

HEXAGON'S QUARTERLY RESIDENTS MAGAZINE

HOME

NEWS

SPRING 2016

Hexagon

FREE COMPUTER COURSES

See page 21 →

ESTATE GRADING

See page 04 →

EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT

See page 16 →

TOP TIPS FOR FIRE SAFETY

See page 18 →



WHAT'S INSIDE

In-house Job Port	03
Estate Grading	04
Residents Inspectors Call	05
Keeping Communal Areas Clear	06
Settling In	06
Get On Board!	08
Satisfaction with the Co-ops	10
The Next Generation	11
Money Matters	15
Employment Support Adviser	16
Digital Photography	17
Fire safety	18
Residents Forum General Meeting	19
Digital Skills	20
DIY Top Tip...	22
Kids Corner	23
Get In Touch	24
Competition Time	24

WELCOME...

...to another edition of Home News.

As readers will be aware, Hexagon does a lot of work to help people into employment. This edition of Home News describes some of the ways that we can help. This includes helping residents to access our in-house Job Port, which is described on page 3.

In addition, we have some information about traineeships and other support available for young people looking for a job. This edition contains an article from our Employment Support Advisor inviting you to engage with her if you would like some assistance in this area.

Regular readers will also be aware that Hexagon offers a large menu of choice to people who want to work with us to help improve our services. This edition contains several examples including, for example, our Estate Grading team, our Resident Inspectors, and the good work of our co-ops who directly manage around 7% of Hexagon homes.

This edition contains two invites for you to be even more involved. The first relates to the Residents' Forum where on page 19 you will see an invite to attend their General Meeting, and the second relates to an invitation to become a Hexagon Board member.

Hexagon's Board has overall responsibility for running Hexagon and is responsible for agreeing our strategic plans, managing the risks that impact on delivering those plans, and ensuring that we deliver our objectives in relation to the development of new homes. We reserve one third of all Board positions for residents to ensure we remain customer focused.

All residents will have received correspondence earlier this month from our Chair, Roy Coulter, inviting expressions of interest for those interested in becoming a board member and on page 8 you will find a reminder. We would very much welcome your interest.



WOULD YOU PREFER TO RECEIVE THIS MAGAZINE BY EMAIL?

You can stop receiving Home News by post if you prefer simply by letting us know. For those of you who receive your rent statement with the magazine, this would mean that only your statement would be sent out in the post while the magazine would be emailed to you.

If you would like to take up this option, simply send your email address to getinvolved@hexagon.org.uk and we will arrange to email you the magazine every three months.



Residents can make use of our

IN-HOUSE JOB PORT

Open every Wednesday between 10.00am to 4.00pm

In addition to free use of our printers, telephones, fax and copying machines, the following resources are available to help residents with their job search activities.

COMPUTERS

Residents are encouraged to use our laptops to write CVs, complete applications, conduct internet based job searches and enhance their typing skills.

For those of you who are not IT literate, we run a four week training course to help improve basic IT skills; how to use the internet; learn new job-search techniques and how to manage an email account. Turn to page 21 to see details of our free Digital Skills course and the chance to gain a free laptop

NEWSPAPERS AND MAGAZINES

We keep copies of all of the local and national newspapers as well as industry magazines that feature vacancies of interest to our residents.

WORKSHOPS

We also hold regular workshops to help our residents succeed in their search for gaining suitable employment e.g. CV Writing and Interview Skills.

POSTAGE

Hexagon will cover the cost of postage of our residents' employment-related mail.

PRACTICE TESTS

We have a number of practice tests on CD, including the CSCS Theory Practice Test and the DSA Driving Theory Practice Test. Residents are encouraged to use these CDs to hone their skills and understand the testing process.

PRINTED RESOURCES

Our Job Port features books and brochures on different aspects of job-search activities, as well as dictionaries and Thesauruses to help residents write CVs and applications. We also keep copies of local telephone directories for residents seeking to identify and contact potential employers.

USING THE JOB PORT FACILITIES

Residents who need help sending e-mails, writing application forms, putting together a CV or preparing for an interview can get one-to-one assistance from our dedicated Employment Support Adviser, LIONNE WHITFIELD. (Check out our Career Matters article on page 16.)

ESTATE GRADING

In November 2015 a group of residents took the lead in completing the sixth round of this successful project.

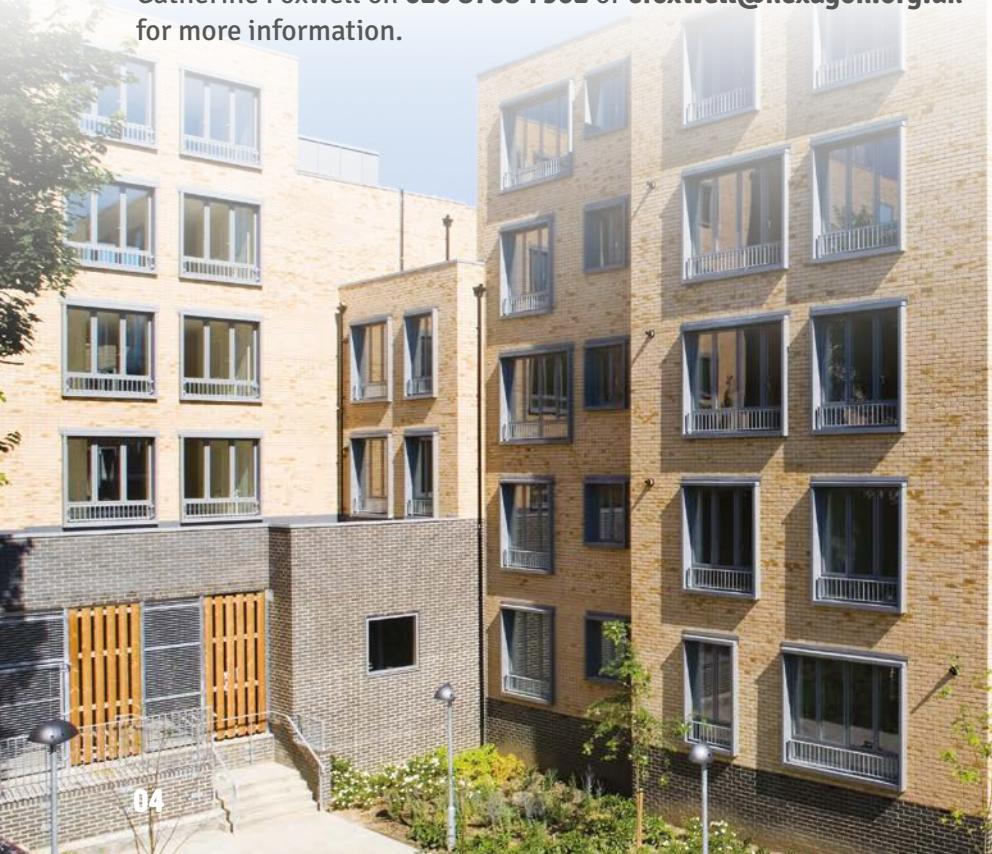
Estate Grading has been running for four years, and involves residents going round and inspecting our estates against a set criteria. This hands-on activity involves residents walking around the chosen estates and awarding them a score. When grading an estate, residents look at shared areas such as communal gardens and also check cleaning, communal repairs and noticeboards and give a view on the general appearance and upkeep of the estate. The estates are then given a grade of either Gold, Silver or Bronze, with Gold being the highest.

The collaborative work between residents and the Housing Services and Repairs teams at Hexagon has seen the standard of Hexagon estates improve from mainly Silver and Bronze estates to all Silver and Gold estates in the latest grading exercise. A great achievement for all involved!

The Estate Graders were particularly pleased to see that estates that were previously rated as Bronze have now improved to Silver.

This great project will continue to run twice a year and is a wonderful example of Hexagon and residents working together, making Hexagon estates a better place to live.

If you would like to be involved in this project, please contact Catherine Foxwell on **020 8768 7962** or **cfoxwell@hexagon.org.uk** for more information.



The results following the recent round of Estate Grading are:



Turkish Oak



Park Court



James Court



Maxim Court



Cobbs Court



Gordon Road



Reader House



Canal Grove



Mayfair House



Malibu House



Redshank House

Pictured: Cobbs Court

RESIDENTS INSPECTORS CALL

Towards the end of last year a team of residents completed an inspection into Hexagon's Community Investment service.

A team of four residents took an in-depth look at the Hexagon Academy, the apprenticeship scheme, activities for young people, the Business Start-Up programme and Community Learning activities. In addition to reviewing the paperwork, the inspectors also interviewed staff from the Community Investment Team to get their response on some of the issues that the inspectors had highlighted.

The inspectors reviewed their findings and found that overall there was very good work provided by the Community Investment Team and they identified areas where

improvements can be made. The main recommendations from the resident's inspectors focused on the need for the Community Investment Team to:

- Review how they communicate with residents
- Explore opportunities to deliver on area-based work out in local communities
- Develop wider consultation to establish what residents expect from the service

The inspectors presented a report to Hexagon containing some 21 recommendations for improvements to the service.

The recommendations have been turned into an action plan which is being delivered on by Hexagon.

The Resident Inspectors do fantastic work and they play a key role in ensuring that the Hexagon services are delivered to a high level. Hexagon welcomes the scrutiny which residents, such as Residents Inspection gives because it shows that by working in partnership with residents Hexagon can go on to drive improvements in the service that we provide.

GO ONLINE

The chances are that you are reading this item in a printed version of the magazine. But did you know that you can read the same version of Home News on your computer, tablet or smart phone?

If you sign up to only receiving a digital version of Home News you would no longer get the printed version through your front door. Instead the magazine would be emailed to you every 3 months. This means benefits to you and to Hexagon... and beyond. The benefit to you is that you can read Home News on the go, for instance whilst on the train or bus. The benefit to Hexagon is that it cuts down on our printing costs... and therefore is kinder to the environment!

So, if you would like to have your copy of Home News emailed to you simply notify us at getinvolved@hexagon.org.uk using your current email address, and we'll do the rest. Then you can look forward to reading a paperless version of your favourite magazine for residents.

LET'S BE CLEAR

Residents' health and safety are a priority for us and we have a legal duty to protect residents from issues such as fire.

If you live in a block you must keep areas that form the fire escape route clear from belongings.

Our Housing Officers carry out checks in blocks and you'll be asked to clear any belongings.

If you live in a block please do not leave rubbish in communal areas as this poses a fire risk.

Please place your rubbish inside bins in your bin areas and do not leave it around your bin area.

If you see rubbish being dumped please try to get as much information as possible and report it to our Customer Services Team on **020 8778 6699** or Customer_Desk@hexagon.org.uk

Residents in larger blocks have noticeboards containing useful information about the disposal of large unwanted items.



Let's work together to make our blocks and estates safe for everybody!

SETTLING IN

On 21st December 2015 Townley Road, a 10 bedded Care Home in East Dulwich, closed its doors and four residents along with the staff team, moved into a new Supported Living Service at Kirkwood Road based in Peckham/Nunhead which is 1.5 miles away (the other 6 residents moved on to other suitable placements).

Moving home is stressful and exciting at the best of times and this was definitely the case at Townley Road where Hexagon had delivered excellent mental health rehabilitation for nearly 25 years. Over this period of time, Townley Road had been home to 130 residents with the majority successfully moving on to lower support.

There was so much to sort out at Townley Road and at the same time so much to prepare for at Kirkwood Road. This was never going to be easy as you will know if you have ever moved house! It was also very emotional leaving the homely building, and in the midst of it all was another "goodbye and thank you"





Pictured (l-r): Jolly, Eve, Felicity and Mary enjoy a break at Kirkwood Road

to the retiring Manager Norma Smellie who had joined the service at the beginning back in 1991.

The main reason for the change (what is known as service re-modelling) was to offer people a better living environment with greater independence and choice. At Townley Road people had their own bedrooms but shared the use of the bathrooms, kitchens and living areas. Also Townley Road could not accommodate people with mobility needs as there were steps up to the front door and all bedrooms were upstairs and in a Care Home setting people did not have the opportunity to manage a tenancy and experience independent living.

It is a wonderful opportunity to open a new service at Kirkwood Road which has 12 self-contained flats and bedsits, four of which are on the ground floor. Each flat or bedsit has its own front door and is offered fully furnished. In addition residents have full access to a communal area [kitchen, lounge and conservatory], which is important for training and social activities, as well as a garden. In this Supported Living model residents have their own tenancy, pay for their own rent and utilities, and do their own shopping, menu

planning, cooking and cleaning with the support of 24 hour on-site staff. There is also greater emphasis on developing routines which contribute to general well-being such as joining activities and courses in the community and entering training or volunteering in preparation for work.

The four residents who moved from Townley Road have settled in well and have already been joined by four new residents; we aim to have let all 12 flats by the end of April. It has been a big change for the staff team too which is now headed up by new Manager, Martha Garcia. After a few short weeks of feeling lost and upside down, everyone is now settling in and here's what they are saying:

'We are back in the real world. We have to pay bills – and that's real'

Anthony (resident)

'Residents have more control and privacy'

Eve (Rehab Worker - Community Links)

'Residents have more decision making. They are now leading and we are following'

Felicity (Recovery Worker)

The future looks bright at Kirkwood Road.

Help shape
Hexagon's
future

*Training
& support
provided*

Salaried
position
£3,588 per
annum

GET ON BOARD

**PUT YOUR NAME FORWARD TO STAND
AS A TENANT BOARD MEMBER**

By the time you read this you should have already received a letter from Roy Coulter the Chair of the Hexagon Board. In the letter Roy outlines why its important for the residents voice to be heard on the Hexagon Board. Have you considered that you could be that voice?

Hexagon is run by a Board of Management. Four places on the Board are for Hexagon tenants and this year we have two places available.

Pictured (l-r): The current Tenant Board Members; Rosalind Watson, Dermot Finn and Kellie Elmes



**YOU CAN JOIN
US AS A TENANT
BOARD MEMBER!**

Who can be a Tenant Board Member?

Anyone who holds a tenancy agreement with Hexagon and who is not more than 6 weeks in rent arrears and who has not been found guilty of a Court judgment for breach of tenancy can consider standing for the Board.

What does being a Tenant Board Member mean?

Being on the Board means that you will have to attend Board meetings (6 a year), attend an away day meeting (one Saturday a year), attend other meetings as required, take part in training designed to improve your understanding of the role, and bring your skills to assist you to contribute to Board discussions.

How do I get on to the Board?

If you are interested in being on the Hexagon Board simply send your name, address, phone number and email address using the contact details below. We will then ask you to complete an Application Form which gives you the chance to tell us about your skills and your interest in standing for the Board. We will also invite you to an informal meeting with a small panel to discuss your application further. Following the meeting with the panel you may be invited to go forward for election onto the Board. The election will be conducted with all Hexagon tenants.

Interested? Want to find out more?

An information session has been arranged for you to find out more about what Tenant Board Members do. This will take place on Tuesday 26th April at the Hexagon office.

If you wish to come to the session please email your interest to getinvolved@hexagon.org.uk or alternatively let us know by filling in and returning the information slip below. If you cannot attend but still wish to put your name forward please indicate and we will send you the relevant information.



Name _____

Address _____

Telephone Number _____

E-Mail address _____

I wish to attend the information session:-

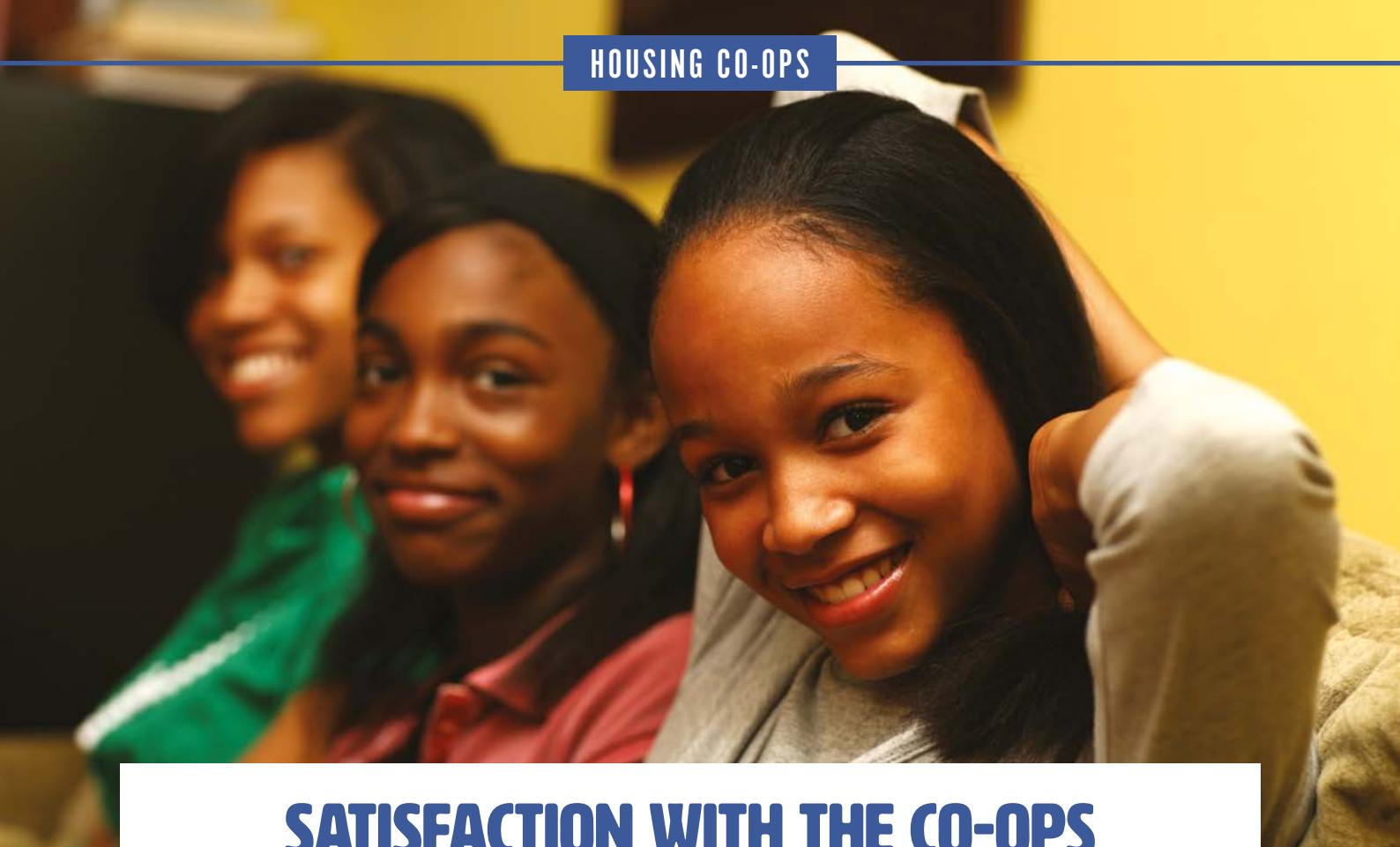


Tuesday 26th April: 6.30 - 8pm Hexagon Head Office, 130 -136 Sydenham Road



I cannot attend the information session but still wish to stand for election.
Please send the relevant paperwork.

Please return or email your interest to Hexagon by Monday 25th April



SATISFACTION WITH THE CO-OPS

A survey which was carried out last year has revealed that 82% of our co-op managed residents are satisfied with the overall service provided by their housing co-op.

The satisfaction survey also showed increased satisfaction ratings in every area when compared to the last survey that was carried out in 2011.

This survey was carried out via postal questionnaires of all 301 co-op managed tenants who are managed by eight housing co-ops. A total of 127 survey forms were returned representing a response rate of just under 42%.

As well as providing information on the general levels of satisfaction, the survey also revealed that satisfaction with specific services has improved since the last survey, including residents views being listened to and acted upon; satisfaction with repairs; the rent as value for money and opportunities to get involved with the co-op.

The survey presents a very good picture of the current satisfaction levels among co-op managed tenants and shows that the satisfaction remains

generally high with their housing co-op. The results of the survey helps to highlight the good work being done by the housing co-ops who work in partnership with Hexagon and shows a continual improvement in the co-op services over recent years.



82% of our co-op managed residents are satisfied with the overall service

 **LIKE US ON FACEBOOK**
Hexagon Youth Mag

THE NEXT GENERATION



APPRENTICESHIPS

Would you like to earn while you learn?

Hexagon is currently offering a variety of apprenticeships ranging from construction to administration.

We also have a couple of paid work placements for the right person.

Please contact André to find out more.

TRAINEESHIPS

**LEADING TO AN APPRENTICESHIP
FOR ANY RESIDENT, ANY AGE**

Would you like to learn a trade?

Hexagon is working in partnership to deliver Traineeships for all residents. There are two sites which are based in Lewisham borough and in Southwark borough. Both sites are open to all residents from any borough but only the Southwark centre will accept residents over 24 years old.

There is a choice of **Painting and Decorating** and **Dry Lining**.

The course will be run over 12 weeks which will include a work placement. At the end of the programme an apprenticeship will be found for each participant.



To book for any of the activities or projects please contact me on:

Tel: 0208 768 7910

Email: apeters@hexagon.org.uk

Text: 07903 342 9071

DRY LINING

Individuals wishing to become Dry Liners do not need to have any formal qualifications or training, although these are likely to be beneficial.

Prospective Dry Liners should have good practical skills, be able to read diagrams and technical drawings and a good level of fitness.

Dry Liners build internal walls in residential and commercial structures. They use plasterboard panels to reduce cost and weight and also to make the walls easier to move or remove.

As a dry liner, your work will involve a 'fixing' stage, followed by a 'finishing' stage.

At the 'fixing' stage, you will:

- Measure and cut plasterboard to the right sizes and angles
- Fix the panels to timber or metal frames (or ceiling joists) using special studs
- Cut panels to fit around doorways and create openings for windows

You will then 'finish' the walls by:

- Sealing joints using filler or adhesive
- Taping over the seal either by hand or with a taping machine
- Applying a thin layer of plaster over the tape (skimming)
- Sanding down the area ready for painting and decorating

Dry lining methods are used to hide wiring or pipes, improve a room's acoustics, and provide a cavity space for insulation or to smooth out uneven walls during renovation work. This role could be combined with traditional plastering or other types of work, for example sectioning off areas in open-plan offices.

PAINTING AND DECORATING

Painters and decorators use a range of coverings to enhance and protect surfaces. These surfaces could include plaster, metal and wood. If you like practical work and enjoy being artistic, this could be a perfect career for you.

To be a painter and decorator, you should have good practical and creative skills. You will need to be able to work carefully and pay attention to detail. Sometimes you'll need a good head for heights.

Your main tasks would include:

- Measuring surface areas to work out how much paint or wall covering you need
- Stripping off old wallpaper or paint
- Filling holes and cracks and making sure surfaces are level
- Preparing surfaces with primer and undercoat
- Mixing paint to the right shade, either by hand or using computerised colour-matching equipment
- Applying layers of paint and hanging wallpaper
- Tidying up after finishing a job

On some jobs you might apply specialist finishes such as rag rolling, graining and marbling. You would often work from ladders or raised platforms to reach ceilings.

For industrial projects, you might remove old paintwork with abrasive blasting methods before applying new coatings using industrial paint spraying equipment.

ARE YOU BETWEEN 16-24 AND LOOKING FOR A JOB?

Hexagon offers 1:1 support for all residents in looking for employment.

All information and advice is tailored to your specific needs.

We can assist you with:

- Job searching
- Creating or improving your CV
- Providing a work experience placement
- Providing advice on training
- Assist with CSCS training and cards
- And much more!

All travel expenses will be paid for and childcare costs where necessary, to cover all appointments attended.

Please contact André Peters to find out more.

Working together to get you the job you want.

Don't waste time call André NOW!!



SELF DEFENCE

FREE

Self Defence classes are
FREE for all Hexagon residents.

Day:	Venue:	Time:
Tuesday	The Deptford Lounge	5:30pm - 7:00pm

Please call to book and reserve your space.



UNIVERSAL CREDIT UPDATE

Universal Credit is a new benefit that replaces a number of existing benefits such as (income based) Jobseekers Allowance / Employment Support Allowance, and Housing Benefit. The roll out of the new benefit continues to gather pace as it is expanded across the country.

Now, for the first time, some residents in all Hexagon areas are eligible to claim Universal Credit. In most areas, only a small number of residents will need to make a claim for Universal Credit. However, in some parts of Croydon, as well as the postcodes SE1 and SE16, most people will move to Universal Credit if they make a new claim or their circumstances change in a way that is relevant to their claim for any benefit.

Universal Credit will continue to apply to more residents in the coming months, with the next change being for more areas to move to the system currently being used in some parts of Croydon, and the SE1/SE16 postcodes. Eventually, all working age residents who receive Housing Benefit will move to Universal Credit, although it's expected that this process will take a few years to complete.

Remember that under Universal Credit your rent will no longer be paid directly to Hexagon as it was under Housing Benefit. This means that you will need to make arrangements with your Housing Officer to pay your rent on a monthly basis.



If you have any queries around Universal Credit, please call the Customer Service Centre on 0208 768 7925 for assistance.

DON'T DELAY WHEN BENEFIT PROBLEMS STRIKE

With all of the announcements being made around changes to benefits, one very important change has gone almost unnoticed.

In the past, if your Housing Benefit stopped, or you needed to make a new claim, it was possible to get the Housing Benefit backdated for up to six months as long as you could demonstrate "good cause" for why you hadn't claimed earlier. This often meant that if you had delayed a claim for good reason such as a bereavement or a health problem, you would have a good opportunity to get the benefit backdated for up to six months.

Since the beginning of April, this ability has been lost. A change in the rules means that the maximum Housing Benefit that can be backdated for is one month, regardless of the reason for the delay. Once a month has passed, the entitlement for the previous month is gone forever, even if a claim would have been accepted had it been made. This is true regardless of how good the reason for the delay is.

This means that it is really important to make a claim promptly, or respond to requests for information quickly. If you don't make a claim (or respond to a request for information) on time, you will need to pay the rent for that period yourself, which could put you at risk of arrears. If you need help to make a claim or manage your current claim, call our customer service centre on 0208 778 6699 for assistance.



CAREER MATTERS

In this edition we introduce a new member of Hexagon staff, LIONNE WHITFIELD. LIONNE HAS RECENTLY STARTED AS EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT ADVISER AND WE'VE TAKEN THE OPPORTUNITY TO FIND OUT ABOUT LIONNE AND THE WORK THAT SHE WILL BE DOING FOR HEXAGON'S RESIDENTS.

How did you get your job?

After studying a number of courses at the London College of Fashion and working in Fashion PR, I realised I was not doing anything meaningful with my day-to-day work life. I wanted a role where I could make a real difference. I always enjoyed working with people, helping them realise their ambitions and would often help friends look for employment and update their CVs. By researching a number of career profiles, I realised being a careers adviser would be a great job for me. Ten years later, I am now a qualified Careers Practitioner and have had the privilege of working with a diverse range of people; helping them to assess their values, interests and skills, relating these to opportunities for employment, further study and training.

"If at first you don't succeed try, try and try again."

What is the Employment Support Adviser's role?

I am an experienced professional who provides focused and specialist guidance in relation to your career planning and decision making. To complement the service the rest of the Community Investment Team offer I provide guidance interviews, undertake a range of career related activities including delivering workshops, working with specific departments, liaising with employers, organising visits and researching opportunities. During your appointment for employment advice I will:

- Negotiate and agree with you the structure of the interview
- Focus on your needs and particular requirements
- Help you to recognise what stage you are at in your decision making
- Provide practical feedback and encouragement
- Refer you to specialist information or services if appropriate
- Help you tailor your CV and Cover Letter

What can residents expect from the service?

A careers interview is a conversation with a purpose, which is agreed with you from the start. It is a confidential one-to-one discussion with me. Whatever you wish to discuss, you can be sure that I will be objective and impartial, supportive and non-judgmental. During the meeting, I will listen carefully to you and will offer guidance by asking questions, making notes, challenging ideas, giving advice and recommending useful resources. These appointments will generate an electronic summary and agreed action plan, which will be emailed to you. I am happy to address any queries via email or telephone; although these forms of contact are only really suitable for quick questions, initial information and advice. Detailed and confidential careers discussions can only occur during the longer face-to-face-appointments.

What sorts of topics are discussed?

Some residents have specific questions to ask, but many wish to talk through ideas and concerns which may include:

- I don't know what to do next. Can you help me?
- How can I find more information relating to my interests and make good use of it?
- How can I improve my chances of success at an interview?
- I've looked into job ideas, but don't know which way to go.
- My CV needs checking and how do I write a covering letter to go with it?
- I am finding it difficult to complete an online application form that is asking for examples of my skills.
- I am not sure this course is the right one for me.
- How can I gain some relevant work experience?
- I have applied for a few jobs, but didn't get an interview. What is going wrong?

What is your favourite motto?

If at first you don't succeed try, try and try again.

What do you enjoy about your role?

I love working with our diverse residents and the fact that every appointment or question is different. The most rewarding part is when an individual tells me they got a job or an opportunity they were seeking as a result of the support they received. Knowing I have made a positive contribution to an individual or a family's life is what gets me out of bed every morning.

Outside of work, what do you like to do in your spare time?

I have a passion for fashion and like to keep up-to-date with the latest trends, by reading magazines and watching fashion shows. I enjoy listening to music, dining out, going to the theatre and watching movies, especially rom-coms and action films. My favourite films have got to be Dirty Dancing and The Bourne Trilogy; I can't wait to see the fourth movie, which is coming out later this year!

How do I arrange an appointment?

I will be holding a coffee morning on **Friday 6th May** at Hexagon **starting at 10:30am**, where you will have the opportunity to meet me in person and discuss your next steps. To book your place, please feel free to contact me on **020 8768 7915**.

DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY

- Want to take better photos?
- Want to learn how to edit photos on the computer?
- Want to get to know your camera and what it can do?

We have an exciting new Digital Photography course starting on **Tuesday 3rd May** running from 1pm to 3pm. The course will run every Tuesday for 11 weeks at the Hexagon offices, 130-136 Sydenham Road, London SE26 5JY

Interested?

If so, please contact Nicky Hazelwood at nhazelwood@hexagon.org.uk or phone on **020 8768 7913**



FIRE SAFETY

MAKE YOUR HOME SAFE

The best protection from fire is prevention.

Hexagon has a duty to take steps to prevent fires breaking out in the communal areas of our properties, but you can still take steps to ensure that your home is as safe as possible. Remember, most fires in blocks of flats start within the flats themselves, not in the communal areas.

By making your home safe from fire hazards you can significantly reduce the chances of a fire starting. Electrical faults from overloaded sockets are one of the main causes of fires. Cigarettes are another major problem as fires can start when they're not put out properly. Chip and frying pans are particularly dangerous when someone forgets to turn off the hob; so are candles when they're left unattended.

A working smoke alarm could save you in a fire. Approximately 35 people die each year in the UK because their smoke alarm was not working. The majority of fires start when people are cooking. Follow the 6 top tips here to prevent a fire from starting. The information in this advice is important – taking a little time to read it now may help to save your life!

35 PEOPLE DIE EACH YEAR IN THE UK BECAUSE THEIR SMOKE ALARM WAS NOT WORKING



REMEMBER TO TEST YOUR SMOKE ALARM REGULARLY!

6 Top Tips to prevent a fire

1

Test your smoke alarms regularly. Remember to change the batteries as often as necessary.



2

Stub cigarettes out properly and dispose of them carefully. **Put them out. Right out.**



3

Do not overload electrical sockets and watch out for faulty and overheating electrical equipment and wiring/cables.



4

Switch off all electrical equipment when not in use. Avoid leaving devices to charge unattended, **especially overnight.**



5

Keep matches, lighters, candles and tea lights out of reach of children or in a locked cupboard.



6

Take extra care in the kitchen and never leave cooking unattended. More than half of accidental fires in the home are to do with cooking.



For more detailed information about fire safety in your home, visit www.gov.uk/government/publications/make-your-home-safe-from-fire

COME TO THE GENERAL MEETING OF THE RESIDENTS FORUM BE PART OF IT. LET'S GROW TOGETHER.

**Saturday 4th June 2016
1pm-5pm**

Employment Academy, 29 Peckham Road, Southwark, SE5 8WA

**COLD LIGHT BUFFET + REFRESHMENTS PROVIDED
FREE RAFFLE + MUSIC + FREE CRECHE**

Transport links:

By bus: Bus routes 12, 36, 171, 345 and 436 stop at Vestry Road, just a few steps from the Employment Academy.

By train: The nearest overground stations are Denmark Hill and Peckham Rye, each about 15-20 minutes walking distance.

RSVP:

RSVP to Brian Hughes at **020 8768 7964** or email getinvolved@hexagon.org.uk by Friday 13th May.

Come and help to agree the new constitution of the Residents Forum.

Pictured: Employment Academy, SE5



What and Who is The Resident's Forum?

All adult Hexagon residents are automatically members of the Resident's Forum. Members elect a Committee at the AGM on Resident's Day. The Committee meets regularly and has close connections with the Board and managers to make recommendations that help ensure that Hexagon's services are accountable to residents and to promote the highest quality of life and general wellbeing of residents.



FEATURED

We live in an increasingly digital world. Technology has and will continue to alter and transform our lives. However many people still don't possess the basic digital skills necessary to take advantage of it. This means some people are unable to do simple things like send a Facebook message, pay a bill with an app, search online for the best shopping bargains, or find out when the next bus or train is due before leaving the house. For some, it means not knowing how to communicate with family and friends online, thereby leading to loneliness, isolation or ill-health.

It is our aim to help get as many Hexagon residents as we can online and equipped with these essential digital skills.

Here is a list of skills that you will need to be able to use the internet through your computer, laptop or other device (eg tablet, smartphone, games console). Have a look at the assessments questions below to see if you have the Basic Digital Skills you need.

Actions : can you	No idea what you mean	Yes I can do this	No I cannot do this
Managing Information <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Use a search engine to look for information online + Download/save a photo you found online + Find a website you have visited before 			
Communicating <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Send a personal message to another person via email or online messaging service + Make comments and share information online 			
Transacting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Buy items or services from a website + Buy and install apps on a device 			
Problem Solving <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Solve a problem you have with a device or digital service using online help + Verify sources of information you found online 			
Creating <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Complete online application forms which include personal details + Create something new from existing online images, music or video 			

There are lots of ways you can improve your digital skills. Here are just some of the ways.
 If you not sure where to start, please contact Lianne Whitfield on **020 8768 7915** or by email at lwhitfield@hexagon.org.uk



SEARCH RESULTS FOR DIGITAL SKILLS

Want to learn how to get online and get the equipment for free?

Contact us today to secure your place on one of our courses. By attending four 2 ½ hour sessions you will learn:

- Computing basics
- Getting online
- Using email
- Using the internet to:
 - Save money
 - Look for work
 - Access services

All participants who complete the course in full will receive a refurbished laptop, a wireless dongle with 12gb of data usage pre-installed (by plugging this in your laptop you will be able to access the internet for free for the next 12 months). Courses start on **Wednesday 27th April** starting at 10am until 3pm, every Wednesday for 3 weeks and take place at the Hexagon offices.

Interested? Contact Lionne Whitfield on **020 8768 7915** or email lwhitfield@hexagon.org.uk

Online, want to learn more?

Online Plus is the perfect online course. If you've got the basics of computers and the internet under your belt, this is the place to start learning a little bit more. Whether you want to chat to family and friends on Facebook, share digital photographs or look after your health online, there is a short course to help you do it.

Online Plus is a complete package that brings together the key courses from this section to help you learn more digital skills and gain more confidence.

Learn how to shop, socialise and bank online, find jobs, fill in forms and stay safe while you're doing it! You'll also get an Online Plus certificate once you've completed this package.

Interested? Just go on to the website: www.learnmyway.com/subjects/online-plus

Have a computer at home and not sure where to start?

Learn My Way offer a fantastic course which will take you through all the basics of getting online.

'Getting online' is the place to take your first steps online. You can find out all about the mouse, the keyboard, and the internet, and get ready to chat to friends with your own email account. From here, the world is your oyster!

Online Basics is a great package of free online courses designed for you if you're just getting started with computers and the internet.

You can start learning how to search, stay safe online, how to use email and public services. Once you've completed the package, you'll even receive your own certificate.

Interested? Just go onto the web site www.learnmyway.com/get-started register and away you go. Or contact Lionne Whitfield on **020 8768 7915** or email lwhitfield@hexagon.org.uk

It's all free and you can learn at your own pace.

Support on your doorstep

There are many organisations, often close to where you live, that can help you to get online. They offer access to computers, as well as support sessions to help guide you if and when needed.

There are too many to list here, though if you would like to know the nearest one to you, please contact Lionne Whitfield on **020 8768 7915** or email lwhitfield@hexagon.org.uk

UNBLOCKING SINKS



HEALTHY RECIPE: BLACK RICE AND MANGO SALAD

Ingredients

- 2 cups black rice (cooked and cooled). Be sure to follow the package instructions for cooking black rice properly.
- 1 ½ cup ripe mango chunks
- 1 cup cucumber (finely chopped)
- ½ cup red pepper (finely chopped)
- ½ cup tomatoes (finely chopped)
- ½ cup red onion (finely chopped)
- ¼ cup cilantro (chopped)
- 1 tbsp jalapeño peppers (chopped). Use fresh jalapeño peppers, do not use pickled jalapeño as this will make salad taste sour. If you cannot get jalapeño peppers, green chillies can be used instead.
- 1 tbsp mint leaves (chopped)
- 1 tsp lime zest
- 1 tsp of sea salt
- ½ tsp black pepper

Method

Cook black rice as per the package instructions. Put all the ingredients in a salad bowl and mix very well. Let it stand for at least 2 minutes before serving. Feel free to experiment with different fruits and salad vegetables – ENJOY.

Under section 3.1 of the Tenancy Handbook there is information on the various minor repairs that tenants are responsible for. Included within these tenant responsibilities is the unblocking of sinks, washbasins and baths. Here are some handy steps below on how to go about clearing blockages and how to prevent blockages from happening.

Prevention

Always use a sink strainer. This is a small grill which can be placed over your plughole. It is designed to stop most food waste from going down the sink and creating build-up and blockages. It can be purchased from any DIY or hardware store and is relatively cheap and very easy to use.

Other suggestions - make sure no oil or grease finds its way into pipework, as it will solidify into a strong, sticky substance when mixed with cold water.

Boiling water works wonders on most sink blockages. It will help to erode any soap or dried liquids immediately; however, do not try this if your drain is not seeing any movement. If it is completely backed up, you may end up needing to use a plunger.

Use a plunger

To flush the gunk out, press a plunger firmly onto the plughole and pull upwards slowly. Keep doing this and you'll hear water gurgling as the blockage is released. If this doesn't work you may need to apply more pressure – do this by covering up the overflow holes with a damp cloth.

Rinse out the pipe

If plunging doesn't work, the problem may be a blocked pipe below the sink. Here are a few steps that may help solve the problem:

- Put the plug in the plughole.
- Place a bucket under the sink pipe.
- Unscrew the pipe carefully; ensuring the bucket is positioned below to catch any water.
- Rinse the pipe out thoroughly, removing anything that's blocking it.
- Try using a piece of stiff wire to poke out the blockage.
- Re-connect the sink pipe firmly tightening all nuts before emptying any waste water from the bucket.
- Pour boiling water and washing up liquid down the plughole to clear away any remaining debris.

If this doesn't work then the blockage may be in the waste pipe connected to the sink pipe or further down the pipe. If this is the case please contact Hexagon Repairs (see back page) who may be able to assist you further.

KIDS CORNER

BUDS
DAFFODILS
GRASS
RAIN
RAINBOW
SEEDS
SPRING
TULIPS
UMBRELLA

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

Find the words in the puzzle grid above. Words may go forwards or backwards and across or down. If you think you have found all the correct words in the word search, simply cut out and send to the address below by **Friday 6th May**.

Send your word search entry to: Resident Involvement Admin, Hexagon Housing Association, 130-136 Sydenham Road, London, SE26 5JY.

**Three correct entries will be drawn at random.
Each will receive a £10 Love2Shop voucher.**

KIDS CORNER WINNERS

Congratulations to **S Bailey (SE12)**, **R P Berry (SE5)** and **Mariah P Forde (SE15)** whose correct entries each won the Word Search in the last edition.

SPRING JOKES

Q: When do monkeys fall from the sky?

A: During Ape-ril Showers

Q: Can February March?

A: No but April May

Q: When do people start using their trampoline?

A: Springtime

CHEESE AND HAM PANCAKE ROLL UPS

KIDS the writing in bold is for you
ADULTS the rest is for you.



FOR THE PANCAKES

- Tip in the flour, make a well, crack the eggs in dishes – whisk together.** Tip the flour into a mixing bowl and make a well in the middle. Crack the eggs into separate dishes, remove any shell, and add to the flour. Tip in the butter, add a little milk and whisk until smooth.
- Whisk in the rest of the milk.** Whisk in the rest of the milk, in a steady stream, until you have a smooth batter that is similar to the consistency of double cream. Now carefully pour the batter into a jug.
- Wipe the pan with oil and pour in the batter.** Using kitchen paper, wipe the pan with a little oil. Place the pan on the stove and heat until hot. Remove from the heat and pour in enough batter to cover the base, swirling it around. Return to the heat for 3 mins until the underside is cooked.
- Now flip the pancake.** Take the pan off the heat and using a spatula, loosen the pancake. Flip the pancake in the air (or simply turn it over with the spatula) and cook the other side. When cooked, put the pancake to one side, then repeat the procedure to cook 7 more pancakes.

FOR THE ROLL-UPS

- Butter a baking dish, then scatter ham and cheese over pancakes.** Heat oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6. Butter a large baking dish. Now lay a pancake in front of you and scatter over some ham, spinach and cheese (remembering to save 25g of the cheese).
- Roll up the pancakes and put them into the dish.** Carefully roll up the pancakes and put them into the buttered dish. Repeat with all the pancakes.
- Make the topping.** In a small bowl, mix together the crème fraîche with the remaining cheese and spring onions, if you like.
- Spread the topping, then sprinkle over the breadcrumbs.** Spread the topping over the pancakes, sprinkle with breadcrumbs and bake for about 30 mins until bubbling and golden. Serve with a salad or veg.

Repairs Freephone

 0800 393 338

If you need to report a repair (except gas central heating and hot water) please call the Repairs line. This number is staffed from 8am – 5pm, Mon – Fri. When phoning outside of office hours you will be forwarded to the Emergency Out-of-hours Repairs number (shown below).

General Enquiries

 020 8778 6699

Option 1 for all gas queries- your call will be automatically transferred to our Gas contractors.
Option 2 for all repairs related queries. **Option 3** for tenancy and rent queries. **Option 4** for general enquiries.

Gas Central Heating/Hot Water problems

 0800 206 1367 (open 24 hours 365 days a year)

Emergency Out-of-hours Repairs

 020 3701 3518

Other ways to contact us

@Customer_desk@hexagon.org.uk

For all general enquiries

 Repairs_reporting@hexagon.org.uk

To report a repair

 www.hexagon.org.uk

 Text: 07537 400 5287

 130-136 Sydenham Road,
London SE26 5JY, United Kingdom

COMPETITION TIME

Congratulations to J Staff (DA8), Julie Hilliard (DA8) and M Holden (SE22) who each receive a £20 voucher for their correct entries.

The answers to the last Competition Time were:

1. The saturation point of temperature
2. 3
3. £5
4. 1902
5. Workers Educational Association

To enter this edition's Competition Time, simply answer the following:

1. How many Hexagon tenancies are managed by housing co-ops?
2. What is the name of the benefit which residents who receive Housing Benefit will eventually move on to?
3. Name one of Lianne's favourite films?
4. How many estates received a Bronze rating in the latest Estate Grading?
5. How long had the care home at Townley Rd been providing a service for?

Please send your entries, by post, to:

Resident Involvement Admin, Hexagon Housing Association, 130-136 Sydenham Road, London, SE26 5JY
Or by email to: getinvolved@hexagon.org.uk

Three correct entries received by **Friday 6th May** will be drawn at random and will each receive a £20 shopping voucher.

The competition is open to all Hexagon residents. The editor's decision is final.



130-136 Sydenham Road,
London SE26 5JY, United Kingdom
Tel: 020 8778 6699

 /HexagonHA
Web: www.hexagon.org.uk

 INVESTORS
IN PEOPLE | Gold

TRANSLATIONS

Always happy to translate!

Chinese

永遠樂於翻譯！

Eritrean

"የኢትዮ-ጵያውያን ከለምና አገልግሎት እና!"

French

Toujours heureux de traduire!

Portuguese

Sempre feliz a traduzir!

Vietnamese

Luôn luôn vui lòng phiên dịch!

Urdu

ترجمے کے لیے ہر دم تیار

LARGE PRINT OR BRAILLE

If you would like this edition of Home News in **large print or braille**, please contact Hexagon, giving your full contact details.

WIN £20