

isha news

the quarterly newsletter for all Islington and Shoreditch Housing Association residents

issue 02 autumn 2012

www.isha.co.uk



Residents Forum: Your Voice Heard

inside this
issue



2

New
Development



4

Residents Forum:
Annual General
Meeting



6

You Said, We Did



7

Shakespeare
House Refurb

Largest New ISHA Development Completed



ISHA recently completed our largest new scheme built in the last decade. The 94 new affordable homes; 80 flats and 14 family houses are in Highams Park, Waltham Forest. Our scheme was part of a larger £100 million development that includes a major new Tesco Store, a range of smaller commercial units and a total of 253 homes.

The 14 terrace houses for Social Rent were occupied in April. They included 3 houses fully adapted for wheelchair users with internal through-floor lifts, height adjustable kitchens and bathroom hoists.

The 80 flats include 44 flats for Social Rent and 36 flats for Shared Ownership. All the Social Rented

flats have now been allocated but there are still some Shared Ownership flats available including wheelchair adapted ones. Details of all ISHA's available Shared Ownership flats can be found via a link on our website (www.isha.co.uk) or by contacting our marketing agent's, Stagnell Fox on 0845 301 422 (www.stagnellfox.co.uk).

Environmentally friendly technologies including a centralized heating plant were also used to ensure the sustainability of the development. All the houses have private gardens and most of the flats have private balconies. In addition to this the flats have access to a secure play area. The shared ownership units have the benefit of a roof garden.

Jobs at TESCO

The new Tesco store will open on 4 October 2012. TESCO's reserved a considerable amount of the jobs in the store for local people, and started this special recruitment round in July 2012.

They have now opened their vacancies to anyone interested in working in the store. If you would like to work for TESCO at Highams Park, please look online at www.tesco-careers.com for details and application form.



How to Bid for Better



Bid for Better was an idea born of the Residents' Forum, the Forum holds £12,500 and residents can apply for a grant of up to £1,500 for their bid. Bids can be submitted to the Forum four times a year. If you are thinking of applying for a grant you don't need to worry as your Resident Service Manager will help you through the process.

A Bid is an opportunity to improve your communal environment. The Bid must be beneficial to all residents, so it could be something to brighten up the internal corridor perhaps plants or pictures, changing the way the exterior looks by adding to the garden, building a wall instead of a hedge and bushes, anything that will make the communal areas more pleasant for all.

One novel successful bid was not particularly thinking out of the

box but thinking on the box. The residents of The Bakery, Hackney were not in love with the numbers on their mail boxes, they were difficult to see. So they decided to Bid for Better to improve things. As a result those boxes even please the postman!

Bid for Better doesn't just have to be about the garden or about post boxes - let your imagination run wild. Think of an idea that will benefit you and your neighbours and go for it.

What do you do?

First of all you need an idea of what you want to do.

Then speak to your neighbours to see if they agree.

Finally contact your Resident Service Manager or the Resident Service Improvement Manager to progress the Bid.

Mr Copland, one of the residents of Shoreditch Court, Hackney is the organiser of a Bid for Better plan. The idea is not only to bring colour and life into what is at present a very plain and boring garden but also to attract wildlife and insects into the garden making it more eco-friendly. Mr Copland, with the assistance of his Resident Service Manager approached the garden charity Eco Active to produce two possible projects for the garden. The one chosen involves planting of herbs and traditional plants with a series of miniature trees.

It is hoped that work will begin in November and by spring and summer there will be a new garden not only to please the residents but also to beautify the area. This plan will only go ahead if, in October, it is accepted by the Bid for Better panel.

Annual General Meeting

Not quite “we are going on a summer holiday” more like “we are singing in the rain”. However those who braved the elements left with a smile and one of our umbrellas!

Residents were invited to the Annual General Meeting of the Residents’ Forum beginning with breakfast/brunch aboard two (old style) Routemaster London buses for a city tour. Despite the tropical storm, in true British style we all made the best of it.

The business part of the day was held at St Luke’s Centre, Central Street, Islington. 54 residents were present as others were put off by

the rain. The business of the day was conducted and Michael Wardle of Shoreditch Court, Hackney was re-elected Chair and Stafford Cohen-Powell of Alfred Wallis House, Islington was re-elected as Vice-Chair.

One of the most important events challenging ISHA was residents noting down ‘What’s wrong with ISHA?’. Some of the themes were:

Issues with bins – bin areas being too smelly, more bins required, bins situated in the wrong place, residents not putting rubbish in bins

Communication – through some of the comments it was quite clear that ISHA need to do more work

in ensuring it communicates with residents in a timely fashion.

Cleaning & Grounds

Maintenance – dissatisfaction with the service currently provided, more frequent cleaning schedule,

Service Charges – why are some items charged to residents when residents are not using them?

Anti-Social Behaviour – gangs congregating on Estates,

Energy efficiency – insulation/energy saving in older properties, inadequate heating.



ISHA have been working on responses to the comments provided. However, there were some comments that were made but it was not very clear which area/block it was referring to or more information was required.

ISHA and the Residents’ Forum, as one of its major topics, will

be discussing communication with residents in order to identify and help resolve problems with poor communication. The Forum members are able, as a collective, to provide ISHA with the residents’ experiences, advise them where they are failing to provide a good service and give helpful recommendations as to how to

make it better. The Forum plan to unpick the issues with poor communication at its meeting on Thursday 15 November, 6-8pm at ISHA’s offices, 102 Blackstock Road, N4 2DR. All residents are welcome to attend.



Residents' Forum Diary Dates

2012

- » Wednesday 31 October
Bid for Better deadline
- » **Thursday 15 November,
6 – 8pm
Forum meeting at ISHA**
- » Saturday 11 May, 2 – 4pm
Forum meeting at The Asian
Centre, 18a Orford Road,
Walthamstow, E17 9LN
- » **Friday 12 July
Bid for Better deadline**

If you would like to contact the Residents' Forum you can contact the Chair, Michael Wardle at forum-chair@isha.co.uk or Tullia Morris, Resident Service Improvement Manager at tulliam@isha.co.uk or on 020 7704 7349 or 07930 202 317.

2013

- » Saturday 26 January, 2 – 4pm
Forum meeting at
Queensbridge Sports &
Leisure Centre, 30 Holly Street,
Hackney E8 3XW
- » **Monday 18 February
Bid for Better deadline**
- » Thursday 14 March, 6 – 8pm
Forum meeting at ISHA
- » **Tuesday 30 April
Bid for Better deadline**
- » Thursday 25 July, 6 – 8pm
Forum meeting at ISHA
- » **Saturday 28 September,
2 – 4pm
Forum meeting at
ISHA**
- » Thursday 31 October
Bid for Better deadline
- » **Thursday 14 November,
6 – 8pm
Forum meeting at ISHA**





you said...

You wanted to "Keep an Eye on ISHA"

You wanted it to be easier to tell us whether you were satisfied (or not) with your repair

You were unhappy with the service charge procedures and the cleaning and grounds maintenance

When I report a communal anti-social behaviour I don't know what's been done

I can't attend an important meeting but I'd still like to be a part of the process

Gave a preference for the design contractor to be used for ISHA News and the Annual Report

...we did

Changed the way the last Annual Report was presented

The repair satisfaction form can now be completed online

Set up a scrutiny process to have an indepth look at these services (if you would like to be a part of this process please contact Mark Slowikowski, Head of Housing at marks@isha.co.uk or on 020 7704 7351)

We now inform all residents of the outcome/s of a communal anti-social behaviour issue

Filmed specific meetings so that residents who can't attend may still have an input

Agreed with your choice!

Our Performance in Quarter 1

April to June 2012

At a Glance Key



Above Target



Below Target



Just Below Target

*These comparisons are based on our performance in April 2010 to March 2011. This is the latest date for which information is available. Information for The period of April 2011 to March 2012 will be made available during Quarter 3.



1. Responses to your Complaints, Letters & Phone Calls

Measure	Result	Target (2011/12)	How we Compared with Others in March 2011 (London & South East*)	What we are doing to improve our performance?
Replying to Complaints within the target time of 10 days	100%	95%	N/A	Above Target
Replying to Letters within the target time of 10 days	100%	100%	N/A	Above Target
Answering the Phone within 15 seconds	88%	95%	N/A	Below Target New phone groups have been set up and all staff now has the facility to pick up a phone extension within their phone groups. This is to be monitored and reviewed monthly.




2. Repairs

Measure	Result	Target 2011/12	How we Compare with Others? (London & South East*)	What we are doing to improve our performance?
The average number of days to carry out Repairs	10 days	14	N/A	Above Target
The Number Gas Safety Checks that are out of date	2	0	Top Group	Below Target We are reviewing the Gas Policy to include an access procedure in order to ensure we are able to get into properties.
Repair Appointments Made & Kept	90%	90%	Bottom Group	Above Target
Residents' satisfaction with repairs	93%	95%	Bottom Group	Just Below Target



3. Letting of Empty Properties

Measure	Result	Target 2011/12	How we Compare with Others? (London & South East*)	What we are doing to improve our performance?
How Quickly we relet your Home?		24 Days	Bottom Group	Above Target
How Many General Needs Homes we re-let?		No Target Set	N/A	For Information Only

4. Rent Collected & Arrears

Measure	Result	Target (2010/11)	How we Compare with Others? (London & South East*)	What we are doing to improve our performance?
What is the Level of Arrears ?		5.5%	Upper Middle Group	Below target One of the main reasons for the dip in performance is the delay in processing claims for housing benefits in one of our local authorities. To address this we are having regular meetings to improve the processing times for housing benefits.
How much Rent did we collect?		99.08%	Upper Middle Group	Just Below Target The team have been tasked to increase personal contact to residents to improve our rent collection rate. This is being reviewed weekly by the Revenue Manager.
How Many Evictions for Rent Arrears were there?		No Target Set	N/A	For Information Only

5. Resident Involvement

Measure	Result	Target (2010/11)	How we Compare with Others? (London & South East*)	What we are doing to improve our performance?
How many residents have been involved this quarter		No Target Set	N/A	We are measuring how many residents have been involved. The total number involved this year – up to the end of June 2012 was 168 residents.
Changes to ISHA's services as a result of resident involvement		No Target Set	N/A	Also being measured is the number of services changed, implemented or withdrawn as a result of your involvement. So, the total number this year – up to the end of June 2012 is 10 changes to our services made as a result of residents' involvement.

Introducing additional Direct Debit payment dates.

At ISHA we are always looking at how we can help you pay your rent and help to cope with proposed welfare benefit changes.

We are now introducing additional direct debit payment days and you can choose the day of the month

on which a Direct Debit is taken from your account. The days of the month are 1st, 4th, 8th, 15th 25th and 28th of the month. A sensible date is the day after your pay day. This way, you can make sure that your money is in your account and you won't go overdrawn.

Direct Debit is the easiest and simplest way to pay your Rent.

Contact Les on 020 7704 7346 or Ola on 020 7704 7350 for further details and to make arrangements to have your rent paid by direct debit.

Are you looking for a chance to earn extra money?

Do you have odd earnings, broken or damaged jewellery that you no longer want? Then consider selling your unwanted jewellery for cash. The prices of Gold have rocketed in the past few years and you may be pleasantly surprised at how much your old unwanted jewellery is worth.

How easy is this?

The easy way is to nip down to one or two jewellers on the high street for a valuation price. You simply go from door to door, haggle and hand over your unwanted jewellery there and then. This is safe and you'll know exactly how much money you will get.

What can you sell?

• Broken jewellery

If your jewellery is broken or damaged, you could be surprised at how much it is worth. Look for old broken chains, scratched old rings or smashed brooches.

• Old gold

Unloved trinkets, unfashionable items, cufflinks, odd earrings or old earring butterfly backs which are worth approximately £2 each.

• Gold crowns

You can even get cash for your unwanted Gold crowns depending on the hole in your teeth and the weight of your crown. It could be worth up to £30.00.

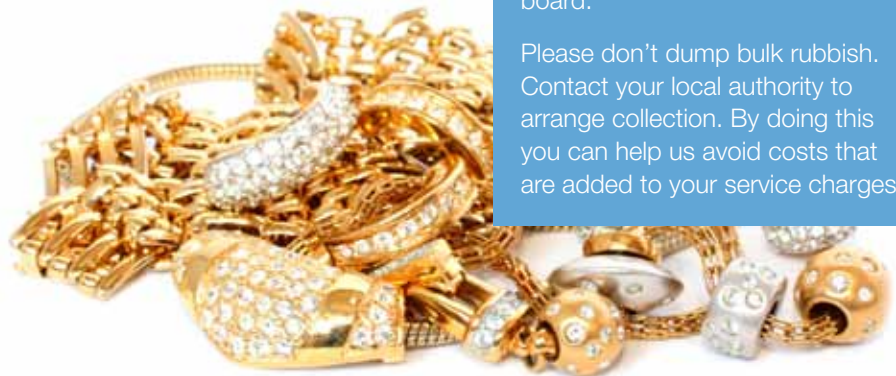
Top Tips for selling your gold

- Never ever send-off gold without knowing its value.
- Get a valuation from more than one jeweller.

In your Local Area

The new cleaning and grounds maintenance contracts have now started on all sites. We'd appreciate your help in monitoring these. Please return the survey forms that we periodically send to you (one is sent with this newsletter). You may also wish to join us on estate inspections. Dates of these are on your notice board.

Please don't dump bulk rubbish. Contact your local authority to arrange collection. By doing this you can help us avoid costs that are added to your service charges.



Be part of Islington Council's new Housing Executive

Are you interested in social housing?

Would you like to help Islington Council improve housing services?

Islington Council are establishing the Islington Housing Executive. This new body will make recommendations to the council on all key decision it takes as a landlord and will be consulted

on all strategic housing issues for the borough. The Executive will be chaired by the Lead Member for Tenants, Residents and Communities and made up of six elected council residents, four councillors and a housing association tenant living in Islington. The role of the housing association tenant representative is to provide an objective perspective on housing landlord issues and to bring a housing association

resident's perspective to strategic issues.

Could this be you? If you are interested in finding out more, please contact Islington Council's Resident Engagement Team on 020 7527 2903 or email them at resident.engagement@islington.gov.uk. Members of the Housing Executive will be provided with support and training to help fulfil their new roles.

Shakespeare House

We are delighted to report the proposed materials for the refurbishment and remodelling of Shakespeare House recently received planning approval.

The block, which is located between Lyme Grove House and Upcott House in Hackney, is in a poor state of repair and the flat sizes are considerably smaller than current space standards. Our proposals include complete remodelling to provide 18 flats (10 rent, 8 shared ownership) with all the rented homes providing family sized accommodation.

Improvements to the block include increased space standards, lift access, private balconies, improved thermal efficiency, larger windows, secure cycle storage and improved landscaping. We are designing security features to achieve Secure by Design standards with one main access



door replacing the previous open access from a number of entrances. We are also taking the opportunity to improve the communal garden area to the rear of Upcott House.

The work will start in September 2012 and complete at the end of 2013. If you would like any more information please contact Samuel Ayisi-Addo: samuella@isha.co.uk / 0207 704 7305.

In The Past Year ISHA Has Been Improving Service Charges

This Is What We Have Done So Far:

Last year we sent explanations to all leaseholders and shared owners explaining where and why we had underestimated on particular service charges, if we had underestimated by £50 or more. This year we notified all leaseholders and shared owners where we anticipated an overspend on the estimated service charges for the past financial year.

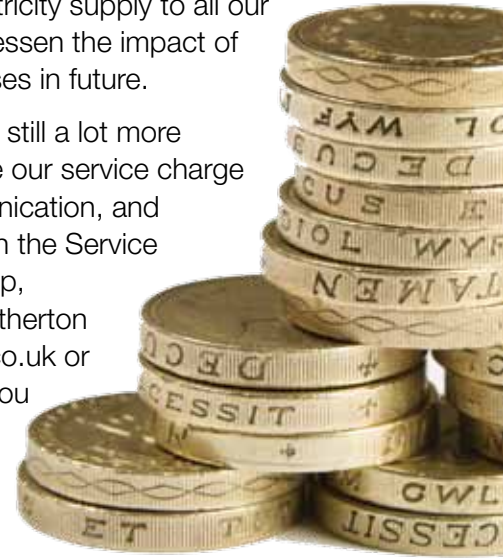
In the service charge explanations we described what each service charge is for, for example saying that the fire maintenance charge would cover costs such as hardwired smoke alarms, smoke activated emergency windows and any emergency lighting.

We have removed unnecessary service charge items from the service charge breakdown. So, if you didn't receive a lift maintenance service at your property, we removed this line from the service charge breakdown.

We have said where we would be tendering for new services and improving value for money. We have a

new service provider for pest control and lift telephone lines, which we expect will reduce costs. In future, we'll be improving the service for value for money for aerial services, fire maintenance and entryphone service. At the end of the year we need to repeat our tender for an electricity supply to all our blocks. This should lessen the impact of any electricity price rises in future.

We know that there is still a lot more work to do to improve our service charge provision and communication, and if you would like to join the Service Charge Working Group, contact Alexander Netherton on alexandern@isha.co.uk or 0207 704 7390 or if you have any questions.



Your Chance to Improve the Cleaning & Grounds Maintenance Service

We want to invite residents to join an exciting new project to look at the way in which we deliver the cleaning and grounds maintenance service.

The idea is to recruit residents to form a Scrutiny Panel. This project will be run by ISHA residents, for ISHA residents.

We aim to provide the services of a consultant; someone from outside

of ISHA to make sure the whole project goes smoothly AND we will provide as much help as possible, but YOU will be in the driving seat.

We hope to kick things off in September with a meeting of all interested residents to elect a chair – a resident who will lead the project.

So, if you are interested, or just want more information, please contact Mark Slowikowski, Head

of Housing on 020 7704 7351 or by e-mail marks@isha.co.uk or write to him at 102 Blackstock Road, London N4 2DR.

We look forward to hearing from you.



If you would like an article in this newsletter translated or in a different format contact us or tick the box then fill in your details and return it with the article.

Nëse doni të përkthyer ndonjë artikull të kësaj fletushke, n'a kontaktoni ose shënoni (✓) në kuti, pastaj plotësoni detajet tuaja dhe n'a dërgoni formën së bashku me artikullin. <input type="checkbox"/>	إذا كنت ترغب في الحصول على مقال في هذه الرسالة الإخبارية مترجماً، اتصل بنا أو قم بالتأشير على الصندوق ثم املأ بياناتك وأعدّها مع المقال. <input type="checkbox"/>
Albanian	Arabic
যদি আপনি এই নিউজলেটারের কোন একটি আর্টিক্যাল অনুবাদ আকারে পেতে চান, তাহলে আমাদের সাথে যোগাযোগ করুন বা বক্সে টিক দিন তারপর আপনার বিস্তারিত পূরণ করুন এক আর্টিক্যালসহ তা ফেরত দিন। <input type="checkbox"/>	Si vous souhaitez obtenir la traduction d'un article de cette lettre d'information, veuillez nous contacter ; alternativement, cochez la case, indiquez vos coordonnées et retournez-les avec l'article. <input type="checkbox"/>
Bengali	French
જો તમને આ સમાચાર પત્રકમાં આપેલ કોઈ લેખનું ભાષાંતર જોઈતું હોય, તો અમારો સંપર્ક કરો અથવા ખાનામાં ટિક કરો અને તે પછી તમારી વિગતો ભરીને તે લેખ સાથે પાછી મોકલી આપો. <input type="checkbox"/>	इस सूचना का कोई लेख यदि आपको अनुवाद कराना हो तो कृपया हमसे संपर्क करें, या खाने में टिक लगा कर अपनी संपर्क सूचना लिखें और यह परची उस लेख के साथ वापिस हमें भेजें। <input type="checkbox"/>
Gujarati	Hindi
Jeśli chciałby Państwo otrzymać tłumaczenie artykułu w niniejszym biuletynie na inny język, proszę się z nami skontaktować lub zaznaczyć właściwe okienko a następnie wpisać swoje dane i zwrócić formularz wraz z artykułem. <input type="checkbox"/>	Hadii aad jeceshay qoraalka warqada akhbaarta in lagu turjumo, nala soo xariir ama dhag sii sanduuqa yar markaa ka dib ku soo qor magacaagga iyo cinwaankaagga ee la' soo celi Qoraalka. <input type="checkbox"/>
Polish	Somali
Si desea la traducción de algún artículo de este boletín, contáctenos o marque la casilla y luego incluya sus datos y remita la información con el artículo. <input type="checkbox"/>	Bu haber bültenindeki bir yazının tercüme edilmesini isterseniz, bizimle irtibat kurun ya da kutuyu işaretleyerek, bilgilerinizi yazın ve yazıyla beraber geri gönderin. <input type="checkbox"/>
Spanish	Turkish
Nếu bạn muốn bài nào được dịch ra trong tờ báo này, thì hãy liên lạc với chúng tôi hoặc đánh dấu vào ô này, rồi điền chi tiết của bạn và gửi trả lại cùng với bài báo đó. <input type="checkbox"/>	اس خبرنامہ کا کوئی مضمون اگر آپ کو ترجمہ کرانا ہوتو براہ مہربانی ہم سے رابطہ کریں یا خانے میں ٹک لگا کر رابطہ کی معلومات بھریں اور یہ پرچی اس مضمون کے ساتھ ہمیں بھیجیں۔ <input type="checkbox"/>
Vietnamese	Urdu

Your Name: _____

Your Address: _____

ISHA, 102 Blackstock Road, London, N4 2DR

Tel: 020 7704 7300 Email: isha@isha.co.uk

Contact our team..

Resident Services Team
for all general enquiries and repairs

020 7704 7300 isha@isha.co.uk

Your Resident Services Manager

Dexter Edward 020 7704 7353 dextere@isha.co.uk

Teslim Fagbayi 020 7704 7341 teslimf@isha.co.uk

Geoff Henson 020 7704 7392 geoffh@isha.co.uk

Your Allocations & Supported Housing Manager

Peter Ward 020 7704 7347 peterw@isha.co.uk

Your Resident Service Improvement Manager

Tullia Morris 020 7704 7349 tulliam@isha.co.uk



EMERGENCY OUT OF HOURS NUMBERS

LIFT BREAKDOWN

0800 652 0692

EMERGENCY REPAIRS

020 7704 7300

GAS LEAKS

0800 111 999

ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

0800 075 6699

You can also report a repair, pay your rent or contact us through the website www.isha.co.uk

...OTHER USEFUL NUMBERS

To pay your rent or for enquiries about your rent account:

If you live in Hackney contact Les Hoyte on 0207 704 7346

If you live in Islington, Camden or Waltham Forest contact Ola Ogunlana on 0207 704 7350

You can also pay your rent with a credit card. To do so have your credit card details handy and ring either Les or Ola on the above telephone numbers

Call the Service Delivery Team on **020 7704 7300** to book an appointment with Capitalise for free money advice.