

# Newlon News



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## Welcome to the Autumn edition of Newlon News.

Inside there is plenty of news and information we hope is of interest to you.

There are updates from our Resident Involvement team, details of upcoming events, tips for helping sell your home, as well as opportunities for getting involved in influencing the way Newlon is run.

One of our long term involved residents also tells us her story about the work she did with us.

Remember your ideas and thoughts on Newlon News are always welcome. Just email us at [newsletters@newlon.org.uk](mailto:newsletters@newlon.org.uk) to get in touch.

# Residents' Forum

## Martin Hughes, Chair, writes:

The Residents' Forum is a group of residents who meet every three months to look at Newlon's work and monitor the performance of their services.

- The Head of Repairs consulted us about a new initiative at Newlon - the completed repairs survey app. This asks residents to answer five questions, on the contractors' hand held device, immediately after they've had a repair done. We thought it was a great way to gain feedback and have also suggested that residents should be able to choose to answer these questions by email.
- The Head of Building Services came and discussed all the fire safety works that Newlon have recently undertaken. We suggested that staff in the Service Centre are trained on fire safety issues to assist in handling residents' queries.
- I reported back from the last Board meeting where the members were impressed at how Newlon had handled fire safety concerns after the Grenfell Tower fire.
- We talked a lot about complaints and identified what has improved since the new system started in 2014. We would like to see other improvements, such as reducing the number of stage two complaints.
- Benjamin Roe came to our last meeting and has now joined the Forum as a new member. We look forward to working with him.



## Join the Forum

If you're good at thinking analytically and have ideas to improve services for all residents then we want to hear from you.

The Residents' Forum are looking for new members who live in Hackney or Islington and can bring new skills to the Forum. We are a friendly group who meet with the Housing Services Director every three months and discuss the issues that are important to residents.

Geraldine Grant, a Waltham Forest resident who joined last October, told us about her experience as a new member:

"When I attended my first Residents' Forum meeting I was made to feel very welcome. It is a great opportunity to learn more about the mechanics of the organisation and I have been very impressed by the level of care and attention given to Newlon's residents. I would recommend it to anyone interested in getting involved."

If you are interested or know another resident who would be then get in touch at [getinvolved@newlon.org.uk](mailto:getinvolved@newlon.org.uk) or phone Karen from the Resident Involvement team on **020 7613 8084** to find out more.



## Fire safety update

We want to reassure residents that we take fire safety extremely seriously. All our schemes have an up to date Fire Risk Assessment and meet current fire safety regulations and good practice. Over the last few years we have carried out a large programme of works to improve safety across our buildings. In addition all health and safety equipment in our homes is regularly inspected.

You can help support fire safety in your building by working with our Estates Team to ensure communal areas are free of possessions and rubbish.

If you have any concerns or queries about fire safety contact our Service Centre on **020 7613 8080** or [customerservice@newlon.org.uk](mailto:customerservice@newlon.org.uk).

## We want your views

The Residents' Forum has an important role as they work with Newlon on behalf of residents to help improve services. But we also want to hear the views of all our residents - including you. You can provide your comments in the "My Newlon" section of our website.

Just go to [www.newlon.org.uk/newlon](http://www.newlon.org.uk/newlon). Any relevant comments posted online will be discussed at the Forum.





# Getting involved: Ruth's Newlon story

For 17 years Newlon resident Ruth Cadby was involved in a wide range of positions where she had influence over and worked to improve Newlon's services. This included being a member of our Residents' Forum, the Scrutiny Panel and the Development Committee, as well as being a long term Board member.

Here she explains more about the roles she had, what she felt she gained from it and why she thinks other people should get involved too.

“ I first got involved with Newlon as I was both interested in housing and aware that I was living in an affordable place with services provided, so I wanted the opportunity to do something myself and contribute to the way Newlon is run.

I was on a number of panels and committees. Being on the Development Committee was a particular highlight as I was very interested in architecture. It enabled me to give my views on Newlon's developments and I felt I had quite an influence on techniques adopted. I loved being involved in the development of the head office.

As a member of the Newlon Board I attended Board weekends. Everyone there had a chance to contribute, so my involvement allowed managers at Newlon to really understand what residents thought. I felt I was effective – there was almost nothing I couldn't talk about.

What I most enjoyed about the involvement opportunities was getting to know people at Newlon. I like how open and transparent the organisation is. It enabled me to meet many interesting individuals and work closely with them. I helped change perceptions because it allowed me to demonstrate to staff that residents have things to say and want to contribute.

I feel getting involved means you can help transform the way Newlon's services work, rather than just expecting them to be done a certain way. There is a learning curve but I feel that's a wonderful thing – finding out something new that you didn't know about. You are given a good insight into how the organisation works. Plus it is an opportunity to bring real change.

A very diverse group of people get involved. For instance the Residents' Forum has a lot of different people with varying views on how things should be done, who all get to have their say. It's something I was really pleased to be part of. ”



## Compensation and refunds when in arrears

It is important that your rent account is not in arrears. Please be aware that we will not pay any refunds or compensation awarded to you if this is the case. If your account shows any arrears then any awards will be paid into your account to reduce them. Once you are in adequate credit then awards – or the remainder of an award following required deductions – can be sent to you.

# Get together with your neighbours and have a Big Lunch!

Whether it is a small gathering in your garden or a large party in the middle of your street or estate, a 'Big Lunch' is a chance to get together with your neighbours for a day to celebrate your community and have fun. You can organise one for any date you fancy - and we can help you do it.

If you want to arrange a Big Lunch then the main things to consider are:

- Picking a date.
- Asking your fellow residents to volunteer to help.
- Deciding where to hold it.
- Advertising your event, such as putting up notices.
- Planning the food or asking residents to bring dishes to share.
- Thinking about any decorations.
- Getting support from local businesses.

We can help with the event by providing information and advice, communicating the event details to other residents and offering you up to £300 to purchase food, equipment and decorations.

If you want to organise a Big Lunch for your street or estate and would like assistance, contact **Karen Orr** on **020 7613 8084** or **getinvolved@newlon.org.uk**.

## Tell us what you think about repairs and digital services

The Scrutiny Panel is a group of residents who look in detail at Newlon's services and performance and make suggestions to improve them. Newlon provides them with all the information they need to do this, such as performance data and the cost of delivering services.



They are very keen to hear your views, comments, thoughts, opinions and ideas about the two topics that they will be looking at this year:

- How Newlon and our repairs contractors communicate with residents and each other about repairs work.
- The digital services that Newlon are developing for residents, including the planned customer self service portal.

What you have to say will be part of the evidence that the Panel consider and will help them make recommendations to Newlon for service improvements. You can get in touch at **getinvolved@newlon.org.uk** or on **020 7613 8084**.

## You said we did

### Viewing times - late arrivals

Applicants viewing properties have asked for a grace period to allow for delays if they are running late. As a result Lettings Officers will now wait five minutes past the start of the viewing time before going into the property. They will also go back outside the property ten minutes later to check for latecomers.

### Evening viewings

Applicants asked for the contact number of the Lettings Officer to be provided on invitation for viewings taking place after 5pm, when the Service Centre is closed, in case issues arise. As a result they now include work mobile numbers.

### Improving computer security and WIFI connection

A resident asked for improved password security on the computers at Barnsbury Community Centre, which was implemented. We now issue passwords directly to residents upon their request, rather than having them openly displayed. Residents also asked for faster WIFI connections, which we arranged with our supplier.



# Events in your area

## Family Day: The Big Draw Festival

**When?** 15th October

**Where?** Keats House, NW3

**Cost?** Free

The Big Draw Festival takes place at Keats House in Hampstead this October, celebrating the power of drawing. Join in for family fun at a free, drop-in workshop led by artist Zoe Bates exploring this year's theme 'Living Lines'. Register your interest in advance on their website.

[www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/things-to-do/keats-house](http://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/things-to-do/keats-house)



## The Apple Fair

**When?** 8th October

**Where?** Forty Hall Farm, EN1

**Cost?** Adult £5, child £2

Come to Forty Hall Farm for the annual Apple Day celebration, with old favourites like apple bobbing, apple pressing demos, our apple stall and other activities for young and old. With a variety of food and drinks on offer, and an appearance by Marvelo the Psychic Squirrel.

[www.fortyhallfarm.org.uk/events/the-apple-fair.html](http://www.fortyhallfarm.org.uk/events/the-apple-fair.html)

## Handa's Surprise

**When?** 10th & 11th October

**Where?** Bernie Grant Arts Centre, N15

**Cost?** Adult £6, child £4

Travel to Kenya and follow in Handa's footsteps as she journeys to see her best friend Akeyo in the next village. Handa is taking seven delicious fruits as a surprise - but seven different animals have seven very different ideas. A blend of physical performance, puppetry and song, with audience participation. Ideal for ages 2-6.

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

## Big Fun Run 2017 @ Victoria Park

**When?** 29th October

**Where?** Victoria Park, E9

**Cost?** Adult £12.99, child £10.99

Run for fitness, charity or fun. The event isn't timed and is all about runners getting together with friends and family, doing something healthy, raising money for a worthwhile cause and enjoying the great outdoors. All ages welcome. Book in advance via the website.

[www.bigfunrun.com/victoria-park](http://www.bigfunrun.com/victoria-park)

## Pumpkin Plod

**When?** 29th October

**Where?** Haven House Children's Hospice, IG8

**Cost?** Adult £8, child £5

The family friendly Pumpkin Plod at Haven House returns this October with a choice of a 2k or 5k forest sponsored walk on Halloween themed routes, with tricks or treats along the way. Register your interest and find out more on their website.

[www.havenhouse.org.uk/event/halloween-pumpkin-plod17](http://www.havenhouse.org.uk/event/halloween-pumpkin-plod17)

## Little Shed of Horrors

**When?** 31st October

**Where?** Chickenshed Theatre, N14

**Cost?** £10

Live spooky music from the Chickenshed Youth Band and terrifying Halloween surprises, followed by a screening of Little Shop of Horrors (Certificate PG, 1hr 43 mins, plus 20 mins interval). Fancy dress is highly encouraged. Buy tickets in advance.

[www.chickenshed.org.uk/little-shed-horrors](http://www.chickenshed.org.uk/little-shed-horrors)

## Hackney City Farm

**When?** Daily, except Mondays

**Where?** 1a Goldsmiths Row, E2

**Cost?** Free (donations appreciated)

Hackney City Farm has a range of farmyard animals including goats, sheep, chickens and donkeys as well as some small animals such as rabbits and guinea pigs. Various activities also take place. Entrance is free, but donations are very much welcome. See their website for full details.

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



# Tips for selling your Shared Ownership home

## First impressions count

The first impression a potential buyer gets is when they look at photos of your home, not when they walk in the door. So make sure your home is at its very best when the surveyor visits to carry out a valuation, as they will take photographs inside and out.

## Make your whole property look great

Spend time tidying up and cleaning all the rooms, storage areas and hallway space in your home. If you have a balcony, make sure you have removed any weeds. Wipe down any kitchen surfaces. Try to make everything look as new and fresh as possible.

## Declutter

Get rid of all the clutter filling your property. If you have turned a spare room into a storage space then now is the time to turn it back into a room someone can sleep in. When potential buyers enter a room, it needs to look as spacious as possible.

## Repair and clean

Now is the time to get any minor repairs done and have a deep clean of your home, be it a door lock hanging off, a dripping tap or dirty windows. A little bit of DIY and cleaning will go a long way to improve the appearance of your home.



## Act like a salesperson

For the period while your property is being advertised for sale you're essentially part of our sales team. Think like one and you can't go far wrong. Make sure potential buyers can see the benefits of your home and be enthusiastic and helpful to them.

If you would like further information on selling your home, please contact **Olu** on **020 7613 7480** who can guide you through the process. You can also email [resident.sales@newlon.org.uk](mailto:resident.sales@newlon.org.uk).

## Digital and self-service

We are investing in developing more digital and self-service customer service options so residents can make service requests at times that suit them, or without needing to contact us. We are currently in the initial phases of tendering for a new customer self service portal.

In the meantime here are some handy things you can already do online:

- Report repairs at [www.newlon.org.uk/contact-us/repairs](http://www.newlon.org.uk/contact-us/repairs).
- Get answers to common queries from our website via the Knowledge Base at [www.newlon.org.uk/knowledge-base](http://www.newlon.org.uk/knowledge-base).
- Pay rent or service charges using the allpay app or by text at [www.newlon.org.uk/residents/paying-your-rent](http://www.newlon.org.uk/residents/paying-your-rent).
- Give your opinions through our online residents' forum at [www.newlon.org.uk/newlon](http://www.newlon.org.uk/newlon).



## Making service charges easy to understand

We are constantly looking at ways for information on service charges to be improved and so with the help of our Readers' Panel we revised the Service Charge Glossary of Terms. This document can be referred to when you look over your service charge statement as it explains some of the key terms used. You can find it at [www.newlon.org.uk/residents/service-charges](http://www.newlon.org.uk/residents/service-charges).

# The secret history of our streets

We provide nearly 8,000 homes, ranging from new build developments to 18th century street properties. Many have fascinating histories. Here we continue our regular feature exploring some of them.



## Somerford Grove, Hackney

When Newlon first started to provide affordable housing in early 1968 we did so through buying primarily Victorian street properties, renovating them where needed and converting them into flats.

Over time we gradually started to develop properties ourselves, but throughout our history we have also redeveloped, renovated and regenerated existing buildings that have fallen into disuse or disrepair. This even includes owning and maintaining a Grade II listed Edwardian Town Hall.

Today we provide homes in buildings ranging from Huguenot terraces to converted Victorian hospital buildings and at Somerford Grove in Hackney, an Art Deco clothing factory.

Our housing in Somerford Grove forms part of a large former factory building built in the mid-1930s as an extension to Simpson House, on Stoke Newington Road. Originally standing at five storeys the building had large steel windows to provide high light levels to workshops. Between stairs there were 10 bays of workshops, with cream glazed ceramic spandrel panels. The block was converted to residential use in 2005.

Simpson House was a large purpose-built factory commissioned by Simeon Simpson, one of the largest manufacturers of top quality men's clothing in Britain during the interwar years. Established in 1894 as a bespoke tailoring business Simpson moved from a small factory in Middlesex Street, E1, to Stoke Newington Road. The main building is in a stripped classical style with Art Deco details and was designed by Hobden and Porri in 1929.

They also designed a number of buildings in Stoke Newington, including the Clissold Road Swimming Baths, which were demolished in 1997. The building is clad in artificial Portland stone and the façade has grand, double-height metal windows extending from the ground floor to the first floor. Between the windows are artificial stone columns topped with simple pyramidal motifs. Along the top of the building there is a ribbed frieze.

The factory is of particular historical interest as it is where DAKS trousers were manufactured. These included a patented self-supporting waistband that no longer required braces to hold them up. The success of this product enabled Simpson's to finance the building of its flagship store on Piccadilly, which opened in 1936. The extended factory covered almost 200,000 square feet and up to 3,000 people were employed there.

This factory building marks the transition of East London's ready-to-wear clothing industry, from small-scale manufacturing in the backs of houses to modern large-scale production in purpose-built factories.

If you would like to know about the history of the building where you live or have an interesting story about your development then let us know. Get in touch at [newsletters@newlon.org.uk](mailto:newsletters@newlon.org.uk).

Information for this article was sourced from [HackneyBuildings.org](http://HackneyBuildings.org).

# Kids' Quiz!

Below are 5 words which are all to do with Autumn. See if you can unscramble them.

- 1) WORCESCAR
- 2) NEWLOHALE
- 3) VATSHER
- 4) SAVEEL
- 5) FRONBIE

Please email your answers to [kieran.hurley@newlon.org.uk](mailto:kieran.hurley@newlon.org.uk), with the words **Kids' Quiz** in the title, along with your name, age and full address. Or post them to **Newlon Kids' Quiz, Newlon House, 4 Daneland Walk, Hale Village, N17 9FE.**

You can only enter the quiz if you are aged 11 or under. Answers must be received by **31st October 2017.**

All correct entries will go into a draw, and one lucky winner will get a £20 voucher which can be used at a range of high street stores.



## Write for your newsletter

Do you have an idea for an article for this newsletter? We welcome articles from residents of all ages. If we publish it we will send you £20 in vouchers of your choice! Send your article idea to [kieran.hurley@newlon.org.uk](mailto:kieran.hurley@newlon.org.uk), or post it to **Kieran Hurley, Newlon Housing Trust, 4 Daneland Walk, Hale Village, London, N17 9FE.**

Newlon House, 4 Daneland Walk, Hale Village, London, N17 9FE  
Telephone: 020 7613 8080

Email (general enquiries): [customerservice@newlon.org.uk](mailto:customerservice@newlon.org.uk)  
Email (repairs): [repairs@newlon.org.uk](mailto:repairs@newlon.org.uk)  
[www.newlon.org.uk](http://www.newlon.org.uk)

Newlon Housing Trust is a charitable Housing Association

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If you have difficulty reading this newsletter, require a different format or need help with translation, please contact us on 020 7613 8091 or email [newsletters@newlon.org.uk](mailto:newsletters@newlon.org.uk).