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Welcome



To the first edition of a new publication which we hope will offer more up-to-date news and information on what is happening at SW9. *Our Community News Update* is the younger sibling of our seasonal newsletters and will follow a similar format to what you can see in the Spring, Summer and Winter publications.

In this edition, we will be looking at issues surrounding condensation and damp, showcasing details on the new Parkguard service and at an important notice from the Metropolitan Police on its recently-promoted safety initiative for women in our communities.

On a lighter note, we wanted to highlight the variety of free certified training courses that are available to you, present an update on the regeneration that is happening on the Estate and look forward to our International Women's Day exhibition which will be displayed from early Spring.

So welcome to *your* Community News Update - the first edition of the year - which we hope you will enjoy. We look forward in sharing a bright and positive 2023 with you.

**Delroy Rankin,
Executive
Director**



What's Happening, SW9?

Our New Neighbourhood Officers

Samara Martin and **Yasmin Karkari**, our new Neighbourhood Officers, oversee our Estate and surrounding Street Properties. Both Samara and Yasmin can be contacted via Info@sw9.org.uk | 020 7326 3700

Details on which Officer manages your individual area can be found on our [website](#).

New ways in how to pay your rent and service charges.

During Spring / Summer, we will be changing our payment service provider from allpay to PayPoint. One of the biggest changes will be that you will no longer be able to pay your rent and / or service charge at the Post Office. You will still be able to pay in cash at shops that accept PayPoint payments using the new PayPoint card.

We will keep you updated on the forthcoming changes throughout the next few weeks; for current information, please view details on our website.



A number of **Frequently Asked Questions** from our residents come up regularly and although some are answered on our [website](#), we are also using the Our Community News Update to highlight particular queries.

In this first issue, we are concentrating on:

"What Is The Difference Between Network Homes and SW9 Community Housing?"

When Network Homes consolidated its organisational structure in 2016, it created a locally focussed housing management company specifically for the Stockwell Park Estate. In April of that same year, SW9 Community Housing was born.

From then up until the present day, we manage the day-to-day housing services for around 1700 homes on behalf of Network Homes who is the landlord.

The actual building stock - bricks and mortar - is owned by Network Homes. Here, at SW9 Community Housing, we are responsible for:

- Installation of utilities' supplies
- Grounds maintenance, cleaning services and general repairs
- Decorating and upkeep of communal halls and stairways
- Bulk waste collection
- Collection of rents and service charges
- Investigating issues surrounding anti social behaviour
- Advice on parking on the Estate
- Hosting a wide range of resident-led activities and events throughout the year
- Educational and employment grants funding opportunities
- Offering advice and support on issues including the cost of living... and much more.

More in-depth information can be found in your Tenancy Agreement or your Leasehold Handbook.

Work in partnership with local people to provide effective and sustainable housing services, enabling our community to flourish.

Our mission statement

Is it condensation? Is it damp? How can I tell the difference?

At SW9, we recognise that issues surrounding condensation and damp are extremely important to us all, especially considering recent high profile stories that have been in the news. We wanted to let our residents know that we take these issues very seriously.

Condensation occurs more prominently during the colder months of the year and can be found in places around our home where the air is still, for example behind furniture or in a corner.

Issues surrounding condensation can be easily rectified if we recognise the signs. If water is running down walls and windows, musty smells occur or the wallpaper is peeling, then our home may be suffering from condensation.

What Can Be Done?

Several useful tips in keeping condensation at bay include:

- Washing machines or tumble dryers should be correctly vented
- Drying clothes outside, whenever possible
- Closing kitchen or bathroom doors to avoid extra moisture
- Covering cooking pans to avoid steam escaping
- Ensuring property is adequately heated
- Open windows slightly in regularly-used rooms.

The [Energy Saving Trust](#) has further advice and information, as well as the national fuel poverty charity, the [National Energy Action](#).

Please also look on our [website](#) for further details.

Damp occurs when water finds its way into a property from the outside. The causes for this could stem from leaking gutters, gaps in doors or windows, poor brickwork or broken pipes.

So, if you see damp patches on internal walls, penetrating damp may be happening. And the more rain we have, the patches could appear larger. Cracks or leaks in gutters could also be a symptom of penetrating damp. And in comparison to condensation, the appearance of black mould on inner walls could also be a sign of penetrating damp.

If you have identified that there could be symptoms of damp in or around your home, for example, a broken pipe; this should be rectified as soon as possible as it may lead to structural issues further down the line.

Contact us if you are aware of anything similar as this will need to be tackled by a damp or other structural specialist.

Call **0207 326 3170** to report your concern, or alternatively, please use our [Online Repair form](#), giving your name, address and contact details, a full description of the issue and a date and time when you'll be available to receive a visit from a contractor and/or specialist.



The Metropolitan Police's Walk & Talk Initiative

The Metropolitan Police has introduced a welcomed initiative where women living and working in London can 'buddy' up with female officers to go out on patrol, share their thoughts on safety and come up with shared information on how to bring about positive change.

The Walks & Talks are open to women aged 18 and above, offering the opportunity to start a conversation about experiences in any area that women may feel vulnerable in.

Further information on the Walks & Talks initiative and how it operates in the Lambeth area, can be found on the [SW9 website](#).

You can also view details about a service called [StreetSafe](#), which outlines how you can report on spaces you may feel unsafe in, relating to broken street lighting or due to anti social behaviours.



Parkguard Patrols On The Stockwell Park Estate



SW9 recently instructed a community enforcement agency, Parkguard, to provide a patrol service on the Estate, to help in the tackling of anti social behaviour.

Two Parkguard officers - identifiable in their distinguished uniforms which include the wearing of body cameras - provide a physical presence to help reassure our residents, taking a lead role in addressing Anti Social Behaviour as well as helping to gather critical information to share in analysis with the Police. We received positive feedback from you about the service during a previous trial, noting that it had helped in the reduction of ASB on the Estate.

Parkguard provides a range of community-based safety services, in support with local authorities and the Police, and offers reassurance and safety improvements to communities. Parkguard is accredited under the Community Safety Accreditation Scheme (CSAS) and holds a range of delegated powers under the Police Reform Act, 2002, enhancing the supportive role in addressing ASB. We have asked Parkguard to provide this service on the Estate up to the new financial year.

For more information on Parkguard patrol services, please see the website [here](#).

Dial, Don't Dump!

If you have items of furniture, white goods, mattresses or other bulky items no longer in use, SW9 offers an in-house bulky waste collection service.

To book for a bulk waste collection, please call on 0207 326 3700 | info@sw9.org.uk | [Contact Us](#). There is a charge of £20 for up to three items.

Lambeth Council's Streetcare Team also offers a collection service. Further details can be found on the Council's website [here](#).

Please be assured that we continue in taking steps to tackle the issue of dumping and fly-tipping around the Estate and we work closely with our Control Room and the Police in identifying possible perpetrators; a fine of up to £1000 will be issued to guilty parties.



Please Don't Feed The Pigeons

We would politely discourage the feeding of pigeons as this encourages an overcrowding which leads to fresh droppings around the Estate.

We carry out preventative actions with our pest controller Nightshift to deter pigeon activity on the Estate and we welcome residents' support on this matter.



Stockwell Park Estate Regeneration

The regeneration of the Estate continues and there are recent updates regarding the continuing works, in particular information on the progress of works on and around Aytoun Road and the Crowhurst House Lift.

For more details, please visit our [website](#).



Aytoun Road Block A West Elevation



Crowhurst Lift Progress

The SW9 Service Improvement Plan

The SW9 Service Improvement Plan, initiated last April, had an ambitious timeline to improve the service the residents on this estate receive.

While the first iteration of this plan has improved several areas of the Business, the far reaching improvements have not yet been fully realised.

A second iteration of the plan is due to be published in the next couple of months, as we take learning from the last 12 months and look to deliver the service you are calling for.

Some of the processes that are in place now, or that we aim to provide in the near future, include:

- An overhaul of our repairs processes - we aim to have a dedicated repairs officer to record your queries, every day
- The procurement of a grounds maintenance contractor and a window cleaning contractor, which will be in place at the beginning of the next quarter
- A comprehensive Leasehold Offer which distinguishes the Leasehold services and General Tenants services is now in place
- A new telephone system which offers a more pleasant and friendlier customer experience and will host better responsive features for SW9 officers. This is due to be in place by April 2023

- Utilising existing and forthcoming channels of technological facilities as well as pertinent training for our staff
- An improvement in answering times and more up-to-date accountability for our staff
- A Customer Service Promise outlining the level of service you can expect from us.

Overall, we hope to increase resident satisfaction, particularly in regards to repairs, and facilitate communication between frontline staff and residents. We will try to make this process transparent to our residents, to ensure they are able to provide input and feedback as we carry out the plan.

The SW9 Improvement Panel

SW9 needs YOU! Join the Improvement Panel today!



The Improvement Panel works closely with SW9 management and staff, conducting reviews and making recommendations on how SW9 can make services you receive better.

You can find out more about the SW9 Improvement Panel by watching our [YouTube](#) video. Further information can also be seen on our [website](#).

International Women's Day 2023



The theme for this year's International Women's Day celebration, taking place on March 8th, is [#Embrace Equity](#). Both the Women's World Cup which will be held in Australia and New Zealand during July and August, and the Women's Ashes matches versus Australia, being held in England during June and July, are also taking place this year.

SW9 will be marking International Women's Day by celebrating a number of well-known female cricketers and footballers in our annual exhibition, which will be on display in early Spring, showcasing the many achievements of our chosen subjects.

Further information on International Women's Day can be found on the official [website](#).

More information on our forthcoming exhibition and related materials will be issued very soon.

Looking for additional help on your way to employment?

SW9 is offering two employment programmes - The Spear Programme for 16 to 24 year olds and The Re-Work Programme for adults - in partnership with Resurgo, a charitable organisation which was founded in 2003. For more information on Resurgo, as well as details about the programmes we can offer, please visit the [SW9 website](#).



LGBTQ+ History Month

An annual, month-long observation of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender history which is marked across the UK during the month of February.

The theme for February is 'Behind the Lens'; a celebration of LGBTQ+ peoples' contribution to cinema and film.

Further information on the events and programmes you can attend in Lambeth and the surrounding areas can be found on our [website](#).



Meet & Greet: Repairs and Estates Teams

We are holding a Meet and Greet session with our Repairs and Estates Teams on February 16, where we can let you know about our services and answer any questions you may have.

The session will take place at the SW9 Resource Centre, 13 Benedict Road, SW9 0FS and will commence from 5pm. No need to book; please just come along and take part.

Further details can be found on our [website](#).



Block Inspections

We will be conducting regular Block Inspections across the Estate throughout the month of February.

Please meet with our Officers to help point out any local issues and potential future problems.

You can see where the team will be visiting on our dedicated [Block Inspections](#) page on the website.

Local Police Ward Drop-In Surgery

SW9 will be hosting the latest drop-in surgery from the Brixton North Local Policing Team on February 16, taking place at the SW9 Learning Centre, 153 Stockwell Road, SW9 9FX, from 5pm to 7pm.

These surgeries offer our residents and the wider community the opportunity to discuss topics of concern, as well as offering advice on crime prevention.

Information on the latest surgery can be found [here](#).

Further details on the team and its services can be found on the [Brixton North Ward Newsletter](#) [here](#).

Fish and Chips Thursdays

The next Fish and Chips Thursday Lunch will take place on February 23, from 1pm at the SW9 Learning Centre, 153 Stockwell Road, SW9 9FX, for our residents aged 55 years and over.

Please book your place by visiting us at the SW9 Reception, or via getinvolved@sw9.org.uk | 020 7326 3700



Free Certified Training Programme

We are proud to offer a variety of training courses that will enable you to upskill your knowledge or get you started on a career plan. Most of the courses are online, so you could take them at your own pace.

Some of the courses on offer include:

- Customer Service
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- PA Secretarial Training
- Project Management
- Social Media Marketing
- Starting a Home Food Business...

and many more.

We also have several face-to-face Programmes on offer, including HGV Lorry Class 2 Training.

Further details on our Training Programme and how you can apply can be found by looking on our [website](#) here.

Please note: our training courses are only available to SW9 Community Housing residents aged 18 and above.



Opportunities from Lambeth

If you are currently looking for a new opportunity, we can point you in the direction of the job seeking initiative presented by Lambeth Council.

Together with Opportunity Lambeth and Lambeth Made Youth Promise, Lambeth Council is presenting several job boards which feature a number of positions in a wide-range of industries, so that local people with the relevant skills can be matched to a job of interest.

Please look at our [website](#) which features more information on the current opportunities available.



The RISE Programme

We've created an updated [video](#) - which you can view via our website page here - for our RISE Programme.

Please take a look at all the multiple ways you can get involved with SW9.

