


People First a time for change
Annual Review 2008



Our mission:
People First is in business to deliver
services that will improve the lives of
as many people as possible.

Chair and Chief Executive's report



Adrian Lohrey
Chair

“Change is ubiquitous, but foreseen and managed effectively will ensure the future sustainability and success of an organisation. At People First we anticipate and embrace change and evolve continuously. This is our greatest strength and the key to our future success.”



Kulbinder Kang
Chief Executive

Like other associations we are immersed in change: changes to our regulator, with the emergence of the Tenant Services Authority and the Housing and Communities Agency; changes to our funding with the removal of the ring fence on Supporting People Funding and the amalgamation of this funding into Area Based Grants to be administered through the Local Area Agreements. And critically, the changes in the economic climate.

At People First we embrace change. Indeed, our track record of capitalising on new opportunities is a testament to our ability to do so. That is why we have enjoyed continued growth in the last year, through the further development of the Community Support Service, our newest endeavour.

However, there are uncertain times ahead and we recognise that in order to survive we need to spread our risks. We also need to expand our services so we can continue to achieve our mission “...to deliver services that will improve the lives of as many people as possible.” With this in mind we propose to explore new business streams in the coming year through the

emerging opportunities arising for example, from the worklessness agenda.

Changes within the association with the emergence of a new business support unit mean we already have the infrastructure in place to position the association for further development and growth. The recent achievement of Investors in People again demonstrates our ability to manage the change associated with such growth.

We recognise the importance of the support, dedication and commitment of our staff, our board and partners in enabling us to achieve our vision. They have made an invaluable contribution in making this year a resounding success. They will be just as important in ensuring our continued success.

People First faces some key challenges in the coming year, but we are confident we can meet them and continue to deliver the quality services we pride ourselves on.

Adrian Lohrey, Chair
Kulbinder Kang, Chief Executive



People First has an excellent track record of engaging with diverse communities. As our portfolio of services widens and changes, this will be seen as one of our greatest strengths, adding real value for new partners and commissioners.



We are sensitive to the needs of our service users who, like us, have to learn to adapt and survive in changing circumstances that are often beyond their control. Organisationally, just as in our personal lives, this requires flexibility and a willingness to think creatively about the possibilities within each new situation that presents itself.

Changing what we do...

The association recognises that in order to survive in the current climate we will need to position ourselves for further development and growth through exploration of new business streams.

The government has made it clear that it sees housing and worklessness as inextricably linked. The Enhanced Housing Options programme and other initiatives offer unprecedented opportunities for People First to expand and deliver new services

not just for our own tenants and service users, but for the wider population.

We know this will require effective partnerships with other stakeholders, but we have a track record of working in partnership and setting up innovative new services.

We also have an effective team eager to embrace new opportunities and challenges and ready to deliver our vision.



Change in regulation...

People First is proud of its local heritage, its well-maintained stock and the services it offers its tenants; but more can always be done.

As a tenant-led business, we welcome the creation of the Tenant Services Authority, which has taken over the regulatory role once occupied by the Housing Corporation. We look forward to working with a regulator that puts tenants and neighbourhoods first.

If we are to follow their lead – and put our own tenants first – it is important for us to sustain our partnerships with other stakeholders, to ensure that Hulme remains a place where people choose to live; to fight antisocial behaviour and to

invest in the community.

Our housing stock is modern, having been built during the last 10-15 years, making it popular with residents in the local area and beyond. This popularity is reflected in a lower tenancy turnover (9.45%) and rent loss due to voids (0.85%) than most – if not all – of our competitors.

The current 'credit crunch' could also provide opportunities to grow our stock and assist us in achieving greater economies of scale. It provides the ideal climate for an entrepreneurial organisation like People First; if it offers us the chance to obtain stock that might otherwise have been unavailable.

As a tenant-led business, we are very aware of – and grateful for – the enthusiasm and commitment that tenants have brought to People First over the years. That's why we are excited by the regulatory changes that will see a new Tenant Services Authority put tenants and neighbourhoods first.

Change for our staff...

The Business Support Unit (BSU) was established in October 2007 in recognition of the increasing pressures on existing staff to respond to, and support, a growing workforce which is now in excess of fifty staff. This growth has arisen from an expansion in the business since our last report and is set to continue.

The unit has a wide remit including Human Resource issues, office management, IT support, web development and health and safety. It is critical in ensuring that all staff are supported appropriately and that our growth and development is effectively managed.

The welfare of our staff is paramount because we know they are our greatest asset and putting 'People First' must begin here. The development of a HR strategy will ensure that their needs are fully

met and this will in turn bring benefits to our tenants and service users as they strive for excellence.

Despite the many changes at People First associated with our growth, our last employee survey in 2007 revealed that:

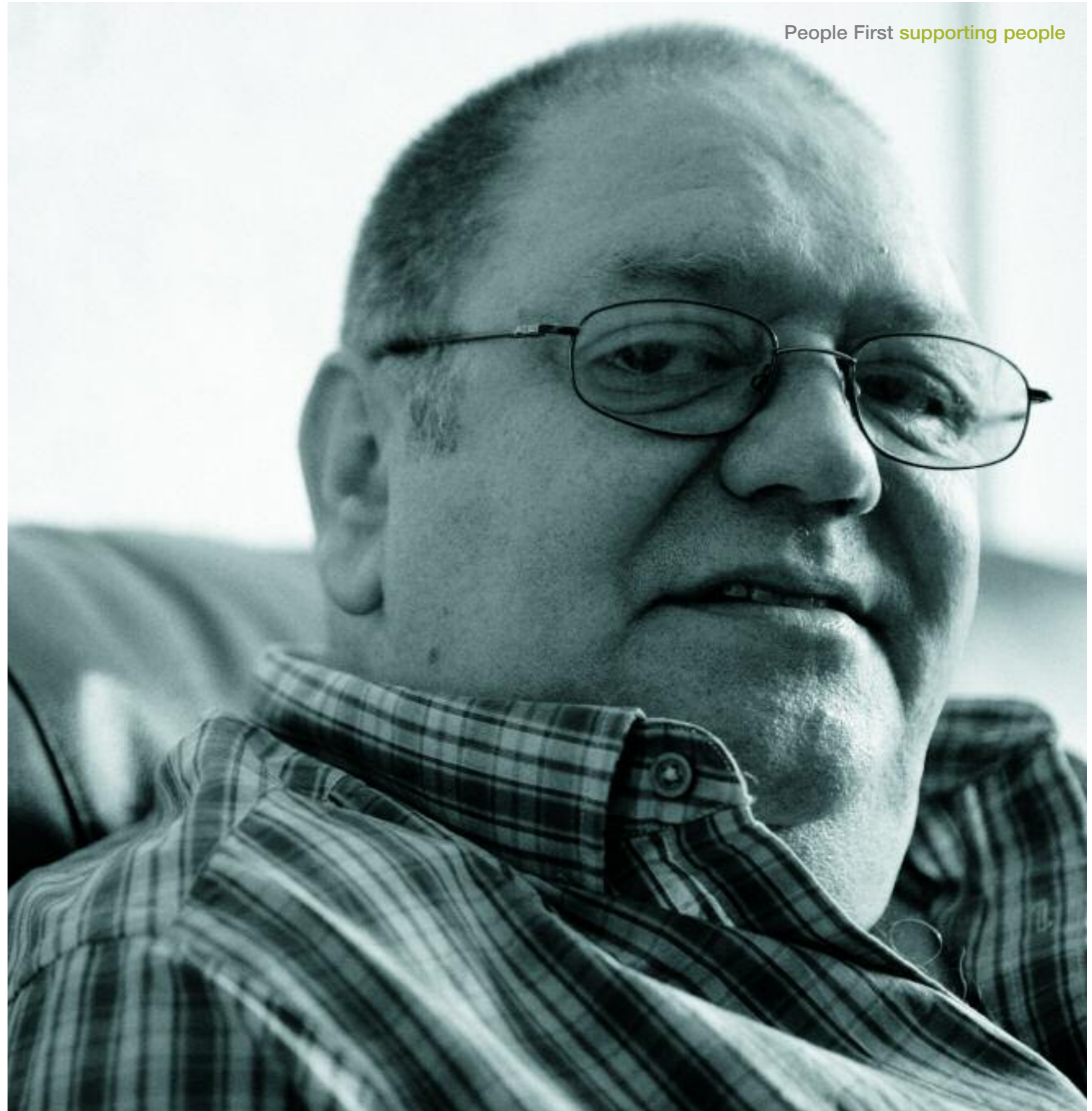
- 93% of staff enjoyed their job
- 86% rated People First as a good employer
- 89% were proud to work for People First

We also achieved the Investors in People Standard once again in 2008.

The BSU will provide the key infrastructure to support and manage our future growth and development, as we position ourselves to explore and develop new initiatives and opportunities.

The recent achievement of Investors in People accreditation again demonstrates our ability to manage the change associated with growth.

People First supporting people





Changing lives...

“I feel it is necessary to bring to your attention the professionalism of the two support workers involved who without their tenacity I would never have got my life back on track.”

Stephen by his own acknowledgement suffered from serious medical conditions and this had an enormous impact on his life, leading to the loss of his wife, job and home and a short spell in prison. He commends the work of community support workers at People First who have helped him get his life back on track by assisting him to secure stable accommodation

The community support service has continued to grow in what is a very competitive climate with limited opportunities. Towards the end of 2007 we secured a contract with Manchester Supporting People to deliver support to older people in Manchester with early signs of dementia and followed this in 2008 with the development of a partnership service with ex-cell and Manchester Supporting People to support people with a history of offending behaviour into employment and with housing related support needs.

Key to our success is the work of staff and their commitment to raising the bar. We have been validated in all areas in which we work at level B on the quality assessment framework and achieved our first A in Rochdale for service user involvement this year. We are well on our way to achieving A's across all core and supplementary objectives.

The support of our partners has also been important in ensuring our success and we look forward to continuing to work with them.

Clearly there are some challenging times ahead, with the removal of the ring fence and the move to Local Area Agreements in 2009 set against a backdrop of continued cuts in Supporting People grant leading to stagnation in funding levels and an increasing emphasis on cost.

However, we feel confident that given our track record and our success at winning new contracts there will still be scope for continued growth of the community support service.



Reflection is important in enabling the transformation needed to face the challenges ahead and in achieving excellence to which we continually strive.

Performance indicators

Rents

	2007/8
As a percentage of all rent due in we collected	98.9%
Unpaid rent of all that we could have collected	8.24%
Unpaid rent of current tenants	6.59%
Unpaid rent of former tenants	1.65%

Empty Properties

	2007/8
Lost rent due to properties being empty	£9,186
Average number of weeks that properties are empty between lettings	4.7

Repairs *(completed within target times)*

	2007/8
Emergency Repairs	97%
Urgent Repairs	93.2%
Routine Repairs	93.9%

Lettings

	2007/8
Tenants nominated by City Council	50%
Tenants from Manchester Housing Register	9%
Tenants allocated through local lettings	41%

BME Profile of New Tenants *(Source: CORE)*

	2007/8
White British	28%
White Irish & White Other	8%
Mixed	4%
Asian or Asian British	8%
Black or Black British	44%
Chinese or other ethnic group	4%
Refused	4%

Tenant Satisfaction *(Source: STATUS)*

	2007/8
Satisfied with People First as a landlord	80%
Satisfied with the condition of the property	89%

Accounts

income and expenditure

for the year ending March 2008

	2008 £	2007 £
Turnover	2,289,303	2,125,120
Operating Costs	(1,734,263)	(1,611,829)
Operating Surplus	555,040	513,291
Interest payable and similar charges	(302,870)	(288,829)
Interest receivable	118,344	82,565
Surplus on Ordinary Activities before Taxation	370,514	307,027
Surplus for the Financial Year	370,514	307,027
Transfer to Designated Reserves	(159,805)	(154,903)
Retained Surplus Brought Forward	926,389	774,265
Retained Surpluses	1,137,098	926,389

All amounts relate to continuing activities

There were no recognised gains or losses for 2008 or 2007 other than those included in the income and expenditure account.

balance sheet

for the year ending March 2008

	2008 £	2008 £	2007 £	2007 £
Tangible Fixed Assets				
Housing Property Cost		13,168,148		13,187,148
less				
Social Housing Grant		(8,700,767)		(8,700,767)
Depreciation		(448,940)		(396,146)
Net Book Value of Housing Properties		4,018,441		4,090,235
Tangible assets		43,275		31,309
		4,061,716		4,121,544
Current Assets				
Debtors	130,005		78,552	
Investments	1,905,709		1,310,573	
Bank and cash	503,688		718,940	
	2,539,402		2,108,065	
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year		(639,583)		(176,185)
Net Current Assets		1,899,819		1,931,880
Total Assets Less Current Liabilities		5,961,535		6,053,424
Creditors: Amounts falling due after more than one year		3,924,293		4,386,698
Capital and Reserves				
Share capital - non equity	37		35	
Designated Reserves (Service items)	106,019		96,214	
Designated Reserves (Planned Maintenance)	794,088		644,088	
Income and Expenditure account	1,137,098		926,389	
		2,037,242		1,666,726
Total Capital and Reserves		5,961,535		6,053,424

These accounts were approved by the Board of Management on 19 May 2008 and signed on its behalf.

A Lohrey, C D'Souza, K Kang

Chair

Adrian Lohrey

Chief Executive

Kulbinder Kang

Board of Management

Adrian Lohrey

Andrew Armstrong

Angela Davies

Cym D'Souza

Iain Todd

John Hepplestone

Lisa Purchase

Siobhan Drugan

Secretary

Kulbinder Kang

Registered office

179 Royce Road

Hulme

Manchester

M15 5TJ

Auditors

Beever and Struthers

St George's House

215-219 Chester Road

Manchester M15 4JE

Bankers

Alliance and Leicester, Bootle

Merseyside GIR OAA

Registered with the Housing
Corporation No. L4088.

Registered as an Industrial &
Provident Society

No. 27746R with Charitable Status.

The Association is a member of the
National Housing Federation.

People First Housing Association

179 Royce Road, Hulme,
Manchester M15 5TJ

Telephone: 0161 226 1917

Facsimile: 0161 232 8422

Email: admin@peoplefirsthousing.co.uk

Website: www.peoplefirsthousing.co.uk



All quotations in the report are compiled from the real experiences of service users but do not necessarily reflect the views of the people featured in the photos.