



Catalyst Communities Housing Association (CCHA)

Residents' Annual Report September 2010

Produced in partnership by CCHA and the Group
Residents' Federation



Catalyst
Communities



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Welcome



Welcome to the Annual Report from your landlord Catalyst Communities Housing Association (CCHA). As chair of the Group Residents' Federation (GRF) I am pleased to introduce this report as we and other residents have been closely involved in preparing it. The Group Residents' Federation's role is to work with Catalyst Housing Group to improve services to residents, through monitoring what they do and how they do it.

What is this report about?

This report updates you on how CCHA is doing. CCHA has to make available to residents an annual report explaining how they meet or are aiming to meet the Tenant Services Authority (TSA) Standards. The TSA are like Ofsted for schools or the Financial Services Authority for banks. They set landlords six Standards they need to meet for residents, which are:

- **Tenant Involvement**, including customer care and complaints
- **Home**, including repairs and maintenance
- **Tenancy**, including allocations
- **Neighbourhood & Community**, including anti-social behaviour (ASB)
- **Value for Money**
- **Governance & financial viability**

Landlords also need to set Local Offers in each of these Standards. Local Offers are a landlord's commitment to how they will provide a service,

based on what residents have asked for.

The GRF helped CCHA design and carry out a survey with other residents on Local Offers at existing resident and community events over the summer. The results, together with other resident feedback, will help set CCHA Local Offers, which are set out on the following pages.

How can residents read this report?

We know that it is important to residents that Catalyst doesn't waste money by printing lots of information that might not be read.

We carried out a Local Offers Survey with Catalyst over the summer and the majority of residents (71 %) said they wanted a summary of the report, with a full version available on request. You can request a copy by: completing the freepost return slip in the newsletter, or online at www.chg.org.uk. Copies will also be available from receptions and by asking your neighbourhood manager for one.

Finally, we are always looking for new members to join the GRF so if you would like to get involved, please complete the form on page nine.

Best wishes from the GRF

John Kehoe
(GRF chair and KHT resident)

Tenant Involvement & customer care

Standard 1



Introduced by Dave Hicks, GRF Member and CCHA Board Member.

Residents living in the Hillingdon area were involved in a pilot with other landlords and the council, to look at this standard. It has resulted in a Standard for the whole borough, setting out how residents will be involved and what customer care standards they can expect.

CCHA must offer all residents the opportunity to be involved in the management of their housing and services.

Some achievements so far

- CCHA supported the London Residents Forum with training and visits to other organisations to help them to work with CCHA to monitor services and ensure that residents are represented.
- CCHA prepared a Resident Involvement Strategy (2009-11) which sets out how CCHA will involve residents and aims to reach Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS) Standard by 2011.
- CCHA held community consultation events across London and the South East, which provided activities for families, children and residents in the community, whilst allowing CCHA to get residents' views.

How did CCHA do (April 2009 – March 2010)

- Satisfaction with views taken into

account: 50%

- Satisfaction with landlord services: 71.6%
- Complaints resolved at first stage: 86.9%

Where CCHA plans to improve

- Involving residents in a Customer Engagement Strategy, based on what residents have said are their priorities for service. The strategy will set out how residents needs will be met and how services will be provided to better meet them, e.g. improving our website to make it easier to use.
- Using the Resident Involvement Statement for 2010/11 to set out how residents can get involved and shape services, for example through joining the mystery shopping programme.
- Continuing to work towards the TPAS Standard, using it as an opportunity to engage with hard to reach residents, identified from our customer profile data.

Local Offers

A survey was done with residents across Catalyst over the summer, to agree the Local Offers. Residents were asked a series of questions relating to this Standard, the results follow:

- Residents are most interested in giving feedback once they have received services and so CCHA will introduce satisfaction surveys on anti-social behaviour (ASB), Complaints and with Neighbourhood Services by April 2011.
- If residents do not think CCHA is meeting the Standards or Local Offers, they would like to be able to complain through the existing complaints process, so the complaints policy will be updated by April 2011.
- Residents would like to be kept informed about how well CCHA is doing against the Standards and Local Offers regularly (every 3 months) so there will be an update in each newsletter which residents already receive.

Home, including repairs & maintenance

Standard 2



Introduced by Christina Tom-Johnson, GRF, CCHA resident and London Residents' Forum member.

The GRF carried out a 'Scrutiny Review' of the Repairs and Maintenance service. This involved interviewing the Managers of the service and then mystery shopping the service and looking at policies and written information to see if it was all saying the same thing. We then made recommendations about how the service could be improved for residents and where there were any gaps.

CCHA must ensure that all homes are warm, weatherproof and have modern facilities. An efficient and cost-effective repairs & maintenance service must also be in place.

Some achievements so far

- The repairs contract is due for renewal in 2011. In preparation for this, residents have been involved in the tendering process, working with CCHA to design the repairs contract to best meet residents needs.
- The repairs contractors – Mears – are based in the same building as CCHA staff which means arranging repairs appointments or raising any queries can be done quickly, so that the service to residents is not affected.
- Residents attend joint meetings with staff at Catalyst on the Sustainability Group, which considers how Catalyst can ensure it is working in a 'green' way. The Group considers issues

ranging from ensuring new homes that are built meet the highest standards of insulation, to ensuring Catalyst offices recycle properly.

How did CCHA do (Apr 2009 – Mar 2010)

- Repairs completed on time: emergency (99.0%), urgent (95.9%) and routine (98.3%)
- Repairs satisfaction: 94%
- Homes with valid gas safety certificate: 99.2%
- Homes meeting the Decent Homes Standard: 98.3%

Where CCHA plans to improve

- Continue work towards agreeing a new repairs contract by April 2011, which will ensure the best possible service for CCHA residents, at the best possible cost – which is known as value for money (VFM).
- Residents will continue to monitor the service through mystery shopping and through

reviewing the performance of the contractors in joint meetings with the repairs managers.

Local Offers

A survey was done with residents across Catalyst over the summer, to agree the Local Offers.

Residents were asked a series of questions relating to this Standard, the results follow:

- Residents would like to receive information about home improvement, cyclical (external) and other works programmes affecting their home and area in a letter or email directly to them.
- Residents would like to be kept informed and updated about progress or changes to these programmes regularly (every 3 months) in a letter or email directly to them.

Tenancy including allocations

Standard 3



CCHA must provide residents with information regarding allocations of housing, rents and tenures.

Some achievements so far

- CCHA has a dedicated Allocations Manager to oversee lettings, ensuring they are let to new residents as quickly as possible, working in partnership with local councils and Choice Based Lettings Schemes to improve the service for residents.
- CCHA employed 9 young people through the government Future Jobs Fund, at no cost to CCHA, to work with residents with low arrears, to ensure they are paying and meeting their obligations as a resident.
- CCHA managed the handover of 3 large estates from other landlords, ensuring the residents who were becoming CCHA tenants went through a smooth process, providing them with information and support.

How did CCHA do (Apr 2009 – Mar 2010)

- Average time to re-let a property: 32.5 days
- Percentage of empty homes: 1.08%
- Current resident arrears as % of rent roll: 7.25%
- Rent collected as % of rent due: 99.4%

Where CCHA plans to improve

- CCHA will review the policy and processes it follows for the allocation of homes to ensure that they are let to the people who most need them.
- CCHA will continue to work closely with G15 (the 15 largest landlords in London) to try and reduce homelessness in London, through making best use of our homes, by encouraging residents to move to smaller properties if they have spare rooms, or by 'de-converting' street properties from flats back into houses

Introduced by Noel Jones, GRF Member and CCHA South East resident.

Residents of CCHA South East are part of a group called IRIS, made up of 5 landlords in the area. Residents have been trained to carry out inspections on tenancy management. We then inspected each other's landlords for 2-3 days, interviewing staff and checking policies and then made recommendations for where they need to improve. We are sharing this experience across the Group to demonstrate how residents can help improve services.

so that larger families are not overcrowded.

Neighbourhood & Community

Standard 4



Introduced by Richard Mwangi, GRF Member, Group Board member and CCHA resident.

CCHA has worked in partnership with the Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH) so that residents can be trained and get qualifications in housing. As part of the training we have been taught mystery shopping techniques so that we can 'check' services are being carried out as they are supposed to be.

CCHA has a duty to maintain and safeguard neighbourhoods and communities, working with partnership organisations and agencies where necessary.

Some achievements so far

- CCHA ensure that anti-social behaviour (ASB) cases are dealt with promptly and action is taken to reduce any effect the ASB might have on other neighbours. In addition, it has reviewed the way ASB cases are dealt with to ensure the right level of support is provided and action is taken to prevent serious ASB from occurring.
- CCHA has a grounds maintenance contract with Just Ask, which residents are very satisfied with as the contractors ensure the communal areas are well kept. In addition, CCHA has set up a scheme for residents to use, where they can pay Just Ask to have their own garden

tidied up, helping improve the whole area.

- CCHA has worked with residents flexibly to encourage them to help improve the area where they live. An example of this is on one estate, where residents have taken over some spare land and developed it into a communal fruit and vegetable patch.

Where CCHA plans to improve

- Use the recommendations from the ASB review to improve the way cases are dealt with and make sure CCHA is providing the best possible service to residents with the resources available.
- Extend the gardening scheme with Just Ask to all areas, including areas where other landlords also manage homes and making it available to their residents, to help improve local areas.
- Review the way that estates are managed, including looking at the estate inspection programmes and improving

the way CCHA feeds back to residents about what has been done after the estate inspections.

Local Offers

- CCHA will review and agree the Local Offer on Neighbourhood and Community with residents between October 2010 and April 2011. Neighbourhood Managers will work closely with caretakers, other local staff and any local Residents' Associations or block reps to identify and agree the Local Offer for their area or estate. It will take account of issues such as caretaking, cleaning, grounds maintenance and gardening arrangements for that estate.
- Once the Local Offer has been agreed with local residents, they will then need to agree how it will be monitored to make sure CCHA is doing what they say they will.

Value for money

Standard 5



Introduced by Janet Hart, GRF Member and Catalyst resident.

As residents, we can get involved in decisions about Value for Money (VFM) by becoming Board Members. The Board Member's role includes ensuring the organisation is spending the rent money in the best way for the benefit of residents. The GRF also try to get the best VFM for residents, through influencing decisions, for example not to print this report and send it to every single resident, only to those who request a copy and will read it.

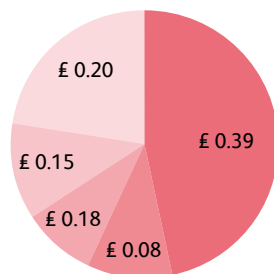
CCHA must manage its resources to provide a cost effective, efficient and quality service. Value for Money (VfM) is about doing the right things (effectiveness) in the right way (efficiency) for the best price (economy).

Some achievements so far

- CCHA has worked closely with the contractors it uses for bulk rubbish collection, to reduce the time spent travelling between areas, and to ensure they only go to areas as often as is needed. This has saved £70,000 to date compared with the previous year.
- CCHA introduced fixed service charges for residents which means that they know how much they have to pay for any services in addition to their rent and CCHA ensures it does not spend more than the fixed amount.
- CCHA compares its costs to other landlords through an organisation

called 'Housemark', which helps to show where services are being delivered more expensively or cheaply than other organisations. It therefore helps identify where savings could be made or if savings are already being made compared to others.

How did CCHA do (Apr 2009 – Mar 2010)



For every £ spent	Amount (£)
Managing Homes	£ 0.39
Repairing Homes	£ 0.08
Improving Homes	£ 0.18
Interest payable	£ 0.15
Reinvestment fund	£ 0.20
Check total	£ 1.00

Where CCHA plans to improve

- CCHA is due to complete re-tendering of the repairs contract for CCHA London, so that the new contract will be in place by April 2011. As residents have been involved in shaping the new contract, it should mean that the service from April better meets residents' needs in terms of appointments and the quality and speed of responses.
- CCHA South East is also due to re-tender the repairs contract, which will be a smaller and more local contract as the homes in that area are more spread out and so the needs are slightly different. Residents in the South East will be involved in the re-tendering process.
- CCHA will take part in a group-wide review of its legal costs to ensure that value for money is being achieved through the arrangements in place with different solicitors, as money could be saved by reducing the number of different solicitors used across the Group.

Governance & financial viability

Standard 6



Introduced by John Foxall, Managing Director of CCHA.

The final of the 6 Standards is about how the organisation is managed and how we make sure we are legally and financially sound. As the Managing Director of CCHA I am responsible for this together with the CCHA Board.

CCHA is a large housing association managing more than 10,000 homes across West London and the South East. With Kensington Housing Trust (KHT) and Fortunegate Community Housing (FCH), we are part of Catalyst Housing Group, which manages around 16,000 homes.

Being part of a Group means we have more financial security and more influence to achieve better deals with suppliers and contractors to deliver value for money to residents. However, even though we are part of the Group, we also make sure that the services residents receive are locally focused and reflect the different needs of the communities we serve. The Group

has three key aims:

- Customer-driven services - A dramatic improvement in the way that the customer shapes our products and services.
- Growth - Substantial growth by developing new homes and by enlarging the Group to further strengthen our financial viability.
- Profitability - Greater profitability so that we are less reliant on scarcer public subsidy and can invest in homes and services.

Improving services for customers is a top priority, and our focus is on improving the services that matter most to customers. Residents have consistently told us that their priorities are improving our management of repairs, estate services, and dealing with anti-social behaviour as well as meeting housing need and offering opportunities for resident involvement.

We are working on an initiative to improve how customers experience our services, through making them more convenient and more

consistent across the Catalyst Group. As part of this project we have invited residents to get involved through focus groups, surveys and existing residents' groups such as the Group Residents' Federation. We started this project in May 2010 and so far nearly 400 residents have given us plenty of ideas on how to improve our services. We are building these ideas into our improvement plans. Across the Group the Boards are taking a keen interest in how services are tailored to local circumstances and in making sure our plans will deliver improvements for customers.

We will keep you informed of our plans and progress through our newsletters and website. We welcome your views and ideas for further ways in which we can improve, so if you would like to get involved, please complete the form on page nine.

With best wishes.

John Foxall, Managing Director

This document gives information about how we have performed over the last year. 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.

Albanian

Ky dokument ju jep informacione në lidhje me menyren si kemi funksionuar ne gjatë vitit të kaluar, 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.

Chinese

本文档提供关于我们在过去的一年中的运作方面的信息。如果您需要将这些信息的任何部分以大字体印刷形式、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。

Hindi

यह दस्तावेज़ इस बारे में जानकारी देता है कि पिछले वर्ष में हमारा प्रदर्शन कैसा रहा। 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।

Punjabi

ਇਹ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਪਿਛਲੇ ਵਰ੍ਹੇ ਵਿੱਚ ਸਾਡੀ ਕਾਰਗੁਜ਼ਾਰੀ ਕਿਵੇਂ ਰਹੀ 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।

Urdu

یہ دستاویز گزشتہ سالوں میں ہماری کارکردگی کے بارے میں معلومات فراہم کرتا 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۔

Bengali

এই দস্তাবেজটি আপনি গত বছর কি রকম সাফল্য অর্জন করলেন সেই সম্বন্ধে তথ্য সরবরাহ করবে। যদি আপনি এই তথ্যগুলোর যে কোন একটির সম্বন্ধে বিস্তারিত জানতে চান, অথবা আপনার নিজের ভাষাতে ব্ৰেল, সিডি, অডিও টেপ-এ পেতে চান তাহলে নিম্নলিখিত নম্বরে আমাদের সাথে যোগাযোগ করুন।

Portuguese

Este documento proporciona-lhe informações sobre o nosso desempenho no último ano. 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.

Polish

Niniejszy dokument zawiera informacje o naszej działalności w poprzednim roku. 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 podanym niżej numerem.

Somali

Dokumentigan wuxuu ku saabsan yahay warka ku saabsan wax-sameeynta shirkeena sanadkan. 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.

020 8832 3344

Your name

Your address

Your email address

Your phone number

(mobile and landline)

Would you like to be involved in setting the local offers for your area to improve the community or estate?

Yes _____ No _____

Do you have any suggestions for how we can improve services for residents?

Do you have any suggestions for how you think we can save money?

Would you like to get involved with the Group Residents Federation?

Yes _____ No _____



Catalyst
Communities

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Catalyst Communities HA

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