

## **Social Development Update-October to December 2010**

The NHT's Social Development Unit recently met with residents of Providence Heights in order to encourage on time mortgage payments, and to promote their participation in self-development activities. Also, residents of the NHT Scheme at Palm Grove Courts beautify their community through NHT sponsored groups. At the same time, a number of NHT sponsored environmental groups entered a painting competition put on by the United Nations to celebrate The International Year of Biodiversity.

### **The NHT meets with Providence Heights residents**



The NHT's Social Development Unit arranged a community meeting with 167 residents of Providence Heights, St. James during the month of October. They were sensitized about the need to keep up to date with their mortgage payments, and of the NHT's policies regarding arrears.

The importance of keeping up to date with mortgage payments as a means of protecting the funds provided by NHT contributors, was emphasized by the NHT's Social Development officers. They also informed the Providence Heights residents that by doing this, they would be meeting their social responsibilities concerning the scheme. The officers further advised the group that putting houses on auction because of non-payment is a last resort only, as it is better for them to work closely with the Trust to ensure that they remain in good standing, even if they have some payment challenges.

The residents of the Providence Heights who are in good standing regarding the NHT mortgage payments, were recognized during the meeting. Dave Allen of COMMAND has agreed to provide a proposal to work with the NHT regarding counseling services for those challenged to pay mortgages. The officers also advised the residents of Self-Development Training projects sponsored by the NHT for the residents. Also, the NHT partnered with the Registrar General Department (RGD) the National Health fund (NHF) and PATH to organize an Opportunities Fair for the residents in their community on November 28.

The Providence Heights Scheme is a product of the Relocation 2000 Project, which has provided over 319 units for persons who previously lived in squatter communities in Barracks Road/Railway Lane in St. James. In September 1999, the NHT in keeping with its mission to provide housing particularly for lower income persons, was given the responsibility to identify and develop alternative sites, and to relocate persons living in squatter communities in St. James and St. Ann. This project has provided improved housing and proper sanitation facilities for these residents through the relocation.

### **NHT sponsored Environmental Club gives Palm Grove Court a facelift**

Clean-up action at Palm Grove Court



The Palm Grove Court Housing Scheme at 231 Spanish Town Road got a face-lift on Saturday, October 16. This clean-up exercise was organized by the Scheme's NHT sponsored Environmental Club which partnered with the resident Youth Club and Strata Corporation. They will continue to beautify the area by planting trees.

### **Environmental protection awareness**

The United Nations General Assembly has declared 2010 the International Year of Biodiversity, and has sponsored a painting competition through the United Nations Environment Programme Caribbean Regional Coordinating Unit (UNEP-CAR/RCU) to mark the occasion. Six (6) NHT sponsored environmental Clubs participated in the competition. The clubs were:

- Cherry Gardens

- Caribbean Palms
- Delacree Park
- Unions Estates
- Royal Place and
- Falmouth Gardens

The theme of the painting competition was “Protecting the Biodiversity of our Caribbean Sea”, and children across Jamaica, from ages eight to fourteen, were invited to participate. A number of activities have been planned globally for children to increase their awareness of ecosystems and get them involved in their protection.