



New homes in Brent

Mayor opens Ebony Court



Plus...

Hello, Catalyst Housing, **page 4**

The perils of illegal sub-letting, **page 5**

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Welcome...

...to the summer issue of Fortunegate News

This will be the last issue of *Fortunegate News*, but don't worry we're not going to stop producing it, we're just renaming it and we want you to help us decide on a new name (see page 4).

As we move to becoming Catalyst Housing, you will start noticing some changes. Our telephone greeting has now changed to 'Hello, Catalyst Housing' (see page 4). This is part of our plans to create one customer services department, which will in time be open for longer and where our staff will be aiming to answer 80% of your queries first time around.

This new department will be headed up by our director of customer services, John Foxall. So in future editions of your magazine, it will be John's face, not mine, that you'll see in this spot!



We have also set up local boards. The Brent local board will be responsible for overseeing the services we provide in the Brent area. This issue also includes an interview with Chris O'Leary, chair of the Brent local board, so you can get a better idea of what the role of the local board will be (see page 5).

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

Best wishes,
Paul Yates, Managing Director at Fortunegate

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 moves across to the housing sector after more than 30 years' experience in transport, including 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.

Upon joining the team, 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



I am fortunate and delighted to be chairing a housing association that is in such good shape"

Richard Brown



Catalyst schemes over the period ahead and I look forward to working with residents and resident board members 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 it demonstrates the strength of housing associations – quality housing and services rooted in real engagement with residents.'

A green heaven

Prize Winner

Apple tree blossoms, fresh jasmine and a hint of lavender. This is what we were greeted with when we went to see Crome Road resident, and winner of our gardening competition, Mrs Tidd.

She won a £50 shopping voucher and J.P. Flintoff's book 'Sew your own' for her truly heavenly garden. Blooming with roses, dandelions and violets it was a magical haven of colours and fragrances that took you away from the stresses of the real world.

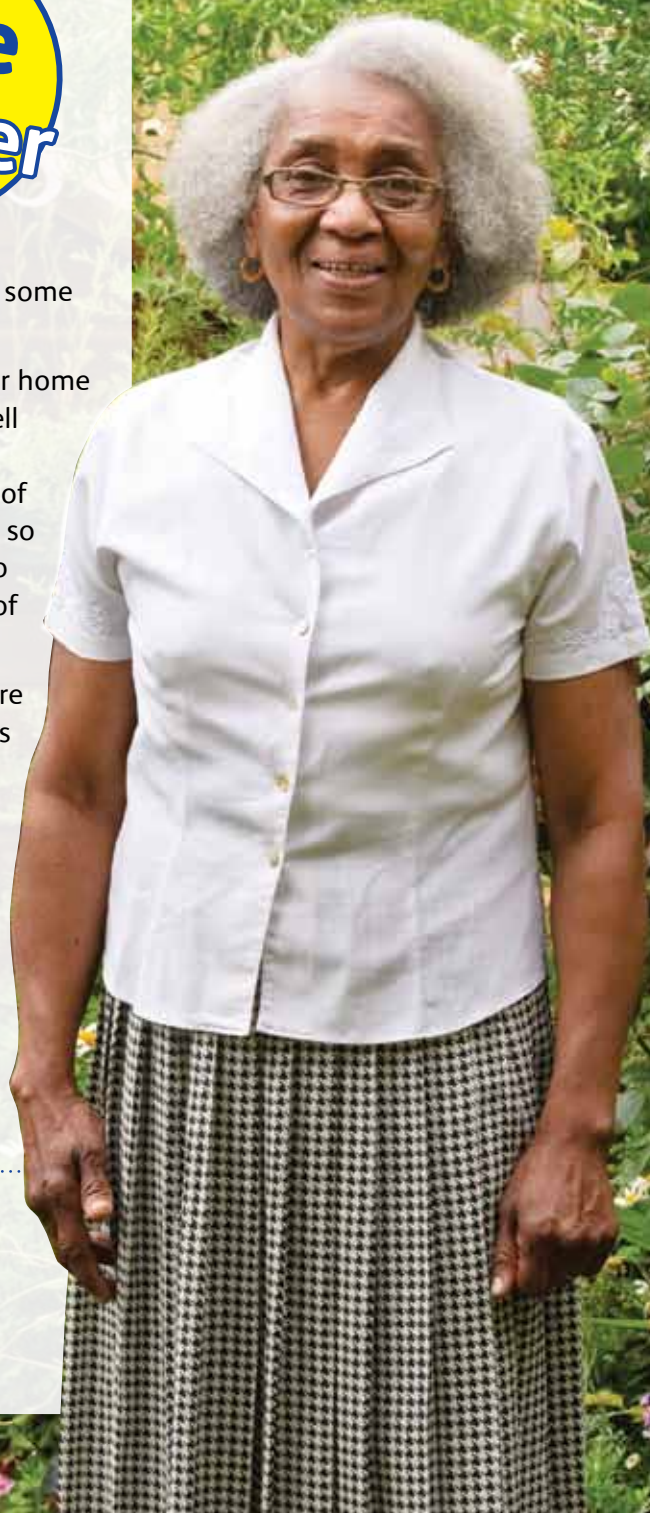
When asked what inspired her to take up gardening, Mrs Tidd said: 'I have always loved plants and flowers, and when I saw my new garden it gave me the perfect chance

to get creative and add some colour to my home.'

Mrs Tidd moved into her home in 2003 and instantly fell in love with it. She was excited at the prospect of having her own garden, so it didn't take her long to start sowing the seeds of her happiness.

'I really enjoy taking care of my garden as it keeps me physically and mentally active. But the real joy is when you see the flowers and plants blossom. The aroma is simply heavenly, not to mention cheap. So it's something that everyone can enjoy.'

If you would like to learn how easy it is to create your very own spot of heaven or even share your green fingers, then join our gardening group. To join, just contact Yvonne Williams on 020 8438 1834 or yvonne.williams@catalystgateway.org.uk



Have your say

Is there something you feel we could do better? Do you want to represent the views of your community? Then have your say by joining our residents' forum.

The forum will be holding its Annual General Meeting (AGM) in August where it will decide on a new name, elect its committee and look at issues that affect residents.

If you would like to attend the meeting, stand for election or just find out a bit more about the forum, contact Wendy Bohan on 020 8955 1787 or wendy.bohan@chg.org.uk

When:

Wednesday 3 August, from 6.30pm to 8.30pm

Where:

**The Unity Centre,
103 Church Road,
NW10 9EG**

‘Hello, Catalyst Housing’

You will probably start noticing some changes as we begin 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, instead of ‘Hello, Fortunegate Community Housing’, we will now be answering the phone with ‘Hello, Catalyst Housing’. Nothing else will change for now, but in time we will be opening our customer services centre 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.

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

We are still keeping a local office in Brent, 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.

If you feel unsure about anything, please call us on 020 8438 1800 or email anyquestions@chg.org.uk

Resident satisfaction survey

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

Snap Surveys, working on our behalf, sent out the surveys to a random selection of residents. 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!

Suggest a new name for Fortunegate News

With the changes in our organisational structure, the curtains close for *Fortunegate News*. 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 *Fortunegate News*.

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 £131.

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



Local boards, local services, local people



After an extensive recruitment process, we are happy to announce that we have recruited local residents to our new local boards. Residents on the Brent local board are Paul Vincent, Angelina Cox and Sibö Sesay.

We still have one vacancy for a resident to join the board and will be advertising this in the autumn.

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 Chris O’Leary, chair of the Brent local board, below.

Chris O’Leary, chair of the Brent local board

When it comes to providing local services for local people, Chris is a real expert.

Chris grew up in Shoreditch, East London, and was a councillor in Hackney and chairman of Hackney’s housing and environment service committee. He is the current chair of the Fortunegate board and has been a Fortunegate board member for the last four years.

As chair, Chris will be working with existing residents’ associations and using the information we obtained whilst drawing up local offers to ensure that the board delivers services that local people really want.

‘Residents should have every possible opportunity to be involved in the management of their homes and the local community. We can then make sure we are providing what they genuinely want.’



Speaking and working with local people is the best way to find out their wants and needs

Chris O’Leary



The Brent board will play a major part in helping us improve our services and will challenge Catalyst so we are accountable to our customers. ‘In this board structure, residents will have a bigger say, so their voices will really be heard. When issues are raised, the board will follow these through and action them.’

When asked what he thinks is important to our customers, Chris replies that the people who would know the answer to this is you, our residents. ‘I want residents to tell us this. Speaking and working with

local people is the best way to find out their needs and wants.’

Resident involvement will be high on Chris’ agenda. He wants to develop strong two-way dialogue with customers, so we can continue to improve and deliver what’s right for local people.

‘Fortunegate wouldn’t be where it is without the outstanding work residents have done in regenerating the local area. We want to build on this passion, and take the organisation forward so we can continue to provide better homes and better services for local people.’

The true cost of illegal subletting

Some people may think they can make some extra money by subletting their home. But former resident, Lisa Odeniyi found this wasn't the case when she was landed with a bill of £6,477.

After suspecting that Ms Odeniyi was illegally subletting, we worked with Brent Council's fraud team to investigate her and eventually took her to court so we could get her evicted. Ms Odeniyi finally moved out in mid-June.

Left with the burden of finding a new home, Ms Odeniyi now also has to shell out nearly £6,500 in court costs. She will also have to pay Brent Council the benefit she was claiming whilst living abroad.

So this venture has turned out to be quite expensive for her.

To combat illegal subletting, we regularly check tenancies, ask for identification and inspect properties. Illegal subletting deprives families on the housing list in genuine need of homes. With many residents living in overcrowded homes and needing to move for their health, we need your help to catch the fraudsters who are cashing in at the expense of others.

If you suspect someone is illegally subletting, please report this anonymously by calling **020 8438 1800**

Summer clean up



We want people living in our neighbourhoods to be proud of where they live. Leaving old fridges, mattresses and microwaves in communal areas or in streets simply makes your neighbourhood look scruffy.

That's why we will soon be holding a summer clean up day, where you can bring out your bulk refuse and dump it in Brent Council's refuse van.

The date and time of the collection is yet to be confirmed, but once it is decided we will advertise it at our main office, the Unity Centre and on our website at www.chg.org.uk



Adapting your home

Do you have a disability that is making it difficult for you to live in your home? Or are you having trouble moving around your home?

If the answer to any of these questions is 'yes', please speak to us and we will see how we can make your life more comfortable by adapting your home. This can range from simple things like hand rails to help you get out of the bath, to major fittings such as stair lifts.

In order to understand your situation fully, we will need to visit your home and see whether there is anything you need from

us to improve things. We can then advise you on how to adapt your home easily and carry out small alterations.

If work to your home is more complicated and costly, we will work with Brent Council to help you get a Disability Facilities Grant.

If you would like to arrange a visit from one of our team, please contact Prince Moulemvo on **020 8964 6411** or prince.moulemvo@chg.org.uk

New homes at **Ebony Court**



Tree planting marks a new beginning for **Ebony Court**

Church End residents joined the Mayor of Brent, Councilor Harbhajan Singh, in May to celebrate the official opening of Ebony Court, a development which provides 27 new homes.

As well as planting a tree, the group toured the flats and

enjoyed afternoon tea. Caricature artists and face painters were also on hand to keep our younger residents entertained.

May was a great month for Ebony Court as the development also won the Higgins Project of the Year Award for Best New Build Scheme.

The regeneration of Ebony Court involved the transformation of a derelict building into desirable

new homes. These include 17 for rented housing and 10 for first-time buyers looking to get on to the property ladder through our part-buy/part-rent scheme.

If you are interested in part-buying a home, please call **0845 601 7729** or email newbuild@chg.org.uk

Coming soon: **St Mary's Court**

Some of you will have noticed that the scaffolding on St Mary's Court, Brent, has started coming down. This is great news for residents as it means they can move into their new homes in late August.

The development includes 38 new homes. Nine are for our part-buy/part-rent scheme and the rest are for affordable rent. All the apartments are modern, bright and spacious.

If you are interested in part-buying a home, please call **0845 601 7729** or email newbuild@chg.org.uk



It's back: The Way Forward



We'll be running the hugely popular the Way Forward project for a fourth consecutive year during the summer holiday. Sign up now to book your place!

This year, we'll be providing music and local history workshops, dance classes, arts and crafts sessions and IT training. Younger residents will get the chance to learn new skills and build their self-esteem, whilst parents are encouraged to help out at workshops.

The project will end with a grand finale, where local people can showcase some of the new things they've learnt.

We hope this project is even more successful than last year, when the Harlesden Safer Neighbourhood team reported a noticeable drop in crime.

Places on the project are limited and will be offered on a first-come first-served basis, so book your place today to avoid disappointment.



For more details or to book a place, contact Yvonne Williams on 020 8438 1834 or yvonne.williams@catalystgateway.org.uk

Starfish guides the way

Problems at school? Feeling isolated? Need positive support? Family issues? Don't know where to turn?

If the answer to any of these questions is 'yes', then Starfish is on hand to help. It works with five other community organisations including Catalyst Gateway, our charitable arm, to provide free support and information for children, young people and parents.

The service is especially designed for people living in the Church End and Roundwood areas, so it can help local people with local issues.

If you need some advice or just want to talk to someone in confidence, call Starfish on 020 8459 9028



Free football with UEFA coaches

Aged 16 to 25? Not in education, employment or training? Love football?

Street League can help you get fit, gain qualifications and support you in finding work through its unique football

and education programme.

The Unity Centre is offering free weekly street football sessions with training from UEFA coaches. You may then be selected to enroll in the Street Academy League – an intensive 8 to 12 week

programme of football, employability workshops and one-to-one support.

Interested? Call the Unity Centre on 020 8955 1780 or register your interest at the Unity Centre's reception.

The apprentice: you're hired!

Be savvy like Lord Sugar – launch your career with an apprenticeship!

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

Apprenticeship placements can often lead to qualifications and career development opportunities – as 21-year-old Prince Bizongo Moulemuo knows well.

Prince did an apprenticeship with us last year. He started at Fortunegate as a customer services assistant in August 2010, and the role involved being the first point of contact for anyone visiting our office on Church Road. 'I had never worked in housing before and thought it would be

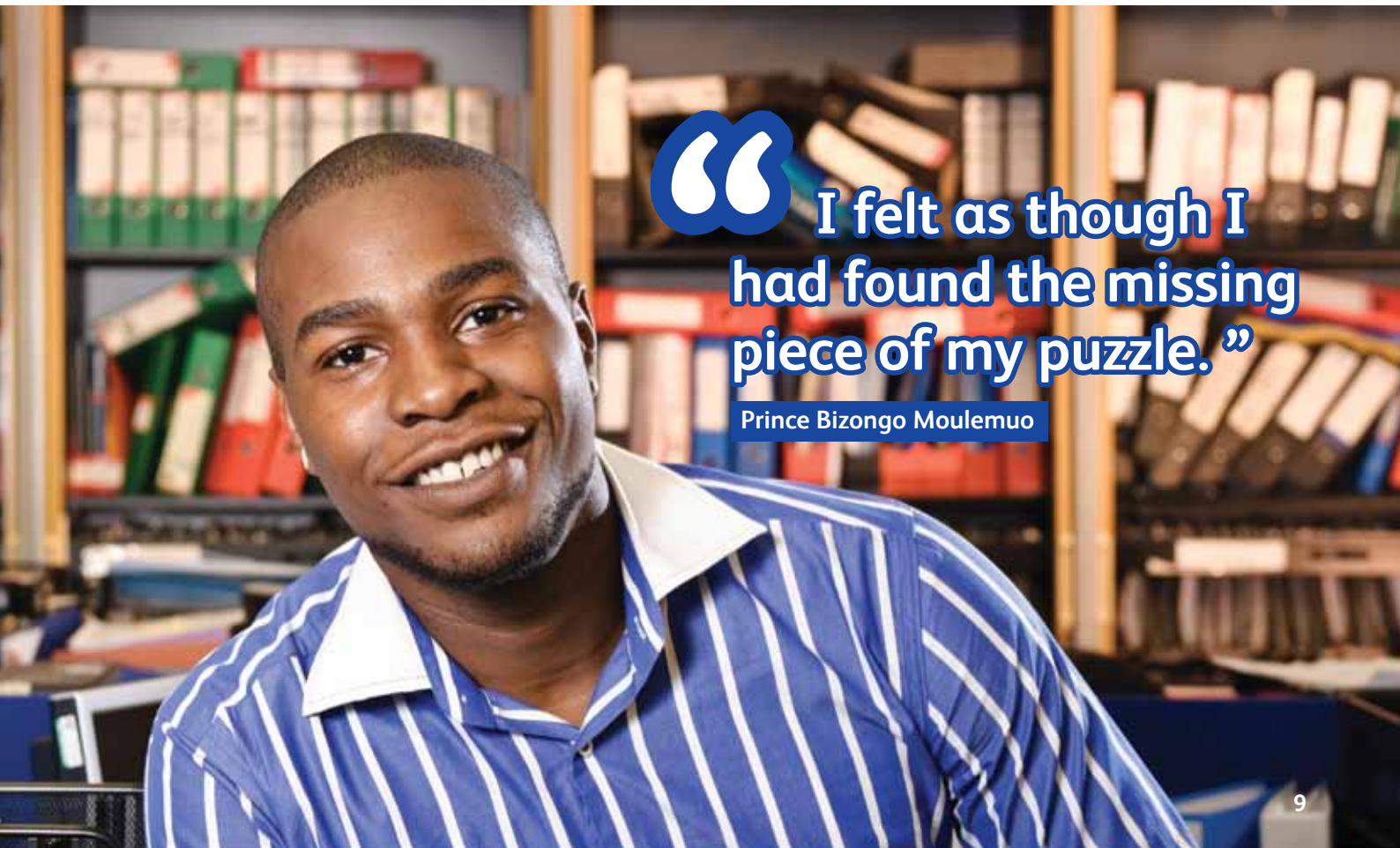
challenging, although after a week I fell in love with it. I felt as though I had found the missing piece of my puzzle.'

During the role, Prince built up a real rapport with our residents, so much so that they would specifically ask to talk to him if they had a problem. 'It felt good to know that I was making a real difference and residents were leaving much happier after they spoke to me. It was building these relationships with customers that made it all worthwhile.'

After his apprenticeship ended, we kept Prince on. He is now working as a property service administrator he gets the chance to work on the multi-million pound regeneration of Wornington Green in North Kensington. The role involves processing repairs, carrying out satisfaction surveys and ensuring high quality across our services.

'This experience has helped me open my eyes to the wonderful world of housing and without the initial opportunity I would have never found my calling.'

Catalyst Gateway is offering apprenticeships in housing, and also in youth work, business administration and construction. If you are interested, please contact Amanda Leeuwerke on enquiries@catalystgateway.org.uk or 020 8832 3377



“ I felt as though I had found the missing piece of my puzzle. ”

Prince Bizongo Moulemuo

Feeling the **heat**

With the sun shining and summer holidays here, it's a great time to go out and enjoy yourselves. But please remember to consider your neighbours when having fun. Anti-social behaviour can ruin lives and make areas feel unsafe.

Below are some useful tips that will ensure everyone has a fun summer:

- Don't play on the street, go to a local park or play facilities instead
- Don't play loud music, especially after 11pm – it's not fair to disturb people who are trying to sleep
- Being rowdy or noisy and hanging out in the street can intimidate people
- Respect people's private space, and don't go onto their property without their permission
- Regular parties can annoy your neighbours, so please tell them if you will be having one



If your neighbour is annoying you, it's better to speak to them about the problem so you can sort it out informally. If the problem persists, we can help you come to an agreement or take action if necessary. Please contact us by calling **020 8438 1800** or through our website: www.chg.org.uk

A free CAB to financial security

After popular demand, a representative from the Brent Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) will be visiting our Church End office twice a week to provide you with free confidential money advice.

CAB can help you with managing your finances and dealing with debt. You can also ask them about housing benefit, rent arrears and overpayments.

To make an appointment with a CAB representative, please call **020 8438 1800**

Safer neighbourhoods: meet your team

We want to ensure that our neighbourhoods are a safe place to live, work and visit.

If there is something that is troubling you, if you want to talk about anti-social behaviour or report a crime, the Harlesden Safer Neighbourhood team is on hand to help.

The team wants to find out how safe you feel, and what issues affect your daily life. It will then set its priorities according to your needs and work with you and other agencies to find a lasting solution.

Meet the team:

Come along to a drop-in surgery at our main office on Church Road on Friday 12 August, from 12 noon to 2am.

Contact the team:

Call **020 8721 2051** or **07843 291 131**, or email harlesden.snt@met.police.uk. They will get back to you within 24 hours.

In an emergency:

In an emergency, always call 999.

Looking for a loan but can't afford the interest?



Whether you're looking to save for a holiday or pay off a debt, you can apply for a low interest loan with credit unions working in West London. These organisations work by using members' savings to provide money for other members looking for a loan.

As a Fortunegate resident, you can apply to join one of the following credit unions:

- **Ealing Credit Union:** if you live or work in Brent or Ealing
- **M for Money Credit Union:** if you live or work in Harrow or Hillingdon
- **Thamesbank Credit Union:** if you live or work in Hounslow or Richmond upon Thames



For more details on any of the above, contact Credit Union Solutions on **020 8573 8010** or admin@creditunionsolutions.co.uk

Pay your rent as usual

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

In the meantime, please continue to make payments 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.

If you are having problems paying your rent and want to speak to someone about this, please contact your neighbourhood manager on **020 8438 1800**



Big Mouth gets a new voice

Many of you have told us that you don't really like the name of our local community newsletter, the Big Mouth. That's why we've decided to give it a new voice and change its name.

So, we're asking you to send us suggestions on what the new name should be. The person who suggests the winning name, picked by the Fortunegate Residents Forum, will win £50 worth of shopping vouchers.

Please send your suggested names to Wendy Bohan on **020 8955 1787** or wendy.bohan@chg.org.uk

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.

Neighbourhood services

Lilah Haire, neighbourhood manager: **020 8438 1820**

Norma James, neighbourhood manager: **020 8438 1813**

Karen Platt, neighbourhood manager: **020 8438 1815**

Property services

Brendan Scanlon, maintenance surveyor: **020 8438 1812**

Ahmed Gasim, maintenance surveyor: **020 8438 1817**

Roger Derooy-Facey, maintenance surveyor: **020 8438 1805**

Resident Involvement

Wendy Bohan, resident involvement officer: **020 8955 1787**

The Unity Centre

Churchend and Roundwood Unity Centre, 103 Church Road, London. NW10 9EG.

Telephone: **020 8955 1780**
Fax: **020 8451 9624**

Keith Chilvers, community facilities manager: **020 8955 1783**

Frances Holder, community development administrator: **020 8955 1780**

Ky dokument ju jep informacione në lidhje me të rejtat 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.

تمدك هذه الوثيقة بالمعلومات اللازمة عن أخبار الإسكان والأحداث والأنباء المحلية. إذا كنت ترغب في الحصول على أي جزء من هذه المعلومات مطبوعاً بأحرف كبيرة أو بطريقة برايل أو مسجلاً على اسطوانة مدمجة أو شريط صوتي أو مشروحاً باللغة التي تتحدثها، يرجى الاتصال بنا على الرقم الموضح أدناه.

این نوشتار اطلاعاتی درباره اخبار، رویدادهای مسکن و اطلاعات محلی در اختیارتان قرار می دهد. اگر مایل به داشتن هر بخش از این اطلاعات به صورت چاپ شده یا حروف بزرگ، خط بریل، روی CD، نوار صوتی و یا توضیح داده شده به زبان خودتان هستید، لطفاً با استفاده از شماره تلفن زیر با ما تماس بگیرید.

આ દસ્તાવેજ ઘરના સમાચારો, પ્રસંગો અને સ્થાનિક માહિતી વિશે માહિતી આપે છે. જો તમારે કોઈ પણ ભાગની આ માહિતી બ્રેઈલ, સીડી ઉપર, ઓડિયો ટેપ અથવા તમારી પોતાની ભાષામાં સમજી શકો તેની જરૂર હોય તો નીચે જણાવેલ નંબર ઉપર અમારો સંપર્ક કરો.

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 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.

இந்த ஆவணம் வீட்டுச் செய்திகள், நிகழ்வுகள் மற்றும் உள்ளூர் செய்திகள் பற்றிய தகவல்களை அளிக்கின்றது. இந்த தகவல்களில் எந்தப் பகுதியாவது உங்களுக்கு, பின்புலம் குறைவில், குறுவட்டம், ஒலி நாடலில் அல்லது உங்கள் சொந்த மொழியில் தெரையப்படாத தகவல் செய்தி கிடைக்கக்கூட ஏதாவதில் எங்களைத் தொடர்பு கொள்ளுங்கள்.

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 کئے نمبر پر رابطہ کریں۔

Contacting us

223 Church Road
London
NW10 9EP

The office is open 9am to 5pm,
Monday to Friday, except on Bank Holidays

We close every Wednesday at 2pm for staff
training, but phone lines remain open

Translation services are available if you
visit in person or call

General enquiries **020 8438 1800** Monday to Friday
from 9am to 5pm

Maintenance **0800 731 5282** (free from landlines) or
0300 456 2482 (low cost from mobiles)
(Capital Heating and Maintenance)
Monday to Thursday from 8am to 6pm
Fridays from 8am to 5pm

Out-of-hours **020 8937 1234** Monday to Thursday
emergency **020 8937 1234** Monday to Thursday
(Brent Council): 6pm onwards, Fridays 5pm onwards
and on all day on weekends.

General enquiries:

020 8438 1800

Monday to Friday from 9am to 5pm



Fortunegate
Community Housing