



## NEWS RELEASE

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### ***FEEL BETTER WITH A HOME HEALTH CHECK***

Homeowners in Wolverhampton are being offered a free home health check as part of a joint campaign launched by Black Country Housing Group and the city council.

Wolverhampton's Care & Repair service, run by Black Country Housing Group, is appealing to homeowners who are struggling to pay for essential home repairs, maintenance or improvements to get in touch. By offering a free home health check, homeowners can use the Kick Start Scheme, which helps them with essential advice on benefits, repairs and improvements as well as access to financial experts to help fund the improvements.

Supported by Wolverhampton City Council, the scheme also has a range of affordable home improvement loans for homeowners on a low income so they can carry out essential repairs.

The campaign message 'Give your home a health check' can be seen in GP surgeries and pharmacies to encourage homeowners to give Care & Repair a call.

Lesa Kingham, Head of Care & Repair at Black Country Housing Group, said: "As an accredited Home Improvement Agency, we've helped thousands of people over the years to install new kitchens, bathrooms and windows, as well as replacing old and leaky roofs to make their homes warm, safe and secure. This latest campaign aims to remind homeowners that their home can have a major impact on their health and wellbeing."

Dr Helen Hibbs, a general practitioner at Parkfield Medical Centre and Ettingshall Medical Centre, is backing the campaign and displaying the materials in her surgery. She said: "Living with damp, a leaky roof or a kitchen that's falling to pieces makes people feel really under the weather and can contribute to ill health. On top of that, worrying about paying for the repairs can also cause distress, especially in this economic climate."

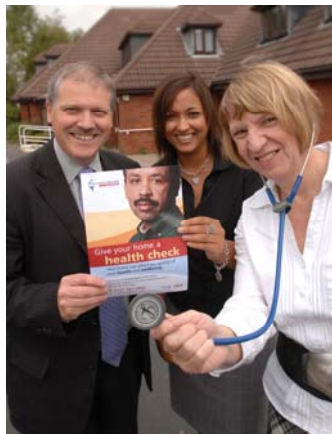
Chris Hale, Head of Housing Market Intervention, said: "This scheme is designed to help homeowners in our city. They can find out more by contacting a member of the Care & Repair team who will then visit them at their home to discuss their options, provide access to financial experts and help identify the repairs that are needed as part of the free home health check."

He added: "Care & Repair will also provide homeowners with peace of mind by only working with approved builders and installers, so they can be sure that the work done is of a high standard and value for money. A member of the team will even be there on site to make sure the job goes well and to take the worry out of the repairs."

Depending on personal circumstances, home improvement loans are funded by the city council to help people on low incomes and for those who often can't get credit elsewhere.

Adrian Phillips, Director of Public Health for Wolverhampton Primary Care Trust, said: "This campaign is quite specific and aims to raise awareness amongst homeowners that help and support is available in Wolverhampton. It also helps strengthen the links between health and housing to improve people's overall health and wellbeing."

Care & Repair can be contacted on 0121 561 3845 or [www.bcha.co.uk](http://www.bcha.co.uk)



**Caption:** Chris Hale (left), Head of Housing Market Intervention for Wolverhampton City Council; Leanne Patel (centre), Senior Caseworker for Black Country Housing Group; and Dr Helen Hibbs, a GP at Parkfield Medical Centre and Ettingshall Medical Centre help spread the new free home health check message that can be seen in GP surgeries and pharmacies

**ENDS**

**For more information contact Mark Symington or Simon Hale  
at Quicksilver PR on 01564 773366.**

## **Notes to Editors**

### **BCHG**

BCHG (Black Country Housing Group) is a community regeneration agency, with housing at its heart, working in Sandwell, Dudley, Wolverhampton and Birmingham.

The Group specialises in urban renewal, economic and social regeneration, through building new affordable homes, providing care and health services to communities and supporting social enterprise and financial inclusion.

It is landlord to tenants in more than 1740 homes and has over 30 years experience in providing quality homes and support services for families, couples, single people, older people and those with special needs.

The Group has established an innovative environmental consultancy service, e<sup>2</sup>S, which advises on sustainability issues for landlords, house builders and public sector organisations.

As well as being a landlord, through its Care and Repair team BCHG provides a home improvement service to the councils of Sandwell, Dudley, Birmingham and Wolverhampton. This helps vulnerable people access funding and contractors to make improvements to their home.

**[www.bcha.co.uk](http://www.bcha.co.uk)**