**Issue 8** 



### Our Community News



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### Welcome

As the year draws to an end it gives us the perfect opportunity to reflect on all that has been achieved at SW9 Community Housing so far.

This is only the second full year that SW9 has been in operation but we are proud of the difference we have already been able to make in our community. The SW9 Summer Festival, Grant Funding and improved policies dealing with local issues are all ways in which we are investing in the local community – not to mention the ongoing regeneration work being carried out by our parent organisation Network Homes.

Also, we continue to look for residents to get involved with us. We currently have vacancies on the SW9 Board of Management. Below is information on how to apply if you are interested in becoming one of our Tenant Members and later in the issue is an interview with the current Board Vice Chair, Olu Ajisebutu, which explains just why this is important. We are your organisation.

We know there are still improvements that need to be made. We have some exciting news to announce in the coming weeks about the new repairs service we are launching early next year – which we hope will revolutionise the customer experience for residents. This initiative, along with many other changes we are making at SW9 over the coming months, are part of our Transformation Agenda as every day we continue to take steps in the right direction from good to great.

*Best wishes,* Delroy Rankin, Executive Director

### **Get involved**

### **Become an SW9 Board Member**

#### In the New Year we will actively be seeking a new tenant Board Member to join our incredible Team.

When at full capacity, the SW9 Community Housing Board is made up of 5 tenants, 5 leaseholders, 2 independents and 1 Lambeth Councillor.

If you live in a social rented property managed by us, then you will be eligible to apply to join our Board.

Homes and the people who live in them are important to us. They're the reason we do what we do. There's a strong sense of community and a tradition of resident involvement in the way that the housing on the Stockwell Park Estate is managed. We think it's that tradition and heritage that makes the area so special. SW9 Community Housing came into being in 2016 to work closely with Stockwell's residents and build a bright future for the estate.

As the housing management organisation for the Stockwell Park Estate, we manage the day-to-day housing services for around 1,600 homes on behalf of the landlord - our parent company, Network Homes.

If you would like to express an interest in becoming a tenant board member and playing your part in shaping the future of the Stockwell Park Estate and street properties, then please email us on **getinvolved@sw9.org.uk** or contact Pete Adams, Interim Engagement and Communications Officer on **0207 326 3700**.

### Trip to Chiswick House and Gardens

### On Wednesday 5 September, we took residents from our Helmi House extra-care scheme on a trip to the beautiful Chiswick House and Gardens.

Residents were treated to a fantastic tour of the Kitchen Garden by Andrew, the Chiswick House gardener, who told them about all the hard work and planning that goes into growing the vegetables each year. He also gave some great tips on how to grow great veg back at Helmi House! Residents were then able to buy freshly picked vegetables from the garden to take home and cook for their dinner.



### Can cook, will cook

Have you ever thought about running your own café, community kitchen or canteen? Well now might be your chance!

Our Older Person's Scheme at Helmi House is on the look out for someone to run its catering facilities from the end of March 2019. This state of the art set up has been in operation for the last two years but the opportunity to run the facility is now up for grabs.

We are looking for someone who is ambitious about running their own business, professional in presentation and absolutely mad about menus!

This exciting opportunity would not only mean that you have an in-house audience and access to a Board-approved subsidy, but also would give you a base on the Stockwell Park Estate and beyond.

To register your interest, or to find out more about this opportunity, contact Lana Hunte, Older Persons Scheme Manager on Tel: 0207 326 3738 or Email: Iana.hunte@sw9.org.uk The trip was organised by Naomi Schillinger who runs pottery and gardening classes at Helmi House every Tuesday morning. Are you a resident living in an SW9 Community Housing Older Persons' Scheme? Would you like to find out more about these classes and trips? Speak to your scheme manager or call Peter Adams, Interim Engagement and Communications Officer on **0207 326 3700**.

# Christmas is coming!



In conjunction with Henry Construction, this year we will once again be launching into the festive season on the Stockwell Estate with an SW9 Community Housing Christmas Event!

Last year's event was a huge success and included the annual switching on of the lights, live music, an exhibition of progress the estate has made from the Network Homes Development team and – of course – the all important visit from Santa handing out presents to the children.

The Christmas Event will take place on Monday 3 December between 5-7pm at the SW9 Community Housing office.





### **SW9 Summer Festival success!**

Were you or your family part of the SW9 Festival this year? If you were then you helped make up the massive 293 residents that took part in our fortnight of summer events between Monday 20 August and Friday 31 August.

This was a massive success and we received loads of great feedback on how we can improve for next year. In total 94% of residents said that our festival events were good, with 6% rating them average. An excellent score!

A variety of different activities were held including a coach trip to Brighton, a community barbeque, trampolining, a visit to London Zoo and a Digital Workshop.

Here's Julie Alexander, Head of Housing Services, with a run down of what went on!

#### Week One

The first week started with a trip to London Zoo, for residents to enjoy all its wonder and amazement. The next day we indulged in the art of pottery; this thoughtful, artistic activity helped our residents open up their minds and relieve stress. On the following day we took three coaches to Brighton beach. Residents enjoyed only a few patches of sunshine, but ultimately got to spent time with their family and other members of their community.

We rounded off the first week with our Community BBQ and the smell of jerk chicken engulfing the pond area at Wynter House. At the event we had many activities for the children to enjoy including card making, a drumming class and a bouncy castle. Our building contractors Henry Construction sprinkled some magic onto the event too, with face painting, popcorn, a slushie machine and hotdogs for our residents to indulge in.

#### Week Two

During the second week, we focused more on upskilling our residents. On Wednesday, we held a cycling training course to give children the confidence to ride safely on roads. Eight children were accompanied by two nationally accredited instructors who covered level 1 and 2 training. In the second week we also held a computer workshop delivered by 'We Are Digital'. They provided tailored computer training to our residents, to give them useful IT skills.

Our last activities looked to improve the mental and physical wellbeing of our residents. There is evidence to suggest that taking part in creative activities has a positive impact on people's mental health, and for this reason we held an art workshop. On the last day of the festival, residents visited a local urban farm to learn how to make a healthy lunch with family and friends. The festival finished off with the launch of the boxing classes funded by our 'Community Chest' grant fund initiative.





#### Feedback from the Festival

"I enjoyed spending time with my family, leaving London and meeting other residents."

"It was my first time doing an activity with SW9 and I enjoyed it!"

"It was great to see different people coming together and having fun."

This is the third year running that we have held the SW9 Summer Festival and every year it goes from strength to strength. However, it wouldn't be possible without all the contractors and partners for their generous support and sponsorship.







## My home and neighbourhood **Time to go digital!**

The world is increasingly moving toward the digital age. What this means for the person in the street is that things you would have once done in person are increasingly being done online or via smartphones.

SW9 Community Housing is also moving in this direction. We now have ways in which you can report repairs, make rent payments and get involved online using our customer hub. This can be found at www.sw9.org.uk

Our Board and management team are keen to get even more of you using our services in this way. During the SW9 Festival, we ran our first Digital Workshop in association with our partner organisation We Are Digital which got six residents trained up and online. Feedback for this was really positive and everyone asked for more courses in future.

SW9 has listened to this feedback and now have two computers in our reception which we want to use for Digital Champion workshops. The aim is for these workshops to help you learn how to use a computer, set up an email address and access the services that are important to you.

If you are interested in taking part in a Digital Champion Workshop please get in touch by calling us on 0207 326 3700 and asking for Peter Adams, our Interim Engagement and Communications Officer.

Of course, if you're already one step ahead you can also express your interest by emailing us at getinvolved@sw9.org.uk

We look forward to helping you get online.

### Have a coffee on us!

As part of our ambition to get as many SW9 Community Housing residents online as possible, we now have two computers set up in our reception area.

These are exclusively for the use of residents who want to come in and get online, set up emails and discover how to access services.

We know that when you are getting started this can be quite time consuming. To make the experience more comfortable we have set up a coffee machine which you can use for free while you are with us.

So pop in, pop online and perk up with a coffee today!

### **Park Heights** cladding update

#### Starting on 26 November 2018, ambitious work will begin at Park Heights to remove and replace existing cladding.

The work will last just over two years and be carried out by contractor Hill. Scaffolding will go up first on the leasehold block and then move onto the tenanted side. In order to allow this to happen, a number of car parking spaces will be suspended although the bins stores will remain in service and additional bins be provided where necessary.

If you have any concerns about these works, please contact the Liaison Team at Hill on Freephone 0800 032 6760 or email residents@hill.co.uk. Drop in sessions will also be arranged and advertised while works are being carried out.



### Hoarding – how we can help

#### At SW9 Community Housing, we take your health and safety seriously. One of the greatest "hidden dangers' in every community is hoarding.

Hoarding matters to us because as well as causing the person a lot of difficulty, it can also be a fire risk and make it hard for the fire brigade to access a property if there is a fire. It can also lead to damage to properties, and difficulty for the person in paying their bills. People who hoard might not let people into their house and this can cause problems with fixing repairs and completing their annual gas safety check.

To help tackle this issue, we have recently introduced a new hoarding procedure. This is guidance for how we can support people who hoard on the estate.

In the past, housing associations would force the person to clear their home, or evict them. We don't want to do this unless it is absolutely necessary. We want to provide help and support to the people affected. This benefits both us and them. We know that it takes time for somebody to recover from

### What is hoarding?

Hoarding is when somebody has difficulty with throwing away or getting rid of items, to the point where they have very little space in their house and they are unable to go about their daily life.

This can cause a lot of upset to the person and many have difficulty accessing their bathroom and kitchen facilities.

hoarding disorder, and it requires a lot of sensitive support and small, manageable steps to take.

If you, or somebody you know, is affected by hoarding then there are a number of people who will be able to provide help, including us. You can speak to your neighbourhood officer if you have any concerns. They are there to help, and can point you in the right direction.

You can also speak to other professionals, such as GPs. There are some very helpful resources online that can help. www.rainbowred.co.uk has an "icebreaker form" that you can take with you to help you explain the problem you or your friend/family member is having. Hoarding UK also has a number of helpful advice and resources available online.

If you have any questions, or would like more information, please contact your neighbourhood officer on 0207 326 3700.

Hoarding is linked to mental health and could be a symptom of many different problems, including trauma and grief. It may also be linked with learning disabilities, autism, brain injury or mental health problems. People who hoard are likely to feel a strong attachment to their belongings, even things that others don't see as important. People who hoard might feel upset or ashamed, but they shouldn't as it is more common than they believe and something that could affect anyone.



### The smart way to report repairs

We know that getting your repairs done quickly and efficiently is incredibly important to you. To help make this happen we have a number of ways in which you can report them to us including telephone, email or dropping into the office.

However, recently we've had some emergency repairs reported via email. As these are not always read straight away it may mean your home could suffer greater damage and take longer to be put right.

If you believe your repair is an emergency then please let us know immediately by calling us on 0207 326 3700 and selecting option 2 for repairs. We can then assess the situation and prioritise it accordingly. You can even do this when the office is closed - after all, an emergency is an emergency.

If your repair is not an emergency then you can still call us, but please do use our email address repairs@sw9.org.uk if that is more convenient to you.

You can also visit our office and use extension 1000 in reception. This will put you straight through to a member of our repairs team.

Your repair is important to us. By reporting emergencies to us immediately we can keep your home and family safe.

### **Satisfaction surveys**

You may have noticed that sometimes when you contact us, or come along to one of our events, you receive a survey to complete. These may be in the form of telephone calls, or you might have been handed a survey by one of the team at an event.

These surveys are really important to us, and they give us a chance to find out how happy you are with our services and what is important to you. The results are fed back to our managers anonymously, so they don't know who left the feedback. This lets them know what areas are in need of improvement, and what we are doing well at.

We are very grateful to everyone who takes the time to complete one of our surveys. By giving us your views, you are helping us make the estate a great place to live!

### Regeneration **Development update**

SW9 is in the process of going through some very positive changes. The regeneration of the Stockwell Park Estate, managed by Network Homes, is now in full swing. During this exciting time we want to keep you up to date about what's been happening and our plans.

Network Homes are currently working on several buildings. You may be living in these or pass them regularly when you walk around the estate. Here is a quick run down of everything that is happening.

### **Aytoun Road**

Work on Aytoun Road is currently in the planning stages and as such there is no contractor appointed yet. However, the Development team has been organising various surveys for the architects including a topographical and services survey.

These will enable them to propose a new location for the lift at Crowhurst House that is required due to the ramp and pedway alterations.

### **Day Centre**

The day centre site is coming along steadily although it has fallen a little behind in the programme. The initial completion date was March 2019, but our contractor Kingsbury have explained to us that this could now be July 2019. At the time of writing the ground of the third floor

#### **Bedwell and Barrett**

Phase 2 of work on the balconies has now been completed by contractor Kingsbury and all redecoration works have been carried out by SO Property Maintenance.



Network

is being poured so steady progress is being made.

The Development team has met with Kingsbury on a number of occasions to discuss ways in which they can work to recoup this time and speed up the programme. When this is complete it will deliver 18 new affordable homes.





### **Tyler House**

Tyler House suffered a major leak on Sunday 23 September, and while that caused some alarm and delay, overall Network Homes, SW9 and Henrys worked well together to respond quickly.

All 28 occupied flats have received a visit or inspection to ensure any issues as a result of the leak have been logged. Contractor Henrys are now working to make appointments with residents to make good any damage. There has been a range of health and safety concerns raised regarding the site, so SW9 and the Network Homes Development team have been inspecting daily and feeding this back to Henry Construction to fix, with some improvement being seen.



A further ingress on Sunday 7 October has caused leaks to several flats but Henry Construction has again worked to fix this and are currently improving the gulley system on the roof to reduce water ponding. In addition the team has begun to hold coffee mornings and evenings with the residents for them to be able to ask questions and speak with both them and Henry Construction.

### **Graffiti Pen**

The contracts for the work to the Graffiti Pen have been signed and contractor Kingsbury has started carrying out the ground works including the removal of one of the walls.

There has been significant interest in the proposals from both residents and local artists who used the space. Once the works are complete in 2019,

SW9 plan to hold a variety of activities in the Pen, including outdoor cinema screenings, boot sale events and five-a-side football, to name but a few.

The residents of Waltham Estate and surrounding SW9 blocks have been written to informing them of the contract with Kingsbury and the works programme.



### My community Get to know your **Board Vice Chair**

#### An interview with Olu Ajisebutu

#### What made you want to become a Board Member for SW9 Community Housing?

I wanted to play my part in helping the community. When Network Homes got involved with the Stockwell Park Estate I saw dramatic improvements and I wanted to do my bit to be part of that change in the future.

#### What are you most passionate about in vour role as Board Vice Chair?

What I wanted to achieve most was to keep the organisation moving forward, making improvements and making sure that all the tenants and leaseholders are aware that they are being looked after by the community organisation SW9 and its parent Network Homes.

Are there any improvements you would like to see at SW9 Community Housing?

SW9

### **FREE BOXING & FITNESS CLUB** FOR UNDER 16s

Benefits of boxing

Gain new skills • Build your strength • Build good relationships Keep fit • Discipline • Motivation • Stress relief • Self defence

Free classes for children aged 7-16 years. Boxing and fitness training provided by qualified instructors.

Age 7-11 years – Saturdays 10am-11.15am

Age 12-16 years – Saturdays 11.15am-12.15pm

Classes run at: Stockwell Park Community Trust, 21 Aytoun Place, SW9 0TE

Contact Patricia on 07736 248716

Community Housing This project is funded by SW9 Community Housing through the Community Chest grant fund.

At the moment the most important thing we need to do is around engagement. Many of our residents are not fully engaged and some people don't know the difference between Network Homes and SW9 Community Housing. We need to explain that Network Homes own the homes but SW9 manage them locally. We can only do this with the support of our community.

#### What advice would you give to a resident wanting to become involved with SW9 Community Housing?

The key point is that we can only do it with residents. If you care about the community then you should get involved and help improve things into the future. It isn't just the Board, there are lots of ways to get involved - we have a Scrutiny Panel and run lots of events for individuals and families. If you care then get involved.

### **Annual Report**

## The SW9 Community Housing Annual Report for financial year 2017-18 will soon be published.

This will detail all that has been achieved in the last financial year, explain how we are doing in comparison to other similar organisations and give an insight into what we hope to achieve going forward.

Our parent organisation, Network Homes, is also publishing its Annual Report. This can be found in the centre pages of the latest Network Homes newsletter.



### Welcome to United Guarding

#### We have now appointed a new CCTV and Concierge contractor, United Guarding.

Dennis Gittins, the Property and Estates Services Manager at SW9 Community Housing, says: "We are really pleased with the appointment of United Guarding to look after both the CCTV and Concierge services.

"Both of these are integral to the ongoing security and safety of our estate. We know that these issues are important to our residents and this contract will ensure that we can continue to keep the Stockwell Park Estate a safe community in which to live and work."



### **Community Chest**

### Do you have an idea for a project that could benefit the community but would need funding? If the answer is "yes!" then why not apply to the SW9 Community Chest?

The SW9 Community Chest offers grants of up to £6000 per year for projects such as community activity classes, coaching or events.

Recent successes have included free boxing classes for 7-16 year olds, holiday play at Max Roach Park, drumming workshops and educational courses through Hatch Enterprise. If you have an idea for a community project that benefits SW9 Community Housing residents, then get in touch today to find out how you can apply for funding.

Just email getinvolved@sw9.org.uk or call us on 0207 326 3740.

## **Keeping it local**

## Here at SW9 Community Housing we have recently begun a new project to create local offers.

Local offers are all about tailoring the service we provide to make sure that we are meeting the specific needs of the community we serve. Although we already offer quite a few things that fit this bill, we know there is more that we can be doing.

At the Community BBQ on 24 August, held as part of the SW9 Summer Festival, we surveyed residents to find out what other local offers they wanted and if they wish us to continue with the offers we already provide.

We now want to hear even more ideas from the community. If you have an idea for something we should be doing differently in order to bring about positive change then let us know by emailing

### Fly tipping – worth the risk?

SW9 Community Housing takes the issue of fly tipping very seriously. To help keep our public areas clean and tidy, our Board has agreed a new policy that could allow us to fine culprits up to £1000.

Says Edwin Maharaj, Interim Neighbourhood Services Manager: "It is important to everyone that we keep our estate safe. Fly tipping is not only unsightly and anti-social; it can also be dangerous – especially to children. We are therefore taking a stronger approach and, if we can trace dumped rubbish back to an individual, we will fine them."

There is actually no need to dump rubbish. SW9 Community Housing's contractor Zing is on hand to collect bulk rubbish for only a minimal charge or, in certain circumstances, for free. Just call the cleaning team on **020 3177 1103**. getinvolved@sw9.org.uk or calling Peter Adams, Interim Engagement and Communications Officer, on 0207 326 3740.

#### Local offers already provided by SW9:

- Support into work such as the Apprenticeship Scheme and CV workshops
- Support for vulnerable residents including the popular Christmas hampers
- · Money, debt and benefits advice
- Community Chest grant fund for community projects
- Family activities and trips out to places such as Brighton, Winter Wonderland and London Zoo.
- Training courses in areas such as first aid and computer skills
- Youth Programme

#### What is fly tipping?

Fly tipping is a criminal offense (under section 33 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990) and it is not tolerated on the Stockwell Park Estate. Disposing of household waste in this manner is harmful to the environment, encourages others to leave their rubbish and attracts pests. Please help to keep your neighbourhood clean.



### **Customer service**



#### The easiest way to pay your rent and service charge is by Direct Debit. It is a simple and safe way to pay your rent automatically from your bank account.

All you have to do is agree the amount to be collected and the date of payment. After that it will be deducted from your account on a regular basis. Just call our income team and we can set up your Direct Debit while you are on the phone.

As an added incentive, the Income Team has set up a prize draw of £500 in vouchers each month. The first draw will take place in the New Year. The only requirement to be included in the prize draw is that you must have been paying by Direct Debit for 3 months or more. Winners may be asked if we can include your photo in the SW9 newsletter and online.

We know that having a Direct Debit in place is the best way to make sure that your bills are paid and to keep your household finances in the black. We are so keen to encourage this that we are putting our money where our mouth is and offering a massive £500 each month to one lucky resident that has set up a Direct Debit."

#### Ade Akitoye, Income Collection Manager

So don't delay, set up your Direct Debit today for your chance to WIN BIG!

### Are you getting the advice you need?

We know that making sure you are receiving all the benefits you are entitled to can be a tricky and time consuming business. Many of you have told us that even getting started with this can be overwhelming.

This is why we have joined with our parent organisation to offer you the services of the Network Homes Welfare Benefit Advice Team.

The team are fully trained in being able to assess your needs and to help, advise and guide you in getting the monies you are entitled to.

Says Ade Akitoye, Income Collection Manager: "In spite of what you may have heard, Income



Collection teams actually want to help you to make sure you are receiving everything that you can. This is the best way to make sure your tenancy is secure and that you and your family are not missing out on what is yours."

To be referred please call your income officer on 0207 326 3700.



#### If you receive benefits and have been transferred to Universal Credit, it is very important that you tell us as soon as possible.

Universal Credit started rolling out in Lambeth from last December. We now have over 80 residents on Universal Credit and this figure continues to rise every week.

#### What is Universal Credit?

Universal Credit is a new combined benefit, paid monthly in arrears, that replaces the following benefits:

- Income Support (IS)
- Income Based Jobseekers Allowance (IBJSA)
- Income Related Employment & Support Allowance (RESA)
- Housing Benefit (HB)
- Working Tax Credit (WTC)
- Child Tax Credit (CTC)

#### What's the big deal?

The big difference with Universal Credit is that your benefits will be paid directly to you every month in arrears. You will then be responsible for paying your rent to us via Direct Debit.

### Winter repairs

We are often asked about repairs timescales, especially in the winter months when issues with hot water or heating can be much more urgent.

Says Dennis Gittins, Properties and Estate Services Manager: "When there is a loss of heating and hot water the response times are to attend within 4 hours and remedy within 24 hours. If a fix is not possible (e.g. parts need to be ordered) then two heaters will be provided by our contractor T. Brown. This is true even at weekends. However, in the unlikely event that a whole block should lose its heating then heaters would be given to the most vulnerable first as T Brown do not have hundreds in storage."

Problems managing until the first Universal Credit payment is a key issue with the new benefit, as revealed by research from Citizens Advice. But we are here to help you. Our income team is available to provide you with advice as well as Network Homes' welfare advisor. Don't suffer in silence! Call us on 0207 326 3700 to talk to us about Universal Credit.

#### How can I prepare for Universal Credit?

- Work towards getting your account into at least one month's credit by paying a minimum £5 extra per week. This will reduce the risk of arrears when you move over to Universal Credit.
- You'll need a bank account to be able to receive your Universal Credit payment. Once you have a bank account you should set up Direct Debits to pay your rent and bills.
- You'll need an email address for your Universal Credit claim. If you need help with this, we can help you. Just call 0207 326 3700 to let us know that you want to take part in one of our digital workshops.

Below are some examples of common repair issues we often face in the winter and the timescales to which we work.

Repair example	Timescale target
Gas leak / major water leak.	Attend and make safe within 4 hours and complete within 24 hours.
Lost heating and hot water.	Attend within 4 hours and complete within 24 hours.
Radiator repair.	Attend and complete within 7 days.
Radiator repair (minor).	Attend and complete within 28 days.

### Our performance

### How we are doing

Performance Indicator	Target	July 2018	August 2018	Our Improvement Plan
Block and Estate inspections rated 'very good' or 'good'	90%	90%	90%	Our estate officers attend monthly block inspections to make sure that all blocks are clean and maintained. If you would like to come along to one of these inspections, please call us on <b>0207 326 3700</b> , or email us at <b>info@sw9. org.uk</b> .
Telephone calls to Customer Services Team answered	90%	93%	93%	Our Customer Services team are here to answer any non- income or repairs related questions. You can speak to them about anything related to parking, housing, events, ASB, or anything else that you would like to find out about your home and the estate.
Satisfaction with Office Visit	85%	69%	79%	We are taking steps in the right direction. You may have noticed if you come in to reception that we now have a smiley face survey stand. This gives us an idea of how happy you are with our service. We use the score given to see where we need to improve and act to do this.
Satisfaction with Recent Repair	80%	84%	85%	We have been listening to your feedback on our repairs service, and have started contacting you after your repair to make sure your appointment was kept. We want to resolve any problems you have as soon as possible, and increase satisfaction with our repairs service.



If you would prefer not to receive the SW9 Community Housing newsletter you can opt-out by emailing communications@sw9.org.uk or writing to Communications team, SW9 Community Housing, 6 Stockwell Park Walk, London, SW9 0FG.