

# Resident



WALTHAMFOREST.GOV.UK/HOUSING  
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# NEWS



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## EVENTS

### 16 MARCH 2022 – HOUSING OPTIONS DAY

We are looking forward to hosting our next virtual Housing Options Day on **Wednesday 16 March**.

This event is for residents who are:

- living in Council accommodation and have requested a move to a different home or,
- currently living in Council accommodation and not already on our housing register but may have been thinking about moving or,
- are a homeless applicant and/or have been placed into temporary accommodation by the Council.

We will send out more details shortly but if you require further information about the event, please sign up to attend using the link [bit.ly/HousingOptions2022](https://bit.ly/HousingOptions2022)

### RESIDENT EVENTS NEAR YOU

Keep up to date with events in your local area by checking our website regularly [www.walthamforest.gov.uk/events](https://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/events)

# WELCOME FROM CLLR MITCHELL

Welcome to our Winter edition of Resident News. During the colder months we prepare for the potential impact of wintry weather on our tenants and leaseholders. We have enacted the Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP), which helps to provide shelter for rough sleepers during the periods of extreme weather. You can read what steps we have put in place to help the homeless on page 9. Fuel poverty has also been in the headlines nationally and we have tried to address this locally by offering support to vulnerable households and families.

As you know climate change is causing more extreme weather conditions – we've recently experienced storm Eunice, flash flooding last summer, and the past decade being the warmest on record. After 44% of residents requested more guidance on things they can do to live more sustainably, our "Climate change means climate choices" campaign was launched.

However, did you know 51% of the borough's carbon emissions are generated by residential homes, and 70% of Waltham Forest's 107,216

homes pre-date 1944? New-build properties with energy-efficient technology are only part of the solution, so it's vital we find a way to reduce carbon emissions from existing homes, through retrofitting.

As part of the council's climate emergency plan for a zero-carbon future, we are investing £50 million in specific energy projects over the next ten years. There are other grant funded projects planned and we will invest in new technology to improve our housing stocks' carbon footprint. As energy prices



rise, we are concentrating on keeping homes warm through wall, roof and floor insulation, and new forms of heating, solar PV panels, air pumps as well as using recycled or reclaimed materials. For more information on retrofitting sign up to one of our open days at our Eco Home, details are on page 11.

Our focus over the next few months will be our building and fire safety works programme, where we are investing £1 million per year in the replacement of windows and roofs. This will improve the energy efficiency of our current social housing stock and help reduce those carbon emissions.

As well as developing our homes for the future, we celebrated our future talent with National Apprenticeship Week. The theme was 'build the future', reflecting on how apprenticeships can help individuals to develop the skills and knowledge

required for a rewarding and exciting career. If you are interested to find out more, both our contractors offer apprenticeships helping support and upskill local people and communities.

Lastly, I am very pleased to announce we have been awarded our Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) Accreditation for our work against domestic abuse. This is fantastic achievement; it demonstrates all the hard work the housing service has accomplished over the past year to support survivors of domestic abuse.

#### THANK YOU

**Councillor Louise Mitchell**

**Cabinet Member for Housing and Homelessness Prevention**

# REPAIR & MAINTENANCE UPDATE

Over the next five years we will be investing over £140 million in upgrading our current housing stock, as well as £40 million on improving our building safety measures. The past couple of years have been very challenging, with the pandemic pausing several of our work programmes, but we still managed to:

<p><b>1 REPLACE</b></p> <p><b>651</b> CENTRAL HEATING SYSTEMS</p> <p><b>200</b> HEATING SYSTEMS AT MONTAGUE ROAD</p>	<p><b>4 CONVERT</b></p> <p><b>17</b> LOFTS</p> <p>INCREASING THE NUMBER OF BEDS IN OUR STREET PROPERTIES</p>	<p><b>8 REPLACE</b></p> <p><b>3</b> LIFTS IN OUR HOSTELS</p>
<p><b>2 REPLACE</b></p> <p><b>1137</b> FRONT ENTRANCE DOORS</p>	<p><b>5 INSTALL</b></p> <p><b>50</b> EXTERNAL WALL INSULATION (EWI) SYSTEMS IMPROVING THERMAL COMFORT AND ENERGY RATINGS</p>	<p><b>6 DECORATE</b></p> <p><b>40</b> BLOCKS AND <b>300</b> HOMES</p>
<p><b>3 UPGRADE</b></p> <p><b>3</b> SHELTERED HOUSING SCHEMES (DILWYN COURT, CLIFTON HOUSE AND LONGFIELD HOUSE) WITH NEW KITCHENS, BATHROOMS AND COMMUNAL AREA IMPROVEMENTS.</p>	<p><b>7 REFURBISH</b></p> <p><b>3</b> REFURBISH 3 BLOCKS IN FRIDAY HILL TMO</p>	<p><b>9 REPLACE</b></p> <p><b>175</b> WINDOWS</p>
<p><b>10 INSTALL</b></p> <p><b>223</b> SPRINKLERS</p>		

Our focus over the next few months will be our building and fire safety programme works, ensuring you remain safe in your homes both now and for the future. We will still be working hard to deliver our internal upgrade programme as well as working with our contractors on our day-to-day repair maintenance jobs.

# PERFORMANCE UPDATE

Since April 2021 we have measured our performance on key parts of our service for residents.

- Our contact centres have received nearly **165K calls**. **Did you know...** Between 9:15am and 12:30pm it is the busiest time of day for our repair and maintenance contact centre, so if you need to get in touch, please try at another time.
- Morgan Sindall and Aston Group have completed nearly **21,000 repairs**.
- 89%** of repairs were completed during the first-time visit.
- From raising the work order to finishing the job took an average of **11 days** to complete a repair. This is due to the difficult circumstances and multiple lockdowns over the past couple of years; we are catching up with the routine appointments so please bear with us so we can operate safely in your homes.

## OVER THE LAST THREE MONTHS WE HAVE:



- increased our first-time fix rate of all repair and maintenance jobs (Morgan Sindall and Aston Group) from **90%** in the last quarter to **91%** in this quarter
- kept **96.5%** of all appointments made.

## LET US KNOW YOUR FEEDBACK



Our contractor, Morgan Sindall, collects feedback through their customer engagement tool to continually improve the service they provide. Residents receive a short survey at key points during the repair service journey by text or email. The survey asks one question "How helpful was the service we provided? Please rate your experience from 1 to 5, with 1 being very poor and 5 being excellent." From analysing the feedback so far, the engineers are helpful, polite, professional and friendly. But if you receive a text or email, please let us know what you think.

## YOU SAID, WE DID

### YOU SAID

Residents on St Barnabas reported issues around communal waste and recycling bins. The communal waste areas were located by the entrance door leaving unpleasant smells upon entering and exiting the building.



### WE DID

Metrostor waste and recycling pods were installed to the exterior as well as a bulk refuge unit. These newly installed pods meant clearing the obstructions from fire exit route and eliminating a possible fire risk. The new Metrostor



Pods are located 6m away from the entrance door reducing any unpleasant smells within the building.

Last summer when we sent out a Resident Involvement Survey an overwhelming majority of tenants and leaseholders that said they wanted to engage with the Council from the comfort of their own home.

To enable better digital engagement opportunities, we have promised to deliver a variety of participation options as part of our Resident Involvement Strategy 2022-2026. One of the key aims highlighted in the strategy is a commitment to improving our current digital contact points and to explore innovative, emerging technologies to reach more people.

In our last bi-annual Survey of Tenants And Residents (STAR), you told us that the biggest reason you were dissatisfied with the Housing service is because we didn't listen to your views on how to improve the service.

We are currently piloting a transactional survey for the caretaking service. We hope to expand surveying to more areas so we can better understand how you feel and make the necessary changes to improve the services you receive.

# BUILDING SAFETY UPDATE



## OUR BUILDING SAFETY RESIDENT ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

We've been working hard on developing Waltham Forest's Building Safety Resident Engagement Strategy. The strategy focuses on how we will inform, engage and communicate with residents about building safety measures for new and existing buildings. Over the coming months we will highlight how you can get involved and the vital role you'll play in keeping buildings and local communities safe.

### KEEP COMMUNAL AREAS CLEAR

For a safer environment please ensure you are on the lookout for any hazards associated with fire safety. We would like to remind you; it is mandatory all escape routes and communal areas are ALWAYS kept completely clear. This means, free from all items that could be an obstruction, including mobility scooters, bicycles, pushchairs right through to plant pots and doormats, all of which can cause difficulty in a fire rescue situation.

This is not just for your own safety, but for other visitors including the London Fire Brigade – clear access routes are essential. Communal areas do not belong to any individual, and therefore, residents do not have the right to store or leave personal items in these areas.



## BECOME A BUILDING SAFETY CHAMPION



*Building safety is something you, our residents, and our Building Safety Team need to do together.*

*All we require is a small commitment from you of under two hours a month - flexible to suit you until you complete the course. In return you'll receive full training when you volunteer as a Champion. The benefits include:*

- *Learning several new skills to support fire safety in your own home, your block and community.*
- *Attend training session on 31 March at 10:00am - 12:30pm and 2:00pm - 4:30pm (lunch will be provided)*
- *Regular updates on building safety for your block to all Building Safety Champions*
- *Opportunity to undertake further learning and development*
- *Great experience and skills to add to your CV*

### GET IN TOUCH

If you are interested, please get in touch by emailing our Engagement Team on [engagement@walthamforest.gov.uk](mailto:engagement@walthamforest.gov.uk) but remember to include your:

- > **Name**
- > **Estate**
- > **A short sentence on why you would like to get involved**

**WE LOOK FORWARD TO HEARING FROM YOU!**

## KEEP SAFE AND DOUBLE CHECK IDS



Over the next coming months there will be some essential building safety works taking place on several estates across the borough. We would like to remind all residents to be extra vigilant during this time. Due to the extra workers onsite, bogus callers, might take advantage of this situation, and try to trick their way into your homes while pretending to be someone else.

If you're not sure who is at your door, **DO NOT open it**. Always check the identity card of the caller or by calling the company they are claiming to be from i.e. gas, electricity, water, postman / parcel delivery person etc. Use the telephone numbers listed online or on a letter provided by the service provider. **DO NOT** use any telephone numbers provided by the caller. Remember if in doubt, **DO NOT open your door**.



### COVID-19: STAY SAFE

Unfortunately, COVID-19 cases are still high within the borough, but we would like to reassure you that our contractors, Morgan Sindall and Aston Group, are all trained and will continue to operate in a safe system of works. Meaning they will continue to take regular tests, wear personal protective equipment (PPE) and carry out questionnaires to ensure proactive measures are put in place before entering your home.

#### You can also protect yourself by:

- Getting vaccinated and book your COVID-19 booster jab
- Social distance in crowded places
- Self-isolate when instructed to do so
- Test regularly
- Let fresh air in if you meet indoors
- Wash your hands regularly

# LEASEHOLDERS UPDATE



## SERVICE CHARGES UPDATE

**2022/23 Service charge estimates** - All Waltham Forest leaseholders and shared owners will shortly receive their notice of estimates for the upcoming 2022/23 financial year. These will be issued before the end of March, which will give leaseholders and shared owners 12 months to pay the balance. Going forward, annual estimates will always be sent in March.

**2020/21 Service charge actuals** - We wrote to leaseholders in September 2021 to let them know their actual (final) charges for the 2020/21 period was delayed. We are still working on finalising these charges and will update leaseholders shortly. We are sorry for the continued delay in providing these charges.

**2021/22 Service charge actuals** - As this financial year draws to a close, we are aiming to issue the actual charges in September. As we make improvements to our services, leaseholders and shared owners can expect their estimates in March and their actuals in September.

For any questions, please contact the Home Ownership team on [RTB.Lease@walthamforest.gov.uk](mailto:RTB.Lease@walthamforest.gov.uk) or 020 8496 3000.

## JOIN A NEW LEASEHOLDER IMPROVEMENT PANEL

To help us improve communication, inform, and involve leaseholders in service improvement, we want to create Waltham Forest's first Leaseholder Improvement Panel (LIP). This panel would meet a few times a year and would work with Home Ownership team to ensure best practice, high levels of performance and value for money.

The aims of the panel:

- Advise and inform the Home Ownership team on key issues affecting leaseholders.
- Represent the views and voices of leaseholders to ensure that services provided by Waltham Forest meets leaseholders needs.
- To hold the Home Ownership Team to account and challenge them to deliver to higher standards



To find out more or to express your interest in joining the panel, please email our Engagement team on [engagement@walthamforest.gov.uk](mailto:engagement@walthamforest.gov.uk)

## REGENERATION UPDATE



### TOPPING-OUT CEREMONY AT JUNIPER HOUSE

Work on our 91-new homes reached a major milestone with a topping-out ceremony at Juniper House in Walthamstow. The development, which previously housed Waltham Forest's Children and Families Service, consists of a mixture of affordable and private sale homes (50% affordable) developed by the Council direct with Hill Group as the design and build contractor.

Juniper House will also feature a 53-place pre-school nursery, with its own play area, a flexible commercial space and a pocket park. The scheme will bring significant benefits for local residents and the wider environment, including air-source heat pumps and solar panels which will provide heating and hot water for the apartments and cooling to the nursery and commercial elements. It is a car free scheme, except for people with disabilities. This development was supported by a £2.48m grant from the GLA's Building Council Homes for London Programme.

# SPECIAL FEATURES UPDATE

## GOVERNMENT FUNDING BOOST TO PROTECT AND VACCINATE ROUGH SLEEPERS

In December the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities announced that rough sleepers are being helped to get their COVID-19 vaccines and move into safe accommodation over the winter thanks to a £28 million government funding boost.

- The Protect and Vaccinate scheme will increase vaccination amongst people sleeping rough and provide emergency accommodation
- £28 million to be allocated to councils across England to provide safe and secure accommodation
- Builds on government's work throughout the pandemic to support rough sleepers and national effort to Get Boosted Now



## THAMES WATER REFUND CHARGE UPDATE



At the end of last year, letters were sent to all council tenants explaining that like many other London boroughs, the Council used to have an agreement with Thames Water to collect water charges on their behalf, at the same time as collecting the rent from council tenants.

The agreement with Thames Water was in place from December 2005 to September 2019 and during this time, the Council considered itself as an agent working on Thames Water's behalf and received commission for this. Recent court



## SUPPORTING THE HOMELESSNESS COUNT

Since the pandemic homelessness is on the rise. Each year local authorities are required to submit an annual snapshot figure to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) to indicate the number of people sleeping rough on a typical night within the borough. This helps inform the national statistics of homelessness across the UK. Our count took place last November; we were joined by 30 volunteers, from both the statutory and voluntary sectors, members of the public as well as Cllr Grace Williams and Cllr Louise Mitchell.

Remember if you are concerned about a rough sleeper, please report it, this will then be referred to our team.

- **Website** – report a rough sleeper directly at [www.streetlink.org.uk](http://www.streetlink.org.uk)
- **App** – download the StreetLink app
- **Phone** – 0300 500 0914

For more information

If you are worried about becoming homeless need help and advice, please visit our website pages [www.walthamforest.gov.uk/homelessness](http://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/homelessness)

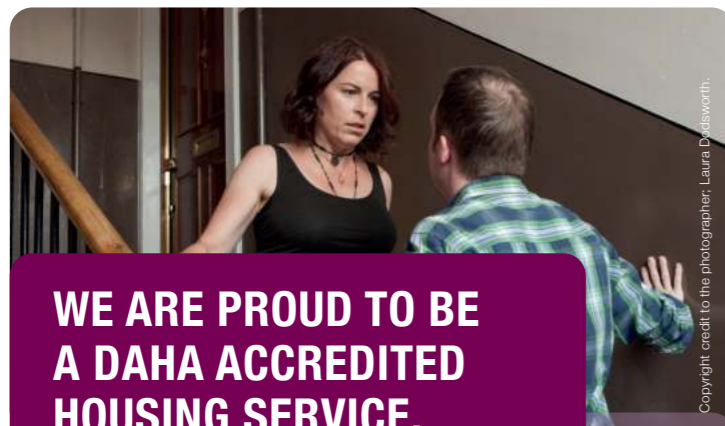
cases against two other London boroughs have challenged this, and judgements have been made that the councils were acting as water resellers and had overcharged their tenants. As a result of the court rulings, the Council now knows it unwittingly overcharged tenants part of the commission which Thames Water paid, and for that we would like to apologise.

Since then, we have been refunding eligible people and payments have been made into "My Waltham Forest" accounts; for current tenants the refund will show as a credit adjustment.

For more information please either visit our website page [www.walthamforest.gov.uk/thames-water-refund-charges](http://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/thames-water-refund-charges) or email us at [water-refunds@walthamforest.gov.uk](mailto:water-refunds@walthamforest.gov.uk) ensuring you include your name, address and your rent reference number.

## JOIN OUR VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS PANEL

We are recruiting for eight members to join the Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) advisory panel. This paid role is for any women, based in Waltham Forest, who has been affected by gender-based violence (e.g. stalking or harassment, sexual violence) or survivors of domestic abuse. It would involve meeting four times a year over a two-year period to share your insights and views to help improve our VAWG programmes. For more information and how to apply, please visit our website [www.walthamforest.gov.uk/join-our-VAWG-panel](http://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/join-our-VAWG-panel)



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WE ARE PROUD TO BE  
A DAHA ACCREDITED  
HOUSING SERVICE.

Our work on improving the support offer for survivors of domestic abuse has reached a major milestone, the Housing Service has now gained its Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) accreditation. This work is particularly important considering the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, which:

- ▶ Introduced a wider legal definition of domestic abuse, it is not limited to physical violence, but now also includes emotional, controlling or coercive behaviour, as well as financial abuse.
- ▶ Ensured any council tenants who are rehoused because of domestic abuse are granted a secure lifetime tenancy.
- ▶ Ensured any person made homeless because of domestic abuse has automatic priority need for receiving homelessness assistance.

## WE ARE KEEN TO HEAR FROM YOU

Posters and leaflets are being developed to outline how we can help a tenant who is experiencing abuse know and understand their rights. If you would like to share your views on what we should include in these leaflets we would like to hear from you, please contact [housingstrategy@walthamforest.gov.uk](mailto:housingstrategy@walthamforest.gov.uk)

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

Check out our website pages, it includes our new policy outlining how we are supporting tenants who are experiencing abuse [www.walthamforest.gov.uk/DA-help-housing-council](http://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/DA-help-housing-council)

SOCIAL HOUSING  
DECARBONISATION FUND

We have been successful in our bid for a share of the Government's Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) to help fund the costs of energy efficiency improvements to some of our poor performing properties. This will help ensure lower energy bills for our residents in future and help us achieve our net zero carbon ambitions.

A total of £1.7M has been secured, which will be combined with some of our own funds, to deliver "fabric first" insulation improvements to 100 terraced properties across the borough and a deep retrofit of 40 flats at Southfield Court, a hostel scheme in Leytonstone which will receive a combination of insulation measures, plus solar PV and low carbon heating. All works funded by the SHDF are scheduled to complete by April 2023. We are planning further investment across the rest of our homes to ensure we can reduce carbon emissions from our houses and estates, whilst helping to provide a long-term solution to the rising costs of gas through better insulation and energy efficiency.

CAR PARKING ON  
COUNCIL ESTATES

Our estate parking team is continuing its consultation work, by seeking residents' views on the option to introduce parking permit schemes on their estate. By early April we will have introduced permit schemes at St Georges Court and Whipps Cross House, Essex Close, Northwood Tower and Wadham Avenue.

By the end of May 2022, the next parking schemes to be completed will be:

- The Drive
- Palmerston Court

Later in the year we are looking to consult with residents on Aldriche Way, Stocksfield, Priory Court and Hylands Road.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

For the latest news on estate parking, go to [www.walthamforest.gov.uk/estateparking](http://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/estateparking)

Please get in touch by emailing us, remember to include your estate name, at [estateparking@walthamforest.gov.uk](mailto:estateparking@walthamforest.gov.uk)

VISIT OUR ECO  
SHOWCASE  
HOME

Homes are the biggest carbon emissions contributors, our plans to reduce these emissions continues to progress, as demonstrated by the exciting 47 Greenleaf Road energy showcase home, developed in partnership with our contractor Aston Group.

Retrofitting a traditional four-bedroom Victorian end terrace built in 1902, into an energy efficient improvement showcase home, shows residents the changes they can make to their homes to save energy, money and reduce their carbon footprint. The improvements have raised the EPC rating from an E to an A and estimated to reduce the fuel bill by three quarters.

To date we have had over 57 events and 1217 visitors; within this figure we have hosted:



## SIGN UP NOW



You can find out further details and sign up to attend an open day by scanning the QR code above or visiting [www.walthamforest.gov.uk/eco-home](http://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/eco-home)

- VIP visitors including STAR Panel members, Cllr Williams, Mayor, Ed Miliband MP (Shadow Secretary of State for Climate Change and Net Zero) and Lord Callanan (Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy).
- 163 students from Waltham Forest College and London Academy of Sustainable Construction, but with further student events planned this number will increase. These events are vital to encourage students to consider careers in green construction and build a desperately needed pool of qualified engineers, installers, and contractors.
- 62 visitors from 12 different London Boroughs.
- 49 visits from 12 housing associations.

Attend a free guided tour on an open day, during which you will receive information on the works installed and advice. You can also receive follow up details on:

- The grants and financial incentives available for energy efficiency improvement works.
- A list of all improvements made to the property, their cost, and who supplied them.
- Information on how homeowners can get further advice and a property assessment by a retrofit consultant.



*"Really inspiring and helpful in understanding what needs to be done to improve the energy efficiency of housing"*

WE ARE REVIEWING  
ALL OUR GARAGES

At the end of last year, we started looking at our estate garages and reviewing their future usage. We:

- Have completed a condition survey of all our garages.
- Will make sure more garages are let, and that Council tenants and leaseholders are given priority.
- Will develop a forward plan on how to make the best use of our garage sites. This could mean having a different use for the site where the garages are beyond repair or if there isn't a demand for them.



So far, we've completed all the condition surveys on our garage sites and are now putting together a solutions programme for the worst condition sites. Over the next few months, we will be looking at garage areas in Chingford and Prospect Hill.

We will continue working on our garage sites project throughout 2022/23 and will engage with residents when agreeing what actions to take next. Watch this space!

## KEEN TO RENT A GARAGE - DO YOU NEED THE EXTRA STORAGE SPACE?

We have recently agreed a new Garage Allocations Policy which gives priority to Council tenants and leaseholders, over other applicants, when awarding garage licences. This policy will be used to re-launch our garage waiting list in, hopefully, April 2022.

We hope this new policy will make applying for a garage licence easier and improve the speed and efficiency of our garage lettings service. Look out for more information later in the year.



## WHAT IS A 15-MINUTE NEIGHBOURHOOD?

One of Waltham Forest's top priorities is developing a borough where every one of our residents can easily access what they need to live a fulfilling and healthy life within their local area, whether that's by walking, cycling or by public transport. Whatever your stage in life, we want to shape our borough around you, to help everyone live a fulfilling and healthy life in their local area.

We are preparing to deliver a series of 15-minute neighbourhood pilots across five of our housing estates. The estates selected for the pilot are – the Avenue Road estate in Leytonstone, which is due to undergo regeneration; Holland House and Boothby Court, sheltered housing schemes in Chingford; and Aldriche Way, a large estate in Highams Park and finally Centenary House, our new development. We will be conducting an extensive programme of community consultation, engagement and neighbourhood mapping and look forward to sharing the insights with you.

Ambitious and innovative work is already underway across Waltham Forest to bring us closer to this idea of a 15-Minute Neighbourhood. **Watch our short video by visiting our Waltham Forest YouTube channel.**



## WE WON AN INSIDE HOUSING AWARD



We are delighted to announce that last November our More Homes joint venture partnership with Mears Living won at the prestigious Inside Housing Award for 'Best Partnership.' The judges praised the collaborative way the partnership had responded to the COVID-19 pandemic in housing homeless individuals and families.

More Homes is an innovative partnership scheme that finds new funding to help alleviate the problem of expensive and inadequate temporary and emergency housing. To date this has enabled us to raise £88m through issuing bonds to purchase 330 homes.

## TELL US HOW WE ARE PERFORMING



1. Keeping properties in good repair
2. Maintaining building safety
3. Effective complaints-handling
4. Respectful and helpful tenant engagement
5. Responsible neighbourhood management

Earlier this year we sent out a government consultation survey on the introduction of tenant satisfaction measures to a large sample of our residents seeking feedback on how we are performing. The importance of measuring satisfaction with our performance and the quality of services is to allow us to identify potential areas of improvement and compare against other social landlords.

The Government is planning to introduce common tenant satisfaction measures across all social landlords covering five main themes below:

We've been making improvements to how we collect this information, making it simpler and more accessible to help generate more insights which we can act upon in our service delivery. The consultation closed on Thursday 3 March 2022; we'll update you when the results are in!

# RESIDENT ENGAGEMENT UPDATE

## HELPING OUR RESIDENTS BECOME DIGITALLY SAVVY!

Working with our contractors, Morgan Sindall and Aston Group, we provide free digital inclusions (DI) workshops for our residents; and over the last few months, we've held several DI sessions in our sheltered housing schemes.

Each session consisted of:

- **Staying in touch** – creating an email, installing mobile apps such as WhatsApp and Zoom, etc
- **Online shopping** – how to set up shopping accounts, PayPal accounts, etc
- **Questions** – will cover anything else you may need support with



For more information about the next upcoming sessions please email [CSRbox@morgansindall.co.uk](mailto:CSRbox@morgansindall.co.uk)

## FESTIVE DONATIONS

During the festive period, our contractors partnered to spread some good will and festive cheer to residents. In total the following was achieved:

- A bed and bedding were donated to a vulnerable resident in need
- £500 was donated to the Waltham Forest night shelter
- £300 was donated to contribute towards raffle prizes for residents
- £1,000 in Tesco vouchers were donated to 15 sheltered schemes to enjoy Christmas



## 100 FREE SLIPPERS FOR OUR SHELTERED HOUSING RESIDENTS

During the festive break our Independent Living team distributed hundreds of free slippers, gloves and scarves to our sheltered accommodation residents to help them get through the winter period.

Poor fitting slippers can cause serious injuries with people slipping or tripping and it has estimated that around 9% of hip fractures suffered by elderly patients are because of bad footwear. Obviously having serious consequences for an elderly person's health, independence and ultimately lead to social isolation. So, we were delighted to present our residents with these slippers to hopefully improve their quality of life.

## HAPPY 100TH BIRTHDAY TO VICTORIA



Last November Victoria Antoniou, one of our sheltered accommodation residents at Longfield House, celebrated her 100th birthday surrounded by friends and family. Victoria originally from Cyprus, has lived in England since 1960, and the last 18 years at Longfield House. After retiring from working in the catering department at Whipps Cross Hospital, she now enjoys gardening, cooking and attending her local church, St Luke's.

Victoria has seven children, 25 grandchildren, 59 great grandchildren and 4 great, great grandchildren and on the big day received hundreds of cards, including one from the Queen. Our contractors also wanted to join in the celebrations and donated gift cards to Love2Shop and Morrison's, so they could purchase some party food.

## STAR PANEL UPDATE



how to encourage more residents to improve the energy efficiency of their homes. STAR was also briefed on the Positive Places programme and encouraged to share the programme with their community.

Our Strategic Tenant And Residents (STAR) Panel welcomed four new members last year. They went straight to work helping us improve services for you. Since then, we've changed the format of the STAR Panel meetings, with their input to ensure information shared at the panels are more resident focused.

The social housing white paper is changing the face of resident engagement in housing and STAR have been integral in ensuring we meet the commitments set out in the paper. STAR have also met with the Housing Strategy team to share their views on the revised Housing Strategy, as well as Waltham Forest Council's climate emergency plans. Some member visited our Eco show home in November and gave us pointers on

### BECOME A STAR PANEL MEMBER

Some of our STAR panel members will be stepping down in September 2022, and we are looking for brilliant new resident representatives to take their place. As a STAR panel member, you will have first sight of key Housing projects and have the power to influence important improvements to the service. You will receive specialist training and ongoing support in your role.

**If you would like to find out more about STAR and would like to take part in our next recruitment drive, please email: [engagement@walthamforest.gov.uk](mailto:engagement@walthamforest.gov.uk), or send us a text or WhatsApp message to 07715 536 865.**

## AVENUE ROAD ESTATE MEET THE CONTRACTOR

In February the Avenue Road residents were invited to meet Bellway London Partnerships, the contractors who will be redeveloping the housing estate.

The Avenue Road estate, located between Wanstead Flats and the Olympic Park, consists of five nine-storey blocks built in the early 1960s. Today, maintenance costs on the estate are high and the flats don't meet modern standards. The proposal is to deliver a range of one, two and three-bedroom apartments and four-bedroom houses.

The contractor day provided an opportunity for residents to find out more about the regeneration project, ask questions, discover what the next steps are and any important key dates.

It was a great turnout with nearly 200 estate and wider community residents in attendance.



**For more information, please visit our website and search for Avenue Road Estate, Leytonstone.**

## FEEDBACK FROM CENTENARY HOUSE



Last year Sixty Bricks, our housing development company, completed its first official mixed tenure providing shared ownership and social level rent development of 45 new homes for local people in Centenary House, Highams Park.

The scheme, aimed at local residents, allowed buyers who cannot afford a property at the full market price to purchase a percentage of it, with the rest paid as rent. The homes are a mixture of one, two or three bedrooms including two which are fully wheelchair accessible; they have a shared communal

area, bike store, under-fives play area and shared garden.

With all new tenants now in their homes, we have sent out a satisfaction survey so they can provide their feedback on the moving in process and overall experience.

**Centenary residents - we look forward to hearing from you!**



**For more information check out the website [sixtybricks.co.uk](http://sixtybricks.co.uk)**

## OUR COMMITMENT TO INVOLVING YOU - OUR RESIDENT INVOLVEMENT STRATEGY

Shortly we'll be publishing our newly refreshed Resident Involvement Strategy 2022-2026. Its aim is to:

- Empower residents to influence decisions
- Offer a range of ways to be involved
- Improve digital connectivity
- Ensure that we continue to be inclusive and representative
- Demonstrate the outcomes and value for money of involvement

With your increased influential involvement and by drawing on your experiences will help shape and drive service improvements. We will involve you both informally and formally at a level to suit your commitments and preferences.

The strategy sets out clear and measurable actions that will deliver a wide range of involvement opportunities that could include surveys, focus groups, panel discussions, TRA meetings and youth groups discussions. Providing a wide range of different opportunities for residents to take part is key to our success. So, keep your eyes peeled - watch this space!

### For more information

Please visit our website  
[www.walthamforest.gov.uk/resident-involvement-strategy](http://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/resident-involvement-strategy)

## PRIORY COURT LANTERN PARADE

At the end of February our Priory Court residents celebrated and enjoyed their fantastic Carnival Lantern Parade. Working in partnership with GB Carnival, who hosted lantern, headdress, drumming and movements workshops where children could get creative with some arts and crafts or dance to the beat of the drums. The residents then took their newly learnt skills and crafts on a parade around the estate. Over 50 people took part in the parade and many more enjoyed the spectacle and music from their doorsteps and balconies. It was a brilliant day had by all, and we would like to thank everyone who took part and our partners who made it happen!



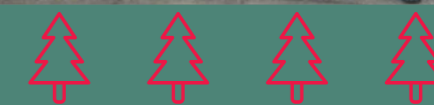
Copyright credit to the photographer, Vicky Couchman and GB Carnivals.

## ESSEX CLOSE AND THEIR FESTIVE TREE

To get locals in the festive spirit, the residents of Essex Close created a festive focal point of their fir tree, which has been a part of the communal garden for the past decade.

Waltham Forest's Environmental Services Team gave the tree a much-needed spruce and trim, while Aston Group, our partners, donated some solar powered fairy lights. Together with the residents the tree was decorated.

Paul Habgood, Environmental Services Manager, said: **"It's great to help residents at Essex Close to brighten up their Christmas tree. We look forward to working more closely with residents and the Engagement Team"**.



**"We've all had a difficult year and wanted to do something bright and colourful for residents to enjoy. Let's hope we have a better 2022".**

Phiz, Chair of Essex Close Residents Group





ADDING  
VALUE TO  
PEOPLE  
AND  
PLACES

**MORGAN  
SINDALL**  
PROPERTY SERVICES

**Aston  
Group**

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.

## VIRTUAL WORK EXPERIENCE

– BE QUICK AND APPLY BY 1 APRIL!

Morgan Sindall is hosting a virtual work experience week from **Monday 11 until Thursday 14 April**. This is aimed at enthusiastic students aged 14 years+ and in full-time education, who are keen to work as part of a team to design, plan and create a space for a person with disabilities and mobility issues.

The work experience will cover:

- Decision making skills
- Communication skills
- Client facing experience
- Presentation skills
- CV writing



To enquire or register for a place then please call 07815 025 603 or email the team at [CSRbox@morgansindall.com](mailto:CSRbox@morgansindall.com)

## NEED HELP WITH DIGITAL SKILLS OR EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT?

This programme is available for any unemployed Waltham Forest resident and is aimed at helping you gain confidence in your digital skills and improving your existing skills. Employment support can also be provided alongside the digital skills training. To register your interest, please call **07815 025 603** or email [CSRbox@morgansindall.com](mailto:CSRbox@morgansindall.com)



## FREE ONLINE COURSES

Morgan Sindall has a huge variety of online courses available for residents such as:

ADMINISTRATION   BEAUTY   BUSINESS   CLEANING   COMPUTING  
CUSTOMER CARE   EDUCATION   FINANCE   FITNESS   AND MANY MORE...



If you would like to learn a new skill or refresh your existing skills, get in touch today, please call **07815 025 603** or email [CSRbox@morgansindall.com](mailto:CSRbox@morgansindall.com)

## GET IN TOUCH



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

WALTHAM FOREST COUNCIL  
HOUSING, RESIDENT  
SERVICES BILLERICAY OFFICE  
6A MORRIS AVENUE  
BILLERICAY ESSEX  
CM11 2JR

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.

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

**020 8496 4197**

[wfdirect@walthamforest.gov.uk](mailto:wfdirect@walthamforest.gov.uk)

[www.walthamforest.gov.uk/housing](http://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](mailto:engagement@walthamforest.gov.uk) with all the details!

WE LOOK  
FORWARD  
TO HEARING  
FROM  
**YOU.**

