

swan



# Many Thanks



Many thanks to everyone who helped us by getting involved in our work last year. You made sure that we kept residents concerns at the centre of our service.

We want to hear as many views as possible, so what we do is what you want. Add your voice and make a difference to your area and our service. And remember, we can support you to get involved.

#### How you can help

**Neighbourhood** – join a residents group or association, make estate inspections, take part in a leaseholders forum, draw up a neighbourhood agreement.

**Services** – get involved in reviewing and developing our services and policies at away days, in committees or forums, and send in your ideas – £50 Marks and Spencer gift vouchers awarded for the best ideas.

**Decisions** – join a resident consultative committee or become a resident board member in Essex or London.

If you would like to help improve your neighbourhood please get in touch today.

Call 0845 612 4700

Email [involvement@swan.org.uk](mailto:involvement@swan.org.uk)

[www.swan.org.uk](http://www.swan.org.uk)

Thanks again

# HOMIES & NEIGHBOURHOODS



SWAN ANNUAL REPORT 2008/09

## DESIGN FOR LIFE

New homes | Bold schemes | Fresh dreams

### FRUITS & BLOOMS

Residents show off their gardens

### PLUS

- Tips from a top gardener
- Seasonal snippets
- Facts and finance
- Meet the Estate Services Team

### JAMIE OLIVER INSPIRES

Swan residents cook up tasty recipes at Jamie's Fifteen restaurant!





**Cover**

- **Photo:** Bow Cross Estate, London by Kalpesh Lathigra
- Design for life **06**
- Fruit and blooms **08**
- Jamie Oliver Inspires **14**
- Tips from a top gardener **08**
- Seasonal snippets **12**
- Facts and finance **17**
- Meet the Estate Services Team **13**



06

BRIGHT NEW HOMES



GROWTH IN THE COMMUNITY **10**



BOW GETS BRUSHED-UP

**12**



JAMIE OLIVER INSPIRES **14**

## CONTENTS

- 03 **Welcome**  
From the Chief Executive, John Synnuck
- 04 **Who's who**  
The Swan Directors and Board members
- 05 **From the Chair**  
A look back and forward from the Chair, Richard Frost
- 06 **Design for life**  
Homes of quality and distinction
- 07 **The Watch is top notch**  
Award-winning residential development
- 08 **Making good in the neighbourhood**  
Residents' gardens revealed
- 11 **Improving the state of Forest Gate**  
Regeneration in East London
- 12 **Seasonal snippets**  
A year of neighbourhood news
- 13 **Force for good**  
Meet the Estate Services Team
- 14 **Jamie Oliver inspires**  
Swan residents learn to cook at Fifteen restaurant
- 17 **Swan facts**
- 18 **Swan Finance**

OUR ACCOUNTS 2008/09



**18**

Design: Hoop Associates www.thisishoop.com

# WELCOME

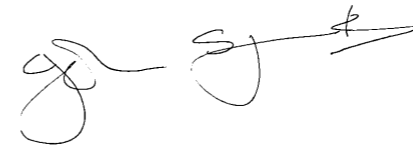
**It's been a year of growth for Swan, as you can see from the stories, facts and features in this annual report.**

Inside you can read about the homes we've built, find out about our plans for improving neighbourhoods and see how we're doing more for residents through our new charitable organisation, the Swan Foundation.

We also feature news of the £170 million, 20-year contract we won to improve 1,300 homes at Forest Gate. We now look forward to working with residents to make improvements that will last.

We are proud of the good quality homes we've been able to offer residents in Essex and London in the last year. We also take pride in the work we've done in partnership with residents to improve the neighbourhoods they live in.

If you would like to get involved, please get in touch so we can work together to create good quality homes and neighbourhoods.



**John Synnuck**  
Chief Executive



TIPS FROM A TOP GARDENER **08**



**12**

PLANTING FOR THE FUTURE



**“ It's been a year of growth for Swan**

### Contact us

**web:** [www.swan.org.uk](http://www.swan.org.uk)  
**tel:** 0845 612 4700  
**post:** Pilgrim House  
 High Street  
 Billericay  
 Essex CM12 9XY  
**email:** [info@swan.org.uk](mailto:info@swan.org.uk)

#### Swan London

Cygnets House  
 10 Chrisp Street  
 Poplar  
 London E14 6LL

#### Swan Essex

Zurich House  
 129 High Street  
 Billericay  
 Essex CM12 9AH



# HOMES & NEIGHBOURHOODS

## SWAN HOUSING ASSOCIATION

Head office, Pilgrim House, High Street, Billericay, Essex CM12 9XY tel: 0845 612 4700  
www.swan.org.uk

### Directors

Chief Executive **John Synnuck**

Deputy Chief Executive **Mark Thompson**

Central Services Director **Ian Nelthorpe**

Director of Treasury Services **Paul Edwards**

Director of Financial Services **Michael Rutherford**

Regional Director Housing (Essex) **Mary Gibbons**

Regional Director Housing (London)

**Sandra Fawcett**

Director of Asset Management **Terry Bird**

Development Director Major Projects **Dave Poulter**

Construction Director Swan New Homes

**Roger Synnuck**

Development Delivery Director Swan New Homes

**John Haydon**

### Board members

**Gideon Amos, Hui Fong Chen, Richard Frost\*,**

**Tim Gerrard, Tony Holland, David Holmes,**

**George Kieffer, Derek Morrison, Ian Ritchie,**

**Stephen King, John Synnuck, Roy Weekly**

### Swan Essex

**May Briggs, Vicki Brown, Keith Dabbs,**

**Ken Dean, John Elkins, Malcolm Elston,**

**Steve King\*, Brian Smith**

### Swan London

**Oliver Blunt, Tyson Bunby, Ann Carlton,**

**Nasreen Golamnohee, Tony Hollans,**

**Eileen McNally, Ian Ritchie\*,**

**Mohamid Sharif, Colin Wannell**

\* Chair

## From the Chair



Swan's aim is to create homes and neighbourhoods people want to live in. The hard work and dedication put in to reach that goal by people in Swan over the past year has contributed to another year of growth.

A good part of our success can be put down to our work in developing homes. We completed 825 new homes last year, taking the total number of homes we manage for residents to 10,052. But it's not just about numbers, we are serious about creating homes people will like and neighbourhoods they will take pride in and look after.

We plan to continue to grow by developing affordable homes, delivering value for money in our day-to-day activities, improving services and increasing opportunities for our residents, and involving them more fully in what we do.

By careful planning and hard work we will create healthy, vibrant and sustainable neighbourhoods that residents can be proud of.

**Richard Frost**  
Chair

Factfile  
2008/09

825 new  
homes  
completed



99% of  
repairs  
done on  
time

299  
people  
in Swan



10,052  
homes  
owned &  
managed

### The Communicator Resident newsletter

Reviewed and rethought after comments from residents, the new look Communicator is a more colourful and easier to read newsletter. Picture-led articles and colour coded sections make it easy to flick through or read in one go. Don't miss another issue of your newsletter.



### Service leaflets

A series of 13 leaflets for customers about Swan services. Includes a guide to making a complaint, how to get involved in decision making and the standards to expect from our repairs service. Leaflets can be picked up from reception areas.



### Handbooks

New handbooks for tenants and leaseholders have just been produced. They contain useful information about what is expected of you, what you can expect from us and how to get in touch.



# DESIGN FOR LIFE

Good design is at the heart of successful communities. And it's at the heart of Swan's drive to create homes and neighbourhoods that people want to live in.

Photographs by: Kalpesh Lathigra

**T**he past year has seen Swan build lots of high quality, new homes, make major plans to regenerate our estates and use new, less wasteful building methods. Our continued growth means we are one of the strongest housing associations in London and the South-East and this in one of the most challenging years for housing organisations.

### Strong track record

Our record of developing good quality affordable homes has established our reputation with the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA). This confidence has resulted in Swan securing £64 million grant funding, the fifth largest award in the country, which will support our plans to develop more high quality, affordable homes over the next three years.

Our ability to do more for our residents was increased by an additional grant of £29 million through the HCA's Continuous Market Engagement process.

### Regenerating existing homes and neighbourhoods

Our existing homes and neighbourhoods are as important to us as building new homes. Last year we took the next steps forward with major regeneration schemes in London and Essex. At Bow Cross in Tower Hamlets we have started work on a £200 million regeneration project to transform a large estate with new homes, refurbishment and better access. While at Craylands in Basildon we have started work on a £200 million 12-year regeneration programme. Both schemes were ranked in the Top 100 regeneration schemes as judged by Regeneration magazine.

Good design in homes and neighbourhoods is like design in many other areas, it is best judged by those who use it. We are pleased to report that last year 89% of residents were satisfied or very satisfied with their new homes. ■

# THE WATCH IS TOP NOTCH

Swan's sensitive and sustainable design approach received recognition this year at the Watch, the former Millwall Fire Station in Tower Hamlets.

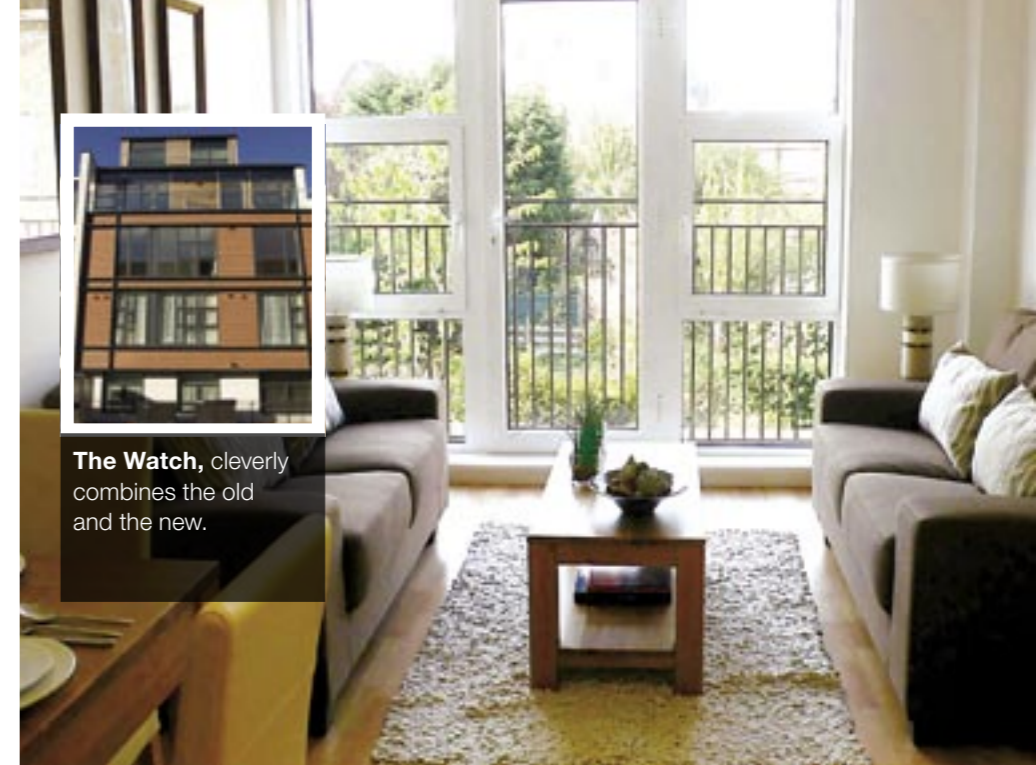
The station was converted by Swan as part of a scheme to offer homes for rent and shared ownership to local people. The project involved retaining many of the historic features of the old building and to reflect these in the contemporary design of the new building.

The development won a special commendation in the Evening Standard New Homes Awards 2009 and was a finalist in the Best New Place to live category of the London Planning Awards 2008. And it's won many more admirers since. ■

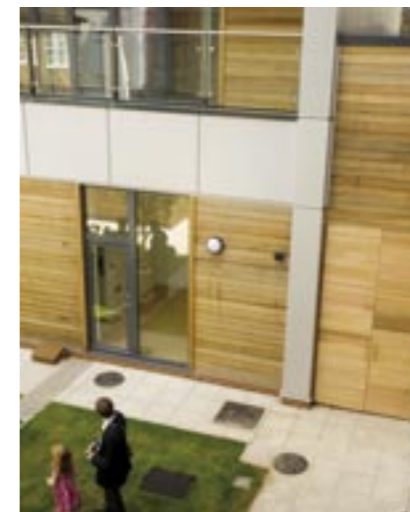
Photography by: Andrew Parsons



Swan annual report 2008/09



The Watch, cleverly combines the old and the new.



## Green schemes

We have been using the latest construction methods to create buildings that will last and that are more efficient in the long-term.

**Atelier**, in Tower Hamlets, was built using individual pods that were constructed off-site. They were then transported to Leven Road where they were fixed together to create a development of 66 flats and artist studios.

**Dove Cott House**, a £4.9 million Parent and Child Unit in Basildon, was completed with a high-energy efficiency Eco homes 'excellent' standard.



The Atelier development

# MAKING GOOD IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD

We all recognise good neighbourhoods. Gardens and balconies are well kept, shared spaces are neat and tidy and people look out for each other. In this Homes & Neighbourhoods annual report we look back over news from Swan neighbourhoods, look at one of our key services on estates and get a privileged look into some of our residents' gardens.

Photographs by: Kalpesh Lathigra

## Blooms in Basildon

Keen gardener Sue Weeks invited us in to her garden in Basildon at the tail end of the summer. Although a lot of the blooms were fading it was still a riot of colour front and back. Sue's garden is a testament to the planning and hard work of a dedicated gardener.

When she moved in the scene was much different. She said:

"I've been here 11 years, pretty much since it was built. There wasn't anything in the back garden when I moved in, just rough earth. Funnily enough I covered it in carpet it to start with to keep the weeds down and to give myself time to settle in."

After a while Sue was able to start planning her garden, dividing it up into manageable sections and not planting everything at once. She recommended a more gradual approach:

"Never do a Ground Force and blitz a garden, build it up slowly. Choose a plant you love, then you've got something that you can enjoy at different times of year. Keep your eye on the pots when no else is and buy garden furniture out of season as well."

As an experienced gardener Sue was full of advice and tips. At the time we visited she said that people could cut back their roses and put pansies or cyclamen into their hanging baskets.

As Sue's front garden slopes down to the street her neighbours get to enjoy the blooms of her labour too.



**"Choose a plant you love, then you've got something that you can enjoy at different times of year."**



### SUE'S TOP TIPS

- Pick roses that smell nice as well as look good.
- Use sprigs of greenery to bring bunches of flowers to life.
- Put in one or two things a month so you'll always have something in bloom throughout the year.
- If you buy winter pansies in September you'll still have them in May.
- Roses make pretty and cheap air fresheners.



## Residents' gardens



### Bright balcony

"I just like the flowers, I don't know the names of them but my girlfriend does. I buy the tubs. We got the wheelbarrow from a garden centre and the tray from Argos then I stained them up to add some colour."

Stephen Francis

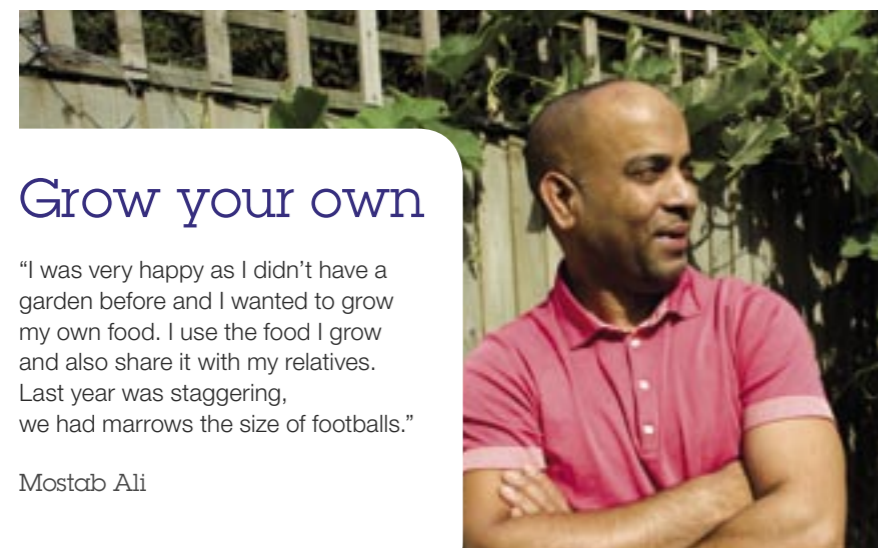


### Coming up tomatoes

"When we came here the garden was a disaster. The grass was all burnt and bare. Everything you see was done by us."

I love the garden, we all love the garden. We hardly buy tomatoes now, as we're overloaded with them from our plants."

Nazia Sultana



### Grow your own

"I was very happy as I didn't have a garden before and I wanted to grow my own food. I use the food I grow and also share it with my relatives. Last year was staggering, we had marrows the size of footballs."

Mostab Ali



# IMPROVING THE STATE OF FOREST GATE

## Swan has started work to improve the homes and neighbourhoods in Forest Gate, East London.

In February 2009 Swan signed a contract with the London Borough of Newham, under the Government Private Finance Initiative (PFI), to raise the standard of 1,300 homes in Forest Gate.

The contract is for 20 years and with a value of £170 million, it makes funds available for long-term improvements to homes and neighbourhoods in the PFI area.

An estimated £45 million has been set aside so that around 900 rented council dwellings will be brought up to the Government's Decent Homes Standard by 2012 with new kitchen

and bathroom fittings, windows and heating systems where needed. In addition, there will be external works to around 400 leasehold properties to improve communal areas and right to buy homes in the area.

Swan will manage and maintain the properties for the next 20 years and will be responsible for caretaking, gardening, repairs and dealing with nuisance. We have already set up a housing office within Forest Gate to deliver these services. And we have also put a strong project team together to make sure we deliver this major programme on target.



### Coat of many colours

In early spring we offered to brighten up some of our residents homes free of charge. We know that some people can't decorate their homes themselves, so we offered to do the paint job for them. People over 65 and people receiving Disability Living Allowance who had not had their homes decorated for seven years were given the chance to have their homes painted by our repairs partner Axis. The offer was snapped up and a number of people will soon be enjoying a fresh lick of paint.



### A bright idea to save energy!

We gave out Low Energy Light Bulb packs for every Swan property in September. We teamed up with the Housing Corporation, EDF Energy and EAGA to reduce carbon emissions and at the same time helped residents to save money at a time of rising energy costs. Each of the 4 bulbs in the pack will last for around 10,000 hours.



### Swan.org.uk

The Swan website was redesigned with the help of residents. It is now contemporary, up-to-date and user friendly website. It remains corporate in style to target our stakeholders and partners, but easy to navigate for our residents. Accessing information about our services and contacting us has become much easier. We even have videos about our residents and our services. ■



# SEASONAL SNIPPETS

News cuttings from the past year in Swan neighbourhoods.



## Spring

### Marvellous mural

Young people from the Bow Cross Estate got involved in brightening up their area in March. They created a bright new mural, which was put on display in the estate Consultation Shop in Tower Hamlets. The project started with the youngsters surveying local people, seeking opinions and thoughts from estate residents. They then used the feedback from the Bow Cross community to create the final design.

## Autumn

### Finalist in Neighbourhood Awards 2008

In September Swan was one of three finalists in the Liveability category of the National Housing Federation's Neighbourhood Awards 2008. We were almost as pleased to be nominated by a resident from the Five Links Estate. Louise Christopher recognised the improvements which our regeneration work had made to her neighbourhood. This involved secure by design features, improved housing services as well as reduced crime and anti-social behaviour.



## Summer

Swan and partners mucked-in by building a sensory garden at Corbets Tey School, Upminster in June. The school is for children and young people with learning difficulties and the garden was designed to help them experience a range of sights, sounds, smells and feelings.



The materials for the garden were jointly funded through a £5,000 donation from Swan, our repairs partner Axis and one of their suppliers, Travis Perkins. The labour was voluntary and included Swan, our partners plus the staff and friends of the school.

“The children will benefit from having a wonderful garden environment.”

Colin Arthey, Headteacher

## Winter

Youngsters from the Churchview Estate in Basildon braved a cold November morning to plant winter flowers and spring bulbs in the park. They were working to improve their neighbourhood as part of a community gardening project supported by Swan. Young volunteers, from the local James Hornsby High School, have also become part of a planning group that looks at ways to improve the estate's green areas.



# FORCE FOR GOOD

There is a force at work in Swan neighbourhoods that is determined to clean things up.

Photographs by: Alex Havret



The Estates Service Team are not actually superheroes but they do wear uniforms and have a powerful array of blowers, polishers and other strange devices to fight grime, graffiti, and other gruesome stains.

The Estates Services Team do more than clean though. They have become an important part of the community by working the same patches and building up relationships with local people. The team on the Exmouth Estate, for example, which has been unchanged for two years, has helped establish a strong sense of community that the estate is proud of.

One resident, Rizwana Wahab, said of the team:

“Friendly, trustworthy, reliable and always willing to answer questions. I feel secure when they are around and it's really nice to have them here.”

### Serving the neighbourhood

The Estates Services Team take on all kinds of tasks, and frequently go beyond the call of duty in working for the good of the neighbourhood. In the past year they volunteered to help on a weekend visit to the Churchview Estate in Essex, for a blitz on graffiti cleaning, and while there also helped mow lawns, trimmed hedges, offering these activities as a one-off complimentary service to anyone who needed a hand.

The teams also helped older and disabled residents with flat clearances, helping to move furniture, hang curtains, move carpets and even put in light bulbs. Members of the team regularly volunteer to help out at community events, from Eid, to fun days, to fireworks. They offer security and after event clean up, free of charge and often on their weekends. They also attend Estate Police Action Days, to work with the police, fire brigade, and residents, to help make your area safer.

Tanya, a resident in Express Wharf said: “They do a fantastic job and I don't think their hard work is recognised. They do not get enough credit for that they do.”

To find out more contact Estate Services 0845 612 4700 ■

# JAMIE INSPIRES

Ten residents from the Exmouth Estate got together at Jamie Oliver's Fifteen Restaurant, with a little help from the Swan Foundation and learnt to prepare a three course meal so they could Pass It On!

Jamie Oliver photograph by: **David Loftus**  
Fifteen photographs by: **Andrew Parsons**



Swan residents get a flavour of Fifteen cooking.

**I**t is not unusual for residents not to talk to one and other where they live, even if they see each other every day. Often this is because they may not feel they have much in common. One thing everyone shares is the need to eat and as Jamie Oliver has shown through his inspirational Pass It On campaign there's no reason why the food we eat should be anything less than fresh and delicious.

Pass It On is about getting people to pass on good, healthy and inexpensive recipes to ten of their friends and neighbours who then pass it on again to another ten people. In this way people come together and learn to appreciate good food.

#### Ten to the power of Fifteen

Swan recognised a great idea and decided to get involved. We took ten women from the Exmouth Estate to Jamie Oliver's Restaurant, Fifteen, where they were shown how to cook three dishes from scratch by one of the chefs. They were then set to work in groups to make the dishes under the watchful eye of the Fifteen team.

Some had never cooked before, while others also had an opportunity to work with ingredients and recipes that were new to them. In line with the campaign our ten champions were to go back home to teach ten other residents the recipes. And that set of ten new cooks were to pass the recipe on again. If the scheme proves successful in East London it could roll out to homes in Essex too. >>>

“ It was a very nice, informative couple of hours – everyone got together and it was quite a laugh. Everyone has to eat – that is something everyone has in common. Although I didn't know my fellow Bengali cooks before, I now say hello to them when I see them round the estate.

– **Ellen Ferris, resident**





## Quotes from the kitchen

### Fojia Sultana said:

"It was really enjoyable. I learned a lot. Jamie [Oliver] wasn't there – I asked. I think there was a celebrity there, but I was so busy cooking I didn't have time to check. It was good to do something with my neighbours because I hardly see them because I'm at uni."

### Thelma Matthews commented:

"They had food there I would never have eaten, like squid. They showed us how to clean it and cook it. We were told to get things fresh and not cook packaged things. I think it was nice because there were people from all different walks of life, different nationalities and we all got on with the job and learned together amicably and had a laugh."

### Ann Ahern said:

"The recipes were easy to do and everyone got on well – everyone chatted to everyone else. There's not much mixing on the estate and I think, because it was all women, it made it easier for the other ladies to come along. The whole idea is to pass on recipes – we are keen to step it up and get everyone mixing." ■



## What is the Swan Foundation



The Swan Foundation is a charitable organisation that will help Swan do more for the local community. It was set up so we make the most of the resources we have and the relationships we have with our partners. The idea is that we work with partners to bring new money into the neighbourhoods we manage.

We want to work imaginatively with ambitious partners, like we have with the Fifteen restaurant, to create Swan Foundation programmes that will improve people's lives.

100% of the resources we attract through the Foundation, whether it is time, money, advice or facilities, will be used for the benefit of the local community.

**To find out more about the Swan Foundation please call 0845 612 4700 or email [info@swan.org.uk](mailto:info@swan.org.uk)**

## Average weekly rents

	Swan Housing Association Group £	Swan Essex Housing average rent £	Supported housing average rent £	Total average rent £
Bedsit	0.00	58.93	71.85	61.98
bedroom	79.27	66.65	74.21	75.32
2 bedroom	91.69	83.08	73.81	87.65
3 bedroom	99.49	94.39	74.22	96.24
4 bedroom	110.89	102.58	82.75	103.07
5 +	123.74	114.67	103.92	116.01

## Repairs performance

	On time %	Annual target %
Immediate	99.92	99
Emergency	99.89	99
Urgent	99.87	97
Routine	99.49	97
<b>Total</b>	<b>99.70</b>	<b>97</b>

## Our people

We employ a total of 299 people across the group:

	Number	%
White	252	84.28%
Black	29	9.70%
Asian	8	2.68%
Other	10	3.34%

## New homes

for April 2008-March 2009 are as follows:

General needs rent	259
Intermediate rent	452
Shared ownership	114
<b>Total</b>	<b>825</b>

## Overview

	Group			
	Owned number of units 2009	Owned number of units 2008	Managed number of units 2009	Managed number of units 2008
<b>Social housing</b>				
General needs	5,495	5,160	1	-
Shared ownership	489	459	-	-
Sheltered (elderly)	30	28	-	-
Other supported housing	509	510	13	-
NHS keyworker accomodation	1,420	689	12	96
Supported housing (Floating support)	-	-	-	-
Temporary social housing	-	-	-	15
London Borough of Newham	-	-	1,348	-
<b>Total social housing</b>	<b>7,943</b>	<b>6,846</b>	<b>1,374</b>	<b>111</b>
<b>Non-social housing</b>				
Market rented	55	83	-	-
Garages	427	426	198	-
Sold to leaseholder with retained freehold	680	645	-	-
<b>Total Housing Stock</b>	<b>9,105</b>	<b>8,000</b>	<b>1,572</b>	<b>111</b>

## Group income and expenditure account

Swan Housing Association Limited Year ended 31 March 2009	2009	Restated*
	£ '000	£ '000
<b>Turnover</b>	53,816	42,617
<b>Operating costs</b>	(40,409)	(33,319)
<b>Operating surplus</b>	13,407	9,298
Surplus on sale of properties	707	1,782
Interest receivable	167	204
Interest payable and similar charges	(14,660)	(13,345)
<b>Deficit on ordinary activities before taxation</b>	(379)	(2,061)
Tax on deficit on ordinary activities	-	177
<b>Deficit on ordinary activities after taxation</b>	(379)	(1,884)

The turnover and deficit for both the current and prior year relate to continuing activities.

\* 2008 figures are restated to reflect the change in accounting policy regarding treatment of First Tranche Shared Ownership sales.

## Group balance sheet

Swan Housing Association Limited Year ended 31 March 2009	2009	Restated*
	£ '000	£ '000
<b>Tangible fixed assets</b>		
Housing properties at valuation	451,242	431,312
Other fixed assets	4,548	5,093
<b>Total tangible assets</b>	<b>455,790</b>	<b>436,405</b>
<b>Current assets</b>		
Properties for sale	41,992	31,818
Debtors	10,796	12,014
Short term Investments	-	3,127
Cash at bank and in hand	19,001	2,146
	71,789	49,105
<b>Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year</b>	<b>(19,751)</b>	<b>(17,531)</b>
<b>Net current liabilities</b>	<b>52,038</b>	<b>31,574</b>
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>	<b>507,828</b>	<b>467,979</b>
<b>Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year</b>	<b>387,559</b>	<b>344,873</b>
<b>Consolidated reserves</b>		
Share capital non-equity	-	-
Income and expenditure account	10,398	9,677
Designated reserve	542	542
Revaluation reserve	109,329	112,887
<b>Total consolidated reserves</b>	<b>120,269</b>	<b>123,106</b>
	<b>507,828</b>	<b>467,979</b>

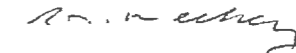
The financial statements were approved by the board on 24 August 2009 and signed on its behalf by :



Richard Frost  
Chair



George Kieffer  
Vice Chair



Roy Weekley  
Treasurer

A full set of audited accounts are available on our website [www.swan.org.uk](http://www.swan.org.uk)

\* 2008 figures are restated to reflect the change in accounting policy regarding treatment of First Tranche Shared Ownership sales.