

Barnet Homes Annual Review

2016-17



*On the cover: Young residents going
for gold at Urban Gamez 2017.*

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Troy Henshall, CEO The Barnet Group

Another year to be proud of at Barnet Homes

2016/17 was certainly a year to be proud of and an important first year of our Good to Great Business Plan. However, we acknowledge there is still significant hard work ahead of us to deliver the services our customers desire.

At the beginning of the year we were set a challenge to improve our re-let times for properties. We reduced the number of days' from 21 to 13.4 which is a fantastic result. This meant we had the best performance in London and was one of the highlights of our year.

By contrast overall tenant satisfaction reduced by 2% from 81% in 2014/15 to 79%. This was disappointing but we are using the feedback from the survey to drive improvements in our

services and I am hopeful this will improve in 2018. Leaseholder satisfaction increased by 4% which showed the improvement plans in this service are starting to have a positive effect.

There were many good news stories including the continued funding of the women's refuge we run in partnership with Solace Women's aid and the completion of the Syrian refugee resettlement project.

We achieved a record number of homelessness preventions, meaning nearly 1,000 individuals or families - more than ever before - were able to stay in their property when facing the threat of homelessness. Our work on the Welfare Reform Task Force also meant over 2,000



residents were supported.

As always, we continued to review our services in order to make improvements and ensure they offer great value for money. We finished the review of our Caretaking service following feedback from residents and leaseholders and are looking forward to the results of this once the changes have bedded down.

Creating Opendoor Homes, our Registered Provider, and receiving approval from the Homes and Communities Agency was a major step for us, enabling us to increase the volume of affordable housing being built in the borough. Our Development team also made significant progress on the Moreton Court Extra

Care scheme and we look forward to this being completed next year.

Finally, we were also very proud to win a couple of awards from partners we work with in Healthcare and Education. Partnership working is key for us and we should thank all of our partners for their efforts and support.

A good start and we look forward to the next twelve months.

Troy Henshall,
CEO The Barnet Group

John Davies, Chair of PAG

A word from our Performance Advisory Group



I can't believe a whole year has gone by since I wrote my last report, and what a year it has been for PAG. In the spring we completed our Community Engagement promotional video which you can see by visiting our website, **barnethomes.org**. It was a great success and it was really good to know that so many Barnet Homes residents want to be involved in the wider community and by being a voice for all our residents.

We successfully completed our review of our gas contractors, Robert Heath, The Customer's Journey and we are really proud of this piece of work. This too can be viewed on the Barnet Homes website.

We had our first PAG away day, held at the new community hall on the regenerated Stonegrove estate in Edgware on Saturday 24th September.

We spent the day reflecting on our recent review; our role and identity; considering our role in relation to the community engagement strategy; identifying ways to encourage involvement; discussing the support required to enable the group to carry out their work and agreeing a forward plan for 2017/18.

We continued working with the Neighbourhood team on the caretaking review and were involved in a series of workshops. We assisted in the repairs review, agreeing customer involvement and making calls to residents to



John Davies with garden club member Madge.

verify the satisfaction surveys that are carried out for quality control purposes.

We approved 11 community projects to receive grants from the Robert Heath First Time Access Fund with a total spend of almost £6,000. This is an initiative set up by PAG in 2015 where we receive a pound from Robert Heath every time they gain access first time to a property to carry out the annual gas safety check.

These projects included funding for exercise classes for elderly residents in one of our sheltered schemes; a fun day on one of our regeneration estates; numerous gardening projects; a new surface for an outdoor gym at one of our Your Choice Barnet schemes and

sponsoring the Barnet & Southgate College student awards. It is great to see so many worthwhile projects taking place across the borough and being able to support them.

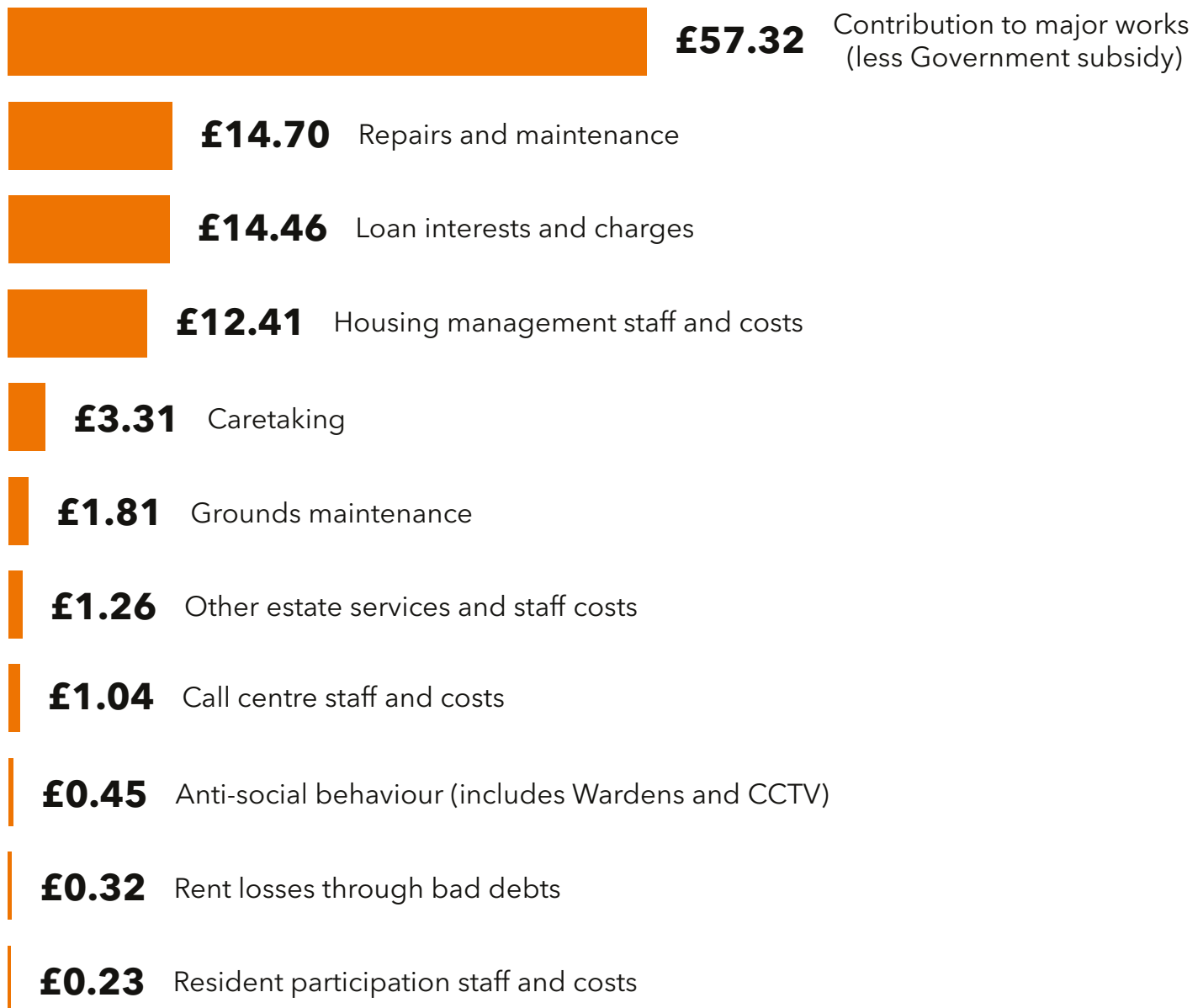
We continue to act as a critical friend to many service areas within The Barnet Group and currently have service champions in our repairs, gas, new build and our leasehold teams.

This really is an exciting time to be involved with Barnet Homes as it continues to grow and we know we make a difference to the services received by all our residents. We still need more residents to get involved so I would urge you to be part of this and help us help you.

How YOUR rent and service charge was spent in 2016/17

Where your rent and service charge goes

The 2016/17 average weekly rent and service charge was £107.32. We consistently review spending to ensure services for residents are value for money and reflect residents' priorities.



Performance - Service Areas

Barnet Homes is performing strongly and in most areas compares well against similar organisations. Our key performance areas below have all shown increased or maintained satisfaction levels, with our 99% repairs satisfaction a particular highlight. Major works satisfaction and empty property condition satisfaction are both extremely high, at 96%.

	2016/17	2015/16	Year on year progress
Void (empty properties) condition satisfaction	96% (Target: 92%)	94% (Target: 92%)	▲
Repairs satisfaction (tenants)	99% (Target: 90%)	99% (Target: 90%)	▶
Major works satisfaction (tenants and leaseholders)	96% (Target: 94%)	95% (Target: 94%)	▲
Current arrears as % of rent (tenants)	3.04% (Target: 3%)	3.24% (Target: 3.3%)	▲
Average re-let time for properties (tenants)	13.5 days (Target: 17.48 days)	21 days (Target: 24 days)	▲
Contact Centre satisfied customers (tenants)	93% (Target: 80%)	93% (Target: 80%)	▶
Service Charge collection including arrears (leaseholders)	101.3% (Target: 100%)	100.5% (Target: 100%)	▲
Properties with an up-to-date gas safety certificate	100% (Target: 100%)	100% (Target: 100%)	▶
Stock unavailable due to major works (tenants)	0.06% (Target: 0.15%)	0.10% (Target: 0.15%)	▲
Freedom of Information requests answered on time (anyone)	100% (Target: 100%)	100% (Target: 100%)	▶

	2016/17	2014/15	2013/14
Overall tenant satisfaction	79%	81%	
Overall leasehold satisfaction	51%		47%

'From Good to Great', The Barnet Group Business Plan

Year 1: 2016-17



2016-17 has been another successful year for The Barnet Group, and Barnet Homes in particular. This success has been built on year one of our 'Good to Great' Business Plan. The plan sets out our vision for the future and is focused on delivering improvements and developments for customers and the community.

Our Business Plan priorities are broken up into three key themes:

Putting People First

- We will **listen** to what matters to our customers and partners, offer real choices, support their aspirations and respond effectively, achieving **positive** outcomes
- We will **support**, involve and develop our employees and make The Barnet Group a great place to work
- We will **enable** and **empower** the people we support, to ensure maximum independence and control over their environment.

Thinking Differently and Challenging Ourselves

- We will build on our existing strengths and use our core services of delivering quality homes, housing management and care as the foundations for all service improvements, efficiencies and growth
- We will combine our expertise and ethos with insight and **innovation** to deliver the most efficient, consistent and effective services individually and with our partners, including getting more things **right first time**
- We will **transform** our Group by challenging how we work to focus on outcomes, impact and the **value** of our work.

Growing our Business

- We will seek growth opportunities that support our aspirations of moving from 'good to great' or provide the opportunity to demonstrate the benefit of our **'good to great'** model
- We will look to grow in areas that allow us to increase our economies of scale and share costs without distracting us from our five year vision
- We will seek opportunities for growth which will provide opportunities for the development of the people we support, the staff providing that support and for **innovative** future service provision.

The Barnet Group is growing in scale and ambition and our Business Plan sets out our vision as we continue to focus on the journey to become a 'Great' organisation.

Part of this is making sure we deliver consistent and cost-effective services that meet the needs and aspirations of our customers.

This Annual Review highlights some of our key achievements in 2016-17.



Putting People First

We celebrated the anniversary of our domestic violence one-stop-shop which helped 244 victims in its first year. Additionally, our refuge has kept 18 families, including 26 children, safe from violence and enabled 12 women and 18 children to move on to settled accommodation



February
2017

Housing Options received the fantastic news that their domestic violence women's refuge would receive £100k of funding from the Department for Communities and Local Government, which will sustain Minerva House until 31 March 2018.

Run in partnership with Solace Women's Aid, Minerva House provides six adult bed spaces and ten children's bed spaces for women fleeing domestic violence regardless of their geographical area or background. The funding will maintain these bed spaces, and will enable Barnet Homes and Solace Women's Aid to better support victims with specialist and complex needs.

Pictured: Staff from The Barnet Group and Hammerson PLC take part in Hammerson's 'fix-up' day at the refuge

Delivering dementia-friendly major repairs and services in our sheltered schemes



December
2016

Our Sheltered Housing and Housing Support Team manage a number of sheltered housing schemes for older people who want to live independently, but require some added support.

We manage over 400 homes, which are usually within a block with their own front door. Residents have their own kitchens and bathrooms, and separate bedrooms or living rooms. They have access to communal facilities within their sheltered housing blocks. All our sheltered housing properties are fitted with our 24-hour Assist alarm system, with pull cords in every room.

We support our residents by holding a number of social events, of which the jewel in the crown is without a doubt the Christmas Tea Dance (pictured).

This year, guests were joined by members of Your Choice Barnet's CommunitySpace day centre, as well as a visit from the then-Mayor of Barnet, Cllr David Longstaff. There was also music hall entertainment and a generous raffle provided by contractors Mears.

Residents were taken for a real trip down memory lane by Pearly King Mickey Driver, who belted out music hall classics such as Doing the Lambeth Walk and We'll Meet Again.

Working with our partners and contractors to generate nearly £38,000 of social investment and support for our communities, including event sponsorship and apprenticeship schemes



May
2016

On Tuesday 17th May Barnet Homes hosted the Service Provider Awards. These were set up as a way of recognising some of the excellent work carried out by staff working for other organisations who frequently become the face or voice of Barnet Homes when works are carried out.

29 Nominations were received across the three categories, each based on a Barnet Homes value. Nominations came from a wide range of service areas within Barnet Homes and from contractors themselves. Three residents (Jan Anderson, David Atta and Aruna Bhatt) undertook the challenging task of shortlisting and deciding a winner for each award, as follows:

Responding to individuals - James McCormack - Mears

Shortlisted;

Christiane Marlen - Mears

Darren Oliver - Mears

One Team, One Outcome - Mears Commercial Team

Shortlisted;

Gary Fox - Mears

W A McGregors - Sub contractors to Morgan Sindall

Taking Ownership - Danielle Richardson - Wigginton (Sub contractor to Lovell T/A Morgan Sindall)

Shortlisted;

Julie Clive - Mears

Stefan Eriksson - Mears



Improving residents' homes through the Capital Works Programme

The delivery of the Capital Works Programme is one of the most important schemes of work undertaken by Barnet Homes to maintain and improve the qualities of residents' homes.

Around £25m a year is spent maintaining the housing stock on crucial components such as electrical rising mains, fire safety installations, windows, roofs, kitchens and much more. We undertake these planned replacement works to reduce the number of responsive repairs Barnet Homes has to carry out. This strategy reduces disruption to our residents and is a cost effective way of maintaining their homes.

Strong partnership working from the team and our contractors ensures value for money for tenants and leaseholders alike. They manage customers through often disruptive and invasive work with professionalism and sensitivity.

CLCH Partner of the Year award!

In September 2016, the sixth annual celebration of NHS staff and their CLCH (Central London Community Healthcare) partners was held at the Church House in Westminster. On the night, Barnet Homes' Housing Needs Officer Rob White picked up the CLCH Partner of the Year award!

The award recognises the efforts of staff and external partners for the outstanding contributions they provide. Rob was nominated by the NHS family nurse who had been assigned to support three homeless teenage mothers whom Rob helped into accommodation.

Tariq Ahmed, Housing Needs manager who attended the awards with Rob said "I am delighted to announce that Rob was crowned the winner of the CLCH Partner of the Year! It was great to see Rob representing The Barnet Group and picking up the award. It is clear that partnership working provides many benefits, including increased customer satisfaction and potential efficiencies - something Housing Options is committed to."

Fulfilling Barnet's commitment to resettle 50 Syrian Refugees

2015-2017

In October 2015, Barnet's local Councillors voted unanimously in favour of resettling 50 Syrian refugees in the borough. The council entrusted this sensitive project to Barnet Homes and it was delivered seamlessly with support from partnership organisations and voluntary organisations such as Timebank and Citizens UK.

In May 2017, the final family was settled in Barnet, bringing the total to 50 individuals, fulfilling the council's pledge. The refugees are now building links in the community and making Barnet their home. They are making steady progress in learning English and some have found employment in industries such as hairdressing and the media.

Starting the delivery of our People Strategy (2016-19)



2016-17

Year one of The Barnet Group's People Strategy looked at the results of the 2015 Staff Survey, and developed projects in four key areas: **attracting, developing and retaining the best talent, making The Barnet Group a great place to work, promoting and supporting transformational leadership and management, and developing a culture of one team, high performance and learning.** Considerable progress was achieved across all four themes, which provided a strong starting-point going in to year two of the strategy.



To attract, develop and retain the best talent, we...

- built a learning and development programme to enhance internal competence and skills
- developed a grow your own strategy, including apprenticeships and graduate trainees
- introduced a coaching and mentoring approach, including participation in the Housing Diversity Network Mentoring Scheme
- reduced temporary staff through recruitment into TBG Flex
- there were 16 internal promotions and secondments in Your Choice Barnet and 31 in Barnet Homes in 2016-17. 9 honorariums are currently in operation for staff acting up or taking on additional responsibilities. All vacancies are now advertised internally for seven working days prior to external promotion.

To make TBG a great place to work, we...

- developed a Health and Wellbeing Strategy, which is now being implemented
- reviewed working arrangements to include more opportunities for flexible working
- identified engagement methods that work for remote and mobile workers
- worked with trade unions and our Staff Council to enhance the employee voice
- there are increased opportunities to influence service developments
- internal communications now work more effectively as a two way process.

To support leadership and management, we...

- concluded and evaluated the leadership development programme and planned future requirements
- reviewed our approach to performance management
- developed a succession planning process to recognise talent and create development opportunities
- reviewed the composition and role of the senior management team
- ran management development training for new and aspiring managers
- rolled-out an Executive Team engagement programme to increase direct communication with teams.

To create a culture of one team, high performance and learning, we...

- launched a new approach to project and programme management
- increased the opportunities for cross-departmental working.

Our Customer Contact Centre is performing strongly with tenant satisfaction levels maintained at 93%.

BOOST Childs Hill project launched by the Mayor of Barnet



2016-17

In April the Mayor of Barnet Councillor David Longstaff, accompanied by the Mayoress Gillian Griffiths, cut the ribbon to officially launch the second BOOST project in the borough. BOOST Childs Hill is a spin-off project from the original BOOST (Burnt Oak Opportunity Support Team) which started in July 2015 and has engaged with over 800 residents and supported 298 into sustainable employment.

BOOST Childs Hill, like original BOOST, is funded by Barnet Council working in partnership with Barnet Homes, JobCentrePlus, Barnet and Southgate College and local community organisations. It is aimed at helping unemployed residents from the Childs Hill Ward (and also the Whitefields area near Brent Cross) to find work, but will also help the wider community with housing support, benefits advice and training opportunities to help them achieve their aspirations. The project will operate from a number of venues across the ward including Childs Hill library, the Children's Centre and from the 'Careers Coach'.

Mike Freer, MP for Finchley and Golders Green, also attended the event and spoke with local residents and members of the team.

Developing and continuing to strengthen our apprentice and graduate programmes



December
2016

In December 2016, The Barnet Group was awarded the accolade of Employer of the Year 2016 at the annual Barnet and Southgate College 'One College Many Stars' awards, chosen from over 800 other organisations that work with Barnet and Southgate College.

We have been working in partnership with Barnet and Southgate College for the past six years, delivering their apprenticeship scheme.

The college's apprenticeship programme provides a wonderful opportunity for local residents to learn while developing skills needed to gain employment.

As one of the largest employers in the borough we want to help residents find work, especially younger tenants and school leavers who are finding it harder in the difficult economic climate to find a way into employment.

Our resident survey placed Barnet Homes in HouseMark's top quartile in London, and leaseholders saw continued improvement



2016-17

Barnet Homes subscribes to a sector-wide benchmarking organisation, HouseMark, which gives us valuable annual comparisons with our peers across London on a wide range of cost and quality measures.

Our 2016 Resident Satisfaction Survey results show overall tenant satisfaction at 79%, which places Barnet Homes in HouseMark's top quartile against our London landlord peers.

Leaseholder satisfaction has shown very positive improvement, with a 4% increase on the last survey result to 51% contributing to an 11% increase since 2010.

81% of our tenants were satisfied with the overall quality of their home, with 88.4% satisfied with the friendliness and politeness of staff. Amongst our leaseholders, 77.1% were satisfied with the friendliness and politeness of staff.

The last annual HouseMark analysis shows that we are a top quartile landlord when compared with our peers for the provision of housing management, repairs and maintenance, estate services and leaseholder services.

The detailed findings from the tenant and leaseholder surveys were used to inform our 2017/18 Business Plan projects which are aimed at improving service delivery in the areas of highest priority for our residents.

We are grateful to everyone who responded to our surveys, providing us with valuable information regarding our services and where and how we can improve them.

Thinking differently and challenging ourselves

Improving rent collection levels and tenancy sustainment



2016-17

The Rental Income Team continues to work to tackle and support the issues surrounding rent arrears and tenancy sustainment.

They also work to understand the reasons behind the arrears. They are able to establish where a customer really needs some extra help to improve their situation, and we use all types of services available, whether this is general budgeting advice, management of complex debt issues or a requirement for personal support. The team are quick to identify serious debt issues and support those with vulnerabilities. They work with an ethos to try and get people into a position where they can successfully maintain their tenancies.

A heart-warming thank you for Ajoke

"My story begins Christmas Eve 2014. My husband passed away after an 18 month battle with lung cancer. We were married 37 years. The first week of January I was receiving letters which began sorry for your loss but... this has stopped and that benefit has stopped. I was inundated with paperwork and in turmoil. When receiving housing and council tax benefit, the forms can be 7-8 pages long, not very legible for me. I would always turn to the back page to see how much I had to pay.

14 months later dealing with life, I realised that I was still down as getting carers' allowance. I informed them immediately. I owed over £900 for rent and £200 and something overpayment for council tax. My son paid the latter but I would not expect him to pay the former as he has 3 small children. I contacted my housing officer Ajoke who often listened to me crying and relieved me of my fears. Ajoke advised that I write to overpayment team asking them to reconsider their decision.

In April of this year, I wrote a 3 page letter explaining my dilemma. I heard nothing back until this week got a final demand for the money asking it be paid in 2 weeks. Again, really frightened and anxious I rang Ajoke again, she advised that I contact CAB. This I did. On their advice I asked the date be deferred until I had a meeting with them. This Monday life again was getting too overwhelming, I wanted to go to sleep and not wake up. I spent a few days with my daughter in Surrey (a change is as good as a rest). I received an email from the overpayment team saying they would not pursue the case and that they had informed me by letter. I told them I never received it but thanked them for their decision.

I rang Ajoke with the good news to thank her, she wasn't in but spoke to her colleague Nadia who was kind and had time to listen, offered to pass on my message. I am still fighting an uphill struggle to live each day, having to deal with people in authority and sorting out money problems increases the burden in life. Although through this journey I have encountered many rude and unfeeling people but also kindness and understanding people too. I give my heartfelt thanks to Ajoke for being there for me. I am still seeing a counsellor and will eventually, hopefully get a job. I would love to have a telephone job maybe with the council, dealing with people in my situation and to give them peace of mind that people do care and there is help out there. I would advise anyone in my position to pick up the phone and ask for help that is available, hopefully you will get someone as kind as Ajoke.

Resolving issues

Alex was pursuing legal action against Ms B, who lives in Barnet. Ms B's rent payment history was poor, but we could see there was effort, we could also see that Housing Benefit payments were regularly changing, giving us an indication of changing income. However the arrears were significant with no sign of improvement. Unfortunately Ms B didn't engage with us and disclose what was going wrong, until we were considering court proceedings for possession of the home. She contacted Alex, and explained a series of issues surrounding her current position, which included suffering a heart attack, two adult children living in the home and not sufficiently contributing to the household, and serious debts to many creditors.

With this knowledge, Alex could work with Ms B and start to tackle the problem. Support was provided by Welfare Benefits Advisors regarding budgeting and providing advice/guidance regarding the adult children and how they should contribute to the household, Ms B was also signposted to Christians Against Poverty debt charity, who assisted with tackling the significant debt issues, and consequently applying for a bankruptcy order. Alex continued to support Ms B, and assisted in applying for Discretionary Council Tax and Housing Payment, which was consequently awarded. Alex was able to prevent possession proceedings. Ms B wrote in after working with Alex and our partners, to thank them for the help that was provided and to tell them that life had now changed for her, for the better.

Achieving our aim of reducing the number of days it takes to re-let our homes to under 15 days, with an average performance of 13.5 days in 2016/17 - the best results in London



2016-17

This year, Barnet Homes has achieved the fastest void turnaround times in London for all four quarters.

HouseMark publishes data to benchmark Barnet Homes' performance against other London-based peers. HouseMark's data shows that Barnet Homes is achieving an average of 13.5 day turnaround for routine void turnaround, compared to the second best performer at 15.8 days.

Re-letting our properties faster is financially beneficial as it ensures more rent is collected and less is spent on temporary accommodation. More importantly, our customers in most need get access to long-term accommodation sooner.

These fantastic results would not be possible without the hard work from a wide range of Barnet Homes teams, and the excellent partnership working with our contractors Mears and Benson.

Our year-end turnaround time of 13.5 days has beaten our initial target of 15 days. Building on this, the Council has set us an even more challenging target of 13 days for 2017/18.

Increasing Leaseholder satisfaction by 4% to 51%



2016-17

Our customers

Barnet Homes' leaseholders are made up of long-term residents who exercised their Right to Buy, and residents who bought their homes on the open market. Some have leased their properties to tenants through our Leasehold Gold service.

Our 3,800-plus leaseholders are a highly valued section of our customer base, and the Barnet Homes community.

The 2016 leasehold satisfaction survey saw a rise in leaseholder satisfaction for the fourth survey running. This is a pleasing acknowledgement that our commitment to serve the best interests of our leaseholders is recognised.

There can be challenges when presenting leaseholders with necessarily high major works costs, but the number of commendations received by and on behalf of our team members is further evidence that we are going in the right direction.

Despite this, the team is not being complacent and work is ongoing using analysis from the latest survey to address the areas highlighted as generating dissatisfaction.

New Systems - improved information

2016-17 involved a great deal of work needed for Leaseholder Services to migrate to QL, our housing management system. The first and largest stage of this transition took place in February 2017. The team were involved in intensive testing and training whilst carrying out their day job. The service charge information we can now produce for our leaseholders much better meets their needs. This will shortly also apply to the right to buy and major works elements of our work.

Daily checks are now carried out for repairs raised; this means that errors can be corrected on a timely basis before they hit the leaseholders' accounts, which in turn reduces the volume of contacts when the actuals are submitted.

Service charge collection achieved its target for the 10th year in a row.

We're listening: leading on Leasehold satisfaction

- close working between the Leaseholder Services and Major Works teams has resulted in great advances being made in the quality and timeliness of the information provided for major works
- we now publish details of future planned major works on the Barnet Homes website, improving communications with our leaseholders
- we update Leaseholders on planned works, repairs and finance surgeries in our residents' magazine atHome, which is published quarterly
- a more holistic approach is being adopted in the planning of works to ensure they are ordered appropriately and that the financial impact on leaseholders is taken into account.

Right to Buy fraud prevention successes

Despite the maximum Right to Buy discount increasing to £104,900 in April 2016, applications and completions continue on what is now an 18-month downward trend. The reasons for this are multiple; uncertainty around 'Brexit', changes to mortgage regulations and high local property values. At the same time changes to procedures aimed at arresting Right to Buy fraud has seen more cohesive working between the Leaseholder Services team and the Council's Corporate Anti-Fraud Team (CAFT), preventing a number of properties being bought fraudulently. One case in 2016-17 involved the signature of a recently deceased tenant being forged in an attempt by her husband who lives out of the country and her grandson who has a home elsewhere in the borough, to obtain the property under false pretences.

Barnet Homes provided support for young homeless people to improve their situation with the aim of reducing reliance on social housing and the benefits system, securing £90,000 of funding from DCLG Platforms for Life

Assist: saving lives everyday



Assist operator David Mackintosh (right), picking up his 2016 Staff Award with Barnet Group CEO Troy Henshall.

2016-17

The Assist vision is to enable people to remain safely independent in their own homes for longer, through the use of assistive technology and technology enabled care.

Over the last year, the team of Assist operators has been busy answering a range of varied and different emergency calls from vulnerable service users, their emergency contacts and other professionals.

Mr H described his experience saying that "I'm happy living on my own but it provides a real lifeline. The doctor recommended it to me and it really is the best thing I could have done. It gives me piece of mind living on my own."

In 2016-17, over 108,000 emergency calls and 17,000 non-emergency calls were answered by the operators. 90.23% of these calls were answered within 30 seconds and had an average wait time of 13 seconds.

The mobile response officers have continued to provide 24/7 emergency response bringing lifesaving first aid and support to individuals without local friends and family.

Snapshots

Leading the Welfare Benefits Task Force, comprising Barnet Homes, the Housing Benefit team, and Job Centre Plus, and supporting 2,150 residents across the borough who have been affected by the Welfare Benefits cap



Designing changes and improvements in order to deliver the council's required efficiencies. This includes substantial financial benefits such as the delivery of £517,000 of efficiency savings in Barnet Homes

Homeless preventions up 12% to 972 in 2016/17



Gas compliance (regulations) position retained 100% through the majority of 2016/17

Managing blocks and communal areas to a high standard



December
2016

The new caretaking service was launched on 5th December 2016 under the management of a new Head of Service and Senior Estate Services Manager. There were previously four larger area teams covering the borough with a mixture of caretaking types. The new caretaking service now consists of six teams and a larger fleet of vehicles, with each team covering a smaller local 'area'.

Each area has a dedicated Estate Services Manager who monitors standards and ensures the quality of service provided to residents is to a high specification. We know it is important to our residents that they see a consistent local caretaking presence, so we have designed the new service to deliver this, whilst also ensuring the service is as flexible and responsive as possible to residents' needs. This means we can deliver a consistently great service across all our estates.

The 6 caretaking teams are:

- **Team 1** - West Hendon & Edgware
- **Team 2** - Grahame Park
- **Team 3** - Hendon
- **Team 4** - Finchley & Cricklewood
- **Team 5** - Muswell Hill
- **Team 6** - Barnet

In the past, some estates had just one residential caretaker. These estates are now served by caretaking teams who share a broad local knowledge of an estate and its surrounds.

This approach reduces lone working for some of our caretakers, as well as ensuring a more resilient service. Where a caretaker is based did not change in every case, but they may leave their estates during the week to help out on other properties. They are aided in return by a team of caretakers on their own estate.

This means that our larger estates can still be covered by a knowledgeable team even when a 'main' caretaker is on leave.

As we bed the new service in, we will continue to monitor our performance and make changes where necessary to ensure that every resident receives a high standard of service.



Growing our business

Building new homes through Registered Provider Opendoor Homes



March 2017

On the 7th of March 2017, Opendoor Homes, our Registered Provider, was given the green light by the Homes and Communities Agency.

The decision heralded the start of an ambitious new build programme to deliver an initial 320 homes for affordable rent for Barnet residents. These new homes will be owned and managed by Opendoor Homes, a subsidiary of The Barnet Group, which is wholly owned by Barnet Council. The new build programme is funded with a loan of up to £65m from Barnet Council.

Building work started with a breaking ground ceremony at Basing Way on 20th March, with Opendoor Homes' first two schemes producing 27 two-bedroom homes in a mixture of modern designed flats and houses. The new build programme, beginning with an initial 320 homes, is set for completion by the summer of 2020.

We are delighted to receive this endorsement from the HCA, to enable Opendoor Homes to start building much needed quality affordable housing in the borough. Barnet Homes has already delivered 43 council homes, and Opendoor Homes represents an exciting new way to help the council deliver affordable new homes for residents.

Over the next decade more than 27,000 new homes will be built in Barnet, the most in outer London, with a range of social rent, affordable and market rate homes.



Increasing the housing supply in the borough by completing the development of 40 new homes in 2016



March 2017

"Building high quality, contemporary new homes in a successful suburb like Barnet in one of the greatest cities on earth is an absolute privilege; there can be no greater legacy that you could wish to leave for future generations."

Derek Rust, Deputy Chief Executive and
Group Lead on Development & Growth.

2016-17 was a momentous year in The Barnet Group's development journey. Less than three years after Barnet Homes completed the first three new council houses in the borough in a generation, our development team is hard at work with a development pipeline which will deliver around 500 new homes and will invest around £100m in new build activity over the next two years alone.

In Spring 2017, we completed Tranche 0 of our development programme, our #40NewHomes. The homes, at six sites across Barnet, delivered affordable new homes for social residents on formerly underused sites.

A resident, thrilled with her new home at Benson Close said “With the house built in the way it is, my son can move around and have more independence. It’s been such pleasure to watch him enjoying the garden... he’s like a different child”.

A resident of a new home at Bedford Road said “As soon as I saw the property from the outside, I knew I wanted to live there with my family so I wanted to accept it there and then, but the housing officer said I had to view inside the property before I could! My wife couldn’t believe it. Barnet Homes has really looked after us from the day we moved in”.

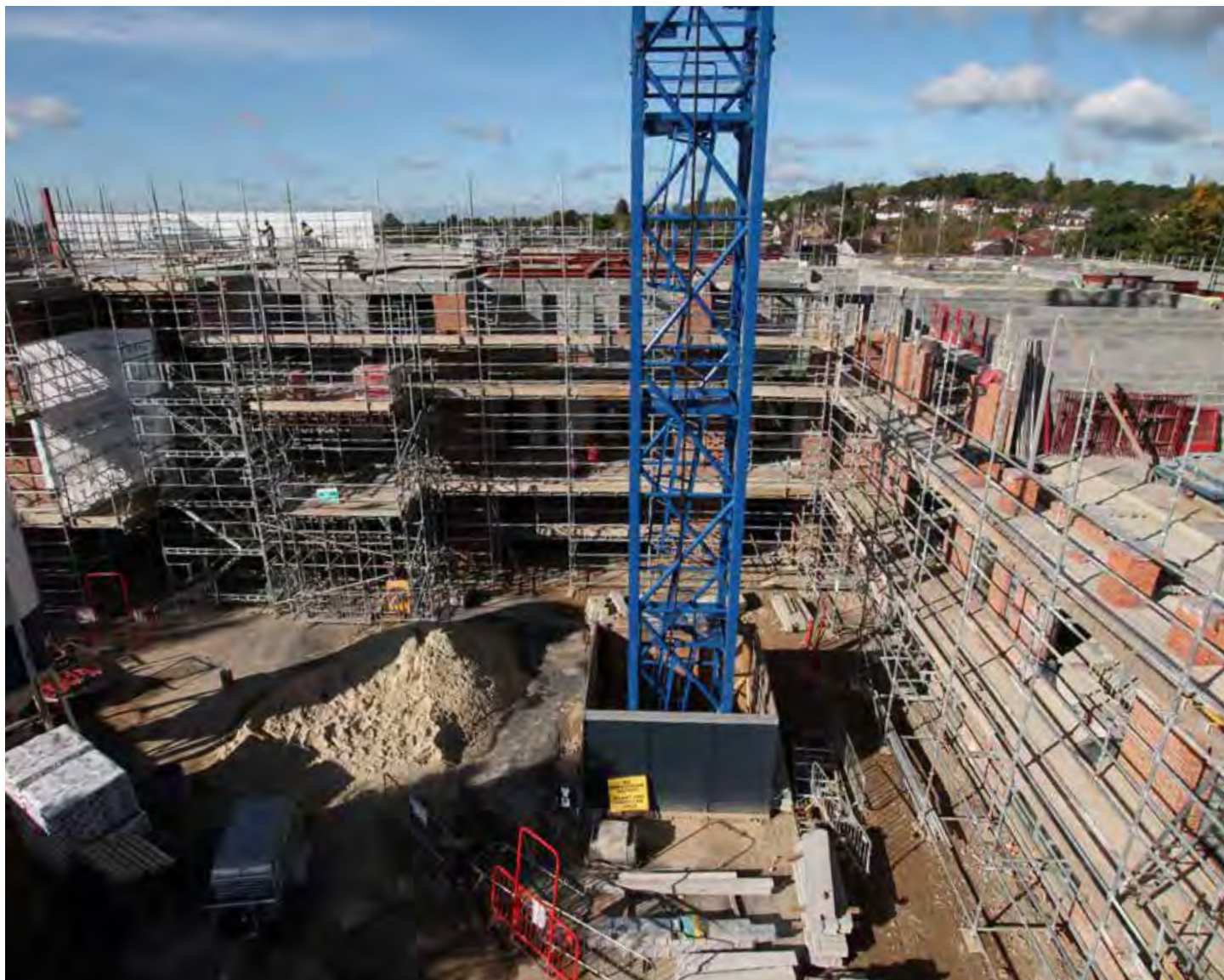
Snapshots

**Satisfaction with repairs
remained at 99% in 2016/17**



**Procuring 493 private sector
properties (a 307% increase)
through Let2Barnet to enable us
to house more homeless families**

Starting the development of a new dementia-friendly Extra Care scheme at Moreton Court



November
2016

Barnet Homes is developing a new dementia-friendly extra care scheme at Moreton Court.

For many years, the site of Moreton Court was a sheltered housing scheme whose residents have now moved into new homes.

Barnet Council have given us permission to build 53 self-contained one and two bedroom apartments. The facilities in these flats will enable adults with additional care needs to live independently.

Our new 53 homes at Moreton Court will not only provide more choice for older people with care and support needs, including those with dementia, but will increase availability of affordable homes for households in housing need with frail older residents moving into flats such as these.

Barnet Council is investing £15 million in the project, which is the first of three Extra Care Housing developments planned for the borough. The new development at Moreton Court is part of Barnet Council's wider housing development programme, which will see more than 700 new homes built on council-owned land, in the borough, over the next five years.

By the end of March 2017, there was significant progress on site. Completion of the extra-care scheme is expected mid-2018.



The Barnet Group

Skills and Employment

Annual Statement 2016-17

This report highlights the outputs and successful outcomes achieved from The Barnet Group's training and employment support initiatives. **432** individuals benefited from direct support into employment, gained training that has led to employment or volunteering as well as receiving advice, support or sign posting to other initiatives.

We are grateful for the continued support we receive from our contractual partners in supporting us to achieve our outcomes, through their own internal apprenticeship programmes.

The report includes case studies that demonstrate the difference our combined services provide as support to our customers and service users.

Case study: BOOST - Your Choice Barnet

A Burnt Oak resident signed up to BOOST programme as they were unemployed and finding it hard to get interviews from the numerous applications they were making. As a result they were not able to secure a job. They attended STRIDE and Employability programmes, completing training and participated in various work experience placements. The feedback they provided about the BOOST team and the programme says that it gave them confidence and a feeling of being valued and supported. With new found confidence and continued support from BOOST they began to get interviews from their applications. They have now found work in Your Choice Barnet.

Case study: Syrian refugee - Barber

A resident arrived in Barnet with their family in February 2016 under the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme. Assisted by a dedicated support worker provided by Barnet Homes our resident was quickly able to gain independence as a newcomer to the country. They secured a job as a barber at an Arabic-speaking barber shop in London within just one year of arrival. For our resident and their family, employment allows for the strengthening of stable social bonds and financial assurances enabling them to live successfully in their new home and country.

Your Choice Barnet

- 4 YCB clients supported into employment
- 9 enrolled on volunteering work placement
- Held an employment/volunteering event at CommunitySpace
- 27 people attended an employment project focus group meeting for adults with disabilities living in Barnet.
- 11 service users gained volunteering opportunities through Timebanking UK.
- 1 client is receiving job coaching from the access to work fund.

(Pictured: a YCB Service User Champion (right) supported through an employment programme, with Terry Rogers, Chair of The Barnet Group board.



Case study: Resident training – Teaching Assistant

Our Barnet Homes resident who was receiving JSA successfully completed City and Guilds level 3 Supporting Teaching and Learning in Schools. They also completed volunteering in a school as part of the course. Our residents' feedback includes 'the course required a lot of commitment but it was great because I learned how to support and work with children in a teaching environment and how to get the best out of them, helping them achieve their full potential. It was a great experience and definitely helped me in getting a full time job as a teaching assistant. I am very grateful to Barnet Homes for giving me this opportunity!'

Case study: Get Real Project – Assistant Support Worker

A seventeen year old person was left alone in the family rented home following their mother leaving after experiencing a nervous breakdown. As a person under eighteen is not legally able to take on a tenancy the landlord evicted them from the property. Signposted to Barnet Homes to secure housing they joined the Get Real Project. Working on a zero hour contract they would have experienced fluctuating Housing Benefit entitlement when they were not needed for work. Get Real signposted our resident to vacancies in our Your Choice Barnet service. With further support they successfully secured a permanent position as an assistant support worker with holiday pay and working within the area where they live.



Apprenticeships and Graduate Placements

45

Through our contractual agreements;

1. Mears - Supported 6 apprentices over the year. This includes 2 Plumbers and 1 Carpenter appointed in 2016
 2. Robert Heath - Supported 2 apprentices
 3. Morgan Sindall has supported 4 apprentices
 4. Armstrong York has supported 2 apprentices
- 5 residents successfully completed Barnet Homes 2015/16 apprenticeship programme.
 - 1 apprentice secured employment with Barnet Homes.
 - 7 residents were recruited onto the Barnet Homes 2016/17 apprenticeship programme, 5 of which were Barnet Homes residents
 - 2 residents were recruited onto the YCB 16/17 apprenticeship programme, 1 of which was a Barnet Homes resident
 - There are 17 graduate trainees within Barnet Homes. 4 are Barnet residents

Pictured above: a group of The Barnet Group's 2016/17 apprentices

Welfare Reform Task Force and BOOST

276

Employment outcomes

- 111 supported into employment through BOOST Burnt Oak; 48 being Barnet Homes' residents
- 165 residents supported through Welfare Reform Task Force, 11 being Barnet Homes residents and 27 living in Temporary Accommodation.

Top five areas of work for tenants:

19%

Care

18%

Retail

10%

Sales

8%

Administration

7%

Warehouse/
Distribution

Case study: Floating support

Ms B gained assistance from our Universal Credit Officer to secure funding through the Crisis Fund to help her furnish her home.

Due to tenancy sustainment concerns and an ASB issue with a neighbour, Ms B was referred to Floating Support services and was offered a flexible tenancy in Edgware.

Through the joint co-ordination and support from staff on our Employment Group, Ms B successfully secured an apprenticeship with TBG. Initially daunted by her surroundings and new challenges when she started, Ms B very quickly settled in and is now thriving in her role.

With the continued support from her Floating Support Officer an application was made to ButtleUK, a charity that provide grants to young people trying to better their lives. Ms B successfully secured goods to the value of £1347, including a £170 travel cheque, an oven, washing machine, £300 laptop and software including work wear clothes and shoes

Ms B was invited by Buttle to meet and to a group of 40 investors, speaking positively about her overall experience saying she would not have been able to achieve what she has without the support from Buttle and our Floating Support service.

Training into employment

- 17 residents gained a volunteering work placement
- 4 gained employment

City & Guilds Accredited Training

Level 3 Teaching and Learning in Schools

- 8 residents gained level 3 qualifications

Level 2 Business Administration

- 9 residents gained level 2 qualifications
- 9 residents signposted to Groundworks Work-Finder Project

Level 3 Social Care

- 11 residents joined the course (starting 2/10/16, ending 12/7/17)

We were awarded apprentice employer of the year out of over 800 employees from Barnet & Southgate College (pictured above)

59



Barnet Homes Performance highlights

Satisfaction with repairs remained at 99% in 2016/17

Our void (empty properties) turnaround times are the best in London

Our Customer Contact Centre is performing strongly with tenant satisfaction level maintained at 93%

Gas compliance (regulations) position retained 100% through the majority of 2016/17

Households in emergency temporary accommodation down 41% to 149 end March 2017

Homeless preventions up 12% to 972 in 2016/17

Continued successful rehousing of residents into suitable homes to facilitate regeneration

Affordable private sector supply up 334% since 2012/13

Our rental income arrears as a percentage of debit improved from 3.24% in 2015/16 to 3.04% in 2016/17

About The Barnet Group



The Barnet Group is a Local Authority Trading Company (LATC) wholly owned by the London Borough of Barnet (LBB). It has four subsidiaries, Barnet Homes, Your Choice (Barnet) and the recently formed TBG Flex, a new employer within the Group that offers more flexible terms and conditions.

In March 2017, we received approval from the Homes and Communities Agency to launch a Registered Provider, Opendoor Homes, which is a subsidiary of Barnet Homes.

Opendoor Homes gives us the opportunity to build and own an initial 320 homes by 2018, solidifying our presence as a leading ALMO and social housing organisation.

Barnet Homes was created in 2004 as a traditional Arm's Length Management Organisation (ALMO) with a ten-year management agreement to provide housing related services. We are delighted that our new ten-year management agreement, effective from 1 April 2016, gives us the mandate to work

with the Council to achieve their ambitious objectives for growth.

The homelessness service, Housing Options, transferred into Barnet Homes from LBB in April 2012. In 2015, the service launched a domestic violence drop-in advice service, One Stop Shop, and a 6-bed refuge for women and children fleeing domestic violence and abuse.

Barnet Homes' sister company Your Choice (Barnet) was created in 2012 as a LATC with a four-year contract to provide specialist care and support to adults with a wide range of physical and learning disabilities. In June 2016, we were delighted to negotiate a new five-year contract with LBB, with an option for two additional years.

The Barnet Group has a robust governance structure with residents, a carer, expert independent board member and two councillors and a chair appointed by the London Borough of Barnet.

Top reasons to work with The Barnet Group

- We're a trusted partner of the London Borough of Barnet
- We're committed to growing our business
- We've got proven experience of delivering more for less
- We build services around our customers
- Barnet is in our DNA
- Profits made get reinvested into service delivery, growth or are passed to our shareholder (London Borough of Barnet) as dividends
- We are wholly owned by the council and therefore there is no need to share profits with other organisations. The assets of the organisation now and in the future belong in full to the council.
- We're building an initial 320 new homes in Barnet, with plans to build many more
- We have a talented, committed workforce
- Our void turnaround times are the best in London



The Barnet Homes Board

"Barnet Homes is more than bricks and mortar. It is about using every opportunity to work with our residents for mutual benefit"

Terry Rogers, Barnet Homes Board Chair

Terry Rogers OBE (Chair)

Terry Rogers OBE is chair of The Barnet Group. He is a fellow of the Chartered Institute of Housing with over 40 years' experience of public sector housing. Before taking early retirement, he was Director of Community Services for the City of London Corporation, which included looking after the Corporation's housing stock in seven London boroughs. He also led a multi-disciplinary group to reduce homelessness in London, for which he was awarded an OBE. He is Vice Chair and trustee of the Help the Homeless charity, a grant-giving body helping small homeless organisations.

Troy Henshall

Troy Henshall is the Chief Executive of The Barnet Group, which incorporates both Barnet Homes and Your Choice Barnet. Troy joined Barnet Homes in 2011 and has worked in the Housing Sector for over twelve years having previously worked in Insurance, Outsourcing and Consultancy.

Jeff Baker

Jeff has worked in housing management and development for over 40 years and is a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Housing. He was formerly Managing Director of a large housing association and Chair of the Tenant Participation Advisory Service, and has held senior/executive positions in several other housing associations and local authorities. He is Chair of Providence Row Housing Association in Tower Hamlets.

David Atta

David Atta has lived in Barnet for more than 25 years. With a professional background in global marketing and communications, David believes all residents should feel engaged with the Board and the decisions taken on their behalf. David believes that communication can always be improved and is best not judged simply by quantity but quality. David also brings extensive experience of cross party Parliamentary lobbying and campaigning, primarily in the cause of civil liberties.

Jack Stephen

Jack has worked for the past 35 years as an executive and non executive board member of commercial, banking and social housing organisations. He is also one of three people responsible for setting up the Fizzy Living private rental group and sourcing overseas capital investment. Jack worked at Thames Valley Housing Association as their Finance Director for 21 years up until retiring in June 2015. In his private life he has been committed to helping his community, having chaired the governors of a secondary school for 10 years, in the process taking it through the rebuild of the entire school, and chairing a homelessness charity for the past 6 years.

Washington Ainabe

Washington Ainabe is the board's leaseholder representative. He has had a long career in the

financial service industry in various capacities; as a management accountant (CIMA), management consultant and most recently in risk. He has lived in Barnet for 15 years (five years as a leaseholder) and is passionate about making a difference in the community. He believes providing quality conditions and good engagement is key to achieving proper standards and sustainability.

Angela Purcell

Angela Purcell has been heavily involved with Barnet Homes since its inception and was

one of the founding members of its resident Performance Advisory Group. She has lived in Barnet for more than 30 years. Previous experience includes working in the Civil Service Cabinet office and as a Primary Care Development Manager. She is committed to continuing to raise standards at Barnet Homes, develop tenant engagement, increase partnership working and cut cases of domestic violence.

Award winners at our 2016 AGM and Customer Awards



Barnet Homes

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