

# Wealden and Eastbourne Lifeline

Annual Review 2006/07



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Wealden and  
Eastbourne Lifeline



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# Contents

- 3 Chairman's Report
- 4 Managing Director's Report
- 5 Introduction to WEL
- 6 Range of Services
- 7 Our Customers
- 9 Summary of Progress
- 10 Future Priorities



# Chairman's Report

This year has been one of consolidation and innovation, and the Board have had to monitor our financial and operational performance very closely as we have attempted to develop our core business and introduce an expanded telecare service.

We are in the process of bidding for corporate monitoring contracts at the time of writing and we are aware of the need to monitor and maintain high standards of service to all our customers. As our telecare services expand, and at the present time they are doing well within our current installation capacity, the call centre will play an increasingly important role in care management.

We have also introduced our Mobile Response Service working on a pilot study in partnership with South East Coast Ambulance Service to provide a falls response service in the Eastbourne area with encouraging early results.

Other initiatives which we are developing are in the fields of lone worker protection, care monitoring to enable care providers to remotely monitor and manage the delivery of domiciliary care, out of hours telephone services for local authorities and private/voluntary sector concerns, and telehealth which is an exciting innovation for the home which monitors for chronic heart disease,

asthma, obesity and diabetes. We hope to set up a pilot study in the near future with assistance from the local Primary Care Trust and GPs.

The future is promising and to accommodate our aspirations we are continuing to look for new premises.

Finally I must thank all our staff for all the hard work they have put in during the year; in particular our MD who has been tireless and good humoured in promoting WEL's interests. My thanks also to my fellow Board members and a farewell thank you to Councillor Ann Murray and Councillor Anna Monaghan who stood down from the Board this year.



**Leonard A. Greene**  
Chairman

**The future is promising and to accommodate our aspirations we are continuing to look for new premises.**

# Managing Director's Report

This has been our first full year of trading and a period of rapid development. Everyone in the Company has responded to new challenges and opportunities with tremendous enthusiasm and commitment working together as a close knit dedicated team.

We have achieved beyond expectations and have established a promising platform for future success.

#### Highlights include:

- Delivering and improving high quality services evidenced by the two satisfaction surveys we have conducted so far
- Developing and implementing innovative new services
- Winning 2 major contracts: our appointment to the NHS Purchasing and Supply Agency (PASA) National Framework Agreement (NFA) and our contract with East Sussex County Council to develop a whole system telecare service
- Introducing 200 new products and services, all of which were tested for quality and value for money through the NFA tender processes
- Attracting national attention and introducing a recognisable new brand image to match our new profile
- Helping key partners to develop their retirement housing services

All this has been achieved without any increase in our standard weekly charge to customers for the fourth year in a row; four years during which we have absorbed significant inflationary pressures through efficiency savings. Furthermore we have achieved an operating surplus for the second successive year.

However we should not take the future for granted. Eastbourne and Wealden coming together has given us a foothold in a demanding and competitive market but if we do not continue to improve in all areas we will not succeed.

In the coming year we will be increasing our staffing cover throughout the 24 hour period which will place increased focus on training and staff development. We will be implementing new services, improving existing services and fulfilling our new contractual obligations. It is also likely we will move to a new operating centre; a key stage in our strategy for growth and development. So 2007/08 will be another challenging year!

I would like to thank our Chairman, Board and colleagues in all departments for their support and encouragement during the year. I am sure that we will be able to look back again in twelve months time and celebrate the achievement of more key milestones in our development.



**Mark Bannister**  
Managing Director

# Introduction to WEL

Wealden and Eastbourne Lifeline (WEL) is a not for profit company limited by guarantee established by Wealden District Council and Eastbourne Borough Council in February 2005 to facilitate the merger and externalisation of the Lifeline services previously operated by the respective Councils.

With 40 years combined experience of providing round the clock reassurance to vulnerable people and the people that care for them, we are now a leading provider of telecare based support services.

From our monitoring and response centre we take care of over 12,000 vulnerable people who are linked to the centre through their sheltered housing emergency call systems or individual lifeline telephones which can be installed in any home with a telephone line.

## Mission Statement

To provide responsive, high quality services that provide good value for money and meet the needs of the communities and individuals we serve, especially elderly and vulnerable people, helping them to live and work in a safe and secure environment

## Statement of Values

- Putting customers first
- Achieving continuous improvement through listening and learning
- Promoting equality and diversity
- Working in Partnership
- Working to benefit the community

## Corporate Objectives

- To provide innovative high quality services tailored to the special requirements of each individual that promote safety, security, choice and independence and enable people, particularly the elderly and vulnerable, to enjoy the best quality of life possible.
- To achieve sustainable growth and strong finances
- To be recognised as a leading national provider of telecare and telehealth services
- To work in partnership with our customers and suppliers, local government, the NHS, voluntary organisations and the private sector to develop services and improve standards of care and support
- To ensure that our services are competitive and responsive to the changing requirements of our customers by achieving continuous improvement and development
- To promote our services and expand our customer base by pursuing an active marketing strategy

- To improve community safety by providing services that aim to reduce crime and fear of crime, reduce accidents in the home and provide support for lone workers
- To support the community by providing an effective and efficient out of hours telephone contact service for local authorities and housing providers
- To provide support to local authorities in co-ordinating the response to major incidents
- To be an employer of choice supporting the personal and professional development of our staff
- To ensure that the company is effectively governed and managed in accordance with the regulatory framework and good practice

# Range of Services

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## Our principal activities are:

- 24 hour telecare and telehealth monitoring and response service co-ordinated through WEL's contact centre, located in Eastbourne.
- Supply, installation and maintenance of community alarms and advanced telecare devices such as smoke detectors, fall detectors, flood detectors and medical alerts.

## WEL also provides other valued community services including:

- Visiting and check calls for sheltered housing residents
- Outreach and floating support
- Lone worker protection
- Out-of-hours contact centre for housing providers & Local Authorities.
- Telephone answering services

Throughout the evening, weekend, Bank Holidays and during the night, we assist residents of the Wealden, Eastbourne and Rother Districts to resolve a wide range of issues ranging from homelessness to noise nuisance. We also process reports of problems on the highways on behalf of East Sussex County Council Highways Department.

## Telecare

Applying state of the art technology we are now able to provide our customers with enhanced safety and security through our advanced telecare range.

We offer a range of different options all supported by our high quality 24 hour response service:

- Home safety sensors which warn the user and centre about smoke, hypothermia risks, high temperatures, fire, water, gas leaks and carbon monoxide levels
- Systems that can remind people to take medication
- Monitors that detect movement or inactivity enabling us to detect possible health and welfare issues or respond to intruder alerts
- Sophisticated sensors and equipment that can be used to monitor lifestyle and enable people to control their environment

## Telehealth

Telehealth is the remote monitoring of vital signs, allowing people with chronic health conditions like congestive heart failure, asthma, diabetes and chronic obstructive airways disease to monitor their condition in their own home and for medical professionals to review this data from their medical practice.

We are working in partnership with Cardiocom a leading US provider of telehealth equipment and services to develop a market leading telehealth solution for the UK market. Telehealth enables people to be discharged early from hospital, prevents hospital admissions and cuts down on visits to hospitals and health centres. It also provides regular and timely information about the patient's condition.

# Our Customers

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## Customer Focus

The Company has a diverse customer base and a range of contracts with different corporate and individual interests. The main categories of customers are:

- Individual subscribers
- Corporate clients under block contracts (mainly housing providers and local authorities) for monitoring and response, out of hours telephone services and lone worker protection.

For the organisations to whom we provide services, our main priority is to deliver a high quality service that meets the needs of their residents and staff. We are committed to working in close partnership to enable client organisations to improve and develop their services.

## The Best Help and Support for You

Understanding and responding to the personal requirements of our customers is central to our philosophy of care. Everyone is given a choice of options and we take time with each individual to ensure that their package of equipment and services is suited to their specific requirements.

Some key facts about our customers:

- 75% of the individuals we serve are over retirement age
- 90% are lone person households
- 70% suffer from a long term chronic condition
- 25% are affected by a sensory impairment
- Our customers tell us that they want high quality home centred services tailored to their individual requirements, enabling them to remain independent and enjoy the best quality of life possible.

## New Customers

During the 12 months under review we have welcomed more than 900 new subscribers to our telecare services.

## Customer Satisfaction

More than 98.5% report that they are satisfied or very satisfied with our service.

## Equality and Diversity

A copy of WEL's policy is available on request. This makes it clear that as an employer and a service provider we aim to avoid discrimination against anyone on the grounds of race, gender, religion, disability or sexual orientation.

Many of the new products we have introduced through the NHS PASA National Framework Agreement, such as the SRS Possum Environmental Controls Systems are specifically designed to assist people with special communication requirements to be able to benefit from our services.



# Improving and Developing Summary of Progress

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- During the year we have made significant investments to enable us to improve and develop our service.
- We have carried out extensive training, research and development to enable us to offer a much wider range of telecare equipment to our customers. As a result we have been commissioned by East Sussex County Council to deliver a countywide telecare service funded by the national Preventative Technology Grant.
- In our monitoring centre too our operators have had to learn about the new sensors and the protocols for responding to them. Indeed our success in implementing new telecare solutions owes much to the fact that there is excellent communication between our installation team and response centre team who are working closely together on a day to day basis.
- In June 2006 WEL was one of 15 providers of telecare services and equipment to be appointed by the NHS Purchasing and Supply Agency (NHS PASA) as a supply partner in the National Framework Agreement (NFA) for telecare. The development of the NFA was promoted by the Department of Health and Department of Trade and Industry to assist in the implementation of a major government initiative, "Building Telecare in England", the aim of which is to enable local authorities and health services to develop telecare services across the country. The programme is supported by the £80

- million Preventative Technology Grant. Our 4 year contract with NHS PASA was won following a rigorous EU compliant tendering exercise sponsored by the Department of Trade and Industry and the Department of Health. WEL was one of only three providers selected to supply products and services across all the framework categories.
- We successfully tendered more than 200 products and services for inclusion in the NFA and these are now all listed on the NHS Electronic Catalogue. PASA tested our equipment options and service proposals for quality and value for money; a rigorous process that included assessments by the NHS Centre for Evidence Based Purchasing and the Medical and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency. The NFA team has won the CIPS Supply Management Best Public Procurement Project Award 2007.
- Through our PASA contract we established strategic partnerships with Tunstall Telecom, Cardiocom, Rother Homes Lifeline, Cirrus Communication Systems, SRS Possum and Bosch Care Solutions, all providers of high quality telecare and telehealth equipment and services.
- We employed leading telecare consultants, HPS, to audit our telecare operations and produce an improvement plan.
- In February 2007 we launched an innovative Community Falls Response

- Service. Our team are qualified as Community Responders and have received training in dynamic risk assessment, first aid and lifting and handling using specialist lifting equipment. They are working very closely with the South East Coast Ambulance Service. The project is funded through the Local Area Agreement.
- We have worked with the Supporting People team and key partners in the housing sector to help re-shape retirement housing services in order to provide more flexible models of support and care aimed at enabling residents to maintain their independence, health and well being.
- In January 2006 our contact centre was awarded Telecare Services Association (TSA) accreditation for a further three years following a rigorous assessment carried out by TSA auditors.
- We have worked with external consultants to improve our financial systems and forward planning.
- In order to ensure that people are aware of the benefits of the services we offer we have made a significant investment in information and awareness raising. We have established the WELbeing brand and the WELbeing website which provides detailed information about our telecare and telehealth range.

# Improving and Developing Future Priorities

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## Priorities for 2007/08 carried forward from 2006/07

Although it is evident that the organisation has made great strides forward during the year we were not able to achieve all our objectives:

- 1 Secure new premises to facilitate monitoring centre capacity
- 2 Achieve TSA Part 2 and 3 TSA accreditation

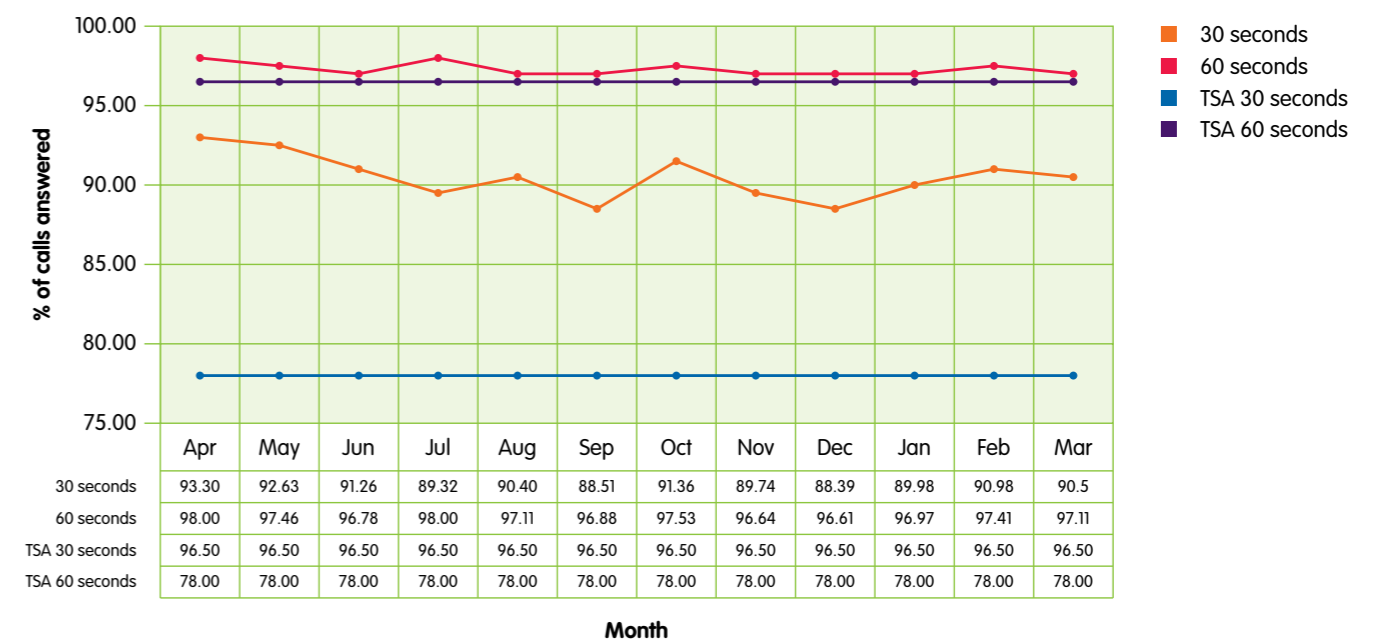
## New Priorities for 2007/08

- 3 Build further capacity in the contact centre by increasing staffing levels throughout the 24 hour period
- 4 Implement a Countywide telecare service
- 5 Deliver the Falls Response Service
- 6 Develop a telehealth service in partnership with Cardiocom
- 7 Develop Care Management solutions in partnership with Over C

## Key Performance Indicators

- Between April 2006 and March 2007 we responded to 150,000 alerts from residents connected to our centre.
- We helped 6000 East Sussex residents to resolve issues ranging from noise nuisance and lost dogs to highway problems
- We rectified 100% of life critical faults to Lifeline equipment within 24 hours
- We achieved 100% of mobile response call outs within 45 minutes

WEL Life Critical Call Response Times 2006/07



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