

Newlon News



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Welcome to the autumn edition of Newlon News.

In this edition we have contributions from residents who have got involved to make a difference at Newlon and in their communities.

We also report back on some of the events held this summer as well as suggestions for things to do over the next couple of months.

Lastly, there is another of our regular features about the interesting history behind our housing.

Cover photo: View from Newlon homes at Goodman's Fields.

All aboard – welcome to Lloyd and Blossom, and a fond farewell to Martin ...



Martin Hughes, Chair

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

At the last meeting:

- We discussed the draft Resident Involvement Strategy. It was very encouraging to see Newlon's plans for involving residents and giving them opportunities to have a say about the services they receive. We had quite a lot to say ourselves and made some practical suggestions about the language used in the document and the timing of the plans. We liked the strategy's focus on the importance of residents' homes in their lives and the recognition of the part Newlon have to play in this.
- We reviewed the Forum's Constitution. This is part of making sure that our group updates how it is organised and supports the Resident Involvement Strategy. There was a lively discussion about this with different views expressed by members and we did not reach any firm conclusion at the meeting. However, we decided to reach agreement through a consultation exercise before the next meeting.
- Members heard about the latest mystery shopping results where a pool of involved residents test Newlon services by phone and email to see if they are meeting the agreed standards. These results showed an improvement from the last time and that staff and teams were quicker at responding to queries. One area identified for improvement was about the tone of communications to residents and action is being taken to improve this.
- The successful resident recruits to Newlon's Board were announced, Blossom Shakespeare and Lloyd Gale-Ward. They are both Forum members and also involved in a variety of ways with Newlon, so have lots of experience to bring to the table. We wish them the very best in their new role.

On a personal note I will be stepping down after nine years as a resident Board member and from the role of Forum chair. I have enjoyed my time immensely and hope that you feel I have made a difference. Lloyd will be taking on the role of Forum Chair and will continue the work of championing resident engagement with Newlon.

Praxis:



Providing support to apply for the European Union Settlement Scheme

The Home Office EU Settlement Scheme has been designed to provide EU citizens and their families with a route to living and working in the UK beyond 31 December 2020. Whether the UK makes a deal with the EU or not, EU citizens living in the UK before any agreed date of departure will be able to apply to stay in the UK via the EU Settlement Scheme. Anyone who does not apply on time may not be able to work or claim benefits and may be vulnerable to deportation from the UK.

Praxis Community Projects provides support to EU citizens and their family members to make applications under the EU Settlement Scheme. In particular, the project is open to people who are at risk of homelessness, precariously housed, have a disability, are elderly or vulnerable. The project is free and is run by qualified caseworkers.

To find out about getting a referral go to www.praxis.org.uk/online-forms-and-advice-page-42.html

Checking your identity to keep your data secure

Keeping your data secure is important to us. So if you contact our Service Centre, we will ask you some basic security questions including your name, address and contact details. This will ensure that we do not accidentally disclose personal data to a third party.

In addition, certain queries require us to carry out further checks. This includes tenancy management issues, rent queries, and requests for keys and fobs. In cases such as these you will be asked questions such as your date of birth and when you last made a rent or service charge payment.





Cally Festival a BIG success

Newlon's Resident Services team worked with the charity 'Help On your Doorstep' to run a range of health and well-being activities for visitors at the free Cally Festival in Islington in June.

Our smoothie bike was running throughout the day making 250 healthy smoothies.

The team met over 500 local people and residents to talk about what Newlon does and promote the work of the Barnsbury Community Centre.

We were also pleased that local MP Emily Thornberry came along to show her support.

We hope it demonstrated Newlon's commitment to the community. Thanks to all those who come along to make it a success.



Residents enjoy Hale Village Festival

Another successful summer festival took place in Hale Village on 13th July.

Hundreds of residents came along to enjoy the day. There was food, music, a bouncy castle and our smoothie bike, as well as information booths, table top sales and more.

Since 2012 the festival has helped create a really positive community at Hale Village. A big thank you for everyone who volunteered or came along to make it such an enjoyable event.



Keeping tabs on our performance

annual report to residents

You should have received the Residents' Review with this newsletter, our annual report to residents.

It charts our performance in key areas over the last year so that you can get a clear picture of how successfully we are providing services.

We also publish quarterly performance updates on our website which set out how we are doing in a range of key areas including call handling, repairs, ASB, estate standards, arrears management and stock improvement.

Visit newlon.org.uk/us/performance for more information on our ongoing performance.

National awards recognition for Newlon's Resident Services

We are pleased Newlon was nominated for the 2019 Women in Housing Awards, in the Improving the Lives of Women or Communities category.

The nomination recognises the success of our female-led Barnsbury Community Centre in Islington, which provides initiatives designed to counter social exclusion and improve the wellbeing of women from all groups in the local community. This includes the Barnsbury Improved Lifestyle Initiative, which aims to boost the health of women who attend.

The award also celebrates the success of the Islington Bangladesh Association's community garden project, which provides allotments, food-growing and cookery classes, with opportunities to gain horticultural qualifications - a unique approach to engaging a group of women who would otherwise be at risk of marginalisation.



Graham Watts, Newlon's Head of Resident Services, said: "I'm thrilled we've been nominated for this prestigious award. While we provide support for these incredible programmes, it really is down to the efforts and leadership of the women involved who have made such a difference in their community."

We were also shortlisted at the 24 housing awards for our Step Forward employment programme. We are proud that 16% of Newlon staff are made up of Newlon residents - a key part of the reason we have been shortlisted for this award.

Resident Involvement Strategy 2019-22

'There's no place like home'

There have been considerable changes in the social housing sector, some of which have inspired debate and discussion about resident involvement and the relationship between residents and their landlords.

This is particularly important following the Grenfell Tower fire in 2017 and the government Social Housing Green Paper in 2018.

We have refreshed our Resident Involvement Strategy to give residents a clear voice throughout Newlon while being agile and dynamic in responding to evolving expectations.

Some practical ways that have been identified include involving residents more in monitoring contractors and staff recruitment, increasing the number of staff who are Newlon residents, and improving resident feedback on our standards.

The ambition is for residents to have every opportunity to meaningfully influence and shape the decisions we make about how we manage and look after their homes.

In developing this strategy, the Resident Involvement team held a series of interactive workshops with staff and Board members as well as residents who are participating at all levels of the involvements.

Thank you to everyone who has been involved in this process.

To find out how you can get involved in helping to improve Newlon's services, and the rewards we provide, go to www.newlon.org.uk/residents/getting-involved.



Maluna's employment success story

Our free employment programme, Step Forward, can help Newlon residents get into work or training. Maluna, from Haringey, is one such beneficiary and wanted to extend her thanks to Paula, who manages the programme.

"Paula has provided great support to me during my time seeking a job. When I first met with her I lacked confidence. She helped me get a volunteer position and from there my confidence grew and I was able to secure paid employment. Paula also referred me to Dress for Success, a charity which provides advice on interview techniques. I am grateful for everything she has done for me."

Want to find out if the programme can help you? Email community.services@newlon.org.uk or call 020 7033 4605.

Inspirational ideas from the TPAS Conference



by Jeannie Lowen

"An inspirational array of people involved with social housing gathered at this year's TPAS conference. TPAS is the 'Tenants Participation Advisory Service'. They work with both tenants and landlords to enhance tenant engagement within social housing. Their aim is to help improve services, save money and bring real beneficial, long-lasting change to communities.

I was invited to the TPAS Conference along with members of the Residents' Forum and staff from the Resident Services team department, the theme of which was 'Shaping Positive Change Together'.

2019 marks the 100th anniversary of the Addison Act which enabled councils to build social housing on a large scale. A timely anniversary given the current lack of availability of affordable homes.

The housing crisis is a major concern for Polly Neate, Chief Executive of Shelter and a keynote speaker at the conference, whose ideas I found inspiring.

During her speech she pointed out the lack of affordable housing is affecting people in all stages of their lives, both young and old.

She spoke with passion about recommendations from Shelter's social housing commission.

The commission has highlighted that if the government committed to a 20-year cycle of building 31 million more social homes then these could be paid for by housing benefit savings alone within 30 years, as a huge amount of housing benefit is currently paid to private landlords and for temporary accommodation.

The Shelter commission for social housing also proposes a stronger voice for tenants, with a new regulator to work across

the social and private renting sector in order to protect residents and enforce standards.

We participated in an assortment of workshops and talks which covered various issues within housing.

Some of our group attended the 'Women's Housing Forum', where the links between women's housing needs and gender inequality were discussed. They covered topics such as homeless women, housing for women in abusive relationships, lone parents and other vulnerable women in our society.

The 'Behavioural Insight' session looked at the idea of the 'nudge' to get people to engage and act via small incremental steps. The words we use can also have a great effect on our thinking.

Another insightful session was about 'Community Led Housing'. These are housing co-operatives which aims to give residents more control of their community. Co-operatives can be focused on specific groups such as older residents (we are a rapidly ageing society) and other groups who would benefit from living in co-operative communities. It is suggested they could go a long way in reducing the stigma attached to social housing.

Having been impressed by this initiative Community Led Housing will be on Newlon's Residents' Forum agenda this September and a connection was made with the person who ran the session.

The conference was galvanising as we gained deeper insight into many issues and brought back some inspirational ideas to explore further."

Jeannie Lowen is a Newlon resident and member of the Norton Folgate Community Group, which won Resident Group of the Year at the 2018 Newlon Star Awards.



Newlon's representatives for the TPAS Conference



Wendy and Sylvia making a difference on the Forum

by Jeannie Lowen

"I had the pleasure of chatting to fellow Newlon residents Wendy and Sylvia who are close friends and together the longest serving members of Newlon Residents' Forum.

This year the Forum is celebrating 20 years since its foundation in 1999. Before it was created Wendy and Sylvia were running a local group, along with their Housing Officer. Other residents would come with problems - usually repair issues - which they would help resolve.

The Residents' Forum brought together smaller local groups such as these into a larger network of Newlon residents.

In the beginning the focus was on repairs. Wendy noted that in the intervening years the Forum has evolved to encompass many more areas. The Forum's Chair also now serves on Newlon's Board and Forum members are consulted on many subjects such as procurement of services and performance figures.

It took time for the Forum to win the trust of the organisation and in the beginning there was a slight feeling of them and us. Nevertheless, the value of having the Forum has been proven over time.

Having resident involvement can bring vital insight into the organisation. For instance, Sylvia pointed out that one of their members raised the importance of keeping pets which led Newlon to reconsider and then revise their pet policy.

The Forum gathers together a variety of people and Sylvia found that she became better at listening to and considering other people's points of view after joining it. This is an important skill, enabling different perspectives to have a fair hearing and consideration.

Newlon's Housing Director, Bill Henderson, has been pivotal in getting the Residents' Forum more involved within Newlon. Presently Wendy is in the early stages of reaching out to some new areas within the organisation. This will help other departments become more aware of the resources the Forum can offer and enable resident representatives to gain greater insight into how these departments work.

There is an obvious closeness between Wendy and Sylvia and it is no surprise that they have been long term friends, having met in 1985. They are lovely, entertaining company, regaling me with many outrageous tales from their lives, which unfortunately, they forbade me from telling! Wendy says she is writing a book, and based on hearing her tales, I expect it will be very humorous. I look forward to reading it one day."

Want to find out more about the work of the Forum?
Go to www.newlon.org.uk/residents/getting-involved.



How we created a tranquil space at Philip Blairman House

by Chris Lloyd

“Living in the heart of Spitalfields can be a very busy and noisy place and this was my motivation for turning an overgrown piece of land into a little sanctuary of peace and quiet.

In the summer of 2013 I approached our then Housing Officer, Hafizur, about the possibility of clearing the small overgrown courtyard area at the rear of Philip Blairman House. Newlon agreed to clear the area as part of adjacent work that needed to be carried out and the residents would then plant and maintain a future residents garden.

Over the past six years our small courtyard garden has grown into a quiet, tranquil little oasis. It's a great place for residents to relax, have some lunch or just sit in the perfect little suntrap. As I live in a relatively small block of 20 flats it also provides a great way to meet and talk to neighbours which can only be a good thing.

In addition to the Agapanthus, Hebes and Salvias, we also grow a surprising amount of fruit and vegetables including tomatoes, courgettes, rhubarb and even an apple tree.

Our communal garden is maintained solely by residents with some occasional funding from our residents' association. Of all the projects that the residents' association and I have been involved with the residents' garden is a constant source of joy.”

Chris Lloyd is a Newlon resident. He is a member of the Norton Folgate Community Group, winner of Resident Group of the Year at the 2018 Newlon Star Awards.



Reviewing our policies

We regularly review our policies and procedures to ensure our services are as effective as possible. Here are a couple of recent examples of where we have made changes.

Starter tenancies

Our policy on starter tenancies was clarified to make it clearer about the requirement for a rent account to be a week in credit.

Succession

A new form will need to be completed when making an application for succession, to make the process more efficient.

Complaints

The policy was updated to ensure that there is consistency around how complaints made about Newlon staff are logged onto our systems and processed.

Barnsbury Estate news



Barnsbury Community Centre Jays Street, Islington, N1 0FE.

We run a wide range of programmes within the Community Centre – and we are always open to new ideas. Most activities are free and open to everyone in and around Barnsbury.

Please stop by the Community Centre, call us on **020 7033 4605** or email community.services@newlon.org.uk to find out more.

Join in with Gen Z

We are pleased that our new programme for young people at Barnsbury is getting lots of positive attention and engagement, and was recently featured in the Islington Gazette.

Generation Z (Gen Z) is aimed at ages 11-16 and provides support, education and advice in a series of workshops over the course of 12 weeks.

The programme will introduce life skills, problem solving, healthy living advice and help build resilience amongst the young people who attend. Gen Z isn't a typical youth programme as they have a strong focus on instilling self-discipline and empowerment with a key focus on addressing the emotional and educational needs of the young people that attend. The sessions will take place on Thursday evenings from 6pm to 8pm at the Community Centre, with some additional weekend trips planned. Hot meals are also provided as part of the sessions.

Barnsbury activity schedule

Monday	Time
Free exercise classes for women	10am – 11am
Historical and European Martial Arts	11.30am – 12.30pm
Free Tutors United - Maths and English Tuition	4pm – 6pm
Tuesday	Time
Free exercise classes for women	10am – 11am
Free coffee and craft workshops for ladies	11am – 12pm
Wednesday	Time
Zumbini	10am – 11am
Yoga (fee applies)	1pm – 2.15pm
Thursday	Time
Free exercise classes for women	5pm – 6pm
Generation Z Youth Programme	6pm – 8pm
Friday	Time
<i>Slots available</i>	
Saturday	Time
General use	
Sunday	Time
Communalism - Philosophy (2nd Sunday of each month)	1pm – 3pm

Free tutoring for young Barnsbury residents

The successful and popular Tutors United classes are open for registration once again at the Barnsbury Community Centre.

The award-winning programme is led by trained university students and is aimed at year 5 and year 6 pupils. Lessons alternate weekly between English and maths. In English, topics include mystery writing, persuasive writing and reports, with a focus on good spelling, punctuation and grammar. Maths classes cover key number skills including fractions and percentages, to help pupils prepare for SATs. Tailored lesson feedback is sent to parents to let them know about their child's progress.

On average pupils in the programme have seen their maths scores increase by 60%, while 80% of pupils have improved in English by a whole grade or more.

To find out more email community.services@newlon.org.uk or call us on **020 7033 4605**.

Events in your area



Pumpkin Plod Family Walk

When? 27th October

Where? Haven House Children's Hospice, IG8

Cost? Adults £11 / Children £7

Pumpkin Plod is the perfect afternoon activity for the whole family. A family adventure trail through a beautiful forest, with pumpkin fun, challenges and treats. This year has new themed activities and children will receive their very own Pumpkin Passport to complete as they undertake their journey around Pumpkin Planet. Families are encouraged to arrive from 12.30pm for an afternoon of pumpkin pastimes.

Tottenham Ploughman

When? 29th September

Where? Lordship Rec, N17

Cost? Free

Tottenham Ploughman was first started in 2013 and celebrates local food and drink from in and around Tottenham, including cheese, beer and bread. Showcasing their wares will be Wildes Cheese, Redemption Brewery, Prestige Patisserie, Opera Ice Cream, Celtic Bakery, Living Under One Sun and more. This free event runs from 11am to 6pm.

tottenhamploughman.com

Apple Weekend

When? 5th & 6th October

Where? Fenton House, NW3

Cost? Adults £10 / Children £5

An annual celebration of all things apple in Fenton's walled gardens and 300 year-old orchard. Taste old English varieties of apples and juice from their trees. Relax with a beverage or two, from delicious fresh juices and teas, to wine and cocktails. There will also be local produce, hot food and kids' activities like badge making, apple juicing and giant lawn games.

nationaltrust.org.uk/fenton-house-and-garden

Apple Day

When? 13th October

Where? Forty Hall Farm, EN1

Cost? Free

Celebrate apples, orchards and the arrival of autumn with lots of activities for all to enjoy at the annual family friendly Apple Fair. There will be apple tasting, apple bobbing, craft activities and more. The Forty Hall Farm Community Orchard volunteers will also be running their apple stall, and there will be plenty of other delicious local street food and produce available at the Farmers Market.

fortyhallfarm.org.uk

Big Fun Run

When? 20th October

Where? Victoria Park, E9

Cost? Adults £16 / Children £14

A 5k untimed run in Victoria Park. Run for fitness, run for charity or just run for fun. There is no pressure, just some easy moves and lots of laughs. It is all about getting involved, having fun and enjoying the whole experience of the day. All ages welcome. Make sure you book your place in advance.

bigfunrun.com/victoria-park

Tales from the Shed

When? Fridays & Saturdays

Where? Chickenshed Theatre, N14

Cost? £6

This autumn you can enjoy weekly vibrant, interactive theatre shows which are perfect for young children. They are informal, lively and engaging as the performers and audience share the same space. Children are always encouraged to make a lot of noise to make the story happen. Every week they present different stories featuring much loved characters.

chickenshed.org.uk

Urban Food Fest

When? Every Saturday, 12pm - 12am

Where? Euro Car Parks, E1

Cost? Free

Conveniently located near Shoreditch High Street station, the Urban Food Fest features over a dozen street food trucks and stalls which regularly change. Global gourmet street food is served alongside a bar with craft beers, cider, cocktails, plus live musicians and outdoor seating.

urbanfoodfest.com



Take a break at Nutley Edge

Are you looking for an affordable getaway? If so, then Nutley Edge Cottages could be the perfect destination. Nutley Edge belongs to Outward, a charity that supports vulnerable people in north and east London, and is part of the Newlon Group.

All profits from Nutley Edge go to providing better care and support. So your stay will be benefiting some of London's most vulnerable people. Nutley Edge sits in eleven acres of rolling countryside on the edge of the Ashdown Forest in East Sussex, located just an hour from London by train and easy to get to by car.

You can pick from twelve cottages that sleep up to four people, and also have the option of staying in our 17th century Old Farmhouse, which sleeps up to eight.

Plus, new this year are two four-metre glamping tents kitted out with a double bed and two single camping mats with sleeping bags, as well as compostable toilet, shared kitchen area and individual fire pits.

There are good rates for Newlon residents.

To learn more about Nutley Edge and book your stay please visit their website at www.nutleyedge.org.uk or call **01825 712 377**.

Managing your contact preferences

We occasionally receive enquiries from residents who would prefer to be contacted by Newlon in a particular way but not in others. We only have a limited capability to manage contact preferences and these are set out below.

If you would prefer to be called to arrange appointments rather than emailed we can note this in our housing management database and try to call you in the first instance. If we can't reach you by phone we will usually also email you if we hold your email address.

We do not have the capability to opt you out of receiving emails or texts that go to groups of residents, such as everyone in a block. For example, if we need to update residents at a scheme about communal works, we will usually text everyone. This means that if we do not have your mobile number you will not receive this update.

We will shortly be adding functionality to our system so that if we do not have your mobile number you would automatically be emailed if we have your email address when we are sending a bulk text to residents.

It is both easier and more cost effective for us to contact residents by text or email if we need to reach you personally or contact groups of residents. However, you can opt out of receiving messages from our Resident Services team about support with benefits or employment.

There are some messages, such as changes to rent or notices for works, which we are required to send in hard copy and therefore will always post to you.

If you do not want to be contacted by us at all using either email or text you can ask us to delete your mobile number and email address from our records. However, in this instance there will be information that you may not receive as a result, such as updates on works.

Before deleting your details we will ask you to confirm that you are prepared to not receive some information and you understand that it may be harder for us to contact you to make appointments.

Please call our Service Centre or email customerservice@newlon.org.uk if you have any queries about your contact preferences.

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 these stories.



Royal Free Hospital

Newlon Housing Trust has some types of stock which are unique for a housing association. This includes long-term ownership of a Grade II listed Edwardian Town Hall and staff accommodation for the Royal Free Hospital.

In the mid-2000s Newlon entered into partnership to redevelop some residential buildings for Royal Free Hospital based on or near to the main hospital campus in Hampstead.

Many of the Royal Free staff have the option of taking up hospital accommodation as part of their employment and there was a shortage of available spaces for people, as well as a number of buildings which required refurbishment. These included William Gunn and Anne Bryans House and homes at the nearby former Queen Mary Hospital site dating from the 1920s.

Each of these sites posed a different challenge. William Gunn was a collection of 1960s low rise blocks which required extensive repair and refurbishment works. The decision was taken to demolish them and build a larger purpose-built single block called Coppetts Wood House using the same footprint. This block was opened 2008 and provides 141 homes, ranging from studio flats to larger family accommodation. It has double the accommodation previously available at William Gunn House.

Our accommodation at the Royal Free Hospital is available to people in a wide range of roles, including nursing and clinical staff. People can live there long term or in some cases stay for short periods, either to come for training or even to perform a specific one-off operation or surgical procedure. Newlon has a small team based at Coppetts Wood House to manage the housing we provide for the Royal Free Hospital.

Anne Bryans House was a 13 storey 1960s concrete clad, brutalist style tower block, which required extensive refurbishment and internal remodelling. We used modern methods of construction to provide each flat with its own bathroom, changing the layout from space inefficient shared accommodation to provide 180 individual flats.

The block is named after Dame Anne Bryans who helped to establish the hospital. She was the first woman to be made a Red Cross commissioner during World War 2 and later became the first chairman of the Royal Free. She was responsible for the successful set-up and completion of the hospital, ahead of schedule.

Our work at Royal Free Hospital started with the refurbishment of Queen Mary's House, which was completed in 2006. This involved upgrading 50 apartments and communal areas.

Today we provide nearly 400 affordable homes at the hospital and have been working successfully in partnership with them for more than 10 years.



Kids' Quiz!

Below are 8 words which are all to do with Halloween. See if you can unscramble them.

- | | |
|---------------|------------|
| 1) TOBIMORCKS | 5) HENATUD |
| 2) OWBESCB | 6) OPOKSY |
| 3) PINKMUP | 7) IPRAMEV |
| 4) CHITW | 8) LERTNAN |

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 **18th October 2019**. 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.

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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