



Scarecrow fever

**Contagious creativity
spreads in
Blackbird Leys**



Plus...

The apprentice, page 3

'Hello, Catalyst Housing', page 4

Up close with our new chairs, page 6

Welcome to the summer issue of *Housing Matters*



This will be our last *Housing Matters*, but don't worry we're not going to stop producing it, we're just renaming it and we want residents to help us decide on a new name (see page 5).

Over the next few months, our magazine name won't be the only thing that's new. As Catalyst Communities HA gradually joins together with the other housing associations in Catalyst Housing Group, you will start noticing some changes to the way we work.

As we join together, I will be taking up a new role as Catalyst's director of customer services. My job will be to lead on improving services to the people who matter the most to us, our residents.

As a first step, we have set up two local boards, one for the South East and one for West London. These boards will be crucial in improving our local services in these areas. On pages 6 and 7, we have featured an interview with the chairs of our local boards so you can find out a bit more about them.

We are also changing the way we answer the phone (see page 5), so from 4 July we have changed our greeting to 'Hello, Catalyst Housing'.

As one organisation, we hope to be able to provide better homes, better services and a better future for all our customers. Please rest assured that these changes will not affect your tenancy, your rights or your rent.

Best wishes,

John Foxall
Managing Director

Catalyst Housing's first chair

We are delighted to welcome Eurostar's Richard Brown as the new chair of Catalyst Housing, our new single organisation, which will be officially up and running in September.

Richard has had more than 30 years experience in transport, spending eight years as Eurostar chief executive before becoming chair. He brings with him extensive chairing experience with a strong focus on employees, customers and change management.

Commenting on his appointment, Richard said: 'I am fortunate and delighted to be chairing a housing association that is in such good shape given the challenging environment in which we now work. I will be visiting many Catalyst schemes over the period ahead and I look forward to working with residents and resident board members as we seek to continuously improve our customer service.'

We would also like to thank the current chair of Catalyst Housing Group, Dame Mavis McDonald DCB, for her terrific leadership over the past six years.

Mavis, who has been a great champion of resident involvement says: 'I have enjoyed my time immensely at Catalyst and I am proud that it demonstrates the strength of housing associations – quality housing and services rooted in real engagement with residents.'



Richard Brown, new chair of Catalyst Housing

The apprentice: *you're hired!*

Forget about who Lord Sugar's new apprentice is going to be – why not become an apprentice yourself?

Our charitable arm, Catalyst Gateway, is launching a brand new apprenticeship scheme. We are looking for six housing apprentices to take part in a year-long placement with the potential for formal NVQ qualifications.

Apprenticeship placements can often lead to qualifications and to full-time jobs – as 23-year-old Anand Kahar knows well.

Anand started his apprenticeship with us as an income officer, which involved ensuring residents pay their rent on time so they don't build up arrears. 'I wasn't really expecting much. I took the job so that I could get some accounting experience,' he said.

In the role, Anand took on an additional project which involved analysing data, and he was so good at it that we decided to hire him in that position!

Anand is now working as a housing project assistant, which involves producing performance statistics and ensuring we are meeting housing regulations.

Knowing that he is helping to make a difference to people's lives is one of the best parts of Anand's job. 'At Catalyst, the focus is on customers and ensuring they get the best possible service. By analysing our performance, I hope to highlight the things we do well and also how we can improve.'

Catalyst Gateway is offering apprenticeships in housing, and also in youth work, business administration and construction.

Interested? Contact Amanda Leeuwerke on enquiries@catalystgateway.org.uk or 020 8832 3377.



‘Hello, Catalyst Housing’



You will probably start noticing some changes as we start joining together the different companies within Catalyst Housing Group, our parent company. The first of these will be how we answer the phone, as we are creating one customer services department.

So, from 4 July instead of 'Hello, Catalyst Communities Housing Association', we will be answering the phone with 'Hello, Catalyst Housing'. Nothing else will change for now, but in the near future we hope to open our customer services centres from 8am to 8pm, Monday to Friday and on Saturday mornings. We will let you know closer to the time when this will happen.

With the creation of one customer services department, we hope that in time we will be able to answer 80% of all queries first time around. This also means that our neighbourhood managers will be able to spend less time on the phone and more time with you, our customers.

We are still keeping our local offices in Ealing and Oxford, each with its own separate customer services centre, so you can still come and speak to us. Alternatively, you can make an appointment with your neighbourhood manager to come and speak to you at your home.

Please remember that your landlord won't change as a result of our organisational restructure, but the name of your landlord will change to Catalyst Housing. This change will have no affect on your tenancy, rent or rights.

If you feel unsure about anything, please contact the customer services centre in your local area (contact details on back page) or email anyquestions@chg.org.uk

Pay your rent as usual

Our finance department is working hard to ensure you can still pay your rent and/or service charge through a range of ways once we become Catalyst Housing.

In the meantime, please continue to make payments in the way you normally do. We are doing our best to make sure that the change to Catalyst Housing is smooth for you.

If there are any changes to your current payment method, we will let you know.

A new name for *Housing Matters*

With the changes in our organisational structure, the curtains close for *Housing Matters*. But don't worry we won't stop producing it, we're just renaming it and we want your help.

That's why we're asking our residents and staff to suggest a new name for *Housing Matters*. The chief executive of Catalyst Housing Group, Rod Cahill will then pick a new name for the publication and the person who suggests the winning name will win an iPod nano worth over £130!

Please send your suggestions to Parveen Agnihotri by emailing parveen.agnihotri@chg.org.uk or calling 020 8832 3167 by 19 August.



Resident satisfaction survey

Thanks to everyone who filled in the resident satisfaction surveys that we sent in May. Your views will help us measure customer satisfaction and help us identify key strengths and weaknesses. We will then be able to target these areas and improve our services.

Snap Surveys, working on our behalf, sent out the surveys to a random selection of residents and we had no control over who was picked. If you didn't receive the survey, but would still like

to give us your views, please fill in an online feedback form on our website at www.chg.org.uk. You can also fill in a suggestion form in your local office.

We will be publishing the results of the survey in the next issue of our residents' magazine, so watch this space!

Local boards, local services, local people

After an extensive recruitment process, we are happy to announce that we've recruited local residents to our new local boards.

Residents on the West London local board are David Hicks, Syreeta Roberts, Julianna Kennedy, Daniel Light and Jeff Rooke. On the South East local board we have Glynn Sparks, Jadranka Cvitanusic, Ian Morgan and Tanya Prescott.

Local boards will take over responsibility for monitoring local services from October. This is when we will have

finished our organisational change and become Catalyst Housing. We will be providing more information about the new local boards in our next issue.

You can read our interview with Asit Acharya, chair of the South East local board, and Paul Evans, chair of the West London board, below. As local board chairs, both Asit and Paul will also sit on the main Catalyst board.

Asit Acharya, chair of the South East local board

Asit brings a wealth of housing experience to Catalyst, having worked in the housing sector for over 25 years. In that time, he has managed housing services across London and the South East.

Asit studied law and initially started off advising people in housing need or threatened with homelessness. Since then he has been a director in a number of housing associations including ASRA and Guinness Trust.

In his role as chair, Asit will be working with other board members, residents and staff to review local services and local concerns, and act as the link with the main board to ensure that these are reflected in our priorities.

'The other local board members and I will help to promote Catalyst Housing and form strong partnerships in the areas we work in, so that we can continue to grow and provide services to more people.'

Asit knows the importance of customer feedback in improving customer services. That's why he's so pleased that our local boards include so many residents. 'I have always worked closely with residents' groups and am really pleased with the commitment and skills that the resident members will bring to the local board.'

The local boards will be key to improving local services believes Asit. 'We will look at local priorities for services and improvements to your homes, then try and ensure that the limited resources we have are spent wisely and fairly.'



Asit Acharya, chair of South East local board

'It's important that we are there when you need us, especially for our most vulnerable residents, and that we stick to our promises'

Paul Evans,

Chair of the West London local board

Paul is something of a regeneration expert. He is a director of UK Regeneration, and was previously responsible for regeneration and planning in the London Boroughs of Southwark and Tower Hamlets. Before that he was the lead on regeneration in central government.

Over the years, Paul has worked on many large regeneration schemes including the Shard of Glass at London Bridge, which will be the tallest building in Europe when complete, the £1.5 billion Elephant and Castle regeneration, and the Alyesbury estate in Southwark, one of the largest housing estates in Europe.

At Catalyst, Paul will be drawing on his first-hand understanding of local and central government to speak out about housing and development issues.

As the chair of the West London local board, Paul will be overseeing the services we provide for London residents and striving to improve them. 'People fundamentally want us to get things right, fix them when they go wrong, and do it well', he says.

He will also be on the lookout for development opportunities so we can provide more homes. 'I will build up good relationships with local councils, so they can understand better what Catalyst can bring to regeneration projects, and trust us to deliver high quality homes.'

Paul is committed to ensuring that the creation of local boards will improve services for local people. 'The company boards spent a lot of time doing formal business, which was inevitably needed. With the main board taking that responsibility, local boards can devote time and energy to residents' day to day issues on our services and homes. By listening to you, we can improve.'



Paul Evans, chair of the West London local board

'I will be aiming to influence housing policies on local, regional and national levels. This will then allow us to provide better homes and better services for local people'

News homes in Ealing Broadway

Are you over 55 and currently living in a Catalyst home in the London Borough of Ealing?

Is your home too big for you because you have extra bedrooms?

If the answer to all these questions is 'yes', then why not consider moving into one of our new homes at Dickens Yard in Ealing Broadway?

Developer St George is now constructing one and two bedroom homes above ground level shops at Dickens Yard. The new homes will be ready to move into next year and all include lift access, secure entry systems and good insulation.

So, if you are interested in moving into one of these homes, please contact us on 020 8832 3298.



g15 Move around London

Do you need to move home for work or because you want to move to a smaller home?

A new project called g15 London moves is making it easier for London residents to move around the city, while keeping similar terms to their current tenancy. The large London housing associations have developed this scheme together. It is open to any tenants who need to move for work reasons, or who want to move to a smaller home.

To register for the scheme you need to be in one of the following four groups:

1. Unemployed with a firm job offer in writing
2. In full-time education or training linked to a firm job offer in writing
3. In work, but finding that the distance from your home to work is making it hard to keep your job
4. Considering moving to a smaller home with fewer bedrooms

You'll also need to have:

- been a secure or assured tenant for at least a year
- a good rental payment record and kept your home in good condition
- had no reports of anti-social behaviour in the last 12 months about anyone in your household

To register for the scheme, please visit www.g15londonmoves.org.uk

Dee Park: 'top notch!' DEE PARK

PARTNERSHIP



'Top notch' is what one resident said about the homes at Dee Park

Muriel Cook will be moving into one of the new homes we are building on the estate. In June she joined local dignitaries to celebrate the progress of the development, and to visit some of the show homes.

'The finish and design of the homes was marvellous. I can't wait to move in later on this year,' she says.

This is not the first time the Dee Park regeneration has been praised. It also caught the eye of Communities Secretary Eric Pickles in May who was 'particularly impressed' with the project. During his visit, he saw how local people working on the site were taking great pride in building homes for local people.

Work started just over a year ago on the £150 million project to transform the forty-year-old estate into a modern housing development.

The first part of the project, due to complete in 2013, will deliver 264 new homes. 140 of the homes will be available for private sale and 124 for social rent through Catalyst, including 60 extra care flats for elderly people.



Eric Pickles (centre) visits Dee Park - picture courtesy of the Reading Post

Buy a home at Dee Park

We are now selling one and two-bedroom apartments and two and three-bedroom houses at Dee Park. Fresh and modern, the homes are highly energy efficient, and have an Eco Homes rating of 'excellent'.

Prices, which include all carpets, flooring and kitchen appliances, start at £134,950 for a one-bedroom apartment and from £184,950 for a two-bedroom house.

For more information or to view the show homes, please call 0845 504 5335 or visit www.deepark-living.co.uk





Our young politician

Congratulations to Lawrence Tailapathy for being elected as the London Borough of Ealing's young MP at Youth Parliament

Lawrence lives on the Windmill Park estate, Southall, and his role will be to make links with top politicians, local MPs and councillors to promote young people's views.

If you are one of our young residents and want to talk to Lawrence about a particular issue, he will be holding weekly surgeries on the estate.

To speak to Lawrence, drop in to the Windmill Park Community Centre on Fridays from 5.30pm to 6.30pm.

Summer fun in Hounslow!

The Way Forward, an exciting activity project for young people over 11, starts this summer

The week-long project includes sports days and IT, drama and dance workshops, and will be held at the Southville Community Centre in Feltham.

The fun starts on Monday 25 July and on the final day, Friday 29 July, there will be a grand finale where young people will get the chance to showcase the skills they have learnt.

We will be providing coaches from the Windmill Park and Jasmine estates in Southall, to take residents to and from the community centre.

To book a place on the project or a coach to the event, please contact Michelle Robinson on 020 8832 3208 or michelle.robinson@chg.org.uk

Get on your bike



Do you want to learn how to ride a bike? Or do you have a bike, and need useful tips on how you can look after it?

Then Catalyst Gateway's bike club is just right for you. In partnership with the London Bike Hub, we are holding creative workshops where eager cyclists can learn all things about bikes –including how to make one!

So far, our bike experts have visited the Windmill Park estate in Southall, and their next stop will be the Jasmine estate, also in Southall. You don't have to be living on the estate to come along, as everyone is welcome.

For more details or if you are interested in coming along, please contact Nuria Rodriguez on 020 8832 3233 or nuria.rodriquez@chg.org.uk



Scarecrow fever

Looks like Halloween celebrations came early for residents of Blackbird Leys

We're not talking adults in vampire attire knocking on your door but a day of scarecrow-inspired fundraising. Local residents enjoyed several hours of cutting, pasting, sewing and stuffing at a scarecrow-making workshop in early June.

The scarecrows then went on a lively parade to the Holy Family Church on June 26, where they were greeted by over 300 people, lively music, a bouncy castle and plenty of food and drink.

The idea for the fundraising event came as the estate's Holy Family Church in Cuddeston looked for an artistic outlet to help raise money for a new church roof.

For more details on community involvement projects in the South East, contact Sasha East on 0186 533 4802 or sasha.east@chg.org.uk

The big sweep up

In June, Park View and Waterloo Rise residents joined forces with our staff for a power clean. To beat the dirt, they formed a united front against all things grimy and disposed of them in skips.

On the day, we supplied refreshments to energise the thirsty workers as well as providing equipment and safety tips. Two members of Reading Borough Council's rubbish and recycling team also came along to pass on their waste disposal tips.

Armed with this knowledge, families created teams and competed to find the best sweeper and litter collector, The most energetic and enthusiastic families were rewarded with amazing prizes.

If you would like to clean up your neighbourhood, please contact Sasha East on 0186 533 4802 or sasha.east@chg.org.uk



'Hello' to Morrison...

Our London residents may have noticed that we've changed our repairs and maintenance service provider in London to Morrison.

All Morrison staff carry ID cards with the organisation's distinctive four star logo. Please do not allow a contractor into your home if they are not carrying an ID card. If in doubt, call the number at the back of the ID card to ensure the person is who they say they are.

This change only applies to residents living in London. If you live in the South East, please continue to report all repairs in the usual way.

Please see below to find out who should you call if you would like to report a repair.



If you need any part of this information in large print, Braille, on CD or explained in your own language please contact us the numbers below.

Ky dokument ju jep informacione në lidhje me të rejat për strehim, ngjarjet dhe informacionet locale, nëse ju duhet ndonjë pjesë e këtij informacioni në Braille, në CD, në kasetë ose të shpjegohet në gjuhën tuaj, ju lutemi kontaktoni në numrin poshtë.

এই দস্তাবেজটি বাসস্থান সম্পর্কীয় খবর, ঘটনা ও স্থানীয় তথ্য সম্বন্ধে তথ্য সরবরাহ করবে। যদি আপনি এই তথ্যগুলোর বে কোন একটির সম্বন্ধে বিস্তারিত জানতে চান, অথবা আপনার নিজের ভাষাতে ব্লে, সিডি, অডিও টেপ-এ পেতে চান তাহলে নিম্নলিখিত নম্বরে আমাদের সাথে যোগাযোগ করুন।

本文档提供关于住房新闻、事件和当地信息方面的信息。如果您需要将这些信息的任何部分以大字印刷形式、盲文形式，或通过 CD、磁带，或以您的本国语言的形式提供给您，请通过以下号码与我们联系。

Niniejszy dokument zawiera nowości z rynku mieszkaniowego, informacje o wydarzeniach społecznych oraz doniesienia miejscowe. Jeżeli potrzebujesz aby całość lub część tego tekstu były przedstawione większą czcionką, w języku Braille'a, na nośniku CD, na kasecie audio lub zostały przetłumaczone na Twój język ojczysty, prosimy o kontakt pod numerem podanym niżej.

ਇਹ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਰਾਹਿਮਿੰਗ ਖਬਰਾਂ, ਪ੍ਰੋਗਰਾਮਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਸਥਾਨਕ ਸੂਚਨਾ ਬਾਰੇ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਦਿੰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਸ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਦੇ ਕਿਸੇ ਹਿੱਸੇ ਨੂੰ ਬ੍ਰੇਲ, ਸੀਡੀ, ਆਡੀਓ ਟੇਪ ਵਿੱਚ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ ਜਾਂ ਅਪਣੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿੱਚ ਸਮਝਣਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ, ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਹੇਠਾਂ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਗਏ ਨੰਬਰ 'ਤੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ।

Dokumentigan wuxuu ku saabsan yahay warka cusub oo guriyo, dhacdooyin iyo gobol ah. Haddaad u baahan tahay warkan afkaaga-hooyo, afka loogu talagalay dadka aan arki karaan – afka faraha ama CD-ga ama ajeladda rekorka nala xirir. Namberkan isticmaal.

یہ دستاویز اقامت گاہوں کی خبریں، واقعات اور مقامی معلومات کے بارے میں جانکاری دیتا ہے۔ ان معلومات کے کسی حصہ کی اگر آپ کو بریل، سی ڈی، آڈیو ٹیپ یا اپنی زبان میں وضاحت کی ضرورت ہو تو براہ کرم ہم سے نیچے دیے گئے نمبر پر رابطہ کریں۔

यह दस्तावेज़ आवासीय खबरों, आयोजनों और स्थानीय सूचना के बारे में जानकारी देता है। अगर आप इस जानकारी के किसी भी हिस्से को ब्रेल, सीडी, ऑडियो टेप में चाहते हैं या अपनी भाषा में समझना चाहते हैं, तो कृपया नीचे दिए गए नम्बर पर हमसे सम्पर्क करें।

ਆ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਘਰਨਾ ਸਮਾਥਾਰੋ, ਪ੍ਰਸੰਗੋ ਅਨੇ ਸਥਾਨਿਕ ਮਾਠਿਠੀ ਵਿਸ਼ੇ ਮਾਠਿਠੀ ਆਪੇ ਓ। ਜੋ ਤਮਾਰੇ ਖੋਠ ਪਛਾ ਆਗਨੀ ਆ ਮਾਠਿਠੀ ਖੋਠਲ, ਸੀਡੀ ਓਪਰ, ਆਡੀਓ ਟੇਪ ਅਥਵਾ ਤਮਾਰੀ ਪੋਤਾਨੀ ਆਥਾਮਾਂ ਸਮਝਯੋ ਥਕੋ ਤੇਨੀ ਜੜ੍ਹਰ ਓਯ ਤੋ ਨੀਥੇ ਜਛਾਵੇਲ ਨੰਬਰ ਓਪਰ ਅਮਾਰੋ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ।

How to contact us

London

Ealing Gateway
26-30 Uxbridge Road
London W5 2AU

Telephone:

Monday to Friday, 8am-5pm.

Translation services are available if you visit in person or call.

020 8832 3298

Emergency repairs:

Call Morrison on 03009 998606
(from 5pm to 8am)

Gas heating &
hot water:

Call Mears Group Plc on 01707 290562
(from 5pm to 8am)

South East (Bedfordshire, Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire)

The Farmhouse
Nightingale Avenue
Blackbird Leys
Oxford OX4 7BU

Telephone:

Monday to Friday 9am-5pm except the first

Wednesday every month for staff training days.

Residents can call the emergency repairs number for any queries.

Translation services are available if you visit in person or call.

01865 712244

Emergency repairs:

Call Frontline on 01489 884697 (from 5pm to 9am)

Gas heating &
hot water:

Call Robert Heath Heating Ltd on 0800 783 0833
(from 5pm to 9am)

Website

You can contact us on the web by visiting www.chg.org.uk



Catalyst
Communities

Housing Matters is published by:

Catalyst Communities Housing Association,
Ealing Gateway, 26-30 Uxbridge Road, W5 2AU.

Printed by Countrywide Publications IP19 8BX