



Kensington Housing Trust (KHT)

Residents' Annual Report September 2010

Produced in partnership by KHT and the Group Residents' Federation



Kensington
Housing Trust



Contents

1	Welcome
2	Standard 1
3	Standard 2
4	Standard 3
5	Standard 4
6	Standard 5
7	Standard 6
8	Translations
9	Get involved

Welcome



Welcome to the Annual Report from your landlord Kensington Housing Trust (KHT). 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 KHT is doing. KHT 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 KHT 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 KHT Local Offers, which are set out on the following pages.

How can residents can get copies of the report?

We know that it is important to residents that KHT 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 housing officer 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, Catalyst resident and Catalyst 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.

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

Some achievements so far

- KHT set up a Resident Involvement Panel to coordinate the resident involvement activity locally to KHT and make sure there is a structure so that residents can get involved in the areas and ways they want.
- KHT jointly agreed with residents an improvement plan, based on the recommendations made by the Audit Commission. Residents also help KHT to monitor the plan.
- KHT has taken positive action to involve hard-to-reach groups. KHT have used local translators to speak to people whose first language is not English, and youth workers with young people, to find out their views.

How did KHT do (April 2009 – March 2010)

- Resident satisfaction with views taken into account: 50%
- Resident satisfaction with the way

the last call was handled: 94 %

- Complaints resolved at first stage: 76.2 %
- Resident satisfaction with the way complaint was handled: 70 %
- Residents participating in involvement groups: 3.96 % (95 residents)

Where KHT 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.
- Rolling out mystery shopping to ensure that residents' can monitor how well KHT is doing at delivering services against the standards agreed with residents.
- Setting up a resident benchmarking group for residents to meet with residents of other housing associations to compare how their landlords are

doing and see where they need to improve.

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 so KHT will further develop our satisfaction surveys on anti-social behaviour (ASB), Complaints and Neighbourhood Services by April 2011.
- If residents do not think KHT 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 KHT is doing against the Standards & 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 John Kehoe, GRF chair and KHT resident.

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.

KHT 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

- KHT set up a Repairs Panel, where residents can monitor how well the repairs service is being delivered and work with the staff and contractors to improve.
- KHT introduced 2 appointment slots for am and pm, to give residents' greater flexibility when they need a repair to be carried out and take less time out of their day.
- The repairs contractors – Mears – are based in the same building as KHT staff which means arranging repairs appointments or raising any queries can be done quickly. Residents can also call through directly to Mears to make their appointments saving time.

How did KHT do (Apr 2009 – Mar 2010)

- Repairs completed on time: Emergency - 98.97 %; urgent - 98.43 %; routine - 99.10 %
- Satisfaction with repairs: 98 %
- Homes with valid gas safety certificate: 98.1 % which was significantly below target due to staffing changes with the gas contractor, however performance has improved and is 99.3 % (Sept 2010)
- Homes meeting the government's Decent Homes Standard: 99.1 %

Where KHT plans to improve

- Regenerate Wornington Green to ensure the homes and the area reflect the needs of the existing and future residents. The new homes include 'green' or energy efficient aspects such as photovoltaic cells to generate energy and save residents money.
- Piloting Saturday morning appointments for repairs to ensure that services are flexible

and meet the needs of residents who are working or have other commitments making weekday appointments difficult.

- Rolling out the recharge policy to ensure that KHT is fairly recharging residents for any repairs or damage which they should be meeting the costs of.

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 direct 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 direct to them.

Tenancy including allocations

Standard 3



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

Some achievements so far

- KHT has worked with residents, other landlords and the Council to help find other homes for 36 households who needed to move out of Wornington Green, so that the first phase of the regeneration can begin on time.
- The tenancy agreements have been modernised to ensure they are in a clear language and don't use too much technical housing wording; they also contain very clear clauses about how KHT will deal with Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB).
- KHT has a contract with HASKC, an organisation who provide welfare and debt advice to residents at risk of eviction for rent arrears, to help KHT residents manage their rent arrears and avoid losing their homes.

How did KHT do (Apr 2009 – Mar 2010)

- Average time to re-let a property 54.4 days – this is due to having to carefully match up empty homes when they become vacant with the families, couples and single people needing to be moved out of the Wornington Green homes due to be regenerated.
- Dwellings Vacant: 1.27 %
- Current resident arrears as % of rent roll: 6.25 %
- Rent collected as % of rent due: 99.74 %

Where KHT plans to improve

- KHT will continue to 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.
- KHT will continue to work closely with G15 (the 15 largest social landlords in London) to try to reduce homelessness in London, through making best use of our homes, by encouraging residents

Introduced by Noel Jones, GRF Member and Catalyst resident.

Catalyst residents in Berkshire are part of a group called IRIS, made up of 5 landlords in the South East. 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.

to move to smaller properties if they have spare rooms. They will also work closely with the local Councils to share information to make sure homes are not being illegally sub-let.

Neighbourhood & Community

Standard 4



Introduced by Karina Skinner, GRF Member and KHT resident.

Catalyst 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.

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

Some achievements so far

- KHT ensure that 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.
- KHT jointly pays for a local neighbourhood manager post at the Dalgarno estate, with 4 other landlords, to make sure residents in the area receive a joined up service to help improve their community.
- KHT residents are highly satisfied with the caretaking service, with

caretakers providing a twice weekly drive-round service to remove bulk rubbish items. This ensures estates and communities look clean and tidy.

- KHT runs the Pathways 2 Progress scheme to young people at risk of becoming involved in criminal or ASB activity, to provide training and positive role model opportunities.

Where KHT plans to improve

- Introduce an ASB Residents' Panel to review the way we deal with ASB cases and ensure we are providing the best possible service to our residents with the resources available.
- Merge the KHT Community Investment Team into the newly formed Catalyst Gateway. This Group-wide operation will strengthen KHT's ability to attract funding, to continue to support local events and activities and to provide more opportunities for residents to improve their quality of life.

Local Offers

- KHT will review and agree the Local Offer on Neighbourhood and Community with residents between October 2010 and April 2011. Housing officers will work closely with the caretakers, other local staff and any local Residents' Associations or block reps to identify and agree the Local Offer for their area or estate. The offer 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 KHT is doing what they say they will.

Value for money

Standard 5



Introduced by Janet Hart, GRF Member, and KHT resident.

As residents one way we can get involved in decisions about Value for Money (VfM) by becoming Board Members. The Board Member whose role includes ensuring the organisation is spending the rent money in the best way for the benefit of residents. The GRF also try and 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.

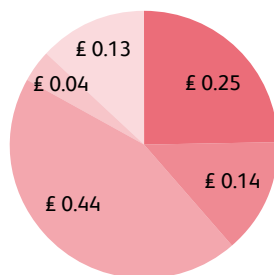
KHT must manage its resources to provide a cost effective, efficient and quality service. Value for Money (VfM) is about doing the right things (effectiveness) in the right way (efficiency) for the best price (economy).

Some achievements so far

- KHT reviewed the caretaking service and was able to save the cost of one caretaker by re-organising the way that the team covers areas and carries out their work.
- KHT has achieved value for money from the partnering contract it has with Mears for repairs. For example, residents have benefited from flexible services such as evening and weekend appointments, at no extra cost to the contract.
- KHT compares its costs and performance with other landlords through an organisation called 'HouseMark'. From information so far available from HouseMark for 2009/10 we compare well with peer landlords in our housing management costs. Our costs

for repairs and voids are higher than some other landlords with the regeneration of Wornington Green vital to achieving better value for money. Another area we have identified for savings is our overhead costs for support services such as IT, finance and other central costs and we will be working on this in the year ahead.

How did KHT do (Apr 2009 – Mar 2010)



For every £ spent	
Managing Homes	£ 0.25
Repairing Homes	£ 0.14
Improving Homes	£ 0.44
Interest payable	£ 0.04
Reinvestment fund	£ 0.13
Check total	£ 1.00

Where KHT plans to improve

- KHT reviewed its spending on

pest control and has identified it will be cheaper to employ a pest control officer directly. This will make a minimum saving of £30,000 rather than paying contractors to do this.

- KHT is introducing a way for residents to make a value for money assessment of services, for example using an index to assess the value for money of resident involvement activities. This will allow residents to work with KHT to assess what services are providing value for money and which are not.
- KHT 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.
- KHT will be introducing 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 KHT can ensure it does not spend more than the fixed amount.

Governance & financial viability

Standard 6



*Introduced by Manpreet Dillon,
Managing Director of KHT.*

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 KHT I am responsible for this together with the KHT Board.

KHT provide over 3300 homes in West London and with Fortunegate Community Housing (FCH) and Catalyst Communities Housing Association (CCHA), we are part of Catalyst Housing Group, which manages over 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.

Moving to a new home/bigger home is also a key issue for many residents. Whilst we are not always able to do this, due to demand outstripping supply, we are working with residents and our partner local authorities to try and maximise the opportunities to move.

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,
Manpreet Dillon, 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 gjate 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 ব্রেল, 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 8960 5544

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 _____



Kensington
Housing Trust

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