sink, serving counter and kitchen

units donated by Spen Valley Kitchens were also fitted, before the entire room was decorated, tiling completed and finished touches added.

Anne Rawlinson, warden at the community centre, said: "The new kitchen looks wonderful and the residents are thrilled with it. The old facilities were desperately in need of modernisation and we can't thank Connaught Baldwin enough for the help they have given us."

Carol Taylor, Connaught Baldwin Senior Customer Service Manager, said; "As a Leeds based company we are always keen to make a contribution to the local community and were delighted to provide the residents of the Cookridge Community Centre with their new kitchen."

Connaught Baldwin are currently preparing to make a further contribution to the Leeds community by inviting listeners of Radio Aire to vote for a local project they feel deserves some special care and attention, with the winning project receiving a makeover in time for Christmas.





# LEEDS SCHOOLS ENCOURAGED TO GO GREEN FOR WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY

**School pupils across Leeds have been encouraged to consider the impact their every day lives have on the future of the planet as part of the city's first ever Green Day.**

More than 7500 pupils and 616 staff at schools across the city participated in activities on World Environment Day (June 5th) as part of an initiative by Education Leeds and the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) to help young people understand how they can work to make their schools more sustainable.

Events such as tree planting, developing allotments, holding outdoor lessons, encouraging composting clubs and even creating musical instruments out of recyclable materials took place at more than 30 schools to help demonstrate to pupils the importance of caring for the environment. In addition, Connaught Partnerships Ltd and Radio Aire encouraged pupils and parents to leave the cars at home by donating hi-visibility vests and water bottles to pupils, with breakfast show presenter Monkey Boy putting his best foot forward by joining a Walking School bus at Iveson Primary school.

Pupils across the participating schools were also asked to think about the food they eat and the impact this can have by enjoying waste free packed lunches made from local seasonal produce while pupils at West End Primary School produced a planning application for a wind turbine at the school.

Radio Aire and Connaught also offered dozens of practical ideas on how to join in the activities by creating a Green Day microsite offering advice on how to design a green area of school grounds to grow fruit and vegetables, holding an eco friendly fair, calculating the school's carbon footprint, organising a new recycling system for the school and starting a dedicated School Green Team.

Chris Edwards, chief executive of Education Leeds, said: "We need to ensure that all our schools are at the heart of a move to sustainable schools where we are encouraging recycling, grow your own, school allotments and energy conservation.

"Our magnificent healthy schools programme has been leading the way – pioneering initiatives like outdoor classrooms, recycling schemes and walking buses. Education Leeds and

Leeds City Council are also building some of the most sustainable and energy efficient schools in the country. "Leeds Schools Green Day and the sustainable schools programme will build on this, helping all our schools to have a positive impact on their local environment and turning the schools here in Leeds into centres of excellence around the environment and sustainability."

Andy Corless, regional director for Connaught, said: "We know the decisions we make now are going to have a huge effect on the lives of our children in the future and this is why we as a company remain fully committed to having a positive environmental impact in the communities in which we work. Initiatives such as the Green Day reach a lot of young people and can help really get the message home about the importance of considering the environment whenever possible."

Connaught is working in partnership with West North West Homes Leeds and East North East Homes Leeds to complete repairs and maintenance to social housing properties in the city.

## NEW BENCH OFFERS A WELCOME BREAK FOR OTLEY RESIDENTS

**Otley residents can rest assured they will always have a seat and a chance to rest their legs after a new bench was donated by Connaught.**

A lack of external seating for the residents of Myers Croft and Lea Croft was brought to the attention of Connaught Partnership Ltd whilst working with West North West Homes Leeds (WNWHL) to deliver kitchen, bathroom and rewiring improvements to more than 200 properties in Otley, near Leeds.

Kevin Tetley, Connaught site manager, explained: "After starting on the improvement works in January we were approached by local tenants to see if there was anything we could do to provide a bench at the top of the hill that leads from Otley town centre. It soon became obvious just how much of a struggle it could be for tenants with shopping so with this in mind we were delighted to be able to provide a bench for the local community."

Sandra Pickles, resident warden, said: "It is quite a tough walk up the hill towards Lea Croft and Myers Croft, especially considering the area is home to a largely elderly population, and tenants have long awaited some seating to enable them to have a rest. They are already taking full advantage of the new bench and we are grateful to Connaught for providing this very welcome addition."



# CONNAUGHT RISE UP TO THE MAKEOVER CHALLENGE

Families and staff at a Leeds centre for children with learning disabilities are celebrating after the completion of a huge refurbishment scheme donated entirely free of charge by Connaught.

The Hawthorn Family Support Centre, of Londesboro Terrace in Leeds, received the free makeover after overwhelmingly winning an online poll with Radio Aire to find the local community project most deserving of the Connaught treatment.

Refurbishment works swiftly commenced after staff and the families who use the centre eagerly drew up a 'wish list' and as a result the centre can now boast two new kitchens, a new security door, new carpets, a full paint job, repairs to a leaking roof and improved plumbing and heating.

The last major refurbishment of the centre, which is part of Leeds Mencap, took place more than 15 years ago courtesy of the Challenge Anneka television programme and it was in desperate need of modernisation. Kate Grimshaw, Fundraiser for the Hawthorn

Family Support Centre, explained: "Since the project began I have been calling it 'Challenge Anneka Part Two'. The depth of work completed is amazing and it is hard to put into words what a difference this will make.

"When we entered the competition we thought we might get a lick of paint, which we would have been happy with, but we were blown away when we saw how much work was to be done. On top of that, the way the Connaught guys have done the work has been really heart-warming at times."

To mark the occasion Hilary Benn MP joined families, staff and the Connaught team at the centre to perform a re-opening ribbon cutting ceremony. After spending time walking around the newly refurbished building and meeting with the families who use the centre, he said: "You cannot fail to be impressed by the work that has been done here. Physically it has made such a difference but it has also generated a real buzz about the place amongst families and the staff which is evident as soon as you walk through

the doors. It has been a really nice project and I know it will be much appreciated by those who use the centre."

Andy Corless, Connaught area director, said: "Connaught is delighted to have completed the works undertaken as part of the refurbishment of The Hawthorn Family Support Centre.

"The staff at the centre are extremely dedicated and have continued to provide a wonderful service to the families of Leeds but the building itself was in desperate need of repair and modernisation. Our team has carried out a huge amount of work to provide much improved facilities but there is still more to do and it would be great to now see other local companies get involved to help this invaluable service."

Connaught Baldwin is working in association with East North East Homes Leeds to complete repairs and maintenance to social housing properties.



## SUCCESSFUL PILOT PROJECT OFFERS ALTERNATIVE TO DEMOLITION IN LEEDS

A pilot scheme to provide full home refurbishments to properties in Leeds has proved so successful that 57 properties now have an alternative to demolition.

West North West Homes Leeds (WNWHL) appointed Connaught Partnerships Ltd to implement whole house improvements to five properties as part of a pilot scheme to determine the most efficient way to manage the future of Leeds City Council owned properties in the Pudsey area.

The improvement works included the installation of full new kitchens, bathrooms, windows and doors; rendering works, full rewiring, plastering and decoration as well as roofing repairs and garden improvements. The programme was completed two weeks ahead of schedule and on budget and as a result will now be extended to further properties in the area.

June Woodward (32) of Inghams Avenue, said: "This has been my home for 10 years and these improvement works have definitely come at the right time, as the whole house

was looking very dated while the kitchen floor wasn't actually level.

"It was obviously a bit of an upheaval to move out for three months whilst the work was ongoing but I was kept informed of progress throughout and if I ever needed anything all I had to do was ask. I was even able to choose the colours of the units, tiles and worktops in my kitchen; as well as the bath panel and colour scheme for the bathroom and the difference it has made is incredible. It has definitely all been worth it in the end and my home has never looked so good."

Stuart Roberts, WNWHL Project Officer, said: "This home improvement work is the culmination of a partnership that started three and a half years ago to provide our tenants with decent homes to live in. These major improvements have been completed on time and keeping to budget, so it is well done to all concerned."



Connaught believes that by putting our customers first we will become widely recognised as the industry leader who fixes, maintains and cleans neighbourhoods throughout the UK.

From humble beginnings 25 years ago in the south coast of England, Connaught has developed by establishing long-term relationships with our customers in the communities we serve. Through sticking to these core values Connaught has become the UK's leading provider of integrated asset management services to local authorities and registered social landlords. We offer a full range of housing maintenance and estate management services through our Social Housing division while also providing compliance services to over 70,000 business customers.



## Leeds construction trainee is North East Apprentice of the Year

Local apprentice James Brier, who lives in Horsforth, Leeds, has been named **Apprentice of the Year** for the North East by his employer, local affordable housing and regeneration specialist Lovell.

The 19-year-old joinery apprentice was presented with his award at a special ceremony at Kingsbury in Warwickshire.

Lovell, which has regional offices at the City West Office Park, Gelderd Road, Leeds, held the awards to celebrate outstanding achievement by its trainees and apprentices.

James joined Lovell in August 2006 from school and has completed his joinery NVQ level 1 and 2 with the company's support. He is now working towards his joinery NVQ Level 3 qualification and hopes to become a site manager.

"James is an outstanding apprentice because of his ability to produce high quality work both as part of a team and when given smaller tasks of his own," says Lovell regional training

advisor Sharon Tyer. "Encouraging talented young people into our industry is one of our key aims and we're delighted that James is developing his construction career with Lovell. It's great to see him winning the regional **Apprentice of the Year** award."

"Working with Lovell has given me the opportunity to develop a range of skills alongside experienced craftspeople on site," says James, who is currently working on a large-scale modernisation programme which Lovell is carrying out for council homes in Leeds.



## MICHELANGELO'S MATES

**East North East Homes Leeds (ENEHL) has launched a new painting and decorating social enterprise scheme in partnership with charity Avalon.**

ENEHL is an Arms Length Management Organisation responsible for managing 19,000 Council-owned residential properties in Harehills, Seacroft and Chapeltown, Wetherby and Boston Spa parts of Leeds. Avalon provides a range of services and training to support people with learning disabilities and mental health issues throughout Yorkshire, Teesside and Cumbria, and aims to identify new business opportunities to employ customers across the region.

Michelangelo's Mates consists of a small team of people who train as apprentices in painting and decorating, under guidance from Project Co-ordinator, Paul Deane.

Working as sub contractors to ENEHL, Michelangelo's Mates provides a quality painting and decorating service on behalf of tenants who are unable to do so through illness or disability, or on empty properties in preparation for new tenants and following repairs carried out by ENEHL. Completed work is quality checked by ENEHL. In some cases, Michelangelo's Mates will replace Decorating Grants. "We started our first job on 15th September and currently have two trainees working mainly on empty properties, but with another two coming on board next week, we will increasingly be responsible for decorating disabled or vulnerable tenants' houses as the project expands," commented Paul, who is responsible for the safe management of the scheme and providing work-based training.

Michelangelo's Mates offers paid employment and work-based training, in conjunction with local agencies that

support the employment needs of people with learning disabilities. The qualifications and training methods are tailored to the needs of each individual with the intention that, once qualified, trainees can find employment in the industry.

The rationale behind Michelangelo's Mates as a Social Enterprise is that it encompasses positive practice, meets the needs of vulnerable tenants, increases customer choice, and offers supported employment and training to people who would not normally have that opportunity.

Steve Hunt (ENEHL Chief Executive) said: "I'm delighted for ENEHL to be working in partnership with Avalon to support social enterprise which plays a valuable part in our communities by helping people get back into work and providing opportunities to develop new skills at the same time".

**ENEHL has provided an office base for Paul and his 'Mates' at Unit 19, Limewood Road, Seacroft, Leeds, LS14 1LU.**



# Building a Bright Future

East North East Homes Leeds have used their Decent Homes funding to take on a number of local apprentices for our in-house contractor: Construction Services.

All our apprentices are paired with an experienced tradesman mentor to carry out hands-on repair and maintenance work to the 19,000 homes managed in the north-east and east of the city.

Four apprentices completed their training this year: Laura Butters (joiner), Rachel Ramsden (painter/decorator), Aslan Aslan (plasterer) and James Turner (plasterer), all of who we retained in the organisation as full time trades people. Last year we appointed Kelly Aitken as

an apprentice bricklayer and asked her what's it like working for ENEHL (see spotlight article below).

Building upon this success we appointed 3 new apprentices this year: Cain Cookson (Joiner), Ashleigh Wilkinson (plumber), Jamie Greaux (plumber).

Our new apprentices have been reaping the awards with Ashleigh Wilkinson set to receive an award for excellence in her first year full time studies at Leeds College of Building Awards Ceremony 2008; Rachel Ramsden won last year's 'Best in Class' award and is to receive the Faculty Award for Special Achievement at Leeds College of

Building Awards Ceremony 2008.

Rachel has also been selected as one of the top candidates in the UK in the Association for Public Sector Excellence (APSE) Local Authority apprentice and trainee of the year awards: Housing and Building. She will be attending the final interviews and awards ceremony in Sheffield in November.

Keith Squires (Director of Construction Services) said 'We value all our apprentices as we seek to bring renewed enthusiasm and skills in the delivery of high quality repair and improvements for the benefit of our residents.'

## Kelly Aitken interview:

### Kelly Lays New Job Foundations

Proving that bricklaying isn't just for men, Kelly Aitken officially started at East North East Homes Leeds in July as an Apprentice Bricklayer. We caught up with her to see how she was getting on...

### What made you decide to become a bricklayer?

My mum wanted me to become a hairdresser, and it was never really me: it's a bit too clean! I always liked to get my hands dirty and enjoyed doing DIY or things like that, so I decided to do this training course with Leeds Construction Skills.

### How did you find going back to college?

I really enjoyed it. I was the only female there and a bit older than quite a few of the others so I was a bit of mother hen really, but it was really good to have the opportunity to learn new skills.

### What's your favourite part of your job at ENEHL?

I love concreting! I don't know what it is about it - I just really enjoy it! I've always enjoyed doing it since concreting in a trampoline for

my son at home. I thought I'd done a really good bit of work at the time but looking back it doesn't seem so impressive, but I suppose I know how to do it properly now. It's just been great at this age to be bettering myself.

### What's been the hardest part of the job?

In the school holidays, not being able to spend time with my son who's 10. He knows and understands that it's good for me and that it means I can provide for him more, but it's still difficult. It just means I have to make more use of my weekends with him.

### Have you found you've got on with our tenants?

Yeah definitely. A few of them have commented that they didn't think it'd be a lady visiting, but then said 'Good on you - it's an equal world!' The first job I did, a cavity clearout at Wykebeck Valley Road, the tenant phoned back Construction Services immediately after to say what a good job I'd done, so that was a nice start! Now I know what it feels like to be on the other side, with everyone working really hard - so don't think I'd complain about repairs any more, because everyone really gives their all.

## LEEDS RESIDENTS WIN PRIZES FOR FLOWER POWER

The winners of a grand garden competition for residents organised by East North East Homes Leeds was announced in a ceremony at Leeds Civic Hall on Tuesday, 2 September.

More than 75 tenants entered the contest, principally sponsored by Leeds-based housing regeneration specialist Lovell, which includes categories for best large garden, best small garden and best floral plant containers. There are also prizes for Best School Garden, Best Community Garden and Best Youth Group Garden.

There will also be two overall 'Best in Show' prizes for the resident judged to have the best garden and for the Best School Garden.

The Lord Mayor of Leeds, Councillor Frank Robinson - lead member for Leeds in Bloom - will be presenting the prizes, donated by East North East Homes Leeds partners and contractors.

"The garden competition really helps showcase the excellent gardens located within East North East and the positive contribution they make to local communities. Working in partnership with Lovell we are able to recognise and highlight the efforts of these residents through this fantastic event," says Steve Hunt, chief executive, East North East Homes Leeds.

Lovell regional training advisor Sharon Tyer, one of the competition judges, says: "It's great that the competition attracted so many entries. During the judging, we visited some stunning gardens where residents had clearly put in a huge amount of hard work and care. Congratulations to all the winners."

Lovell, which is based at the City West Office Park, Gelderd Road, Leeds, is currently carrying out a major housing improvement programme for East North East Homes Leeds, an arm's-length management organisation established by Leeds City Council to manage its housing stock in the east and north east of the city.

# Wordsearch find the hidden words listed below

n	n	p	m	t	h	h	r	i	e	e
o	o	i	a	i	l	t	r	i	n	y
i	i	h	n	n	e	e	g	i	r	a
t	t	s	a	d	e	c	e	n	c	y
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- |              |              |
|--------------|--------------|
| Arms         | Leeds        |
| Bathroom     | Length       |
| Construction | Management   |
| Decency      | Organisation |
| Doors        | Partnership  |
| Homes        | Roof         |
| Kitchen      | Windows      |

The winner will receive a pair of tickets for the **Leeds Rhinos** first home game of the season.

Return completed entries along with your name and address to:

LHCP Newsletter Competition,  
Property Management Services, Unit  
5, Landmark Court, Elland Road,  
Leeds, LS11 5JT

Deadline for competition: Friday 9th  
January 2009.

Competition winners will be  
contacted by post.

## Kids Colouring Corner

### Just for fun!

Colour in the picture of our rugby loving construction workers!

