

Newlon News



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Welcome to the summer edition of Newlon News.

There are updates from the Residents' Forum and Scrutiny Panel, as well as information about the work of our Community Services team - including ways they may be able to help you.

You can also find out what some of our residents have been doing to improve their local community.

In addition we've highlighted some exciting local events to help you enjoy the summer weather and keep the kids amused.

Remember your ideas and thoughts on Newlon News are always welcome. Just email us at 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 performance.

- We recently held our first annual strategy and planning meeting and discussed the updated 10 year Corporate Vision - which summarises Newlon's achievements and sets objectives for the future. This helped with planning our agenda for the year.
- A new way for us to look at service performance using a balanced scorecard format was agreed. We also chose the services and performance measures about them which we believe are critical to Newlon's success.
- A straw poll of members was conducted about how we thought the Forum had performed over the past year. The average score was four out of five. This year we hope to improve on that.
- The Vice Chair (Lloyd Gale-Ward) and I signed the Forum's Constitution, which sets out the principles and rules of the Forum, including how it is organised.



Join the Forum

We are keen to recruit two new members to the Residents' Forum, to take on an influential role of representing all residents. We are particularly looking for female residents who ideally live in Islington or Hackney.

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 to find out more.



The Scrutiny Panel is recruiting

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.

Tony Gibney, Chair of the Panel and a resident at Hale Village, outlined its benefit:

"The Panel is here to help Newlon provide the best service it can for its residents. We bring a residents' perspective and work with everyone to make improvements."

The Panel has been busy this year with meetings almost every month. This includes working to create a Scrutiny Manual. The manual outlines how the Panel should carry out its work, by setting out a simple six step process to be followed. It makes the scrutiny process clearer and more transparent for both Panel members and Newlon staff. This new process was implemented in April.

The Panel has a vacancy for one new member - an opportunity which doesn't come often. To find out more email getinvolved@newlon.org.uk.

Chat live with us online

Did you know you can use live chat on our website? It is a quick and easy alternative to calling or emailing us. Just click “*chat with us*” at the bottom of the screen to get started. Type your message and you will be connected to one of our Service Centre Advisors.

Find it at www.newlon.org.uk



Isobel Place residents give their children a say

Residents at Isobel Place have created an innovative way to ensure youngsters on the estate have a say.

A children’s committee called “Kids Voice” was set up in 2015 as a means for all the children who live at Isobel place to have a voice.

Kids Voice meetings take place around 3-4 times a year, where they talk about issues that affect them and other children in Isobel Place. Some of the topics the children talk about relate to what the Isobel Place Residents’ Association meetings have covered.

On average around 15 children attend the meetings, with ages ranging from 3 to 14 years old.

It is run the same as any committee, with a Chair and an agenda. The meetings are set up via two adult members, but ultimately Kids Voice is run for the children by the children.

Residents have found that since Kids Voice has been running it has been a great way to improve communication between adults and children, providing a positive environment to bring up concerns and questions. It also enables children there to better understand subjects which affect them and where they live.

Last summer the residents organised a “Big Lunch”, which the children from Kids Voice were able to get involved in. In addition they were lucky to be able to purchase recreational equipment, which children can come and ask to use.

Kai Hockley, son of the Chair of the Isobel Place Residents’ Association, Joanne Hockley, said: “We have found that having Kids Voice has helped us all to express any worries or concerns to people who will help, and we have found that the adults are nice and talk to us.”

Transfer list consultation

Every year a number of tenants apply for a move to another Newlon home, but there is very little chance that we will ever be able to offer them a transfer.

This is because we are required to offer the majority of new homes we build to our local authority partners to house people who are currently homeless. Therefore we only ever have a very small number of homes for people to transfer to and the majority of people on our list have already been waiting more than 10 years.

We are therefore proposing to stop offering transfers except for the following reasons:

- Medical Transfer - where we need to help someone move urgently due to health reasons.
- Decants - when we need to move people due to the poor condition of a property.



We want your views

We are now carrying out a formal consultation on the proposed change. We need your views and comments before 15th September to help us make a decision.

You can have your say by emailing transfer.consultation@newlon.org.uk. Alternatively call **020 3234 2127** where you will be able to leave a recorded message with your feedback.



Our new service model: Working together to improve re-let times.

In April 2015 we launched our new service model, creating specialist teams which focus on specific services and queries.

One success we have had is the speed at which we re-let a property when it becomes vacant. It is important for our properties to be vacant for as short a time as possible in order to maximise rents and make sure we can provide a home for someone in housing need.

Last financial year the average time it took us to re-let our Intermediate Rent properties was almost twice as fast as the year before.

This is thanks to our specialist Lettings team working together well with our Repairs and Maintenance team - improving procedures, making use of our new IT systems and taking ownership of their tasks.



Queensland Road Garden Project

This year residents were given the go ahead and some start-up funding by Newlon to take a more active role in the maintenance of the communal terrace garden between Tower 1 and Tower 3 at Queensland Road.

Residents Vivian and Nora explain more:

“The QN7 Gardening Club is a casual and informal group of like-minded individuals who meet on the last Sunday of every month to enjoy the terrace, plant, weed and generally help keep the communal area look great for all to enjoy. Residents of all ages and abilities are invited to join in the fun.

We had a planting day in April, where we planted raspberry bushes, strawberries, herbs and lots of vegetable plug plants. Some of these plants are doing well - others not so well. But it is a huge learning curve for us as none of us have any gardening experience.”

If you want to know more about it and how we achieved it you can email us at: queenslandroadresidents@gmail.com.

Hale Village Summer Party returns



The popular Hale Village Summer Party returns on Saturday, 22nd July from 12pm–4pm in Perkyn Square, Hale Village, N17. It is free and open to all.

Last year around 400 residents and local people came along to enjoy great local food and stalls with arts, crafts, books and clothes. There was also honey harvesting, a story telling workshop, fitness activities, a smoothie bike, a tombola, a raffle, face painting, biscuit decorating, a bouncy castle and more.

It is a great day for the community to come together and have some fun as well as learn about the different activities they can get involved in during the year.

We hope to see you there this year.



You said we did

End of defects period

A defects rectification period is a set period of time after new homes are built during which a contractor will return to remedy defects. Residents told us they found the communication about the inspection at the end of the defects period unclear. As a result we created a factsheet explaining what residents should expect. You can find it on our website at www.newlon.org.uk.

Improving green spaces

Over the past few months we met with residents and local volunteers in Islington to discuss ways we can enhance Newlon's green spaces and support local gardeners. In response we purchased new allotment boxes and improved the gardens on the Barnsbury Estate. We have also partnered with a social enterprise, Aspire, to offer gardening services and training courses, as well as the Islington Bangladeshi Association to provide gardening days.

Policy changes

We review our internal policies on a regular basis to ensure we provide the best quality services to our residents.

In recent months we have made changes to dozens of our policies. Here are just a few:

- Our vulnerability policy, which provides our staff with guidance on how to provide the best service to vulnerable residents, now includes better guidance on how we handle repairs to homes where there is a child with autism, to ensure the way we undertake works takes account of their needs.
- Our Right to Acquire and Right to Buy policies have expanded on the fraud and money laundering checks we make when an application is submitted.

Barnsbury Estate news

Barnsbury Community Centre

Jays Street, Islington, N1 0FE

Most activities are free and open to everyone in and around Barnsbury. Contact **020 7833 2525** to find out more.



What?	When?
SkyWay Youth Club	Wednesdays, 5-7pm
Barnsbury Improved Lifestyle Initiative for women	Mondays & Tuesdays, 10am-11am and Thursdays, 5pm-6pm
Salsa in the Cally (Salsa classes)	Tuesdays 7pm-9pm
Tiddley Tots Nursery	Weekdays, 8am-6pm

SkyWay Youth Club

- fun and learning for young people at Barnsbury Community Centre.

Are you a young Newlon resident, aged 6 to 16, looking for some fun activities?

Then come to the SkyWay Youth Club at Barnsbury Community Centre. Not only can you make friends, you can also take part in cooking workshops (making healthy meals but also things like candy apples!), crafts, games, and organised trips.

It's all free to attend and led by Sola and Angel from SkyWay who make things fun and interactive.

Please note that dates may change, so always contact us before the event to avoid disappointment.

Find out more by emailing community.services@newlon.org.uk or by calling **020 7033 4605**.

Tiddley Tots Nursery

Tiddley Tots Nursery have places for 0 - 2 year olds and 15 hours early years free placements for 2 - 3 year olds (subject to eligibility - please contact Tiddley Tots directly to learn more).

The nursery is also on the lookout for new volunteers. Applicants must be over 16 years of age and acceptance will be subject to a DBS check.

For more information please contact the Tiddley Tots manager, Tarine Dime, by calling **020 7837 2737** or emailing islington@tiddleytotsnursery.com.

Little Engineers Nursery

- opening soon

A new nursery is opening at Hale Village in Tottenham, with the first intake this September. If you are interested in registering a place please email office@len.lidsact.org.



Don't risk losing your parking permit

Each year parking permits are reviewed, which involves us checking whether residents have outstanding arrears. If they do then permits may not be reissued. So if your permit is about to expire make sure you have paid any money you owe us.

Events in your area



Urban Food Fest

When? Every Saturday, 12pm - 12am

Where? Euro Car Parks, 162-167 Shoreditch High Street, E1

Cost? Free

Located near Shoreditch High Street station, Urban Food Fest features over a dozen street food trucks and stalls. Global gourmet street food is served alongside a bar with craft beers, cider and cocktails. There is also live music and outdoor seating. Ideal for sunny summer days.

www.urbanfoodfest.com

Music on the Lawn

When? 2nd July

Where? Forty Hall Park, EN2

Cost? £5

A family event held in the grounds of Forty Hall in Enfield. Children's activities on offer include bee, butterfly and ladybird workshops, croquet and a bouncy castle. There are food and drink stalls but you are also welcome to bring a picnic to enjoy in the grounds. Organised by Friends of Forty Hall Park.

www.friendsoffortyhallpark.org

Strawberries and Screen

When? 3rd - 16th July

Where? Granary Square, King's Cross, N1

Cost? Free

If you can't get tickets for Wimbledon this year then you can head to King's Cross, where you can see all the live tennis action for free on the big screen. The outdoor screen will be one of the biggest in central London. There will also be Pimms, strawberries and other refreshments on offer.

www.kingscross.co.uk/event/strawberries-and-screen

Walthamstow Garden Party

When? 15th - 16th July

Where? Lloyd Park, Walthamstow, E17

Cost? Free

In its fourth year, this free festival returns to celebrate east London's creative and cultural communities, showcasing local talent and established artists. Taking place in Walthamstow's Lloyd Park it has two days of music, theatre, dance, film, spoken word, arts & crafts, food and family activities, delivered in partnership with local organisations. Capacity is limited, so early arrival is recommended.

<http://walthamstowgardenparty.com>

Camden New Town Community Festival

When? 15th - 16th July

Where? Camden Square Gardens, NW1

Cost? Free

This free family friendly festival runs every year in Camden Square Gardens. It is a celebration of music, dance, history and the multicultural Camden community. With live music, activities for kids, a healthy living tent, as well as a number of food and craft stalls. Everyone welcome.

<https://camdennewtownfestival.wixsite.com/music-festival>

Streelife

When? 22nd - 23rd July & 19th - 20th August

Where? Camden Square Gardens, NW1

Cost? Free

Streelife is the new name for Alexandra Palace's street food and craft beer festival. The festival features over 30 street food vendors, craft beer bars, cocktails, Pimms and food traders. Saturdays feature eclectic bands and on Sundays the DJs take over. There is also live street art and graffiti to watch.

streelife.alexandrapalace.com

Angel Canal Festival

When? 3rd September

Where? City Road Basin, Regents Canal, N1

Cost? Free

An annual free one-day festival based around the City Road Lock, Basin and towpath alongside Regents Canal. Attractions include stalls, a children's fun fair, Punch & Judy, a storyteller, have-a-go pottery sessions, live music and street theatre. There is also a regatta with free canoeing sessions and bell-boat racing.

www.angelcanalfestival.org

Employing your skills: Newlon helps residents find jobs and training following successful jobs fair



On 27th April our Community Services team hosted a jobs fair at the Engine Room at Hale Village in Tottenham. Over 60 Newlon residents attended to speak to our employment partners and find out about upcoming job opportunities.

A number of residents secured jobs and work placements following this successful event. It was open to everyone aged 16 and above, currently unemployed or in part-time work and looking to find full-time work.

You can still contact us if you are interested in:

- Finding a new job.
- Making a career change.
- Moving from part-time to full-time work.
- Earning while you learn.

We have roles in health and social care, administration, warehouse services, hospitality, cleaning services, construction and education.

For more information call the Community Services team on 020 7033 4605 or email community.services@newlon.org.uk.



Getting into work: **Rasel's story**

Rasel found work with Newlon with the help of our Community Services team. Here he explains how their employment programme got him into work:

"I found out about Newlon's employment programme when I was reading the residents' newsletter and I got in touch with Paula from the Community Services team.

She helped me improve my CV and put me forward for an interview. Fortunately I got the role.

I had been out of work for a while, so it was difficult at first, but with the support of the team it didn't take me too long to get back in the swing of things. My job is varied - my favourite part is meeting new people at the community centres we operate.

If you want to get into work my advice is to put your CV together and get in touch with Paula."

Courses to enhance your digital abilities

Are you a digital thinker? Whether you are interested in learning how to design games or create tech that will make a better world, Ada College is the perfect place for you. Based in Tottenham, you can join a pioneering sixth form or kick-start your career with a Foundation Degree. Find out more at www.adacollege.org.uk.



The Underground: Summer programmes for young people by Prospex



If you are a young Newlon resident aged 8-21, you may be interested in activities being run by Prospex. These take place at the Underground Youth Centre in Piper Close, Islington. They include cooking and coding classes, girls' clubs, the Duke of Edinburgh Awards scheme, homework support, job advice and mechanics courses.

This summer Prospex are pleased to announce their 'Make Some Noise for Summer' programme. During the holidays the Underground Youth Centre will be open daily for young people aged 8-13 with a variety of activities, excursions and projects available.

It is free for local residents. However there are limited spaces available and priority will go to residents in Piper Close and Ringcross Estate.

To find out more contact **020 7607 7626** or info@prospex.org.

This programme is generously funded by Global's Make Some Noise.

Newlon Hardship Fund

Some vulnerable residents moving into our properties come from temporary accommodation where they have no furniture of their own. Others may be leaving care or supported housing and taking on their first independent tenancy, or may be dealing with extreme poverty.

For such residents, having the essential items for their home means they are able to live in comfort without having to resort to loans or high cost 'rent-to-own' retailers.

This is where Newlon's household Hardship Fund can help. It is a crisis fund, available only to residents who would not otherwise be able to purchase the essentials.

Newlon's Community Services team runs the scheme and allocates funding, the fund is provided external charity called SPH Friends. Over the past four years, hundreds of Newlon residents have benefited from over £150,000.

We would like to extend our thanks to our generous funder, SPH Friends, for enabling us to help those of our residents facing extreme hardship.



Improve your IT skills with Digital Wings

We are pleased to offer access to 'Digital Wings', a free interactive learning experience from Barclays Digital Eagles.

With over 30 courses on everything from social media, programming and gaming to online safety, IT experts from IBM, Microsoft, Google and others help you learn while you earn points and complete modules to unlock Open Badges.

Start your free journey by visiting <https://digital.wings.uk.barclays/partners/newlon-housing-trust>



Stay at Nutley Edge - and support a good cause

Are you looking for an affordable holiday? Want to get outdoors and experience the tranquillity of the countryside? Nutley Edge Cottages could be the perfect destination for you. It sits in eleven acres of rolling countryside on the edge of the Ashdown Forest in East Sussex, just an hour from London.

Nutley Edge is also used as a holiday destination for people with autism spectrum conditions and learning disabilities to enjoy a break, organised by our care and support partner Outward. Any profits made by Nutley Edge are invested into Outward. So by staying there you are contributing to this valuable cause.

Newlon residents get 10% off.

Visit www.nutleyedge.org.uk to find out more and book.



Need help with your benefit claims?

Every year Newlon helps residents claim thousands of pounds in benefits. Newlon's highly skilled Welfare Benefits Advisor can work with you to find out what you are eligible for, including backdated benefits, support you to make your claim and follow up to ensure it is processed properly.

Universal Credit is being rolled out in Tower Hamlets and Hackney and may affect your household. Please contact us or check with your Job Centre Plus advisor if you have any questions or if you need support.

If you are worried about how you are going to be able to cope with these changes, please contact your Income Officer on **020 7613 8080** or Community Services on **020 7033 4605**. Alternatively email community.services@newlon.org.uk.



Dealing with leaks

Leaks can be a major problem for residents, especially when they come from another property or the source is hard to trace. We receive a number of enquiries about how to deal with leaks every year and have produced a new information leaflet on this, which you will be able to find at www.newlon.org.uk/publications. in July.

The leaflet provides guidance on people's responsibilities, what actions Newlon and residents should take in the event of a leak occurring and advice on what will be covered by insurance.

Looking for a new home?

Try mutual exchange

What is mutual exchange?

Mutual exchange allows you to swap homes with another Newlon tenant or a tenant from another housing association or local authority. You might want to do it to move to another area, downsize, or if you require additional bedrooms. It is available to tenants who have a secure or assured tenancy.

What are the benefits?

It is straightforward and gives you control and flexibility. You can browse around for your ideal home, visit it and - if you want to - chat with the tenant.

How do I do it?

Before you begin, you should check with us to ensure you are eligible. Also make sure your rent account is up to date.

You should then create an advert for your property - some top tips to do this are on the right.

Next you should find a tenant who wants to swap. Our quarterly Mutual Exchange Board includes a list of Newlon residents who are interested in moving. You can also register with a number of websites. Home Swapper is one of the best and it's free for Newlon residents. You can also try sites such as Move Maker, Housing Moves and Seaside & Country Homes.

In addition Newlon will be hosting a mutual exchange event in Autumn this year, where you will be able to meet with other residents who wish to swap their homes and get information and advice.



Top tips for your advert to improve your chances of a swap

- Think about the best features of your home. Do you have a nice view? Do you have plenty of storage space? Are there good transport links?
- Describe your property, including the location, size of rooms, whether there is a garden or parking facilities.
- Ensure the information is accurate, as people looking to swap with you are relying on it.
- Take good pictures of your home, showing tidy rooms free of clutter. Remember first impressions count.
- Describe the ideal property you are looking for. But also state what you are willing to be flexible on, to maximise your options.

You can find out more about mutual exchange on our website at www.newlon.org.uk.

Digital services - quick and easy ways to do things

Many of the issues that residents most frequently need to contact us about can be done quickly and easily through our digital services.

You can:

- **Report repairs online** using our handy diagnostic tool, which makes it easy to report what the problem is. Visit <https://www.newlon.org.uk/contact-us/repairs>.
- Try our new **live chat** feature for any enquiries you have. It is available during office hours on our website www.newlon.org.uk. Just click "chat with us".
- **Find out answers to frequently asked questions on our online Knowledge Base.** You can find it at www.newlon.org.uk/knowledge-base. It was used more than 7,000 times last year.
- **Pay your rent by text or using the allpay app.** Both of these options provide a quick and easy way to pay your rent you can find out more at www.newlon.org.uk/residents/paying-your-rent.
- Register for our **online Residents' Forum**, which allows you to have your say on a range of topics without needing to be able to attend a meeting in person. Go to www.newlon.org.uk/residents/getting-involved/residents-forum.



Kids' Quiz!

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

- 1) ECHASEB
- 2) WISTUMIS
- 3) TRAWEKARP
- 4) CEONA
- 5) GIFRUNS

Please email your answers to 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 **4th August 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.

Winner!

Congratulations to **Aysha** from **Islington** who won the spring quiz and who will receive a voucher soon.



Be environmentally friendly by getting your newsletters digitally

We can send our newsletters digitally to your email address. This is both faster and more environmentally friendly. If you want to receive them digitally rather than in hard copy then please get in touch at newsletters@newlon.org.uk.

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, 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
Email (repairs): repairs@newlon.org.uk
www.newlon.org.uk

Newlon Housing Trust is a charitable Housing Association

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