

# Housing News

## WHAT'S IN THIS ISSUE?

### 07 Housing Heroes

Nominate your local heroes  
for an award



### 13 A day in the life

Our cover star Kevin Robins tells us  
about his role as a community warden



### 16 My Southwark

Jeanette Mason, chair of the  
Ledbury Estate Tenant and  
Resident Association tells us  
all about her Southwark...

# THE WAY WE ALL REGISTER

# TO VOTE IS CHANGING

**Make sure you're still registered to vote.**

Look out for our canvassers who will be visiting Southwark properties to help you to register.



### What do I need to do?

- From Friday 17 October we will be sending canvassers to certain properties in the borough to help you to register to vote. They will be happy to help you with any queries that you may have
- If you are not currently registered to vote, you can do so by returning an Invitation to Register form or going online at [www.gov.uk/register-to-vote](http://www.gov.uk/register-to-vote) where the application only takes five minutes to fill in
- If you receive a Household Enquiry Form (HEF) please return the completed form, even if you have already registered online.

If you haven't received a letter about registration or if you have any queries, please contact Southwark Electoral Services on **020 7525 7373** or email [electoralenquiries@southwark.gov.uk](mailto:electoralenquiries@southwark.gov.uk)



**YOUR VOTE MATTERS  
MAKE SURE YOU'RE IN**



*Southwark*  
Council

# WHAT'S IN THIS ISSUE?

## WELCOME TO THE AUTUMN ISSUE OF SOUTHWARK LIFE HOUSING NEWS.

I'm really excited that once again we are inviting you to let us know about your Housing Heroes, those local people making a big difference in your community. You can find everything you need to know and fill out a nomination form on page seven.

I hope you also enjoy hearing from previous winner Jeanette who tells us all about her Southwark on page 22. And make sure you turn to page 14 where Kevin gives us a fascinating insight into what it means to be a community warden.

I'd also invite you to turn to page 15 where we look to the future of the Lakanal building following the terrible tragedy five years ago and update you on how we're continually investing in our fire safety with new smoke and heat alarms.

Plus, don't miss our article setting out our housing promises to you and how we are working to make them a reality.

With competitions, advice on how to make the most of autumn and much more we hope you enjoy this issue and as always, please do get in touch with any comments or article ideas.

Best wishes  
Cllr. Richard Livingstone

### CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING

### CONTACT US

Do you have something to say about Southwark Life Housing News? Write to: **Letters, Southwark Life Housing News, Communications, Southwark Council, 160 Tooley Street, Second floor, hub 5, SE1 2QH** or email [SLHN@southwark.gov.uk](mailto:SLHN@southwark.gov.uk)

### TWEET TWEET

We're online so if you are too, come and say hi. It's a great way to stay updated on the latest local events, news and info.

 @lb\_southwark

 [www.facebook.com/southwarkcouncil](http://www.facebook.com/southwarkcouncil)

## THE SOUTHWARK LIFE HOUSING NEWS TEAM

**Editor:** Kate Walwyn-Jones

**Contributors:** Nazarine Aiken, Sally Causer, Yvonne Drake, Lola Fatogun, Laura Fitzsimmons, Carly Hamilton, Florence Igbokwe, Lucy Lee, Miriam McGrath, Fariah Nanhoo

**Design:** Cubiquity

## 04 QUALITY AFFORDABLE HOMES FOR YOU

How we are working to achieve our promises

## 06 NEWS IN BRIEF

Need to know stories making waves in the borough

## 14 LET'S TALK ABOUT GETTING INVOLVED

We talk to Emilie Mendy about getting involved in her local community

## 15 FIGHTING FIT FOR AUTUMN

Ideas on how to keep active this autumn

## 17 NEW FUTURE FOR THE LAKANAL BUILDING

An update on plans to bring the Lakanal building back into use

## 18 IMPROVING OUR FIRE SAFETY

Discover how we're investing in fire safety

## 21 ASK SALLY

Columnist Sally Causer of Southwark Citizens Advice Bureau answers your money queries

## 23 HOME OWNERSHIP SERVICES

What you need to know about the home ownership services available at Southwark Council

## 24 COMPETITION TIME

A chance to win £50 in vouchers



# QUALITY AFFORDABLE HOMES FOR YOU

Fairer future  
Quality affordable homes

CLLR RICHARD LIVINGSTONE  
CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING

"Good quality affordable homes are essential to maintaining strong communities and making Southwark a place to be proud of. Everyone deserves to live in a warm, dry and safe home and as a council we're committed to making sure this happens. Whether you're a council tenant, leaseholder or you rent privately we want you to feel proud of your home and your local community.

This isn't just an ideal – we have a plan of action that transforms our aspirations into reality. These are long term Fairer Future promises to ensure that both you and future generations to come enjoy quality affordable homes in Southwark."



**Take a look at what we have planned and what this means for you.**

**Build more homes of every kind**

**What's in it for me?**

The council is committed to building more homes, of all kinds, to meet the growing demand. Our various regeneration projects around the borough mean that we're bringing in a real mix of homes to Southwark.

**Build 11,000 new council homes by 2043, with at least 1,500 by 2018**

**What's in it for me?**

Given the scale of the borough's waiting list, it is vital that we provide more social housing. Southwark's home building programme is the most ambitious in London. The plans fully involve local residents who will have a genuine say about the quality of the new council homes and where they should be built.

Where new homes are built on existing estates, 50 per cent of the new homes will go to tenants on those estates in housing need.





## **Finish our programme to make every home warm, dry and safe by 2016 and continue our a programme to deliver a quality kitchen and bathroom for every council tenant**

### **What's in it for me?**

Having already invested over £300 million in the scheme, if you're a council tenant you can look forward to a series of improvements to ensure your home is warm, dry and safe. And we're sprucing up kitchens and bathrooms across the borough.

## **Introduce licensing in the private rented sector and further crack down on rogue landlords**

### **What's in it for me?**

Licensing Southwark's privately rented sector means that we will be able to drive up housing standards and reduce antisocial behaviour. Everyone deserves a quality home and we're making sure this happens regardless of who your landlord is. We're currently consulting on the subject, please visit [www.southwark.gov.uk/talkrent](http://www.southwark.gov.uk/talkrent) to get involved.

## **Set up an independent leaseholder and freeholder management company**

### **What's in it for me?**

We aim to give leaseholders and freeholders a greater say in how their properties are managed. The company will be focused on the issues that matter the most to leaseholders and freeholders in Southwark.

## **Introduce resident housing inspectors**

### **What's in it for me?**

This new idea will give residents greater responsibilities in their local communities. Working in partnership with the council's resident officers, volunteers will help bring about better housing standards in local areas.

## **Further reduce illegal subletting of council homes**

### **What's in it for me?**

Illegal subletting costs the council money and prevents genuine residents from receiving a tenancy. With limited homes and stretched budgets, we're doing all we can to clamp down on this crime and provide homes to genuine applicants.

## **Have a lettings policy that means that 50 per cent of all new council homes go to people from the area, with the rest going to other Southwark residents**

### **What's in it for me?**

It's simple: prioritising quality affordable homes for people who have a local connection to the borough, contribute to their communities, or are a working household.

## **Keep council rents low**

### **What's in it for me?**

With rising living costs you can at least rest assured that we're doing all we can to keep rent levels down. We've achieved this over the past few years and we are committed to increasing rent by no more than inflation plus one per cent for the next four years.

# FREE LOCAL COURSES

The council is funding free accredited training for local adult residents. Two courses are being offered: basic computer skills and employability.

The three day employability course runs from Wednesday to Friday, 9.30am to 4.30pm. The two day basic computer skills course runs Monday and Tuesday, 9.30am to 4.30pm. They are open to any Southwark resident aged 19 or over, regardless of their employment status.



**i** The classes are being held every week at Alpha House, 100 Borough High Street. To register for your place, call 020 8951 4220 or 080 0180 4841.

## Southwark

# IN BRIEF

## #HOUSINGDAY

Take a look at our short film of residents talking about the importance of social housing in Southwark. Watch the film and join the Twitter conversation @lb\_southwark using the hashtag #HousingDay

## CONGRATULATIONS TO THE ESTATE CLEANING AND GROUND MAINTENANCE TEAMS

An independent review into our estate cleaning has found a marked improvement from the last review in 2010. The cleaning, caretaking and amenities score improved from 88 to 93 per cent and the grounds maintenance score remained at an impressive 98 per cent. Congratulations to the teams and keep up the good work.

## IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR OLDER PEOPLE'S FREEDOM PASS?

**If your older person's Freedom Pass expires in March 2015 you need to renew it.**

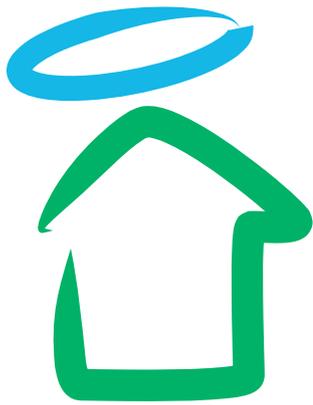
Renewal letters are being sent out up until the 12 December; you will need this letter to renew your pass as it contains your unique renewal number. Once you have this number visit [www.freedompass.org](http://www.freedompass.org) to renew your pass and continue enjoying free travel all over London.

## GET INVOLVED WITH NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

Neighbourhood and Home Watch (NHW) aims to bring neighbours together to create strong, friendly, active communities where crime and antisocial behaviour are less likely to happen.

For more information on how to get involved in a Neighbourhood Watch Scheme go to [www.ourwatch.org.uk/get\\_involved](http://www.ourwatch.org.uk/get_involved)





# HOUSING HEROES AWARDS

## Housing Heroes Awards 2014

Recognising local heroes and celebrating working together to improve housing services in Southwark



**Fairer future** ✓  
Delivering our promises

## FOREWORD

Southwark Council is making huge strides in improving our council housing. We are investing in making every home Warm, Dry and Safe; building new council homes to meet the housing demand we have in our borough; improving repairs and other services for our tenants and leaseholders, and working hard to keep rents low.

But we cannot make all the housing improvements we need alone: we need local residents to continue to play their vital role in supporting their communities. We are committed to working in partnership with our tenants and leaseholders to provide you with the opportunities to change the way we deliver our services and council housing in the future.

Our Housing Heroes Awards celebrate how we work together to improve local services and recognise those individuals or groups who give up their time to benefit their communities and neighbours. If you know of a Southwark Council tenant, tenant body or member of council staff who you think deserves recognition for the work that they have done, we want to hear from you.

We look forward to receiving your nomination and wish you luck!

**Cllr Richard Livingstone**  
**Cabinet Member for Housing**



## INTRODUCTION

Southwark Council has launched the Housing Heroes Awards to recognise individuals or groups that have made an outstanding contribution to their local area and contributed to improvements in Southwark housing.

There are eight categories. Take a look at the criteria for each and send us your entries. We're sure you can think of lots of examples of good work being done around your community.

Your entries will be reviewed by a judging panel made up of tenants, councillors, council officers and stakeholders. If your nomination is shortlisted we'll notify you in December and you and the person you are nominating will be invited to an awards ceremony on Tuesday 20 January 2015 where the winners will be announced.

For more information on the awards visit [www.southwark.gov.uk/housingheroes](http://www.southwark.gov.uk/housingheroes)



## ELIGIBILITY

1. Nominations are open to anyone who lives in Southwark.
2. Nominees for the neighbour of the year, best community initiative, young community hero and the lifetime achievement categories must be Southwark Council tenants or leaseholders.
3. Nominees for customer service of the year must be employed by Southwark Council or one of its contractors.
4. Nominees for the good landlord award must rent out properties in Southwark.

## CATEGORIES

### A) Neighbour of the Year

An outstanding individual or group that has done something to make a positive change in your local neighbourhood or community in the past year.

### B) Best Community Initiative

An innovative project or initiative that has helped your local community come together and make life better in your community in the past year.

### C) Young Community Hero

An outstanding young person (under 18 years of age) who has done something to make a positive change in your local neighbourhood or community in the past year.

### D) Customer Service of the Year

A member of Southwark Council staff or one of its contractors who has delivered excellent customer service to you, your family, neighbourhood or community in the past year.

### E) Good Landlord

A landlord (public or private) who has provided exceptional service to their tenants in the past year. Landlords, you can also tell us how good you are.

### F) Up and Coming TRA of the Year

A TRA that started or relaunched in the last 12 months that has shown the most potential in making a difference in its neighbourhood.

### G) Outstanding Tenant and Resident Association (TRA)

An outstanding TRA that has worked to make a positive change to your local neighbourhood or community through your local TRA in the past year.

### G) Lifetime Achievement

An outstanding individual who has worked to make a positive change to your local neighbourhood or community over many years.

### H) Overall Winner for Outstanding Achievement

A winner drawn from categories A to G who, in the judging panel's opinion, deserves further recognition for outstanding and innovative achievement, which has benefited others.

## HOW TO ENTER

Please complete the attached entry form and post to:

FREEPOST RSCE-TGHU-CUZB  
**Southwark Council**  
Richard Harrington  
Housing Services (3/5)  
160 Tooley Street  
London, SE1 2QH

You can also make an online nomination by visiting

[www.southwark.gov.uk/housingheroes](http://www.southwark.gov.uk/housingheroes)

The entry deadline is  
**Sunday 30 November 2014.**

We cannot consider entries received after this date.

Please summarise in 250 words why the team or individual deserves to be nominated and how they meet the category selection criteria. The judges will use this summary to make their decision.

### YOUR DETAILS

Name:

Address:

Telephone:

Email:

Nomination for category (please circle):

**A B C D E F G H**

### I WANT TO NOMINATE

Name:

Address:

Telephone:

Email:



250 WORDS  
OR LESS

A large, empty rectangular box with a thick orange border, intended for writing an entry.

Your entry must be 250 words or less but may also include supporting information, e.g. photographs or multimedia. You may continue on to one additional sheet.

**Good luck and thank you for completing this form.**

**250 WORDS  
OR LESS**

**FREEPOST RSCE-TGHU-CUZB**

**Southwark Council**  
**Richard Harrington**  
**Housing Services (3/5)**  
**160 Tooley Street**  
**London, SE1 2QH**

# A DAY IN THE LIFE...

## KEVIN ROBINS SOUTHWARK COMMUNITY WARDEN



Kevin has been a community warden in Southwark for nearly nine years. Born and bred in the borough, he sees his job as an opportunity to give back to the community.

For more information on the role of community wardens go to [www.southwark.gov.uk/wardens](http://www.southwark.gov.uk/wardens)

**A** special constable for a decade before he became a community warden, Kevin knew that this was the perfect role for him. What he enjoys the most is the interaction with people and the varied nature of the job.

"The thing about Southwark is it's so diverse. You're learning something every day" says Kevin. "You come into work and you never know what's going to happen. That's what I like about it."

There are 42 uniformed community wardens in Southwark including seven parks liaison officers. Kevin and his team work very closely with the emergency services and other organisations such as SASBU, (Southwark Antisocial Behaviour Unit) housing services and homelessness charity St Mungo's to keep Southwark safe. They assist the police at serious incidents like road traffic accidents, and were first on the scene at the Cuming Museum fire.

*"You come into work and you never know what's going to happen. That's what I like about it"*

The link between the community and the police, the wardens have powers to deal with low level antisocial behaviour such as littering, dog fouling, graffiti and dangerous cycling on footpaths; they can enforce on the spot fines known as FPNs (fixed penalty notices) for these offences. Kevin says: "It's an extremely important part of our job in keeping the borough clean but it's equally important in getting people to understand that they have a responsibility too."

But it's not just about enforcement – the wardens work tirelessly to support Southwark's vulnerable residents who need their help. Kevin and a colleague once found a 17 year old boy collapsed in the street, and having kept him conscious until an ambulance arrived, were told by paramedics that he would not have survived without their intervention.

On another occasion, neighbours became concerned by the stacks of paper piled next to an old gas oven in the home of an elderly man in Dulwich. He wouldn't let anyone into his property, but over a number of weeks Kevin befriended him, gained his trust and was let into the house, which had no central heating and dangerous, ageing gas heaters. Kevin worked swiftly with other agencies to replace his unsafe gas fire, as well as securing the benefit payments that he was entitled to. After the work was complete Kevin continued to visit him every week to help him with his prescriptions until the man sadly passed away a year later.

"That was a good one," Kevin says. "I really felt like I'd done something. And it's not just me that does it, there are so many other wardens making a big difference."

**i** Want to share your Southwark with SLHN? Let us know what makes the borough special to you. Email [SLHN@southwark.gov.uk](mailto:SLHN@southwark.gov.uk)

# LET'S TALK ABOUT GETTING INVOLVED



Emilie Mendy, a young mum living in Rotherhithe, regularly attends community council meetings and is involved with her local TRA. She also runs Bizzie Bodies sessions for local children, where they learn French through the arts, at her local TRA hall. We talk to her about why she feels getting involved is important.

## What made you decide to set up Bizzie Bodies?

I wanted to have more play provisions for children of primary school age, and something for my children to do. Being French I wanted to give something back to the community through sharing my skills, and I wanted to meet new people.

**i** For more information about getting involved go to [www.southwark.gov.uk/housing](http://www.southwark.gov.uk/housing) or give the community engagement team a call on **020 7525 3326**.

To follow us on Facebook go to [www.southwark.gov.uk/residentsinvolvement](http://www.southwark.gov.uk/residentsinvolvement)

## Has there been anything that's surprised you, and what do you think you have achieved by getting involved?

Becoming more confident. Getting involved in your community is good for you regardless of your background or where you come from. Networking and working with others, especially with children, makes me happy. I also got a number of grants within six months of starting the project which was very encouraging.

## What did you find difficult and how did you overcome this?

It was hard to start with as people didn't know me and I needed to gain their trust and confidence. The initial response to my flyers was that parents weren't interested but I found that if I talked to them individually that changed. Not having much information was very difficult but Gill Kelly, Brian O'Neill and Louis Rotsos of the council's community engagement team were a fantastic source of information and inspiration.



**f** [www.facebook.com/bizziebodies](http://www.facebook.com/bizziebodies)

**t** [twitter.com/BizzieBodies1](https://twitter.com/BizzieBodies1)

# FIGHTING FIT FOR AUTUMN

As the days get shorter and the sky gets darker, it can be easy to feel a bit gloomy or under the weather. Here are some ideas to fight back against the autumn blues.

## Don't forget your flu jab

"I've got two kids and I need to stay healthy to look after them."

"I don't want to take time off work."

"I had flu and it really knocked me for six."

These are just some of the many reasons people gave us for why they always get their flu jab. You can get a free flu jab if you are 65 or over, or if you are at risk of getting seriously ill because of flu (for example because of other health conditions you have).

If you're eligible for the jab, just call your GP to book an appointment. It offers up to 80 per cent protection this winter flu season, so you can get on with your life and not worry about getting sick.

You can also visit [www.southwark.gov.uk/saynotoflu](http://www.southwark.gov.uk/saynotoflu) to find a local pharmacy that offers vaccination.

## Get active

Whether it's finding your inner karma at a yoga class or joining a walking group, exercise boosts your mood, makes you feel great and even reduces your risk of developing a chronic disease.

Whether you're eight or 85, there are tons of activities waiting to be discovered in Southwark, many of which are free or low cost. Just visit [www.southwark.gov.uk/getactive](http://www.southwark.gov.uk/getactive) to find something perfect for you.

## Gardening

The annoying thing about autumn is that when it's cold and rainy people tend to stop going outside. But just grab a big woolly scarf, a few jumpers and get out there – and gardening is a great reason to do so.

Now's the time to start planting for spring and so there are lots of gardening projects in the borough where you can get your outside fix. And putting those bulbs in will be a great reminder that winter may be coming, but it doesn't last forever.

Just visit [www.southwark.gov.uk/gardening](http://www.southwark.gov.uk/gardening) to find a project near you.

## Meet someone new

As we start gearing up for Christmas, it can seem like if you don't have family nearby, you get left out.

There are lots of fantastic organisations in the borough that not only organise Christmas activities, but have great events and courses happening all year round – and they'd love you to come along. From volunteering to computer classes for beginners to salsa, whatever your interests, you're sure to find something really interesting – and meet some equally interesting people at the same time.

Just call **0345 155 9033** to find an activity near you.

# MY SOUTHWARK

Jeanette with Kenneth Elgenia and Victoria-Jane O'Donnell at the First World War centenary event



*Jeanette Mason, chair of the Ledbury Estate Tenant and Resident Association (TRA) and Southwark resident, tells us about her Southwark...*

## What's your connection to the borough?

I have lived in Southwark for about 33 years. My family all live around Camberwell, Walworth and Peckham. I have made lots of friends, especially since I have been chair of Ledbury Estate TRA. When I moved here there was a gas works across the road and local shops which are now all gone, which is really sad. There have been a lot of changes, some good, and some bad. It's certainly a real community.



## What have been the highlights of the Ledbury Tenant and Resident Association?

Well there are a few. Having events on the estate and putting the Ledbury back on the map is a big one. We have organised Christmas and Halloween parties, fish and chips for the elderly, and Easter egg hunts. But for me it has to be the old fashioned fête we had this year to mark the centenary of the First World War, with three Chelsea pensioners attending the event. There were donkey rides, Punch and Judy, a coconut shy, stalls, and Surrey Docks Farm came along. It was a great day and the other TRAs came to help and share in the fun. The Mayor of Southwark, Deputy Leader Cllr Ian Wingfield and a number of other councillors came down as well. Events like these break barriers down.

## How did it feel to win the Housing Heroes award?

I felt very humbled, as so many other TRAs are working hard as well. So it was really lovely to be appreciated, and we all wore a smile on our faces for some time.

## What is your favourite park in the borough?

Burgess Park has got to be the best. It has a new BMX track, a picnic place, a lake you can walk around with the family; it's lovely.

## What do you do to relax?

Spend time with my grandchild and family. I like watching some sport, tennis or a bit of football.

## Where is your favourite place?

My garden is my place to unwind, listen to music or read.

**i** Want to share your Southwark with SLHN? Let us know what makes the borough special to you  
Email [SLHN@southwark.gov.uk](mailto:SLHN@southwark.gov.uk)



# NEW FUTURE

## FOR THE LAKANAL BUILDING

Many of us in Southwark will remember the tragedy of 3 July 2009 when six residents lost their lives in a tower block fire in Camberwell.

For a long time the future of the building has been uncertain but now the council, in partnership with the local community, have agreed a scheme to bring Lakanal back into use. After extensive consultation with the Resident Project Team, who were formed to make sure that local people were involved every step of the way, a refurbishment scheme for the building has been agreed, with the structure remaining the same.

The scheme also provides potential opportunities for improvements across the wider estate, again developed in consultation with the Resident Project Team, and is currently being consulted on with the whole of the Sceaux Gardens Estate. Opportunities for developing the undercroft of Lakanal are also being explored with the current proposal looking to develop this area to provide facilities for local community groups and organisations.

John McGrath, tenant and chair of the Sceaux Gardens Estate tenant and residents' association, said: "We're pleased that a positive outcome has been reached after such a terrible tragedy five years ago. We've worked closely with the council and are really happy with the plans, which will see more residents moving to the estate in the near future."

Cllr Peter John, Leader of the Council, said: "This is a poignant moment in the history of what has happened in this part of the borough. It is important to reflect on the impact that the Lakanal fire had on so many people, not least

the families of those who died, but also on the community at the Sceaux Gardens Estate. But now is the right time to move forward and it is good to see a really positive step for people living here, who have worked on this project for many months, and who can now look ahead to the tight knit community expanding as new residents move in."

The council will soon be holding a drop-in session for all Sceaux Gardens Estate residents which will allow residents to meet the council project team and review and comment on the current proposals for the block and wider estate.

Glenn Potter, Regeneration Director of the council's contractor Keepmoat, said: "Over the past few months, we have held a number of sessions with residents to invite them to explore what they would like to see in terms of the building and local area. The community projects have inspired and supported residents to come to their conclusions on what's best for the estate as a whole. We look forward to working with Southwark Council to implement the plans."

# IMPROVING OUR FIRE SAFETY



Following on from recommendations made after the Lakanal tragedy, and as part of our promise to provide quality affordable homes to all our residents, we have been working closely with the London Fire Brigade to invest in our fire safety. As part of this we have been installing new state of the art smoke and heat alarms in many of our properties.

The alarms are currently being installed in high rise blocks of over ten storeys, blocks with complex layouts and street conversions. Over the next ten years the plan is to roll them out to all council properties.

However with it proving tricky to gain access to some tenants' and leaseholders' properties in the pilot scheme we wanted to address any doubts you might be having...

**I've been having major works done to my home and I already have a smoke alarm. Do I really need this?**

Even if you have an existing fire alarm or have recently had one installed as part of works to your property, they are not the same. These new alarms have been specifically developed for our properties and are linked to give early warning and significantly reduce your fire risk.

**There must be some hidden costs**

The alarms and installation are completely free. We will also cover maintenance costs, apart from for leaseholders who can opt in to pay a £10 annual maintenance charge.

**It will mean having ugly smoke alarms and wires all around my home**

No, unlike the big plastic eyesores of old, these alarms are smaller, more discreet and mainly wireless. All can be controlled by a LED controller. The battery also lasts for ten years so you won't have to worry about changing them.

**Smoking will mean it's constantly going off**

Not only do the alarms look better they are also smarter. They can distinguish between real smoke and

smoke from a cigarette. They are also being installed by trained contractors who know where to put them so they don't cause false alarms.

**The installation will take ages and I'll have to take time off work**

Our contractors can offer weekend and evening appointments, and it should only take an hour at the most.

With fire safety we really are all in it together and the longer it takes to install your alarms the greater the risk not only to your own safety but that of your neighbours. Most of the alarms have now been fitted but for fire safety only 100 per cent is good enough.

## Leaseholders in converted street properties

Due to the linked nature of the alarms it is crucial we install them in all of the properties, including those of leaseholders. If we are unable to do this we will have to pursue other costly fire safety measures, such as compartmentation, which would be passed onto leaseholders through service charges. So if you think your home might be affected please see below for how to get in contact.



To book an appointment or to find out if your home is part of the scheme go to [www.southwark.gov.uk/smokeandheat](http://www.southwark.gov.uk/smokeandheat)

To be prepared in the event of a fire, make sure you know your fire plan. Tenants should also be aware of the fire information in their tenants' handbook. For more information go to [www.southwark.gov.uk/firesafety](http://www.southwark.gov.uk/firesafety)

## What London Fire Brigade says



Most people know that a working smoke alarm can save lives by providing those vital few seconds needed to escape a house fire. But, despite the majority of households (88 per cent) having at least one working smoke alarm in their home, these smoke alarms alerted households to a fire in England in only a third of cases.

The most common reason a smoke alarm failed to activate was because the fire was outside its range.

Any kind of smoke alarm is better than no smoke alarm at all but statistics show that linked smoke alarms are more reliable and provide better coverage than stand alone alarms.

Smoke detectors should be located so occupants will be able to hear them throughout the home, particularly when you are asleep or when doors are closed. Ideally this means having a detector in every bedroom, outside each sleeping area and on every level of your home.

Southwark Council and London Fire Brigade (LFB) work closely in partnership to improve the fire safety of all residents in the borough. Southwark Council is currently undertaking a programme of installing linked smoke detection in its residential properties.

LB Southwark's fire liaison officer states:

*"I would strongly urge residents in Southwark to take up the Council's offer of linked smoke detection particularly in street properties that have been converted to flats where occupants share a front door or stairway, as the linked system offers the earliest possible warning smoke and fire."*

The London Fire Brigade will also continue to carry out free home fire safety visits giving fire safety advice and installing battery operated smoke alarms if no other detection is present. If you would like to request a home fire safety visit from the LFB you can contact them on **0800 028 4428** or go to [www.london-fire.gov.uk/HomeFireSafetyVisit.asp](http://www.london-fire.gov.uk/HomeFireSafetyVisit.asp)

**L F B**

LONDON FIRE BRIGADE

# Home fire safety guide for purpose-built flats and maisonettes

## IF YOU HAVE A FIRE, DO YOU KNOW YOUR PLAN?

Follow this advice if you live in a purpose-built block of flats or maisonettes, of any height, with shared communal corridors, external walkways, staircases or entrances.

### If there is a fire or smoke inside your flat or maisonette:

- Get everyone out, close the door and walk as calmly as possible out of the building.
- Do not use the lift.
- Call 999, give your address including the number of your flat and state which floor the fire is on.

### If there is a fire or smoke inside your flat or maisonette but your escape route is NOT clear:

- It may be safer to stay in your flat or maisonette until the fire brigade arrives. Close the door and use soft materials to block any gaps to stop the smoke. Go to a window, call for help, call 999, give your address including the number of your flat and state which floor the fire is on.

### If there is fire in another part of the building but not inside your flat or maisonette:

- Purpose-built blocks of flats and maisonettes are built to give you some protection from fire. Walls, floors and doors will hold back flames and smoke for a minimum of 30 to 60 minutes.
- You are usually safer staying in your own flat unless heat or smoke is affecting you. If you are in your flat, stay put and call 999. Tell London Fire Brigade where you are and the best way to reach you.
- If you are within the common parts of the building, leave and call 999.



# ASK SALLY

## ANSWERING YOUR MONEY QUESTIONS...



Whether you're having money worries, need some advice about loans or have a question about benefits, Sally Causer of Southwark Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) has got straightforward, no-nonsense advice you can really use.

*I am worried about how much major works on my estate might cost, is there a limit on how much leaseholders can be charged?*

### SALLY SAYS...

New rules for social landlords, such as Southwark Council, came into force on 12 August 2014. They limit service charges for repair, maintenance and improvements to £15,000 within any five year period if the property is the leaseholder's principal home and the works started on or after 12 August. The council can also use their discretion to reduce service charges if the leaseholder is in extreme hardship.

For more information about the new rules call the council's home ownership unit on **020 7525 1400** or the Southwark CAB leasehold advice line on **020 7237 9532**.

*My phone company harassed me into getting a new contract. But I wasn't given all the correct information, and now I am paying more. Can I get out of the contract?*

### SALLY SAYS...

New rules come into force on 1 October 2014 which help consumers who feel they have been misled or the person trying to sell them something was aggressive.

If a trader's behaviour is likely to significantly impair the average consumer's freedom of choice this may amount to aggressive practice, and you may be able to withdraw from the contract or seek damages.

For more information you can contact the Citizens Advice consumer helpline on **0345 404 0506**.

*I borrowed some money from a high street credit shop earlier this year. I missed a payment and the company has offered to rollover the debt. What does that mean?*

### SALLY SAYS...

If someone is struggling to pay back a loan, a payday lender may offer them the opportunity to extend the loan. This is known as a rollover. Payday lenders are now only allowed to rollover a loan twice.

Before a lender agrees to a rollover, they must now give customers an information sheet that explains where and how they can get free debt advice as the interest charged for this type of service is very high.

For help on budgeting and finance or for advice on payday loans go to **[www.southwarkcabservice.org.uk](http://www.southwarkcabservice.org.uk)**

You could also contact London Mutual Credit Union to find out about their financial services. Call them on **020 7787 0770** or email **[info@creditunion.co.uk](mailto:info@creditunion.co.uk)**

## GOT A QUESTION FOR SALLY?

Email **[SLHN@southwark.gov.uk](mailto:SLHN@southwark.gov.uk)**

Sally can't answer all letters personally but if you need help with money issues contact Southwark Citizens Advice Bureau on **0844 4994 134**

For full details of opening times and more useful information about the advice agencies in Southwark please visit **[www.southwarkadvice.org.uk](http://www.southwarkadvice.org.uk)**

**citizens  
advice  
bureau**

Working together for the public's health

Lambeth

Southwark  
Council

*"Flu is very different to a cold.  
I never want to have flu again -  
that's why I'll be getting the jab"*

## Don't forget your flu jab

There's a reason that most people offered the flu jab say yes.  
If you're eligible, just call your GP or visit [www.saynotoflu.co.uk](http://www.saynotoflu.co.uk)  
to find a local pharmacy offering vaccination.

NHS

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

Southwark  
Council



**IF YOU ARE A LANDLORD  
YOU CAN EARN MONEY BY LETTING  
YOUR PROPERTY TO US**

Find out more at  
[www.southwark.gov.uk/landlords](http://www.southwark.gov.uk/landlords)  
or call 020 7525 4172

Social lettings agency

[www.southwark.gov.uk/landlords](http://www.southwark.gov.uk/landlords)

# HOME OWNERSHIP SERVICES

## Tenant Move Assistance

*Help for tenants moving into the private rental sector*

If you are a tenant moving out of the borough of Southwark and into private rental accommodation, you may be eligible for grant assistance. You could for example be moving for work reasons, or to be nearer to family elsewhere in the UK.

We can offer a cash grant to help with your deposit, removal costs and other costs involved in the move.

The grant payment will match the amount available under the council's Smart Move scheme, which is currently £1,000 per bedroom you are giving up.

We'll need to know where you are moving to with full details of the accommodation, including the landlord's contact details and a copy of the tenancy agreement.

**i** If you would like more information about Tenant Move Assistance, please contact **Mark Maginn**, social homebuy manager on **020 7525 7431**.

## Actual service charges

The council has just sent the actual service charge adjustments for 2013/2014 to its homeowners. With your breakdown of service charges you will find a booklet giving details of all the communal services that may be provided to you, and how the charge has been calculated.

If you are a leaseholder, you will also have received a leaflet explaining your rights and obligations under the terms of your lease.

**An apology to leaseholders** Residents may have noticed that in the last issue there was a mistake on page 12 of the magazine. The text should have indicated that leaseholders own the kitchen and bathroom and are responsible for the repair, maintenance and renewal of these elements. We'd like to thank everyone who pointed the error out to us and apologise for any confusion.

## New Tenant Management Organisation (TMO)

Gloucester Grove Estate TMO went live on 6 October 2014. The majority of the housing needs of residents of the estate will now be managed by TMO staff from their offices in Wickway Court, Cator Street on the Gloucester Grove Estate.



Southwark Council and TMOs have been working together for a number of months to build a local housing office following a successful ballot of residents earlier this year.

Undertaking a range of housing services including repairs, cleaning and rent collection, Gloucester Grove is the fourteenth TMO in Southwark. Between them they provide services to over 4,000 homes. A further TMO on the D'Eynsford Estate, is due to go live early in the new year.

Congratulations to the whole committee and the residents of Gloucester Grove Estate.

**i** If you would like to know if a TMO would be right for your home, contact the tenant management initiatives team (TMI) on 020 7525 7712 or email [tenantmanagement@southwark.gov.uk](mailto:tenantmanagement@southwark.gov.uk)

Should you have any queries about your service charge, or wish to see a more detailed breakdown of the costs, please contact your dedicated collections officer, whose contact details have been provided on the invoice. If you have any concerns regarding the quality of the service provided then you can also raise this with your resident services officer, or if you live on a tenant managed estate, your TMO office.

# WORDSEARCH

ALARMS	DRY	VOLUNTEERS
BUILDING	ESTATE	WARDEN
CHARTER	IMPROVEMENT	WARM
COMMUNITY	PROMISES	
CONSULTATION	TRAINING	

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

**SOLVE BOTH PUZZLES FOR YOUR CHANCE TO WIN A £50 SHOPPING VOUCHER**

**Helen Grater from Walworth was the lucky winner last issue.**

Tell us what you would like to see in the next issue of Southwark Life Housing News.

1

2

3

Name:

Tel:

Address:  Age:

Comments about the magazine:

# USEFUL HOUSING CONTACTS

## Housing services for council tenants

Tel: 020 7525 2600  
Mon to Fri – 8am to 6pm

## RENT

Pay by Direct Debit:  
020 7525 2600

Pay by debit/credit card:  
0845 6000 611 (24hrs)

Pay online:  
[www.southwark.gov.uk/payforit](http://www.southwark.gov.uk/payforit)

To pay in person:  
Peckham cash office:  
19-23 Bournemouth Road, SE15

Walworth cash office:  
177-179 Walworth Road, SE17

Opening hours:  
Mon to Fri – 8.30am to 4pm

To pay by post:  
London Borough of Southwark  
Income Collection Business Unit  
PO BOX 11767  
153-159 Abbeyfield Road  
London SE16 3ZF

## REPAIRS

Tel: 0800 952 4444 (24hrs)  
Online: [www.southwark.gov.uk/repairs](http://www.southwark.gov.uk/repairs)

## UTILITIES (emergencies)

Electricity: 0800 096 9000  
Gas: 0800 111 999  
Water: 0845 200 800

## LEASEHOLDERS/FREEHOLDERS

Home ownership unit  
Mon to Fri – 9am to 5pm  
Tel: 020 7525 1400  
Email: [hsg.homeownership@southwark.gov.uk](mailto:hsg.homeownership@southwark.gov.uk)

Southwark Antisocial Behaviour Unit  
Tel: 020 7525 5777 (24 hours)  
Email: [sasbu@southwark.gov.uk](mailto:sasbu@southwark.gov.uk)  
Web: [www.southwark.gov.uk/sasbu](http://www.southwark.gov.uk/sasbu)

Southwark Homesearch  
Bidding hotline: 0845 270 0655  
Bidding text line: 07781 486 526  
Advice line: 020 7525 4140  
[www.southwarkhomesearch.org.uk](http://www.southwarkhomesearch.org.uk)

## WRITE TO SOUTHWARK LIFE HOUSING NEWS

The Editor  
Southwark Life Housing News  
Communications team  
PO BOX 64529  
London SE1P 5LX  
or email  
[SLHN@southwark.gov.uk](mailto:SLHN@southwark.gov.uk)

# SPOT THE DIFFERENCE



There are seven slight differences in the two pictures of the Tootsie Rollers performing at the Older Peoples' Day in Walworth. Can you spot them?

Send your completed competition entries to Southwark Council, Southwark Life Housing News, Communications team, PO BOX 64529 by 30 November 2014. The winner will be notified by letter and announced in the next edition of Southwark Life Housing News.

The information you provide will be used fairly and lawfully. Southwark Council will not knowingly do anything which may lead to the breach of the Data Protection Act 1998.