









Green shoots for growing Communities

Residents' review 2022-2023

Scaffolding in place for remedial fire safety works at Queensland Road, Islington

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A message from our **Chief Executive**

Welcome to our annual report to residents for 2022-2023.

This reports our overall performance against the key areas set out by the new Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs).

The TSMs are part of a range of recent new requirements introduced by the Government and our regulator – the Regulator of Social Housing. All social housing providers in England and Wales are required to start collecting data against the TSMs from April 2023 with full results to be published in an annual report to residents in autumn 2024.

As the main reporting areas have previously been set out we have been able to collect information during the past year to show our performance in relation to the new measures. This has the added benefit that when we first formally report against the TSMs in a year's time, we will be able to show trend data and you will be able to see if we performed better than the year before.

This report covers our performance against each of the five TSM areas:

- Keeping properties in good repair.
- Maintaining building safety.
- Respectful and helpful engagement.
- Effective handling of complaints.
- Responsible neighbourhood management.

Our performance against each of the TSMs is also summarised in a table at the end of this report.

We are also required to report on residents' overall satisfaction as part of the TSMs.

This has been declining since the mid-period of the pandemic, across the sector and for Newlon residents.

In the summer of 2022 we launched our Trust Newlon initiative to rebuild residents' confidence in the way we work with you and to focus on your priorities for improving services.

Trust Newlon focuses on the four key areas residents told us were the most important:

- Delivering reliable repairs.
- Being easy to deal with.
- Improving the places where our residents live.
- Supporting sustainable tenancies.

Each of these areas are covered by the TSMs.

Although we have much work to do I am pleased to report that we have seen improvement in a number of areas during the first year of Trust Newlon and we are seeing the green shoots of recovery. Specific highlights include:

- Increased satisfaction with the repairs service in the past year.
- A reduction in the number of times residents need to contact us.
- Increased use of the My Newlon portal.
- Increased satisfaction with the standard of communal areas.
- A slight increase in overall satisfaction.

These are a significant step in the right direction and give us confidence that the work we are doing through Trust Newlon is being reflected in residents' experience of dealing with us.

Listening to what our residents tell us and acting on their feedback is at the heart of our approach to improving services. To support this we worked with residents to co-create a new Resident Engagement Strategy during the last year which sets out the ways we will work together to deliver residents' priorities.

We will be working hard to build on this during the current year and we believe that through working together with residents and listening and acting on their priorities the green shoots we are now seeing will continue to grow.



O1 Keeping properties in good repair

Making sure that our residents have a decent home is one of our main priorities and a key requirement of the TSMs.

Our performance in the main areas set out in the TSMs is detailed below:



The most important aspect of meeting the standard for keeping properties in good repair is ensuring we meet 100% compliance with the Decent Homes Standard.

100% of our homes in the last year met the Decent Homes Standard.

To support meeting this standard and maintaining residents' homes to a high level we invested an additional £5 million in improvements to our existing homes during the past year and will be maintaining this level of additional investment for a number of years.

In addition we have invested £16 million on carrying out remedial fire safety works.

Dealing with damp and mould

One major area of focus for the social housing sector has been the management of damp and mould following the tragic death of 2-year-old Awaab Ishak. In response to this nationwide concern we have introduced a new approach to dealing with damp and mould and a new team – the Complex Repairs Team. Their role is to deal with any repairs issues which cannot be easily fixed, including issues with damp and mould.

We want our residents to live safely and securely in high quality, healthy homes and we take all reports of damp and mould very seriously.

If you spot signs of damp or mould in your home please report it to us immediately, even if the problem only seems to be small.

To report damp or mould, please contact our Service Centre by calling **020 7613 8080**, or emailing **repairs@newlon.org.uk**.

You can also report issues with damp and mould using the **My Newlon portal**.

If the problem is urgent please call us.

If we have already attended to deal with the issue and it has not been resolved you can contact our specialist damp and mould taskforce, part of the Complex Repairs Team directly by emailing **dmtf@newlon.org.uk**. Starting fire safety works in Hornsey Street, Islington.





Safety checks in the home



Supporting independent living for vulnerable young adults

Satisfaction with repairs

2022-2023 68%

Overall satisfaction with our repairs service improved significantly during the last year.

This is really important as repairs are the main reason residents need to contact us and dissatisfaction with repairs leads to the majority of complaints.

As part of Trust Newlon we have been working really closely with our main contractors to look at how we can ensure more repairs are completed first time and to make sure fewer appointments are cancelled and that less jobs are left undone.

This work has proved successful with the weekly number of cancellations reducing from around 90 a year ago to around 30 currently. Where repairs are cancelled this is mainly because we need a different tradesperson than anticipated to complete a repair.

In combination with using a data driven approach to manage complex or repeat issues, we are confident that we are making progress in getting more repairs right first time and in dealing with longstanding problems which have required repeat visits. Residents' satisfaction that their homes are well maintained



This result is difficult to compare to the previous year because of changes to the question and methodology following the introduction of the TSMs. The closest previous question was satisfaction with the overall condition of the home – which was 60% for 2021-2022.

Although this only indicates a very small improvement we are optimistic that we are moving in the right direction and that the increased investment we are making into maintaining people's homes in this and future years will help to improve residents' satisfaction with the standard of their homes.

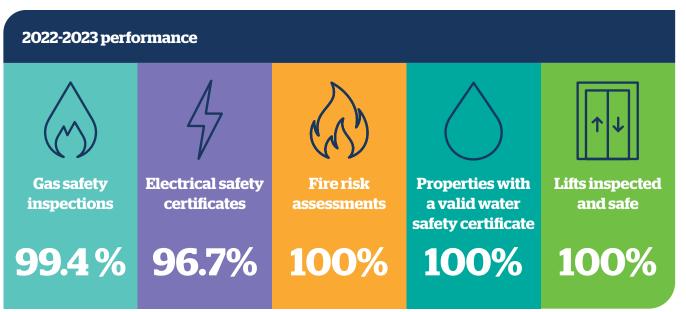


Greener energy - installing new photovoltaic panels

O2 Maintaining building safety

Ensuring the safety of our residents in their homes and of our staff and contractors is one of our core values.

The TSMs focus on ensuring that a number of key safety checks are carried out on a regular basis.



Any gaps in gas and electrical safety inspections reflect where we have been unable to gain access to people's homes.

Please assist us by responding to any appointment requests from Newlon or our contractors to carry out these vital safety checks.

These are legal requirements which help to keep you and your neighbours safe.

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If after several attempts to contact you or arrange an appointment we are unable to gain access we may need to take further action.

We understand that there are a range of reasons and personal circumstances why it is not always easy for people to provide access to their homes. We will always work with you to find a solution if this is an issue.



Preparing for remedial fire safety work



Almost ready to move in at Monument Way in Tottenham Hale

Satisfaction that the home is safe



This score is the same as the comparable standard for last year. While our aim is to work with residents to improve their satisfaction with safety where they live, it is reassuring that during a period when we are carrying out large scale works at a number of schemes that the majority of people feel safe in their home.

A wide range of new legislation has been introduced by the Government following the Grenfell Tower tragedy, including the Building Safety Act and the Fire Safety Act.

One of the key considerations of the Building Safety Act is a requirement to engage directly with residents, especially in taller buildings, seven storeys or above about safety in their building. We believe that this increased engagement, combined with progress in completing essential fire safety works and our ongoing programmes of safety checks, will help people feel safer in their homes.

Our full Building Safety Team is now in place and working to meet the requirements of the Building Safety Act. To support this they are meeting with and engaging with residents, working with our residents' Think Tank on developing an approach to engagement around safety and trialling innovative new technology including Twinnedit to assist with mapping building safety information.



Digitally explorable building components in Twinnedit

Twinnedit is a unique application which creates a digital twin of buildings so that residents as well as the fire brigade and the health and safety regulator can securely access all of the key safety information relating to a building.

Our partnership with Twinnedit has led to the opportunity for some residents to gain nationally accredited building safety training and through a link up with our Step Forward employment and training programme to a number of potential employment opportunities, including some with Twinnedit.

For more information about our approach to safety in your home please visit our website **www.newlon.org.uk/safety**.

Feeling safe where you live

We understand that feeling safe in the home is not just about crucial checks, it is about the safety of the environment where you live and other actions we take to ensure residents can feel secure in their homes, and most importantly how we listen and act on your concerns.

One of the main concerns residents have told us about is the security of front entrance doors to the blocks where they live.

To address this we have introduced a new collaborative way of working between our Neighbourhoods, Investigations and Building Services teams to use a data driven approach to provide higher specification security doors where we have higher than average amounts of antisocial behaviour (ASB).

Previously if an entrance door was damaged or needed repair our Building Services Team would have organised a repair. Now, before doing this we liaise across teams to understand if the doors are being damaged on a regular basis and if there are other related issues of ASB in front entrance lobbies and communal areas. If it is clear that this is the case we will install new heavier specification security doors. This reduces issues with the doors not working and problems with unwanted access to blocks, helping to minimise issues with ASB and to make residents feel secure where they live.

One recent example of this is that we have installed new security doors for our blocks across Hale Village where we have 542 homes.



O3 Respectful and helpful engagement

Satisfaction that Newlon keeps you informed about the things that matter to you



Agree that Newlon treats tenants fairly and with respect



These are both new areas of reporting and we have set targets for improvement in the current year.

During the current year we will be working with residents through the residents' Think Tank and wider surveying to understand the best way to keep you informed about the things that matter to you and will work together to make improvements based on residents' ideas and priorities.

Listening to your views and acting on them

Engaging with residents and acting on your views is a really important part of the way we work to provide services for you.

To support this we worked directly with residents to co-create our Resident Engagement Strategy, which focuses on the ways that residents can work with us to design and improve services.

It is vital that residents feel that we listen and act on their feedback and we offer a range of ways you can get involved with us, from very light touch to being directly involved in activities such as procurement, sitting on interview panels, and inspecting and grading our housing.

These include:

- The residents' Think Tank.
- Scrutiny activities including mystery shopping and estate inspections.
- Taking part in interview panels.
- Being part of a residents' group where you live.

Uniquely for an organisation of our size more than 15% of Newlon's staff are also our residents and we believe that their input is helping us to design, deliver and plan services that meet residents' needs.

You can find details of our Resident Engagement Strategy and the opportunities for getting involved on our website at **www.newlon.org.uk/residents/getting-involved**.

My experience of being on an interview panel

Residents are frequently involved in interview panels to appoint new staff members and Spitalfields resident Jeannie Lowen shares her experience of taking part in a panel to appoint a new Income Officer:

I recently spent two days on an interview panel with two members of the Income Team; it was a rewarding experience. I had the opportunity to gain some insight into how Newlon supports residents facing financial problems. This can lead to potential rent arrears issues. I discovered that the focus is on helping residents remain in their homes.

From my short time on the panel I got the strong impression that the focus is on compassionate understanding, with the aim of helping tenants remain in their homes and in finding workable solutions.

As for my fascinating couple of days on the interview panel the successful candidate had a deep understanding of the cycle of debt, eviction and homelessness which ultimately leads to the requirement of rehousing. They were acutely aware that there is a need to prevent that cycle. This candidate will be a great fit for the team in the role as a new Income Officer.

The team do everything they can to help and are acutely aware that the cost of living crisis is having a substantial impact on residents. If you are having problems, the Income Team's aim is to find solutions to sustain your tenancy; they are here to help you and seek to treat everyone with fairness, understanding and equality.





New homes underway at Belmont Street in Camden

You said We listened

An important part of the Resident Engagement Strategy and one of our Trust Newlon priorities is to demonstrate that where residents have made requests we have listened and acted. In each quarterly newsletter we highlight these activities using the 'you said, we listened' graphic.

Recent highlights include:



We want to be able to contact Newlon quickly and easily to report a range of issues or check information.



Developed the 'My Newlon' portal for this purpose, allowing residents to report a wide range of routine and communal repairs. It's easy to use with a straight forward sign-in process. You can use it at any time of the day or night to report repairs, communal issues, check statements and make payments.



We want to be able to access the help and advice that is available to households during the cost of living crisis.

We have Created a section on the Newlon website called 'cost of living support' where you will find a wide range of help and support that is available for households. We have provided increased hardship funding and set up a new Financial Inclusion Team to increase the level of support we provide for the households in the most need.

You said

We want Newlon staff to listen to our concerns and treat us with respect, showing empathy to the situations we find ourselves in and to communicate honestly but kindly with us.

We have

Listened to what you have said about how Newlon communicates with you during phone calls, in face to face meetings and through emails and letters. We want all our staff to show kindness and empathy towards our residents and so we have started to create the culture and behaviour change needed to deliver this. We are pleased to report that all our staff have recently taken part in customer service and empathy training. You said

We have

We want to know what Newlon can do about noise concerns that seem loud and intrusive but don't reach the statutory levels of noise nuisance to class them as antisocial behaviour (ASB).

Listened to what you have said about noise and how it can sometimes seem loud and intrusive whilst you are going about your everyday lives but if it doesn't reach the statutory levels of noise nuisance cannot be classed as ASB. In response, we have developed a Noise Policy which focuses on treating noise as a general concern in the first instance and then as ASB if it turns out to be above the statutory noise level.

You said

We are concerned about security doors in some of the blocks where we live.

We have

Introduced a new approach to upgrade doors where there are repeated issues and higher than average levels of ASB.

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04 Effective handling of complaints

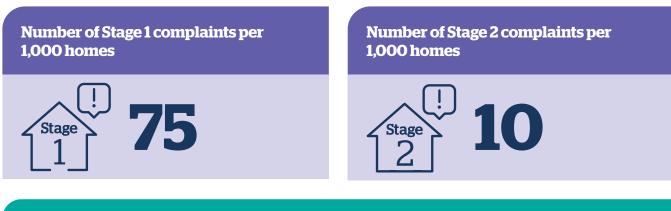
Percentage of Stage 1 complaints responded to within Complaint Handling Code timescale



Percentage of Stage 2 complaints responded to within Complaint Handling Code timescale



The TSMs also require us to record how many complaints we receive against the number of homes we have. This is so that the level of complaints can be transparently compared between social housing providers. For 2022-2023 these numbers were:



% residents saying they made a complaint to Newlon in last 12 months



of residents say they have made a complaint to us of some kind during the last year.

Satisfaction with complaints handling

There has been a complete change in methodology for this question from surveying people who had made a complaint to asking all residents regardless of whether they made a complaint. This means we are unable to compare last year's figures which showed that the majority of people were happy with how we handled their complaint to this year's.

If you need to complain

If you are unhappy with the service we provide and need to make a complaint we will always aim to work with you to resolve the issue as quickly and effectively as possible.

We have a formal complaints process you can follow, which is backed up by the Housing Ombudsman service

Newlon follows the Housing Ombudsman's Complaints Handling Code.

You can find our self-assessment against the code as well as details of how to complain and how to access the Ombudsman's service at **www.newlon.org.uk/ residents/making-a-complaint**.

The number of complaints we receive has levelled off and was broadly similar last year to the year before.

With the other green shoots of improvement we have seen, we are optimistic that this shows that our Trust Newlon initiative is working and that more issues are getting resolved sooner and that residents are finding less need to complain.

We are working to learn from complaints and take on any learnings from the Ombudsman. Recent learnings have helped us design our new approach to dealing with damp and mould and change the way we deal with ASB.



Residents fact finding at the Barnsbury Estate



05 **Responsible neighbourhood management**

Residents have told us that they want the areas where they live to be clean, secure and well maintained.

We work hard to achieve this through our repairs and handyperson service, estate inspections and carrying out scrutiny with residents.

Satisfaction that Newlon keeps communal areas clean and well maintained



This is a slightly changed target from previous years. We also track overall satisfaction with communal areas and this improved during the past year from 54% to 63%.

Improving the places where people live is an important part of Trust Newlon and we are pleased that we seem to be moving in the right direction.

Percentage of communal areas meeting highest standard



This is a new way of expressing the target and although this seems like a low outcome, all of our communal areas meet a good standard or better. The TSMs aim for more to be of the highest standard and we are working to improve this figure over the coming year.

Satisfaction with handling of antisocial behaviour (ASB)



Minimising ASB is an important part of ensuring residents feel secure and can enjoy living in their homes. There are significant changes in the way satisfaction with ASB is recorded, including recording dealing with noise nuisance and other sources of ASB separately. This means that this figure is difficult to compare with previous years. Our own surveying separate to the TSM standards shows that there have been recent improvements in the satisfaction of how we have handled ASB and this also improved in recent years.

We have also been focusing on dealing with areas of higher than average ASB and are confident that this result will improve over the next year.

Satisfaction that Newlon makes a positive contribution to your neighbourhood



This is a complex area for us to work on as in some places such as Barnsbury or Hale Village we have large communities of Newlon homes in one place. In other areas, such as parts of Hackney we quite often have scattered areas of original street properties or small developments spread across a borough and our local presence is limited.

We are committed to doing more than simply providing housing for our residents and for the communities where our residents live.

We provide a wide range of community activities open to all Newlon residents via our community centres at Barnsbury and in Limehouse. We regularly advertise activities and how to sign up for them in our quarterly residents' newsletters.

We offer our Step Forward programme to support residents into employment and training and we offer a range of hardship funding and support for residents in the most need. We provide a wide range of supported housing for the most vulnerable members of our community through our partnership with Outward, our care and support partner.

Last year Outward provided more than 3,500 hours of volunteering to support vulnerable adults. They also offer a specialist resource at Nutley Edge in East Sussex to provide holiday and activity breaks for adults with learning disabilities.

If you would be interested in volunteering or finding out more about the work of Outward visit **www.outward.org.uk**.

As a Group we employ more than 600 people and more than 15% of Newlon's staff are our residents.

We work in partnership with a wide range of local partners to support local communities, including working with the Engine Room Community Centre at Tottenham Hale to contribute with them to the Tottenham Foodbank.





Community day at the Barnsbury Estate



Monument Way at Tottenham Hale

06 Overall satisfaction

Overall satisfaction of residents who rent their home



This is a slight increase from last year. Although it is only a small increase it is welcome news as we work to regain residents' trust and improve satisfaction with the services we provide. This result ends a long period of decreasing satisfaction and is moving in the other direction to satisfaction in the sector as a whole.

How satisfied are you that Newlon is easy to deal with



It is good news that people are finding us easier to deal with. This is also shown through a significant reduction in contacts with our Service Centre, which went down by 4.4% last year and a significant increase in uptake and usage of the My Newlon portal.

Both of these trends have continued into the current year.

Registered users of the portal have increased to more than 3,000 households and use has increased by 90% in the last year.

Where the money goes

For 2022-2023 Newlon had a turnover of £116 million and made a surplus of £8.9 million.

As a not-for-profit charitable organisation we do not make profits and any surpluses are reinvested to maintain existing homes or develop new affordable homes.

While we fully appreciate the financial pressures residents are experiencing, by agreeing to the 7% rent cap our costs increased significantly more than our income, limiting our ability to invest in existing and new homes.

In the last year we invested £26 million on existing stock, comprising of £10m in stock investment work and £16m on remedial fire safety work..



New homes and helping to beat the homelessness crisis

Newlon's mission and charitable purpose is to provide high quality affordable housing to Londoners in housing need.

Our capital is facing a genuine homelessness crisis with an estimated one in fifty people categorised as homeless and more than 170,000 people, including 83,000 children currently living in temporary accommodation, many for the long-term.

For this reason we remain committed to building new affordable housing and currently have nearly 600 new homes in our development pipeline. We have also committed to providing new supported housing as part of our development programme to help support the housing needs of the most vulnerable members of our community.

We provide a range of homes including Shared Ownership and intermediate rent to help meet the housing needs of people on lower to lower middle incomes who would struggle to find homes on the private market and would not qualify for social housing. Here you can find out about how one Newlon resident has achieved their dream of home ownership by moving from an intermediate rent to a Shared Ownership home.



Settling in - Agnieszka at home



Progress onsite as a former Homebase store becomes homes

A new Shared Ownership home in Tottenham Hale

Hale Works, with its impressive 32 storeys, has become an iconic sight on the Tottenham Hale skyline. Providing spacious homes built to a high specification, it offers a great option for purchasing a property within a vibrant, rapidly developing area. Newlon are pleased to be able to offer some of the one and two bedroom apartments at Hale Works on a Shared Ownership basis.

Agnieszka has recently moved into a Shared Ownership apartment at Hale Works. Prior to this she rented a Newlon intermediate rent home, also based in Tottenham Hale.

"I've lived in Tottenham since 2008 and I can't ever see myself leaving the area. At first I lived in private rented accommodation but then I was told about intermediate rent properties. I applied to Newlon to become an intermediate rent resident in 2017 and was very quickly offered an apartment in Albemarle Court, Hale Village. I lived there for six years and was very happy. I found Newlon to be a great landlord and had no issues at all. It was a very positive experience for me and definitely made me want to continue my journey with Newlon once I decided to look for my next home."

Having found out about Shared Ownership, Agnieszka began saving for a deposit. However, there was a small set back during lockdown when she was made redundant from her retail job.

"Unfortunately the retail company that I worked for went into liquidation and I ended up having to use my savings to support myself until I found another job. I knew that I didn't want to go back into retail work and so I moved into the beverage industry – everyone always needs food and drink! I started in a middle management role but after several promotions, I became Head of International Planning. During this time I also won numerous awards. The additional income that came with the promotions and awards meant that I was able to save up for a deposit again quicker than I thought. It also meant that I was in a position to apply for a larger two bedroom apartment rather than a one bedroom property."

After looking at several Shared Ownership properties in and around Tottenham Hale, Agnieszka decided that the stylish two bedroom property in Hale Works was the best option for her.

"I was particularly taken by the quality and finish of the apartments in Hale Works. They really were presented to a much higher standard than any of the other Shared Ownership apartments I viewed. I love the ultra-modern kitchen and bathrooms and the two bedroom, two bathroom layout suits my needs, as I mainly work from home so I need a place that can accommodate this. The clever storage spaces are another reason why this apartment appealed to me. But my favourite part is the large south facing living area complete with balcony, which, because of its location within the development, is not overlooked at all. It's a totally private outside space that I can relax and enjoy the sunshine in. It's funny because I remember when Hale Works was being built, I said to my friends that one day I will be living there and now I am!"

Now happily settled in her new home, Agnieszka is looking to the future.

"Having my own 'forever home' has given me a real sense of security. It's one area of my life that I don't need to worry about any more. When I was renting I had to be assessed every three years to ensure that I still met the criteria to live in an intermediate rent apartment. Now I have my own home, I obviously no longer have to go through that. My aim for the future is to increase (staircase) the share of the apartment I own to 100% and become an outright homeowner."

Annual report card - the year in numbers

	2023 result	2024 target
Keeping properties in good repair		
Decent Homes Standard compliance	100%	100%
Responsive repairs completed within target	79%	90%
Satisfaction with repairs service in the last 12 months (Renters)	68%	70%
Satisfaction with time taken to complete most recent repair (Renters)	62%	70%
Satisfaction that your home is well maintained (Renters)	61%	65%
Maintaining building safety		
% of properties with a valid gas safety check	99.4%	100%
% of properties with a 5-year electrical certificate	96.7%	100%
% of properties with a valid FRA	100%	100%
% of properties with a valid water safety certificate	100%	100%
% of lifts inspected and safe	100%	100%
Satisfaction that home is safe (All respondents)	66%	70%
Respectful and helpful engagement		
Satisfaction that Newlon listens to your views and acts upon them (All respondents)	47%	55%
Satisfaction that Newlon keeps you informed about the things that matter to you (All respondents)	64%	70%
Agree that Newlon treats tenants fairly and with respect (All respondents)	61%	70%
Effective handling of complaints		
Percentage of Stage 1 complaints responded to within Complaint Handling Code timescale	98%	100%
Percentage of Stage 2 complaints responded to within Complaint Handling Code timescale	91%	100%
Number of stage 1 complaints per 1,000 homes	75	n/a
Number of Stage 2 complaints per 1,000 homes	10	n/a
% residents saying they made a complaint to Newlon in last 12 months (All respondents)	38%	n/a
Satisfaction with Newlon's approach to complaints handling (All respondents)	25%	TBC
Responsible neighbourhood management		
Satisfaction that Newlon keeps communal areas clean and well maintained (All respondents)	59%	70%
Percentage of communal areas meeting highest standard	21%	28%
Satisfaction with Newlon's approach to handling of antisocial behaviour (All respondents)	42%	50%
Satisfaction that Newlon makes a positive contribution to your neighbourhood (All respondents)	42%	50%
Overall satisfaction		
Overall satisfaction (Renters)	59%	65%
Satisfied that Newlon are easy to deal with (Renters)	63%	70%

Newlon House - 4 Daneland Walk - Hale Village - London - N17 9FE www.newlon.org.uk

Newlon Housing Trust is a charitable housing association

Chair: Aman Dalvi OBE Group Chief Executive: Mike Hinch Newlon Housing Trust is a Community Benefit Society - company no. 18449R, registered with the Regulator of Social Housing no. L0006, HMRC charities reference no. EW91301, VAT registration no. GB778532683. Access Homes is a Community Benefit Society - company no. 24992R, registered with the Regulator of Social Housing SL3605 Outward Housing, trading as Outward, is a company limited by guarantee - company no. 02151434, registered charity no. 800529. Newlon Fusion is a company limited by guarantee - company no. 04000022, registered charity no. 1119673. NewlonBuild Ltd is a private limited company no. 07884092. NewlonInvest Ltd is a private limited company no. 09492006.

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