

# Highlights of the financial year April 2017 – March 2018



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## Chair's review of the year

This year marks Poplar HARCA's 20th anniversary. The first 2,100 properties were transferred to us from the London Borough of Tower Hamlets in March 1998. Two decades on, we have approximately 9,400 homes and are a key partner in the physical regeneration of Poplar. We have built brand new homes; education, healthcare and faith buildings; retail, workspace and community spaces. We provide jobs & skills training, enterprise support and youth provision for our community. Our HARCA police team helps keep the streets safer and we work with local and national organisations to provide green initiatives, art & culture, clubs and networks. All of this builds sustainability and resilience, helping local people take advantage of existing opportunities and preparing them for an exciting future.

And it has been another year full of achievements. It is pleasing to see resident satisfaction recover to 81% following 2016's dip to 75%. We completed the final phase of the 10 year redevelopment of the Leopold Estate providing 364 new homes of which 108 are affordable. We were also named Social Landlord of the Year at the Housing Excellence Awards, won two awards for our sustainability work and accolades for both place-making and community impact.

The Regulator of Social Housing published its Regulatory Judgement in March 2018 after completing an in depth assessment resulting in no change to

our G1 and V2 rating and concluding that Poplar HARCA can deal with a reasonable range of adverse scenarios. The Board acknowledges that we continue to have material risks to manage, in particular with joint venture sales activity peaking in 2019/20.

The Board's strategic approach to asset management and use of void properties continues to mitigate rent reduction. Working in partnership with the London Borough of Tower Hamlets, we are helping homeless people and securing increased rental income. Operating margin overall and for social housing lettings have both improved year on year.

After successfully arranging a new £40m revolving credit facility with Allied Irish Bank in February 2018, sufficient funding and security is in place to fund the existing ambitious development plan. This liquidity, combined with proceeds from disposal of carefully selected void homes has resulted in a financially resilient business plan that will deliver 780 new affordable homes over the next 6 years.

Looking ahead, our plans for regenerating Crisp Street Market were passed by London Borough of Tower Hamlets' Strategic Development Committee on 24th July. This is a fantastic opportunity for us to provide 643 new, mixed tenure, homes. The scheme also includes refurbishment of the market area, new shops plus a new community hub and public realm.

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As part of the plans, our head office will make way for a new cinema. Our move to a neighbouring building will see Poplar HARCA staff working more efficiently under one roof. As part of our digitisation strategy, we're also encouraging residents to do more online and our resident portal is now live.

Fashioning Poplar is now on site, helping bring garment manufacture back to its roots in the East End, in conjunction with the London College of Fashion, UAL and a range of partners. It will offer affordable workspace and local training and employment opportunities.

None of these past achievements, or incredibly exciting future plans, would be possible without the support of our residents, our hardworking staff, my fellow Board Directors, and partners including the London Borough of Tower Hamlets.

A huge thank you to everyone that helps us create opportunities in Poplar.

Here's to the next 20 years!

**Dr Paul Brickell - Chair**

## 'Creating Opportunity' Highlights



Planning permission for Chrisp Street Market regeneration scheme secured



Fashioning Poplar, a project to transform 81 underused garages into a fashion and makery enterprise centre, planning permission secured and now on site



The new on-line service offer for residents was successfully launched

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Poplar HARCA's corporate strategic plan 2016-21 is called 'creating opportunity'.

**In the second year of this plan we have achieved a great deal, including:**

Named  
social landlord  
of the year

**2,400**  
young people  
attended Spotlight  
with over 2,700  
sessions in  
the year



**252**  
residents were  
supported into  
employment



**4,936**  
gas services  
completed

**540**  
volunteers  
engaged with  
local projects and  
initiatives



Leopold  
Phase 2  
regeneration  
project  
complete



The brand new  
Poplar BMX  
track opened

**89**

out of 130 tenants  
who moved in  
the year were  
overcrowded



**2,076**  
residents have  
accessed health and  
well-being sessions



**589**  
new homes,  
in the two years  
to date

**35,000**  
bulbs were planted

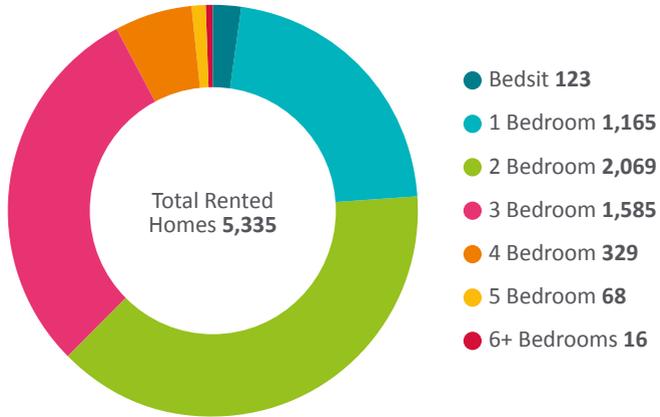


# Poplar HARCA Housing Stock

At 1/04/18

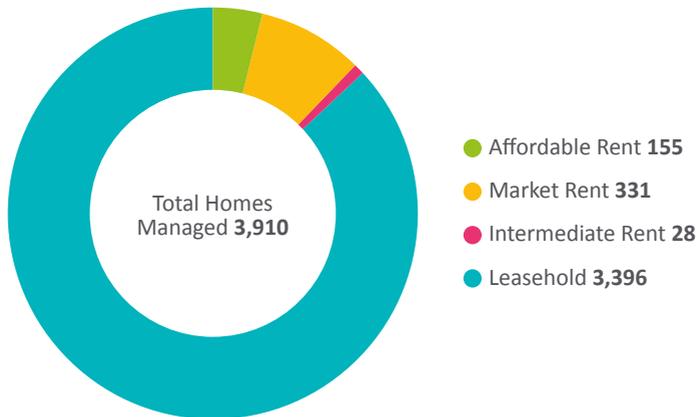
## Rented Homes

At 1/04/18



## Other Managed Homes

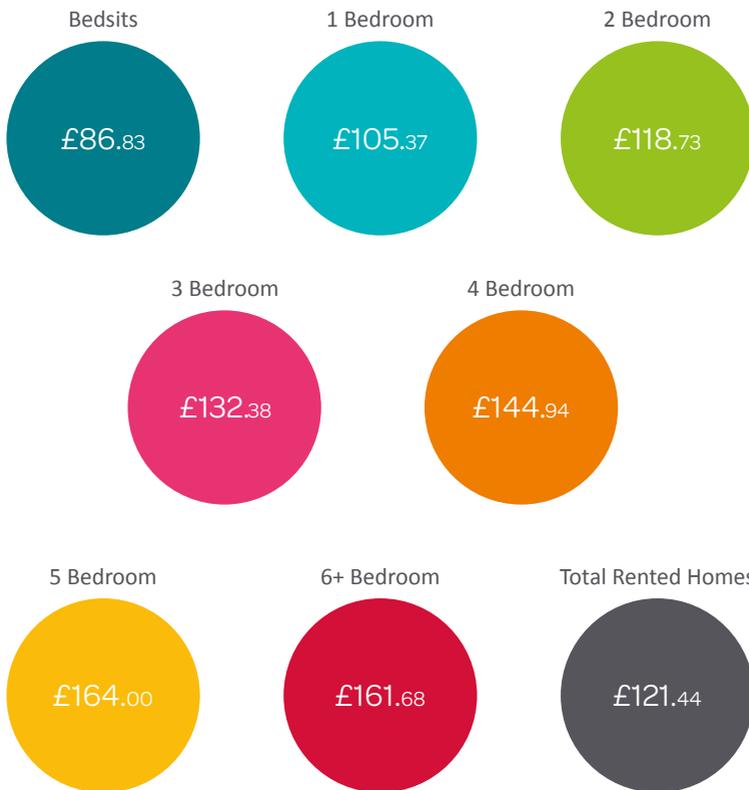
At 1/04/18



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## Rented Stock

Average Poplar HARCA Social Rents





## Residents at the heart

Residents' safety, satisfaction and involvement always have been our priorities.

### Fire safety

The Grenfell tragedy is still uppermost in our thoughts. £500,000 has been spent on fire safety improvements in the past year. Much of this was spent on work to improve compartmentation within our blocks such as replacement of staircase fire doors, riser panels, intake doors and improved fire stopping. There was also a programme to renew/install fire detection in homes in a number of high rise blocks. This past year we also began visiting every home to carry out fire safety checks. Incredibly, some people have refused access or not cooperated with this important safety check, but we won't be put off and will be taking legal action.

### Police and safeguarding team

We re-introduced the police team this year and created two important new roles to support vulnerable residents: Domestic Abuse and Safeguarding Co-Ordinator, and Welfare Benefits Tenancy Sustainment Officer.

### Resident involvement

There are a huge number of ways for you to get involved with Poplar HARCA. Our Area and Estate Boards, and newer Gatherings, are neighbourhood-based and rely on volunteers to tell us what's happening and what needs to happen where they live. The Joint Estate Panel brings representatives of these local groups together to influence what goes on across our estates and the wider strategic decisions. The Youth Empowerment Board makes sure young people have a say. The Poplar Board and Committees are in charge of our strategic direction.

During the last year, the JEP has examined current and future development schemes and new housing service models and the YEB has supported a campaign for a new pedestrian bridge over the Limehouse Cut and attended a Home Office roundtable on combating terrorism.

We worked hard to get resident satisfaction up from 2017, and were pleased that 81% of you told us we're doing a good job.

81%





## Repairs

% Completed on target 2017/18



98%  
completed  
within target



96%  
Satisfaction with  
completed repair



97%  
of repair  
appointments kept



90%  
of correspondence  
answered on target



22 Days Average time to re-let empty  
homes during 2017/18



100% of tenanted homes with a valid  
gas safety certificate at 31/03/18



# Poplar HARCA People

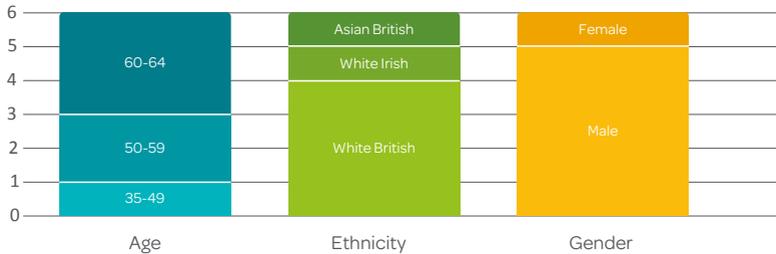
## Age Range, Ethnicity & Gender

- Age range
- Ethnicity
- Gender

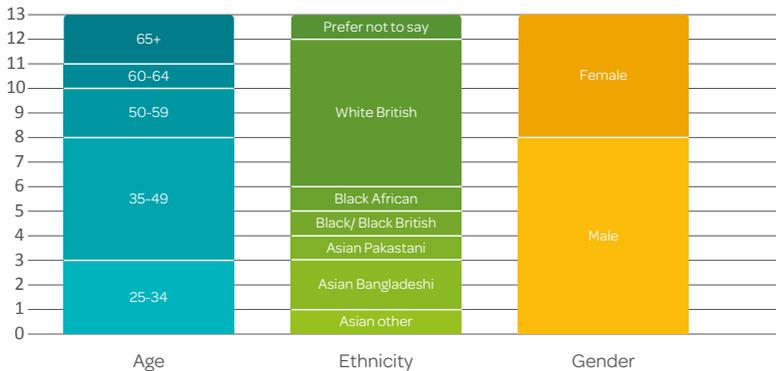
### Staff



### Corporate Management Team



### Board members



## Have you signed up for MyHARCA?

Our new online platform allows you to access our services on the go and jump the queue. You can also update your communication preferences and tell us how you want to be contacted.

Register now at [myharca.poplarharca.co.uk](http://myharca.poplarharca.co.uk)



**Register for an online account and  
access all our services in one place:**



View your  
statements



Pay your rent



Report a repair



You can download the full version of the Annual Report and Consolidated Financial Statements on our website at [www.poplarharca.co.uk/who-we-are/document-and-publications](http://www.poplarharca.co.uk/who-we-are/document-and-publications)