



Double win for Catalyst

*Catalyst crowned 'Affordable Home
Ownership Provider of the Year'*

Plus...

- Celebrity sighting at family open day, page 4
- High hopes for new Wallingford homes, page 10
- How we performed, pages 14 – 15

A few words from John

Welcome to the autumn 2009 issue of *Housing Matters*.

I am delighted to let you know that Catalyst Housing Group, CCHA's parent company, has been named 'Affordable Housing Provider of the Year' at the National Affordable Home Ownership Awards 2009. We also won the 'Best Regeneration Project' category at the awards ceremony for the redevelopment of the Page Road estate in Bedfont – see page 8 for more information.

In this edition, we update you on the various events that have been taking place around your neighbourhoods over the last few months. Residents got the chance to meet QPR Football Club midfielder Mikele Leigertwood at the Group Residents' Federation Family Open Day in July (page 4), and O'Grady Court marked its 25th anniversary with an event attended by Jim O'Grady – after whom the scheme is named – and the Deputy Mayor of Ealing, Cllr John Ross (page 5).

We also tell you about the various initiatives currently taking place that you can get involved in. We are now holding free chair exercise and hand massage classes for older residents in an attempt to help them get fit (page 6), you can help assess our services by becoming a mystery shopper (page 7), or you can contact us if you are unemployed and looking for work (page 7).

The people who know what they want from us and how we can improve our services are you – that's why we would like you to take part and have your say. Therefore on pages 12 to 13, we tell you about how you can become the voice of your neighbourhood by joining the London Residents' Forum and by becoming a block representative. Read on to find out more!

John Foxall

Managing Director

Catalyst Communities Housing Association



John Foxall

Social Homebuy

Last chance to get on the property ladder!



**Catalyst
Communities**

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Social Home Buy is a scheme which allows tenants to buy their current home either outright or on shared ownership terms with the benefit of a discount. The smallest share that you can purchase is 25% and it is possible to buy further shares later.

Catalyst has very limited funding available, to assist one tenant only, to purchase their property under this scheme. Once this funding is utilised, Catalyst has no further funding and no further applications will be entertained.

So if you are interested in this scheme, you will need to contact us as soon as possible and all applications will be considered on a first come basis. In view of the limited funds available, tenants who might qualify for Right to Acquire will be considered under that scheme instead.

The main criteria Catalyst will require from an applicant is a clean rent record in the last 12 months and for the tenant not to have been in receipt of Housing Benefit for the 12 month period. The tenant must be able to afford the purchase of course.

If you are interested in buying a share of your home, please contact our customer services team on 020 8832 3298 to request an application form.

Happy resident tell us what she thinks

When complaints arise about any part of the services we provide, Catalyst is quick to look at putting things right. But one complaint from a resident in Reading came as a pleasant surprise.

Crossway Point resident Karen Blake wanted to let CCHA know about the good service she had been receiving from her housing officer, Wendy Forsyth. 'Wendy has always been very helpful when I've approached her and has offered support and advice,' explained Karen. 'But whilst there are plenty of systems in place for submitting complaints, there was no obvious way to say how pleased I was.'

'I realised I couldn't be the only one who appreciated what had been done for them and I wanted to feed that back. I thought a compliments form would be a useful feature for the CCHA website.'

Ironically, Karen ended up using the complaints form on the website to submit her idea, but it was a welcome criticism that CCHA was only too happy to address. A compliments form has now

been added to the website, following Karen's recommendation.

If you would like to pass on positive feedback about a member of staff or one of our services, please visit our website at www.chg.org.uk/catalystcommunities/tenants/suggestions.aspx



Karen Blake, Crossway Point resident, gives us her feedback

Fighting fraud

A new anti-fraud initiative has been launched to ensure our homes and resources are used to benefit those with genuine needs and entitlements.

Catalyst Communities is participating in a national exercise with the Audit Commission, other social housing landlords and local councils. This will involve sharing information with the Audit Commission about which tenants are occupying our properties, so that data can be matched against that provided by the other social landlords and councils.

The process will involve comparing computer records held between the organisations to see if they match. This might include personal

information, such as names, addresses and dates of birth. Where a match is found between data then further investigations will be undertaken to determine whether there is an error in the data or whether fraud of one kind or another is being committed.

The Audit Commission has specific legal authority to carry out data matching, which means that it does not require the consent of individuals under the Data Protection Act; however this exercise is subject to a strict code of conduct to ensure the proper use of the information provided. This code can be found at www.audit-commission.gov.uk/localgov/audit/nfi/Pages/default.aspx. If you require further information, please contact your local housing office.

Happy families at Kennet Walk

Activities for the whole family to join in were a big success this summer at Kennet Walk, East Reading and have led to regular sessions being established from the autumn onwards.

Following the results of a successful residents' survey in February 2009, CCHA has been working with Reading Borough Council to increase the number of activities for families at Kennet Walk.

A well-attended community BBQ and regular evening visits from the Just Around the Corner van, filled with Playstations and sports equipment, proved very popular. Now, from 1 October, new parent and toddler sessions will take place every Thursday morning. We will also be holding Family Worker drop-in sessions on the first Friday of every month at the Old Nursery Building that will provide support, advice and help with parenting skills for families with children under 19.



Sisters (from left to right) China, Trinity and Paris McFarlane take part in the fun activities laid on at Kennet Walk

For more information, please contact Holly Rosenegk, community development officer, on 0118 960 4519 or email her at holly.rosenegk@chg.org.uk

Celebrity sighting at family open day

Over 200 Catalyst residents attended a family open day at the Unity Centre in Neasden during July and got the chance to meet QPR Football Club midfielder Mikele Leigertwood. The event was organised by the Group Residents' Federation (GRF) and was filled with a whole host of fun activities including drama classes, face painting, a 'doctor bike', storytelling and a bouncy castle. This was accompanied by music from a local steel band.

Information on Catalyst's services was available for residents, including our training and employment initiatives, resident involvement opportunities, youth training and shared ownership programmes. Representatives from the National Tenants' Voice, Connexions and Catalyst's housing management, community regeneration and sheltered housing teams were also on hand day throughout the day to answer any queries.

The purpose of the GRF is to ensure that all of Catalyst's boards are accountable and that Catalyst Housing Group is providing the best overall service it possibly can to residents. The GRF does this by testing Catalyst's policies and procedures through a range of resident scrutiny means such as mystery shopping and policy reviews.



Mikele Leigertwood, QPR midfielder, meets young resident at family open day

The GRF is now looking for new members. If you would like to get involved or would like further information, contact Michael Simms, resident involvement manager, on 020 8832 3111 or email him at michael.simms@chg.org.uk. For more information on the GRF, email them at grf@chg.org.uk or visit their website at www.catalystresidents.org.uk

Namesake joins scheme's *25 year* celebrations



Mrs Nicky Ross, Deputy Consort, celebrates O'Grady Court's 25th anniversary

Residents from O'Grady Court marked its 25th anniversary in July with an event attended by the Deputy Mayor of Ealing, Cllr John Ross, and Jim O'Grady – after whom the scheme is named.

Deputy Consort, Mrs Nicky Ross, was presented with a bouquet from Hilda Ladd, one of the three original tenants of the scheme, whilst former Ealing Family Housing Association board member Jim O'Grady spoke about what housing was like in 'the good old days'. Rod Cahill, Catalyst's group chief executive, shared with guests his views on what life is like now at O'Grady Court and what the future holds.

The high point of the event was Jim marking the occasion by cutting two *birthday cakes* – one for the main event and one for the evening party specially put on for residents of O'Grady Court. Both cakes were prepared by O'Grady Court resident Mrs

Margaret Connaughton. A dinner was accompanied by jazz music, arranged by another O'Grady resident, Teresa Oliver.

The residents of O'Grady Court would like to thank the 25th anniversary committee, led by Sheila Ladd, along with all the volunteers who worked tirelessly before the day and on the actual celebration.

O'Grady Court is a sheltered housing scheme located in West Ealing and consists of a total of 62 flats. The scheme was officially opened on 11 July 1984 by the Duke of Edinburgh.

For further information on Catalyst's sheltered housing schemes, please contact Jane Endersby, older peoples' services manager, on 020 8832 3320 or email her at jane.endersby@chg.org.uk

Older residents fit for life

Local older residents will be able to maintain a healthier lifestyle, thanks to free chair exercise and hand massage classes organised by the Older Tenants' Forum. The classes are currently taking place at Catalyst's sheltered housing schemes in West Ealing and Southall, and will be open to all local older people.

To date over 40 CCHA residents have received massages and reflexology therapies as part of the project funded by Catalyst and by Ealing Council's Community Chest Project. Many of them are now benefitting from repeat appointments. Residents who have taken part have also told Catalyst's community regeneration team that the exercises have improved their levels of mobility.

For further information on the classes, please contact Les Warren, community regeneration advisor, on 020 8832 3219 or 07966 327 551, or email him at les.warren@chg.org.uk

These classes are being supported by Active Ealing and the Age Concern Luncheon Club, and are currently taking place at the following locations:

Chair exercise classes:

Sahaara Court

Lancaster Road, Southall, UB1 1AP

Every Monday from 4pm to 5pm and every Thursday from 10am to 11am

Hopley House

Bayham Road, West Ealing, W13 0TU

Every Monday from 2pm to 3pm

Hugh Clark House

Singapore Road, West Ealing, W13 0UF

Every Wednesday from 1pm to 1.45pm

O'Grady Court

Melbourne Avenue, West Ealing, W13 9BY

Every Wednesday from 2pm to 2.45pm

Hand massage class:

Hopley House

Bayham Road, West Ealing, W13 0TU

Every Tuesday from 10am to 11.30

(by appointment only)

Last chance for budding broadcasters!

Residents can hit the airwaves for the second year running, thanks to a four day radio broadcast across Reading.

CCHA has joined forces with London & Quadrant and Home Group housing associations to bring an amazing weekend of great music, information and news to the town from Thursday 26 November to Sunday 29 November. There will be lots of opportunities for Catalyst residents to get involved in producing programmes, presenting shows or simply tuning in to listen.

Local community groups will also get the chance to promote what they do and advertise for new volunteers. The FM frequency has yet to be confirmed, but will probably be 87.9FM. Tune in pop pickers!



Holly Roseneck, community involvement co-ordinator at CCHA, takes the mike for radio broadcasts

Moving into employment

If you're unemployed and looking for a job, there is a free service available in your borough that can help you access work and training support along with advice on getting back into the workplace.

The Moving into Employment project can help you with:

- Preparing an effective CV
- Completing application forms
- Preparing for interviews
- One to one job search support
- Voluntary placements to get you ready for work
- Confidence building
- Preparing for work workshops
- Gaining a qualification
- Finding out more about services in your local community

For further information, please contact one of our employment and training advisors:

Luciana Buzak

020 8832 3110 or luciana.buzak@chg.org.uk

Alex Walker

020 8832 3274 or alex.walker@chg.org.uk

Valerie Francis

020 8832 3274 or valerie.francis@chg.org.uk

Solve mysteries for Catalyst Communities

CCHA is looking for volunteers to become *mystery shoppers*, who can help test and improve the services delivered to residents.

If you would like to know more about getting involved in testing the services in person, over the phone or in writing, we want to hear from you.

We will be organising training that will enable you to become an effective mystery shopper in the coming months. So if you live in Reading, Oxford or London and would be interested in taking part in this exciting opportunity, please contact Michael Simms, resident involvement manager, on 020 8832 3111 or email michael.simms@chg.org.uk



Catalyst wins awards for affordable housing and regeneration



Murray Crawford, regeneration manager for Catalyst, gets his hands on 'Best Regeneration Project' award

Catalyst Housing Group, of which CCHA is a member, has won two prestigious awards at the National Affordable Home Ownership Awards.

Winner of the 'Affordable Home Ownership Provider of the Year' category and the 'Best Regeneration Project' award, we were recognised for the outstanding contribution we have made to affordable housing through the regeneration of the Page Road estate in Bedfont.

The regeneration of Page Road has transformed the formerly run-down, neglected and crime-ridden estate into a thriving community and desirable place to live. Due to complete in late 2010, the new Page Road will see the development of 320 brand new homes – 137 for rent, 79 for sale and 104 for shared ownership – as well as better designed shared green spaces and private gardens or balconies for all residents on the estate.

Rod Cahill, group chief executive of Catalyst Housing Group, said: ***'I am proud of what we have all achieved. Catalyst is a big organisation, but for too long we have been shy about our successes. It is wonderful to be recognised by the industry for all we have done in the past 12 months. This is the start of a new and progressive era at Catalyst.'***



Buy a home at our award-winning development

Making the right choice

Lewin Terrace (Page Road) is a modern development in Bedfont boasting an impressive selection of high quality one and two bedroom apartments and two bedroom houses. Available under the NewBuild HomeBuy scheme, the development offers a flexible route into home ownership by enabling you to buy a share of between 25 - 75% in the property and pay a reduced rent on the share you do not own.

Stylish interiors

Step inside and appreciate the stylish yet comfortable living environment. From the contemporary fitted kitchens with integrated stainless appliances to the spacious open plan living



area, each home is superbly finished with a range of design features perfect for today's modern living. The blend of contemporary design and simplicity makes a stunning combination for you to add your own personal touch to your new home.

Location

At Lewin Terrace there is easy access to all local amenities. Set amongst the exciting regeneration of nearby Feltham High Street; the project being planned will include a range of cafes, supermarkets, hotels and offices.

With an ideal location in Bedfont, you can experience the mixture of cafes, bars and restaurants all on offer. If you fancy a spot of retail therapy, the Treaty Centre offers many of the high street retailers. There is also a Cineworld Complex with 14 screens for all you film fans out there. If it's a quiet time you're after, head towards the

Hounslow Heath Nature Reserve, Bedford County Lakes or the Hounslow Heath Golf Course that are only a stone's throw away.

Great connections

Travelling from Lewin Terrace offers excellent transport links to ensure you have all the right connections. Heathrow Airport is approximately 15 minutes by car. For those who want to travel much closer to home, Hatton Cross tube station (Piccadilly Line) will take you into Central London in under 30 minutes. Feltham train station is a short distance away and offers services to London Waterloo, Clapham Junction, Richmond and Reading. With



the added benefit of the M3, M25 and A30 nearby, getting around couldn't be easier.

What is shared ownership?

The scheme allows you to purchase the specified share of the property price and pay a reduced rent on the share you do not own. After 12 months you will have the option of buying more shares (subject to affordability) until you own the property outright. The more shares you own, the less rent you will need to pay. A monthly service charge is also applicable.

What to do next?

Contact our sales and marketing team for more information about Lewin Terrace on 0845 601 7729 or email them at newbuild@chg.org.uk

Priority will be given to those who live or work in the Borough of Hounslow

High hopes for new Wallingford homes

Ed Vaizey, Shadow Minister for Culture, unveiled a sculpture by local Wallingford artist, Michie Herbert, to mark the official opening of the Blue Mountains housing development.

A plaque to commemorate the former children's home that stood on the site of the development was also unveiled, accompanied by afternoon tea, face painting and a live band to celebrate. Catalyst staff, local partners and current Blue Mountains residents were joined by former residents of the children's home for the day's proceedings.

Built on behalf of CCHA by Inspace Partnerships, the mixed tenure development consists of 79 new or refurbished homes, with 54 rented homes, 23 HomeBuy properties and two *assisted persons* bungalows. The tenure mix and unit sizes reflect the needs and aspirations of the local community. All of the homes are finished to a high standard with fully fitted



Singer Adrian Brown, of Dalton, Smith and Brown, entertains



Ex-resident and former town mayor Theresa Jordan (centre) joins Blue Mountains' current residents to mark the opening of the scheme



Grace Hendy, local resident, puts on a sunny face

kitchens, double glazing and allocated parking spaces. They also benefit from a very good Eco Homes rating.

When developing the site, consideration was given to the existing high quality build and natural environment of Wallingford. The two Edwardian villas to the front of the site, which were originally built as cottages, provided many of the visual cues that have been utilised in the theme of the new homes.

South Acton regeneration reaches a high point



The Mayor of Ealing, Cllr Barbara Yerolemou (far right), lays final piece of concrete frame at Reade Court

Catalyst, with partners Inspace, celebrated reaching the highest point of construction so far in the regeneration of the South Acton estate with a *topping out* ceremony in July. The Mayor of Ealing, Cllr Barbara Yerolemou, unveiled a commemorative plaque at the event and laid the final piece of the concrete frame at the top of Reade Court.

Julia Moulder, director of development at Catalyst said: ***'Catalyst and our contractors Inspace are pleased to be able to celebrate reaching a high point in the regeneration of South Acton – quite literally! Today's topping out ceremony marks a major milestone in the process of providing new, high quality affordable homes for residents.'***

Beyond the physical regeneration, Catalyst and Ealing Council are working hard on the estate to facilitate community regeneration through a variety of initiatives including access to employment, training and personal development support as well as the sponsorship of a local youth football team.

All of the new homes on the estate have been designed to maximise energy efficiency. They include a central energy centre with a combined heat and power (CHP) plant, and bio-mass and gas boilers. Insulation levels in the new homes are 24% higher than set out in the Building Regulations 2006, which will help to reduce residents' energy consumption. In addition to these environmentally conscious features, the estate will also benefit from an onsite city car club and excellent public transport links.

Once complete, the current phase of the regeneration will provide a total of 129 new homes for the local community, with 74 homes available for rent and 55 available for purchase through NewBuild HomeBuy.

Residents master Tilehurst regeneration plans



Plans to revamp the Tilehurst estate into 21st century dwellings were given the once over by local Reading residents at a public exhibition this summer.

Catalyst's development team asked for feedback on the updated £150million redevelopment plans at the Dee Park Masterplan Exhibition. The exhibition is part of ongoing consultation with residents and the wider public on the *masterplan* for the regeneration project, which aims to improve the quality of life for people living on the Dee Park estate. The proposals will see the 1960s estate freshened up through improved housing, roads, parks and shops as well as a new community centre and school being built to make it a more attractive place to live.

The revised plan has been put together by the Dee Park Partnership, a partnership made up of Catalyst, Inspace Homes and HTA Architects who work closely with Reading Borough Council.

A planning application for the first phase of the work was submitted in August and we will receive a decision for this in December 2009. The first phase will include 124 affordable homes and 140 homes for sale. If approved, work on the estate will start in the New Year. The regeneration project will eventually lead to 482 homes for sale and 281 affordable homes for rent.

For further information on the regeneration of the Dee Park estate, please contact Serena Horgan, senior project manager, on 020 8832 3129 or email her at serena.horgan@chg.org.uk

London Residents' Forum



The London Residents' Forum (LRF) is made up of a group of block representatives, who meet regularly to raise issues that are of concern to their neighbours. Many of our estates have block representatives – to find out who the representative is at your estate or to report an issue for the monthly meeting, please email lrf@chg.org.uk

At each of the monthly meetings the LRF holds, minutes are taken and CCHA's community regeneration team consequently produces a newsletter highlighting the main points of the meeting. If you would like a copy of the newsletter, please email the LRF or collect one at our head office in Ealing.

Below is a summary of the key points that were discussed at the last two meetings.

July 2009 meeting

- For preparation purposes, residents and block representatives should send in issues three weeks in advance of the meeting. This will ensure that there is enough time for staff to investigate and give an informed response at the meeting.
- If you would like to be part of the decision making process for contracting services, please contact Tom Smith, procurement manager, at tom.smith@chg.org.uk to find out more about how to get involved and to register your interest.
- The forum agreed to apply for funds to the Catalyst Communities Trust for health and food growing projects in Windmill Park and Invicta Grove.
- A spreadsheet is kept of residents' participation and this helps us to monitor the service, understand the type of people who get involved and enables us to thank residents for their time.

August 2009 meeting

- Two more neighbourhood managers have been appointed, which means that there are now 14 in total. Consequently, we have sent letters to all residents who have been allocated a new neighbourhood manager.
- Healthy Neighbourhood Award Scheme: currently the scheme is being run at Hugh Clark House, O'Grady Court, Westcott Park, Windmill Park and some sessions at Hyde House. If residents would like to take part, they should contact Wendy Sweeney (see opposite for more details).
- Service Charges: where items on bills are incorrect, residents should tell their neighbourhood manager as mistakes can occasionally happen. Tenants have fixed service charges and leaseholders have variable service charges.
- The Group Residents' Federation arranged an open day at the Unity Centre, drawing on the organisation skills of the Certificate in Housing Students. See page 4 for further information on the event.
- Christina Tom Johnson reminded the group that 'Unity is strength and by informing each other as block representatives, the "voice" is much stronger'.

London Residents' Forum open meeting

The next LRF's open meeting will be held on Saturday 5 December and is for London residents only. We can't confirm a venue yet, but if you are interested in attending, please email lrf@chg.org.uk or contact Michael Simms on 020 8832 3111 or email him at michael.simms@chg.org.uk

Become a block representative

Becoming a representative for your block can give a voice to you and your neighbours without joining a residents' association or other formal group.

As a block representative you can stand for the interests of a block of flats, a street, a community group or any other agreed specified area and join the London Residents' Forum (LRF) and/or the Group Residents' Federation (GRF).

Your responsibilities in this role will include:

- being a point of contact for your community
- acting and representing views on behalf of your community as well as providing feedback
- raising issues on behalf of your chosen community with the Residents' Forum.

The emphasis of this role is on two-way communication and will focus on providing information to and from your community. For this reason, the community you wish to represent will be asked to sign a form or provide a letter to show that they support you on an annual basis.

If you are interested in becoming a block representative or want further information on the LRF or GRF, contact Michael Simms, resident involvement manager, on 020 8832 3111 or email him at michael.simms@chg.org.uk.



Healthier neighbourhoods take shape in Ealing

Ealing residents have been sampling a range of exercises and alternative therapies this year, thanks to a Healthy Neighbourhood Award Scheme.

The scheme encourages residents to achieve a sense of well being, enjoy a healthier lifestyle, improve self esteem and have pride in their neighbourhood. With help from a lifestyle coach, groups have been set up that explore exercise, learning and connecting with other people, with the aim of showing how all these things can be achieved without spending money and can genuinely help people to get the most of life.

Part of the *Unity in the Community Project*, which was funded by Ealing Council, the scheme belongs to an Acton Community Forum, Southall Community Alliance and Ealing Council Voluntary Service partnership.

A successful spring launch at Hopley House led to weekly groups being established, such as weekly chair exercises class at Hugh Clark House and O'Grady Court, Futsall

training at Westcott Park (delivered by Active Planet), a children's dance class at Windmill Park and hand massage classes at Hopley House.

Bob Copland, who attends a weekly chair exercises class at Hugh Clark House, said: 'I can't believe the difference the classes have made. I practice the stretches every day and it's made me feel much more supple and helps my balance. It's great!'

If there is a group of you who would like to get involved, please contact Wendy Sweeney, community development manager, on 020 8832 3186 or wendy.sweeney@chg.org.uk for more details.

Healthy
neighbourhood
award scheme
Looking after your heart as well as your home

How we performed

At Catalyst Communities we aim to give residents a consistently high level of service. Our performance information is one of the best indicators of how well we are performing. Our achievements are measured against key service standards for the period between 1 October 2008 and 31 March 2009.

Our repairs service

Our performance in terms of our repairs service is measured by looking at the percentage of repairs that we complete within a target time. Our service standards say we will complete (or make safe):

- 100% of emergency repairs within 24 hours
- 95% of urgent repairs within three working days
- 90% of routine repairs within 21 working days

The repairs performance for the final quarter of this period is below target level, although the overall average time taken to complete a routine repair has not increased during the year. During the last six months we took an average of 12 days to complete a repair from when it was reported. We are now concentrating on improving

Description	Target times	London	Oxford	Reading	Overall
Emergency	Within 24 hours (100%)	99.9%	78.9%	73.0%	96.8%
Urgent	Within 3 working days (95%)	96.4%	77.4%	58.2%	84.6%
Routine	Within 21 working days (90%)	83.7%	91.0%	79.3%	83.8%
Repairs completed		15,506	1,674	1,806	18,986

our performance when it comes to repairs. This includes reviewing the overall decline and considering how to work with our contractor to see major service improvements.

Another key measure of our performance is resident satisfaction with the service we provide. We encourage our residents to give us feedback on the quality of any repair work and the professionalism of the repair staff. Using this regular survey, we ask residents to score their satisfaction with our services out of 10. We are happy to report that your overall satisfaction has increased again, compared with the same period in the previous year. The figures for overall repair satisfaction show that we remained above our satisfaction target of 8.

Period	Satisfaction
1 October 2008 to 31 March 2009	8.9
1 October 2007 to 31 March 2008	8.8

Rent collection and rent arrears

We aim to collect at least 99% of the rent that is due to us. At the end of quarter 4 we collected 100.3% of rent – all rent due plus a portion of arrears.

Period	Arrears
1 October 2008 to 31 March 2009	100.3%
1 October 2007 to 31 March 2008	99.8%

The table below shows overall percentage of arrears owed by residents as a proportion of an annual rent. Our overall performance in arrears reduction for October 2008 to March 2009 has improved in compared to last year and we are now on the way to achieve our target of 7%.

Period	Arrears
1 October 2008 to 31 March 2009	7.5%
1 October 2007 to 31 March 2008	7.9%

Complaints

We take all complaints seriously. As our service standards say, we will:

- welcome your views if you are dissatisfied with any aspect of our service
- acknowledge your written complaint within three working days
- send a full reply to most complaints within ten working days.

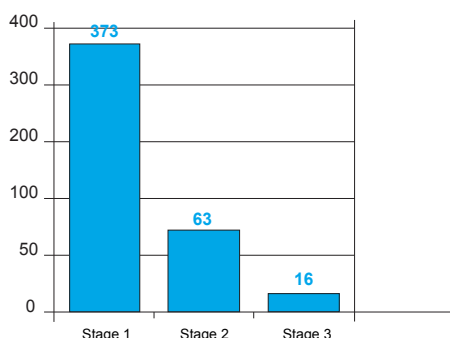
For complex complaints we may need longer to investigate; if so, we'll let you know and agree a timescale with you.

Our response rate for complaints has got better over the years, but there is still room for improvement. We are continuing to resolve the majority of them at an early stage, with over 85.6% dealt with at stage one and only 3.7% reaching stage 3.

Number and percentage of complaints answered within target time (all stages combined)



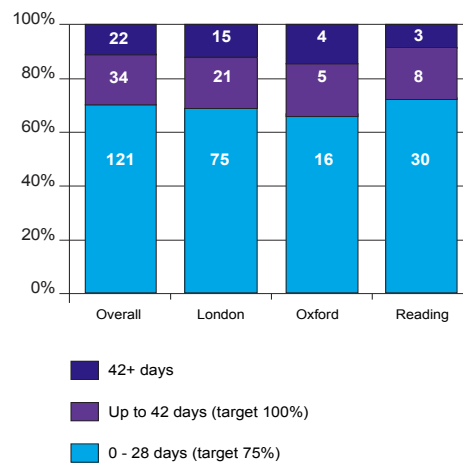
Number of complaints by stage



Vacant homes

A key measure of our performance in this area is the time it takes for us to re-let properties that have become empty after someone has moved away. Our service standards say we will re-let empty properties within average of 25 days. Overall our average time taken to re-let empty properties for October 2008 to March 2009 has remained within target at 24.5 days.

Number and percentage of properties re-let over time

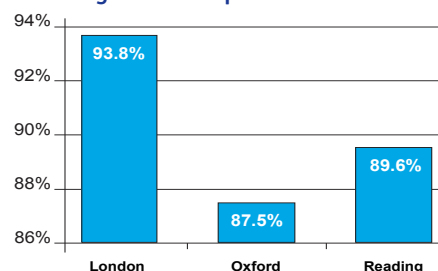


Mystery shopping

We carry out a number of checks on the quality of the service provided in reception and on the telephone, for example, through 'mystery shopping' (where somebody visits our reception areas or telephones us, posing as one of our residents or a relative of a resident).

The higher the score given by the shopper for how we deal with the enquiry, the better, and from our latest quarterly information, our reception has scored higher than the Quality Housing Standard (QHS) Certification Target (Certification Target 81%). During the second half of the year, we also showed that our performance in telephone accessibility across the whole of CCHA is much better than the QHS Certification Target standard of 84%.

Percentage score for personal visits to reception



A full version of our performance report, 'On target', is available for you to download from our website at www.chg.org.uk/catalystcommunities

Driving forward with community tour



Catalyst Communities staff continued their journey around our communities, armed with a range of goodies and activities and meeting over 250 residents on the way during the Driving Forward 2009 events.

No two events were quite the same, due to each being shaped as far as possible by local residents in each area. Many of the sites were lucky enough to experience the fantastic sounds of the St. Michael and All Angels steel band – a youth project based in Brent – and were even invited to try out the steel pans!

Residents were asked to write their views of our repairs and maintenance system on little flags and attach them to the gazebo. These views are being fed back to our maintenance team to help them shape and improve the service. People were also asked their views about priorities for their neighbourhood and voted using coloured balls in our *opinion polls*.

The options for people to vote on were: dealing with anti-social behaviour, green and healthy projects, community groups endeavours, projects for older people, projects for young people and family work. The top two overwhelming priorities across all our neighbourhoods were dealing with anti-social behaviour and projects for young people.

In addition, at Page Road residents were treated to a bus ride to the local lakes; Mill Farm enjoyed all the fun of the fair; Windmill Park experienced a real life fruit and vegetable stall and a local GP ran free health checks. Catalyst Communities' Reading office organised a fun bus for neighbourhoods in Stokenchurch, High Wycombe and Slough, who tried their hand at badge making, and in Oxford they went bowling on the Nintendo Wii console, met Oxford United players and went on a treasure hunt for the day.

Sadly a couple of the events had to be cancelled because of torrential rain, which was disappointing for everyone involved. However, we would like to say a big thank-you to all the residents who helped make the tour a success.





Growing together

Residents who started a community garden earlier this year are already seeing the fruits of their labour. The garden project at Invicta Grove estate in Northolt found its roots in spring, thanks to funding from Capital Growth and support from the London Residents Forum.

The group of enthusiastic adults and children created seven raised beds of different sizes on the grounds of the estate, where they planted a wide variety of fruit and vegetables including corn, kale, squashes, courgettes, radishes, marigolds, carrots, strawberries, avender, sage and coriander.

The green-fingered residents meet on Wednesdays for a gardening club where they water, weed, sow, plant and learn about growing vegetables sustainably, as well as the uses and health benefits of the abundant wild food and plants growing in

the surroundings. A compost bin enables them to recycle all their garden and raw vegetable kitchen waste in order to make rich, healthy compost.

Three other housing estates in Acton, West Ealing and Southall are part of this food growing initiative and have already secured funding through the Catalyst Communities Trust to start their community gardens. Catalyst Communities provided a training course last May to design and manage food growing projects in community spaces. Residents who attended this training will now be able to share their new found knowledge with other residents who want to join the community garden projects.

To find out more, please contact Nuria Rodriguez, community development officer, on 020 8832 3233 or email her at nuria.rodriguez@chg.org.uk

Under 12's take home trophy

Acton took on Hillingdon at a youth football tournament organised at the South Acton estate in August, funded by CCHA.

Bollo United Football Club organised the under-12s five aside event, where the rain held off long enough for five Bollo United teams and one Hillingdon youth team to compete for the Catalyst Cup. The trophy was taken home by the visitors following a penalty shoot-out semi-final and a nail-biting final.

All the teams won points and played hard, with medals for the first, second and third teams. Football fans on the day included the players' parents and family members, who were kept entertained between games with an impressive display of soccer skills.





New West Reading residents' association on its way

Brockett Close resident, Emma Fidler, joins in the fun

Residents of Brocksett Close, West Reading have taken their next steps towards forming a new residents' association by nominating its first three representatives.

So far they have organised a very successful community BBQ with donations from CCHA and are hoping to turn a flower bed into a small allotment area for local families.

The group's first official meeting takes place this autumn, where a full committee is expected to be elected. The formation of the committee will allow the residents to apply for funding to hold further events and *green up* Brocksett Close.

Community initiatives coordinator Holly Roseneck said: ***'This is a real example of local people taking the initiative to make positive changes to their street. A spirit of friendliness is beginning to develop amongst neighbours here as they get to know each other and become friends.'***

Parents keen to join employment cycle

CCHA told one lucky resident to get on her bike – when she won a bicycle donated by Catalyst to a local school's raffle where information about jobs and training was on offer.

The St John's Primary School summer fair saw the community regeneration team take up a stall to provide information to parents about the training and employment programmes on offer in the area. Some parents showed a particular interest and CCHA is now working with them to find suitable opportunities.

The bicycle was first prize in the raffle and won by Ms M Gano from Hyde House in Ealing.

For further information on employment and training initiatives, please contact Nuria Rodriguez, community development officer, on 020 8832 3233 or email her on nuria.rodriguez@chg.org.uk



Pamela Gano tries out the bike her mum won at the summer fair

Spot the difference

We had an overwhelming response to our spot the difference competition in the summer issue of Housing Matters. The prize draw for an Argos voucher was won by **Ms W from Acton (£40)**, **Mr M from Wood Court (£30)** and **Mrs V from Brentford (£20)**.

As well as spotting the differences between two photos for a chance to win an Argos voucher, residents were given the opportunity to put comments on their entry that will provide valuable feedback to us about our repairs service.

Many of you told us that the repairs that are carried out are usually done to a good standard and that our staff were friendly and helpful. Also, because of your feedback, we are now looking to improve the arrival times for repairs and increase the was something that we could look to address, as well as the frustrations some residents experience with the slow speed of our overall repairs process.

Thank you to everyone who submitted their views: your comments will be taken on board towards the constant work to improve our repairs service.



Name:

Age (if under 18):

Address:

What do you think of our current newsletters and how could they be improved?

(Too short/long, easy/hard to understand, too many/few pictures)

Please cut out this page and return to: Parveen Agnihotri, Editor, Housing Matters, Catalyst Communities Housing Association, Ealing Gateway, 26-30 Uxbridge Road, Ealing, London W5 2AU

This magazine provides information about housing news, events and local information. If you need any part of this information in large print, Braille, on CD or explained in your own language please contact us on the number below.

How to contact us

London

Ealing Gateway
26-30 Uxbridge Road
London W5 2AU

Monday to Friday, 8am-5pm.
Translation services are available if you visit in person or call.

Telephone: 020 8832 3298

Gas heating & hot water: Call Mears Group Plc 01707 290562

Emergency repairs: Call Mears Group Plc 01707 290561



Oxford

The Farmhouse
Nightingale Avenue
Blackbird Leys
Oxford OX4 7BU

9am-5pm from Monday to Friday excluding Bank Holidays and the first Wednesday in every month when the office is closed for training. Translation services are available if you visit in person or call.

Telephone: 01865 712244

Gas heating & hot water: Call Robert Heath Heating Ltd 0800 783 0833

Emergency repairs: Call Mears Group Plc 01707 290563



Reading, Slough, Wycombe

Enterprise House
95 London Street
Reading RG1 4QA

9am-5pm, Monday to Friday. Translation services are available if you visit in person or call.

Telephone: 0118 951 2900

Gas heating & hot water: Call Robert Heath Heating Ltd 0800 783 0833

Emergency repairs: Call Mears Group Plc 01707 290563

Website

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

On the website you can:

- report a repair
- make a housing enquiry
- download guides and residents' magazines
- find out the latest news on Catalyst Housing Group and Catalyst Communities
- make a suggestion or complaint.

Services on the web are quick and easy to use and available 24 hours a day.



Ky dokument ju jep informacione në lidhje me të rejtat për strehim, ngjarjet dhe informacionet lokale, 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 সংক্রান্ত খবর, ঘটনা ও স্থানীয় তথ্য সংক্রান্ত তথ্য সরবরাহ করবে। যদি আপনি এই তথ্যগুলোর যে কোন একটির সংক্ষেপে বিস্তারিত জানতে চান, অথবা আপনার নিজের ভাষাতে ব্রেল, 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 ਹਾਊਸਿੰਗ ਖ਼ਬਰਾਂ, ਪ੍ਰੋਗਰਾਮਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਸਥਾਨਕ ਸੂਚਨਾ ਬਾਰੇ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਦਿੰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਸ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਦੇ ਕਿਸੇ ਹਿੱਸੇ ਨੂੰ ਬ੍ਰੇਲ, ਸੀਡੀ, ਆਡੀਓ ਟੇਪ ਵਿੱਚ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ ਜਾਂ ਆਪਣੀ 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 नंबर पर हमसे सम्पर्क करें।

ਆ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਘਰਨਾ ਸਮਾਚਾਰ, ਪ੍ਰਸੰਗੋ ਅਤੇ ਸਥਾਨਿਕ ਮਾਹਿਤੀ ਵਿਸ਼ੇ ਮਾਹਿਤੀ ਆਪੇ ਏ। ਜੇ ਤਮਾਰੇ ਕੋਠ ਪਛਾ ਮਾਗਨੀ ਆ ਮਾਹਿਤੀ ਖ਼ੇਠਲ, ਸੀਡੀ ਓਪਰ, ਆਡੀਓ ਟੇਪ ਅਥਵਾ ਤਮਾਰੀ ਪੋਤਾਨੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਮਾਂ ਸਮਝੋ ਸ਼ਕੋ ਤੇਨੀ ਜੜ੍ਹ ਡੋਯ ਤੋ ਨੀਯੇ ਜ਼ਯਾਵੇਲ ਨੰਬਰ ਓਪਰ ਅਮਾਰੇ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ।



**Catalyst
Communities**

Catalyst Communities HA
26-30 Uxbridge Road
London W5 2AU

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020 8832 3298