

Belgrave Neighbourhood Co-operative Housing Association



Stafford Street handover 2015

21 homes
Affordable rented

For further
information:
info@belgrave.org.uk

The 2012 acquisition of Canterbury House, a former church in Melton Road in Leicester comprising 21 flats from Riverside Housing Group marked another step in the growth of Belgrave Neighbourhood Co-operative Housing Association (BNCHA). The co-op's press release calls it "a golden opportunity for heavenly housing" - a reference to the co-op's primary location around Leicester's "Golden Mile", a stretch of the Belgrave Road with dozens of jewellers, textile shops, Indian sweet shops and restaurants that hosts the largest annual Diwali celebrations outside India, and the hugely popular Belgrave Mela.

BNCHA been a long term community player in this area. 2015 saw the 40th anniversary of BNCHA. Set up in 1975 at a time when Belgrave's growing Uganda Asian population led to increasing demands on the area's housing, local residents launched a successful campaign to stop Leicester City Council's proposed clearance of Victorian terraced homes. In the wake of this campaign, the co-op was set up to ensure a supply of good quality affordable homes in the area.



Having started the housing co-operative movement in Leicester four decades ago, we are now the largest, fully mutual co-operative in England. We have come a long way and have much to be proud of. We have achieved a great deal, helping thousands of people in housing need in the Leicester area.

Niketu Sachdev – Belgrave Neighbourhood Co-operative Housing Association Chair



The growth of the co-op led to the formation of co-ops in other neighbourhoods in Leicester – Maynard Co-operative Housing Association, Cossington Housing Co-op and Ross Walk Housing Co-op. As the four co-ops grew rapidly in the 1970s and 1980s, they initially worked together through a federation, but when the federation suffered financial problems in the 1990s, the co-ops formed a long term partnership with Leicester Housing Association – now ASRA Housing Group.

BNCHA and the other Leicester co-ops have steadily increased their housing stock over the years. BNCHA is now the oldest and largest housing co-op in the UK - with the purchase of two terraced houses in Stafford Street in 2015 bringing the number of its homes to 379, which includes the 20 flat Loughborough Cottages extra care scheme. With ASRA's support, all of the co-ops have recently developed or bought homes, some with and some without external grant funding.



At BNCHA AGM 2015



I came from India in 1980. My wife and I were living with my mother-in-law and it was very crowded. We got the key to the door of our new home on the day my first son was born – that was a great day. I have been here ever since and I am happy here. It is quiet, but it is near the shops and the city centre. There is a good community spirit around here and everyone helps each other out – we are like one big family.

Ashwin Patel – long standing BNCHA member