



Fair Community Housing

Newsletter

Winter
2018

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Merry Christmas

from everyone at
Fair Community
Housing Services

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lunch for
over 60s**

**Stay
safe this
Christmas**

top tips to
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Welcome

**from the Chair of the Board
Christine Nicholls**



My name is Christine Nicholls and I am the newly elected Chair of Fair Community Housing Services.

I have been a part of the committee since 2015 in the role of Secretary and now welcome the new role of Chair with enthusiasm.

I am sure that that everyone will join me in thanking my predecessor Teddy Amoyaw for his hard work and dedication to FCHS during his time as Chair. I think that his boots will be difficult to fill but I will do my very best.

We are nearing the end of an eventful year at Fair Community Housing Services and preparing for the year ahead with lots of exciting plans and ideas.

However as always we want to know your views about the service and what you would like to see happen in and around your estates during the coming year. Read on to find out more about plans for your estates and how you can get involved.

As you know we continually seek to improve upon what we do and tailor the service to one which meets your needs and aspirations. The new Handy Person Service introduced earlier this year is one of many ways that we have responded to your views by providing an additional service which is of benefit to both tenants and leaseholders alike.

Inside this newsletter you can read details about our upcoming Continuation Ballot which will take place next year. The ballot is important because it asks you to vote on the service that we provide and confirm whether you are happy for us to continue doing so for another five years.

We very much hope that you will vote for us to continue because we have lots of plans that we want to implement and can only do them with your support and involvement.

On behalf of the Committee and the staff at FCHS I would like to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

**Christine Nicholls
Chair of Fair Community
Housing Services**

Calling senior citizens

**Join us for a FREE
Christmas lunch on
Wednesday 12 December**

If you are aged 60 or over you're invited to join us for a fabulous Christmas lunch at a top restaurant overlooking the River Thames and Tower Bridge on Wednesday 12 December.

We are inviting all our senior citizen residents to come together at Browns restaurant, Butlers Wharf to celebrate Christmas and we will pick up the bill!

What better way to start celebrating Christmas than with friends and neighbours and enjoy lunch on us?

If you are aged over 60 and would like to join us for this festive occasion, please look out for the letters coming through your door with details about the lunch and the choice of food on the day. We will also post further details on noticeboards within blocks.

To book your free place please contact us on **020 7378 0547** and let us know your menu choices.

We hope that lots of you will come and celebrate with us. We look forward to seeing you on the day!

Can't make it?

Anyone over 60 who is unable to join us for the Christmas lunch can receive a £30 cash gift instead. For more details and to claim your voucher please pop into the office at 2 Fair Street or call us on 020 7378 0547.



Don't forget to pay your rent over Christmas!

We know that Christmas is an expensive time of year but it is important not to forget to pay your rent.

Missed payments mean that you will quickly fall into arrears and potentially risk losing your home.

Avoid getting into debt by making sure your rent payments are made on time and your rent account is up to date. Talk to us about setting up a direct debit or standing order where your rent is paid automatically from your bank account so you don't need to worry about ever missing a payment.



Struggling to make ends meet?

If you're finding it hard to manage your money and pay your bills including rent please talk to us for confidential help and money advice. Don't ignore the problem and hope it will go away. It's important you talk to us before rent arrears build up. We can help you look at your debts, budget your money and most importantly keep the roof over your head. Pop into the estate office at 2 Fair Street or call us on 020 7378 0547 for friendly help and advice.

Christmas on a budget

Christmas doesn't have to cost the earth.

You can still enjoy a fabulous festive period on a budget. Follow our top tips below on how to celebrate Christmas on a budget and make sure you still have enough money to pay the rent.

- Set a budget with friends and family for presents, or better still swap home made gifts. Cakes and cookies make tasty (and budget friendly) presents. Try our gingerbread man recipe on the back cover.
- Get the kids to make home made Christmas cards instead of buying them from the shop.
- Stick to supermarket own brand food and see the savings add up.
- Instead of buying expensive presents why not swap your time with loved ones instead? Offer to babysit, walk the dog or wash the car instead of spending money on the high street.



Fair Community Housing Services Continuation Ballot 2019

Coming soon!

As you know we deliver the housing service to all FCHS tenants (secure and leasehold).

As a Tenant Managed Organisation (TMO) we run the service on behalf of Southwark Council – giving residents a say in how the service is delivered and how your homes and neighbourhood are managed. Our TMO is run by residents for residents so we can be sure the service you receive is meeting local needs.

Every five years the TMO are required to find out if you are happy for us to continue to manage your homes and the surrounding estates.

We believe that we provide a faster, more efficient service that reflects the needs of our residents, compared to Southwark Council and other service providers, and we hope that you do too. We offer lots of extra services like free events and activities (see page 3) and the handy person service (see below).

Look out for our special edition newsletter coming in the New Year which will focus on the upcoming ballot and ways that you can get involved and have your say!

Find out more about the Continuation Ballot at our General Meeting on Tuesday 29 January 2019 at 6.30pm

All FCHS tenants and leaseholders are invited to attend. You can meet staff and FCHS Board members, hear about our draft Business Plan and give us your feedback about our service. We will advertise the venue nearer the time. For more details please pop into the office at 2 Fair Street or call 020 7378 0547.

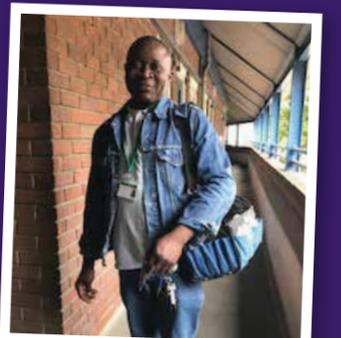


Need minor repairs or DIY at home?

For all your repair and DIY needs; from unblocking sinks, building flat pack furniture or putting up a shelf we can help. Our handy person service is reliable, affordable and we'll get the job done quickly.

- ✓ A local service
- ✓ Top quality repairs
- ✓ Experienced handypersons
- ✓ Detailed knowledge of the property
- ✓ Affordable prices

Contact us on 020 7378 0547 to find out more.



Major works update

Together with Southwark Council we are busy improving your homes and neighbourhood. Read more about the exciting plans and work that will be taking place in our local area below.

Southwark Quality Housing

Southwark Council have completed the majority of work on 41-79 St Johns Estate and Coxson Way. The scheme has overrun partly because the TMO persuaded the Council to carry out extensive repairs to the flat roof (following requests from residents).

Alongside residents, we also lobbied the Council to renew windows at 1-40 St Johns Estate, and the Council have also agreed to redecorate the balcony areas (as has happened at 41-79 St Johns' Estate). This work will take place as part of a future works package.

Consultation has started at Devon Mansions, Hartland House, 1-18 Fair Street, Lewes House, St Olaves Estate and 1-40 St Johns Estate. Residents were invited to find out more at a drop in session on 30 October. If you live in one of these areas you will have received a letter from the Council explaining the work that will be taking place in your home or block. We are waiting to hear when work will start on site but the Council will be running more consultation events in the future.

If you want to find out more about the future works and how your home will be affected you can contact the following people at Southwark Council whom are responsible for managing the major works programme across FCHS estates:

- Contract Manager Ola Adefala on 020 7525 1380 / 07592 119127 email ola.edefala@southwark.gov.uk
- Customer Relationship Officer Zechariah Urquhart on 020 7525 1067 email Zechariah.Urquhart@southwark.gov.uk).



FCHS communal decorations

As well as the work being undertaken by the Council, we are also investing money to improve your homes. We will be carrying out a programme of redecoration to the enclosed communal stairwells, hallways and landings in Devon Mansions, Hartland House and Lewes House. Residents can get involved in

choosing colours for the paintwork and floor.

We aim to start work on blocks 1 – 3 Devon Mansions early in the new year, before moving on to Lewes House and a programme for the rest of the blocks will be published during Spring/ Summer 2019.

Keeping you safe during the Festive Season

The Christmas holidays are a time of fun and good cheer and we want to ensure that a good time is had by all.

With this in mind, we've put together a few timely reminders about safety and security during the festive period.

- Ensure that fairy lights are kept well away from anything flammable including paper, decorations and other soft furnishings. Remember to always switch off fairy lights at the mains when you go out and during the night.
- Don't overload plug sockets with fairy lights or too many other electrical gadgets.
- After presents have been opened, please make sure the wrapping paper; boxes, tinsel and other festive paraphernalia is securely bagged and taken out for recycling on the appropriate day.
- Ensure that you have a working smoke alarm in your home.
- Don't leave presents where they can be easily seen by people passing your home as this may attract burglars.
- Take care over how you dispose of food and non-recyclable household waste. Remember Christmas is a period of high demand on refuse services and leaving bags of waste outside will attract rats, mice and other vermin.



Christmas Opening Hours

During the Christmas period you can pop into our offices at 2 Fair Street or call us on 0207 378 0547 at these times:

24 December, 9am – 1pm
27, 28 and 31 December, 10am – 4pm

Our normal office hours of 9am – 5pm will resume from 2 January 2019.

Repairs

24 December, 1pm – 5pm
27, 28 and 31 December, 9am – 10am and 4pm – 5pm
(please call 07940 232496 if you have an urgent repair).

If you need an emergency repair out of office hours (eg on weekends; bank holidays and outside of normal office hours) please call Southwark Council emergency repair service on 0800 952 4444.

Christmas treats

Kids will love making these simple Christmas gingerbread people.



Ingredients

- 350g plain flour
- 175g light soft brown sugar
- 1 tsp bicarbonate of soda
- 1 egg
- 2 tsp ground ginger
- 4 tbsp golden syrup
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- Writing icing to decorate
- 125g butter



Method...

- Sift together the flour, bicarbonate of soda, ginger and cinnamon.
- Add the butter and use an electric mixer and blend until the mix looks like breadcrumbs.
- Stir in the sugar then add the egg and golden syrup.
- Mix well then tip the dough out, knead until smooth, wrap in cling film and pop in the fridge for 15 minutes.
- Roll out to 0.5cm thick and use cookie cutters to cut out the gingerbread man shapes.
- Bake at 180C for 10 to 15 minutes until golden brown.
- Leave to cool then decorate with the writing icing.

Hang them on the tree or give them as a homemade presents.

Get in touch

Please pop into the Housing Office we'd love to see you!

Got an idea for an article for our next newsletter or a suggestion on how we can improve the local area?

• Fair Community Housing Services
• Horselydown Offices
• 2 Fair Street
• London
• SE1 2XA

• Call us on:
• 020 7378 0547
• Visit our website:
• www.fairhousing.org.uk