

Resident



NEWS

WALTHAMFOREST.GOV.UK/HOUSING
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Waltham Forest



EVENTS



SHELTERED HOUSING CHRISTMAS PARTIES



Next month our Independent Living Service is spreading good will and festive cheer by hosting 14 Christmas parties for our Sheltered Housing Scheme residents. These celebrations are incredibly important for our resident's wellbeing, preventing social isolation and loneliness. Residents will celebrate by enjoying lots of games, winning some incredible prizes and sharing delicious food together.

4 - Dilwyn Court	11 - Lime Court	18 - Clifton House
5 - Holland House	12 - Pelly Court	19 - Turners Court
6 - Boothby Court	13 - Goddarts House	20 - Winters Court
7 - The Chantry	14 - Holmcroft House	21 - Plaxton Court
8 - Longfield House	15 - Downland Court	

DOMESTIC ABUSE HELP

Whether you would like to get advice, just talk about your concerns or access immediate support, you can meet with a specialist worker at one of our Family Centre Hubs. There's no need to book an appointment, just drop into one of our scheduled weekly sessions.

- **Leyton Children and Family Centre Hub**
215 Queens Road London E17 8PJ
Monday Tuesday and Wednesday – 10am to 4pm
- **Chingford Children Family Centre Hub**
5 Oaks Grove Chingford, E4 6EY
Friday – 2pm to 5pm
- **Walthamstow Children and Family Centre Hub**
313 Billet Road Walthamstow E17 5PX
Thursday – 10am to 4pm

ENERGY CAFÉS

Our contractor, Morgan Sindall Property Services, is delivering a programme of support and advice sessions for residents on energy awareness.

These sessions can be delivered over the phone, virtually, or face to face and occur on the first Wednesday of each month from 10:00am - 12:00pm. To book a space please email CSRbox@morgansindall.com.

- 6 December
- 3 January 2024
- 7 February 2024
- 6 March 2024



Resident events near you. Keep up to date with events in your local area by checking our website regularly www.walthamforest.gov.uk/events

WELCOME FROM CLLR AHSAN KHAN



Welcome to our autumn edition of Resident News

Making sure residents can access affordable, good quality homes is a key priority. Between 2011 and 2022, over a third of homes built in Waltham Forest were offered at either social rent or other below-market-cost models. On top of this, the council has pledged to create 1,000 extra homes for social rent over the coming years. Although we built the fourth-highest total of social rent homes in the UK last year, with 190 completed, we know there is more to be done to achieve our goal, both here in the borough and across London.

In January 2023, the council launched its Housing Commission that brought together industry experts to make action-focused suggestions on how to address the housing challenges in the borough and increase the number of genuinely affordable homes. The Commission's report is helping us to carry out sustainable, long-term

housing planning and build on our well-established housing delivery plans. Increasing council housing not only helps those who live in it, it also has a positive effect on the wider area by taking pressure off the private rental market by decreasing competition. Building more genuinely affordable homes not only creates new job opportunities and builds community resilience, but it also means that fewer people face the risk of becoming homeless.

We are developing a local response to the national housing crisis of homelessness. In July, Cabinet approved proposals around "Reshaping our Homelessness Support Offer". This report emphasised a focus and investment to tackle the key issues causing homelessness and outlined earlier preventative measures. It covered three initiatives: firstly, a return of homelessness face-to-face appointments for residents

in immediate crisis or with accessibility issues; secondly, our new Housing Sustainment Team; and, finally, a new housing advice offer for residents in the private rented sector. You can read more about this on page 9.

We recognise that neighbourhoods must be built around the people who live in them. We want people to be able to easily reach most of the facilities, experiences, and activities they need within a short walk or cycle of their home. This leads to healthier, happier, and fairer communities. Our main priorities are:

- Making streets safer
- Becoming net-zero by 2030
- Launching a new Family Hubs programme
- Tackling health inequality

We have several initiatives to tackle these key priorities, such as working with the Waltham Forest Metropolitan Police, Safer Streets, Place and Anti-Social Behaviour teams to create welcoming and safer neighbourhoods for all our residents throughout the borough and on our estates.

Through our climate action plan, we are working with residents to help them retrofit their homes which in turn reduces their energy bills making their homes more energy efficient. Read more about how we are helping residents retrofit their homes on page 10 remember you can also join our monthly Energy Cafés - more info on page 15. Also, did you know some Sixty Bricks developments have been fitted with solar panels on the roof to convert thermal energy into electricity for the development? Finally, our new Family Hubs programme will bring accessible support services to families close to home, such as family support, wellbeing, health, learning activities, and safe spaces for young people in the borough.

I hope you enjoy this edition of Resident News!

Councillor Ahsan Khan
Deputy Leader and Portfolio Lead for Housing and Regeneration

REPAIR & MAINTENANCE UPDATE

Over the next ten years we will be investing £327m improving our resident's homes, an additional £40 million was allocated in 2019 for building safety over ten years and these works are in progress.

IN 2022/2023 WE:

REPLACED

CENTRAL
HEATING
SYSTEMS



565

REPLACED

668
FIRE DOORS



FITTED

49 SOLID EXTERNAL
WALL SYSTEM INSULATION

1952

DOMESTIC ELECTRICAL
UPGRADES



IN 2023/2024 WE PLAN TO:

UPGRADE

COMMUNAL HEATING
WORKS AT WINTERS
COURT



DECORATE AND COMPLETE



EXTERNAL IMPROVEMENTS TO 90
HOUSES AND 30 BLOCKS

REPLACE

350

FRONT ENTRANCE
FIRE DOORS



REPLACE

CENTRAL
HEATING
SYSTEMS



600

REPLACE



185

BATHROOMS



105

KITCHENS

UPGRADE

2000

DOMESTIC
ELECTRICAL
SYSTEMS

REPLACED



262
BATHROOMS



196
KITCHENS

We have been working closely with Morgan Sindall Property Service (MSPS), our repair and maintenance contractor, to deal with the historic repairs backlog that arose during the pandemic. Since March 2023, we have reduced the number of repairs, that have been outstanding for a long period of time, by 46%. The aim is to fully clear the backlog by the end of the year, although we are working to complete this before that date. Thank you for your patience in these repairs but should they deteriorate significantly we would ask you to contact us immediately. We are also working with Morgan Sindall Property Service on a programme to improve our customer experience and satisfaction scores.

As part of our preparations for the new Regulatory Regime for Social Housing, we are proposing some new service standards for repairs:

1. We will aim to attend to and made safe 'critical' emergency repairs within 4 hours.
2. We will aim to attend to and made safe 'essential' emergency repairs within 24 hours or the next working day.
3. We will aim to complete all other types of repairs, including communal repairs within 28 days.

Let us know what you think about these proposals by emailing housingstrategy@wathamforest.gov.uk

PERFORMANCE UPDATE

As part of the new Regulatory Regime for Social Housing the government is introducing a new set of Tenant Satisfaction Measures to help residents to be able to scrutinise their landlord's performance. Here are some examples of our performance against the new Tenant Satisfaction Measures for the last business year (2022-2023).

Tenant Satisfaction Measure	2022/23 Performance (%)	2022/23 Medium London Borough averages (%)	How do we compare to other Boroughs?	What are we doing to improve?
% of Gas safety checks completed on time	100%	99.54%	Good	
% of Fire safety checks completed on time	100%	100%	Good	
% of Complaints responded to within 10 days	8%	78.7%	Poor	A new dedicated complaints team is in place and performance this year has improved to 86% responded to on time.
% of residents satisfied with Landlord	59%	60.2%	Average	
% of residents satisfied with repairs	61%	59%	Average	
% residents satisfied that the landlord keeps communal areas clean, safe and well maintained.	56%	58.5%	Poor	A new service improvement project has launched. Further information can be found on page 9.
% of residents satisfied that the landlord makes a positive contribution to neighbourhoods	72%	54%	Good	
% of residents satisfied with the landlord's approach to handling anti-social behaviour (ASB)	48%	42%	Average	We are developing a new approach to ASB and are being supported by sector experts.



YOU SAID, WE DID

YOU SAID

Leaseholders have asked for greater opportunities to engage with us directly to drive improvements in the services which we offer.

Residents raised concerns regarding the path from the top of Wadham Avenue to the pathway connecting Empress Avenue and Cavendish Road. The path would become muddy and unsafe during the cold, wet winter months.

Residents from Pelly Court, one of our Sheltered Housing Schemes, wanted to improve their internal courtyard garden areas.

Residents asked for us to improve our bin areas, to make them look nicer and easier to use with defined spaces.

WE DID

We've commissioned engagement experts to help us establish a leaseholder engagement framework. This will enable leaseholders to have greater input in informing service design and delivery.

To address these issues, we instructed Purdy, our contractors, to upgrade the pathway by fitting a new hard surface making it easier for everyone to enjoy the local green space.

Our Place Team consulted with residents on the design of the courtyards and what they would like to see in the space. At the end of August we held an opening ceremony where we officially welcomed residents to the new gardens.

Throughout the borough we've recently completed new bin areas where the spaces are clearly defined, including Rethingam Way, Chingford and Tower Hamlets Road, Walthamstow.



BUILDING SAFETY UPDATE

SAFETY ADVICE WHEN CHARGING YOUR E-BIKE OR E-SCOOTER

E-bikes and e-scooters are becoming increasingly popular. However, in 2022 the London Fire Brigade (LFB) attended 116 fires involving e-scooters and e-bikes. Most of these fires happened in people's homes, often caused by charging lithium-ion batteries commonly found in e-bikes and e-scooters.

For more information, please visit www.london-fire.gov.uk/safety/the-home/e-scooters-and-e-bikes/



► SIGN UP TO BE A BUILDING SAFETY CHAMPION

We are recruiting **Building Safety Champions** to work together with our Building Safety Team to learn about safety improvements in your block or estate. It's a vital role in keeping you and your neighbours safe. If you would like to get involved in becoming a building safety champion but haven't volunteered yet, please get in touch by scanning our QR code or visiting our website:

www.walthamforest.gov.uk/building-safety



MAKE SURE YOU ARE AWARE OF THE POTENTIAL DANGERS OF LITHIUM-ION BATTERIES AND HOW TO STAY SAFE WHEN CHARGING THEM.



• CHECK BEFORE YOU BUY

– always refer to trading standards if you have any doubts over the quality of the products.



• TAKE CARE WHEN CHARGING

– never leave a charging lithium-ion battery unattended or charge while you are sleeping. Always unplug it once you have finished using it, do not charge your e-bike / e-scooter in a communal area or block your escape route and NEVER charge faulty or damaged batteries.



• ALWAYS USE THE CORRECT CORDS

– ensure you use the correct charging cord and buy any replacements from a reputable seller.

DAMP AND MOULD GUIDANCE FOR COUNCIL TENANTS



Damp and mould are a top priority for the Council, and so is the health and safety of our residents.

How to report damp and mould

Damp and mould are easier to tackle when they are caught early. If your home has issues with damp or mould, please report it by:

- completing our online e-form, or
- calling our customer resolution centre on 0208 496 4197

How to help prevent damp and mould in your home?

Damp and mould can be caused by lots of different things. Condensation damp is the most common type of damp. Unlike other types of damp that are the result of issues with the building itself, condensation damp is caused by day-to-day living. However, condensation is not the only cause of damp and mould as there can be other possible sources.



Scan the QR code and download our Damp, Mould and Condensation leaflet

for some practical steps you can take to help reduce condensation in your home.



KEEPING OUR TENANTS SAFE FROM FIRE

Earlier this year, we worked in partnership with the London Fire Brigade (LFB) and Met Police for a planned exercise at Hopson House, in Walthamstow, to ensure we were prepared in the event of a fire. This exercise tested our procedures to ensure we're prepared to keep our residents living in tall buildings safe and protected in an emergency. Information from this exercise also helps the LFB with tactical plans should there be an incident at Hopson House, or any other similar buildings within London.

We met with Paula, our Building Safety Champion at Hopson House, to find out how we could support her in her vital role. We also caught up with Neil Guyett, LFB Borough Commander, who highlighted why these exercises are so important. Scan the QR code and watch our short video.



LEASEHOLDER UPDATE

SERVICE CHARGES



We are due to send you your service charges for the period 2023/24. We have now sent the following items to you:

1. Service Charge Estimate, Ground Rent and Buildings Insurance 2023/24

This is the estimated charge for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024; this charge is for the services to the common areas to your building and/or estate. It will also include your Ground Rent and Buildings Insurance charges, if applicable. Payments can be spread between October 2023 and March 2024.

2 Service charge actuals 2022/2023 are delayed and will be issued shortly.

Moving forward our aim is to issue estimated service charges along with shared ownership rent every March, with final accounts issued in September.

For any questions, please contact the Home Ownership team on homeownership@walthamforest.gov.uk or 020 8496 3000.

REGENERATION UPDATE

At the end of last year Sixty Bricks, our wholly owned housing development company, finished four new schemes - The Brick Works, Hylands Road and The Jazz Yard, all in Walthamstow plus Whitethroat Court in Leytonstone. Housing management teams have been extremely busy helping families on the housing register list to move into their new homes.

Sixty Bricks was set up by the council to increase the supply of affordable housing in the borough. It provides homes across a range of tenures, and property sizes from studio flats to four-bedroom apartments for larger families.

In July, Sixty Bricks was given the go ahead by the Local Planning Authority to take forward its plans to build 83 new 1-, 2- and 3-bedroom homes as an infill development on the Priory Court estate. A new Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) and a range of estate improvements including CCTV and enhanced street lighting will also feature.



SPECIAL FEATURES UPDATE



HOW ARE WE HELPING RESIDENTS AT RISK OF HOMELESSNESS



Due to the cost-of-living crisis, lack of affordable private rented sector accommodation in London and many households being impacted by the government's benefit cap, homelessness is becoming more prevalent in these challenging times.

We are developing a local response to a national housing crisis.

In July, Cabinet approved proposals around "Reshaping our Homelessness Support Offer". This report emphasised a focus and investment to tackle the key issues causing homelessness and outlined earlier preventative measures. It covered three initiatives: firstly, a return of homelessness face-to-face appointments; secondly, our new Housing Sustainment Team; and, finally, a new housing advice offer for residents in the private rented sector.

- **Return of face-to-face appointments** – since the pandemic all homeless assessments have taken place online or over the phone. Although this approach provided several benefits, Cabinet agreed that face-to-face appointments are important for residents in immediate crisis or with accessibility issues. **This service will run on an appointment only basis and there will be NO walk-in or self-referrals.**
- **Our new Housing Sustainment Team** – will identify and work with households at risk of homelessness before they reach a point of crisis. The team's focus will initially be on families within the private rented sector, particularly those who are impacted by the government's benefit cap. The team will provide advice and assistance across a wide range of issues including benefits, employment, and health that enables them to sustain their tenancies'. **The new team will work closely with other council departments to identify and reach out to those most in need.**

We work hard to ensure that anyone who approaches us at risk of becoming homeless has a roof over their head while we work to help them find a suitable solution in settled accommodation. We appreciate how stressful the situation can be for anyone in this position. Local demand for housing is increasing, and the supply of affordable properties is limited. We know the only way out of the housing crisis is to build more family homes for social rent, and while we have one of the best records for delivering more of these properties, we know there is more to be done. **For more information, please scan the QR code**



OUR CARETAKING AND GROUNDS MAINTENANCE NEW SERVICE STANDARDS

Earlier in the year we asked for your feedback on our Estate Services - Caretaking and Grounds Maintenance service, we really appreciate you taking the time to help us better understand your experience and priorities. Over the last few months, we've been reviewing our services and updated our Caretaking and Grounds Maintenance service standards.

To help deliver better services we:

- Have increased the number of Caretaking and Grounds Maintenance staff, as well as Supervisors who will support both teams to ensure standards are being met.
- Are recruiting a Waste and Recycling Officer, who will work with residents, caretakers and waste management team to improve the management of bins, rubbish and recycling area on our estates and tackle hot spots in the borough.

To find out more information about managing your estate, scan the QR code



OUR POSITIVELY CHARGED POSITIVE PLACES PROGRAMME

The council is investing £1 million into its Positive Places programme. The funding is available for resident led improvement works to the environment in and around their housing estates.

Projects we've completed so far include:

- A multi-use Games Area (MUGA) with a surrounding mural, plus a new community growing allotment in partnership with Organic Lea on Stocksfield Road Estate.
- A play area and community room on the Aldriche Way Estate.
- A redesigned Attlee Terrace playground with lots more play equipment, with new resurfacing as well as benches for residents to relax.
- Lena Kennedy Close, Park Court and Cecil House residents welcomed new security measures.
- Added new benches, planters and landscaped green spaces across the borough including Cherrydown and Marmion Avenue, Holmcroft House, Church Hill Road and most recently at Pelly Court courtyard garden.

Got an idea for our Positive Places programme?

Email our Place Team on Positiveplaces@walthamforest.gov.uk – make sure you include your name, estate, and ideas. You can send your suggestions in at any time. The panel meets three times a year, February, June, and October.



HELPING RESIDENTS RETROFIT THEIR HOMES

Last year we secured £1.73 million of the Government's Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF).

Combined with our own funding, Aston Group and Saving Energy have completed energy efficiency improvement works to low performing EPC properties across the borough. Through retrofitting our homes with energy efficiency measures we are helping provide a long-term solution for our residents' energy bills. Homes are the largest cause of carbon emissions, reducing this will also help us future proof our properties and move closer to our net zero carbon ambitions.

For advice about retrofitting, please visit www.walthamforest.gov.uk/housing/energy-efficiency/retrofit-advice



DOWNLOAD OUR FREE SAFE STREETS APP

WORKING TOGETHER TO END VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS

Street harassment is unacceptable in Waltham Forest. To help, we have launched our Safe Streets app, in which you can report incidents anonymously, access specialist support and contact the police or council for a full investigation.

By downloading the app, you can help pinpoint locations where women and girls are being harassed so that we can work with partners, such as the police, to make our streets safer. For more information visit: www.walthamforest.gov.uk/safestreeets



HOUSING FRAUD - BEAT THE CHEAT IN YOUR STREET!

Help tackle housing fraud, if you believe someone claiming social housing:

- is not living in their social housing property
- lied to buy their property through Right-to-Buy
- is sub-letting
- lied on their application
- has another home
- is committing any other type of housing fraud



! Report fraud to us: by calling our 24-hour a day hotline on 0300 003 1099 or you can email us at fraud@walthamforest.gov.uk. You can report anonymously and any information you provide will stay confidential.

FIND YOUR NEAREST COMMUNITY LIVING ROOM

Community Living Rooms are spaces across the borough where you can rest and relax, meet new people, access advice and information, or get creative. Find a list of spaces open near you on our dedicated map. More spaces are opening soon!

For more information, please visit www.walthamforest.gov.uk/get-involved/community-living-rooms or scan the QR code.



CONCERNED OR WORRIED ABOUT A VULNERABLE ADULT

If you have urgent concerns that you or someone you know, is being abused, neglected, or at risk to themselves please contact the Waltham Forest Safeguarding Adults team on 020 8496 3000.

The on call social worker will then help the person in need. Your call will be treated in the strictest confidence, and they are available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. If you have concerns about a vulnerable adult, it is not your responsibility to interview or investigate. Please refer to the Safeguarding Adults team who are responsible for this.

For more information please scan the QR code.



COULD YOU SAVE MONEY ON YOUR INTERNET BILL?



If you receive Universal Credit or other benefits, you could be eligible for a discounted broadband deal from your internet provider. These deals are often called "social tariffs". Find a list of available social tariffs on our dedicated Let's Get Digital webpage. We've also compiled tips on finding free WiFi and reducing mobile data.

For more information, please visit <https://bit.ly/get-online-less> or scan the QR code.



HELP THE HOMELESS

SEE SOMEONE SLEEPING ROUGH?

Don't just walk on by, please send an alert to our dedicated outreach team via StreetLink. StreetLink is contactable via website, mobile app and phone so that you can alert local authorities and street outreach services regarding people you see sleeping rough. It's the first step to ensuring that rough sleepers know about, and are connected to, available support.

How to send an alert

- www.streetlink.org.uk
- 0300 500 0914



Or let us know via the StreetLink mobile app: available for download for Apple and Android devices.

NEED TO MAKE A COMPLAINT?



We actively encourage residents to complain if they are dissatisfied with any aspect of our housing service. Equally, we welcome compliments from residents in cases where staff have provided an excellent service. We have a two-stage procedure when residents would like to raise a complaint.

- **Stage 1** - response to complaint by service area. If you remain unhappy, you can proceed to stage 2 of the complaint's procedure.
- **Stage 2** - Further investigation by corporate complaints team. The Council has 25 working days to investigate and respond to Stage 2 complaints, or 20 days if the complaint relates to Housing Services.

Our target response times for Stage 1 complaints:

- **10 working days** for complaints on the services which we as a landlord provide directly to tenants. For example, responsive repairs, rent statements or grounds maintenance.

How to complain

- Scan the QR code and complete our online form www.walthamforest.gov.uk/council-and-elections/making-complaint-or-compliment/complaints-and-compliments
- Or you also have the right to get in touch with the Housing Ombudsman, for more information visit www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk



BEWARE OF THE 'NO WIN, NO FEE AGREEMENTS'

Over recent months, the Legal Ombudsman has become increasingly concerned about the operation of 'no win, no fee' legal services.

The Citizens Advice Bureau offer lots of useful information and you can view these online. This includes some solicitors offer 'no win, no fee' as a way of paying for civil cases, such as personal injury. If you win the case, the solicitor's fees and expenses you agreed to will be taken from your compensation. You'll usually be able to recover some costs from your opponent.

If you lose, you won't usually pay your solicitor's fee, but you'll still have to pay something. You might have to pay the

other side's costs and you might have to pay your solicitor's expenses, for example, for medical or accident reports.

You should check the agreement carefully and ask your solicitor to explain what you might have to pay if you lose your claim.

You might be able to take out a special insurance policy before the court case that'll cover your costs if you lose.

What steps you could take

- **Check your no win, no fee agreement.** A no win, no fee agreement is sometimes known as a 'conditional fee agreement' (CFA). It is important to know whether there are conditions involved.
- **Have a thorough discussion with your solicitor.** Ask relevant questions regarding potential fees, or payments if there's a loss and in doing so, you can save yourself time, money and stress.
- **Don't sign unless you are certain.** The agreements themselves are complicated, so don't sign unless you're certain.

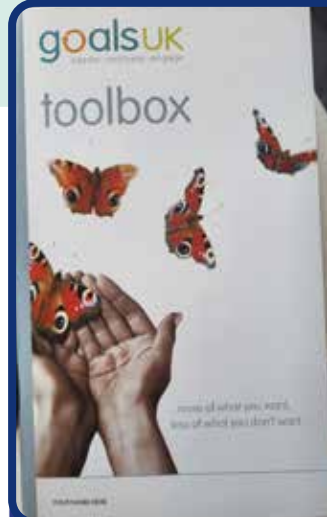
For more information, please visit the Citizens Advice Bureau www.citizensadvice.org.uk

RESIDENT ENGAGEMENT UPDATE



DOMINOES!

Earlier this year the Independent Living Service hosted a dominoes tournament for three of their housing schemes – Holmcroft House, Pelly Court and Plaxton. It was a tight contest for first place, but in the end Holmcroft beat Pelly Court by one point. Residents enjoyed the afternoon and celebrated with a fish and chip supper. More tournaments will be planned in the future. If you would like to find out more, please speak to your Independent Living Officer or email the service on Independent.LivingService@walthamforest.gov.uk



GOALS

BUILDING CONFIDENCE AND INDEPENDENCE FOR OUR RESIDENTS

Our residents said...

“GOALS encourages you to depend and rely on yourself and believe in your own ability to achieve the things you desire in life”

“It was inspirational, thought provoking and a great reminder/recap on life”

“A very good course for learning for your future”



Several residents from our Independent Living Schemes recently took part in a two-day GOALS (Goals, Opportunities And Life Skills) programme organised by our Engagement Team.

GOALS is a unique, life-changing programme that raises self-esteem by challenging the way people think, feel and behave. Residents could challenge the way they think about themselves, identify their aspirations and plan steps and changes to improve their life and wellbeing.

GOALS isn't designed to tell people what to do, but to work with them, to establish their needs and wishes and create a positive outlook on life.

STAR

PANEL UPDATE

We caught up with Bert Morris, who up until recently served as our Resident Chair of the Strategic Tenant And Residents (STAR) panel, and he told us what the panel has been working on and how to get involved.

“Our role is to give a residents’ perspective on housing policy, performance and future strategic plans. We do not ‘represent’ residents from specific areas but act as a completely independent ‘critical friend’ to the council’s housing service. The STAR Panel also holds the housing service to account for the services it provides to residents by carrying out scrutiny reviews. We independently review how well a certain aspect of the housing service is delivered to bring about improvements for residents overall. When we have carried out a scrutiny, we make recommendations for improvements. An action plan is agreed, and we check that the housing service has implemented the agreed improvements.



“Resident scrutiny works to make sure that residents’ interests are at the heart of how housing is delivered across the borough. We are always looking for new STAR Panel members and are looking for people to join the STAR/ Scrutiny Panel who have a commitment and enthusiasm for improving and developing services for all residents. We meet four times a year with additional sessions if we are carrying out a scrutiny exercise, but meetings can either be face to face or virtual and usually take place in the evening.

“This month we welcomed Josie Lewis who was recently elected our new Resident Chair of the STAR panel. Good luck in your new role!”

To register your interest in joining the STAR panel, or other involvement opportunities please email the Housing Engagement Team on engagement@walthamforest.gov.uk



WOULD YOU LIKE TO CREATE A TENANTS AND RESIDENTS’ ASSOCIATION (TRA)?



A TRA is a group of residents who are elected by their fellow residents to highlight and share their views of the estate and neighbourhood with Waltham Forest Housing Service. There lots of reasons why you might start a TRA, including:

- The opportunity to be a voice for your estate, build a stronger community spirit, and organise social activities.
- Improving the sense of community and wellbeing by pushing for positive change in your area through fundraising.
- Campaigning for improvements such as new or better community amenities.
- Becoming a regular point of contact for Waltham Forest Housing staff and influencing decisions about how housing services are delivered.



Whatever the reason, get in touch with the Housing Engagement Team today.

The Engagement team is here to help support you to get a group up and running or help breathe new life into an existing group. For more information email us today on engagement@walthamforest.gov.uk



During the summer holidays children from Priory Court Estate visited The Hive as part of the Summer Waltham Forest Holiday Activity and Food (HAF) Programme. The programme provides holiday clubs for children who are in receipt of benefit-related free school meals across the borough.

The Hive, formerly known as Suntrap Forest Centre, is an innovative environmental education hub in the heart of Epping Forest. It inspires young people and adults to tackle climate change, through a deeper understanding and connection with the natural world. During the week the children tried a variety of activities, such as building rafts and catapults, meeting the animals, pond dipping plus lots more.

For more information on The Hive, please visit www.walthamforest.gov.uk/schools-education-and-learning/hive

CUTTING A NEW PATH AT WADHAM AVENUE

During the summer councillors joined local residents to open a new pathway from Wadham Avenue connecting Empress Avenue and Cavendish Road. They walked the new and improved route, complete with wheelchair turning circle and smooth easily accessible transitions for all.

At the opening event Councillor Rosalind Doré, Cabinet Member for Destinations, said “Improving residents’ access to nearby amenities is one of our top priorities. This really is our 15-minute neighbourhoods in action and it’s wonderful to see. Since the pathway has been built residents have more options for public transport links and the routes to Highams Park and Chingford Mount are safer, quicker and greener for everyone. Huge thank you to our Housing Team and Purdy, our contractors, who worked extremely hard in completing this project.”

Stephen, a Wadham Avenue resident, said:

“This path upgrade has been a brilliant addition to the local area. My children go to the school nearby and during the winter months we’d have to either use our wellies and take an extra change of clothes or go round by the road which would take twice as long. I’m so pleased the new path is in place, we walk or scoot to school in half the time, plus there is no need to carry any extra stuff. Thank you to all those involved in making this happen.”

Akgul, another Wadham Avenue resident, said:

“I moved to the area about five months ago and knew about the shortcut through to the local shops, but because it was so muddy, I wouldn’t use it. But I was delighted when I got the letter from the council saying they were going to upgrade the path. This has really made such a big difference to the local area; it cuts my journey in half and it’s lovely to see so many people already using it.”

HOW YOUR HOUSING OFFICERS CAN HELP YOU

Your Tenancy Officer is responsible for:

- Conducting viewings and signing up new tenants.
- Carrying out settling in visits for new tenants.
- Processing tenancy changes including successions and assignments of tenancies.
- Managing anti-social behaviour (ASB) and other breaches of tenancies.
- Supporting vulnerable tenants and how to live independently.

Contact your Tenancy Officer, by emailing **Tenancy.Management@walthamforest.gov.uk**

Your Rent Officer can help you with:

- Debt and money advice.
- Help with maximising your income.
- Support with your benefits.
- Advice finding work.
- Help moving to a smaller property.

Contact your Rents Officer, by emailing **rents@walthamforest.gov.uk**

Your Place Officer is responsible for:

- Carrying out regular inspections of your block or estate.
- Liaise with residents exploring ways of improving the area through our Positive Places programme.
- Address any anti-social behaviour (ASB) complaints within the communal spaces.
- Ensure communal areas are obstruction free and oversee the caretaking and grounds maintenance monitoring.

Contact your Place Officer by emailing **PlaceManagement@walthamforest.gov.uk**

**MORGAN
SINDALL**
PROPERTY SERVICES



Morgan Sindall Property Services (MSPS) and Aston Group, the two main contractors for Waltham Forest Council housing, have been running a wide range of free online training courses and workshops for our residents.

ADDING
VALUE TO
PEOPLE
AND
PLACES

OUR RESIDENT TRAINING PROGRAMME - NEXT STEPS

Have you been thinking about getting back into training, work or learning a new skill to enhance your life? If so, our resident training programme "Next Steps" could be for you. The programme is a great way to help you build your confidence and gain new skills along the way. All the courses are fun, free and informal and we can help if you need access to IT equipment, or internet access and free transport.

Our programme will be in the new year, for more information please visit our website

www.walthamforest.gov.uk/housing/housing-get-involved/training-courses-and-workshops

Energy
Café



MSPS is delivering a programme of support and advice sessions to Waltham Forest residents on energy awareness. These sessions can be delivered over the phone, virtually, or face to face and occur on the first Wednesday of each month from 10am until 12noon. Those running the sessions have passed a Level 3 qualification in Energy Awareness with the National Energy Action, enabling them to advise residents on the following:

- ✓ What to do if you're struggling to pay your energy bills
- ✓ Making sure your home is energy efficient
- ✓ Keeping your home free from condensation and mould growth
- ✓ The best boiler controls for heating your home efficiently
- ✓ Grants and benefits to help you pay your energy bills
- ✓ Signposting for extra support to other agencies.

To enquire or register for a place then please call **07815 025 603** or email the team at CSRbox@morgansindall.com

EMPLOYABILITY SESSIONS

MSPS provide free support and advice sessions to help secure employment or move roles.

- Do you need support writing a CV?
- Need tips on preparing for an interview?
- Or are you looking for a new job and need some support with where to start?

Then join our employability sessions where we can offer support and guidance to help you on your job search. If you would like to sign up to a session or have any further questions, do get in touch with MSPS by emailing CSRbox@morgansindall.com or Aston Group Rachel Statter on R.Statter@astongroup.co.uk.



GET IN TOUCH

WALTHAM FOREST COUNCIL HOUSING

For general enquiries, reporting anti-social behaviour, repairs or help and advice on paying rent:

- ☎ 020 8496 4197
- ✉ wfdirect@walthamforest.gov.uk
- 🌐 www.walthamforest.gov.uk/housing

If you have a fantastic community event, good news story or would like to feature in our Resident Newsletter please email engagement@walthamforest.gov.uk with all the details!

WALTHAM FOREST
COUNCIL HOUSING,
PLACE DIRECTORATE
CEDAR WOOD HOUSE
2D FULBOURNE ROAD
WALTHAMSTOW, E17 4GG

Cedar Wood House is closed to the public, please contact our housing teams via phone or email, phone lines are open Monday to Friday 9am until 5pm.

WE LOOK
FORWARD
TO HEARING
FROM
YOU.

