

Sutton Housing Society Easter Newsletter 2011



The Easter Eggstravaganza event proved popular with some budding artists, and here we see the results of their handiwork, some really beautiful painted ceramic eggs.

In first place (left) was Margaret Brady from Dorothy Pettingell House, in second place was Pam Burfoot (centre) from Norman House and in third was Margaret Hutchings from Thomas House.

After our hard work painting we then had to use some grey matter to answer an Easter and general knowledge quiz, followed up by a sing-along with a music quiz to end the day.

1st prize Margaret Brady D P House
2nd prize Pam Burfoot Norman House
3rd prize Margaret Hutchings Thomas House
Each Winner received an Easter Egg - Congratulations!



Resident Suggestion Forms for events in sheltered schemes 2011-2012 - How you voted

We have now had a chance to look at the returned forms, and the results are as follows:-
1st choice of what residents would like most to do was a fete, 2nd choice combined bingo, quizzes and a health and wellbeing event. 3rd choice was Suttons got talent, 4th was the Euroasian East meets West event, 5th was carpet bowls, 6th was darts, and 7th was a race night.

With regard to other schemes attending in-house events 40 residents said yes and only 7 said no. 35 residents agreed that there should be a charge at schemes for food against 11 who said no.

The result for having an Xmas party at schemes or a large SHS party was split equally. Most residents were happy to pay towards a party and also for an entertainer. Half of you were able to make events without transport.

The Events Planning Committee will be meeting in May to discuss the outcomes and arrange suitable events for the year according to your choices.

Please look out for further information on your event notice boards.
Judith D'Arville Resident Involvement Coordinator



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Repairs and Maintenance



Investing in our buildings, and our residents

As part of our long term business planning we have a stock reinvestment plan. This sets out planned replacement of key parts of our buildings and your homes. The plan allows us to predict our cash flows into the future. All of this work is funded from our rent income.

This is a summary of the main projects we plan to undertake in the current financial year –

Nairn Court	Kitchen and boiler replacements
Cloverdale Court	Communal areas improvements, redecoration and recarpeting
Furlong Close	Boiler replacements
Griffiths Close	Communal boiler replacement
Mary Court	Recarpeting to communal areas
Margaret House	Recarpeting to communal areas
Norman House	Communal areas redecoration and works to water storage tanks
Old Brewery House	Communal boiler replacement
Ronald House	Boiler replacements and recarpeting to communal areas
Thomas House	Communal boiler replacement and car park resurfacing
Trickett House	Recarpeting to communal areas
Wandle Valley Estate	Kitchens and boiler replacement

- We will also continue the planned removal of the asbestos which remains in some of our buildings.
- With all of the boiler replacements we will be seeking to reduce the running costs of tenant's homes.

All of the work we do contributes to maintaining the high standards of our properties. We aim to be the best social landlord in the Borough with the best properties. These schemes, along with many other smaller projects planned for the year will help us to achieve this and we hope, help to make our properties homes our residents can be proud of.

If you have any comments or questions on this please let us know. We will of course notify and consult individual residents as each project is developed. Chris Turton Chief Executive

Scheme Manager Minutes Resident Meetings



Norman House

At the meeting held 24/02/2011 there was a request from a number of residents to have the current notice board moved from the lounge, as residents who did not go in to the lounge were possibly missing information.

It was confirmed by the Scheme Manager that there was currently little space in the lobby area and space could not be made without moving other important notices, however she would investigate moving the current notice board to a wall opposite the fire panel in the front entrance hall.

Thomas House

At the meeting held 27th January 2011 the Scheme Manager reminded residents regarding the "stay put" policy in the case of a fire.

Recycling was also discussed and residents were reminded to recycle whenever possible using the bins provided.

The Scheme Manager presented to residents the "Scheme Information" leaflet that she had been asked to produce for new residents, and agreed to make copies available for all residents.

Margaret House

At a meeting held 18th January 2011 residents had requested a more explicit sign for Margaret House.

The Scheme Manager explained that following discussions with the Maintenance Officer it would not be possible to change the current sign, it being relatively new and having been correctly produced to the Societies requirements.

The Scheme Manager confirmed that a request for new carpets was to be presented for approval at the next board meeting, due to convene in the next few weeks. Unfortunately steam cleaning of the chairs in the communal areas had not been agreed.

The Scheme Manager confirmed that the sliding door in the lounge was to be replaced to meet fire regulations, and that the new door would be compatible with wheelchairs to allow access to and from the gardens.

Dorothy Pettingell House

At a meeting held 20th January 2011 some residents volunteered to ensure the safety of the scheme by closing windows and ensuring doors were closed at night. The Scheme Manager thanked those residents who had offered their services.

The scooter policy was discussed and the Scheme Manager highlighted that any resident considering buying a scooter should consult her first, and that all residents should make themselves aware of the need for insurance cover.

The performance of all the service contractors was discussed and overall the general feeling was that there was an improvement in this service and that the cleaners were doing an ok job.

Residents raised that they felt the front door was weak and insecure and required either replacement or a stronger lock. The Scheme Manager agreed to raise this with the Maintenance Officer.

Housing Operations Committee update



The Housing Operations Committee met in February 2011 and had a full turn out. The meetings are held at Trickett House Head Office after office working hours. Please remember resident members give up their time on a voluntary basis to represent your views, and ensure that the Society is performing as it should.

The main agenda items that took up the bulk of the discussions were around two important policy reviews, which were approved. The policies were:

1. Lettings and Transfer Policy and Procedure
2. Rent Arrears Policy, Procedure and Statement

Members reviewed and discussed the performance reports for quarter 3. Amongst other things these reports show how quickly we fill empty properties, how much rent we have collected and how many complaints we have resolved satisfactorily.

Please remember if you are interested in being involved in the Society's Committees focus groups or panels please contact Judith D'Arville, Resident Involvement Coordinator on 020 8661 5894.

Zoe Macgregor
Housing Services Manager

Regulation and Service Standards - Local Offers

We have now conducted a very successful consultation exercise on this, and we are able to confirm the "local offers" which the Society will be making to its tenants. These are set out for your reference on the enclosed insert.

The working party deserve our sincere thanks for their hard work and commitment in reaching a consensus on the local offers. In addition the tenants raised other important issues. Some of these were about detailed elements of services already delivered. Others raised much broader questions and challenges for staff like how the Society should respond to working with other agencies to reduce levels of domestic waste, recycling and energy conservation.

We are committed to maintaining and developing this resident involvement and scrutiny. Much of the service monitoring which will take place over the next year will be carried out on your behalf by the Housing Operations Committee and we will ensure you are kept informed.

Chris Turton
Chief Executive



IT update



SHS Website

Did you know that Sutton Housing Society have a website? Take a look at www.suttonhousingsociety.org.uk - let us know what you think by emailing info@shsoc.org.uk or calling the office on 0208 642 1500. We recently held a consultation on the content and the navigation of the website with members of the Housing Operations Committee. We will feed-back on results from this in the summer newsletter.

Get Digital

28 Residents from sheltered schemes took part in a Get Digital training programme at Thomas House and Norman House. Most residents received 6 hours of training over a 6 week period. They learnt about the internet, email, Skype, digital photography and word processing. The feedback has been really positive, with the only criticism being that residents would have liked more time.

IT clubs and computer corners have now been set up at 5 sheltered schemes. All computer corners have new computers with internet access, colour printers and additional kit like large keyboards to make accessibility easier, and webcams/headphones to enable residents to contact family and friends using the internet. Each IT club has a resident IT Buddy to help. Residents Tony Sheridan and Jeff Haddock and SHS staff attended a Get Digital Sustainability Workshop in London in March. Celia Dawes said, "We all came away feeling that we were on the right track to make this project really successful."

Comments from residents who have benefited from the training programme:

Iris Platt, who recently celebrated her 90th birthday. "I am very happy with using the computer, if only I could keep it in my brain - how to get on to things like emails, facebook and so on. It is easy when you know how! Today I spent some time looking at my granddaughters pictures from uni and New Zealand on facebook."

Colin Crowhurst, "I was adamant that I did not want to learn about computers or have anything to do with the training. But I was encouraged to have a go; I enjoyed taking part and have learnt much more than I thought I would - I have even bought myself a laptop. I will continue to use my new skills and look forward to learning even more."

Hine Prescott is also an IT Buddy. "I thoroughly enjoyed taking part in the computer training which taught me a lot (because I was worse than some!!) and it brought back memories of things I thought I had forgotten! It had built my confidence and I now feel really happy in my role of "IT Buddy" at Norman House, where I can use the skills I learnt to help others which I really enjoy doing. I know that the residents will benefit from having guidance on a one-to-one basis rather than sitting in a large group."

If you would like to join the IT club at any of our schemes, please contact your Scheme Manager. If you have never used a computer before you can still apply to join the IT Club. We will offer basic training to get you up and running.

Residents Page



Garden Competition

For all you green-fingered gardeners we will be hosting another competition this year, and posters will be going up shortly.

Please let your Scheme Manager (if you have one), or me know if you would like to enter.

If you are able to help judge the categories please let me know.

Judith D'Arville 0208 661 5894

Pat Shaw Community Award

Do you have a neighbour who goes out of their way to help you or others? Does someone or a group make your life a little easier or happier?

There are lots of ways people help one another, doing a bit of shopping, popping in to see you're ok, listening when you're down, taking your rubbish out, helping organise events, stop you feeling lonely, giving you a lift, or cooking a meal.

It may be making the scheme or garden look beautiful, but whatever it is, please think about nominating these special people, and recognise them by recommending them for the Community Award. (Forms will be in summer newsletter)

Readers Panel

We recently wrote to members of the Readers Panel to ask them for their comments on the recently updated Recharge Policy. Comments received from members enabled us to make some adjustments before finalising the policy.

In future all Policies and Procedures approved by the Readers Panel will bear the Readers Panel approved Logo.



We also asked members to comment as to why they joined the panel - here are a few comments from members:-

- I am interested in the panel because we then know the standards of what is happening
- I feel that if I can make a difference to anyone's life it would make me more grateful for who and what I am
- I want to give tenants of Furlong Close a voice, and because I believe that the readers panel have an important job to do for all tenants
- I like to be in touch with any proposals
- I like to think its my way of getting a little bit involved about what's going on
- I take great interest in local affairs, giving great thought to questions before replying, I hope I prove an asset to the panel

If you are interested in joining the Readers Panel contact:- Judith D'Arville on 0208 661 5894



Policy updates

Two policies were approved at the last Housing Operations Meetings as set out above; and a number of further policies were updated in accordance with the Societies policy review timetable.

- Lettings and Transfer Policy: the main change approved by members to this policy is that, the number of suitable offers for those on our sheltered housing waiting and transfer lists was amended from 3 to 2, before a persons application is suspended for 1 year.
- Rent Arrears Policy: the changes approved by members to this policy were around increased clarity of Officers roles and responsibilities, and increased clarity to tenants as to what action will be taken and when, in arrears cases.
- Ex-Gratia Payments to Tenants/Applicants: no significant changes to this policy.
- Home-loss and Disturbance Policy; no significant changes to this policy.
- Aids & Adaptations Policy: no change at all to the policy. There have been 2 related documents attached, setting out, how to refer to SHS's Trusted Assessor scheme, and how to refer for an Occupational Therapist assessment.

If you are interested in seeing any of these policies and you live in sheltered accommodation, please refer to the policy manual placed in your communal lounges.

Alternatively please contact Judith D'Arville, Resident Involvement Coordinator on:-
0208 661 5894.

Zoe Macgregor
Housing Services Manager

Fire Brigade regulations

Residents should be aware of new regulations from the Fire Brigade and incidents regarding residents being stuck in lifts.

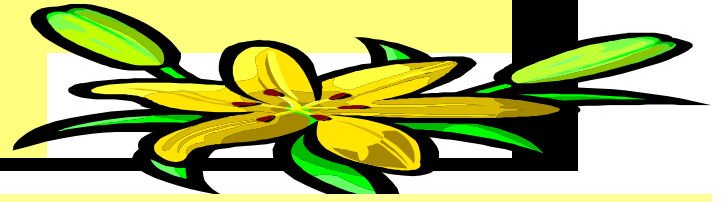
There will now be a £300 charge for releasing persons from a lift if there have been more than three calls within a 12 month period; unless there is a known medical condition which could then escalate to an emergency.

- This charge could then be forwarded onto the resident themselves for payment.
- In the first instance the lift engineer should always be called in preference to the Fire Brigade.

Robert Boswell
Senior Housing Officer



Poets Corner and Seasonal Facts



Ode to Tablets

A row of bottles upon the shelf
Caused me to analyse myself
One yellow pill I have to pop
Goes to my heart so it will no stop.
A little white one that I take
Goes to my hands so they won't shake.
The blue ones that I use a lot
Tell me I'm happy when I'm not.
The purple pill goes to my brain
And tells me that I have no pain
Green capsules tell me not to wheeze
Or cough or choke or even sneeze.
The red ones, smallest of them all
Go to my blood so I will not fall.
The orange ones, so big and bright
Prevent my leg cramps in the night.
Such an array of brilliant pills
Help to cure all kind of ills
But what I'd really like to know
Is what tells each one where to go?

Dorothy Plim
Trickett House

60th Wedding Anniversary



Fred and Dot Allen from Trickett House celebrated their 60th Wedding Anniversary on March 31st 2011. They got a special card from the Queen and congratulations and warm wishes from everybody. They had a party with residents on the night, and a family get together at the weekend. What an achievement!

The new Direct Debit winner this issue,
(winning a £25 Marks and Spencer's voucher) is:-
Mrs Parish from Old Brewery House

The Resident Satisfaction repair slip winner this issue,
(winning a £25 Marks and Spencer's voucher) is:-
Mrs E Smith from Nairn Court

Tai Chi

In celebration of world Tai Chi day Sutton Housing Society arranged two sessions of Tai Chi at Thomas House and Dorothy Pettingell House. Tony from Trickett said " I was really impressed and felt it was both informative as well as helping anyone with arthritis and stiff joints. By rubbing your hands it created heat that you passed on to the next persons shoulders, and you could feel the energy going into your spine and shoulders. I would recommend it to everyone."



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