

Residents' Annual Report 2023



Residents' Annual Report 2023

Contents	
Introduction	p3
Welcome	p4
2023 successes:	
Annual Visits	p6
Fire Risk Assessments	p7
Contractor Code of Conduct	p8
Faster Payments	p9
Spotlight	
Linde Carr	p10
Amjad Khan	p11
Resident Involvement	
Offer proposal	p12
Local Approach	p15
Love Where You Live	p17
Thank You	p18



Notting Hill Genesis residents at various events in 2023



Top left: Staff and residents community garden project 2023 Top right: Resident Involvement evaluation day November 2023 Bottom left: Urban Gamez, Grahame Park summer 2023 Bottom right: Aylesbury Christmas event 2023 Cover: St. Martin's resident mural in Lambeth October 2023, residents and staff.

Introduction



Urban Gamez at Grahame Park summer 2023

The Residents Annual Report is a way for us to celebrate the successes of partnership working with residents, as well as providing a glimpse into plans for the next year.

In 2023, we are delighted to have worked with more residents, and there have been many new opportunities to get involved, including through new resident-led groups, email consultations and focused projects. We are pleased to be able to show the positive impact of those further on in this

report. We have continued to work in line with the [Together with Tenants](#) charter and increased our focus on engaging with residents in their local communities, ensuring our residents associations play a key part in the overall resident voice and positive change. We have also begun to improve our resident involvement offer. Residents have been vital in helping to shape upcoming focuses and opportunities, creating a culture of collaborative working with goals that speak to us all.

New opportunities have included:

- A new forum for residents living in supported or sheltered accommodation
- Opportunities to review a number of policies such as hate crime, defects, repairs, pets and hoarding
- Procurement projects such as heat networks, lifts, planned investment and fire risk assessments
- Managing our gas contracts, having the opportunity to join contractor management meetings

Click inside the text box or scan the QR code which takes you to the web site for more information



New forum for our supported housing residents



National Housing Federation Together with tenants



Welcome



Ian Ellis
Chair
Notting Hill Genesis Board

I am delighted to wish you a Happy New Year and to introduce this year's Residents Annual Report.

In July 2023 we introduced a new three-year corporate strategy, called 'Better Together', which sets out our aims to improve services, homes and communities. Our new vision, 'working better for our residents' reflects a culture shift that we need to achieve to deliver what matters most to residents. Working together, we can look to achieve common goals and deliver better connections, better homes and better places.

This past year has also brought about a consultation on a new set of consumer standards, and from April 2024 we will need to show that we are compliant

with these, acting in line with a code of practice set by the regulator of social housing. The proposed new standards cover Safety & Quality, Transparency, Influence & Accountability, Neighbourhood & Community, and Tenancy. We look forward to working closely with you to ensure we are meeting these standards and are keen to continue to use this consultative approach with regulation and our resident services as a whole.

I would like to thank all of you have given your time and support this year to help us to gain valuable insight into and improve residents' experiences. Your commitment is extremely important and valued greatly by all at Notting Hill Genesis.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ian Ellis". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Welcome



**Emma-Louise
Stewart**
Chair of the Resident
Voices Group

This is my first year as a board member, and my first year chairing the Resident Voices Group. This is a great year of firsts... So far, it has been a very interesting time, to say the least. Being able to work alongside members of the Resident Voices Group, health and disability forum plus residents and staff across the organisation. As residents and staff alike, we are really looking at the way we will be working together with Notting Hill Genesis going forward. I have been highly impressed by the passion and community spirit coming through in our meetings and events.

When I joined the board back in September, what appealed to me about the role of board member and chair of the Resident Voices Group, and sold me on the position, was that residents are at the forefront of the organisation. With the upcoming changes to

consumer standards and the increasing need for collaboration between residents and Notting Hill Genesis, resident involvement is one of the most important factors in ensuring residents remain at the heart of everything the organisation does. We are pleased that a new customer strategy is in place and informing future plans, and look forward to playing a key role in ensuring Notting Hill Genesis complies with and exceeds the new standards this coming year.

This is now our third Residents' Annual Report, which gives you a flavour of the hard work of residents and the impact that this has had on services and residents' experiences.

I hope you will enjoy reading about some of the positive changes residents have made.

Emma-Louise Stewart

2023 successes – Annual Visits

In 2020/2021, the Oversight & Scrutiny group led on a project to improve the annual visit experience for residents, after receiving feedback from satisfaction surveys and resident groups that the process was not working as well as it could have been. An annual visit is when a housing officer meets with a resident in their home at least once a year. It is an opportunity to check that any information we hold about the resident is correct, ensure the resident's home is in good condition, and a chance for residents to be updated about changes to services. It is also an opportunity for residents to discuss any tenancy or property issues with us.



NHG resident and staff member on their annual visit

Since actions have been completed, satisfaction with the annual visit has risen from 82% in December 2022, to 90% in October 2023, showing a steady continuous improvement as recommendations have been implemented.

One of the clearest improvements over the past year is staff taking ownership of any issues or queries, with scores rising from 80% in December 2022 to 90% in September 2023. In fact, since the new satisfaction survey for annual visits was introduced in December 2022, all aspects of satisfaction have increased, including advisor manner and how well any 'next steps' are explained.

The project group, consisting of 12 residents, carried out the following activities

- Experienced annual visits
- Interviewed housing staff
- Heard feedback from other residents
- Made recommendations regarding communication, relationship building and getting the most out of the visit, which were implemented through 2021 and 2022 through an action plan.

Click inside the text box or scan the QR code which takes you to the web site for more information



2023 successes – Fire Risk Assessments

Fire risk assessments (FRAs) are one of the precautions we take to keep residents safe from fire. These assessments are carried out by Savills, one of the leading experts producing FRAs in the industry. We regularly review FRAs for our buildings with an internal shared / communal area which is a requirement of us as your landlord and an essential measure we must take to keep you safe in your home. The purpose of the FRA is to assess the risk of a fire occurring, the likelihood of residents being able to respond to a fire and the consequences of a fire occurring in the building. Savills will then make recommendations for us to improve the safety of the building following the assessment.

Click inside the text box or scan the QR code which takes you to the web site for more information



Our Fire safety FAQs



What was the issue?

We were spending too much time working with Savills to resolve access issues to carry out the assessments. FRAs are carried out by Savills every year, two years or three years, depending on the type and age of the building.

What could be done?

Residents in our Asset Management Steering Group agreed that the introduction of FRA letters to inform residents of upcoming assessments and access requirements should help with this.

What did residents do?

In April 2023, 14 residents gave feedback on a new letter template before it started to be used. Residents made important suggestions to improve these letters, to ensure residents receiving them

understood the context, were aware of the importance of the assessments, but remained calm and proactive in ensuring that access could be given to communal areas when needed.

What was the impact?

These letters are now being used regularly. Since the introduction of the letters, 100% of scheduled assessments have been completed. Resident involvement in this piece of work has meant that the process of carrying out FRAs this year has been much smoother, that residents are kept informed, and the need for using locksmiths to gain access to a communal area is kept to a minimum. We are spending less time resolving access issues and residents better understand the importance of the FRA.

This is a great example of how resident input has had a really positive impact on services. Frazer Day, Fire Safety Project Manager, said 'This piece of work has

allowed NHG to ensure our programme for completed FRA's has maintained at 100% throughout 2023. Thank you to the residents who took part'.

2023 successes – Contractor Code of Conduct

Over the past year, resident complaints have highlighted concerns over the way our contractors behave in their homes. Among the most common complaints is instances of contractors failing to show up to scheduled appointments on time, or at all, or failing to communicate any changes quickly. But there are other criticisms we need to tackle, such as contractors arriving without proper identification, being rude to residents, leaving a mess behind or even causing damage while they are there. Language barriers and health and safety concerns have also been raised, with some of you claiming areas of work in your homes have been left hazardous.

Our contractors are representing us when they enter your homes. Both you and us are trusting them with the responsibility of ensuring everyone feels safe and comfortable living there and we expect our contractors to take that responsibility seriously. We know the behaviour and professionalism of contractors goes a long



Residents touring Earl's Court November 2023

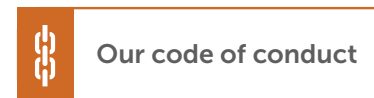
way to shaping your experience and your opinion of us, and as such we are simplifying our code of conduct so the demands and expectations on contractors are clear for both you and them. This revised code emphasises the importance of factors such as displaying appropriate identification, maintaining cleanliness and respecting your privacy.

We have approached a number of residents who submitted complaints for their views

on our code of conduct, while also receiving input from our asset management scrutiny group. Thank you to everyone who took part, whether that was in person, over the telephone or in writing, as your feedback has had a direct influence on the shaping of these new guidelines.

It was clear from our discussions that this updated code of conduct must be reinforced through robust contract management and high standards being demanded of our contractors. One of the ways discussed to help hold contractors accountable was the potential to include financial penalties within our contracts for those who don't meet the high standards expected of them. Elements of this will now be built into the way we assess contractor performance in future.

Click inside the text box or scan the QR code which takes you to the web site for more information

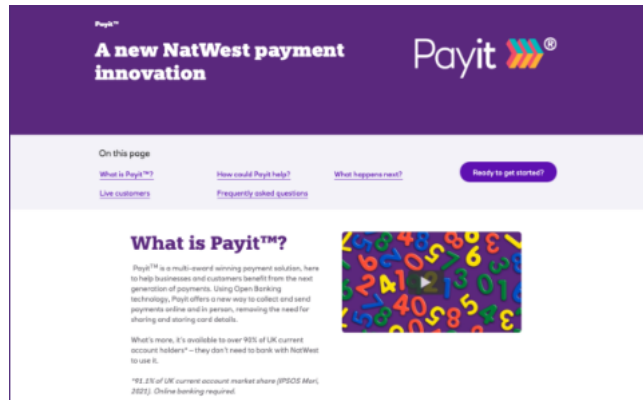


2023 successes – Faster Payments

Sometimes we need to make discretionary payments to residents where we have not met our service standard, or if the resident is in credit on their rent or service charge account. We've changed the way we process these payments to make it quicker and easier for residents to receive the money you are entitled to.

As part of our commitment to enhancing our resident experience, we have introduced an online payment system, using NatWest Payit, to improve the way we make payments to those residents who have access to a mobile phone and e-mail address.

Before this new system was introduced, residents carried out user testing and reviewed different aspects of the service, such as the notifications residents receive throughout the payment process. Residents then provided valuable feedback which was used to ensure the new payments system was as efficient, easy to navigate and clear as it could be for residents. User testing at



NatWest Payit home page

this stage also helps to eradicate any potential issues in the early stages.

The new system went live at the beginning of November 2023, with an additional option in My Account for residents to 'request for credit refund', and more options for staff to choose from when instigating a payment to a resident.

So far, using this new system has meant that residents are receiving funds much quicker, as payments can sometimes take up to 20 days to reach them. Time is also

saved by the Notting Hill Genesis finance team as manual checks such as payment details, bank account details and appropriate beneficiaries no longer need to take place if the resident has chosen to receive their money by this method. The new system has also reduced the likelihood of any errors occurring.

We are keen to continue to involve residents in user testing when we look to introduce anything new, or any improvements to our existing systems. Another example of this has been the roll-out of the new Notting Hill Genesis website this year. We are extremely grateful to the residents who tested the functionality of the new website, helping to identify any improvements that could be made in the early stages of development.

Click inside the text box or scan the QR code which takes you to the web site for more information



Spotlight – Linde Carr



Linde Carr, involved resident and former resident board member, has given us an insight into what encouraged her to get involved and what it means for her:

'I got involved over ten years ago. Notting Hill had a resident newspaper which they circulated a few times a year, and there was an invitation for residents to attend some meetings about repairs. I had just retired so I went along to Hammersmith and checked it out.

I remember that the Head of Resident Engagement approached me one day and said that Notting Hill were advertising for a resident board member. I applied, not thinking for one minute I would be successful, but I was! And so I had a key to the fairy castle and all its contents. I wanted to see everything that involved the housing officer role, so I visited all the area offices, arranged by the governance team, and the officers there took me out on their visits to meet other residents. I remember being astounded at how varied and complex their jobs were. It gave me an insight into how important it is to make sure that the organisation invests in the people who make it happen. Don't misunderstand me, as well as the good work, there were things that needed improvement, but the dedication of most of the officers just had to be admired. They are the bridge between other services like repairs or complaints, so they really are 'Jack of all trades'.

The thing I am most proud of is being one of the people who challenged the 'Pay to stay' section of the new housing act that the current government wanted to become law. It meant that many thousands of social residents would be forced to pay the market rent for their homes which was impossible. The Resident Involvement team, along with **TPAS**, were able to arrange a meeting for myself and another resident with Baroness Lister in the House of Lords, to present our reasons that this should not become the law. We all breathed a sigh of relief when the House of Lords chucked that section out and we residents kept the rooves over our heads.

I would say to all residents that it is within your power to make a difference, so get involved! You may not see the changes immediately, but you have a voice, so use it and see what happens. I am not saying that I have always achieved what I wanted, but putting the residents' point of view across does make a difference. I don't regret one moment that I became involved, so give it a go.'

Spotlight – Amjad Khan



Embarking on a journey of transformation as the new Customer Experience Director

I'm beyond thrilled to share with you the exciting initiatives we're embarking on to redefine and elevate our customer experience. As the new Customer Experience Director, my primary focus is to enhance every aspect of customer interactions with Notting Hill Genesis. I bring plenty of experience, energy and passion for driving positive change. My role is not just a title; it's a commitment to

ensuring that your journey with us is nothing short of exceptional. We're not just aiming to meet customer expectations; we're dedicated to exceeding them. It's about making every step with us seamless, efficient, and, most importantly, enjoyable for our residents.

Innovation is at the heart of what we're doing. I believe that the best solutions come from collaboration, which is why we're going to be involving more of our residents, in key decision-making processes. Your insights are invaluable, and together, we'll continue to co-create solutions that truly address our customers diverse needs. Your involvement ensures that our services are not just tailored to meet standards but are crafted with the wider community in mind.

No service is perfect, and when challenges arise, I see them as opportunities for growth. Improving our complaint handling procedures is a priority. I want every concern to be an opportunity for us to learn, improve,

and demonstrate our unwavering commitment to customer satisfaction. In a rapidly changing regulatory landscape, my focus is on ensuring that we exceed the new consumer standards coming into effect in April 2024. Our policies are evolving to be more customer-centric, diverse, and reflective of best-in-class practices. This isn't just about compliance; it's about aligning our practices with our customer expectations and needs.

The Road Ahead

As we step into 2024, I invite each of you to join us on this transformative journey. Together, we're shaping the future of customer experiences at Notting Hill Genesis. Your insights, feedback, and collaboration are invaluable as we work towards a community-focused, innovative, and exceptional experience for every resident.

Here's to a year of positive change, growth, and unparalleled experiences and I can't wait to see the incredible impact we'll make together.

Revised Resident Involvement Offer – Proposal




Emma-Louise Stewart at Resident Involvement evaluation day November 2023

This year, until April 2024, we're carrying out a review of our resident involvement offer. Since 2021, we've heard a lot of feedback that we need to hear from more residents from a wider range of communities, to diversify perspectives and engage more with our younger residents. You have also challenged us to ensure we communicate a clear and simple offer of resident involvement, demonstrating the benefits.


Keeping in mind our new corporate strategy and the proposed changes to the consumer standards, as well as all the feedback we have received so far when consulting with involved residents, we have started to build a revised offer which remains inclusive, connected and measurable, principles that were co-designed with residents in 2021.

The commitment of our residents in recent years to provide robust challenge and feedback, to scrutinise services and advocate on behalf of their communities, particularly during periods of uncertainty and change, had provided a firm foundation for us to build on together. We value the ongoing commitment and hard work that our existing involved residents give, and this proposed approach is about moving forward together and encouraging new residents to get their voice heard. Based on this and collaborating with our residents, we can now develop an offer of involvement that reflects both our ambitions and the needs of our residents. We look forward to working with all our involved residents over the next year, to provide the support and training needed and for all residents to feel confident with their views, ideas and valuable challenge.

Click inside the text box or scan the QR code for more information on our web site

 [Our corporate strategy](#)



 [Consultation on the consumer standards](#)



Revised Resident Involvement Offer – Proposal

What have residents told us so far?

Since September 2023, we have been consulting with residents on the proposals to improve the resident involvement offer at NHG, by holding 1-1 and group meetings, drop-in sessions and encouraging involved residents to send in any feedback by email or phone at any time. So far, residents have told us that:

- There is a need for change and new voices, particularly younger and more diverse voices.
- It is important to ensure we remain compliant with the consumer standards, as well as retaining the skills, knowledge and experience of residents who have been involved for a long time.
- Focused project work recently completed has brought about positive change, such as damp and mould, contractor code of conduct and welcoming new residents projects.
- Communication is essential to regularly promote opportunities, such as the resident involvement bulletin.
- Open forums and residents' associations are good ways to connect local voices to wider, strategic projects and focuses.

How are we planning to improve the resident involvement ?

Local

- Residents' associations
- Open area forums (for all residents to attend)
- Resident involvement drop in days
- Housing surgeries
- Joint inspections
- Community events and meetings

Oversight

- Resident Voices group

Involvement Activities

- Scrutiny projects
- Resident led meetings
- One off consultations or projects

Governance

- Resident committee member eg. operations committee
- Resident board member
- Shareholders

Revised Resident Involvement Offer – Proposal

What's next?

We are carrying on the conversation on resident involvement and would love to hear from all our residents about the types of opportunities you would like to see. So far, between January and April 2024, there will be opportunities to help shape and improve the following services:

- Sustainability
- Building safety
- Procurement of a domestic heating contractor
- Policy reviews – parking, lettings, pests, home improvements
- Repairs
- Damp & mould
- Consumer standards – monitoring our approach and progress
- Open area forums – engaging in your local communities



Resident Involvement evaluation day at Bruce Kenrick House November 2023

Over the coming months, the resident involvement team will be developing a welcome and training package for all residents who wish to get involved, to make sure everyone has the tools they need to feel confident when taking up an opportunity.

We'll be posting regular updates in our resident involvement bulletin, so get in touch if you would like to be added to the mailing list.

Click inside the text box or scan the QR code to email or call the involvement team



Local Approach – New Focus

This year, we have focused more on working with residents in the local community. Some of the ways we have started to do this include:

- We held a Residents Association summit in June 2023 to bring representatives together and plan how we can work more collaboratively. Residents from this group have since been involved in improvement projects over the last six months.
- We carried out an audit of residents associations to ensure we can better support those who are active.
- The resident involvement team have been more visible at local events and residents' meetings, to spread the word about getting involved and the benefits it can have.
- We have introduced reporting tools for housing colleagues to tell us about any events and activities in their area of work, to help us to understand the issues residents are having, and how we can use this information to inform wider projects to improve services.

From the beginning of 2024, we will also have a new team dedicated to resident engagement, meaning we can spend more time listening to and working with our residents to improve local areas and services.



In 2022/23

70 local engagement activities were recorded, with approximately 900 residents taking part!

Top: Resident involvement and housing teams, Factory Quarter

Left: Staff at Meet the Housing Ombudsman event in Hammersmith July 2023

Click inside the text box or scan the QR code which takes you to the web site for more information



Our Resident Association tool kit





Local Approach – New Focus

To further improve local resident engagement, we will be introducing Local Area Forums, which are currently being designed and planned for 2024. These forums will be a chance for residents to receive updates on services, raise concerns, talk to local officers, and meet residents in the neighbourhood. We will also:

- Advertise and host more events with partners, such as the 'meet the housing ombudsman' held in July 2023.
- Run, sponsor or attend more events in local communities, such as the Wembley Mela which took place in July 2023, and Southwark Kaleidoscope, celebrating diversity in Southwark through art, music and dance.
- Provide and advertise more training and resources for residents, such as the Government's Four Million Homes initiative, providing guidance and training on residents' rights.

Click inside the text box or scan the QR code which takes you to the web site for more information

 [Housing Ombudsman event follow up](#) 

 [Southwark Kaleidoscope](#) 

 [Four Million Homes](#) 



Above: St. Martin's resident mural October 2023, residents and staff



Left: At Kaleidoscope event, Southward September 2023

Love where you live

Bringing the community together through gardening-Factory Quarter

A group of resident volunteers were able to bring the whole community together through various planting, gardening and bulb planting days, transforming their whole communal area by filling them with colourful



flowers, plants, shrubs and small trees. Many children, families, young people and residents got involved.

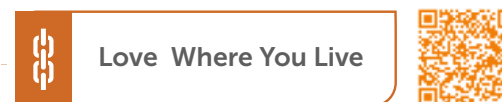
Building on newfound friendships and community further, an Eid celebration was held for all residents at Factory Quarter in Acton Vale. The **Love where you Live** fund provided a small grant to support the event. John, one of the residents on Factory Quarter said *"As you did so much to help us set up our Eid celebration, I wanted to send you a video to show the fantastic atmosphere and wide participation of all ages, cultures and nationalities. It was an amazing day and the Somali community who asked me to help them organise it were over the moon. They provided the most delicious food and were celebrating until 9pm."*



Above: Shrubs ready for planting at the Factory Quarter, Acton Vale.
Above left: Factory Quarter gardens.

It was a huge success and everyone was impressed by the strong community spirit. Thank you so much for the budget, which allowed us to fund decorations, table accessories and non-alcoholic refreshments".

For more information on funding **Love where you Live** events click the text box or scan the QR code



Thank you



Resident Ray and NHG staff member Claire Aherne at Freeman Court in Chelmsford

We would like to say a huge thank you to all the residents who got involved this year. With your efforts, some important improvements have been made to the services all residents receive.

Residents are at the heart of all that we do. The resident involvement team is here to facilitate ways for you to get involved, challenge us and give us your views. There are many ways you can get involved in shaping our services, from one-off surveys to time-limited task and finish projects focusing on specific issues, to taking part in short consultations on policies or wider housing sector questions.

Each month, the resident involvement team sends out a bulletin to all residents interested in hearing more about resident involvement and engagement opportunities. This includes access to free training courses through the year and updates on national events that you may be interested in. Using the links below, you can learn more about resident involvement on our website, and subscribe to our mailing list to receive our bulletin

Click inside the text box or scan the QR code which takes you to the web site for more information



In 2022/23

79% residents satisfied with their involvement activity in 2022/23

240 out of 277 resident recommendations made since January 2019 were implemented by the end of 2022/23

74% of recommendations made in 2022/23 made linked to three or more principles of the Together with Tenants charter. Communication was the most frequent principle covered



Bruce Kenrick House,
2 Killick Street,
London, N1 9FL

This report was published in February 2024
Design lead: Colin Burns, NHG resident