

PCHA

Part of the Genesis Housing Group



**PCHA going
green**
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What's happening

The newsletter for PCHA residents Summer 2009

Welcome to your summer newsletter

Hello and welcome to your summer 2009 newsletter. This edition has lots of news about improvements we're making at PCHA, as well as information about how you can get involved.

Find out about our new Managing Director in the article on this page, have a look on page 3 to see what we've been doing to improve our telephone service and turn to page 5 to find out about opportunities to work with us to ensure we're giving you the best possible service. You'll also find out about an employment training programme in Westminster on page 6, and information on activities for young people in Brent and Westminster on page 10.

We hope you enjoy this edition. If you have any comments or ideas for future newsletters, please contact Angela Ellis on 020 8451 8080 or email angela.ellis@pcha.org.uk

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Welcome to our new managing director

In June, we were delighted to welcome Olu Olanrewaju as our new Managing Director at PCHA. Olu brings with him a wealth of experience from the social housing sector. He has worked in the Midlands area for several years, most recently at Midland Heart Housing Group in Birmingham where he was Managing Director between 2005 and 2008, and then as Group Director of Customer and Communities. Outside work, Olu's interests include jazz music, learning to play the saxophone and supporting Manchester United football club.

Commenting on his new role, Olu says "I am very pleased to join Genesis Housing Group as Managing Director of PCHA. It is a privilege to be part of an organisation such as PCHA, with its rich history of transforming lives and communities with social investment. I am thrilled at the prospect of playing a part in moving the business to the next level."



Would you prefer to receive *What's Happening* by email?

If you would, please let us know by calling 020 7563 0037 or emailing info@ghg.org.uk.

COMING SOON!

Your PCHA Report to Residents 2009 will be arriving in the Autumn.

AN UPDATE ON CUSTOMER SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS

Over the past few months we've been consulting with you to find out how you think we can improve our services. We have used your feedback to develop an action plan and we will be providing you with regular updates in future newsletters about the changes we have made.

Some of the improvements we have already made include the following:

- We have set up a new contact centre for all your housing management queries (you can find out more about this in the article below).
- We are improving how we monitor our Service Commitment, which sets out the level of service you can expect when you contact us. Improvements include setting up a new correspondence log to monitor how quickly we respond to your letters.



- We are introducing new software to monitor how quickly we answer the phones at our desks to make sure we're answering within our target of four rings.
- We are developing a programme of surveys to be carried out throughout the year to make sure that we listen to you and act on what you have told us.

We will soon be publishing our customer services delivery plan that will set out all the improvements we are planning for the future. This will be available on our website www.pcha.org.uk and in our reception.

New contact centre for all your housing management queries



We now have one telephone number for all your queries: **0208 451 8000** which is available from **9am to 5pm** Monday to Friday. By dialling this number you will come through to our contact centre, which will take all housing management calls. Our customer services officers will deal with your call at the first point of contact or, if necessary, refer you to the relevant officer. This new contact centre went live on 1 May in response to feedback that we have received from residents about contacting PCHA.

You can also continue to use this phone number to report a repair to our maintenance contact centre, which is open from 8.30am to 7pm Monday to Friday.

This new service will not be available to our residents using the east London office until August 2009. Until then, if you are a Springboard or PCHA resident living in East London or Haringey, you should continue to call your housing services or incomes services officer on their direct line, or by calling **020 8475 0033**.

Leaseholder handbook feedback

All leaseholders received a new and updated version of the leaseholder handbook earlier this year. The feedback we received on this was very positive with 75% of respondents finding it easy to read and understand, 98% of respondents liking the format of the handbook and 100% thinking that it contained useful information. Thank you to all who sent us their feedback and congratulations to Ms. Mandy Breeze from Academia Way who won the £50 Marks and Spencer's voucher.



Dealing with telephone problems

On page 3 you will see we've made some improvements to our telephone service by setting up a new contact centre for all your housing management queries. However, some of you may have experienced some problems recently while trying to contact us by telephone. These were caused by our telephone provider and we have been working hard to make things better. It was agreed that we would inform you when the system went wrong so that if you were unable to get through to us at that time you would know the reason why.

We had a problem on 5 May where callers using our old numbers were cut off after four minutes. This has been fixed and we are sorry for any inconvenience caused. Our main number changed to 0208 451 8000 in October 2008 and calls to this number were not affected by the fault.

In May, our repairs contact phones were not working at the following times:

11 May: 70 minutes

12 May: Approx. 3.5 hours

14 May: 40 minutes

15 May & 22 May: Intermittent problems for most of the day.

We apologise to anyone who couldn't get hold of us during these periods. We have a dedicated member of staff working on fixing the telephones and hope to see services working well soon.

As well as concentrating on fixing these technical problems we have been working hard to improve the service you receive once you get through, which has included setting up the new contact centre.

Service charges

As the financial year 2008-2009 has come to an end we are now producing your service charge accounts, which will compare the actual expenditure in our buildings and estates with the estimated amount that you paid during the year.

The accounts will show either a surplus or shortfall for the year depending on whether we have paid more or less money than anticipated to maintain the communal areas where you live.

If you are a tenant, any surpluses or shortfalls will be taken into account when setting your service charges for 2010-2011.

If you are a leaseholder, your rent and/or service charge account will be adjusted with any surpluses or shortfalls.

When the accounts are ready to send to you, we will be organising residents' meetings in our bigger blocks and estates to review the accounts with you. In addition, housing services officers and contact centre staff will also be available to answer any queries that you may have. Call us on **020 8451 8000** if you have any queries.

Leaseholder forum success

We have now had two forum meetings with leaseholders where we discussed our recent leaseholder survey and service improvement plans. We are now organising our next meeting. If you would like to come along then please call the Resident Involvement team on **0208 4518080** or email residentinvolvement@pcha.org.uk.



We want your help to improve our services!

WE'RE LOOKING FOR RESIDENTS TO GET INVOLVED IN ESTATE INSPECTIONS

We're looking for residents in Westminster and Brent to help us improve our estates by becoming resident inspectors. As an inspector, your role would be to visit our estates once a month to inspect the cleaning and gardening services and check for any maintenance issues in communal areas. Using the checklist we would provide, you would need to note any problems and report back to us. The necessary work would then be ordered and you would be asked to check that the work had been done on your next inspection.

To become a resident inspector you will need to have basic computer skills and have one day a month free to carry out the inspections. You will also need to pass our resident inspectors training course. You will be paid a small fee for each inspection and we will also pay for your travel costs. If you think you might be interested in becoming an inspector, please call Sauda Simba on **0208 451 8082** or email sauda.simba@pcha.org.uk



Why not be a mystery shopper?

Would you like to get involved in making sure we're offering a good service? If so, you may like to become one of our 'mystery shoppers.' This would involve telephoning various departments between 9am and 5pm (or 9am to 7pm on a Thursday) and then reporting back to us on the quality of the service you received.



You will receive one day's training and you will be rewarded for your time. You will be able to choose how many 'mystery shopping' sessions you would like to take part in. If you think you might like to become a mystery shopper or would like more information please call Sauda Simba on **0208 451 8082** or email sauda.simba@pcha.org.uk

Would you like to be the leaseholder representative for your block?

Many of our leasehold customers have told us that they would like to appoint a representative for their block to keep in close contact with us and provide updates to their neighbours. This could include putting up news and information from us on notice boards in your block.

If you would like to be the leasehold representative for your block, please contact the Resident Involvement team on **0208 4518085** or email residentinvolvement@pcha.org.uk

LOOKING FOR EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES? Westminster Works can help



Westminster Works is an employment and training programme in Westminster. This is an exciting opportunity for Westminster residents to become re-skilled or receive help in finding suitable employment. The programme brings together a number of specialist organisations and housing associations who are working together to provide information, advice, guidance, training and job opportunities for residents. Each person signed onto the programme will be given their own personal advisor who will assist them along the way to meeting their future career goals.

Genesis Community, Genesis Housing Group's charitable foundation, are door-knocking in various locations across Westminster this summer and working in partnership with CityWest Homes, another housing provider, to deliver 20 job fairs over the next 18 months.

For further information, please contact Paula Hines on **020 8900 4779** or **paula.hines@ghg.org.uk**

ESTATE INSPECTIONS IN YOUR AREA

Our housing services officers regularly inspect the estates and neighbourhoods where you live. This is to check the standard of cleaning and gardening and to review any maintenance problems in communal areas. To find out when your housing services officer will be in your area, please ask for a leaflet at the reception desk or look on our website: **www.pcha.org.uk**



Working together to tackle abuse

Knowing what to do when we suspect something is wrong is a concern for everyone. We work closely with other organisations including local councils, police and specialist agencies. You can help too. If you have any concerns about children or residents in your community we encourage you to speak to someone. Contact your local council or one of the national organisations listed below for advice.

Here are some useful telephone numbers and websites:

Childline 0800 1111
(24 hour free, confidential, helpline for children)



NSPCC Child protection helpline
0808 800 5000
(24 hour free helpline)
www.nspcc.org.uk also has useful information, available in several languages.

Action on Elder Abuse helpline
0808 808 8141
(free, confidential helpline)
www.elderabuse.org.uk

Age Concern Information Line
0800 00 99 66
(8am – 7pm, free advice and information)
www.ageconcern.org.uk

SOME CHANGES TO YOUR GAS AND REPAIRS SERVICES

Gas Safe Register



From 1 April 2009, Gas Safe Register replaced the CORGI gas registration scheme as the official gas safety

body. This means that all gas contractors will need to feature the Gas Safe logo on their I.D. Further information about the new register is available on their website www.gassaferegister.co.uk

Changes to our gas servicing contractors

We have recently re-selected our gas servicing contractors. As a result of this competitive process, we have selected the following companies to work with us to make sure your gas appliances are regularly checked

and maintained:

J. O'Connor – for properties in East and South London

Village Heating – for properties in North London

BSW Heating Ltd – for properties in West London

Village heating and J.O'connor have worked with us for a number of years and were successful in winning a new contract to continue providing gas services for us.

BSW Heating Limited will be working in Westminster and we welcome them to PCHA as a new contractor. They are an award winning contractor and have demonstrated a high level of competence within the industry, including the effective management of domestic heating systems for other housing associations.

To report a gas or heating problem, or loss of hot water, contact the company for your area on the following numbers:

East London and South London
– J. O'Connor
Tel: **020 8367 4401**

North London
– Village Heating
Tel: **0800 980 4796**

West London
– BSW
Tel: **0800 953 1229**

If you have any queries about the service you receive or are having difficulty in getting through to the contractor, you can contact us on **020 8758 8380** or email MandEdepartment@pcha.org.uk

What's in a name?

Your repairs provider Pathmeads Property Services is changing their name to Shenstone Services. This change is part of the company's growth and development strategy.

The changes will mean an improved customer service for you, including:

- more directly employed staff
- a new directly employed out-of-hours team

- an improved call handling and repairs system
- a new customer-focused, fully interactive website, www.shenstone.co.uk, which will be available later in the summer.

You will soon see the new name of Shenstone on the company vans and on staff badges.

Shenstone services



NEWS FROM THE TENANT SUPPORT TEAM



Join our focus group!

Our focus group continues to meet every three months. At recent meetings we have discussed how we are improving our tenant support services and what standard of service you should expect from us. We also discussed visits and activities the team will be arranging over the next few months. We're looking for two or three more tenants to join our group. If you are receiving support services and would like to join, please contact your support worker, or call Paul Evans on 0208 451 8136 or email paul.evans@pcha.org.uk

Our next meetings will be at 12.30pm at our office at 192 Willesden High Road on:

- 30 July 2009
- 29 October 2009
- 10 December 2009

Residents visit Kew Gardens

In April, the Tenant Support team organised a trip for residents to visit Royal Botanic Kew Gardens. The trip was a great success, with 28 residents coming along and enjoying the wonderful range of flowers, greenhouses and scenery. If you would like to be involved in any future visits the team organises, please contact Paul Evans on 0208 451 8136 or email paul.evans@pcha.org.uk



Money advice surgery in Willesden

Bob Butler (pictured) has been working with our Tenant Support team to help give advice to residents at a weekly money advice surgery. Bob may be able to help you with budgeting, managing debt problems, or setting up a bank account. He can also refer you to local furniture re-use projects, where

low cost furniture is available. Bob is based at our offices at 192 High Road Willesden every Thursday, and has met with residents at our office as well as visiting residents at home with their support worker. If you think Bob might be able to help you, please contact Paul Evans for a referral, on 0208 451 8136 or email paul.evans@pcha.org.uk

PCHA GOING GREEN

RECYCLING SUCCESS AT FORUM HOUSE

Michelle Erandio moved into her new home in Wembley in December last year. She is now happily settled in and is enjoying all the benefits of living in Forum House in Wembley City.

One of those benefits is the high-tech disposal system, which helps residents to recycle and also minimises carbon emissions. Residents separate their household waste and recycling before putting it into colour-coded chutes. Valves in the chutes are opened twice a day and the rubbish is whisked into corresponding containers at the rubbish collection station. When these containers are full, they are driven off to the nearest recycling plant.

Forum House has other features which help residents to be environmentally-friendly; Michelle hasn't had to use her heating too much, as it stays warm in her flat even in winter. She is also using the great transport links which connect Wembley to central London by bus and tube.

Michelle is enjoying living so close to Wembley Stadium. "It's really nice when there are events in the stadium" Michelle says. "It's exciting to see so many people here, and it's a great atmosphere."

DO YOU NEED SOME HELP OR ADVICE ON ENERGY EFFICIENCY IN YOUR HOME?

Do you want to reduce your heating and electricity bills and improve the energy efficiency of your home? If so, Sade Sanni, our dedicated Energy Efficiency Manager, might be able to help. Contact her on **0208 758 8357** or email sade.sanni@pcha.org.uk

OUR COMMITMENT TO THE ENVIRONMENT

We have developed a new policy which sets out our commitment to protecting the natural environment. If you would like to see our policy, please contact Harriet Jones on **0207 563 0034** or email harriet.jones@ghg.org.uk



“The disposal system is really good. At first I found it hard as I wasn't used to separating my rubbish, but now it's easy and it's helping the environment”

Your say!

We want to hear about a subject that interests you – whether it's about where you live, an event happening in your local community, or an issue you'd like to share with other PCHA residents. If you'd like to suggest an article for our Your Say! page, please contact the Resident Involvement team on **020 8451 8085** or email us at residentinvolvement@pcha.org.uk.

What's going on for young people?

Genesis
Community

Woodfield Road youth inclusion – West Nine Youths

The Woodfield Road Youth Inclusion Project is for young people aged between 8 and 13 years living in Westminster. For over two years this project has helped young people to meet and discuss important issues in their community, play games, make new friends, go on trips and find out about activities and services available in their borough. The group has been involved in arts and crafts, drama, dance, filming, editing, sports, quizzes, and many other great activities.

Would you, or someone you know, like to be involved in the Woodfield Road project? It takes place every Thursday, 5.30pm – 7.30pm at: Paddington Arts, The Pyramid Room, 32 Woodfield Road, London, W9 2BE.

For more information or to get involved either visit Paddington Arts on a Thursday between 5.30pm and 7.30pm, or call Steve Nicola on **07740 046 526** or **0208 150 5334**.

Want to get into volunteering, training or employment? Are you aged between 8 and 19 years and living in Brent?

Genesis Community may be able to help – through providing mentoring support, referring you to local youth services providers, or providing outreach sessions in your local neighbourhood.



A successful visit to The Lion King at the Lyceum Theatre



Young people enjoy a visit to Thorpe Park

If you would like more information please contact Fabian Gilbert, Youth Programme Delivery Manager, on **020 8900 4768** or Fitzroy (also known as Benson) on **020 8900 8356**.

Community centres available for hire

Are you looking for a hall to hire for a small celebration or to run a community project?







Genesis Community may be able to help. We currently have two community centres that are available for hire. If you would like to hire a centre, or to find out more about the activities currently happening, please contact us on the numbers opposite.

- **The Vale Community Centre**, Pentland Road, Kilburn, NW6 5RT – Contact Sarah Connelly on 0208 900 4774
- **Pinner Road Community Centre**, 49 Savoy Court, Pinner Road, North Harrow HA2 6DZ – Contact Sarah Connelly on 0208 900 4774.

HOW ARE WE PERFORMING?

We want to provide you with excellent customer service. To help us do this we have set ourselves performance targets for the year. We measure how we're doing each month, in comparison with our targets, so we can see where we're doing well and where we need to improve.

Here are some figures showing you how we were performing in May compared with our target this year.

Service area	Our target	How we performed in May?	
Percentage of repairs completed the first time we visited you	75%	69%	
Overall satisfaction with repairs (results from our phone survey)	80%	66%	
Average waiting time for calls to our repairs contact centre to be answered	30 seconds	2 minutes 36 seconds	
Average waiting time for calls to our housing management contact centre to be answered	30 seconds	19 seconds	
Average time residents have spent before being seen at our office receptions (without an appointment)	10 minutes	4 minutes 10 seconds	
Percentage of complaints responded to within our target which is to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> acknowledge the complaint within two working days give a full response within ten working days. 	98%	100%	



We have met or exceeded our target



We haven't met our target and we need to do better

