

Hounslow Homes news

www.hounslowhomes.org.uk

Issue thirty three | March 2005

...Included with this issue: Tenant Training opportunities, Spring 2005 + Information about Hounslow Mediation Service...

Attractive, safer and greener neighbourhoods

Part of a new programme called Decent Estates

A new programme called "Decent Estates" will begin later this year. The programme aims to improve and regenerate local estates. Work will include modernising communal areas, playgrounds and community facilities.

Chris Langstaff, Managing Director of Hounslow Homes said "This new programme allows us to focus our attention on creating decent estates for our

tenants. We will focus on estates that residents and HFTRA feel are most in need of improvement work. The programme ultimately aims to create safer, greener and nicer places to live.

How will estates be selected for the programme?

Using a 'scorecard'. The card will include questions about parking, refuse collection, the quality of internal and external areas and the level of crime and

anti-social behaviour experienced.

List of Estates to be included in the programme

This draft list has been discussed and agreed with Hounslow's Federation of Residents' and Tenants' Associations.

What work will take place?

Work will be tailored to meet the needs of individual neighbourhoods and communities. It will include updating parking facilities, improved lighting, new communal flooring for entrances and

stairwells and modernising communal areas and block security systems.

We need your views to make this programme of improvement really work!

You can have your say about the estates that have so far been listed for work by calling HFTRA on 020 8569 5823, or by attending your local area forum.

Find out more

We will publish the list of estates that will be part of phase one of the programme later this year.



Elmwood Avenue is just one of the estates shortlisted for possible inclusion in the Decent Estates Programme.

HFTRA Conference 2005: Your chance to have your say!

The HFTRA Conference (Saturday 9th April 08.30 - 16.30) is a "must" this year for all tenants and leaseholders who want to speak directly to resident representatives and Hounslow Homes staff about possible changes affecting your services and responsibilities in your home.

HFTRA will be holding a number of workshops about:

- Repairs - changes in tenants' responsibilities.
- New legislation and service improvements for leaseholders.
- Resident involvement and the role of HFTRA.
- The future of Hounslow Homes.
- Safer neighbourhoods.
- The housing needs of older people.

So, if you want to be at the heart of the debate on the future, make sure you book your place now!

For more information on what will be happening on the day and how to book your place, see page 3.

CENTRAL AREA -
Hounslow, Isleworth,
Heston & Cranford
NORMAN CRESCENT
CLEMENTS COURT
REDWOOD ESTATE
BRABAZON BLOCKS
BROOKWOOD ROAD
HESTON FARM
NORTHFIELDS BLOCKS
MIDSUMMER
WORTON ESTATE

EAST AREA - Brentford & Chiswick
EDENSOR GARDENS
BERKELEY HOUSE
HAZEL CLOSE
MERCURY HOUSE
CHARLTON HOUSE
BRENTFORD TOWERS
HAVERFIELD ESTATE
HOGARTH ESTATE
BEACONSFIELD CLOSE
EGERTON HOUSE
BOURNE COURT
ST PAULS HOUSE

BURFORD HOUSE
STAMFORD BROOK
MANSIONS
PINKHAM MANSIONS
SYDNEY GARDENS
DUKES AVENUE

WEST AREA - Feltham, Bedfont & Hanworth
FRANK TOWELL COURT
BETHANEY WAY
SOUTH BEDFONT ESTATE
ORIEL ESTATE

THE HOLANDS
SOUTH ROAD
MCCARTHY ROAD
OXFORD COURT
NEW CHAPEL SQUARE
ROSE GARDENS
ELMWOOD AVENUE
HIGHFIELD ESTATE
SANDALWOOD & PINWOOD ROAD
BECKETTS CLOSE/FIELD ROAD
SOUTHERN AVENUE
BEAR & SWAN ROAD

Rents set to increase

By the time you receive this edition of Hounslow Homes News you will probably have been notified of an increase in your rent. This increase will help us to maintain and improve our services to you over the next year. If you are concerned about your rent, contact your local Hounslow Homes office or Hounslow Welfare Benefits and Money Advice on 020 8583 4242.

Thank you to all of you who took part in our recent inspection. We will publish the results in the next issue.

Don't forget to sign up for the HFTRA conference! See page 3 for details.

Local news

What's been happening in your area

22nd January, **Worton Estate, Isleworth** - Residents from the Worton Estate celebrated the completion of a project which provides new homes, new play areas and better facilities for young people to play.



Above: Residents celebrate the completion of the Worton redevelopment project.

22nd January, **The Hollands Estate, Hanworth** - Residents came along to a great fun day at the Naval Club. Visitors took part in arts and crafts sessions and face painting and even got to learn some circus skills! A big thank you to all those who supported the event and the naval club for allowing residents to use their amenities.

24th January, **Dukes Meadow, Chiswick** - Alun Michael, the Minister of State for Rural Affairs and Local Environmental Quality, visited Dukes Meadow last month to find out about how the community is coming together to improve the local area.

Latest news

22nd March, **Waterfields, Feltham** - Interested in finding out how this residents' association is making your area a better place to live? Then come along to their Annual General Meeting on 22nd March at the community room.

Contact Jacky Rankine (0208 583 4035) for more details on both of the above.

New anti-social behaviour (ASB) reporting surgeries

Bedfont - Need to report anti-social behaviour? Then visit our new fortnightly surgery in Bedfont Library between 2-4pm.
Orchard Road - Our ASB surgery is starting again from Friday the 1st of April and will run on the 1st Friday of every month.

Contact Phil Stevens (0208 583 4034) for details on both surgeries. For details of ASB surgeries in your area, call your local housing office.

Tackling anti-social behaviour together.

Building community spirit - a chance to give your views



Above: The Chair of the Haverfield residents association, Betty Batty and children from Green Dragon School on the Haverfield estate entertain local residents with Indian dancing.

Have you ever thought about how good it would be to live in an area with a strong sense of community?

We have. A recent independent survey by KWEST showed that six in ten people currently think that different groups get on well with each other within their community. We want to push this statistic even higher, and are working to do this by:

- Working with CIP & Brentford FC to offer free football coaching for young people from different backgrounds in the summer holidays.
- Setting up groups to help people from varying minority backgrounds feel.
- Using our neighbourhood wardens to help out with community events.

We want your help with our aim of building "Community Cohesion". Send us your views and ideas on different ways to bring communities together by contacting our specialist officer Neghet Khan, from our Equalities team.

Call - 020 8583 4012 email - neghet.khan@hounslowhomes.org.uk
Post - Neghet Khan, St Catherine's House, 2 Hanworth Rd, Feltham TW13 5AB

Message from the Leader



Cllr. Colin Ellar, Leader, London Borough of Hounslow

It is now three years since the Council set up Hounslow Homes as an arms length management organisation after consulting and receiving the support of the tenants.

Hounslow Homes has achieved:

- A good reputation locally and regionally.
- Effective implementation of the decent homes

programme so that all properties will be made decent by the end of March 2006.

- Improvements to the repair service and to customer access.
- Good progress in tackling anti-social behaviour in our neighbourhoods.

These achievements have helped to increase tenants' satisfaction with their housing service from 64% two years ago to 76% now.

I am confident that Hounslow Homes will continue to work closely with the Council. We will ensure our tenants are satisfied and that services will continue to improve.

Changes to the Right to Buy scheme

The government has recently made changes to the Right to Buy scheme. This affects tenants who apply for the scheme on or after 18th January, 2005 (except where a different date is below).

The changes are -

To qualify for the scheme, you must have lived in a council property for at least 5 years, rather than 2 years.

- A notice requiring tenants to complete their purchase can be served 3 months after we make the offer, instead of 12 months after.
- If you decide to sell your home less than 5 years (rather than 3 years) after you bought it, you must repay a proportion of the "Right to Buy discount". The amount paid is linked to be any decrease or increase in the value of the property. In exceptional cases, residents may not have to pay back the discount. The Council now has the option to buy the property if the right to buy owner decides to sell within 10 years of buying their home.
- The rent to mortgage scheme (a scheme that allows tenants to buy their home without paying the full purchase price at the time of completing) will end from July 18th, 2005.

Leaseholder news

Send us your Leaseholder questionnaire



Don't forget to send us your completed leaseholder questionnaire that was sent to you recently with your new Leaseholder's Handbook. The information you provide is really useful to us and ensures that we have your correct contact details.

A reminder about asbestos

A leaseholder at the last forum asked us to explain our policy on asbestos removal. Under the terms of your lease you are responsible for all fixtures and fittings which may contain asbestos, for example, artex and floor tiles. Hounslow Homes will however make sure that that communal areas and the exterior of your building is free from any asbestos if it poses a risk to your health. If you need to arrange for asbestos to be removed yourself, please contact a specialist contractor.

For more information

Read our leaflet "Asbestos - Information you should know" available at area housing offices or on our website. You can also write to Asbestos Advice, St Catherine's House, 2 Hanworth Road, Feltham, Middlesex, TW13 5AB, or call 0800 085 6575.

A word of warning from the repairs team

If you do not sort out a repair to your home, such as a problem with water leakage, and it affects other residents, Hounslow Homes can get a court order to gain emergency entry to your home. This only happens if you delay a repair for a long time or if the repair is needed to prevent a serious health hazard. See your leaseholder handbook for more details or contact the Home Ownership Unit if you have any queries.

Saturday morning service



If you live a busy life and don't have time to get in touch with us in the week, make sure you use our Saturday telephone service! Our staff are happy to take your call on any issue relating to being a leaseholder with us such as answering queries about your account or major works.

Leaseholder Services and Home Ownership numbers are:

020 8583 4295 (Brentford & Chiswick)
020 8583 3418 (Feltham)
020 8583 3417 (Hounslow)

HFTRA conference - the who, what, when and where!

Who: HFTRA representatives, senior Hounslow Homes staff, and a guest speaker!

What: Workshops on your housing services, refreshments, the signing of the tenants' compact, prize draws, raffles and competitions for the best stall!

When: Saturday 9th April 8.30am - 4.30pm

Where: Renaissance Hotel, Heathrow

For more information, or to book a place, contact:

HFTRA: Julie Brooker on 07789 501621

or

Hounslow Homes: Eileen Gladwell on 020 8583 4380



Be on your guard against bogus callers

You may have read in the newspapers about people visiting homes in Hounslow pretending to be from Hounslow Homes or from the Council. Always remember that apart from emergency situations, visits by Hounslow Homes staff will ALWAYS be arranged in advance. If you are in any doubt, don't let the person in. If you are visited by someone you suspect may have been a bogus caller, please contact the police.



How our rents are calculated



from George Fry, Chair of the Hounslow Federation of Tenants' and Residents' Associations (HFTRA)

By the time you read this you should have received your annual notice telling you about your new rent charge. I think that I am fairly safe in saying that no-one will be told that their rent is going down! I am equally sure that most of us will be paying a rent increase that is above the rate of inflation. This is because our rents are set using a central government formula that uses local factors like wage levels and property prices.

The Government's "big idea" is to make local authority and housing association rent levels more similar because they think this is fairer. We think this approach is misguided because it penalises many of us who happen to live in areas where property prices are high. It means that we will be receiving above inflation increases for some time to come making rents much less affordable. Hounslow Homes and the Council both agree with us that the system needs looking at and we

have been letting the Government know just that.

The Government is also keen to have landlords charge tenants separately for some of the services they receive. Because of the way rents are being controlled this may mean extra payments above what we pay now. HFTRA oppose this and Hounslow Homes have agreed to hold off from introducing these service charges for the time being. At the same time the amount of money that government lets Hounslow Homes have to run housing is being squeezed. This means we need to work hard to make sure we get the services we want while ensuring that costs are kept down. It also means that it's more important than ever to collect tenants' rent. So if you are having difficulty paying your rent don't forget, whether you are in work or on benefit, there are people who can give you free advice that can keep you out of debt. Just contact your housing office.

Translations

If you need language assistance with this publication please ring 020 8583 2299 or Minicom 020 8583 3122. If you would like a copy of this publication in large print or Braille please ring 020 8583 2299.

English

Wargeyska Hounslow ee Guryuhu waa soo saarid qoraal ah oo loogu talo galay qofkasta oo ku nool Hantida ay leeyihin Qaybta Guryuhu. Haddii aad qoraalkan wax kaalmo ah aad uga baahatid fadlan soo garaac 020 8583 2520.

Somali

'હાઉન્સલો હોમ્સ ન્યૂઝ' સમાચાર પત્રક, કાઉન્સિલના મકાનોમાં રહેતાં પ્રત્યેક લોકો માટે માહિતી પ્રાપ્ત કરવાનો હેતુ રાખે છે. જો તેમાંની કોઈપણ વિગતો તમને ગુજરાતીમાં જાણવા માટે મદદ જોઈતી હોય તો કૃપયા આ નંબર પર ટેલિફોન કરો: 020 8583 2294

Gujarati

ਹੰਸਲੋ ਹੋਮਜ਼ ਨਿਊਜ਼ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਸਾਰੇ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਲਈ ਹੈ ਜੋ ਹਾਊਸਿੰਗ ਡਿਪਾਰਟਮੈਂਟ ਦੀ ਟਿੱਡੀ ਹੋਈ ਰਿਹਾਇਸ਼ 'ਚ ਰਹਿ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ। ਜੇਕਰ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਸ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ਨ ਨੂੰ ਸਮਝਣ ਲਈ ਮਦਦ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ 020 8583 2297 'ਤੇ ਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ।

Punjabi

Hounslow Homes News eshte per njerezit te cilet jetojne ne shtepija te Keshillit (Council Houses). Nese keni nevojte per ndihme per te kuptuar kete botim ne gjuhen tuaj, ju lutemi thirrni Sherbimin per Perkthime ne 020 8583 2298.

Albanian

हंसलो होमज़ न्यूज़ उन लोगों के लिए है जो काउंसिल के घरों में रहते हैं। यदि आपको इसके बारे में हिन्दी में जानकारी चाहिए तो कृपया ट्रांसलेशन सर्विस को 020 8583 2520 पर फोन करें।

Hindi

"ہاؤسلو ہومز نیوز" کی اشاعت کونسل کے گھروں میں رہنے والے افراد کیلئے ہے۔ اگر آپ اس اشاعت سے متعلق مدد حاصل کرنا چاہتے ہیں تو براؤزر نمبر اس نمبر پر ٹیلیفون کیجئے 020 8583 2293

Urdu

أخبار المنازل في هاؤنسلو - هي للناس الذين يسكنون في منازل مجلس البلدية. إذا كنت تحتاج مساعدة في فهم هذا المنشور بلغتك الأم، فنرجو الإتصال بخدمة الترجمة على رقم الهاتف: 020 8583 2298.

Arabic

"اخبار مسكن هانسلو" برای افرادی است که در خانه های شهرداری زندگی می کنند. اگر در فهمیدن این نشریه به زبان خودتان به کمک نیازمندید، لطفا با خدمات ترجمه با شماره 020 8583 2298 تماس حاصل نمایید.

Farsi

Making sure tenants and leaseholders have a voice

Like most of our board members, Chris Boucher has a long history of getting involved with housing issues. He was a committee member of the energetic New Ivybridge Tenants' Association, which has been very successful in making a difference to the local area. He was also equalities officer at HFTRA.

When Chris first heard about the possibility of Hounslow Homes being set up, he was an obvious choice to put himself forward for the board. "I've often been told I've got a big mouth and so I was told I'd be a great candidate for making sure tenants have a voice on the board!", Chris maintains membership and strong links with both his local tenants' association and HFTRA to ensure that new ideas and issues are brought to the board.

Chris is passionate about making sure that Hounslow Homes communicates with all the different ethnic communities in Hounslow. "Although we still have a lot of work to do, we're

now at the stage where most information we have can be requested in another language which is very important in meeting the needs of tenants and leaseholders in this borough". He also champions lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender issues (LGBT) and recently organised a conference on this subject. Chris also steers the Hounslow Homes new LGBT working group.



The date of the next LGBT working group is 6th April. For more information contact Razia Parmar on: 020 8583 3725 or email: razia.parmar@hounslowhomes.org.uk

Sheltered Housing Services meet new excellence standard



Following an intensive inspection by the Centre for Sheltered Housing Studies (CSHS), Hounslow Homes' Sheltered Housing services have met a new excellence standard.

This standard shows that the services provided by Hounslow Homes are exceeding the needs of our sheltered tenants and are providing a good standard of accommodation and service to our older people, whilst empowering our tenants and increasing their sense of independence.

If you would like to find out more information about the Sheltered Housing services provided by Hounslow Homes, visit our website, or your local housing office.

If you would like a copy of this publication in another language, or format please call 020 8583 2299 or minicom on 020 8583 3122.

Do you want to help people in your area learn new skills and involve tenants?

Hounslow Adult and Community Education (HACE) works with Hounslow Homes to provide our tenants with FREE training courses. We offer many courses in areas such as Afro-Caribbean hairdressing, learning to be gardener, computer courses and job search skills.

HACE also offer many other types of courses which need to be promoted to the local community. They are looking for volunteers who can give three hours a week to help promote these courses in the following local areas: Ivybridge, Clayponds, Haverfield, and Brentford Towers.

If you are interested in finding out more, please contact Julie Apsey from HACE on 07947 406786 or 020 8583 6014.



NOTICEBOARD Housing contacts

EAST AREA

FOR TENANCIES IN BRENTFORD AND CHISWICK

General Enquiries: 020 8583 4220
Minicom: 020 8583 4390
Caretaking Service: 020 8560 5447
Both offices are open to you in person wherever you live. For emails, telephone and post, please contact the Brentford office only.

OPENING HOURS

8.45am - 5pm Monday to Friday
(5.30pm on Thursday by appointment)

ADDRESS

Chiswick Town Hall, Heathfield Terrace, Chiswick W4 4JE or
58-59 Brentford High Street, Brentford TW8 OAH

EMAIL

info.housingeast@hounslowhomes.org.uk

FOR TENANCIES IN HESTON, CRANFORD,

CENTRAL AREA

HOUNSLOW AND ISLEWORTH

General Enquiries: 020 8583 4382
Minicom: 020 8583 3959
Caretaking Service: 020 8569 6873

OPENING HOURS

8.45am - 5pm Monday to Friday
(5.30pm on Thursday by appointment)

ADDRESS

The Civic Centre, Lampton Road, Hounslow TW3 4DN

EMAIL

info.housingcentral@hounslowhomes.org.uk

WEST AREA

FOR TENANCIES IN FELTHAM, BEDFONT AND HANWORTH

General Enquiries: 020 8583 4383
Minicom: 020 8583 4387
Caretaking Service: 020 8814 1771

OPENING HOURS

8.45am - 5pm Monday to Friday
(5.30pm on Thursday by appointment)

ADDRESS

St Catherine's House, 2 Hanworth Road, Feltham TW13 5AB

EMAIL

info.housingwest@hounslowhomes.org.uk

CALL CENTRE

All housing repairs can now be reported on one freephone number

0800 085 6575

Minicom: 0800 389 9821

Language line: 0800 389 9830

Open: 8am-8pm Monday-Friday

9am-12 noon Saturdays

(at all other times call 020 8583 2222)

REPORT ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

contact your area office or:

Police: 020 8577 1212

Crimestoppers: 0800 555 111

HOUSING ADVICE SERVICE

020 8583 3844 Minicom: 020 8583 3111

LEASEHOLDER SERVICES & HOME OWNERSHIP

020 8583 4295 (Brentford & Chiswick)
020 8583 3418 (Feltham)
020 8583 3417 (Hounslow)
Fax: 020 8583 4133

CUSTOMER COMPLAINTS

020 8583 3737 Fax: 020 8583 4336
Minicom: 0800 389 9821
complaints.team@hounslowhomes.org.uk

HOUSING BENEFIT HELPLINE

020 8583 4242

HOUNSLOW FEDERATION OF TENANTS' AND RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATIONS

020 8569 5823
enquiries@hftra.com

RIGHT TO BUY

020 8583 3918

HOUNSLOW MEDIATION SERVICE

020 8568 5522
Fax: 020 8568 5566

RE-HOUSING UNIT

020 8583 4422

HOMELESS PERSONS UNIT

020 8583 3842



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Managing quality homes for
Hounslow

