

# Light up a life by sponsoring our appeal



• The Christmas tree at Bournville Green

**People across the area are being invited to light up a life by sponsoring a light on the famous Bournville Christmas tree.**

Last year the Bournville Christmas tree was designated a special tree to celebrate and remember the 30,000 local children and adults who are blind or sight impaired and who cannot appreciate the magnificent sight of the tree fully decked with lights at Yuletide. Total donations for the Tree of Light Appeal last year were £3,014 - and for only a £5 minimum donation it is hoped to raise thousands again this year.

The money raised has helped the Birmingham Focus on Blindness charity put an information desk and staff and volunteers within the eye clinic areas of both Selly Oak Hospital and the Birmingham and Midlands Eye Centre. This has helped raise awareness of the charity and its services and is absolutely vital when it comes to informing those recently diagnosed as sight impaired of the services and support the charity can offer.

This support includes giving guidance, visiting people in their homes, advising on benefits and notifying people of activities in which they can take part.

If you would like to support the charity with a donation, come to Bournville Green to see the lights switched on at 7pm on Tuesday 5 December. Please make your cheque payable to Birmingham Focus on Blindness (please do not send cash) and send to: Tree of Light, Birmingham Focus on Blindness, 48 Woodville Road, Harborne, Birmingham B17 9AT.

**If you would like to pay by credit card please call 0121 478 5235. Alternatively you can make your donation securely on-line at [www.birminghamfocus.org.uk](http://www.birminghamfocus.org.uk)**

## Make sure you're up to speed on benefits

If all or part of your rent is paid by Housing Benefit then it is essential that you contact Benefit Services directly within a maximum of 28 days to advise them of any change either in your circumstances or of an increase in your rent. Failure to notify Benefit Services of any changes will result in incorrect benefit being paid and could lead to an over-payment which you will be liable to pay back.

**You can contact Benefit Services on 0121 464 7000 or call at any Neighbourhood Office. For further information contact Elaine Blackburn, Area Housing Manager at BVT on 0121 415 6573 or email [elaineblackburn@bvt.org.uk](mailto:elaineblackburn@bvt.org.uk)**

## Thinking caps on for charity trek

Generous Bournville Village Trust staff got their thinking caps on to help a Hopwood man raise money for a charity trek. Double heart attack victim Ray Harrison made the tough trek across the South American mountains in October to raise funds for the British Heart Foundation.

Ray, aged 50, is a contractor who works for the Trust.

Before his trip he organised a quiz night - and BVT staff were only too willing to take part.

Ray's story is all the more courageous given that only three years ago, two heart attacks left him fighting for his life. But doctors gave him the all clear to make the journey through Peru, which netted thousands of pounds for the British Heart Foundation. His trek took him to the mountain city of Cuzco and from there he took the overland route to the lost city of the Incas, across difficult terrain high above sea level.



• Ray Harrison on his fundraising trip

# Thanks for completing the survey

Many of you will have recently received and completed our **STATUS Survey (Standardised Tenant Satisfaction Survey)** which was sent to you by **CWA, an independent consultancy working on behalf of Bournville Village Trust.**

We are required by the Housing Corporation to carry out a STATUS Survey every three years to ensure we are taking into account your needs and concerns and providing everyone with the best home and housing services on offer.

BVT is also required to submit anonymous results from the survey to the Housing Corporation, the government agency which funds and supervises all housing associations. We would like to thank all of you who took the time to complete the survey, as your comments and answers have helped us to identify not only areas for improvement but also areas of great success.

The results were extremely positive, demonstrating an increase in satisfaction levels across all the areas covered, as compared to the previous survey carried out in 2003.

We will be announcing the winner of the £500 vouchers in the next edition of Outlook.

Indicator	2003 %	2006 %	Improved percentage
Satisfaction with the overall service provided	86	89	✓
Rent representing good value for money	74	83	✓
Satisfaction with accommodation	86	88	✓
Condition of property is 'good'	85	86	✓
Satisfaction with neighbourhood	84	86	✓
Easy to get in contact with the right person when contacting BVT	70	83	✓
Satisfaction with helpfulness of staff	85	91	✓
Satisfaction with repairs and maintenance overall	86	88	✓
Satisfaction with speed with which work was completed	81	92	✓
Attitude of workers	92	97	✓
Overall quality of work	86	94	✓
Kept informed about matters affecting tenants	90	91	✓
Takes account of views when making decisions	75	93	✓
Satisfaction with opportunities for participation in management and decision making	75	79	✓

## Tenants take time to 'live the dream'

32 tenants took part in the 2006 Tenants' Tour, 'Living the Dream', which was organised by the Tenant Participation Panel and included a whole host of activities.



• Tenants at Chadwich Manor Farm

During the morning participants visited Bournville Village Trust's agricultural estates, Chadwich Manor Farm and Groveley Farm. This was then followed by a buffet lunch at Phoenix Hall, in Bordesley. Anne Linley, who went on the tour, said: "We had an absolutely fantastic day and all credit is due to the Panel. I've lived in the Trust's area since 1981 and have passed many of these buildings but knew nothing about them.

"The tour was a real eye-opener and the farmers were very welcoming and informative. It's really nice to know that tenants can make a difference." The tour ended with a visit to Castle Vale Community Housing Association and was an experience enjoyed by all.

## Reminder for drivers

Bournville Village Trust would like to remind drivers that parking on the pavement is not permitted. Parking on the



pavement is not only inconsiderate, but dangerous as pedestrians are then forced to use the road to get past or walk over the grass - which is difficult for elderly people and parents with push-chairs. We have always taken great pride in working together to create a comfortable living environment and would ask all drivers to be thoughtful when parking.