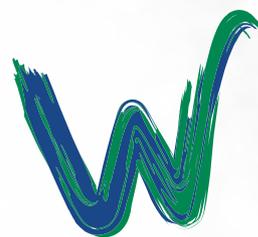


# Wythenshawe Life

[www.wchg.org.uk](http://www.wchg.org.uk)



Wythenshawe  
Community Housing Group

Winter  
2013



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Excellence

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**Your Feedback**

Information on how to make a complaint, comment or comment about our services

## Feedback Leaflet INSIDE!

If you  
or anyone you know  
would like this publication  
**IN LARGE TYPE**  
or audio format please  
contact us on  
**0800 633 5500**



## Combating fraud

The Government has introduced new powers and penalties to combat tenancy fraud.

As a result, social housing tenants sub-letting their homes could face up to two years in prison and a fine. As landlords, we will have the ability to recover profits that are made.

Tenancy cheats who rent out their home and live elsewhere cost the taxpayer up to £1.8 billion a year. It is estimated that around 100,000 social homes in England are unlawfully occupied. It also deprives homes to people in real need.

Sub-letting is a serious breach of your tenancy terms. If caught, you could lose your home, your Assured Tenancy status and receive a fine and custodial sentence.

If you are aware of anyone sub-letting their home, please contact us on **0800 633 5500 (Willow Park)** or **0300 111 000 (Parkway Green)** and we will investigate.

## Taking a bow



Congratulations to Rana Holland and Victoria McDowell for being short-listed in the inaugural Women in Housing Awards, and to Victoria for winning the Young Achiever category!

The awards recognise the achievements of women working in the Housing sector. Rana, our Communications Manager, was shortlisted for the Best Marketer/ Communications category (sponsored by *Inside Housing*).

Victoria, our Employment and Skills Development Manager, won the Young Achiever Housing and Community Development category (sponsored by Aster) for those under 30 who “demonstrate understanding of the wider needs of the community”. There was strong competition with entries from all over the country!

The awards were hosted by Commonwealth Gold Medalist Diane Modahl and presented by the “First Woman of Football” Karren Brady, who both inspired the whole audience.

Victoria and Rana our Women in Housing Awards stars



## Glittering performance!

We have been awarded the prestigious Customer Service Excellence Accreditation after putting tenants at the heart of everything we do. Three of our services were awarded distinctions:

- WCHG Wardens First Responder service for providing a fast response to tenants. Staff have been trained to use defibrillators. We were one of the first housing associations to adopt this service.
- Real Food – find out more on page 6.
- Employment Initiatives - read the latest on pages 14 -15.



## Stop press

The Darke family, nominated by our Real Food Team, won the top prize in the Green Futures category of this year’s Manchester Be Proud Awards. The Real Food Team was shortlisted for the award too!

## Listening to you

Your feedback, good or bad, helps us develop our services.

Together with our Tenants Complaint Panel, Tenants Committee and staff, and with advice from the Housing Ombudsman, we have reviewed our policies and procedures and developed a new policy, *Your Feedback*.

The policy leaflet is enclosed, and is available from our customer feedback team, our website and from any of our receptions.



## Opening the door to New Foxfield

Our first residents are delighted with their new homes at New Foxfield in Newall Green.

One tenant, Mrs Eden, said: “We lived in our four-bed house in Baguley for nearly 30 years but since moving there has been no looking back. The community spirit here is great. We have made great friends, and we all look out for each other. It’s brilliant.”

This development of 68 affordable homes was officially opened by Chair of the PGHT Board, Cllr Paul Andrews, WCHG Group Chief Executive, Nigel Wilson, and MP for Wythenshawe and Sale East, Paul Goggins.

At the opening, Cllr Paul Andrews said: “Making sure there is enough good quality, affordable housing available for the people of Wythenshawe is a real challenge and one that we will continue to address as we go forward at WCHG.”

The developers were Lovell whose Regional Director Nigel Yates says: “As a Manchester-based company, we feel a particular pride in having helped deliver this significant and much-needed development.”



The Homes & Communities Agency (HCA) invested £1.7m in the development as part of its Affordable Homes Programme.



## Growing tribute to Tony

Part of the development has been named after Councillor Tony Burns, former Chair of the Parkway Green Board and Lord Mayor of Manchester who sadly passed away in April 2012.

His wife, Sheila Burns, was guest of honour at the official opening of the Tony Burns Garden and unveiled a commemorative stone in memory of her husband.

Chief Executive Nigel Wilson described the development as: “A fitting tribute to Tony who played such an important part in the local community over the years and was instrumental in the setting up and running of Parkway Green and helping us start the work on our new Group Structure.

“These new homes will leave a lasting legacy in Wythenshawe for the local community who were always close to Tony’s heart.”



### Customer Feedback

I thought that the Wardens were brilliant, and I think it’s the kind of service we have needed in our area

# Make sure you get the balance right!

Don't risk losing your home...

If you are struggling to pay your rent and bills please contact us for advice on:



It's about getting the **Christmas/rent** balance right!

Willow Park  
T: 0800 633 5500

Parkway Green  
T: 0300 111 0000

## £aving tips



For more help to reduce gas and electricity bills, speak to our Big Energy champion Rob Brereton and his community energy champions. They are part of a Department of Energy and Climate Change Project which runs until the end of March 2014. Rob can be contacted on 0161 946 7516.



### Heating

Turn your thermostat down by one degree - save £10%  
Eliminate draughts with curtains and draught excluders



### Washing

Wait until you have a full load  
Use an economy or low temperature wash



### Lights and plugs

Energy saving bulbs are now available from many poundstores  
Turn phone chargers off when not in use



### Cooking

A covered pan cooks more quickly and uses less energy  
Only boil enough water for what you need



### Shopping around

For gas and electricity use the Parkway Green Energy or Willow Park Energy websites or telephone comparison services.

## Say NO to Payday Loans

Nearly half of payday loan users have taken out credit they couldn't repay



- Loan sharks are illegal money lenders
- One in three people who take out a payday loan get into more money trouble
- Interest rates in the thousands of percent
- Tempting 'rollovers' get you to borrow more
- Once you start, it's hard to stop

# Helping you meet the 'bedroom tax' challenge...

The bedroom tax continues to provide challenges to our tenants. WE are helping tenants who want to downsize by supporting them through the rehousing process.

There is also help available through the Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) scheme which has relaxed its criteria so that more people can apply including:

- those who are looking to move but are finding it is taking time to find a smaller property
- if you are a care giver or receive care from a network of people that means you cannot move (you don't need to be claiming Carer's Allowance)
- you are looking for employment
- you have children that need a room, but don't live with you full time.

We can help you apply for DHP. If you have previously been refused we can ask for your case to be looked at again using the new criteria.

### Qualifying age creeps higher

The bedroom tax applies to people whilst they are of working age. This means you have to pay the bedroom tax until you reach pension credit age. This was 61 years old, but the Government is increasing the qualifying age for pension credit to 66 years old by 2020.

If you are approaching pension age you can check the date you will reach pension credit age and no longer have to pay the bedroom tax at: [www.gov.uk/calculate-state-pension](http://www.gov.uk/calculate-state-pension), or, if you don't use the internet, by contacting your Rents Officer.



Contact Us Now...  
We are here to help

Willow Park Tenants:  
E: [welfarereform@willow-park.co.uk](mailto:welfarereform@willow-park.co.uk)  
T: 0800 633 55 00

Parkway Green Tenants:  
E: [welfarereform@parkwaygreen.co.uk](mailto:welfarereform@parkwaygreen.co.uk)  
T: 0300 111 0000

## Benefit Cap - helping families adjust

We have 31 families who have been subject to the £500 per week Benefit Cap since 30 September 2013. We are working with these families through Real Opportunities to support them into employment and to manage their household budget.

All have five or more children and our Real Food team is showing them how to reduce their food bills through healthy eating to help them afford to pay any rent shortfalls.

### Universal Credit

The rollout of Universal Credit has been slowed down to allow more testing of processes and the support that will be needed. The Government aims to have everyone transferred onto Universal Credit by 2017, and we will continue to keep you updated.



### Customer Feedback

We were told that our repair operatives did 'excellent work'; everything was left "very clean and tidy"

# Celebrations for Sherryl!

'Bubbly' Sherryl Dyson - a Volunteer Peer Mentor at Benchill Youth HUB - has been crowned Club Volunteer of the Year at the Boys and Girls Club Awards.

Sherryl, 20, is also a volunteer co-facilitator of Youth Re-born, Willow Park's Youth Panel. She enjoys her work so much that she enrolled at The Manchester College, and gained an NVQ in Youth Work.

Wendy Hall, Youth Advice and Support Worker for WCHG, said: *"She is bubbly and friendly and always has a smile on her face. Her willingness to help others with their problems means that our young people respect and look up to her."*



▲ Volunteer of the Year, Sherryl Dyson, left, with Wendy Hall at the Awards



# Ready to save lives

Nine of our young people from Benchill Youth HUB took part in a "Stick it" First Aid training course, learning skills that can be the difference between a life lost and a life saved!

The course was run by St John's Ambulance and organised by Boys and Girls Clubs Greater Manchester.



# Digging in to help cancer survivors

We have donated a community allotment to a new support network to help cancer survivors combat feelings of isolation often experienced after completing treatment.

The network - Macmillan Connections - was officially launched across Manchester with the opening of the allotment at Haveley Circle, Benchill. Our Real Food Team is also getting involved in supporting the allotment.

Macmillan Connections is the brainchild of cancer survivor and Macmillan Cancer Information and Support Manager, Debbie Smith, and will be run from the Macmillan Cancer Information and Support Centre based at UHSM's (University Hospital of South Manchester) Wythenshawe Hospital.

For more information about Macmillan Connections please contact the Support Centre at UHSM on **0161 291 4876**.



▲ Head gardener at Tatton Park Simon Tetlow



# Dave steps up!

Dave Chorlton has been elected Chair of the Willow Park Board, taking over from Dennis Finnegan whose term of office had come to an end.

Dave is a Business Development Manager for a printing company in Stockport; was a founder member of the BW3 networking group for Business Working in Wythenshawe and his association with the area spans more than 45 years.



▲ Nigel Wilson, Group CEO of Wythenshawe Community Housing Group, left, and Eddy Newman, Chair of WCHG, right, welcome Dave Chorlton to his new role

Eddy Newman, Chair of WCHG, said: *"We would like to thank Dennis for all his hard work during his term as Chair and congratulate him on his re-election to the Board. We are delighted with Dave's appointment as Chair of the Willow Park Board. His knowledge and skills of the business environment in Wythenshawe is second to none and he will bring fantastic skills and knowledge to the role."*



Find out more about the Willow Park, Parkway Green and WCHG Boards at [www.willowpark.co.uk](http://www.willowpark.co.uk); [www.parkwaygreen.co.uk](http://www.parkwaygreen.co.uk) and [www.wchg.org.uk](http://www.wchg.org.uk)

# Make sure you check out!



We **WISH** you well in your new home, but please remember you must give us an official Notice in writing of at least four weeks of:

- the date you intend to move
- a forwarding address
- the reason you are moving.

We will arrange an Exit Survey at your home before you move to look at what repairs you or the Trust may need to carry out. When you move, you need to hand in your keys and complete a termination form or send a nominated person to do so.



1.

- If you do not provide us with a written letter you will continue to be liable for rent until we can terminate the lease.



2.

- If you move out and the property is not up to standard we may charge you to put it right.

For more information on bringing your property up to scratch before moving contact your Neighbourhood Officer on **0800 633 5500 (Willow Park)** or **0300 111 000 (Parkway Green)**.

# Community Library - the full story!

The Community Library at Parkway Green House is now open and looking for volunteers to join its Friends of Northenden Community Library Group.

Customers can reserve and collect books using the e-library, as well as selecting from stock books, and there are computers with free Internet access available to use. Other activities include story times.

Councillor Rosa Battle, Executive Member for Culture and Leisure, said: "In close partnership with Wythenshawe Community Housing Group, we have worked to ensure that Northenden residents have access to library facilities in a location which is central to the area.

"We are now calling for local people who are passionate about their library to talk to us about how they can get involved. With their help, this new facility will grow and thrive in the future."

Opening hours are :

Monday	2pm – 5pm
Tuesday	10am – 1pm
Wednesday	10am – 1pm
Thursday	2pm – 5pm
Friday	10am – 1pm

**Cllr Rosa Battle calling for book lovers to get involved**

**Volunteers are needed to:** help run the library, show customers how to use its services and answer enquiries, to create displays and exhibitions and to deliver story sessions and other events. If **YOU** would like to get involved, please contact Oliver Larke: [o.larke@manchester.gov.uk](mailto:o.larke@manchester.gov.uk)



# Metrolink on track

Good news - Metrolink says the end of the major road works is in sight for spring 2014!

After this, minor works will be ongoing for some time and will be less disruptive. They say: "We would like to thank local residents for their patience during construction."

Metrolink will shortly be recruiting more tram drivers and Passenger Service Representatives as the network gets bigger. Jobs will be advertised at [www.metrolink.co.uk](http://www.metrolink.co.uk).

The new Metrolink line to Manchester Airport, is part of a £1.5 billion investment programme to provide a new transport link through Wythenshawe, improving connections to jobs, healthcare, shops and leisure opportunities across the region.



**Fact**  
Metrolink is the largest transport project currently being delivered in the UK outside London.

Your Wythenshawe Community Housing Group

## NEIGHBOURHOOD WARDENS

Challenging and preventing crime in your local areas.

**0161 946 9501**  
24 Hour CCTV Control Room

**1pm – 9:45pm**  
Normal hours of patrols



## Sowing the seeds of change

The Evolution Project is an intensive programme to help young people at risk or actively involved in anti social behavior to change their ways!

Our 2nd Evolution Project - a joint venture between our Youth Team, led by Wendy Hall, and our Community Safety Team, lead by Sarah Lomax - featured the reality of gang life, victim empathy and crime and consequences. Participants also went for a motivational walk up Moel Famau in North Wales - for some it proved a life-changing event.



**Our Evolution Team in North Wales**

## Wardens go back to school

Our Wardens are working with several local primary schools to deliver programmes like Stranger Danger, ASB, The Environment and Staying Safe. A workshop at St Wilfrid's school on Stranger Danger and Staying Safe was well received by both the pupils and teaching staff.



**Wardens with pupils from St Wilfred's**

If you are worried about ASB, you can request assistance or report an incident to the control room/ Wardens by calling 0161 946 9501. You can also attend our Wednesday drop in surgeries 11-12noon at Parkway Green House or Bowland Road or 11am-2pm at Wythenshawe House.

# NEWS from the courts



## Arrested

Emergency injunctions have been granted against two tenants who made threats to kill and verbally abused their neighbours. They also threatened WCHG staff. One tenant has since been arrested and sentenced to three months in prison.

An injunction was obtained against a tenant who continued to hold parties and play loud music late at night.

## Caught on CCTV

Information from CCTV has helped to prosecute two young men for a shoplifting offence after CCTV staff were able to direct police to their location. The young men were given 100 hours community service and 12 months probation.

## Equipment removed

Staff have removed a stereo, CD player and speakers from a property after professional witnesses confirmed a tenant had broken a Noise Abatement Notice to stop playing loud music. The tenant will have to pay £800 costs to have the equipment returned.

## Police operations

Anti Social Behaviour (ASB) officers working alongside Police during "Operation Synergy" helped secure a number of arrests and subsequent convictions for public order offences, including abusive and threatening behaviour.



Five males and one female were arrested in September as part of WCHG joint working with GMP on "Operation Pavel" in relation to burglaries across Wythenshawe. The individuals are awaiting trial.

# Thumbs up... for a cracker of a conference!



Our winners ▲

## Around 250 attendees enjoyed a packed agenda at the Wythenshawe Community Housing Group (WCHG) first ever Tenant Conference.

The event, at The Forum, included a 'chat show' and 'Question Time' with senior management and staff, and a chance to win prizes with a game of "Play Your Cards Right".

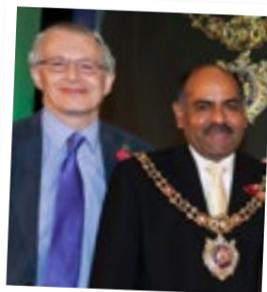
Community Hero and Garden Awards were presented and the Real Food Wythenshawe Team demonstrated how to make a mouthwatering leek and potato soup.

Eddy Newman, Chair of the WCHG Board, said; "Many of our tenants work with us on our committees and panels and I am proud to be here at the Tenant Conference as we take some time out to celebrate some key achievements for the Group and recognise some of those unsung heroes across our neighbourhoods in our Community Awards."

Nigel Wilson, WCHG Chief Executive Officer said, "Since the group began back in April we have undergone a fair amount of change but we have remained focussed on delivering a first class service to our tenants. This is the time of year that we take stock and reflect on our progress so far, so we are delighted that you have had this opportunity to ask some questions and feedback your comments so that we continue to provide you with an excellent service that meets your needs."



"The feedback I've received has been very positive. We are already looking forward to next year! I'm excited about the challenges ahead and more opportunities for the tenants to get involved!" Bernard Caine, Chair of the WCHG Tenant Committee



## Recognising our Community Heroes!

The Lord Mayor of Manchester, Councillor Naeem ul Hassan, attended the conference and presented the prizes to the winners:

Award	Winner
Good Neighbour	Robert McKenzie
Young Person	Jimmy Kelly
Community Group	Sarells Morris Troupe
Environmental Champion	Ann Lloyd
Staff Award	Nicola Hamilton
Anti Social Behaviour Champion	Rhobert Williams
Involvement Champion	Fred Bates

## From the floor!

The Under Occupation/Bedroom Tax, investment in new homes for Wythenshawe and neighbourhood issues such as dog-fouling and litter were amongst topics raised by tenants for the Senior Management Team and special guest Michelle Reid, Chief Executive of TPAS (Tenant Participation Advisory Service).



"The 'Community Angels' (involved tenants) worked really hard with WCHG to make this event a success. Talking to tenants, they have been really appreciative!" Eva Mulholland, Tenant and Community Angel, Newall Green



"Glynn Evans was brilliant - especially in the 'Play Your Cards Right' quiz! He really held the event together. It was great to see new people getting involved and it was a great chance to talk with other tenants too." Mr and Mrs Benyon, Tenants and Community Angels, Benchill



## Bloomin' Great – Garden Winners!

Best Garden winner	Monica Winters, Benchill
Best Garden runner up	Brian Whitehead, Northern Moor
Front Garden winner	Christine and Anthony Robinson, Newall Green
Front Garden runner up	Brenda Jones, Newall Green

Judges Special Award	Grant Higginson, Baguley
Home Owners Award winner	Annie Craven, Baguley
Home Owners runner up	Mr and Mrs Simons, Brooklands
Communal Gardens winner	Shenton TRA, Brooklands
Communal Gardens runner up	Alf Morris Court, Brooklands



## Our Angels!

WCHG Involvement Manager Dean Slavin paid special thanks to our Community Angels. They are involved tenants who led on organising the whole event! If you would like to get involved, contact the Involvement Team on 0300 111 0000 or 0800 633 5500 or email: [getinvolved@wchg.org.uk](mailto:getinvolved@wchg.org.uk)

## Know your Neighbourhood officer

There have been a number of changes to our Neighbourhood Officers, and we were asked at the conference whether we could update you. We are happy to oblige!

Our Neighbourhood Officers cover the following areas. To contact them call 0300 111 0000 or 0800 633 5500.



**Michelle Wilcox**  
Baguley/Royal Oak  
[michelle.wilcox@wchg.org.uk](mailto:michelle.wilcox@wchg.org.uk)



**Andy Coutts**  
Brooklands/Bideford/Butcher Lane  
[andy.coutts@wchg.org.uk](mailto:andy.coutts@wchg.org.uk)



**Julie Brennan**  
Newall Green  
[julie.brennan@wchg.org.uk](mailto:julie.brennan@wchg.org.uk)



**Janet Power**  
Northenden/Northern Moor North/  
Northern Moor West (to Orton Road)  
[janet.power@wchg.org.uk](mailto:janet.power@wchg.org.uk)



**Sarah Lomax**  
Northern Moor  
[sarah.lomax@wchg.org.uk](mailto:sarah.lomax@wchg.org.uk)



**Bev Green**  
Woodhouse Park/Moss Nook  
[bev.green@wchg.org.uk](mailto:bev.green@wchg.org.uk)



**Nicola Edmonds**  
Woodhouse Park/Moss Nook  
[nicola.edmonds@wchg.org.uk](mailto:nicola.edmonds@wchg.org.uk)



**Marion McIver**  
Sharston/Crossacres/Benchill  
[marion.mciver@wchg.org.uk](mailto:marion.mciver@wchg.org.uk)



**Natalie Leigh**  
Brownley Green  
[natalie.leigh@wchg.org.uk](mailto:natalie.leigh@wchg.org.uk)



**Steve Campbell**  
Benchill  
[steve.campbell@wchg.org.uk](mailto:steve.campbell@wchg.org.uk)



**Andrea Murphy**  
Peel Hall  
[andrea.murphy@wchg.org.uk](mailto:andrea.murphy@wchg.org.uk)

"Think WCHG and the involved tenants have done a brilliant job!" Jackie Butterley, Tenant, Brooklands

Well done to everyone who was nominated and to everyone who entered!

"Great venue. Best part was the Awards ceremony - rewarding people in the community." Martin Williams, Tenant Board member, Poundswick



**Woodhouse Park Lifestyle Centre**  
Portway (junction with Selstead Road), M22 1QW  
Tel: 0161 436 0560  
www.WoodhouseParkLifestyleCentre.co.uk

## Strictly Young at Heart!

We celebrated International Day of Older Persons with a fantastic event which had people cooking, salsa dancing, exercising and chatting throughout the day.

Young at Heart emphasised healthy and happy lifestyles for people of all ages! Wythenshawe FM broadcast live from the event with a cookery demonstration by our Real Food team and craft sessions to make bird feeders from this year's apple crop.

The Police, Metrolink and South Manchester Healthy Living Network joined with volunteer groups such as The Generation Project - see page 16 - to talk about their work.

Health check-ups were available and there was a chance to sample a Reiki head massage, keep fit sessions, indoor bowling and sequence and Salsa dancing. A free concert by 'Loose Change' entertained those enjoying a lunch provided by the Styles cafe - and even had them dancing in the aisles!

Opening times for Woodhouse Park Lifestyle Centre this Christmas

24 December	9.00am – 12.00pm
25 & 26 December	Closed
27 & 28 December	10.00am – 4.00pm
29 December	Closed
30 December	10.00am – 4.00pm
31 December	9.00am – 12.00pm
1 January	Closed



## High fives!

Together with Manchester United Foundation we hosted a five-a-side football tournament to mark World Mental Health Day.

Teams from all over Greater Manchester, whose members may have experienced problems with mental health, took part.

Manchester United Foundation's health project coordinator, Steve Hoy, explained: "I'm a great believer in people confronting taboo subjects. The more we confront these issues the more people will be open to getting the relevant support to progress in life, instead of suffering in isolation at home."

The semi-finals and final were held at a The Cliff Training Ground attended by 'Busby Babe' Wilf McGuinness.

Steve Hoy, Chair Eddie Newman and players at the Lifestyle Centre



From left: Steve Hoy, Wilf McGuinness and Jordan Tyms from the Lifestyle Centre



## Get Animated!

Think Wallace and Gromit - and you will not be far wrong!

WOW Zone's qualified teachers are working with more than 120 local children on amazingly creative ICT projects to develop ideas from original concepts to detailed storyboard, voice recording, capturing animation and editing to a final short film.

As well as technical skills children who attend the WOW Zone's dedicated IT suite learn crucial life skills such as patience, self-confidence, teamwork and communication!

Did you know? WOW stands for 'Widening Opportunities in Wythenshawe'. Sessions are arranged directly through the local schools.



**Bideford Community Centre**  
Bideford Drive, Baguley, M23 0QH  
Tel: Nicola Hamilton, Well Being Coordinator  
on: 0161 946 6468 or email: nicola.hamilton@wchg.org.uk

## Hot on fun!

Our Winter Warmer Party set the temperature for a MERRY festive season of sizzling celebrations!

In December we are planning Christmas Carols at the Bideford Centre sung by local primary school Sacred Heart with local residents welcome to attend. This will be the third year running for an event with a growing following!

Real Neighbours are serving up a treat on Monday 23 December with Christmas Dinner, music and entertainment for people on the Bideford Estate who may be alone during this time. If you, or someone you know, would like to attend please contact Nicola Hamilton on 07525 905014.

The Johannesburg Real Neighbours Group threw a Christmas Party on the 12 December for residents of the area and, as we went to press, plans were afoot for a party for Frank Price Court.

As we move into 2014 we are looking forward to planning more events and projects. Watch this space!

### Christmas Opening Hours

We close on  
Tuesday 24 December

Re-open Tuesday 7 January

## Thank you!

To all our volunteers for their dedication and commitment. Find out about the help Real Neighbours offer over winter on page 17

Real Neighbours. Wythenshawe.



Kirsty Taylor, Lead Volunteer at the Winter Warmer Party



**Benchill Community Centre**  
Benchill Road, Benchill, M22 8EJ  
Tel: 0161 945 0879  
www.benchillcommunitycentre.co.uk

**Christmas Opening Hours**  
We close on Tuesday 24 December 12pm  
Re-open on Thursday 2 January 8am

### Afterschool Club

We will be open every evening, Monday - Friday 3.15pm – 5.30pm until Friday 20 December and will reopen on Monday 6 January. The cost is just 50p which includes a snack. Come and enjoy fun activities from sports, arts and crafts to pool, cookery and much more!

### ESOL dates

We are currently running our second 12-week English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) course. If you, or someone you know, is interested in Entry Level English classes please contact the centre for dates in 2014.

### Seasonal cheer!

As we went to press we were holding our Christmas Party for local elderly residents with a three-course meal, sing-a-long, carols, entertainment, raffle and lots of fun to be had!

### Learn, Achieve, Believe (LAB)

Are you unemployed? Do you want a better life but not sure how to achieve it? Do you want to feel more confident?

Our LAB course can help and you can receive up to £100 in training allowance, including £12 travel expenses and £40 childcare each week. Get a certificate, job reference, build your confidence, have fun and meet new people.

We have courses lined up for 2014 Monday – Friday 10am – 3pm. If you are interested contact Meg on 07854 582897.



# Apprentices with a fine future

Meet our 11 new apprentices as they start three-year training.



▲ Apprentices with Abbey Watson, Apprentice Manager

They have already proved themselves remarkable after beating off tough opposition from over 70 applicants to secure their places!

They are all from local Wythenshawe schools and colleges, including the MEA, Newall Green High School, St. Paul's and The Manchester College. They have secured apprenticeships as gas technicians, electricians, roofers, joiners, bricklayers or as plasterers.



Aqib Ahmad, 19, from the MEA  
*"My Dad's an electrician and I've always wanted a trade. I was ecstatic when I found out that my application had been successful!"*



Mollie Collinson, 18, from The Manchester College  
*"After school I went to study plumbing at college. I did my work experience in gas servicing so I'm over the moon to be starting as a gas apprentice!"*



Dillon Hargreaves, 16, from St Paul's  
*"I heard about the apprenticeships at school and I'm thrilled to have been chosen as an apprentice joiner. I'm keen to work hard and get my qualifications."*



▲ Chief Executive Nigel Wilson with Aqib, Mollie and Dillon

## Ready to work!

### A big thank you

to suppliers who have donated tool bags to the Apprentices for their relevant trades. Many thanks to Axon Buildbase, Plumb Centre and Parts Centre, Eyre and Elliston.



# A cuppa cheer for job hunters!

Wythenshawe Futures is our programme that provides training, skills and opportunities for the people of Wythenshawe. It includes:

### Servings of confidence!

We worked with SimTrava, a franchise partner of Costa Limited, to recruit for a local Barista. Our pre-employment course at the Lifestyle Centre developed candidates with confidence, presentation skills, team work and initiative. Everybody who completed it will be invited to interview – we wish them luck!

### Real experience

In partnership with The Manchester College, we are once again offering a number of adult work placements so that local learners get the experience they need to complete their NVQ Level 1 in Business Administration and to improve their chances of getting employment or further training.

### Sweeping into action

We have our very own in-house street cleansing team helping to make Wythenshawe a place where people have pride in their homes and service. The six strong team (pictured below) went into action on 1 November. They are all local people recruited through a pre-employment course run with The Manchester College. They are working towards an apprenticeship in Cleaning and Support Services and other training opportunities.



### Breaking down Barriers

Real Opportunities helps overcome the barriers which stop you from getting into work or training. If you join the programme and attend the National Careers Service appointment, then you will also be made aware of employment opportunities exclusively available to people in Real Opportunities.



To find out about any of these opportunities, contact the Futures Team on 0161 946 7545.

## Colin's story



Colin had been a full-time Carer for his father since 2008. He had been doing some voluntary work but knew he needed to update his skills to make himself more 'employable', so he contacted the employment and skills team at Wythenshawe Community Housing Group.

Our Real Opportunities service gave him some guidance and mentoring, and he successfully completed several rounds of interviews to land a full time job with a local call centre company Intelling.

Colin says: *"The job is great! I just want to say thank you for all your support."*

If you think the Real Opportunities team could help you get back into work, please contact Sarah Ritchie on 0161 946 9153 or email: [realopportunities@wchg.org.uk](mailto:realopportunities@wchg.org.uk)



### Customer Feedback

We were very impressed with the Neighbourhood Warden Service

# Tackling loneliness



Do you know someone who might like to become involved in the Generation Project - a scheme to ensure older people in our area are not left lonely and isolated?

- Amongst its initiatives are:
- Sunday afternoon social and creative activities
  - a befriending project with volunteers visiting the elderly in their homes at evenings and weekends
  - energetic and motivated elderly individuals contributing their skills and experiences to lead events

The Generation Project works with local businesses, community groups and spaces and with other local initiatives. To find out more, or to volunteer go to [www.thegenerationproject.co.uk](http://www.thegenerationproject.co.uk) or email [thegpprojects@live.co.uk](mailto:thegpprojects@live.co.uk)

# Bids welcome!

Voluntary and community groups can now bid for funding of up to £2,500 from our Wythenshawe Community Development Grants.

Projects must benefit your neighbourhood. Priority will be given to small unfunded voluntary and community groups.

We are unable to make grants to:

- Individuals
- Profit making organisations
- Projects which promote political or religious activities
- Projects or activities which are the responsibility of statutory organisations



# Charter for the over 50s



Over 50? Finding it difficult to know where to go for information or to access services?

A new Wythenshawe Age Friendly Network is being formed to bring together services and groups working with older people, and to develop the Wythenshawe Age Friendly Charter.

Jane McAllister, Partnership Health Worker, will be working with partners and residents across Wythenshawe to develop it. To find out more, contact Jane on **0161 217 3444** or email [jane.mcallister@mhsc.nhs.uk](mailto:jane.mcallister@mhsc.nhs.uk)

# Top Troupe!



▲ Tudor Rosettes Morris Dancing Troupe received funding from our community fund for uniforms. They are pictured here with their trophies after winning a regional championship.

# Community First pot

Projects in Baguley, Brooklands, Northenden, Sharston and Woodhouse Park may qualify for funding under the Government's Community First initiative that runs until March 2015.

Projects must help communities come together to identify their strengths and local priorities in order to plan for their future and become more resilient.

To find out more about Development Grants or Community First Funding contact Sarah Woolley on the Regeneration Team on **0800 633 5500** or **0300 111 0000** or email [sarah.woolley@wchg.org.uk](mailto:sarah.woolley@wchg.org.uk)

# OUR WINTER TIPS Boilers

For Combination Boilers Only:

**Do** ✓

- ensure main electrical isolator switch is "on"
- check the gas meter has sufficient credit
- check the time clock is set correctly
- set the heating programme to desired positions/times
- set the room thermostat (normally located in the hall) to the desired temperature
- contact the Customer Services Team if the pressure gauge drops to zero AND the boiler will not ignite
- report a leaking pipe, valve or radiator to us immediately

**Don't** X

- attempt to vent the radiators
- remove a radiator, part of the system or alter the heating system in any way
- you must not turn off the electricity or gas supply to the boiler. (Unless in case of an emergency – gas leak, fire etc.)

# All Boilers – other things that could make your boilers shut down

A pipe from the bottom of your boiler vents moisture to the drain outside. If this pipe freezes your boiler will shut down and you will be without heating/hot water. You can thaw these pipes yourself but you must follow these instructions very carefully:

- only thaw an outlet pipe that is at ground level and which is easily accessible
- use a hot water bottle or heat wrap (like those used to ease muscle discomfort) as a suitable and safe way of thawing the pipe
- once a pipe is thawed, reset your boiler by pressing the reset button and waiting for it to fire up.

If you are still having problems, contact Customer Services see right.

**Warning!** • NEVER use boiling water to thaw a pipe  
• NEVER use a naked flame to thaw a pipe

# Ready to help

No matter how bad the winter, our Real Neighbours are ready to help out!

We will contact our older and more vulnerable tenants to make sure that they have all the essentials they need and that they feel safe. We will offer support and assistance where we can, whether this be practical support such as shopping or just reassuring you that we are here.

If you would like to become a Real Neighbour, or know someone who could do with their help, contact Nicola Hamilton on **07525 905014**, email [Nicola.Hamilton@wchg.org.uk](mailto:Nicola.Hamilton@wchg.org.uk) or contact via the Customer Contact Centres.

# CHECK YOUR COVER!

Remember, in case of an accident, such as a flood, your possessions are not automatically covered by insurance. If you don't already have home contents cover we offer a new cost effective insurance policy. Simply fill in an application form at one of our offices or email Chelsea Ainsworth on [Chelsea.Ainsworth@wchg.org.uk](mailto:Chelsea.Ainsworth@wchg.org.uk) or contact her via our Customer Contact Centres.



# Preventing burst and frozen pipes

Find your stop tap

Make sure you know where your stop tap is and how to turn it off. A stop tap is a valve that turns off the cold water system to your home. It is usually under the sink in your kitchen, but could also be in your bathroom or even outside. If you have a burst pipe, turning it off will help prevent flooding and serious damage.



Check where it is today. Give our Customer Services a call if you cannot find it!

# Useful numbers and websites

- Willow Park Customer Services **0800 633 5500**
- Parkway Green Customer Services **0300 111 0000**
- Smell Gas? National Grid - **0800 111 999**
- No Power? Electricity Northwest - **0800 195 41 41**
- Manchester City Council updates [www.manchester.gov.uk](http://www.manchester.gov.uk) **0161 234 5004**
- Local travel updates [www.bbc.co.uk/travelnews/manchester](http://www.bbc.co.uk/travelnews/manchester)

# A Day in the life of ... a Service Inspector

Service Inspectors check and monitor our services to ensure they are being done properly and up to standard. They ask customers what they think - this can be done over the phone or alternatively they carry out on-site inspections. We think our Service Inspectors give us a fair view of what is going on and tell us what they really think.

This volunteer activity provides us with the customer's perspective and helps us to improve services for your community.

In return for their time all our Service Inspectors receive:

- Training to enhance their skills and ability
- Help and support
- Personal development

- A sense of achievement knowing they have made a difference
- Knowledge of community issues



**Nina Purse, Service Inspector, says:**

*"I love working for Wythenshawe Community Housing. I have been volunteering for about six years and enjoy being a Service Inspector. I have carried out various tasks such as inspecting walk ups, going on estate walkabouts and doing a review of the concierge service. I like getting out and about otherwise I'd be at home on my own. I also love the people I work with and have made some very close friends."*

## Wordy Worm



competition

Find six chunky green words **JUST LIKE THIS** in this issue to make up a word worm sentence, and send it to:

Word Worm  
Wythenshawe House,  
Poundswick Lane,  
Wythenshawe, M22 9TA

or email to: [info@wchg.org.uk](mailto:info@wchg.org.uk)  
by 30 January 2014.

All correct entries will be entered in a prize draw and one lucky person will win £50.

**Don't forget to include your contact details.**

## Our Performance

Performance up to the end of October is:

- ☹️ Current Rent Arrears 5.17%
- ☹️ Average time to let a property 23.6 Days
- 😊 Percentage of repairs completed on time 99.94%
- 😊 Percentage of repairs completed on first visit 98.52%
- 😊 Customer satisfaction with repairs 95.89%
- ☹️ Percentage of phone calls answered in 30 seconds 85.19%

### Wythenshawe Community Housing Group Tenant and Resident Group Contacts

TA Group	Contact for group	Contact Tel
Newall Green T & RA	Wyn Casey	998 4970
Northern Moor T & RA	Bernard Caine	902 9221
Royal Oak TARA	Gina Hall	998 2146
Royle Green TA	Robert Mckenzie	902 0096
Shenton TA	Jackie Butterly	998 6855
Butcher Lane TARA	Kirsty Taylor	915 6642
New Baguley TARA	Glen Kamara	286 0379
Benchill TARA	Graham Loose	945 0684
Bideford RA	Tracey Porter	998 6635

## Santa safety

- Check your **CHRISTMAS** tree lights carry the British Safety Standard sign
- Never place candles near your Christmas tree or materials that can catch light easily
- More tips from Greater Manchester Fire and Safety at [www.manchesterfire.gov.uk](http://www.manchesterfire.gov.uk) and follow the publications link.



## All for a Good Cause!

Ralph Webb, a tenant and prolific fund raiser at Birch Tree and Edwards Court, handed over £3200 to the Defibrillator Unit in the Cardiology Department at Wythenshawe Hospital for use by the ICD Support Group, and WCHG donated a further £800 to bring the total to £4000.

Congratulations to Ralph who has helped raise to more than £50,000 for a variety of good causes over the past 20 years!



Congratulations to Ann Lloyd our latest Wordy Worm winner. The answer was: **'Building more homes for Wythenshawe'.**

## Wythenshawe Transplant Centre donation

Parkway Green was delighted to present their chosen charity for the year, Wythenshawe Transplant Centre, with £750 raised by staff. Parkway Green Board Chair Cllr Paul Andrews is pictured here presenting the cheque to Sister Sabine Manduel.



## SPOOKTACULAR!

A new musical had it all for Halloween. The 050 community choir, part of Real Lives Wythenshawe, sung about murder and mayhem, ghosts, conspiracies and evil goings on during Cromwell's siege of Wythenshawe Hall. Their performance, in the Hall itself, was simply spooktacular!



## Garages to rent

We have recently improved our garages, and have some available to rent in:

- Staithes Road, Moss Nook
- Ravenscar Crescent, Moss Nook
- Summerfield Road, Woodhouse Park
- Hilary Road, Woodhouse Park
- Robinswood Road, Moss Nook
- Culmere Road, Moss Nook

Blue Badge holders receive a 50% discount. Conditions apply. Contact the Neighbourhoods Team, on 0800 633 5500.

**Costs:** Tenants and leaseholders, £7.00 per week; non WCHG residents, £8.40 per week;



## CHRISTMAS COLLECTION CHANGES

Over the Christmas period there will be changes to your bin collection days.

Normal Collection Date	Temporary Change	Week
Monday 23 December 2013	No change	Brown week
Tuesday 24 December 2013	No change	
Wednesday 25 December 2013	Friday 27 December 2013	
Thursday 26 December 2013	Saturday 28 December 2013	
Friday 27 December 2013	Sunday 29 December 2013	
Monday 30 December 2013	No change	Blue week
Tuesday 31 December 2013	No change	
Wednesday 1 January 2014	Thursday 2 January 2014	
Thursday 2 January 2014	Friday 3 January 2014	
Friday 3 January 2014	Saturday 4 January 2014	

Collections will be back to normal on Monday 6 January 2014.

### Christmas tree recycling

Put your tree next to your green wheele bin or small green bin on your green collection days throughout January 2014.



0300 111 0000



0161 945 5730



info@parkwaygreen.co.uk



Parkway Green House  
460 Palatine Road, Northenden, M22 4DJ  
or 137 Bowland Road, Baguley, M23 1LE



www.parkwaygreen.co.uk



0800 633 5500



Text **WILLOW** followed  
by your message to **86688**



enquiries@willow-park.co.uk



Wythenshawe House,  
8 Poundswick Lane, Wythenshawe,  
Manchester M22 9TA

or 294 Portway, Woodhouse Park  
Manchester M22 1TG



www.willow-park.co.uk



Arabic

Chinese

Farsi

French  
Pour recevoir ces informations dans d'autres langues, en Braille, en gros caractères,  
ou sur bande sonore, prière d'appeler le numéro de téléphone ci-dessous.

Hindi

Kurdish

Somali  
Si aad u hesho macluumaadkaani oo ku qoran luqad kasta, tan indhoolaha,  
daabacaad balaaran ama cajal ku duuban fadlan telefoonka hoos ku qoran:

Urdu

Vietnamese

For Wythenshawe Community Housing Group  
go to [www.wchg.org.uk](http://www.wchg.org.uk)

Our offices are open during weekdays,  
except on Bank Holidays.

Find us on facebook or follow us on twitter:



Wythenshawe Community  
Housing Group



@wythenshawe\_chg



## Christmas opening hours

To ensure our services are accessible for you when  
you need them, all of our offices will be open during the  
Christmas break.

Parkway Green offices will be open during this time for  
the first time as an improved customer service to you.  
Therefore, all offices will open between **9.00am and  
5.00pm** except on:

**Tuesday 24 December:** Offices close at 1pm (customer  
services phone lines open until 4pm)

**Wednesday 25 December:** Closed

**Thursday 26 December:** Closed

**Tuesday 31 December:** Offices close at 1pm (customer  
services phone lines open until 4pm)

**Wednesday 1 January:** Closed

If you need to contact us in an emergency please call  
our out-of-hours services on **0300 111 0000 (Parkway  
Green)** or **0800 633 5500 (Willow Park)**

## Have YOU got a story idea?

Please let us know what you think of this edition of  
Wythenshawe Life, how it can be approved and  
what you would like to see in future editions.

Email [communications@wchg.org.uk](mailto:communications@wchg.org.uk)  
or ring **0300 111 0000**.



If you require assistance with translation of this newsletter,  
large print, braille, or an audio copy contact us by phone on:  
**0300 111 0000** or by email: [communications@wchg.org.uk](mailto:communications@wchg.org.uk)