

theLink

June 2016

Warm weather at last!



I'm delighted to be writing this in shirtsleeves with the window open. This last winter seemed very long but now we seem to have turned the corner – I hope that's still true by the time you read this!

And talking of sunshine, this latest Link updates you on our summer party – well we hope it will involve sunshine – which we are having much closer to home at Abyssinia Court, meaning less travel and more time to enjoy ourselves.

We also report on further improvements we have been making, including installing solar panels at Margaret Hill House, as well as upgrading or replacing 16 kitchens and 11 bathrooms, with only one bathroom left to go! We are also replacing over 20 boilers.

Elsewhere, we've some interesting events to report on in the dementia-friendly café, not least some pretty sharp moves being thrown by the attendees who were all up dancing to Brazilian music recently.

But I'm calling this edition of The Link the 'Carla Special' – our Property Services Manager Carla Ferrarello tells us about what takes up her day, and Corporate Services Manager Carla Pedwell gives us a few gardening tips – not that we don't think the gardens are all looking nice already, and to prove it we photographed some lovely irises in the gardens of the Waverly Road building.

I hope you enjoy this Link, and look forward to seeing you all at our summer barbeque.

Always



Front Garden, 3 Waverley Road



SUMMER EVENT 2016

- watch this space

This year we are planning an event closer to home. The proposal is to have a barbeque in the gardens of Abyssinia Court in June or July, hopefully with better weather than in August last year! This should be a good opportunity for you all to interact and socialise with each other whilst enjoying some outdoor fun in the sunshine with tasty food and music - and no coaches!

There will be a display stall available for residents who would like to exhibit their own artwork, photography, crafts or any other talents you may have. Residents who would like to be involved in the exhibition should contact Phil Johnson on 020 8340 6374.

We would welcome any ideas or suggestions for entertainment and activities that you would like to see at the barbeque - perhaps a particular type of entertainer or a band. Early propositions include your Housing Assistant, Dennis Meredith, waiting on you hand and foot in his summer attire!

You can use the form below for this.

Please let Phil Johnson know your ideas by the 13th of June

Name

Address

Interested in attending

Ideas for the day

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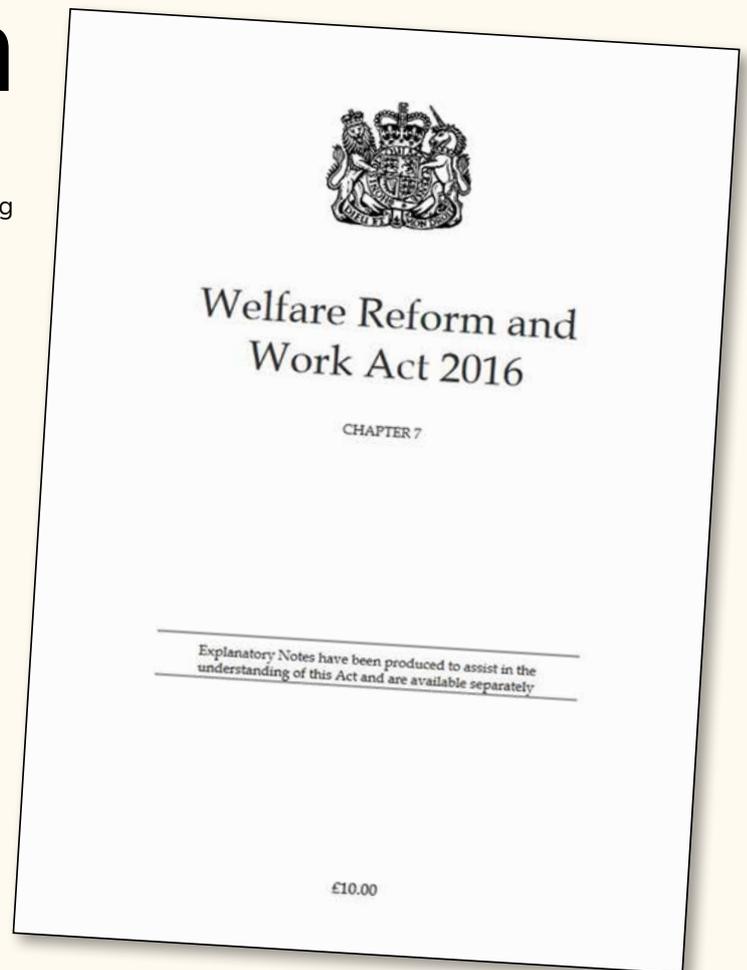
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Government 1% rent reduction

Some tenants may be aware that, as from April 2016, the Government has imposed on housing authorities and housing associations a rent reduction for general needs tenancies of 1% every year for the next four years. This means that Trust tenants living in our street properties and other general needs properties will see their rent reduced by 1% this year; however, the reduction does not apply to our sheltered or supported housing schemes due to the extensive services provided.

The rent reduction will be automatically applied by Hornsey Housing Trust when we calculate your rent statements, therefore residents do not need to make an application. Some tenants will see their housing benefit payments reduced as a result of the changes.

Please let us know if you have any questions about this. Those with the internet can read more about the general policy at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/welfare-reform-and-work-act-2016-social-rent-reduction>.



Tenants' Handbook update

The Trust is committed to providing you with a first class service and a high quality home which you can get the most out of. To help you do this, we want you to have a clear understanding of your tenancy and the services we provide, including how to manage repairs in your home, information on rents and other charges, health and safety within your home and communal areas and your rights and responsibilities as a tenant of the Trust.

The Tenant Scrutiny Panel and the Trust have been working in partnership to create a new Tenants' Handbook, a useful guide to help you easily access information about your tenancy and the Trust as your landlord. Tenant

Scrutiny Panel members and Trust staff have met a number of times over the last few months, researching the handbooks of similar sized housing associations, discussing the content and purpose of the Handbook and deciding what we would like to add or remove from the current Handbook.

The new Tenants' Handbook has now been agreed as completed by the Tenant Scrutiny Panel, and will be presented to the next meeting of the Board for their review and comment. Following this, the new Handbook will then be printed and published, and a copy will be sent to all tenants and made available on our website.

Update on planned maintenance, asset management and energy conservation

As well as carrying out repairs when needed, the Trust has a planned programme of works which ensure the structure of its buildings are maintained to a good standard.

Looking back at last year the Trust delivered a number of improvements:

- Replaced 22 boilers which were over fifteen years old or where there were regular breakdown issues
- Started our programme to replace 28 kitchens and bathrooms which have reached the end of their life cycle. The contractors MNM have upgraded or replaced 16 kitchens and 11 bathrooms, with one bathroom remaining to be done
- Continued the upgrade of the communal areas in our 54 street properties
- External refurbishment programme - To ensure the external fabric of our buildings is maintained to a high standard, we are refurbishing windows in two of our

schemes, plus carrying out external redecoration and repairs in three street properties

Our Energy Conservation programme has seen a number of exciting initiatives being completed including:

- The installation of boiler management units in all communal boilers. These units regulate the way the boiler fire to ensure the cost effective use of energy
- We have upgraded the loft insulation in 11 sites, of which seven were schemes and four street properties. The contractors Kershaw were appointed to carry out the works, which have now been completed
- We have installed Solar Photovoltaic panels at Margaret Hill House. The energy generated is used to power the communal kitchen and laundry room. Any surplus energy is sold back to the National Grid and the money raised is used to reduce the costs of communal lighting, heating and lifts



The new solar panels at Margaret Hill House can be seen from Middle Lane



‘Forró’ dancing gets everyone on their feet at café

Wednesday 18th May saw some Brazilian dancing at the dementia-friendly café at Abyssinia court.

The dancing is called ‘forró’ which is actually a Brazilian adaptation of the English phrase ‘for all’.

Two dancers, Annax and Carlotta, showed those present some exercises to follow the rhythms of the music – they explained there are three different forró rhythms and showed dancing and movements for each.

Once people were suitably loosened up, the real dancing began and as you can see everyone was happy to join in.

Although a long afternoon, the time really flew by and

the activity left everyone feeling upbeat.

Earlier in the day people wrote personal notes to dementia, telling the disease how they felt about it and the differences it had made, but also how it highlighted what was important in life. Annax told a moving story of how his family would make sure his father exercised after he’d had a stroke, even though he wasn’t fully mobile, to keep himself and his mind positive and active. He said physical and mental difficulty shouldn’t disguise the fact that “in your soul you are the same person, whatever else is happening to you”.

Theatre project on the memory



Annax’s words echoed the subject of another visit a few weeks ago to the café by theatre director Guillaume Pigé.

His group, Theatre Re, are preparing a project on dementia and significant memory loss: “To forget means to be unable to remember. It implies the loss of accessibility to a memory, however it does not necessarily mean that the information is lost. Through the portrayal of one man’s inability to

recollect his life, and building on recent neurological discoveries and interviews, we are developing a visually stunning, moving and intimate piece of theatre about what is left when memory is gone.”

Guillaume’s project, ‘The Nature of Forgetting’ is being supported by various organisations including Arts Council England, Haringey Council and Jackson’s Lane Theatre in Highgate.



Rear garden, 3 Waverley Road



Let it grow

HHT's Corporate Services Manager **Carla Pedwell** outlines a few things you can do in the garden.

With the weather warming up, be inspired in the garden this summer. Whether you have a garden, a balcony or a hanging basket, these handy tips will help you to create a beautiful garden you can be proud of.

- The next time you boil or steam vegetables for dinner, don't pour the water down the drain, let it cool and then use it to water your plants. The water is full of nutrients and you'll be amazed at how your plants respond to the "vegetable soup".
- Take the strain out of lifting large planters and pots by filling the pot one-third to one-half full with polystyrene packing peanuts. Place a piece of porous fabric over the packing peanut base before adding your soil. This also improves water drainage.
- Growing tomatoes, peppers or cucumbers? Plant a box of matches in the ground with them. Matches contain sulphur, which these plants thrive on.
- To prevent accumulating dirt under your fingernails while you work in the garden, draw your fingernails across a bar of soap and you'll effectively seal the undersides of your nails so dirt can't collect beneath them. After you've finished in the garden, use a nailbrush to remove the soap and your nails will be sparkling clean.
- Spray your favourite garden tools with a silicone or Teflon lubricant to make digging and shovelling a breeze. A good coating of this spray causes any soil to slip off the tool without a mess.
- It can be easy to forget what you've planted and where. Take an extra minute to write a plant label (most plants you buy from a garden centre come with one) and pop it in the pot or ground next to the seeds, bulbs or plants you've planted.
- You don't need a bird table to attract birds. Get a bird feeder – or make your own by cutting a hole in the middle of an empty plastic drinks bottle – fill it with birdseed, and hang it from a tree, your balcony or even your washing line with wire or strong string. Make sure you put it in a sheltered place and high enough to be out of reach from cats.
- Build a bee hotel. A bundle of hollow stems or bamboo shoots can be tied together and hung to create a perfect environment for bees and keep them returning year after year.

If you have any gardening tips you'd like to share with other HHT residents, do get in touch, and also if you have any photos you want to share. You can write to us at the usual address, or e-mail carlap@hornseyht.co.uk.

A day in the life of...

Carla Ferrarello

Hornsey Housing Trust's Property Services Manager



My work is exciting, demanding and highly varied - no two days are the same, and a solid work ethic and desire to do well are important to maintaining a good standard of service.

Central to my job is developing and delivering maintenance programmes to look after our buildings. We have an 'asset management strategy' where our 'assets' are our properties, and maintaining them well means we maximise their lifespan and maintain their value.

We use a 'stock condition survey', and a building's repairs breakdown history, plus tenants' report of issues, to tell us what needs addressing in our properties. The resulting action involves planning ahead for anything from one to five years.

To meet all the legal requirements, I buy in and manage contractors to service around 40 different contracts. This is because there are so many aspects which, while some are less visible, are important to ensure our tenants are safe. Examples include legionella treatments; fire risk assessments and fire alarms maintenance; the portable appliances test; asbestos surveys; and various small contractors looking after specialist equipment.

Each contractor is assessed with a set of 'performance indicators', to identify and address areas for improvement. Having so many contracts also means I take part in a lot of meetings! When returning to the office, I need to catch up with e-mails and phone-calls, respond to queries, and

regularly review the workload for the following day.

The programmes I deliver take up a large part of the Trust's budget, and therefore have to be monitored rigorously. I prioritise how and where budgets are spent, regularly reviewing them and making recommendations based on key needs.

One very rewarding task is piloting new technology to provide tenants with a higher standard of living. Over the past couple of years, we have trialled systems like the water mist units, which keep vulnerable tenants safer in case of a fire, as well as energy-saving technologies like solar panels and boiler management units.

I got into social housing by chance, when I first arrived in London and bumped into a 'Big Issue' vendor: I was very impressed that homeless people were empowered to regain control over their lives through housing and employment, and started volunteering in a King Cross homeless centre. I then studied for and gained Housing qualifications.

My love of learning continues, as I stay up to date with the latest requirements and good practice for social landlords, through reading and occasionally attending conferences and training courses.

I always enjoy visiting the properties and talking to you all, and getting feedback on the projects, which is very important to our being able to deliver the best service we can.

Answers to the puzzles on page 8

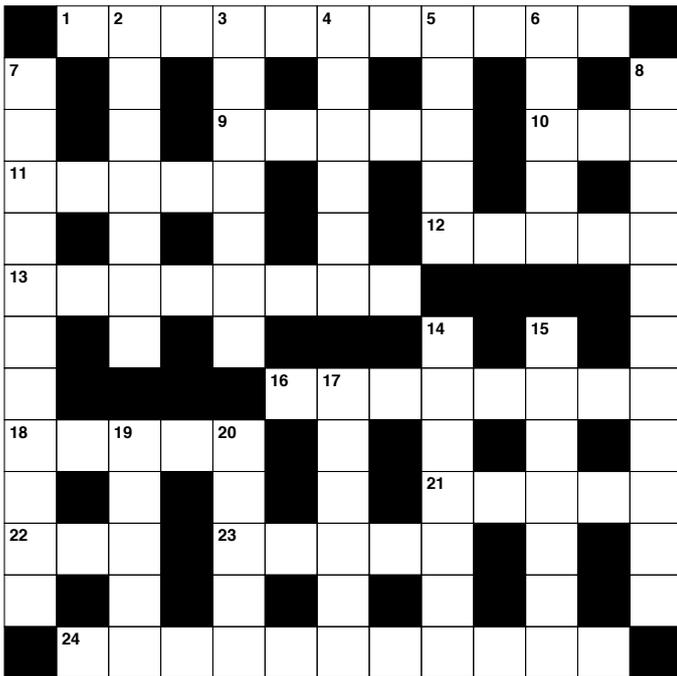
H	E	A	V	Y	H	A	N	D	E	D		
C	N	A	Y	A	X	S						
L	T	G	L	E	A	M	P	R	O			
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N	U	T	L	D	L	E	M					
S	P	R	E	A	D	E	A	G	L	E		

5	2	7	4	9	1	3	6	8
4	3	8	5	7	6	9	2	1
6	9	1	3	8	2	5	7	4
3	7	2	1	5	9	4	8	6
9	8	6	2	4	7	1	5	3
1	4	5	6	3	8	7	9	2
8	1	9	7	6	3	2	4	5
2	6	4	9	1	5	8	3	7
7	5	3	8	2	4	6	1	9

Events in Schemes

Please contact your Support Service Officer or Hornsey Housing Trust for future events taking place in the schemes run by AaCE, Alzheimer's Society and the Trust.

Crossword



Across

- 1 - Unnecessarily forceful (5-6)
- 9 - Shine brightly (5)
- 10 - In favour of (3)
- 11 - Fault; mistake (5)
- 12 - Triangular river mouth (5)
- 13 - Curiosity (8)
- 16 - The greater part (8)
- 18 - Dreadful (5)
- 21 - Not in good physical condition (5)
- 22 - Extremity (3)
- 23 - Plant spike (5)
- 24 - Stretch out completely (11)

Down

- 2 - Put in someone's care (7)
- 3 - Wanderer (7)
- 4 - Doglike mammals (6)
- 5 - Titled (5)
- 6 - Kick out (5)
- 7 - Eg without a beard (5-6)
- 8 - Everything that orbits the sun (5,6)
- 14 - Round building (7)
- 15 - Trap for the unwary (7)
- 17 - ___ Schwarzenegger: actor (6)
- 19 - Frustrated and annoyed (3,2)
- 20 - Espresso coffee and steamed milk (5)

Sudoku

5			4			3		8
	3	8	5	7				
		1			2	5		
3	7	2				4		
				4				
		5				7	9	2
		9	7			2		
				1	5	8	3	
7		3			4			9

Answers to the puzzles are on page 7

Staff

- **Alwyn Lewis** – Chief Executive
- **Jonathan Steinberg** – Finance Director
- **Phil Johnson** – Housing Services Manager
- **Carla Ferrarello** – Property Services Manager
- **Olabisi Durojaiye** – Financial Controller
- **Vishwaneer Ramtale** – Management Accountant
- **Barbara Moore** – Housing Support Coordinator
- **Carla Pedwell** – Corporate Services Manager
- **Dennis Meredith** – Housing Assistant
- **Maria Reyes** – Customer Services Administrator

Support Services Officers

- **Prerna Hulman** – Abyssinia Court
- **Rexford Godfrey** – Margaret Hill House
- **Oluwatoyin Balogun** – Olive Tree House
- **Petula Quamina** – Palm Tree Court/Sheba Court

Contact Hornsey Housing Trust

Telephone: 020 8340 6374
(Office 9am – 5pm weekdays)

Fax: 020 8341 1134

E-mail: admin@hornseyht.co.uk

Web: www.hornseyht.co.uk

Don't forget we have a 24-hour, 7-days-a-week Emergency Repairs service – call 020 8340 6374 at any time if you have an emergency repair to report

Other useful numbers

Haringey Housing and Council Tax benefits
020 8489 2800

Gas leaks (National Grid)
0800 111 999 (24hours)

Noise nuisance (Haringey Council)
020 8489 1000 (9:00am – 17:00pm)
020 8348 3148 (17.01pm until 08.59am)

Crime stoppers
0800 555 111

Rubbish and recycling (Veolia)
020 8885 7700