

Catalyst Information for Scrutiny Committee on 21st March 2018

Please see below Catalyst response for the information required for the Scrutiny Committee on the 21st March 2018.

Questions

1. Details of tenanted, freehold, leasehold and shared ownership stock in the borough of Brent – including ward, estate/street, garages, parking bays and parking arrangements

Please see attached a spreadsheet that contains details of the tenanted, freehold, leasehold and shared ownership stock within LB Brent. This includes the location of our stock including the estate and street – and the ward in which each property is located.

Parking bays and parking arrangements: Within Catalyst have different approaches to managing parking within LB Brent; some parking is managed by our Environmental Services Team and the rest is managed by two contractors. Our main contractor is Wing who started managing some of our parking in December 2017; permits are £82 per annum and £10 min for blue badge holders or registered carers.

Please see below a table detailing our parking within LB Brent:

Estate/Site Name	No of Parking Bays	Parking Contractors
Beckett Close	20	Wing
Cardinal Hinsley - Brent (Joint with L and Q)	21	PCM
Charles Hobson House	21	Wing
Church Road, Brent	53	Wing
Craven Park	110	Wing
Dan Court	150	Wing
Ebony Court - Brent	19	Wing
Garnet Road	23	Wing
George Lansbury House	26	Wing
Gibbons Road and Beckett Close	14	Wing
Heron Close and Garrard Walk, Brent	38	Wing
Hugh Gaitskell House	67	Wing
John Buck House	65	Wing
Keir Hardie House	67	Wing
Manor Point - Dugdale Court, Vigers Court, Plough Close, Ainsworth Court and Sandby Court.	94	PCM
Maundeby Walk	24	Wing
Mayo Road	44	Wing
Merle Court, Kilburn		No contractor
Opal House - Brent	16	No contractor
South Kilburn	11	No contractor
Talbot Walk	44	Wing
Wharton Close	36	Wing

2. Confirmation of stock condition and Decent Homes standard and imminent investment plans

CATALYST currently own 18 homes that do not meet Decent Homes in LB Brent; this is largely an issue of homes not meeting accessibility requirements.

Our imminent investment plan includes replacement of heating, upgrading of electrical and kitchen replacements at George Lansbury House.

3. Confirmation of bicycles storage arrangements – including in-borough location

Catalyst's new build blocks/estates have bike stores/sheds concealed in underground car parks including:

- Dan Court;
- Craven Park;
- South Kilburn;
- Starkey House;
- Florence Court;
- Claygate Court.

Bike store provisions across the rest of the Brent stock are usually standalone bike racks.

4. Clear mapping of properties to rent levels – e.g. social, affordable

We have not been able to provide a map of properties to rent levels however we have attached a spreadsheet with details of our stock and the corresponding tenure, rent and the ward location.

5. Details of any ongoing or planned developments in-borough

Catalyst does not currently have any ongoing or planned developments within the LB Brent.

6. Number of properties sold under right to buy in 2016/17 and YTD

Catalyst have sold 6 properties under right to buy in Brent from April 2016 to date. Within LB Brent we manage large-scale voluntary transfer (LSVT) housing so tenants have retained right to buy.

7. Details of Pay to Stay Policy and number of affected households

Catalyst have not adopted a Pay to Stay Policy therefore none of our households have been affected.

8. Details of Flexible Tenancies - number of affected households and general approach being adopted to tenancy renewal

As a Housing Association Catalyst does not have flexible tenancies. We have a number of 'Fixed Term Tenancies' across all of our stock 2,708 of which are in LB Brent. Our general approach is to re-grant tenancies unless there has been a breach of tenancy during the five-year period for which it is granted. Our aim is to sustain tenancies.

9. Right to stay - number of households affected before the policy was made non-compulsory for Council's in Nov 2016

As a Housing Association right to stay does not apply.

10. Effect of social rent reduction (1% rent reduction)– number of affected properties, total loss of revenue in-borough only and impact on service & investment

All of our social and affordable rents in LB Brent were reduced by 1% on review in April 2017 – a loss of revenue of £124,967 per annum. Following the rent reduction proposals our Board of Management met to consider the impact of this, and recommitted to both our social purpose and to ensuring the provision of high quality services to our customers.

Given our strong financial standing at that (and the current) time, our low gearing and our growing mixed-tenure development pipeline, we have not cut either our services to our customers, our investment in their homes or our commitment to build 1000 new homes per annum from 2020. In 2017-18 we invested £26m in our homes – over £2.8m of this being in Brent (where, it should be noted that we have a relatively new portfolio of stock). This £2.8m will fund planned works including kitchens, bathrooms and electrical upgrades; cyclical works including external works and decoration and day-to-day repairs.

We have similarly continued to fund our Catalyst Gateway service (social, economic and community investment) by £2.2m each year, thus continuing to invest in our customers and the neighbourhoods in which they live.

11. What is your resident or engagement strategy

Catalyst's approach to resident engagement is based on three main areas of focus:

- Direct involvement within our governance structure;
- Co-working with key resident forums, associations and groups;
- Using customer feedback.

Direct involvement within our governance structure

Resident Board Member: As part of our governance framework, we have a resident Board member. This role acts a key member of the Catalyst Board to help shape our strategic vision and influence the decisions that affect our residents across Catalyst.

Customer Experience Committee (CEC): A sub-committee of the Board, the CEC consists of Board members and residents, aimed at taking responsibility for the oversight of all customer related policies, practice and service outcomes, reporting back to the main Board on issues of concern about the quality of the customer experience and making recommendations for any future changes to strategy, policy or practice.

Co-working with key resident forums, associations and groups

Our main relationship with residents on improving our services lies within our relationship with our Catalyst Residents' Federation (CRF). The CRF is a well-established constitution - having been in existence for a number of years – working closely with residents and Catalyst to improve services. The CRF membership is made up of elected residents from the various residents' groups across Catalyst neighbourhoods in London and the South east.

CRF: They act as an umbrella for our local resident initiatives such as our area forums and residents' associations. It facilitates and supports our resident involvement activities whilst providing an overview on how we can improve. The CRF have supported Catalyst on a number of initiatives including resident consultation, service improvement/scrutiny, mystery shopping, policy reviews and providing valuable resident feedback through subsidiary groups and key networks.

Area Forums: We have two active area forums in key areas; RB Kensington and Chelsea and LB Brent. Our RBKC Residents' Forum and LB Brent Residents' Forum work closely, highlighting local issues of concern from residents associations in their respective areas so that we can tackle this collaboratively and proactively.

Resident Associations: There approximately 17 active residents' associations spread across our stock. They work directly with Catalyst, often with joint meetings with Catalyst representatives to tackle local issues and drive service improvement in their local area.

Other residents' groups: In addition to the groups listed above, there are several specialist groups such as our Catalyst Disability Forum, Environmental Services Improvement Group and Policy Forum. These groups all work closely with Catalyst to improve services in key areas of focus. We also establish Steering Groups on estates where regeneration is planned/underway, including Wornington Green and Friary Park Estates. These groups help to inform master planning and highlight key issues for the community.

Residents are also invited to be involved in the procurement of CATALYST's major contracts, for example the recent retendering of our maintenance contracts.

Using customer feedback

We collect and use customer feedback in a variety of ways to improve our services.

Collecting customer feedback: In addition to the information we collect through our resident activity, we have a partner agency (Voluntas) who are commissioned to collect feedback from our customers through a variety of surveys including:

- The STAR survey - we have a target of 500 completions per month;
- Trigger based surveys such as our Repairs, Complaints, ASB surveys.

We've also launched new internal mechanism to carry out mystery shopping exercises.

Using customer feedback: The use of customer feedback and insight cuts across the whole of our organisation and has formed the bedrock of our new Customer Experience Strategy. The foundation of this has been using customer feedback to develop key customer expectations (easy, reliable and empathetic). Catalyst have also used the customer feedback to drive service improvement through local improvement plans, neighbourhood strategies and local neighbourhood management plans.

12. Latest Survey for Tenants and Residents (STaR) results – with reference to Brent residents only if possible

In January 2018, 500 Catalyst residents completed our STAR survey, for which 47 of those responses were provided by Brent General Need's residents and 14 Shared Owners. Overall satisfaction scores (very satisfied/fairly satisfied) results for those Brent residents are featured below.

STAR Questions	GENERAL NEEDS	SHARED OWNERS	COMBINED SCORE
Overall Satisfaction	72.3%	50.0%	67.2%
Overall quality of your home	72.3%	71.4%	72.1%
How easy is it to contact Catalyst	80.9%	71.4%	78.7%
Deliver on promises to you	69.6%	28.6%	60.0%
How well do Catalyst understand your needs	76.6%	57.1%	72.1%
How quickly did Catalyst resolve your query	72.7%	35.7%	63.8%
Neighbourhood as a place to live	78.7%	71.4%	77.0%
Repairs & Maintenance	73.9%	25.0%	63.8%
Value for money for services received	55.3%	35.7%	50.8%
Value for money in terms of where you live	83.0%	57.1%	77.0%
Internal Cleaning	64.1%	84.6%	69.2%

External Cleaning	67.5%	71.4%	68.5%
Ground Maintenance	74.4%	71.4%	73.6%

13. Details of how Councillors can make direct contact with service managers?

Councillors can make direct contact with the Service Managers, known in Catalyst as Neighbourhood Experience Managers. For complaints, councillors can also email Executive.Enquiries@Catalyst.org.uk. Our Neighbourhood Experience Manager for LB Brent and their contact details are provided below:

Kemy George
Tel: 0300 456 2099
Email: Kemy.George@Catalyst.org.uk

14. What Financial Inclusion support or advice is provided to Brent Residents

Catalyst's Income Team:

- Support residents in making claims for Housing benefit;
- Discuss income and expenditure to see if there are any shortfalls and reasons why rent payments can't been made and will use this when deciding on next actions;
- Advise on Universal credit and make applications for APA if needed;
- Refer to internal partners to enable residents to access more specialist advice, promoting financial inclusion.

Catalyst Gateway, Catalyst's social investment arm, has a Financial Inclusion Officer dedicated to LB Brent; last year they helped 100 Catalyst residents with budgeting, bills and benefits

In addition, we have commissioned an independent debt advice service for our residents in LB Brent. This is to the value of over £50,000 per annum and is profiled to give independent debt advice to 70 Catalyst residents in LB Brent a year.

15. Repairs contractor - London Living Wage

Within LB Brent our main repairs contractor is Capital Heating; they are committed to paying London Living Wage.

Catalyst housing's community investment in LB Brent

Catalyst Housing has three key strands of its activity:

- **Community investment** where it supports the development of community projects;
- The '**individual offer**' where it directly delivers services to support Catalyst tenancies;
- **Catalyst Housing Charitable Trust** which makes individual grant awards to enable residents to experience new opportunities; learn a skill; or overcome a hardship.

Catalyst works with a range of local partners to strengthen and support community investment in LB Brent. The majority of our community investment is focussed on the Unity Centre on Church Road, which is in Brent council's priority neighbourhood of Church End. Our aim is to make the Unity Centre a key community asset for the Church End estate.

Catalyst has developed a neighbourhood strategy for Church End which reflects the priority issues of Catalyst's residents:

- Reducing crime and anti-social behaviour;

- Enhancing the quality of life for local people;
- Improving employment prospects and skills;
- Reducing financial exclusion.

We particularly encourage the use of volunteers as this is an excellent way for local people to acquire skills and for the community to build its capacity and do more for itself. During 2016/17, we trained and supported 44 volunteers who contributed over 1,900 hours of volunteer time to our projects.

Our community projects have also achieved the following outputs during 2016/17:

- 125 children took part in our holiday programmes;
- 145 residents signed up as users of our 'community gym';
- 30 young men took part in our 'music project' and accompanying business workshops;
- 86 young people took part in National Citizenship Service programme;
- 18 families were supported through a strengthening families programme;
- 25 older people took part in weekly health and well-being activities;
- 8 young people participated in our Prince's Trust enterprise programme;
- 9 young people were supported into Employment, Education or Training through the Prospects CALM contract;
- 24 children took part in weekly learning activities through Gener8 study programme.

Our social investment team, Catalyst Gateway, also delivers support services directly to Catalyst residents to help them sustain their tenancies. These services include help to find jobs or access training, dealing with household bills, budgeting and benefits, and support with lifestyle issues. These services are delivered by a Brent based team and achieved the following outcomes in 2016/17:

- 19 Catalyst residents into jobs or training;
- 100 Catalyst residents helped with their rent arrears, benefit entitlements and utility debts;
- 13 young people with schooling and positive activities;
- 12 Catalyst vulnerable residents helped with their tenancies

Issues for the scrutiny panel

Based on our experience of operating in LB Brent and working with Brent Council, Catalyst would like to bring the following issues to the attention of the scrutiny committee:

- Catalyst would welcome more coordinated working including a joined-up approach to tackling environmental issues for example fly tipping and abandoned vehicles, particularly on neighbouring estates.
- From a community development perspective we recognise the potential for LB Brent to assume a lead coordination role enabling limited community resources to be used more effectively. This would also provide the opportunity to develop best practice and avoid duplication.
- Catalyst recognise that LB Brent are managing one of the largest regeneration projects at Wembley Park as well as smaller regeneration projects in South Kilburn, the Burnt Oak and Colindale areas. From our experience Church End and Church Road, these areas would also significantly benefit from investment potentially through a regeneration programme.