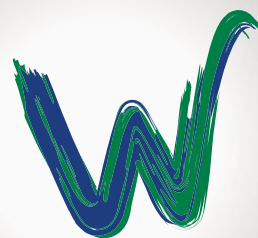


# Wythenshawe Life

www.wchg.org.uk



Wythenshawe  
Community Housing Group

Spring  
2015



## Rallying call

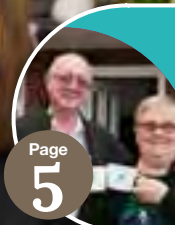
Homes for  
Britain

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More  
homes  
for  
Wythenshawe

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Your  
Neighbourhood,  
our promise

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Wythenshawe  
**Readers Survey**

We would like to know if you want to continue to receive a printed copy of your tenant newsletter, Wythenshawe Life and our Annual Report.

We want to make sure that we get the best value for money and with that in mind we want to make sure that we do not print more copies than needed.

Please let us know if you would like to:

- ☐ Continue to receive a printed copy
- ☐ Are you happy to access the newsletter and annual report on our website?

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete  
our Wythenshawe  
Life survey - see  
inside

## Easter Opening Times

Good Friday (3 April) - closed  
Easter Monday (6 April) - closed

In an emergency call our  
out-of-hours repairs service

0800 633 5500 (free from landlines)  
0300 111 0000 (best from mobiles)

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

Tenant  
Approved





## Pure gold



Wythenshawe Community Housing Group has been awarded the top Investors in People (IIP) Gold accreditation after demonstrating how we develop and realise the potential of our staff and improve service standards for our tenants and residents.

IIP Assessor Carol Davidson said: "Gaining Investors in People makes a statement about the kind of organisation Wythenshawe Community Housing Group is and the way in which it operates and the values that drive the organisation."

## Quality you can rely on!



Congratulations to our Wythenshawe Works team for achieving the Housing Quality Network (HQN) DLO and Gas Safety accreditation.

They had to go through a rigorous assessment process and passed with flying colours.

HQN's Director of Accreditation Gill Stead presented the award and said: "By gaining this award, WCHG really can demonstrate that its service is great quality and offers value for money. Having gone through such major organisational change it's a real endorsement of the work of staff, involved residents and board members who have made sure that with so much happening, the focus on customers and performance has not been lost."

**More from our Wythenshawe Works team on page 8.**

## Bringing Heritage to Life!



Young People are exploring and celebrating Wythenshawe's rich heritage, thanks to a Heritage Lottery funded Wow Zone project.

A Project Management Team of young people is meeting each week to unearth little-known facts about our history and culture.

They will be organising creative workshops and creating a Community Event and Showcase at the Forum on 5th September.

**For details go to [www.wowzone.org.uk](http://www.wowzone.org.uk) or call 0161 436 0586. More from the LifeStyle Centre on page 12.**

## Awards - we're in the running!

We have been shortlisted in a range of categories for three prestigious awards.



**Investors in People awards** – for Reward and Recognition and Gold Employer of the Year categories.



**2015 UK Housing Awards** - Our Real Neighbours team for Empowering Local Communities and our

Leybrook/Gladeside Road apprentice-built bungalows for Outstanding Development of the Year (up to 24 homes).



**2015 Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS) awards (Northern Regional Finals)** - for five excellence

awards: Co-Regulation, Youth Involvement, Tenant-led Scrutiny, Community Action, Contractor Engagement. In addition, Eric Smith, Chair of WCHG's Tenant Committee and Secretary of Bideford Community Centre, is nominated in the Tenant of The Year Cliff Whiteley Award.

**We will let you know more next issue!**

# Homes for Britain - our rallying cry

It was all aboard for members of staff and tenants, as we boarded a train and headed for Westminster to join the Homes for Britain Campaign rally - the biggest of its kind in recent years.

The National Housing Federation (NHF) backed campaign is providing a united voice for housing organisations, charities and others in the run up to the General Election as it calls on all political parties to commit to 'end the housing crisis within a generation.'

Our Chief Executive Nigel Wilson said: *"The need for decent housing has never been more urgent... we want to see proper debate across the political spectrum about how to solve the housing crisis."*

Key political leaders attended the Rally with a question and answer session conducted by Jonathan Dibley asking all political parties what steps they are going to take to end the housing crisis.

The 'Rally' was a huge success and WCHG achieved lots of media coverage, including BBC news. See video footage at -

- [www.theguardian.com/society/video/2015/mar/17/homes-for-britain-rally-thousands-activists-converge-westminster-video](http://www.theguardian.com/society/video/2015/mar/17/homes-for-britain-rally-thousands-activists-converge-westminster-video).
- [www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-31933400](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-31933400)
- [www.presstv.ir/Video/2015/03/18/402305/million-more-Britons-Rely-on-Housing-Benefit](http://www.presstv.ir/Video/2015/03/18/402305/million-more-Britons-Rely-on-Housing-Benefit)

After the election, the NHF will present the new government with a detailed plan for ending the crisis. It will focus on the vital role of housing associations and the Federation's vision. To find out more go to [www.housing.org.uk/generalelection](http://www.housing.org.uk/generalelection).



**We have made a Homes for Britain video. Visit [www.wchg.org.uk](http://www.wchg.org.uk) and the YouTube channel to view it.**



**To see how WCHG is helping provide new homes for Wythenshawe, go to page 5.**

## Mr Bloom comes to town!

**"Wow it's amazing in the Real Food Geodome isn't it? It's like an allotment from the future! Thank you for showing me round the Geodome tiddlers."**

So said CBeebies Mr Bloom (presenter Ben Faulks) when he came to Wythenshawe to record a podcast at The Manchester College's Geodome and meet with our Real Food Team and pupils from Haveley Hey Primary School.

The podcast is part of a series of radio shows recorded in different habitats around Greater Manchester and aired throughout March, and it is also available on our website.

Four young 'tiddlers' from Haveley Hey Primary School showed Mr Bloom around The Manchester College's Geodome - a Real Food team ground-breaking project to create

a 'living classroom' focussed on sustainable food production and fruit and vegetables that can be grown near to your home and all year round.

Rachel Harding, Food Education and Skills Coordinator from Real Food Wythenshawe, said: "This has been a fantastic day and has really brought to life what sustainable food production is all about."

**More on the Real Food team on page 15.**







## Bargain computers!



Get Online Wythenshawe has already sold more than 100 refurbished computers and laptops to local residents at an average price of just £62 - and it has more to sell priced from £29 to £99.

If you purchase one you can receive free one-to-one help to use it.



**Question:** *The internet isn't for me - why should I bother?*

**Answer:** *So many government services are moving online now, like benefit applications, car tax, even complaining about your bin delivery that it is getting more and more important to be online just to get by. More than that though, the internet can help you to find work, connect with like minded people, keep you up to date with local events and the community and help you spread your horizons.*

**To purchase a computer or to find out about our help sessions call 0161 946 8920 or email: [getonline@wchg.org.uk](mailto:getonline@wchg.org.uk).**



**Get Online with Universal Credit**



## Always pay your rent

**It is important that you keep up your rent payments. If you are struggling to pay your rent, bills or loans, speak in confidence to our Financial Inclusion Team's specialist Debt Advisors who can offer free advice and practical support to help you find a solution.**

Our Welfare Rights Officers can also provide advice and support with benefit queries including housing benefit, universal credit, disability living allowance/ personal independence payment, tax credits, attendance allowances and pension credits.

**To make an appointment contact 0800 633 5500 (from landline) or 0300 111 0000 (from mobile).**

## Universal Credit for families – it's here !

From 2 March 2015 Universal Credit (UC) was rolled out to include families at Wythenshawe Job Centre.

This means it now includes anyone who has recently finished work. There are no plans at the moment to migrate existing working age benefit claimants over to Universal Credit.

### What does it replace?

The following benefits:

- Job Seekers Allowance (income based)
- Employment Support Allowance (income based)
- Income Support
- Working Tax Credit
- Child Tax Credit
- Housing Benefit

### If you are advised to claim Universal Credit

Universal Credit is normally claimed using an online claim form. If you do not have access to the internet, or would like some assistance in completing your claim, you can call us on:

**T: 0800 633 5500 (FREE FROM A LANDLINE)**

**T: 0300 111 0000 (LOCAL RATE FROM A MOBILE)**

We will make an appointment for you to come in within a working day and help you complete your claim.

### What next?

The Department of Work and Pensions will advise you of your payment date, this is normally five weeks after you make your claim. You need to contact your rent officer and confirm the date of your payment. You will receive your money on the same date each month for as long as you claim Universal Credit.

**Please note – once you move on to Universal Credit you will be responsible for paying your full rent each month. You will no longer be able to claim Housing Benefit in addition to Universal Credit.**

Your rent officer will discuss:

- making an agreement to pay your rent
- helping you prioritise any debts
- looking at any help you may need while waiting for your first Universal Credit Payment
- help and advice with claiming Council tax benefits
- what to do if you do not receive your Universal Credit when expected or you think the amount paid is not correct.

**If you have any further queries, please contact the rents team on the numbers above.**



# Investing in the future

We have been celebrating the completion of three developments and welcomed new tenants into:

- 12 two-bedroomed bungalows at Glade Brook Gardens, in Brownley Green
- 12 two-bedroomed and two four-bedroomed bungalows on Scout Drive, Newall Green
- 6 two-bedroomed apartments on Altrincham Road, Baguley.

Part-funded by the Homes and Communities Agency, these homes have been built to the very latest standards in quality, design and efficiency to provide tenants with attractive, safe, secure and comfortable homes.

Local MP for Wythenshawe, Mike Kane, Eddy Newman, Chair of the Board and Nigel Wilson, Group Chief Executive of WCHG, went along to meet with some of the new tenants and welcome them to their new homes.

Simon Sharpe, who moved into an apartment on Altrincham Road when his former flat was identified for demolition, said: *"I am thrilled with my new apartment - it is perfect for me. I work at the Airport so the location is great - and the trams are really handy too."*

**Nigel Wilson, Group Chief Executive of Wythenshawe Community Housing Group, said:** *"Building new homes to meet the ever-growing needs of local people is a key priority for us. Since WCHG was formed two years ago, the Group has completed 135 new homes and invested over £13m in the area. We have a new build programme of 496 homes costing £60m between 2015-18, including Village 135 our £20m Extra Care Scheme on Hollyhedge Road/Brownley Road. We continue to work with the Homes and Communities Agency to provide a variety of much-needed homes for the people of Wythenshawe."*



**Welcoming Sylvia and Alex Brennan, centre, to their new Glade Brook home: Nigel Wilson and Mike Kane MP, on left, and Eddy Newman and Dave Chorlton, right**

Sylvia and Alex Brennan are also delighted with their new bungalow on Glade Brook Gardens: *"We needed to downsize from our family home just down the road. It doesn't feel like*

*we have down-sized because the rooms are so spacious. I was struggling with the stairs in the house, and although it was a difficult decision to make at the time, it was the right one and the bungalow is perfect for us now."*

Mary Erskine moved into a two-bed bungalow on Scout Drive. Mary said: *"We absolutely love it! The community spirit is fantastic as we all moved in together. In fact we are having a street party in June to commemorate D Day with our neighbours in the nearby Johannesburg Gardens community centre. There is such a lot going on - never a dull moment!"*



**Cheers! MP Mike Kane with Mary Erskine in her Scout Drive home**



**Welcome home: from left, Nigel Wilson, with Simon Sharpe, Eddy Newman and Dave Chorlton**

## Open Doors Weekend



WCHG and contractor Galliford Try welcomed Wythenshawe MP Mike Kane and local students to Village 135 as part of national Open Doors weekend. Our £20 million Extra Care scheme is expected to open in spring 2016.

To find out more about these purpose built, state-of-the-art, environmentally friendly apartments for older people, please contact Amanda Seals, Extra Care Manager on 0161 946 9581.

**We also have a range of accommodation available now for the over 50s and over 60s, including independent living apartments. More on page 7.**



**VILLAGE  
135**

## We hate Hate Crime!



More than 40 amazing young people from Wythenshawe sent out a message loud and clear - "We hate Hate Crime."

They were taking part in interactive theatre workshops organised by our Wardens and Youth Involvement team with the help of theatre group NK Arts and funding from Manchester City Council.

The event raised awareness and enabled young people to share their own experiences and challenge such behaviour.

**More on what our Neighbourhood Wardens are doing on page 9.**

*You are Invited to*

**Wythenshawe One World 2015  
Wythenshawe Forum  
Saturday 25 April  
12noon-5pm**

This will be an exciting celebration of the cultural diversity of the people of Wythenshawe.

All are welcome! There will be entertainment, refreshments and lots of stalls.

This is a partnership event supported by Manchester City Council, Greater Manchester Police Wythenshawe, WCHG, BITC and Wythenshawe Community Groups.

**FORUM**

## We need to find a Real Neighbour

**Many congratulations to all our Real Neighbours for their nomination in this year's UK Housing Awards. See the story on page 2.**

Our Real Neighbours play an invaluable part in our local community, helping out at events and offering a helping hand to those in need in their community.

If you have some spare time and would like to join this friendly and dedicated group of volunteers, we would love you to take part in one of our induction sessions which will be running at Wythenshawe House throughout 2015. **Contact Lewis Crowther [lewis.crowther@wchg.org.uk](mailto:lewis.crowther@wchg.org.uk) or call 07525 905030 for more information.**

**Real Neighbours. Wythenshawe.**



**Bideford Community Centre**  
Bideford Drive, Baguley, M23 0QH

email: [bidefordcommunitycentre@hotmail.com](mailto:bidefordcommunitycentre@hotmail.com),  
call the Centre on 0161 946 6386 or  
contact Kirsty Taylor, co-ordinator, 07871 351018  
or secretary Eric Smith on 07950 879465

## More Bideford news

We are opening our own toddler group and now have our own clothing bank called Bideford Boutique open on Tuesdays

and Thursdays 10am-2pm and Wednesdays 12-2.30pm. Plans for a Saturday swap shop opening are also in the pipeline.

The support group "Welcome To My World" is now back up and running every Wednesday for parents who have children with complex needs.

**Call the centre or drop by for details of any of these groups.**





# Thinking about a move?



**Downsizing your home can significantly reduce your energy and other bills, giving you more money to spend on other things!**

As well as developing Village 135 for the over 55s (featured on page 5) we have a range of accommodation available now which might suit you if you have already reached or are heading towards retirement age!

For those aged over 60 and wanting the peace of mind of knowing there is a Scheme Warden service, apartments for independent living at Alfred Morris Court in Northenden or Frank Price Court in Brownley Green might be the place for you. They have CCTV, secured entry, car parking, a great community spirit, gardens, and are close to local facilities.

For more information or to look round Alfred Morris Court please contact Hayley on 0161 946 6311 or contact Andrea on 0161 946 7583 to look around Frank Price Court.

Over 50? You might want to consider Edwards Court in Brownley Green and its one-bedroom apartments which all have key-fob 24 hour access, 24-hour-a-day CCTV Service and car parking spaces.

If you are interested in Edwards Court or looking for rehousing in the Wythenshawe area and need help getting registered or bidding, call 0800 633 5500 if using a landline or 0300 111 0000 from a mobile and we will be able to help.



## £elp for Community Groups



**Simply Cycling**  
All ability cycling

Our Grants Panel has awarded over £40,000 to Community Groups during the past year. Recent recipients included:

- Bideford Centre which ran a Christmas Dinner for those in need
- Simply Cycling to buy a Recumbent Hand Cycle for their members

If you are part of a Community Group looking for up to £2,500 for a project, please contact Pedro Odjidja on 0161 946 6315 or email [pedro.odjidja@wchg.org.uk](mailto:pedro.odjidja@wchg.org.uk).

Key dates for applications are:

Closing Date for Applications	Grants Meeting date
22 April 2015	13 May 2015
25 June 2015	16 July 2015
19 August 2015	9 September 2015

# Open up -our appointments plea!



**Our Wythenshawe Works team is always looking to improve services to residents.**

Last year more than 72,000 jobs were raised, but 8,000 were cancelled. Each cancelled job costs money. One of the main causes of cancellation - around 3,500 - was lack of access for our technicians.

The team estimates the total cost of cancelled jobs was around £176,500 - money and time that could have been spent carrying out repairs for other people.



**Most of our work is by appointments chosen by tenants. We understand things can change and you may not be able to keep them, but please contact us beforehand so we can re-arrange our schedules and carry out a repair for someone else until we can see you at a time that suits you.**

## Spring smart



Our Environmental Services Team is going to be part of a massive Spring Clean across Wythenshawe.

Manchester Airport has made a cash donation to Manchester City Council, to help improve the appearance of the City.

Our Street Cleansers and Grounds Maintenance operatives are working with MCC operatives on over 100 sites to clean up grot spots and improve landscaping.

As spring approaches you will also see the grass cutters back at work – the new cycle usually starts during March, weather permitting.



## Getting it right!



There are some repairs which take time to do right, and we might require access to your home for a day or more.

For fairly large scale jobs we usually ask our surveyor to visit and agree the works to be done and the amount of time we need access with you. If in doubt, please check with us how much time we need to access your property so we can complete the job properly when we turn up.

Occasionally, once we start a job, it turns out to be more complex than originally envisaged and we may need to ask you to provide us with access for longer than the hour or length of time we had originally thought it would take. We want to complete all repairs as soon as possible, and your co-operation in providing access is vital.

## Customer Feedback

There was a big 'thank you' from one resident after our Gas Safety Check operative noticed she had a gas leak from her oven, and elsewhere. He immediately made the potentially life-saving decision to call out the gas emergency service Transco. When they arrived, they told our resident she was lucky he had acted so promptly and decisively.





## Back to school

Our Neighbourhood Wardens have been visiting local primary schools giving talks on stranger danger, anti-social behaviour and the environment to Year 6 pupils.

The presentations have been well received. Staff at Sandilands Primary School commented on how much the children have all enjoyed the presentations and how they are looking forward to working with the Neighbourhood Wardens.



## CCTV update

The CCTV Control Centre has been extremely busy providing evidence to the police leading to 11 arrests for various offences including assault, theft, drink driving and shoplifting.



## Support scheme launched

WCHG has teamed up with two tenant volunteers to ensure residents have access to an independent witness and victim support service which can offer emotional and practical support.

Jack Proverbs and Eva Mulholland have over 30 years experience of working in the voluntary sector and have completed Volunteer Witness Support Training. They are looking forward to the challenge ahead.

**For further information about the scheme please speak to Janice Teale, project co-ordinator, on 0161 946 7515.**



## News from the courts



- An injunction has been secured against a tenant who allowed a male excluded from the Baguley area to stay at his property and cause anti-social behaviour. The tenant can be arrested if he allows the male and his girlfriend into his property or uses abusive or threatening behaviour to his neighbours.
- A further injunction has been obtained against a female tenant who had allowed the use of cannabis, slamming doors and who let dogs bark late at night. Further complaints have been received and an application to the court for committal to prison and possession of the property has been made.
- The Anti-Social Behaviour team has obtained possession of three starter tenancies due to ongoing noise nuisance and anti-social behaviour. In each case the tenant appealed the decision but the Courts granted possession.

**If you are worried about ASB, you can request assistance or report an incident to the control room/Wardens by calling 0161 946 9501.**

## Action Day builds Respect

Joint work with the police during the Heybrook Respect Action Day in Baguley to tackle complaints of criminal damage, off road bikes and anti-social behaviour has proved to be successful. A male was arrested and an off road bike was confiscated as part of the initiative.

In response to feedback from the day, regular patrols have now been held in the area and the number of reported incidents has reduced by more than 90%.

# Your Neighbourhood, Our Promise!

**Wythenshawe Community Housing Group (WCHG) has been working with its tenants and residents over the past year to find out what you think about the area you live in and what your priorities are for your neighbourhood.**

A new Group-wide Neighbourhood Strategy was developed and approved by the Group Board. This sets out how we will manage your neighbourhoods, taking into account what you told us are your priorities and supporting WCHG's five-year Strategic Plan.



We have been working on developing a Neighbourhood Promise for each of our 14 neighbourhoods. These:

- reflect where you live
- what we know from your views and feedback
- our performance
- what external indicators are telling us.

Each Neighbourhood Promise has an action plan for the next three

years that we will deliver on and report back on so you know how we have delivered and what the outcomes are for you.

We want to do this because as a Group we aspire to putting neighbourhoods at the heart of the business and to delivering locally focussed services.



The key objectives of the Strategic Plan that we have linked to the Neighbourhood Strategy are:

## Excellent Services

We will deliver this by offering you a service that reflects your priorities and what your neighbourhood needs.

## Partnership

We already have strong partnerships with other service providers in Wythenshawe, particularly Manchester City Council, and we will continue to work with them and strengthen those bonds to deliver the best possible services to you.

## Towards Independence

We recognise that some of our tenants and residents find it difficult to access services and need a little bit more support than others. We will work with those customers and identify how we can best support them.

## Viability

Through the delivery of the neighbourhood plans, we will be able to show you how money is spent in your neighbourhood and how it compares to others. We will also provide outcomes on how some of the work we do makes a social impact. For example, this might be by having fun days where we encourage the whole community to get involved.



The Neighbourhood Plan will be managed by your local Housing Officer who will be responsible for making sure the actions on the plans are completed. We will provide a six-month summary of how we are doing

and a full annual update so you know we are doing what we said we would do.

We will use our Local Performance Panels and Tenant Committee to challenge our performance and to be the voice of our tenants and residents if you feel there are areas we can improve on.



## Looking after our environment



### Thanks for Recycling!

Lots of you are used to splitting out the recyclable stuff in your rubbish bin, and using the free service from the council with the blue, brown and green bins. So a big 'Thanks' to you!

Some people, however, are still not doing it. So does it matter?

**Answer:** YES - when we recycle more we throw away less.

**Fact!** Rubbish costs five times more to get rid of than the recycling in your green bin, and more than ten times the cost of your blue and brown bins.

So please – don't put things that can be recycled in your general rubbish bin.



**MANCHESTER  
CITY COUNCIL**

To find out exactly what can be recycled or when your collection day is please contact Manchester City Council at [www.manchester.gov.uk/recycling](http://www.manchester.gov.uk/recycling).



**Our housing officers regularly see bulging rubbish bins all over Wythenshawe, or piles of leftover rubbish in people's gardens. It looks a mess and you could even be fined.**

## Need to get rid of bulky items?

Manchester City Council offers a collection service to help prevent fly tipping.

### Did you know?

- **1** – every household in Manchester can have one free bulky collection every year – you can include three items.
- **£0** – this is how much it costs to get rid of your extra rubbish at the Household Waste and Recycling Centre (the tip!) at Longley Lane.
- **Free** - recycling bins cost nothing! Order online from the council at [www.manchester.gov.uk](http://www.manchester.gov.uk)
- **Fly-tipping** is a crime - please report it!

**To book a bulky item collection, and check it qualifies go to [www.manchester.gov.uk/recycling](http://www.manchester.gov.uk/recycling). Some restrictions apply. For instance, they cannot collect items that are:**

- too big or heavy for two people to move
- dangerous to lift, or could damage a vehicle
- dangerous waste like asbestos, chemicals or paint stripper
- waste left by building or repair work
- fencing, greenhouses, sheds or petrol lawn mowers
- tyres, gas canisters, car batteries, parts or engines.



## Dates for your diary

### Over 50s Fun Exercise

(all abilities welcome)  
12noon-2pm Wednesdays  
10am-12pm Thursdays

### Easter Play Scheme

13-16 April  
6-12 years  
11am-3pm

### Styles Café

9am-2.30pm  
Monday to Friday  
Affordable homemade food  
Welcoming environment

### Walking Football

11am-12pm Fridays

**Woodhouse Park Lifestyle Centre**  
Portway (junction with Selstead Road), M22 1QW

Tel: 0161 436 0560

[www.WoodhouseParkLifestyleCentre.co.uk](http://www.WoodhouseParkLifestyleCentre.co.uk)

Follow us on twitter @WPLifestyleCent  
or Facebook Woodhouse Park Lifestyle Centre

### Easter opening times:

Thursday 2 April - open as usual 9am-10pm

Good Friday 3 April - closed

Saturday 4 April - 9am-5pm

Easter Sunday and Monday 5 & 6 April - closed

Tuesday 7 April - open as usual 9am-10pm

## Where wedding wishes come true



Fabulous facilities, combined with friendly and welcoming staff mean we can help you create the wedding of your dreams at the Lifestyle Centre - and for less than you might fear! Book to view our suite and discuss your plans with Lisa Davenport on 0161 436 0560.



## £300 boost

Thanks to energetic sponsored indoor cycling, volunteers at the Wythenshawe Games Funday raised £300 for Better Things (formerly Manchester Mencap) and we were delighted to be able to hand over the cheque to Better Things group members.

## Cracking coding

The Lifestyle Centre is hosting a CoderDojo club in the Wow Zone. The club is part of a global network for young people to learn to code, develop websites, apps, games and more!



*"We were really excited after leaving the CoderDojo and have told all our friends at school about it. I can't wait for the next one."* Athena, aged 9.

CoderDojo is free and held on the last Sunday of every month for young people aged 5-15, but places are limited, so you must book. Call for more details.

**Find out about the Wow Zone Heritage project on page 2.**



## Reach your Personal Best

In the run up to this year's Wythenshawe Games (22 - 29 July) we are launching a Personal Best programme aimed at giving you the motivation to get active and to try something different!

From mid-April through to the end of July you can take part in activities like zumba, dance, football, netball, basketball and much more. You will be encouraged to set your own achievable goals and be given a passport to record achievements.

Find out more on our website, Twitter or Facebook or contact Jordan Tyms on 0161 436 0560 [jordan.tyms@wchg.org.uk](mailto:jordan.tyms@wchg.org.uk).

## Bound for Spain

Woodhouse Park resident Margery Spencer won a 4 Star all-inclusive break for two people to Spain in the Over 50s Lifestyle Group Christmas Prize Draw.



The winning ticket was drawn by Lord Mayor of Manchester, Cllr Susan Cooley, at their Christmas party at the Woodhouse Park Lifestyle Centre. The event was part funded by a Manchester City Council Cash Grant and all monies raised will fund and support activities for local people who are over 50.





**Benchill Community Centre**  
Benchill Road, Benchill, M22 8EJ

Tel: 0161 945 0879  
[www.benchillcommunitycentre.co.uk](http://www.benchillcommunitycentre.co.uk)  
or [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/benchillcommunitycentre) benchillcommunitycentre

Good Friday 3 April - closed  
Easter Monday 6 April - closed

## Dates for your diary



### Easter Playscheme

7-10 April

Children aged 6-14

9.30am-3pm

Cost: £1, bring a packed lunch

Call us to confirm details

### English and Maths for beginners

9.30am-12.30pm Mondays

6-9pm Wednesday

Free, friendly, fun

Absolute beginners-Level 2

### Parents and Tots

9:30am-12 noon Wednesdays

9:30am-12 noon Fridays

Open to all parents and toddlers

Cost 50p towards refreshments



## Brush up your computer skills

DAY	CLASS	START	FINISH
Monday	Beginners/ECDL	9.30am	12.30pm
Monday	Over 50's Beginners Class	1.30pm	3.30pm
Monday	ECDL and advanced ECDL	3.30pm	7pm
Tuesday	Beginners	9.30am	12noon
Thursday	Beginners/ECDL	9am	11.00am
Thursday	Beginners/ECDL	11am	1pm
Thursday	Beginners	1.30am	4pm
Friday	Beginners/ECDL	9.30am	12.30pm
Friday	ECDL and advanced ECDL	3.30pm	6.30pm

Our sessions are open to everyone. Costs vary.  
Give us a call, or pop by to find out more.

## Benchill Community Centre's Over 50's Coffee Morning



10.30am - 12.30pm  
Monday 16th February  
Monday 16th March  
Monday 13th April  
Monday 18th May  
Monday 16th June  
Monday 16th July

*Come along once a month to meet new people, enjoy a hot drink and share your hobbies and interests*



[www.facebook.com/benchillcommunitycentre](https://www.facebook.com/benchillcommunitycentre)

Benchill Community Centre, Benchill Road, Wythenshawe,

M22 8EJ, Tel: 0161 945 0879 Email: [Rochele.loneragan@wchc.org.uk](mailto:Rochele.loneragan@wchc.org.uk)



## Pitch perfect!



**Sir Alex Ferguson has officially opened a series of new state-of-the-art pitches at Manchester Enterprise Academy which is a Manchester United Foundation partner school.**



As we went to press, MEA were receiving their OFSTED feedback. The report will be published very soon.

MEA are currently in the top 5% of similar schools nationally and the Department for Education website states 'there is not a higher performing similar school within 75 miles of MEA'!

To find out more and read the report as soon as it is available go to [www.manchesterenterpriseacademy.org.uk](http://www.manchesterenterpriseacademy.org.uk)

The five new pitches were co-funded by the Premier League through the FA Facilities Fund. As a co-sponsor of MEA, WCHG was delighted to provide match funding.



During the visit, Sir Alex met with students and teachers and said: "It's great the school having these facilities because I always think education is not always about the education itself, it's about inspiring young kids and I think they'll get great inspiration from these pitches."



## Biggest dig so far!



It has been the biggest dig yet for staff and pupils from Saint Paul's Catholic High School who are working to create a Gifted Garden and Outdoor Classroom at the school.

Thanks to the Woodland Trust, the school's fabulous team of gardeners planted 420 saplings which will form a gentle hedge around the garden area. Year 6 pupils from the feeder primary schools were invited to complete the chain of planting to establish their roots at Saint Paul's.



## Stepping up

At the Manchester Health Academy:

- Ten intrepid Year 10 girls stepped up to take on the annual Kath Fry Challenge at Ghyll Head on Lake Windermere and won! They even set a new record for MHA for the mountain hike.
- Friday English lessons see students 'Caught Reading' - sitting back, relaxing and enjoy reading. Reading for pleasure improves vocabulary, creativity and imagination, and students have been loving it with animated conversations about what has been read and what to read next!



## Boxing clever



Newall Green High School's PE department

was off to a great start to the school year with a silver award in the Government-led Sainsbury's School Games Mark scheme.

For pupil Courtney McCarthy there was success when she travelled to Poland for a boxing event - and beat the Polish champion. She then defeated the English champion in Birmingham!





Real Food Wythenshawe is a Big Lottery funded project managed by WCHG to support local residents and community groups to grow, cook and eat healthy food.

Find out more about our activities and follow us at [www.realfoodwythenshawe.com](http://www.realfoodwythenshawe.com); on twitter @realfoodteam or call the team on 0161 946 7554.

## Be a volunteer

2015 is going to be busy so we are looking for more volunteers. If you, or someone you know, would like to help please call the Real Food Team on 0161 946 9115 or send an email to [susan.law@wchg.org.uk](mailto:susan.law@wchg.org.uk).



The Real Food Team will be taking part in Dig the City from 3 July-6 August. We will have a show garden and a '50 Shades of Green' cocktail bar in Manchester City Centre! If you want to volunteer to help us prepare for this show garden event, please contact us!

# Polytunnel pledge

The Real Food Wythenshawe Project Team is giving away free polytunnels, raised beds and compost to local community food growing projects to help them grow more food to share.

And helping them is the team's new Growing Co-ordinator, Kay Bamford, a former tutor for Manchester Adult Education and Ageing Well Development worker.

She has her own allotment and says: "I know from experience that growing things and being outside has many benefits for well-being. It lifts your mood, provides exercise, can be a chance to socialise, and gives you a strong sense of achievement and is very often good fun!"

Real Food. Wythenshawe.



If you need advice for your growing project please contact Kay.

Email: [kay.bamford@wchg.org.uk](mailto:kay.bamford@wchg.org.uk)  
Tel: 0161 946 9116

## Fostering makes a difference - could you?

There are currently around 24 foster carers in Wythenshawe but many more are needed.

Children who can't live with their parents or guardians need foster carers - this could be for a few days, a few weeks or for much longer.

Nineteen-year-old Mary-May has lived with foster parents Julia and Paul Edwards along with her brother Chris since she was eight and says: "Foster carers give children like me and Chris, who haven't had the best start in life, the opportunity to have a fresh start, and to do something with their lives, and to finally feel like they really belong somewhere."



## Tilt and touch



The popular Forum Nursery now has a sensory garden, and state-of-the-art 'Tilt & Touch'

nursery tables with large touch-screens to deliver learning through interactive games and activities.



The nursery cares for children from three months to aged five. For more information or to book a tour, call 0800 954 0669 or email [info@thecooperativechildcare.coop](mailto:info@thecooperativechildcare.coop).

To find out more visit [www.fosterformanchester.com](http://www.fosterformanchester.com), call 0800 988 8931 or follow [www.facebook.com/FosterForManchester](https://www.facebook.com/FosterForManchester)

## Meet Michelle



I am a student with The Manchester College studying BTEC Level 1 in Business Administration and Customer Service and as part of the course we complete a 12-week work placement alongside our classroom study.

I have been given the opportunity to complete my placement with WCHG, who offer five placements in various departments across the organisation.

My placement is with the Employment and Skills Team as a Real Opportunities administrator. This role offers a wealth of experience carrying out all aspects of administration including data entry, making appointments over the telephone, using spreadsheets and using the various computer programmes.

As an adult learner I feel that the experience gained will be invaluable to me in the workplace and has given me the confidence to move forward and gain further qualifications and also to find employment.

Michelle Brown,  
Adult Work Placement

There are five Adult Placement students studying at The Manchester College who have spent one day a week on work placement with WCHG.

Michelle, left, is one. Another is former florist Susan Sherratt, below, whose ongoing knee problem means she wants to find a career that does not involve being on her feet so much.

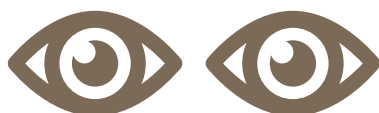


She says: "I have been working with the Rents Team and I have learned a lot. It is really good practical experience – including keyboard skills, data

entry, photocopying and all the technology that goes with working in a modern office. I am enjoying the work and it has really boosted my confidence and made me feel ready for working in an office environment."

## Contact Box

For information about any of our Employment and Skills programmes contact our Employment Co-ordinator Stephanie Quinn on 0800 633 5500 or email [stephanie.quinn@wchg.org.uk](mailto:stephanie.quinn@wchg.org.uk). You can also find out more at [www.wchg.org.uk/careers/help-to-work](http://www.wchg.org.uk/careers/help-to-work).



## Watch out!

As we enter the spring we start to get a lot of interest about our Apprenticeship programme. It is too early to start the recruitment process but all future apprenticeship opportunities will be advertised through the local high schools, The Manchester College and our website.

## Looking for experience?

We work with lots of local training providers and schools, and can accept referrals for Work Experience from them. Ask your head of year/ careers advisor/provider to get in touch with us.



Get Trained to Get Hired  
Forum Concourse  
11am – 3pm  
Tuesday 16 June 2015

Want to learn something new? Gain skills? Take part in courses? Come along and meet face-to-face with providers to see how they can meet your training and learning needs.



# Signpost to your future

Real opportunities. Wythenshawe.

- 1  Fill in Real Opportunities form
- 2  Receive a call to make a 1-1 appointment
- 3  Attend the appointment, getting helpful advice and guidance
- 4  Get an action plan to help you move forward (courses, hints and tips, actions)
- 5  Receive texts and emails about opportunities (e.g. Futures, Metrolink, Airport jobs)
- 6 For Futures opportunities
  - a.  Complete pre-employment course, meeting new people and gaining new skills
  - b.  Be guaranteed an interview
  - c.  Land the job

**We could all do with a little help now and again, and Real Opportunities supports you in your personal journey towards work and training.**

It is completely voluntary and offers confidential advice and guidance to help you move forward, signposting you to courses, support and exciting job opportunities in the area.

Real Opportunities members are usually the first to find out about our Wythenshawe Futures programme, with 88% of those who secure the positions coming from Real Opportunities.

We are really proud of the Wythenshawe Futures programme:

- Since 2011, 76 people have gained work experience and qualifications at WCHG
- Nearly 80% have gone into work afterwards

Wythenshawe Futures is designed for people who find it difficult to get a job, due to lack of experience, qualifications or have been unemployed for a long time.

A total of 23 people took part in a recent Wythenshawe Futures pre-employment course focussed on Customer Service and on giving participants a taste of what a real job interview would be like.

There were eight positions (five administration, three mobile cleaning) on offer and those who successfully completed the Wythenshawe Futures pre-employment course were guaranteed an interview. All successful candidates will be in post shortly. More next issue!

## More than just business

The Enterprise Centre on Benchill Road continues to prove a 'great place to do business' and is a thriving hub of activity for small businesses and budding entrepreneurs.

Tenant Sharon Whitehorn of Sewn for You said: "I was looking for somewhere affordable and local to Wythenshawe. The Enterprise Centre fitted the bill perfectly and offers business support too. This has enabled me to move my business forward."

Now 88% occupied, the Enterprise Centre also offers:

- affordable 'all-inclusive' office space
- reduced 12-month rental rate for start-ups
- business advice and support
- training programmes
- networking opportunities
- rentable meeting & training room facilities



For more information, call 0161 945 0655, email [sian.payg@wchg.org](mailto:sian.payg@wchg.org) or visit [www.wythenshaweenterprise.com](http://www.wythenshaweenterprise.com).

## Hold the Date - Tenants Conference

**Thursday 12 November 2015**

All our tenants are invited to attend our third Annual Tenants Conference at Wythenshawe Forum. Invitations will be issued nearer the time, but if you want to be an early bird and book your place now, or want more information, please call our Involvement Team on 0161 946 6369.

## Following up

Last issue we reported on the success of our 2014 Tenants Conference.

We have now reviewed the answers attendees gave to questions on: allocations of homes, IT access, debt management, community facilities, repairs, customer and other services.

We have fed the responses into our service plans so we can improve them going forward.

## Springtime Spectacular

Watch out for a flush of colour as the 22,000 bulbs planted by our amazing TARA volunteers and teams as part of Wythenshawe in Bloom make sure our Garden City lives up to its name.

Phase two of Wythenshawe in Bloom is now underway - two fabulous displays beds will be created. More next time!

## 102 years young!



Congratulations to former tenant Dorothy Rowley who has just celebrated her 102nd birthday. Dorothy lived in Bucklow Drive until she had a fall, aged 100, and moved to The Peels in Wythenshawe. Tina Smith and Mike Richmond from Wythenshawe Works popped in to see her with a big bunch of flowers from us all to help her celebrate!

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

**WYTHENSHAW  
GAMES 2015**

**WYTHENSHAW PARK  
22ND - 29TH JULY**

## WCHG Gardening Competition



There's plenty of time to get your pots and flowerbeds into perfect shape for our annual competition. Judging is in July.

If you have entered before we will be writing to you to encourage another application. We will be promoting the competition on social media, and through local press and points of interest.

If you are interested in entering, you can also call Pedro Odjidja on 0161 946 6369 or email [getinvolved@wchg.org.uk](mailto:getinvolved@wchg.org.uk).

## Fanning the flames of safety

In 1899 all parish councils were asked to provide fire protection for their inhabitants and those in Wythenshawe had to make arrangements with the nearest available fire service. Baguley and Northenden each paid the Sale and Ashton Joint Fire Brigade £15 per annum. In 1903 Northern Etchells made a similar arrangement with the Altrincham Fire Brigade but changed to Cheadle and Gatley UDC in 1909.

However, there was a lack of quick communication between the towns. In 1905 the National Telephone Company wanted £21 10s for a telephone link between the Northenden Council Rooms and the Sale Fire Station, a sum the local residents thought exorbitant. In 1926 Northern Etchells was still lacking telephone facilities. In 1922 there was a fire at the motor garage in Northenden and the Manchester Brigade was on the scene before the Sale Fire Brigade!



**West View Bingo Club**  
7pm every Tuesday

West View Court  
community room

Contact  
**Robert McKenzie**  
0161 902 0096

21

76

## Memorial Garden?

Following the closure of the Wythenshawe British Legion Club, a group has been formed to decide how to relocate the Rolls of Honour and the Memorial so we can continue to remember those who died serving their country.

The group has some ideas but would like to hear your views. Please complete their short on-line survey by 12 April at [www.surveymonkey.com/s/ZMCLTX](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/ZMCLTX).



## Performance to the end of February is

### Year to Date performance to end of February 2015



Current Rents Arrears – **5.13%**



Average time to relet a property – **20.37 days**



% of repairs completed on time – **99.82%**



% of repairs completed on first visit – **98.94%**



Customer satisfaction with repairs – **96.21%**



% of phone called answered in 30 seconds – **78.30%. Overall performance in the last two months has been 90%+**

## Value for money



- During the cold weather we bought rock salt for 30% of our normal price, saving £6,000 - and we were able to grit more paths.
- We now take all out-of-hours antisocial behaviour calls ourselves, saving £3,000 a year.

## Don't be afraid ...

### ... to help us shape our policies!

We are looking for tenants to join our Tenants Committee and be a part of the Governance Structure for WCHG. We would also welcome tenants to join our Service Review Group (SRG) to look at specific aspects of our service to you. Last year SRG focussed on and made improvements to:

- sign-up process
- Customer Services
- repairs to empty properties.

**Successful recruits will receive full training, support and possibly a mentor! For an informal chat, call Dean Slavin, Involvement Manager, on 0161 946 6369 or email [getinvolved@wchg.org.uk](mailto:getinvolved@wchg.org.uk).**

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

TA Group	Contact for group	Times	Location	Contact No.
Newall Green T & RA	Wyn Casey	Last Wed @ 2pm	Johannesburg Gardens Community Centre	0161 998 4970
Northern Moor T & RA	Fred Bates	First Mon @ 7.30pm	Wood Ville Community Cnt 130 Sale Rd	07891 167309
Royal Oak Community Action Group	Gina Hall	Quarterly Last Tues @ 6pm	Royal Oak Comm Centre, Brookcot Rd	0161 998 2146
Benchill TA	Sue Loose	Second Tues @ 7pm	Benchill Community centre	0161 945 0684
Butcher Lane TARA	Kirsty Taylor	Last Thursday @ 6.15pm	Wythenshawe FC clubhouse	0161 07871 351018
New Baguley TARA	Glen Kamara	First Wed @ 7pm	Hall Lane Resource Centre, Hall Lane	0161 286 0379

**You are welcome to attend your local meeting!**

## You are welcome!

The New Baguley Tenants' and Residents' Association is helping to improve the local neighbourhoods and welcomes residents to their monthly meeting with invited guests such as local Councillors, police, WCHG officers (and others).

The Group spearheads community projects such as last summer's impressive Estate Clean-up. They are also:

- raising funds for more litter picks (*MCC helps fund equipment*)
- arranging Day Trips
- involved in Wythenshawe in Bloom.

See left for details of meetings and how to contact the group.



## Wordsearch competition

Q R X L I D O F F A D E  
A G Y T E N N O B G G U  
H N N S C J V S E G E G  
K I N T E T R T B X C T  
R R U Z B E A R B S J V  
O P B O W L C E R C Q P  
U S B O O T H T K U H A  
H R L C W E I S T H H R  
D F O F L K C A L T W A  
B H R N M S K E V N O D  
C Y X F I A S Y U U T E  
J N G E B B Q O C H P Y



BASKET  
BONNET  
BUNNY  
CHICKS  
CHOCOLATE  
DAFFODIL  
EASTER  
EGG  
FLOWERS  
HUNT  
PARADE  
SPRING

Cut out and send in your completed word search with your contact details to: Christmas Word Search, Wythenshawe House, Poundswick Lane, Wythenshawe M22 9TA or scan and email to: [customerenquiries@wchg.org.uk](mailto:customerenquiries@wchg.org.uk) by **Thursday 30 April**. All correct entries will be entered in a prize draw and one lucky person will win £50.

**Congratulations to last issue's winner Mr G Wroe from Baguley.**

## The Haybarns New Homes for Shared Ownership

Wythenshawe Community Housing Group is delighted to offer four new semi-detached town houses for sale under shared ownership from as little as £67,500\* at our Haybarns development on Hall Lane Baguley.

The Haybarns is situated in close proximity to local amenities including shops, parks and schools with access to the metro link a five minute walk. These homes, which are ideal for first time buyers, include a fully fitted kitchen, spacious living rooms, off road parking and front and rear gardens.

An open weekend will be held in May but for an immediate opportunity to secure your new home please contact the sales team on **0300 7777 177** or email [sales@wchg.org.uk](mailto:sales@wchg.org.uk)



\*For a 50% share

The Haybarns is provided with funding support by the Homes and Communities Agency and demonstrates WCHG support for the national 'Homes for Britain' campaign.

## Contacting Us Made Easier

**0800 633 5500**

Best option from a landline (Free call).

**0300 111 0000**

Best option from a mobile. (Please check with your provider).

**[customerenquiries@wchg.org.uk](mailto:customerenquiries@wchg.org.uk)**

## Easter opening hours

Our offices will be closed for Good Friday and Easter Monday bank holidays.



Part of



WCHG Head Office  
Wythenshawe House  
8 Poundswick Lane  
Wythenshawe  
Manchester M22 9TA

Or 294 Portway, Woodhouse Park,  
Manchester M22 1TG

Parkway Green House, 460 Palatine Road,  
Northenden, M22 4DJ

Or 137 Bowland Road, Baguley, Manchester, M23 1LE  
**[www.wchg.org.uk](http://www.wchg.org.uk)**

## Taking Safeguarding seriously

In the last six months 82 "Causes for Concern" were investigated by a Safeguarding or Support Officer. Most required support rather than a referral on to the Safeguarding Board.

If you have any concerns about the wellbeing of a child, young person or vulnerable adult call our trained safeguarding staff on **0800 633 5500** or **0300 111 0000** in confidence and we will investigate. If someone is in immediate danger call 999.



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)