



# ANNUAL REPORT TO TENANTS

# 2020

Claringbull  
Court  
66  
Eden Grove



# About us

We are a small neighbourhood-based housing association working in and around the Barnsbury area of Islington.

We have 300 homes and share with our tenants great pride in being a part of the Barnsbury community.

## Our mission

- \* To help keep Barnsbury affordable and the community thriving.

## Our values

- \* to be a great landlord
- \* to help meet Islington's diverse housing needs
- \* to be 'a force for good' in Islington
- \* to be a modern, effective organisation.



OUR CLOUDESLEY ROAD OFFICE

# January 2020



M	T	W	T	F	S	S
BHA closed 30	BHA closed 31	Bank holiday BHA closed 1	BHA reopens 2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31	1	2

# Chair's report



SEAN McLAUGHLIN

**Sean McLaughlin became our new board chair in September. He brings to the role his extensive knowledge of local housing issues, having spent 20 years with Islington Council, including 10 years as director of housing and adult social care. Sean remains deeply committed to helping our borough's less privileged people and families.**

“ I only became chair in September but already I'm impressed by how the board and staff team here are challenging each other to come up with new and better ways for Barnsbury HA to make the biggest impact on housing need locally.

Barnsbury HA has been making a unique contribution to Islington's residents and neighbourhoods for over 50 years.

I am looking forward to working with the board and with tenants to make sure we build on our reputation for excellent service and make sure BHA offers you all a place where you feel you belong and you can thrive.

I am delighted to announce that this year we recruited to our board two tenants - Janice Walsh and Chris Bell. And a third tenant, Fenan Emmanuel, now sits on our Audit and Risk Committee. All three bring to their roles enthusiasm, expertise and huge amounts of local knowledge.

I'd also like to thank my predecessor Martyn Waring for his sterling work as chair of Barnsbury HA for six years, and his nine years' service on the board.

And finally it gives me great pleasure to wish all of you a very prosperous 2020.

**Sean McLaughlin, Chair**



# February 2020



M	T	W	T	F	S	S
27	28	29	30	31	1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	1

# The year in numbers

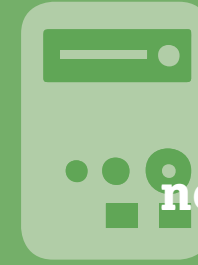
**18**  
new kitchens



**20**  
new bathrooms



**34**  
new boilers



**1132**  
repairs done



**4**  
new homes built



**17**  
homes let



**100%**  
gas safety certificates



**£587k**  
invested in homes



**4.5**  
compliments for every complaint





# March 2020



M	T	W	T	F	S	S
24	25	26	27	28	29	1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	Clocks go forward 29
30	31	1	2	3	4	5

# Listening to your views

We were very encouraged by the very large number of you who responded when we asked for feedback on our services in spring. The rating you gave us for overall satisfaction with our services puts us up with the best of all London's housing associations. Thank you! Highlights for us were finding that:

**97%**

**were satisfied with our caretaking service**



**88%**

**were satisfied with our repairs service**



**77%**

**believe we deliver what we promise**

**88%**

**of you said that, overall, you were satisfied with our services**



**78%**

**said that you trust Barnsbury HA**



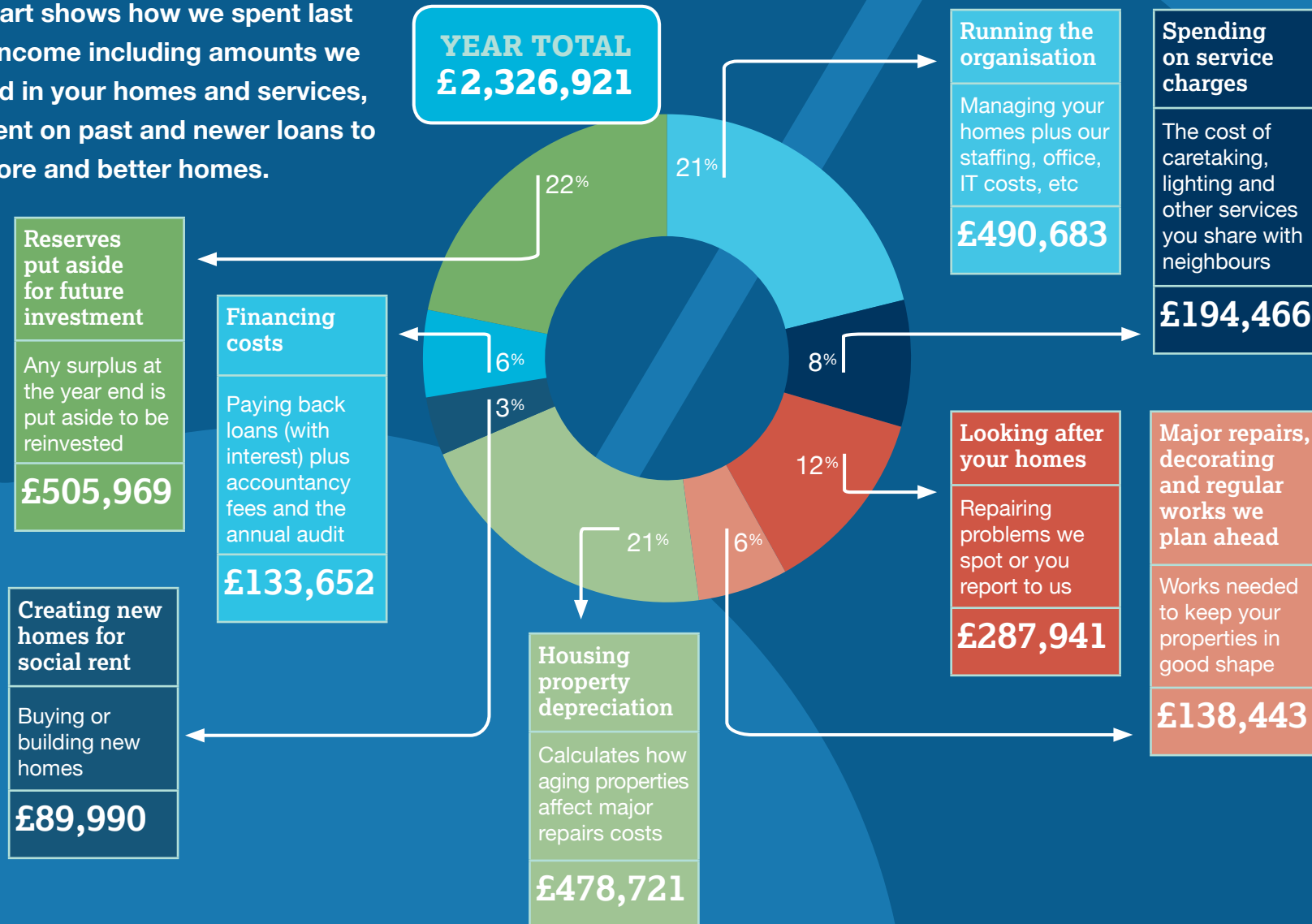
# April 2020



M	T	W	T	F	S	S
30	31	1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	Easter Friday BHA closed 10	11	Easter Sunday 12
Easter Monday BHA closed 13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	1	2	3

# How we spent our budget

This chart shows how we spent last year's income including amounts we invested in your homes and services, and spent on past and newer loans to fund more and better homes.



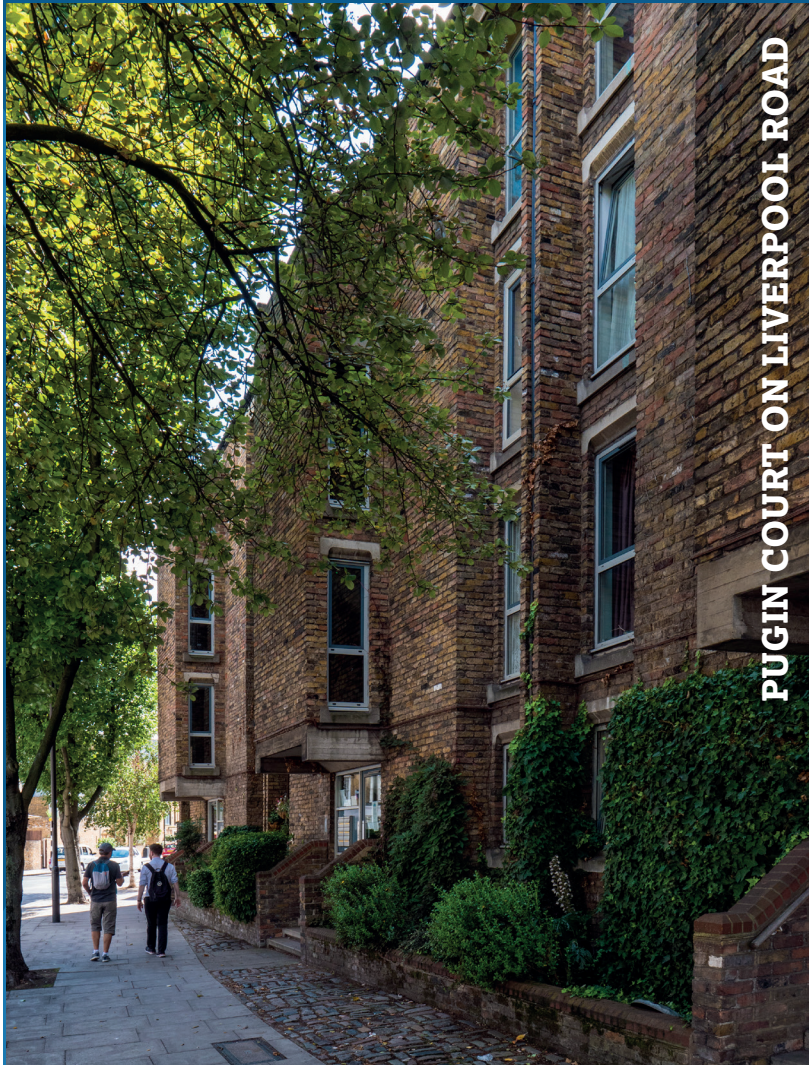


# May 2020



M	T	W	T	F	S	S
27	28	29	30	1	2	3
4	5	6	7	Bank holiday BHA closed 8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Bank holiday BHA closed 25	26	27	28	29	30	31

# More for the money



Every year, like all housing associations, we have to check how our running costs and spending compare with those of other housing associations doing similar work.

We have to offer evidence to our regulator that we give value for money. But this also helps us stay on our toes, finding ways to improve your services and our practices each year. These are some examples from 2019:

- \* Our work with **St Mungo's** brought in an extra £60,000 for those of you needing support in the form of extra benefit payments and personal help.
- \* Redesigning the **interiors** of unpopular 1970s bedsit flats in **Pugin Court**, *left*, and giving each a smart makeover, has made it easier to find tenants for them. Six are now home to local nurses and teachers.

- \* We found new ways to carry out daily tasks more efficiently using **technology**, without losing the personal touch we know you value. For example, we now use an online website to manage staff absences for training, holidays etc. The cost is easily offset by saving staff time and our records are much better.

- \* We improved and stream-lined our regular **safety checks on blocks of flats**. The result is clear records of fire safety checks and proof that we comply with best fire safety practice.

- \* We agreed a new **letting standard** so new tenants know the standards they can expect of our homes and we have a clear consistent standard for works to homes that fall empty before a new tenant moves in.



# June 2020



M	T	W	T	F	S	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	1	2	3	4	5

# Community matters

The highlights of our year are always working (or playing) side by side with you or being able to make life a little easier for those struggling to get by. These are some that stood out for us:

We're always pleased to fund **outings to the seaside or pantomime** organised by the tenants and residents association.



Our annual **Funday** in September was attended as usual by hundreds of you and your extended families.



We've been able to help some of you with emergency vouchers for the Trussell Trust **foodbank**. Thanks to all who helped us collect food and other essential items for **Foodbank\_N1**, along with £165 in cash.

Our **community rooms** at Morland Mews and Highbury Fields are used for your coffee mornings and Morland Mews also hosts the knitting group, bingo and your exercise classes. We'd love to see more of you using the community rooms - turn to **November** for details of who to contact.



**Football coaching** during the school holidays with professional help from Arsenal Ladies Team has gone down a storm, and the **Club Local women's football team** use the pitch every week. We're hoping to get a **gardening group** going in spring to improve biodiversity on the top site and encourage wild life.

Our partnership with St Mungo's made life better for many of you in the shape of **free advice on welfare and finances, and support to deal with debt.**

# July 2020



M	T	W	T	F	S	S
29	30	1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31	1	2



# Building new homes

The cost of renting or buying a home in Islington is high and rising, making it one of London's most expensive boroughs. So although we are small we feel strongly that we should do our bit to provide more homes here that people on modest incomes can afford.

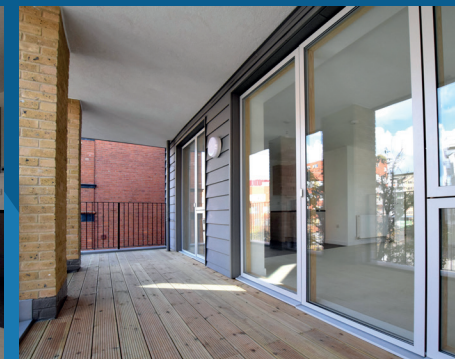
Last year we finished four new homes in Eden Grove where for years there had stood a derelict school caretaker's house.

Islington's chair of housing, Cllr Diarmaid Ward, said he had often walked past the derelict house. Our scheme, he said, was 'a dream realised'. 'Four homes in the place of one. You can't ask for more.'

We are hoping that in 2020 we will start to convert under-used garages at Morland Mews into six new homes and a community centre. First priority for the new homes will go to estate tenants needing a ground floor home.



**CLLR WARD WITH CHIEF EXECUTIVE  
SUSAN FRENCH AND FORMER CHAIR  
MARTYN WARING AT EDEN GROVE**



# August 2020



M	T	W	T	F	S	S
27	28	29	30	31	1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
Bank holiday BHA closed 31	1	2	3	4	5	6

# Safety first

The devastating fire and horrendous loss of life at Grenfell Tower in 2017 was a chilling reminder for all of us of the importance of health and safety. We at once started work back then on stringent measures to make all of your homes as safe as possible.

We have kept up the momentum this year, starting regular estate walkabouts to pick up on any health and safety concerns.

Among other fire safety measures, we have improved signage. You may also have noticed that we've become much more vigilant on the need to keep shared hallways clear.

Our strong focus on fire safety will continue next year and we thank all of you who have helped us make your homes and estates safer places to live.



**BARNSBURY STREET, HOME TO  
OUR VERY FIRST PROPERTIES**

**We're also able to help at least one neighbour comply with their fire safety regulations, giving the Drapers Arms in Barnsbury Street gated access from the rear to our Morland Mews estate.**

**This arrangement keeps the pub's staff and customers safe and gives us an annual income boost of around £6,000. We spend that money on improvements you can all enjoy.**



# September 2020



M	T	W	T	F	S	S
31	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	1	2	3	4

# Who we housed

All our homes are funded with public money so we work closely with Islington Council to make sure we find new tenants fairly and quickly for any of our homes that fall empty.

During the year we found tenants for 17 of our homes that were empty.

Some of our other tenants found a new home themselves through a **mutual exchange**. This lets tenants wanting to move home advertise their home to other tenants until they find a good match.

We also updated our **policy on lettings**, which hadn't changed since 2015, and we reviewed our homes' **standards for lettings**. Helping us with this important work were the tenant members of our new **resident panel**.

6

went to people put forward by the council under its choice-based lettings system

5

went to 'key workers' - people who aren't paid a big wage but who work in essential local services

6

went to people who were already our tenants but wanted a smaller or larger home

5

families swapped home with another family as a 'mutual exchange'



# October 2020



M	T	W	T	F	S	S
28	29	30	1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	Clocks go back 25
26	27	28	29	30	31	1

# Coming up next

So what are our plans for 2020 and what role can you play? Our board has been thinking hard about how Barnsbury HA can 'do more good'. That means using our resources in ways that will make the biggest and best impact on housing in Islington.



Over the coming year we will be:

- \* asking for your ideas and suggestions for **the best ways for us to work with you** to make your neighbourhood a place where, as chair Sean McLaughlin says, you feel you belong and can thrive
- \* talking to all of you about **the type of services you would value most** and how best we can offer these
- \* talking to **local community groups and organisations** to see if closer links between us will bring benefits for all or some of you
- \* doing our bit to tackle **the climate emergency**, including making your homes much more energy efficient, which should also cut fuel bills

- \* coming up with some very clear and ambitious plans to **improve the condition of your homes**, inside and out
- \* continuing to work with our **resident panel** to update and improve our policies and services
- \* encouraging more of you to make free use of facilities we own, such as the **community rooms** at Morland Mews and Highbury Fields. If you'd like to set up a new group (maybe a homework club?) just let us know and we'll help. Contact Dean at [dean@barnsbury.org](mailto:dean@barnsbury.org)



# November 2020



M	T	W	T	F	S	S
26	27	28	29	30	31	1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	1	2	3	4	5	6

# New faces at BHA

There have been a few changes on our staff and board teams over the year so here is a reminder of who has taken on new paid or unpaid roles with us.

## Our board of management

Our work is overseen by a board of volunteers. They scrutinise our work and policies and check that our standards and services are consistently high.

In September Martyn Waring stood down after six years as board chair. He was replaced after a rigorous recruitment process by Sean McLaughlin, now managing director of Homes for Haringey.

Sean has a long and distinguished record in Islington, most recently serving as the council's housing and social care director.



JANICE



FENAN

Three talented tenants also stepped up to new roles overseeing our work this year. Janice Walsh, one of our earliest tenants, has joined the board, along with Chris Bell. Our recruitment drive also had an unexpected bonus, with Fenan Emmanuel joining our Audit and Risk Committee.

## Staffing changes

Last year saw finance officer Jean Bull retire after 37 years with us. Jean will be familiar to many of you, not least as a neighbour at Morland Mews, where Jean



JEAN &  
DICKIE

and husband, caretaker Dickie, have lived since the early 1970s.

Managing our finances has become increasingly important as we continue to grow in size and ambition. So new to the finance team is a new part-time finance officer, Ewelina Galeziewska.



PRISCILLA  
& EWELINA

Our housing team also has a new face, with Priscilla Adjei-Asante taken on to help part-time with housing management and repairs and maintenance.

# December 2020



M	T	W	T	F	S	S
30	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	BHA closes at 1pm 24	Christmas Day BHA closed 25	Boxing Day BHA closed 26	BHA closed 27
Bank holiday BHA closed 28	BHA closed 29	BHA closed 30	New Year's Eve BHA closed 31	Bank holiday BHA closed 1	BHA closed 2	BHA closed 3

# Our board

**Our work is overseen by a board of volunteers who meet six times a year.**

**Chair: Sean McLaughlin**

Managing director of Homes for Haringey. Appointed 2019

**Vice chair, chair of audit and risk committee: Aaron Elliott**

Development and regeneration consultant for Altair. Appointed 2014

**Chair of governance and remuneration committee: Nancy Korman**

Retired after a career in local government health and social care. Appointed 2012

**Chris Bell**

BHA tenant with extensive knowledge of housing matters. Appointed 2019

**Jonathan Bunt**

Expertise in local government finance and affordable housing development. Appointed 2017

**Chyrel Brown**

Expertise in housing and neighbourhood management. Appointed 2018

**Stephane Croce**

Expertise in corporate sector and business administration. Appointed 2017

**Charles Culling**

Expertise in wide range of social housing services, finance and strategic management. Appointed 2013

**Barbara Sidnell**

Expertise in local government (former Islington councillor), and community development and safety. Appointed 2014

**Janice Walsh**

BHA tenant of long standing with broad knowledge of housing and links to local voluntary sector. Appointed 2019

**Find out more about our board at [barnsbury.org/about/management-board](https://barnsbury.org/about/management-board)**



# January 2021



M	T	W	T	F	S	S
BHA closed 28	BHA closed 29	BHA closed 30	BHA closed 31	Bank holiday BHA closed 1	2	3
BHA reopens 4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31



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# BARNSBURY

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