

## **PRESS RELEASE**

28 April 2009

### **Staff in South Lakeland get top tips on how to deal with anti-social behaviour**

Two free half day conferences on how to deal with anti-social tenants took place in Kendal Town Hall on Monday 27 April 2009. The conference, hosted by South Lakes Housing and South Lakeland Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnership, was attended by over 60 front line staff from a wide range of agencies, including housing providers, police, youth service providers, local authority staff and fire and rescue service.

The keynote speaker was Bill Pitt MBE, Director of ASB Action Ltd who provided the latest information on the following topics:

- The Government's messages on the role of social landlords and their partners
- Ways to support victims of anti-social behaviour
- Working in partnership to deal with youth nuisance on mixed tenure estates
- Managing mental health related anti-social behaviour
- How to gather evidence

**Mary Dowling Chairman of the Board South Lakes Housing**, said: "A small number of households are typically responsible for a high proportion of anti-social behaviour which can impact on the lives of many within the community. At South Lakes Housing, we focus on nipping anti-social behaviour in the bud through early intervention work, such as warning letters, referrals to mediation, acceptable behaviour contracts and community projects such as the recently built Multi Use Games Areas (MUGAs) built across the district.

The aim of the conference is to show frontline staff how we can make their lives, and the lives of the neighbours and communities affected by anti-social behaviour, much easier. They will discover that support is available to them and that working with us and our partners, they can help make communities safer and stronger."

**Andy Shine, Chair of the South Lakeland Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership**, said: "Although the number of incidents of anti social behaviour has reduced over the last 3 years, the behaviour of a small number continues to have a disproportionate impact on the

lives of others, across South Lakeland. We believe working in partnership gives us an opportunity to tackle this behaviour head on and welcome this conference for front line staff, who know first hand about the real impact of anti social behaviour in our communities.

We are all working to the same goal, to keep South Lakeland communities safe, without threat or fear of crime”

### **Notes to Editor:**

1. South Lakes Housing is the Arms Length Management Organisation (ALMO) set up by South Lakeland District Council from April 2004 and manages a full range of management and maintenance services for over 3,500 tenants and leaseholders, and employs approximately 140 staff.

2. The government's Audit Commission Inspectors awarded the ALMO a 'good' 2 star with excellent prospects rating in its recent inspection.

3. Anti-Social Behaviour is defined by the Housing Act 1996 as conduct which:

- Is capable of causing nuisance or annoyance to any person AND Directly or indirectly affects the housing management functions of a relevant landlord OR
- Consists of using, threatening to use, housing accommodation owned or managed by a relevant landlord, for an unlawful purpose,

4. Bill Pitt has over 30 year's experience of housing management with Manchester City Council. He was responsible for setting up Manchester's Nuisance Strategy Group in 1995, established to tackle the serious problems on the City's housing estates. In recognition of his services in tackling ASB, Bill was awarded an MBE in the 2006 New Years Honours.

5. Bill was a member of the Social Exclusion Unit's Policy Action Team on ASB established by the Government to look at ways of ensuring public services work together positively to create a better social environment. Since July 2004, Bill has worked as an expert practitioner with the Anti-Social Behaviour Unit and subsequently, with the Respect Task Force at the Home Office.

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Pictured left to right, Cllr Andy Shine, Supt Andy Towler, Bill Pitt MBE and Mary Dowling.