



## We are **changing**



### Plus...

Local boards, page 6

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Regional round-up, page 10

Catalyst  
Housing  
launches on  
1 October

# Welcome...

*...to the September issue of Town Talk*

This is an exciting time for Catalyst, as the housing associations within the group join together to form one organisation (see pages 4 – 5). From 1 October, Catalyst Housing will be up and running. Our teams are working hard to make sure the transition to the new organisation goes smoothly for you. We hope the change will in fact be a ‘catalyst’ and help us continue to provide a better service to you.

The results of our satisfaction survey shows we are making good progress towards improving our service (see page 8). 54% of you are now satisfied with our services - an increase of 10% from 2009. Even though your satisfaction has increased, we know that we need to do more work with you to make sure your satisfaction continues to increase.



This issue of *Town Talk* also includes details of the apprenticeships Catalyst Gateway, our charitable arm, is offering (see page 3), how we’re recruited residents to our local boards (see page 6) as well as our usual regional round-up (see page 10).

Remember if you have any comments about our services and how we can improve them, please do get in contact with us.

Best wishes,

**Steve Chapman,**  
*Editor*

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## Putting up satellite dishes



**With an increase in satellite channels and programmes, some leaseholders have been asking us whether they can put up satellite dishes and aerials outside their homes.**

We don’t generally give permission to put these up, as we have to take into account health and safety, maintenance, planning and environmental issues. These fixings can also cause damage to the building and this may incur extra repair costs.

If you do put up satellite dishes or aerials without our permission, we have the right to take them down. We may then also charge you for the costs of taking these down and for the damage they may have caused to the building.

**So, if you are thinking of putting up a satellite dish or aerial, please get our permission by writing to your neighbourhood manager at your local office (contact details on page 11).**

# Become an apprentice

Catalyst Gateway, our charitable arm, is offering year-long apprenticeships in housing, youth work, business administration and construction. You can also gain formal NVQ qualifications during the placement.

Apprenticeship placements can often lead to qualifications and career development opportunities – as 21-year-old Prince Bizongo Moulemuo knows well. Prince started at Fortunegate as a customer services assistant and found his feet as the first point of contact for anyone visiting our Church Road office.

He built up a real rapport with residents, so much so that they would specifically ask to talk to



him if they had a problem. Prince says: 'It felt good to know that I was making a real difference and residents were leaving happier after they had spoken to me.'

When his apprenticeship ended, we kept Prince on. He now works as a property services administrator,

where he gets the chance to work on the multi-million pound regeneration of Wornington Green.

**Interested in becoming an apprentice? Then contact Amanda Leeuwerke on [enquiries@catalystgateway.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@catalystgateway.org.uk) or 020 8832 3377**

## CCHA London gets new repairs contractor

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

Even though we've changed our contractor, you may also see some familiar faces. This is because when a business or contract changes hands, previous employees automatically change to the new employer or contractor.

Please remember that all Morrison staff carry ID cards with the organisation's distinctive four star logo. You should not let 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 Catalyst Communities HA (CCHA) London residents. There is no change if you are a CCHA resident living in the South East or a resident of Fortunegate Community Housing or Kensington Housing Trust.



Follow us on  
**twitter**  
Catalyst4You

Keep yourself in the loop and one step ahead by signing up to our twitter page for residents. You'll be able to get the latest news, changes and events happening in your area – all in real time.

To sign up, just:

- Go to [www.twitter.com](http://www.twitter.com)
- Type in 'Catalyst4You' in the search
- When you have found us, just click on 'follow'

# We are C

**On 1 October, the housing associations within Catalyst Housing Group will join together to form Catalyst Housing.**

We are working hard to deliver better customer service, and this restructure will help us to improve further. When we consulted residents about these restructure plans, more than 73% were in favour.

As we join together, you will start to notice some changes. Below is a summary of the changes.

## Same rights

This restructure will have no affect on your lease, your rent or your rights. Our name will change to Catalyst Housing on 1 October. Our signs, letterheads and leaflets will also change to reflect our new name.

## One customer services department

We have created one customer services department, with two customer services centres – one for London and one for the South East.

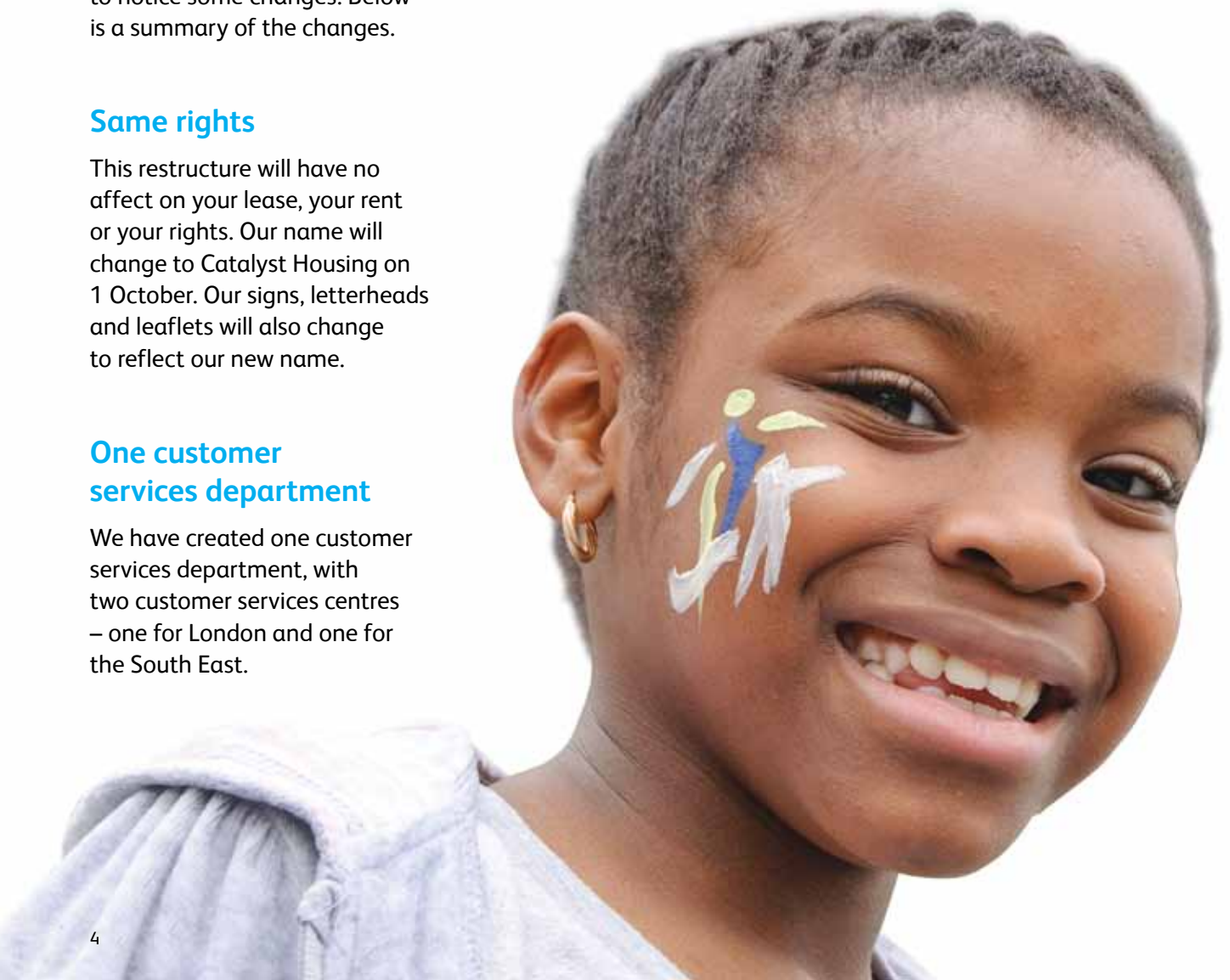
## New customer services telephone numbers

In line with our organisational restructure, we have created two customer call centres each with its own new low-cost telephone number.

So if you call us from 1 October, below are the new digits you have to dial:

**London: 0300 456 2099**  
(8am – 5pm, Monday to Friday)

**South East: 0300 456 2090**  
(9am – 5pm, Monday to Friday)



# Changing

It doesn't matter whether you call us from a landline or a mobile, you will be charged a local rate. Also, the old numbers will still work for a few months, so don't worry if you forget to write them down.

## Local offices

We are still keeping local offices in Brent, Ealing, Kensington and Oxford so you can continue to come in and speak to us. You can also make an appointment with your neighbourhood manager to come and speak to you at your home.

## Local boards

We have set up four local boards in the areas of Brent, Kensington and Chelsea, West London (the rest of London) and the South East (outer London). More details on local boards and the residents we've recruited to the boards are on page 6.

## Better services

With the creation of one customer services department, we hope to open our customer services centres from 8am to 8pm, Monday to Friday and on Saturday mornings. Our customer services staff will

also be able to answer 80% of all queries first time around. This means that our neighbourhood managers will be able to spend less time on the phone and more time with you, our customers.

## More information

We will be writing to you on 1 October to formally let you know that your landlord has changed to Catalyst Housing. You can also get the latest information on our website at [www.chg.org.uk](http://www.chg.org.uk). If you are worried about something or have a question, please email us at [AnyQuestions@chg.org.uk](mailto:AnyQuestions@chg.org.uk)

## Catalyst Housing's first chair

We are delighted to welcome on board Eurostar's Richard Brown as the new chair of Catalyst Housing, our new single organisation, which will be officially up and running on 1 October.

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



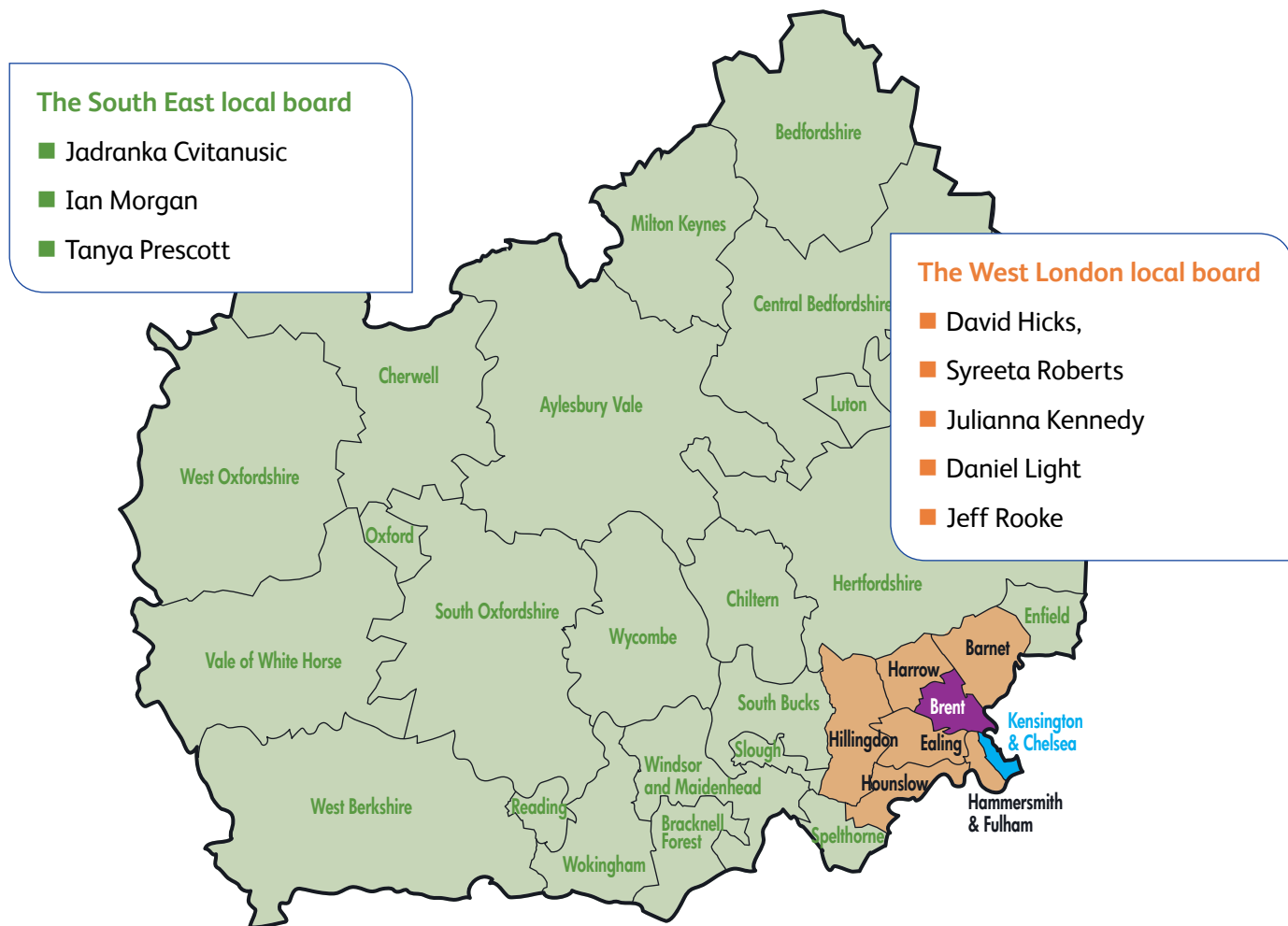
on employees, customers and change management.

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. ”

# Local boards, local services, local people

Local people are in the best position to tell us what works well and the areas in which we can do better. That’s why as part of our organisational restructure (see pages 4 and 5 for more details), we have set up four local boards. Up to half the places on the local boards have been reserved for residents.



We still have one vacancy for a resident to join the Brent local board and one for the South East local board. We will be advertising for residents to join these local boards in the coming months.

Local boards will be responsible for monitoring local services from 1 October. This is when we will have finished our organisational change and Catalyst Housing will be up and running (see pages 4 and 5 for more details).

# External decorations

We are proud of the high standards of our homes. To make sure they stay this way, maintenance work needs to be done to common parts of buildings. This responsibility lies with the landlord of the property which may be us, you or a third party.

Below is a breakdown of who is responsible for the external decorations to common parts of the building:

- For flats where we own the freehold, we do the work usually every 5 – 7 years
- For flats where we don't own the freehold, the landlord is responsible for the work
- If you live in a house, you or the landlord are responsible for the work

If we are doing the work, we will decorate external and internal communal areas as well as carry out minor repairs to windows and buildings. To save time and money, we may also do other repairs or minor work. Before we do any work, we will always inspect the building and identify what needs to be done.

## Who pays for it?

If we carry out the work, it's your responsibility to pay your share of the cost. Some estates or groups of properties are partly or fully covered by your reserve fund (see below). Once we send you a bill for the work, you'll need to pay within 21 days. If you don't, you may have to pay additional costs.

To help you pay for your share of the work, we offer a range of payment options. They include:

- **Installment plans:** you can arrange to pay the money in 12 monthly installments without incurring any interest.
- **Loans:** If you need a longer than a year to pay, you may need to get a loan. We may offer you a loan, but we'll charge a handling fee and interest on it. The interest rate won't be more than 4% above the base rate set by the Bank of England.

If you think you'll find it difficult to pay for your share of these costs, we can arrange free and independent advice to help you.



## Reserve Funds

These are sums of money that you pay towards, which are then put aside for work that is required to the building you live in. Buildings built before 2007 will usually have a reserve fund. For ones built after 2007 the fund will also cover other works, such as replacing windows.

Your summary of expenditure, which we'll send you every six months, shows what reserve funds you contribute towards. The fund can only be used for the purpose it was intended for. Please note that the reserve fund is only an estimated cost and actual costs can vary.

## Will I be consulted?

Regulations require us to send you written notices if the works are likely to cost more than £250 per property. The first of these is to explain the work we are planning. Later, we'll send you information regarding estimates. These notices are often called Section 20 notices.

When you receive the notices, we are inviting you to give your observations. These need to be in writing and you'll have a minimum of 30 days to reply.

## More information

If you need more information, please visit our website or call your local customer services centre (contact details on page 11).

# Our survey

We're happy to announce that your overall satisfaction with our services has increased to 54% from 44% in 2009. We commissioned an independent company, Snap Surveys, to carry out our resident satisfaction survey in June. They sent it to a random selection of leaseholders and of the people who we sent it to, just under a third responded.

We will now be using these results to improve our services to you, under our new organisation Catalyst Housing (*find out on page 4 how we are changing*).

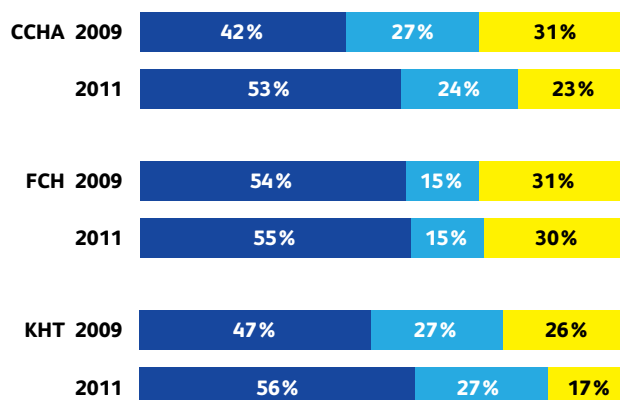
Below is a summary of some of the results.

**Key:**

- Satisfied
- Neither
- Dissatisfied

## Overall satisfaction with our services

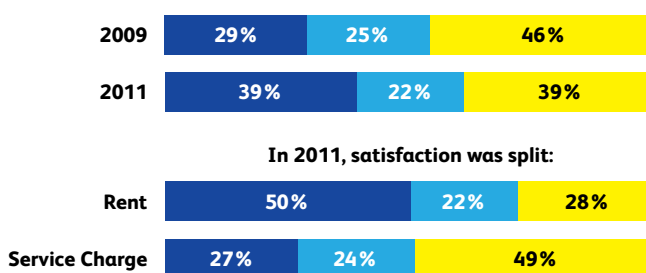
The number of leaseholders who are now satisfied with our services has increased overall, especially leaseholders of CCHA and KHT. Although we know you think we are doing better, we also know these results are not at the level we would like; and there are still things we can do to improve our service to you.



## Rent and service charge as value for money

Our leaseholders do feel reasonably satisfied with their rent as value for money. But there has been very little change in the number who feel dissatisfied with the service charge and the value for money it offers.

Only about half of you are satisfied with how we explain how your service charge is spent. This is strongly linked with your satisfaction with its value for money, so we need to work with you more in this area.



# said...



## Listening to you

More than half of you think that we give you the chance to make your views known and over a third of you are satisfied that we listen and act on your views.

This is a great improvement from two years ago where just over a quarter of you were satisfied with your views being taken into account.



## Your last contact with us

You feel more satisfied with the final outcome of your contact with us compared to two years ago. This applies to when you call us, speak to us face-to-face or when you contact us through other means such as email.



## Security of your home

When we asked you about security within your building, block or estate, 40% of you were satisfied compared to 55% being satisfied with security as a feature of their home in 2009. However, there has been no change in dissatisfaction with security in the past two years.

## Your views count

We will be using what you told us to improve our services to you. If you didn't have the chance to take part in the survey, please give us your views by filling in our online suggestion form or a suggestion slip in your local office (*contact details on page 11*).



## Tree planting marks new beginning for Ebony Court

In May Church End residents joined the Mayor of Brent, Councillor Harbhajan Singh 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.



## Youth project is pride of London

Our youth mentoring programme, Pathways 2 Progress (P2P), has won the top London award at the National Housing Federation's What We Are Proud Of Awards 2011.

P2P helps teenagers to find new interests, develop their talents and fulfill their potential. So far, it has supported more than 600 young people.

David Orr, chief executive of the National Housing Federation, described the project as 'outstanding.' Having been voted the pride of London, P2P will now compete with the other regional winners for the national prize.

**To take part in P2P, please contact Andrew Togobo on 020 8964 6454 or [andrew.togobo@chg.org.uk](mailto:andrew.togobo@chg.org.uk)**



## Oxford's got talent!

Oxfordshire residents showed off their talents at the Star Catchers talent competition, with dancers Blackout being crowned the winners and scooping a prize of £1,000.

400 people turned out to watch the final and were entertained by singers, dancers, musicians and rappers. The nine members of Blackout, which includes one Catalyst resident, impressed the audience

and judges with their professional street dance.

This competition was organised by landlords and community groups working in the Oxfordshire area. Residents who took part in the project filled in a survey, so they could tell us how we can improve services. We will then work with other landlords to deliver services local people want.



# How to contact us

**CCHA London** – Ealing Gateway, 26-30 Uxbridge Road, London W5 2AU

Monday to Friday, 9am – 5pm except bank holidays

**General enquiries:** **020 8832 3298**, Monday to Friday from 8am – 5pm except bank holidays  
(**0300 456 2099** after 1 October)

**Gas heating and hot water emergencies:** **01707 290562** after 5pm and all day on weekends

**Plumbing, electrical and all other emergency repairs:** **0300 999 8606** after 5pm and all day on weekends

**CCHA South East** (Bedfordshire, Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire) –  
The Farmhouse, Nightingale Avenue, Blackbird Leys, Oxford OX4 7BU

Monday to Friday 9am – 5pm except the first Wednesday every month for staff training days  
and bank holidays

Residents can call the emergency repairs number for any queries

**General enquiries:** **01865 712244**, Monday to Friday from 9am – 5pm (**0300 456 2090** after 1 October)

**Gas heating and hot water:** **0800 783 0833** after 5pm and all day on weekends

**Emergency repairs (Frontline):** **01489 884697** after 5pm and all day on weekends

**Fortunegate Community Housing** – 223 Church Road, London NW10 9EP

Monday to Friday, 9am – 5pm, except on bank holidays.

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

**General enquiries:** **020 8438 1800** Monday to Friday, 9am – 5pm (**0300 456 2099** after 1 October)

**Repairs, pest control and gas heating:** **0800 731 5282** or **0300 456 2482**,  
Monday to Thursday from 8am – 6pm, Fridays from 8am – 5pm

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

**Kensington Housing Trust** - 354 Portobello Road, London W10 5XZ

Monday to Friday, 9am – 5pm except bank holidays

**General enquiries:** **020 8960 5544**, Monday to Friday, 9am – 5pm except bank holidays  
(**0300 456 2099** Monday to Friday 8am – 5pm after 1 October)

**Maintenance or repairs:** **020 8960 5544**, 8am – 5pm (**0300 456 2099** after 1 October)

**Emergency out-of-hours:** **020 8964 0148**, after 5pm or all day at weekends

## Website

You can visit our website at [www.chg.org.uk](http://www.chg.org.uk)

This magazine provides information about housing news and events in your local area. If you need any part of this information in large print, Braille, on CD or explained in your own language, please contact us (*contact details are on page 11*).

### Arabic

تمذك هذه الوثيقة بالمعلومات اللازمة عن أخبار الإسكان والأحداث والأبناء المحلية. إذا كنت ترغب في الحصول على أي جزء من هذه المعلومات مطبوعًا بأحرف كبيرة أو بطريقة برايل أو مسجلًا على اسطوانة مدمجة أو شريط صوتي أو مشروحًا باللغة التي تتحدثها، يرجى الاتصال بنا على الرقم الموضح أدناه.

### Hindi

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।

### Portuguese

Este documento proporciona-lhe informações sobre notícias sobre habitação, factos e informação local. Se necessitar de parte desta informação em caracteres aumentados, em Braille, em CD, cassete áudio ou apresentada no seu idioma, por favor contacte-nos, através do telefone abaixo indicado.

### Somali

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.

### Gujarati

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

### Polish

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.

### Punjabi

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

### Urdu

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۔



**Catalyst**  
Housing Group

**Town Talk** is published by:

Catalyst Housing Group, Ealing Gateway,  
26-30 Uxbridge Road, London, W2 5AU.

Tel: 020 8832 3344

[www.chg.org.uk](http://www.chg.org.uk)

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

Contact details of local offices are on page 11.