

Wythenshawe Life

www.wchg.org.uk



Wythenshawe
Community Housing Group



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Easter Opening Times

Good Friday, 18 April - closed
Easter Monday, 21 April - closed

Our Emergency and out-of-hours service is available on:

0300 111 0000 (Parkway Green)
0800 633 5500 (Willow Park)

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



Reporting a repair

In consultation with our tenants, we have updated our repairs policy:

- **Emergency repairs** (when there is potential danger to health or risk to safety) are completed within an agreed 2 hour appointment slot within 24 hours
- **Repairs by appointment** offered between 8am and 6pm Monday to Friday and 8am to 3pm on Saturdays at a time chosen by you
- **Six week repairs** are usually done when there is no risk to health and safety such as roof and gutter repairs, footpath repairs, internal doors and pointing and brickwork
- **Programmed repairs** are ones common to a number of properties and completed as part of a programme of work.

There are some exceptions such as gas or carbon monoxide leaks and these should be reported to National Grid immediately.

Report repairs:

- By phone – Monday to Friday through Customer Contact Centre **0800 633 5500** or **0300 111 000**
- Through the out-of-hours service using the same numbers
- In person at any of our offices
- Online through our website
- Through the phone app – see item on page 3.

To find out more contact Mel White, Business Manager on **0161 946 9184**

Cheers! for the Real Food Team

Congratulations to the Real Food Team which has been shortlisted for the prestigious UK Housing Awards National Campaign of the Year.



The Awards are being held on April 29, so we are all keeping our fingers crossed for them, and will let you know how they got on in our next issue.

Find out more about the project on page 7.

Real Food. Wythenshawe.

A Cut Above!



We are working with Manchester City Council to deliver grass cutting, street cleansing and associated services across the whole of Wythenshawe.

We want to deliver the best possible service for the people of Wythenshawe. By working together we can improve the quality, frequency and impact of these services for the benefit of everyone who lives or works in Wythenshawe.

The pilot joint-working scheme will run until the end of March 2015. All teams will operate from our Bradnor Road office.

For more information contact Carl Burgess on **0161 946 9151** or email carl.burgess@wchg.org.uk or Barry Warner on **0161-946-9190** or email barry.warner@wchg.org.uk

Keep up with your rent

Paying your rent should be top of your priority list each month. If you fall behind it can be difficult to make up the rent owed, and your home could be at risk.

If you are struggling, please call **Willow Park** on **0800 633 5500** or **Parkway Green** on **0300 111 000** and our friendly experts will talk to you in confidence.

To work out whether you might be entitled to housing or other benefit, there is a useful on-line calculator at www.manchester.gov.uk/benefits

Committed to equality



Board chair Eddy Newman with Clifton Robinson, CEO of HDN

We have been awarded the diversity network accreditation from the Housing Diversity Network (HDN) in recognition of effective leadership and processes aimed at addressing inequality, getting the most from our staff and meeting the needs of the communities we serve.

Chair of the WCHG Board Eddy Newman said, "I'm delighted that Wythenshawe Community Housing Group has been awarded this recognition as it demonstrates that we are fully committed to Equality and Diversity and that is embedded throughout the organisation."

Breaking news...

We have been shortlisted in four categories of the 2014 Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS) awards - • Excellence in Co-Regulation • Young Tenant of the Year • Tenant of the Year • Tenant/Resident Involvement Officer of the Year

The awards take place during April. We will bring you more news next issue!

Proud to be WCHG!



Our smart new liveried vans are out and about across Wythenshawe, bearing designs and themes chosen and developed by our tenants.

Wythenshawe Community Housing Group (WCHG) Chair Eddy Newman said, "The designs reflect the rich heritage of the community as well as reinforcing the message of a brighter future for Wythenshawe. We're very proud of the finished vehicles and we hope that the visibility brought about by the vans will help maintain the partnership between the Group and local people."



All our colleagues in Wythenshawe Works have a stylish new uniform, bringing Parkway Green and Willow Park closer together as one.



If someone turns up to do repairs, only let them in if you are expecting them. If in doubt, keep them out and call us on **0300 111 000** or **0800 633 5500** to confirm any appointment. There have been reports of conmen using false ID to access homes. Our genuine operatives will not be offended by being asked to wait.

Housing App launch

If you have a smartphone - we have a handy free App for you!

The WCHG App makes it easier than ever for you to contact us and to do everything from reporting repairs, checking your account, reporting antisocial behaviour or paying your rent, all at the touch of a button.

all app stores under the title **Wythenshawe Community Housing Group App** and is compatible with iPhones, Androids, Blackberries and other smartphones. Once downloaded simply follow the easy to use drop down menu.

Reminders can also be set up to pay rent! With more than 48% of the UK population having access to a smartphone, we hope many of you will be downloading it!

The App is available as a free download from



Reduce damp and mould

We have experienced a rise in customers telling us they have experienced dampness in their home. In the overwhelming majority of cases the property is suffering condensation.

Condensation happens when moist air comes into contact with a cool surface, such as when mirrors or windows steam up which can lead to the development of black mould. Everyday activities like cooking, showering or drying clothes create moisture in the air. This moisture needs to be managed. We recognise some customers are impacted by rising fuel prices and may not be using the heating as much. This will increase the likelihood of condensation.

To prevent condensation and mould growth;

- Ventilate your home by opening windows and trickle vents regularly
- Try to maintain your home at a constant warm temperature
- Check your extractor fans are operating and used when cooking /bathing
- Wipe down damp surfaces regularly (eg windows) with a dry cloth or paper towel
- Do not dry clothes on a radiator or in front of a fire
- Use a washing line or externally ventilated tumble dryer

Call us on **0300 111 000** or **0800 633 5500** to request a detailed leaflet or support



Pre-1996 Bedroom Tax Exemption

Tenants who have lived in the same property and claimed Housing Benefit continually, or with a claim gap of less than 4 weeks, since before 1 January 1996, may be entitled to a temporary exemption to the under occupation (Bedroom Tax) charge.

This means that for some of our tenants the bedroom tax should not have been applied.

This is however only a temporary reprieve. The exemption has now closed and the bedroom tax applied to all the households affected from 5 March 2014. This means everyone who is temporarily exempted will have to pay from this date.

Helping those we know are affected...

We have sent a list of approximately 300 tenants who we believe to be affected to the Manchester Revenue and Benefits Unit who are now processing and verifying the list to remove the bedroom tax back to 1 April 2013. This process may take several weeks.

Those identified will then receive an amended Housing Benefit award notice from the Revenue and Benefits Unit and a backdated payment of Housing Benefit onto their rent account.

Tenants we may be able to help...

There are two other groups of tenants who may be entitled to this exemption, but we cannot identify them because of how our records are stored. We need these tenants to come forward so that they do not miss out.

Gaps in Housing Benefit claims of up to 52 weeks are allowed for a small number of people who have worked for a short period and claim Incapacity Benefit. Does this apply to you?

If you have lived in a property continually since before 1 January 1996 and you have succeeded to the tenancy, or the tenancy has been assigned to you, between 1996-2014, the exemption may still apply. This might be due to the death of a parent who held the tenancy or a former joint tenant moving out.

If you think this applies to you then please contact the Welfare Reform Team for further advice on how to appeal to the Revenue and Benefits Unit.

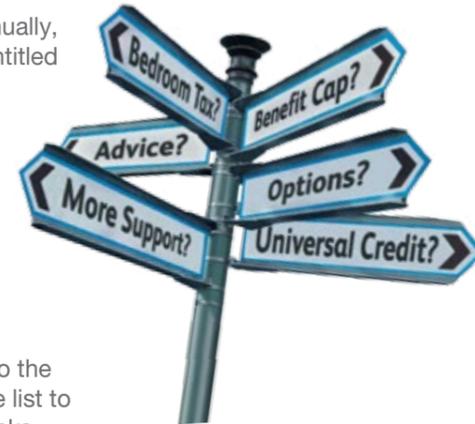
Get Online Wythenshawe

With so many services - including benefits - now available over the internet, Get Online Wythenshawe is helping even more people to get 'online' by offering reconditioned computers from less than £30 from Benchill Enterprise Centre.

If you want to learn how to get on line, watch out for our free online basic skills courses at the Lifestyle Centre, Benchill Community Centre and Royal Oak Community Centre.

You can help! Donate your unwanted computer equipment. All data will be securely wiped and photos etc can be returned to you on a disk.

To find out more call **0161-946 8920** or email getonline@wchg.org.uk



Contact Us Now... We are here to help

Willow Park Tenants:
E: welfarereform@willow-park.co.uk
T: 0800 633 55 00

Parkway Green Tenants:
E: welfarereform@parkwaygreen.co.uk
T: 0300 111 0000

Access IT skills courses at:

Woodhouse Park Lifestyle Centre
Tree of Life – Greenbrow Road
Royal Oak Community Centre
Benchill Community Centre

Customer Feedback

A customer was unhappy with the diagnosis of mould growth being attributed condensation.

We: advised all surveyors to have a full discussion with customers explaining the causes of condensation and what can be done to prevent/treat it. Informative leaflets regarding condensation will also be issued to customers.



Going up - our first Extra Care scheme!

Work will be starting on our landmark Extra Care Housing Scheme on the junction of Brownley Road and Hollyhedge Road this spring.

This £18million investment, part funded by a Department of Health Care & Support Specialised Housing Fund through the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA), will provide 135 much-needed homes for older people in Wythenshawe.

The scheme will include 66 homes for rent, 39 shared ownership and 30 for sale. There will be high quality

communal facilities, including an on-site Scheme Manager and 24 hour extra care provision **HELPING** residents maintain their independence for longer in their new home.

A community café will provide a focal point for scheme residents and for the local community.

We expect completion in autumn 2015. If you would like any further information please contact Amanda Seals, Extra Care Senior Manager, on **0161 946 9581**.



Gladeside gathers momentum

Work is on schedule for the 12 two bedrooomed bungalows being built on Gladeside Road in Brownley Green.

Chair of Wythenshawe Community Housing Group Eddy Newman and Group Chief Executive Nigel Wilson went along to see the progress.

Eddy Newman said, *"These bungalows will provide excellent homes for local people. They are being designed with energy efficient features and two of the bungalows will be specifically designed for wheelchair accessibility, providing much needed facilities for the people of Wythenshawe."*

The homes are being built by Wiggett Construction and completion is due later this year.



Marking Leybrook out!

Great progress is being made on the six two-bedrooomed bungalows at Leybrook, Brownley Green, being built by Wythenshawe Community Housing Group apprentices.

This development is being overseen by Wiggett Construction but all the manual work is being undertaken by WCHG staff and 35 of our apprentices who are getting on-the-job training for their respective trades alongside WCHG joiners, roofers, plasterers, plumbers, electricians and painters and decorators.

A special plaque has been erected to commemorate the apprentices involvement in this unique project!



Battle of the bins bulge – recycle for a greater Wythenshawe!

Bulging black bins are still a problem in some areas, say housing officers who have spotted several during estate walkabouts!

If your black bin is so full on collection day that the lid is open, it will not be emptied or taken away - nor will any additional bags of household waste left at the side. To cut down on the amount going into black bins and to landfill make sure you are recycling all you can!



Did you know?

- 1 - number of free bulky collections each household can have each year
- £0 - for you to dispose of your extra rubbish at the Household Waste and Recycling Centre on Longley Lane
- Free - recycling bins! Contact Manchester City Council on **0161 234 5004** or order online at www.manchester.gov.uk
- Fly-tipping is a crime - please report it! It's the people of Manchester who end up paying for it to be cleared up!

Want a garage?

If you live in the Heybrook Road area of Baguley we have six newly developed garages to rent at £7 per week for tenants and leaseholders and £8.40 for private tenants with a 50% reduction for blue badge holders.

Interested? Contact **Shaki Boreke** or **Andy Coutts** from the Parkway Green Neighbourhood Team on **0161 946 6344**.

BEFORE YOU BIN IT THINK CAN IT BE RECYCLED?



NO PLASTIC CARRIER BAGS PLEASE
To find out more visit www.manchester.gov.uk/recycling

MANCHESTER CITY COUNCIL



Green and proud!

We all want to live in an environment we can be proud of! If you have a garden it is your responsibility to maintain it and make sure it is not full of rubbish.

The Parkway Green Neighbourhood Team recently obtained a two-year Injunction Order against a tenant who refused to clear and maintain their garden, along with an order for more than **£1000** costs for the legal action.

Real Food - team with a mission

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. The team has been busy throughout winter, and the action is hotting up with spring and summer around the corner!

Spring into action - we'd love to support you!

The Real Food Team is currently supporting 20 growing projects and is looking forward to welcoming new schemes, large and small, to their first season.

We can help:

- If you are part of a community association, or a group of residents searching for somewhere to grow your own fruit and veg. We are currently mapping available growing space in the community for vegetables, wild flowers and fruit trees.
- If you are an individual wanting to join an existing growing project please get in touch for our current list. Many are seeking extra helping hands and can share their expertise. Contact Sarah Taylor: sarah.taylor@wchg.org.uk or call her on **0161 946 9164**.

Grafting made easy!

Sam Bolton from Grafting Orchards in Tameside has run Real Food Team Grafting Workshops to help attendees learn how to graft and create new local and heritage variety fruit trees.

Did you know? Wythenshawe was built in the 1930s as a Garden City with every house having a fruit tree in its garden? Real Food are doing a survey to see how many of these trees still exist and will work with residents to re-establish fruit trees.



New look Farm Shop

Pop in and see how The Real Food Team has helped re-launch the Wythenshawe Community Farm Shop. The shop, open daily from 11.30am – 3.30 pm in Wythenshawe Park, is stocked with produce sourced from within a 30 mile radius – including fresh fruit, vegetables, eggs, honey, preserves, and award winning sausages made from their very own home reared pigs.



Follow us!

Look out for our new Real Food website www.realfoodwythenshawe.com which lists all the new and exciting workshops on offer. You can also follow us on Facebook: Real Food Wythenshawe on **Twitter: @realfoodteam** or call the team on **0161 946 7554**.

Cooking on a Budget

Our cooking course at Benchill Community Centre has been helping local residents have fun making easy, low cost healthy family meals from fresh ingredients. See our website for details of more courses to come!



Customer Feedback

Thanks! To the Financial Inclusion team for all their help and advice about what financial assistance people are entitled to, enabling them to take control of their own lives again - from a Moss Nock customer.

Serving up a winner!

Manchester Health Academy (MHA) has won the School Catering Award at the Education Business Awards in London.

Helen Walker, Curriculum Lead for Health/Humanities, said, "We are delighted to receive this award as it follows on from our work with the Children's Food Trust in July 2013, when the Manchester Health Academy became the first school in the UK to receive the Children's Food Trust Award.

"This recognised the whole team's efforts to champion healthy eating by engaging with students in creative and imaginative ways."



Superb Success for MEA!



Manchester Enterprise Academy was in the top 100 most improved schools in England on GCSE results in January 2014. This amazing news further confirms the transformation of the Academy which Wythenshawe Community Housing Group sponsors.

In 2012-13 MEA had been recognised by Ofsted for good teaching, behaviour and leadership and had seen academic results significantly improve. This academic year continues to bring exciting developments:

- In sport: A joint bid with the Manchester United Foundation, Wythenshawe Community Housing Group and the Football Foundation to upgrade the Academy's astro-turf pitches to all-weather 4g surfaces has been successful; rugby is blossoming and NFL American Football coaches will be training students Superbowl style. Olympic judo athlete Michelle Vidler is mentoring girls as part of the 'Sky Sports Living for Sport' campaign!
- More than 35 mentors from local leading businesses and organisations - including WCHG - are working with 6th form students. This has already led to university applications soaring and to some amazing employment opportunities for students.
- In September, a new course pioneered by Peter Jones - the hugely successful business man and TV 'Dragon' - will be launched in the 6th Form. This Level 3 course focuses upon 'Enterprise and Entrepreneurship'. Call MEA's 6th form college on **0161 499 2726** to find out more!

Gateway to Apprenticeships



Three Year 11 pupils from Saint Paul's Catholic High School in Wythenshawe are spending one day a week with WCHG as part of The Gateway Project.

The scheme is giving Anthony Morris, Shane McDaid and Nathan Pollard a chance to develop the skills they are going to need for the future as they work towards a Level 2 qualification in construction which they are on track to complete in just one year.

When they finish their placement in June, subject to interview, they hope go on to a four-year apprenticeship with Wythenshawe Community Housing Group.

Former St Paul's student Reece Whelan joined WCHG in 2011 as a roofing apprentice and last year was highly commended by Pete Waterman at the National Apprentice Services Awards. This year, Cameron Jackson joined us an apprentice after working on the Gateway Programme and will make an excellent gas technician!



Customer Feedback

A customer complained there was a lack of communication from our contractors installing new boilers advising of length of time it will take, what and how a new boiler will be fitted .

We: have amended the existing pre-entry pack we provide to customers having a new boiler fitted to give customers advance notice of exactly what they can expect and within what timescales.

Wardens at your service

Our flagship Junior Wardens programme is to be re-launched and we are actively looking to recruit 8 - 16 year olds to engage in positive activities and community days.

Meanwhile, as well as patrolling our areas, our Neighbourhood Wardens hope to deliver our own sporting activity sessions in local parks and play areas and will be working with our Youth Involvement Team, attending residents meetings, drop in sessions and events.



If **YOU** would like us to attend an event or to hear more of what we do please contact **Lee Isherwood** on **0161 946 9501**.

Saying NO to hate crime

Hate crimes are any crimes committed against a person that the victim believes is motivated by the offender's hatred towards them on the basis of their age, disability, gender, race, religious belief, sex or sexual orientation.

Staff from WCHG's community safety team have recently undertaken training on hate crime reporting. All WCHG offices are now registered as Third Party Reporting Centres - which means you can use our offices to report incidents of hate crime or harassment in confidence.

For further details contact Simon Melloy, our Hate Crime Champion, on **0161 946 7510** or email **simon.melloy@WCHG.org.uk**

Positive results CCTV CONTROL

Our CCTV Control Room continues to achieve great results in partnership with Manchester City Council and Greater Manchester Police, and we are looking to extend our coverage into Parkway Green neighbourhoods.

Our high visibility camera network is having a positive impact on reducing anti social behaviour in our neighbourhoods and we are trialling new digital 4G cameras in "hot spot" areas.

Consultation took place in February with internal and external colleagues including MCC and Greater Manchester Police. Presentations of our proposals were given at Local Performance Panel meetings before agreeing our 6 trial locations.

If you wish to discuss our future plans or have a question relating to Our CCTV Control Room please Contact **Craig Rigby** on **0161 946 6318**.



News from the courts



Evicted

A woman and her three children have been evicted following complaints by local residents of continued anti social behaviour and threats of violence to a neighbour, despite an earlier Court injunction. The Trust agreed to adjourn committal to prison if possession was offered. The property was vacated in January.

Exclusion Order

A man has received a 28-day suspended prison sentence after breaking an exclusion zone order made by the Courts who heard he had persistently harassed his parent's neighbour.

Noise Nuisance

A woman who caused persistent noise nuisance to her neighbours has received a suspended prison sentence after ignoring an earlier Injunction Notice.

Emergency Injunction

An Emergency Injunction Order was obtained against a tenant's 18-year-old son after he made threats to his elderly neighbour. The Order has not been breached and the elderly neighbour now feels safe in his own home.

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.

Our Tribute to Paul Goggins – Wythenshawe has lost a good friend

The year started with the shocking and untimely news of the loss of Paul Goggins MP. Paul was a fantastic ambassador for Wythenshawe and was a great friend of WCHG. He supported Willow Park and Parkway Green in their early days and helped us launch Wythenshawe Community Housing Group last year.

Paul often paid tribute to the important role that Willow Park and Parkway Green have played in the transformation of the area and he had great pride in all the achievements of Wythenshawe and its community. We will miss his support and guidance.

Nigel Wilson, Group Chief Executive said: *“I can honestly say that of the many and varied politicians that I have met and worked with, he was alone in having no edge or aspect of self-importance. He could genuinely listen to everyone—from our tenants to Prime Ministers- and had their ear. He never sought fame or self-publicity, he was always available to assist and help our work on anti-poverty and challenging inequalities. Wythenshawe has lost a good, decent friend but we owe it to Paul to fight on, ensuring that his legacy is a stronger, brighter Wythenshawe in which all residents have the best opportunities to succeed.”*



Eddy Newman, Chair of WCHG, said: *“Paul Goggins was a friend and valued colleague. He was clearly determined to do his best for the people he represented, particularly vulnerable people. He was known as a campaigner against poverty and he continued that campaign against poverty and unfairness throughout his time in parliament. He was a real champion for the people of Wythenshawe and Sale East.”*



Meet... your new MP

Mike Kane was a councillor in Northenden, and is a former teacher. More recently he's been acting Chief Executive of Movement for Change, leading on their payday lenders campaign.

Mike Kane grew up in Wythenshawe. A son of Irish Immigrants, Mike joined the Labour Party at the age of 18, campaigning for the disability rights MP champion Alf Morris.

Mike was once one of the youngest elected councillors in Manchester and rose to be an Executive member on the authority. While his main career was as a teacher he went to work as a parliamentary manager for both James Purnell and Jonny Reynolds, acting as parliamentary agent for the later.



Mike Kane MP said, *“I was delighted to be elected as MP to my home town seat. Paul Goggins was an extraordinary hardworking dedicated public servant and I hope to do his memory justice. I look forward to championing the causes of local people down in Westminster over the coming months and years.”*

Proud to be... a living wage employer

WCHG is one of the 27 organisations in the Housing sector nationally to become an accredited Living Wage Employer.

It means our apprentices will be paid the living wage - £7.65 per hour - the rate independent experts calculate is the amount required to cope with the cost-of-living. Shadow Chancellor Ed Balls and Wythenshawe and Sale East MP Mike Kane visited and toured one of WCHG's building sites and met apprentices who will benefit from the Group's announcement.

Ed Balls said: *“I want to see more employers follow the example being set by Wythenshawe Community Housing Trust to get wages rising.”*



▲ Apprentice Kirstie Sales with Ed Balls and Mike Kane

Paul Goggins MP was also a great supporter of Real Food Wythenshawe and had a personal commitment to supporting local people around food poverty. He was instrumental in setting up the food poverty working group in Wythenshawe which next meets on **17 April at Wythenshawe House at 11.00**. Contact Lewis Crowther if you would like to attend:

lewis.crowther@wchg.org.uk

Woodhouse Park Lifestyle Centre

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

STOP PRESS! We have just heard that Wythenshawe Amateurs have won the £100k bid from Budweiser for a new clubhouse. More news next time...

Easter Opening

9am-6pm on Easter Saturday
CLOSED Friday 18 April, Sunday 20 April and Monday 21 April.

Something for everyone!

Woodhouse Park Lifestyle Centre has facilities that are available for communities to hire, and which are second to none. For instance:

Our sports pitches recently hosted the deaf football tournament and in February we held an amateur football tournament to help Wythenshawe Amateurs Football club raise money and publicise their £100k bid in the 'Budweiser Club Futures' competition to win a new clubhouse for the team.



Local organisations and businesses across Manchester took part in the 5-aside tournament, including The Image Group, Magenta Living, Wythenshawe Amateurs, Weaver Vale and WCHG. It was a huge success and raised over £800.

Did you know? Outdoors, we have 4 floodlit all-purpose pitches; indoors we have a fully equipped sports hall for badminton, netball, basketball, bowls, boccia, dodgeball.

Contact us if you have a team who would like to use these facilities or if you would like to join one of the many existing teams that use them. **We are just a call or a click away!**

Let's Get BrainPOP-ing!

Get ahead of the game by BrainPOP-ing at home!

It could help you to help your child with their homework, or enable you to learn something new, and it is guaranteed fun!

We trialled BrainPOP UK at the WOW Zone and, because it is such a fantastic educational resource, we have agreed a six-month Community License with BrainPOP UK for use right across Wythenshawe!

One parent said, "BrainPOP is very educational, the children are having so much fun, they don't notice how much they are learning about the world."

You can use BrainPOP online or you can download the mobile app for any smartphone or tablet.

Coming soon...

...in May:

- Disability Football - 'One City' disability sports sessions - free access for 8-adults

Call us to register your interest.

...Over 50s:

Film shows include:

Oklahoma

22 May 1-4pm
Admission free!

...Swing into spring

Frank Sinatra tribute act

24 April 1.30-4pm
£3 with light refreshments



Experience the magic of Motown

at the Lifestyle centre

Saturday 24 May | Admission £4
Bar open 7.30pm - 11pm (11.30pm Close)



Simply Login using:

Website: brainpop.co.uk

App: Download "BrainPOP UK"

Login details:

Username: **wowzone**

Password: **brainpop**

Have fun and feel free to feed back any comments to andy@wowzone.org.uk



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

Easter Opening

12 noon-3pm on Easter Saturday,

CLOSED Friday 18 April, Sunday 20 April and Monday 21 April.

The centre has hosted different events, such as The Hate Crime Awareness day for people in the community and sessions on how to build bird boxes and tree grafting with The Real Food Team.

We are starting a film club at Bideford and there are plenty of other projects going on - more news next time! As always, our volunteers have been extremely busy!

If you have any ideas, or want to know more about activities you can join in with, contact Lewis Crowther - [07525905030](tel:07525905030) or lewis.crowther@wchg.org.uk or Nicola Hamilton - [07525905014](tel:07525905014) or nicola.hamilton@wchg.org.uk



Benchill Community Centre
Benchill Road, Benchill, M22 8EJ

Tel: 0161 945 0879
www.benchillcommunitycentre.co.uk

Springing into action!

As well as our free community sports we are offering:

- Zumba Classes for just £1 on Monday evenings as part of Manchester City Council's Active Lifestyles campaign
- Easter Play scheme from Tuesday 15 - Friday 18 April, for children aged 6-14 from 9:30am to 3:00pm for just 50p per day
- Computer 'Driving Licence' courses for beginners and advanced users
- A Skills Academy for people aged 18+ with a learning disability to make and appear in their own film, TV and radio presentations
- A Free Art Club every Friday

To find out more, just give us a call, email us, or drop by...

Benchill Community Centre

FREE Community Sports

4pm - 6pm
Monday & Friday - 16+ Years
Tuesday and Wednesday - Under 16's
Thursday - Afterschool Club

10am - 1:30pm
Saturday - 7 - 14 Years

Benchill Community Centre, Benchill Road, Wythenshawe, M22 8EJ
Tel: 0161 9450879
Benchillcommunitycentre@willow-park.co.uk

LOTTERY FUNDED **COMIC RELIEF**

Helping students 'Get Hired'



Parkway Green House was the venue for a Businesses Working with Wythenshawe (BW3) 'Get Hired' event for Manchester Enterprise Academy post-16 students.

WCHG, Microsoft, Manchester Airport and Manchester City Council were on hand to give students an insight into the world of work, sharing expert knowledge and advice to help prepare them for leaving education.

Harry Freeman a Yr13 student at MEA Sixth Form, found the help in filling in application forms and creating a CV invaluable. He said, "I didn't realise it was so complicated and by the time I had filled things in with some support, was very surprised by all the skills I do actually possess and am more confident about myself and my chances of employment in the near future."

Upcoming BW3 event dates:

1 May – Get Hired – St Pauls RC High School

22 May – Numbers at Work – St Aidens Primary School

To find out more about BW3 go to: www.bw3.org.uk.



Welcome to our new Housing Apprentices



A warm welcome to seven Housing Apprentices who joined us in December following a pre-employment course held in partnership with The Manchester College

Faerie August, Christopher Benjamin, Shaki Borki, Samantha Fowler, Hannah Jordan, Ashley Law and Stuart Peacock will be with us for 12 months on four-month rotations in a variety of departments as they study for their Level 2 Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH) certificate in Housing Practice.

Each has a dedicated mentor, and all have reported that they are already learning more than they had ever expected!

One of the apprentices, Samantha Fowler, said:

"Since starting on the Welfare Reform Team as part of my apprenticeship, I have been made to feel like part of the family. It has been a real eye opener working with this team, as I get to see how tenants are coping with the changes that have been put in place.

"The team are very helpful and are always involving me in new challenges. I really enjoy being an apprentice for Wythenshawe Community Housing Group. It has been an amazing experience so far."

Employability courses help Wythenshawe Residents

Pre-employment courses have helped those looking to **GET** a job and have also landed successful participants with a Customer Service Level 1 certificate to add to their CVs.

They were held in partnership with The Manchester College with participants coming through our Real Opportunities team and the Talent Pool. The courses covered completing CVs and application forms, mock interviews with feedback and all the bits in between!

If you need help finding work or training, complete a Real Opportunities form today. Contact **Stephanie Quinn** on **0161 946 7545** or email realopportunities@wchg.org.uk

Real opportunities. Wythenshawe.

Street Cleaning Team - Marie's story

After just three months, our Futures Street Cleaning Team has made a huge impact.

So far, they have collected more than 3000 bags of rubbish, responding to our tenants concern about littering in the area. One day a week they visit the Manchester College, working towards their Level 2 Apprenticeship in Cleaning and Support Services.

Marie from Woodhouse Park was unemployed for seven years before starting with the group. She says: *"I needed a job... I couldn't afford my bills and my family were helping out as much as they could."*

"Since working, I have got my independence back. Being in work has made a huge difference to my life and helped me in so many ways, especially being able to stand on my own two feet."

Be sure to give our Street Cleaning Team a wave if you see them out and about!



Helping adults into work

For the third year running we are working with The Manchester College to provide adult work placements so that learners get the work place experience they needed to complete their NVQ Level 1 in Business Administration.

Mary Abraham, currently on work experience with the Real Food Team in Regeneration, said, *"The placement is going well, everyone's nice and I feel comfortable. Learning new things is a good experience, especially feeling like being part of a team."*



Free Travel

Day savers and mega riders tickets to help you get to a new job or interview

REAL OPPORTUNITIES REAL OPPORTUNITIES

Contact the Futures Team on **0161 946 7545**

Enterprise Centre



Thinking about setting up a business or becoming self employed? The Enterprise Centre on Benchill Road could provide some answers!

As well as providing offices for new and existing business there is free advice and support for anyone wondering about setting up on their own.

For more information or support call **Phil Duffield** on **0161 945 0655** or visit www.willowparkenterprise.com

New and Exciting for YOU...TH!

Are you aged 13-19? At a loose end sometimes between 6.30pm-9pm?

We have the solution!

The Youth Involvement Team is now operating three great new senior youth clubs at youth and community centres in West Wythenshawe - and they are guaranteed to be fun!

The youth clubs are funded through the City Council's Youth Fund at Bideford Community Centre on Tuesday nights, Norbrook Youth Club on Thursday nights and at Woodville Community Centre on Friday nights.

That means that together with the existing youth clubs at the Benchill HUB and Woodhouse Park Lifestyle Centre, there are now five youth clubs to choose from!

Our thanks to key community representatives for the centres who have been a fantastic support for us, and particularly to Bernard Caine, Eric Smith and Gavin Evans for their support.

NEW YOUTH CLUBS IN WYTHENSHAW

opening from 21 January 2014

What's on offer? ARTS & CRAFTS COOKING SUPPORT & ADVICE VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES TUCK SHOP SPORTS Football, Basketball, Badminton, Table Tennis, Pool

Tuesday 6:30pm - 9:00pm 13-19 years
BIDEFORD
Bideford Drive Baguley

Thursday 6:30pm - 9:00pm 13-19 years
NORBROOK
Bordley Walk Wythenshawe

Friday 6:30pm - 9:00pm 13-19 years
WOODVILLE
Sale Road Northern Moor

funded by MANCHESTER CITY COUNCIL

For more information contact Youth Involvement Team 0161 946 7547 or 07917473091

Meet Wendy Hall

- a member of The Youth Involvement Team.

Wendy Hall is our Youth Advice and Support Worker and is available to help young people aged 11-25 with any issues that affect them on a day-to-day basis.



Her free and confidential service helps young people access advice and information on a 1-2-1 basis so they feel ready to make positive and informed choices.

She can also offer support with relationships (sexual health), bullying, housing, education, training and employment, drugs and alcohol, benefits and welfare rights.

You can approach the service yourself, or be referred by a friend, family member, youth worker or teacher.

Contact Wendy at:
wendy.hall@wchg.org.uk, text 07825 240 640 or call her office: 0161 946 7543.

Inspirational - student Sham



Sham Mamoun, a Year 10 student at Manchester Health Academy (MHA), spent her Christmas holiday with the charity Syria Relief on a humanitarian mission at refugee camps.

She took with her more than 200 letters written by students at MHA to children in the refugee camps, bringing back their replies.

Sham came to the UK in 2010 and has dedicated her free time to raising awareness of the plight of the people in her native Syria. She was nominated to work with RECLAIM, an organisation which supports young people at critical times in their lives and helps them to develop their confidence and leadership skills.

Last year Sham won the Diana Award (National Citizen of the Year), presented to her in London by Prime Minister David Cameron and she is now working as an ambassador for the Award.



Value for Money

We continue to improve the services we offer to ensure they are Value for Money. To do this we work with tenants to ensure that services are fit for purpose and continue to adapt to individual's needs.

The Group will continue to let you know about the savings and improvements that are made through this newsletter, Annual Report and the website. Value for Money is a key focus for involvement panels, Tenants Committee and the Boards to ensure compliance with the Homes and Communities Agency Value for Money Standard.

If you would like more information on the Value for Money Standard or would like to suggest ways in which the Group can improve, please get in contact with Paul Roberts, Business Development Manager, on 0161 946 6333 or email business.development@wchg.org.uk



Our Performance

Performance up to the end of February is:

- Current Rent Arrears 5.21%
- Average time to let a property 22.2 Days
- Percentage of repairs completed on time 99.92%
- Percentage of repairs completed on first visit 98.43%
- Customer satisfaction with repairs 95.73%
- Percentage of phone calls answered in 30 seconds 82.39%



Wordy Worm

competition

Find five 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 by 30 April 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.

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



Customer Feedback

Extremely pleased - a Benchill customer with the gas servicing operative who attended her home and who got the job completed swiftly and was polite and professional.

A day in the life of ...a Grants Panel member

Robert McKenzie from Northenden has been involved with WCHG since Day One - and before that he was heavily involved with Parkway Green Housing Trust.

He is a member of the Grants Panel which meets once a quarter and reviews all applications to our Community Development Grants Scheme. The Panel can decide which applications to support with up to £2,500 for a project which benefits local communities.

It is Robert's duty to review all paperwork and assess how he thinks each application should be scored, ahead of a discussion with the wider Panel.

Robert said, "I enjoy being a Grants Panel member because it allows tenants to give the appropriate financial support to Wythenshawe's community groups when they are in most need. It gives a great deal of satisfaction, knowing that I personally have made a difference."

Does Robert look familiar? You may already have heard of him! He is a community leader where he lives and last year he received the Good Neighbour Award at the Tenant Conference, for all the hard work he does locally.

Below, you can see the schemes the Panel agreed last quarter, and find out how to apply if you know of a project that would benefit.



Community funding for local projects

At our last Wythenshawe Development Grants meeting we provided funding of more than £8000 to the groups listed here.

We meet quarterly. If you would like to apply for a grant for a project which benefits your neighbourhood, contact Sandra Ronaldson on **0800 633 5500** or email sandra.ronaldson@wchg.org.uk or Pedro Odjidja on **0300 111 0000** email pedro.odjidja@wchg.org.uk. The maximum grant is £2500.

Group	Project	Grant
Butcher Lane TARA	Christmas carol concert	£150
Butcher Lane TARA	To take 50 children to see Snow White at the Forum,	£295
Royal Oak	Christmas dinner for 45 members of the Ballroom Dancers & Chair Based exercise Group	£454.55
Bideford Xmas Dinner	Christmas lunch for 55 people and carol service	£873.84
St Luke's Church	To purchase strimmer for an overgrown area being prepared for growing vegetables	£200
Sarelles Morris Troupe	Medals, trophies, DJ and room hire for the end of year presentation	£860
SVP Xmas Meal	67 Christmas Day meals and food parcel to 535 families and 160 single people/childless couples. Part funding of a £9000 project	£2500
Rose Hill Community Farm	Installation of security cameras & lights. Match funding	£2500
Manchester Carers Forum	Support activities and respite for carers	£864



Noticeboard

Real Neighbours. Wythenshawe.

As always, our trusty band of Real Neighbours volunteers have been working tirelessly across Wythenshawe!

A busy Christmas period included parties, raffles, carol singing and plenty of seasonal cheer for elderly or vulnerable local people! Since then the volunteers have attended an informative Hate Crime Awareness presentation at the Bideford Centre.

To become a Real Neighbour, or to find out how they could help someone you know get in **TOUCH**. Contact Nicola Hamilton on **07525 905014** or email [Nicola Hamilton@wchg.org.uk](mailto:NicolaHamilton@wchg.org.uk)

Outward Bound!

Climbing, archery, bouldering, the Piranha Pool and Alien Conspiracy were all on the agenda when the WOW Zone team took 22 Year 4 children from Newall Green Primary School to the Robinwood Activity Centre in Todmorden for a 2-night residential project.

WOW Zone teacher Louise Zwanepoel said, "Many of the children had never been away from home before but they absolutely loved the activities and we could see them growing in confidence as they worked together to overcome their fears!"

More on the Wow Zone on page 12



Gardening group gets digging



The Macmillan Cancer Information and Support Centre at Wythenshawe Hospital and WCHG has worked with the Real Food Project to create an allotment at Haveley Circle, Benchill.

This has become the new Macmillan gardening group for local cancer patients and their families to relax and help with getting back to normal or a 'new normal' - and now we are looking for new members!

Call Macmillan Connections activities on **0161 291 4876** for more information.

SPRING INTO ACTION

Now is the time to start planning your entry to WCHG's Garden Competition! Details and a leaflet/entry form will be included in the summer newsletter - so happy gardening!!!

Congratulations to Mr Paul Couper of Northern Moor, our latest Wordy Worm winner. The answer was: **'We wish you a merry Christmas'**.

A PEOPLE AUCTION

7pm 25th April, Woodhouse Park Lifestyle Centre

An auction of people's skills. Come and bid for such skills as **cooking, cleaning, car washing and more**

- 27 lots!

Help us fund raise for the... **FREE Fun Day 2 August 2014.**



History of Wythenshawe

Wythenshawe was created as a garden city suburb in the 1930's to provide family housing for the people of Manchester, but its history goes back much further

Did you know?

Wythenshawe comes from the Anglo-Saxon word "Withigensceaga" meaning 'small wood of withy [willow] trees'. In the 13th century it went under the name of 'Wytenscawe' and became known as "Withenshawe" in 1607.

The three ancient townships of Northenden, Baguley and Northen Etchells make up Wythenshawe. Northenden and Baguley are mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1086.



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

Hindi

Kurdish

Somali

Urdu

Vietnamese

For Wythenshawe Community Housing Group go to **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

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 or ring 0300 111 0000.



Welcome on Board

As we went to press we were looking forward to welcoming The Right Revd David Walker, Bishop of Manchester as a member of the Wythenshawe Community Housing Group Board. Eddy Newman, Chair of WCHG, said *“The Bishop of Manchester has a passion for social housing, urban regeneration and the well-being of tenants and he will make a big contribution to Wythenshawe Community Housing Group and the people of Wythenshawe.”*



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