



## Annual Residents' Report 2009



**Fortunegate**  
Community Housing

# Annual Resid

It is important that our residents know how we are performing when it comes to the services we provide. That's why this issue includes some key information about how we did last year. We hope this shows just how committed we are to continuously improving the services that you receive.

## *A bit about us*

Fortunegate Community Housing (FCH) was formed in 1998 following the transfer of a large number of Brent Council properties. FCH owns and manages around 1,400 rental properties across Brent. We are one of three member companies within Catalyst Housing Group, but still retain our individuality and independence. We run our services to suit the specific needs of our residents.

## **The Board**

Chris O'Leary (Chair)

Brigid Neal

Rosalie Fitzgerald-Walsh

Paul Vincent

Nike Ogundana

Paula Fance

Ezi Ogbonna

Peter O'Callaghan

Stephen Bright

Cllr Janice Long Cllr Chunilal Hirani



*Our new grounds maintenance team*

## Improving services

### **Lean Systems**

By using this continuous improvement tool, we have become more customer focused in our approach to improving services for residents, as the Lean System approach allows us to shape our services around what residents want. So far we have used the tool to review rent collection, and we are now committed to ensuring that all residents know how much rent to pay, when to pay and how to pay. We will next be reviewing how we re-let empty properties.

### **Reduced rent arrears**

We have continued to cut rent arrears in 2009 in order to ensure more funds are available to maintain FCH properties. It is essential that we have the means to carry out the necessary repairs to properties and provide the services that benefit the community. The time it takes to re-let empty properties has also improved, which has helped to maximise our rental income.

### **Improved relationships**

We have developed stronger relationships with our stakeholders in Brent – including the Safer Neighbourhood Teams and Brent Council – to take steps to reduce and deal with anti-social behaviour. Notices of Seeking Possession have been served on residents where warnings have not been heeded. This has resulted in an improvement in behaviour by the residents concerned.

# Residents' Report



*The local community gets together during the Way Forward project*

## Improving places

We have made the following improvements to our responsive repairs service over the last year:

- Most residents are now offered an appointment when they report a repair.
- There are a high level of job completions that are 'right first time'. This minimises inconvenience and supports our commitment to deliver a responsive repairs service that is of high quality.
- We have reduced the target times for repairs completions to an average of five days across all repair priority categories.

Our property services team has continued to improve the preparation and distribution of service charge accounts. This is evidenced by the small volume of queries on the actual accounts from our leaseholders and shared owners. We will also continue to look for efficiencies in the procurement of services to ensure that service charge costs are kept as low as possible.

It has been a challenging year for the estate services team. Although they were delivering a good service, there was room for improvement. That's why we bought grounds maintenance in-house. This involved terminating the Vista contract and welcoming the three Vista employees into FCH. Together we are continuing to identify and implement new service improvements.

## Involving residents

Our community investment team has had a busy year and their achievements include:

- The Elders Forum became a fully constituted group that has a committee, and is independently seeking and applying for funding.
- Four residents completed an in-house accredited course in youth work and successfully received an NVQ Level 3.
- We are supporting one resident in setting up a social enterprise business by paying for them to attend the school of social enterprise to expand their business.
- As part of the Way Forward Project, we worked with young local residents to help deliver a summer holiday project for young people and offered them training in youth work to further their skills for next year's project.

We have also been working hard to improve the financial performance of the Unity Centre. A new business plan has been drafted, which takes into account the community's needs and wants. The centre's staffing structure was changed in 2009, and we feel that 2010 is going to be an exciting year as we take the first steps towards turning the Unity into a hub of social enterprise.

## Facts and figures for 2009

### Data provided at:

31 March  
2007

31 March  
2008

31 March  
2009

#### Properties managed

1336

1414

1398

#### Voids and lettings performance

Average re-let turnaround times (days)

65

51

99

Total number of dwellings vacant

13

61

6

Dwellings vacant

0.97%

4.31%

0.43%

#### Rent collection

Rent collection as percentage of rent due

98.89%

98.14%

103.12%

Current residents arrears as percentage of rent roll

12.36%

12.09%

9.97%

#### Resident satisfaction

Status 2004

Status 2008

Satisfaction with their last repair

62.60%

86%

Satisfaction with the service provided by their landlord

63.80%

78%

Satisfaction that views are being taken into account

60.30%

63%

#### Reactive repairs

Number of emergency repairs completed

128

276

328

Number of urgent repairs completed

106

500

826

Number of routine repairs completed

4294

3819

4292

Emergency repairs completed within target

100%

98.19%

98.78%

Urgent repairs completed within target

95.28%

97.00%

94.67%

Routine repairs completed within target

98.95%

97.16%

95.50%

Homes with valid gas safety certificate

99%

97.03%

97.86%

