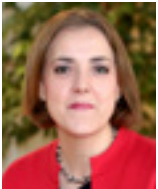




Annual Report
to Residents
2018-19

Ruth's foreword



Ruth Davison,
Chief Executive Officer

I quickly discovered, after joining ISHA some nine months ago, that we didn't deliver consistently good customer service to you, our tenants and residents.

That doesn't mean there aren't residents who receive a good service. Many of you do, and told us so in our recent survey which gave you all the chance to rate our services. Some of you even included compliments, praising particular members of staff.

But we don't do it consistently. You can't at the minute rely on us to do what we say we'll do, when we say we'll do it. And our communication with you is sometimes poor. This would be bad enough if we were running a bus service or pizza delivery firm, but we are not. We're talking about your homes. And we need to get it right.

Part of the reason for commissioning the survey was to get a more detailed picture of your views. Satisfaction, as you'll read elsewhere, was just 60 per cent. Clearly not good enough.

But we didn't wait for the results of the survey before we started to make changes – we have already begun making improvements which you should feel the benefit of in the weeks and months ahead. The priority areas shouldn't be a surprise to you. Repairs, safety and communications, the things that matter most to you, are the areas we have been, and will be, prioritising.

Your safety is always our top priority, and last year over half our spending on repairs was to ensure that the homes you live in are safe, and so we could carry out work to cladding following advice from the Government. Ensuring homes are not just safe, but also comply with complex and changing Government guidance, remains an issue for all housing associations. This year we will continue to prioritise our safety work, but we're also investing more in providing new kitchens and bathrooms, to ensure every home we provide is high quality.

We've also joined the Institute of Customer Service and all staff, me included, will be embarking on its training programme. Our residents' panel is up and running again, this time with a difference. Over the year the panel will be putting on day events, Resident Action Forums, open to all residents, each dedicated to a different issue. These are not only for you to give us your views and insights, but to work with us to specify service standards and new ways of working.

We exist only to serve you and future generations of tenants and residents. We have a lot of hard work to do, but you can be assured of my – and the team's – commitment to working for and with you in getting to a place not of just consistently good customer service, but of excellent customer service.





What we're here for

Islington and Shoreditch Housing Association (ISHA) is a community and neighbourhood-based housing association, managing and developing quality affordable housing for people in North and East London, and building more homes in Hackney, Islington and Waltham Forest. We are a major provider of truly affordable housing in North London, with over 2,400 homes.

Our Mission at ISHA is to provide excellent services because we believe that everyone is entitled to a quality, affordable and safe home. We want to make sure our customer service is right every time, and when we get it wrong, we fix it. But we have work to do to realise this ambition. We know this because we asked you – our tenants and residents – and you told us so.

We've already begun to take action to improve the service we deliver to you, and we're committed to making sure you have a great experience, every time you contact us.



We are committed to working for and with you to get to a place of consistently excellent customer service.

Committed to you

Customer survey results

In March 2019 we commissioned a Survey of Tenants And Residents (STAR for short). It was designed to help us understand how you feel about us and the service we provide.

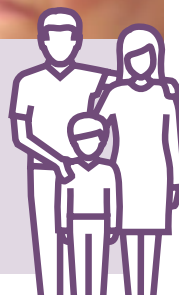
This is the first large-scale survey we've completed in a number of years. We wanted to find out what you really think and what we need to improve. Other similar organisations carry out this type of survey too, so it gives us the chance to see how we are doing compared with them.

The results of the survey were disappointing, and they brought home to us what we already suspected about the shortcomings in our service.



Number of residents and tenants responding to Star Survey

499



You told us:

60% of you are satisfied with the overall service provided by ISHA

50% of you are satisfied with our repairs and maintenance delivery

59% of you believe your rent represents good value for money

47% of you believe your service charges represent good value for money

In comparison with our peer housing associations, our performance has been below average. So the results have reinforced to us that we have a long way to go to improve things.



What we've done over the past year, our commitments to you

Committed to *improving our customer service*

We told you earlier this year that we have appointed a new customer service manager to lead the team who are your first point of contact with us. Other improvements are already taking place to make your experience a better one.

- We've looked at our processes and made it easier for our staff to resolve your queries the first time you call us. We're also improving how we keep you up-to-date. When there is a system or service failure, we've let you know 89% of the time, and we're working to make this 100%.
- We have new members of staff in our customer service team, who are experienced and enthusiastic about providing you with a good service.
- Our team now aims to resolve your issue the first time you contact us whenever they can.
- Our call answering time is improving – from a peak in December 2018 we have reduced the time you have to wait for a call to be answered by 99%.
- We've joined the Institute of Customer Service. They will be training every staff member, so across ISHA everyone has the skills to deliver excellent customer service, every time.
- We've created two internal working groups, focussed on improving the customer journey. These groups have already made the case for a number of improvements, including the introduction of WhatsApp to make it easy to get in touch with ISHA Customer Service.

Committed to *keeping you informed and involved*

You, our residents and tenants, are the reason we are here. We don't just want a snapshot of what you think, we believe the best way to improve services is for you to be involved in advising on what we do and how we do it, so we can work together with you to provide a better service.

- We've revitalised our Resident Scrutiny Panel. You'll have seen details in the latest newsletter of how you can get involved. If this is something you are interested in, please contact us at scrutiny@isha.co.uk
- We've introduced Resident Action Forums for flexible and immediate workshopping of recommendations and solutions for improving service delivery.
- We've appointed a new Head of Communication and Involvement, to look at how we communicate with you, and how our staff communicate effectively with each other to provide you with the best service.

Committed to *improving repairs*

You've told us that one thing you aren't always satisfied with is our repairs service. We've already started to make changes here.

- We're investing in repairs, and improving our planned and cyclical maintenance.
- This year we're increasing our planned and cyclical maintenance budget so we can install 35 new kitchens and bathrooms.
- We're looking really closely at how we work with our repairs team, ISHA Home Team, to make sure that together we are responding effectively to repairs in a timely fashion.
- The focus of our first Resident Action Forum, held this autumn, was how we communicate with you around repairs. We'll let you know the recommendations from this resident group and how we are going to take them forward.



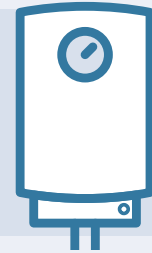
Repairs and maintenance - what we've done this year:

Total repairs and
maintenance spend
£2.9m



Installed
**25 new
boilers**

75 planned for
next year



Carried out
cyclical works to
8 blocks



Completed
**340 electrical
safety checks**

to individual homes – an ongoing
programme of around 400 per year



Started new lift
installations at
4 sites
2 more planned
for next year



Committed to *developing new homes*

An important part of our mission is to develop more quality affordable housing for people in North and East London, and to build more homes in Hackney, Islington and Waltham Forest.

We lead the North River Alliance (NRA), which is a development consortium of North and East London community-based small and medium sized housing associations, with whom we've developed 3,500 homes in 15 years.

And we are on track to meet our ambition to have built 400 more homes in the five years to 2020.

In the last year we:

Completed **85** New homes, all of them affordable



Secured

£6.6m in grant funding to develop more homes for people living in communities in North and East London



Began projects which will deliver a further

217 new homes

Sold **39** new affordable shared ownership homes



Committed to *ensuring your safety*

The most important thing to us is that you are safe in your home. We're taking action to make sure every one of our tenants and residents is safe.

- Last year we spent £1.4m carrying out work to cladding, following the advice and recommendations of the Government and independent experts.
- We have 24-hour fire wardens in 3 of our blocks. They will continue to provide reassurance to residents that their homes are safe while we carry out our individual action plans at each location for a long-term solution.
- We've engaged a new gas contractor. We want to make sure that the contractor we use is the best and most reliable we can find.





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