



SPITALFIELDS
HOUSING ASSOCIATION LTD
স্পিটালফিল্ডস হাউজিং এসোসিয়েশন লি.

Residents' Annual Report

2010 – 2011



Working with **residents**

Working in partnership with others to promote **economic regeneration**



Well managed housing



Spitalfields Housing Association Mission

We are committed to improving the quality of life for the communities we serve. We will achieve this through the provision of well-managed housing and by working in partnership with others to promote economic regeneration and empowerment. Our professional staff, supported by our Board of Management, will involve tenants and the wider community in the delivery of cost effective, accountable and responsive services.



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Introduction

The Tenants Services Authority introduced a new framework for assessing performance from April 2010. This framework required housing providers to consult with their tenants and agree a set of 'local offers/offer'. The Tenants Services Authority is scheduled to be abolished in 2012 and the regulatory functions will be transferred to the Homes and Communities Agency.

In October 2010 we produced an Annual Report for Residents which set out how the standards were met and proposed the draft 'Offer'.

During 2010/11 we consulted extensively with residents to develop and agree a set of service standards. The service standards reflect what you think is most important in terms of how we provide services to you. These new standards are the 'Offer.' A copy of the 'Offer' is available online at www.spitalfieldsha.org.uk or by contacting the association.

Our performance against the 'Offer' will be monitored and reported to residents in our newsletters, on our website and in the Annual Report to Tenants. We are also setting up a Resident's scrutiny panel whose role will be to monitor our performance.

This Annual Report sets out progress made so far with the 'Offer' and how services are currently provided; some key performance including satisfaction survey results, in 2010/11 and how we plan to deliver improvements.

The Residents' Forum and all residents in the involvement register were consulted on the content and design of this report. We hope that you find this report interesting and useful. We want to know what you think about it and would welcome any suggestions you have to make it better in 2011/12.

Resident involvement and empowerment standard

Customer Service

What we are doing

- Our offices are open for at least 8 hours daily from Monday to Thursday and for 6.5 hours on Friday;
- We offer a range of ways for you to contact us – by e-mail, by letter, by telephone, or by visiting in-person;
- We provide direct dial numbers and e-mail addresses for our staff. Contact details for staff can also be found on our website www.spitalfieldsha.org.uk;
- A Freephone number (0800 644 6441) is provided for the repairs service;
- We aim to answer your call within 6 rings and reply to correspondence within 10 working days;
- We have put in place a corporate branding procedure for all our publications.

How we are doing

-
- 68% of respondents said that they had no difficulty contacting us
-
- 55% of respondents were satisfied with last contact
-
- 47% of respondents found the website helpful
-
- 59% of respondents found the newsletter useful
-
- 4 residents attended Customer Care training with staff
-

What we plan to do next

- Introduce a reception survey to ensure we meet the targets for reception service by November 2011;
- Set up correspondence monitoring to ensure your letters are responded to within the agreed target time by October 2011;
- Put in place systems to monitor telephone answering by March 2012;
- Carry out a review of the customer service function by December 2011;
- Embed the culture of customer care by including customer care targets in individual performance plans by April 2012.

Complaints

What we are doing

- You can make a complaint in person, by letter, e-mail or by telephone. You can also ask a representative to make a complaint on your behalf;
- We acknowledge complaints within 2 working days and respond to you in full within 10 working days;
- If you are not satisfied with the response you can ask for a review through stage 2 and then 3;
- Once you have been through our complaints process you can refer your complaint to the independent ombudsman service;
- We carry out complaint satisfaction surveys. The feedback received from the survey helps us to improve services and ensure the complaints process is effective.

How we are doing

-
- 25 complaints received in 2010/11
 - 100% of complaints were responded to within target
-

Complaints by service area	Number of complaints 2009/10	Number of complaints 2010/11
ASB	18	8
Estate Services	0	1
Repairs	8	9
Contractor	1	4
Staff conduct	1	0
Other	0	3

What we plan to do next

- Include performance on complaints in the newsletter quarterly from December 2011;
- Improved satisfaction with handling of complaints to 70% by June 2012.

Resident involvement and empowerment standard

Tenant involvement

What we are doing

- We offer a range of activities for resident involvement, both formal and informal to encourage feedback from wider groups of residents. You can get involved as a board member, attend and help plan the annual residents' conference, the residents' forum, the women's forum, the youth empowerment forum, become a resident estate inspector, take part in focus groups, interview panels, and become a member of a tenants' association;
- We have organised an annual residents' conference for the past three years to find out what is important to you and have included this in our service improvement plans for the forthcoming year;
- We continue to support community development activities organised by our residents' groups including, health sessions, fundays for children, day trips, sponsor a football team and gardening club;
- We encourage and support you in setting up Tenants' Associations and provide an annual grant for Tenants Association activities.

How we are doing

-
- 85 residents attended meetings in 2010/11
-
- We currently have 7 active Tenants Associations
-
- We offer 14 ways to get involved
 - 7 residents have been trained in carrying out estate inspections
-
- 72% of respondents were satisfied with being kept informed
-

What we plan to do next

- Review the way we involve and engage residents and publicise this in newsletters twice a year from December 2011;
- We aim to recruit 'resident readers' who will review and comment on our communications (leaflets and newsletter) before they are published to ensure articles reflect what residents want to know by December 2011;
- We will continue to work with you to address the priorities you have identified at the residents' conference in April 2011 and the satisfaction survey 2010/11;
- Include a section in the newsletter for Tenants' Associations activities from December 2011;
- Set up a scrutiny panel to review performance and progress with the delivery of the 'offer' by December 2011.



Fruit curving on Selby Street fun day

Resident involvement and empowerment standard

'Spitalfields HA has done a fantastic job in setting up a women's forum. It is a great opportunity for women to get involved with the association. One of the many achievements of the women's group was to get the association to deliver regular exercise sessions at Wapping and in other areas for its residents. I can express my concerns directly to the association through the women's forum.'

Yasmin Begum

'The Youth Empowerment Forum has been running successfully for over a year now. I am very thankful to Spitalfields HA for creating the opportunity for youth to be involved in local decision making, community activities and to bridge the gap between young people and the community. Joining the YEF has opened up my mind more. It has helped me with my team building skills and decision making. It makes me feel more responsible for the decisions I make. All in all, it was the opening of a new door for me.'

Nahas Ajhar

'The adaptation works carried out for my mother included additional staircase handrails, a shower and WC. With the help of the additional hand rails my mother is able to climb the stairs herself. A shower with a shower seat and a clos-o-mat WC, has helped my mother in terms of hygiene and keeping clean.

These adaptations have made life easier for my mother to get on with her daily life and made it easier for her carers to support her.

I am really happy with the adaptation work. I believe Spitalfields played a big part in ensuring the works were done to a good standard.'

Mr Rezaul Karim

Understanding and responding to your needs

What we are doing

- We have carried out profiling of all our residents and as new tenants sign up, we complete a profile form with them. This helps us to deliver services which meet the needs of the individual. For example, if someone has a disability and finds it difficult to come into the office, we would make arrangements to see them at home. We also use this information when reviewing policies and procedures. We do this by carrying out Equality Impact Assessments on policy/procedures to ensure they do not have an adverse impact on any residents;
- We fund essential major and all minor aids and adaptations. For desirable major adaptations we work closely with the Occupational Therapist (OT) team to ensure disabled facilities grant (DFG) is applied for and works completed as quickly as possible;
- We translate key documents into Bengali, offer large print and translation in other community languages on request.

How we are doing

-
- 70% of tenant profile records were received as at 31/3/2011
-

What we plan to do next

- Put in place effective collection and monitoring of diversity information of residents who engage with us to ensure they represent the diversity of all our tenants by March 2012;
- Arrange training for staff to ensure use of plain English in all communication to residents by March 2012;
- Identify suppliers who can produce information in different formats so that we are able to respond to requests within a reasonable timescale by December 2011.

Home standard



Contractor carrying out repair work

Responsive repairs

What we are doing

- We met all the responsive repairs targets in 2010/11;
- We provide you with clear guidance on which repairs are our responsibility and which repairs you must complete yourself in the tenants' handbook, the website and the newsletter. We also advise you when you report a repair if it is your responsibility;
- If you request us to carry out a rechargeable repair, we provide you with an estimate prior to commencing the work;
- We have put in place an appointment system for urgent and routine work which offers 6 appointments slots per day with the choice of an AM, Midday & PM appointment;
- We have in place a 'code of conduct' for all our contractors, which requires them to display their badge and leave your home clean and tidy;
- We post inspect 15% of all repairs and 100% of all repairs over £1,000;
- We contact you within 5 working days if you express dissatisfaction with the works;
- We incorporate choice where possible so that residents who wish to pay for a better offer e.g. better kitchen or bathroom can do so.

How we are doing

- 2503 orders raised in 2010/11
- 525 repairs post inspected in 2010/11
- 52% of respondents were satisfied with the repairs service
- As at 31 March 100% of homes had a valid gas safety certificate (CP12)



Spelman Street fun day

Home standard

Repairs Priority	
Priority	Within
Emergency	24 hours
Urgent	5 working days
Routine	28 working days

Repairs Performance		
Priority	Target	% completed within target time
Emergency	90%	100%
Urgent	95%	99.76%
Routine	95%	98.21%

What we plan to do next

- Improve handling and processing of repairs from receiving a request to completion by October 2011;
- Publish progress with the repairs improvement plan every quarter in the newsletter from September 2011;
- Introduce an independent repairs post card survey by October 2011;
- Put in place system to monitor appointments made and kept by October 2011;
- Establish a residents repair panel to ensure that residents participate in the recruitment of contractors and assessment of the quality of work by December 2011;
- Introduce a 'right first time' performance indicator by November 2011;
- Implement a procedure to follow up rechargeable invoices to maximise collection by January 2012.

Quality of accommodation

What we are doing

- We ensure that works are informed by our stock condition survey and that we carry out essential work first;
- We publicise our planned maintenance programme annually in the newsletter and explain why properties or estates are included in the programme;
- We consult with you at least a month before planned maintenance work is carried out. The contractor visits individual tenants to identify any special requirements and confirms in writing the nature and agreed timescale for the works;
- We carry out regular site visits during planned works and ensure that a Resident Liaison Officer is employed by the planned maintenance contractor;
- We give you a choice of bathroom & kitchen. This is done through a focus group who make 4 choices which are then offered to the block or estate;
- We have a tenant representative who sits on the consultant and contractor selection panel;
- We ensure that the contractor produces monthly progress reports and displays this on scheme notice boards where available;
- We publish newsletter articles on progress with the Decent Homes Standard (DHS) programme.

Home standard

How we are doing

- 100% of homes meet Decent Homes Standards
- As at 31 March the average SAP rating for homes was 70
- 74% of respondents were satisfied with overall quality of homes
- 71% of respondents were satisfied with the general condition of property

What we plan to do next

- Tell you about the major repairs programme once available and publish the schedule in the newsletter by December 2011;
- Recruit a representative from the residents' forum/scrutiny panel to sit on the contractor selection panel by December 2011.

'Thank you for re-doing our kitchen. The work has been done to my satisfaction and I am very pleased with the end result. There is now a lot more cupboard space and I love where the sink is now situated.'

Mrs N Nessa

'Burhan Uddin House underwent the decent homes improvements in summer 2010. Each of our twenty flats had a modern kitchen fitted to residents' requirements and in the bathroom showers were installed for the first time. Other works included installing new intercom handsets which help avoid unwanted random late night intrusion and a fire alarm system. Most rewardingly the building was stone cleaned washing off decades of dirt and grime from standing on a busy main London street and thereby contributing to an improved sense of self esteem for its residents. Overall the process went smoothly and has delivered real improvements for all the residents of the block'.

Cat Cox



New kitchen in Fakruddin Street

Tenancy standard

Your tenancy

What we are doing

- We aim to visit all new tenants in their homes within two weeks of their moving in;
- We investigate all reports of unauthorised occupancy within 5 working days and where unauthorised occupants are found, take prompt action to recover possession as per our subletting policy.

How we are doing

-
- 3 evictions took place in 2010/11
-

What we plan to do next

- Audit 15% of current tenants each year;
- Review and update the tenants' handbook;
- Review and refresh tenancy agreements.

Allocations & Lettings

What we are doing?

- We are a full partner of Tower Hamlets Common Housing Register. We have adopted their lettings policy as part of the partnership;
- If you want to move home we help you to complete a common housing register application and advise you on other options available for moving home including mutual exchange, Homeswap and Housing Options;
- We survey all tenants on the transfer list to ensure we hold correct information;
- We have collected information on the makeup of each household which enables us to assess overcrowding and under occupancy within our homes.

How we are doing

-
- 166 of SHA tenants are on Common Housing Register (CHR) as at March 2011:
 - 8 SHA tenants were offered a home through CHR in 2010/11
 - 82 out of the 166 SHA households on the CHR are overcrowded
 - 25 of SHA households are under occupying
-
- 70 % of respondents are satisfied with the overall lettings service (lettings survey 2010/11)
 - 47 homes were let in 2010/11
 - Average time taken to let a home in 2010/11 was 3.6 weeks
-

What we plan to do next

- Visit all households currently under occupying and advise them of options available to them for a move, incentives on offer if they move and if choose to remain in their homes the impact of changes to housing benefit rules which is schedule to be implemented from April 2013.

Rents

What we are doing

- We enable you to pay your rent at our offices, using Paypoint or through standing order;
- We send you a 6-monthly rent statement or send one within 1 working day of your request;
- We help you to claim housing benefit and council tax benefit;
- We aim to make personal contact with you if your account goes into arrears to offer advice and make realistic repayment arrangements.

Tenancy standard

- We refer you for advice about other benefits you may be entitled to. We have an arrangement in place with Toynbee Hall advice service to come in the office quarterly. You can drop in or make an appointment to see them. We also hold once a month advice sessions for new tenants where you can seek advice on welfare benefits and budgeting;
- We have a corner in our reception area dedicated to information on debt and welfare advice services in the area.

How we are doing

	Target	Achieved
Rent Collected	100%	98%
Rent Arrears	Under 5%	3.8%

What we plan to do next

- We will look into offering you the option to pay at the post office and by direct debit by March 2012.

Leaseholder

What we are doing

- We ensure your service charge bill is accurate, fair, and easy to understand;
- If you request we meet with you to discuss services we provide;
- We send you an annual statement each year detailing the breakdown of each service, how we have calculated service costs, and any changes in the cost of services.

How we are doing?

-
- 87% service charges collected
-

What we plan to do next

- Review and update the leaseholder handbook.



Youth Empowerment Forum



Tenant conference

Neighbourhood and community standard

Dealing with anti-social behaviour

What we are doing

- We have included on our website detailed information about Anti social behaviour, where to complain and the different stages of action;
- We use the ReACT Anti social behaviour management software which helps us to ensure you are kept informed about what is happening at each stage of your complaint;
- We carry out a satisfaction survey when a case is closed;
- We aim to remove any abusive, obscene or threatening graffiti within one working day of it being reported;
- We offer you the option to speak to a female member of staff.

How we are doing

- 36 ASB cases were reported in 2010/11
 - 48% respondents were satisfied with handling of ASB
 - 74% respondents were satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live
-

What we plan to do next

- Include Anti social behaviour performance in newsletter from December 2011.

Keeping estates clean

What we are doing

- We carry out inspection of communal areas every month; residents can attend the inspection;
- We provide an inspection report to your residents' association or block or area representative on request;
- We take action within five working days to resolve all issues identified during estate inspections and inform the resident inspector;
- We have included maintenance of grassed areas, footpaths, roads and street lighting in the cleaners job description;
- We work with residents to provide security gates where feasible;
- We have introduced controlled parking in all 8 estates which have parking areas.

How we are doing

- 300 estate inspections carried out in 2010/11
 - We have trained and recruited 7 resident estate inspectors
 - 51% respondents were satisfied with communal and shared facilities
-

What we plan to do next

- We will install notice board where possible and use this to inform you of the result of estate inspections and cleaning schedule;
- We will continue to encourage more residents to come forward and train as resident estate inspectors.

Neighbourhood and community standard

Local area co-operation

What we are doing

- We are a member of the Tower Hamlets Partnership, the Tower Hamlets Housing Forum and the various sub groups including the Community Involvement Network;
- We launched the Community Development Strategy – STEP UP in July 2010. The priorities for the next year are to; celebrate resident volunteering, support residents to find work and training opportunities, improve opportunities for young people and support residents to improve their health.

How we are doing

-
- Participated in 'STAR in the Community Awards' - two SHA residents won awards for community cohesion and Inspirational Resident of the Year
-
- Secure 'Future Jobs Fund' grants to enable us to employ 5 trainees
-
- Published an 'Employment and Training Special' to signpost residents to agencies that can support them into work
-
- Published a directory for young residents giving information about employment, funding, sport and physical activity and feeling safe
-
- Ran 3 cancer awareness workshops for women on three of our estates
-

What we plan to do next

- Continue to compare our performance and share good practice with our partner Housing Providers in Tower Hamlets;
- Support residents into employment and training;
- Work with our younger residents and local young people to improve their chances of getting into jobs and training by taking on two apprentices ourselves and by working with universities outreach programmes to raise aspirations;
- Support residents to improve their health by organising health awareness days.

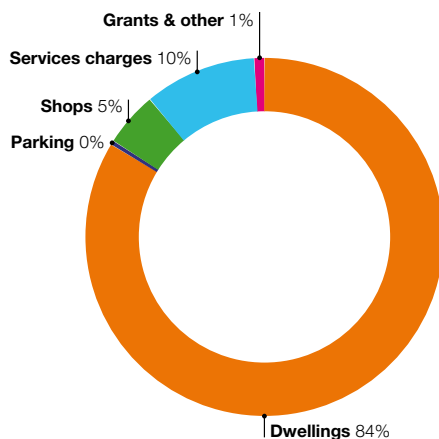
Value for money standard

What we are doing

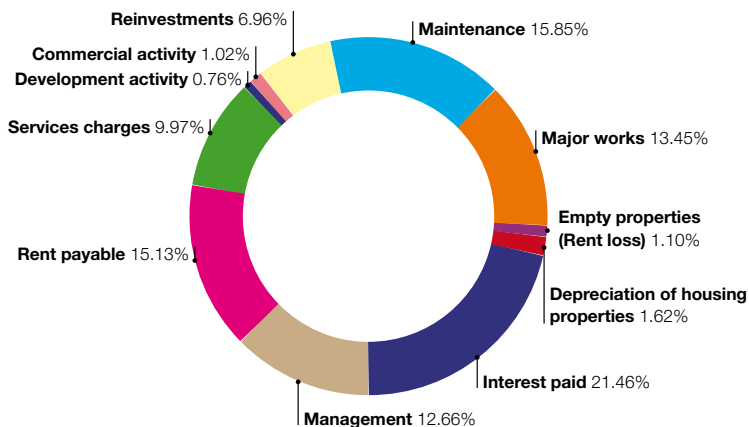
- We are a member of LBTH Benchmarking sub group and 'we are benchmarking' facilitated by Skills & Projects;
- The day to day repairs contractor is a 5 year partnered contract based on Schedule of Rates;
- The gas safety and repairs is on a 3 year partnered contract;
- We set budgets annually and allocate resources based on priorities for service delivery;
- We obtain three estimates for works costing between £3,000 and £6,000;
- We have a procedure in place for tendering for contracts above £6,000.

How we are doing

Income



Expenditure



Management

Includes all salary costs and overheads across Spitalfields HA

Service Charge

Costs (other than salaries) of providing services such as caretaking, communal repairs, communal gardens, landlords lighting and heating etc.

Maintenance

Costs of responsive repairs and gas maintenance services to our tenanted and void properties only

Major Works

Costs of delivering our refurbishment programme

Depreciation of housing properties

Cost for physical wear and tear of all fixed assets

Empty Properties

(Rent and service charge income lost)
Income lost during periods when properties were empty

Interest Paid

Interest costs on borrowings to finance purchase of new homes

Rent Payable

To other RSLs for properties managed on their behalf

Development Activity

Costs relating to building or purchasing of new homes

Commercial & Other

Insurance and legal costs

Reinvestment

Surplus income used to build or purchase new homes and refurbish existing homes.

Value for money standard

What we plan to do next

- Introduce benchmarking information in all our performance reports;
- Complete tendering process for the day to day repairs contract by June 2012 and involve residents in the process;
- Complete tendering process for the Gas safety and repairs service by October 2012;
- Arrange training for residents to support them in contractor selection and monitoring process by March 2011.



Nelson Walk

Governance and financial viability standard

What we are doing

- The Board has adopted the National Housing Federation (NHF) Excellence in Governance and carried out a comprehensive review against the code;
- We have a Code of Conduct which details what is expected of Board members and job descriptions which sets out clear responsibilities for key officers and all members;
- We carry out annual Board appraisals;
- We have clear terms of reference for the Board and the Audit Committee;
- We have a 30 year financial plan in place linked to our asset management strategy;
- We carry out internal audits of processes each year on a rotating cycle;
- We have a risk management plan in place which is reviewed quarterly;
- We provide the Board with adequate financial and business reports in order to scrutinise performance of the organisation.

How we are doing

- Out of 15 Board members 6 are residents
- We submitted regulatory returns such as the RSR and CORE within deadlines
- There are no key issues highlighted in the audit of internal controls
- Raised £10 million private finance to fund our development programme

What we plan to do next

- Increase the number of female Board members;
- Implement best practice in Governance;
- Review Business Plan and key objectives to reflect current economic climate.



Second from right – Cathy Forrester winner of Star in the Community Award 2010

Summary accounts

Income & Expenditure Account for year ending 31 March 2011

	2011 (£)	2010 (£)
Turnover	4,211,779	3,936,636
Operating cost	(3,010,883)	(3,077,871)
Operating surplus	1,200,896	858,765
Sale of property	-	194,319
Interest receivable	723	357
Interest payable and similar charges	(907,393)	(587,107)
Surplus for the year	294,226	466,334



Tenant conference

Glossary

Aids and Adaptations (A & A)

Small changes made to a property to allow a tenant to remain in their home, for example a grab rail to help with getting in and out of the bath or fitting a shower if the tenant cannot use a bath.

Anti Social Behaviour (ASB)

“Behaviour that could cause or is likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress to one or more persons...” (Crime & Disorder Act 1998)

Benchmarking

Comparing an organisation’s performance to that of other similar organisations. It is a way of finding out what an organisation is doing well and what it needs to improve.

Choice Based Lettings

This is the system for letting homes operated by the Tower Hamlets Council Common Housing Register. Choice-based lettings allows tenants of partner landlords to bid for homes which are then allocated on the basis of needs.

Code of Conduct

A code of conduct is a list of guidelines that describe how members of a committee, group contractor etc. are expected to carry out their duties and conduct themselves when at meetings, or acting on behalf of the organisation.

Continuous Recording (CORE)

Each time a housing provider lets or sells a property, they have to fill in a CORE log which records a wide range of information on both the household and property. This information is used by various organisations to inform funding, regulatory and other housing policy decisions.

Decent Homes Standard (DHS)

The Decent Homes Standard is a target set by Government for all social housing providers to meet set standards of design for their homes. A decent home will have to pass four tests: -1. It has to meet the current statutory minimum standards for housing 2. It needs to be in a reasonable state of repair 3. It needs to have reasonably modern facilities and services 4. It needs to provide a reasonable degree of thermal comfort.

Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

A way of assessing services so that people are not discriminated against based on their age, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability. It can also help identify ways to improve services so that they better meet residents’ needs.

Homes and Communities Agency (HCA)

The Homes and Communities Agency is the national housing and regeneration agency for England. In October 2010, the Government announced the abolition of the Tenant Services Authority (TSA) and the transfer of some of its key functions including Housing to the HCA. This change is expected to take effect in April 2012.

Housing Ombudsman Service (HOS)

HOS is in charge of investigating complaints made about Housing Associations. Before the HOS can be called in to investigate, the person making the complaint must have been through the Association’s own Complaints procedure. The HOS only investigate complaints made against landlords who are members of the HOS scheme.

Glossary

Local Offer / Offer

Local offers are a way of tailoring the services provided based on what, the residents, want. These are a set of clear commitments or 'offers' and set out what you can expect from us. The idea is that we work with you to monitor these offers so that we can provide services that meet your needs and ensure that our local offers lead to better services.

National Housing Federation (NHF)

Represents housing associations in England and campaigns for better housing and neighbourhoods. Spitalfields HA is a member of the NHF.

Performance Indicators

A measure to help us to see how well we are performing or whether we are on course to reach a particular target.

Regulatory & Statistical Return (RSR)

This is a regulatory requirement of the TSA. Each year housing associations must complete a RSR form providing statistical data about rents, stock, empty properties, lettings, sales and development and other information.

Service Standards

Detail what residents can expect of each service area e.g. the general standard and timescale.

Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP)

System used to assess the energy efficiency of properties. The ratings are on a scale of 1 to 100.

Tenant Services Authority (TSA)

Organisation which oversees housing associations. The TSA makes sure they abide by the law and government guidelines.

Tenants' Association (TA)

A voluntary group made up of people who live in a particular area or scheme, who have got together to have their say on local issues, improve their area or organise social events.

This annual report is available in English and can be requested in Bengali, braille, large print and on audio tape from our office at:

Spitalfields Housing Association Ltd
78 Quaker Street
London E1 6SW

T 020 7392 5400
F 020 7392 5401
E info@spitalfieldsha.co.uk
www.spitalfieldsha.co.uk

Working with our tenants to create a **cleaner** and **safer** neighbourhood

Delivering cost effective, accountable and **responsive services**

We are committed to improving the **quality of life** for the **communities we serve**