



Fortunegate Community Housing (FCH)

Residents' Annual Report September 2010

Produced in partnership by Fortunegate and the Group Residents' Federation



Fortunegate
Community Housing



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 Fortunegate. As a member 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 Fortunegate Community Housing (FCH) is doing. Fortunegate 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 Fortunegate 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 Fortunegate 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,

Brigid Neal
(GRF member, Fortunegate resident and Board member)

Tenant Involvement & customer care

Standard 1



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

Catalyst 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.

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

Some achievements so far

- Fortunegate set up the Elders Forum to represent the interests of elder members of the community. Many of Fortunegate's residents are elderly and this Forum makes sure their views are heard.
- Fortunegate provided 20 residents with training through Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH) courses, to give them the skills to be able to monitor how well Fortunegate is doing on delivering services.
- Fortunegate involved residents in interviewing and recruiting staff to key roles, including the Managing Director position, helping to ensure the people who work at Fortunegate work well with local residents.

How did Fortunegate do (April 2009 – March 2010)

- Resident satisfaction with views taken into account: 51.5 %
- Resident satisfaction with landlord services: 78 %
- Complaints resolved at first stage: 86 %

Where Fortunegate 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.
- Rolling out a 'block rep' scheme where residents can represent the block in which they live and take forward issues affecting residents living there.

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 Fortunegate will introduce satisfaction surveys on anti-social behaviour (ASB), Complaints and Neighbourhood Services by April 2011.
- If residents do not think Fortunegate 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 Fortunegate 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 Ebrahim Kinteh, GRF Member and Fortunegate 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.

Fortunegate 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

- Residents have very high satisfaction with the repairs service at Fortunegate, due to the contract with Capital Heating, who they have worked with for 5 years. This means that the residents know and trust the staff and they know the residents and understand what they need.
- Residents can call directly through to the Capital Heating call centre and they can respond quickly to any requests for repairs.
- Capital Heating introduced a 0300 low-cost number for repairs so that residents calling from mobiles do not have to pay more, which they had to with the previous 0800 number. They have

issued new magnets to publicise the new number.

How did Fortunegate do (Apr 2009 – Mar 2010)

- Repairs completed on time: Emergency repairs 100%, Urgent repairs 99.5% and Routine repairs 99.5%
- Average satisfaction score for repairs: 9.5 out of 10
- Homes with valid gas safety certificate: 99.4%
- Homes meeting the Decent Homes Standard: 99.2%

Where Fortunegate plans to improve

- Set up a local Repairs Scrutiny Panel for residents to involve them in monitoring the repairs service.
- Use the customer profile information about residents to identify who might benefit from the aids and adaptations provided by Fortunegate in partnership with Brent Council.

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



Introduced by Noel Jones, GRF Member and Catalyst resident.

Residents of the Group 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.

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

Some achievements so far

- Fortunegate reviewed the way that homes are re-let to ensure new residents can move in quickly, which also reduces the amount of money Fortunegate loses for the period the home is empty. In 3 months, the improvements have meant that the time it takes to let new homes has reduced by half.
- Fortunegate employed 4 young people through the government Future Jobs Fund, at no cost to Fortunegate, to work with residents with low arrears, to ensure they are paying and meeting their obligations as a resident.

How did Fortunegate do (Apr 2009 – Mar 2010)

- Average time to re-let a property

51.6 days (this has improved to 29 days in August 2010)

- Dwellings Vacant: 0.6 % (8 properties)
- Current resident arrears as % of rent roll: 8.9 %
- Rent collected as % of rent due: 101.6 %

Where Fortunegate plans to improve

- Fortunegate 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.
- Fortunegate will continue to work closely with G15 (the 15 largest social landlords in London) to try and reduce homelessness in London, through making best use of homes. This will involve encouraging residents to move to smaller properties if they have spare rooms, or by checking that the residents who are supposed to be living in the homes are,

and the property is not being illegally sub-let.

- Fortunegate has signed a partnership with Brent Council to ensure that sub-letting is addressed, by being able to check our residents against the fraud register.

Neighbourhood & Community

Standard 4



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

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

Some achievements so far

- Fortunegate 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. 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.
- Fortunegate has arranged the Way Forward event for more than 90 young people aged between 11-14 to attend events during school holidays, to try and prevent young people from 'hanging around' estates and potentially causing ASB.
- Fortunegate has worked closely with the Safer Neighbourhood Teams

locally to deal with any serious cases of ASB to ensure residents can live safely in their communities.

- Fortunegate set up and coordinated a group, bringing together lots of partner organisations including the police, to crack down on ASB and crime in Church Road, as part of work to improve the area as a place to live.

Where Fortunegate Plans to improve

- Use the recommendations from the ASB review to improve the way cases are dealt with and make sure Fortunegate is providing the best possible service to residents with the resources available.
- Continue to improve the Church Road area of Neasden, through regenerating the area, developing plans with the council to build new homes and shops to replace existing empty properties.
- Play a key part in the local Crime

Focus Group which allows local landlords to meet and share information about ASB cases and work together to improve neighbourhoods for residents.

Local Offers

- Fortunegate 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. 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 Fortunegate 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.

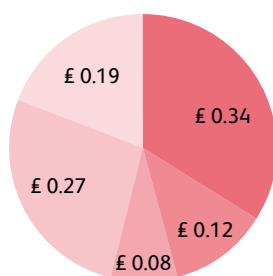
Fortunegate must manage its resources to provide a cost effective, efficient and quality service. Value for Money (VfM) is about doing the right things (effectiveness) in the right way (efficiency) for the best price (economy).

Some achievements so far

- Fortunegate has used a consortium 'Buy4London' to buy boilers, which has saved more than £50,000 due to the costs being lower by using the consortium.
- Fortunegate has brought estate services in-house, rather than paying a contractor to carry out estate works. This has saved £86,000 across the year.
- Fortunegate 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 most service areas

such as housing management and repairs. One area where we need to make savings is in our overhead costs for support services such as IT, finance, premises and other central costs and we will be working on this in the year ahead.

How did Fortunegate do? (Apr 2009 – Mar 2010)



For every £1 spent

Managing Homes	£ 0.34
Repairing Homes	£ 0.12
Improving Homes	£ 0.08
Interest payable	£ 0.27
Reinvestment fund	£ 0.19
Check total	£ 1.00

Where Fortunegate plans to improve

- Fortunegate will introduce 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 Fortunegate has to ensure it does not spend more than the fixed amount.

- Fortunegate will continue to work with the repairs contractor – Capital Heating – to ensure that the contract continues to provide the best value for money for residents.
- Fortunegate will maximise the use of the Unity Centre to ensure that running costs are met through income it makes, or through developing partnerships with other local organisations who can use it.
- Fortunegate 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 Paul Yates, Managing Director of Fortunegate.

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

Fortunegate is a small housing association providing over 1,900 homes in Brent in London. With Kensington Housing Trust (KHT) and Catalyst Communities Housing Association (CCHA), 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 deal 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.

Paul Yates, 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 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 8438 1800

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 _____



Fortunegate
Community Housing

Wendy Bohan
Resident Involvement Officer
Fortunegate Community Housing

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required

FREEPOST

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