

ISSUE 64 – AUTUMN 2010
YOUR WDC HOUSING MAGAZINE

KEEPING YOU
INFORMED

HOME NEWS

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ANNUAL REPORT TO TENANTS

A DAY IN THE LIFE
OF... A KINETICS
ENGINEER

TENANT
PARTICIPATION
UPDATE



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AN UPDATE



**Jameel Malik, Head of
Housing and Property
Services.**

We invited you to our monthly meetings in community venues across the district and I'm pleased to report that some of you came along to meet the management team and discuss your current issues and concerns. It was very refreshing to be out and about meeting you as well as extremely informative, so do feel free to drop in and meet us. All our meetings are held between 9.30 - 11.30 am;

- **5 October, The Gap**
- **2 November, Tannery Court**
- **7 December, Chandos Court**

Please keep your feedback coming in and come and meet us at our monthly meetings!

This issue contains our annual report in the centre pages and you can pull it out to keep separately if you wish. It is how we report to you, our tenants, on how Warwick District Council is performing in terms of allocating and maintaining your homes, value for money, involving tenants and customer care, as well as looking after neighbourhoods and communal areas.

Please take this opportunity to read the annual report - it will hopefully answer some of your questions and show you what steps we are taking to improve services.

In this issue we offer some advice on how to keep your homes warm and your heating bills down this winter as well as a great recipe for a heart warming and healthy cake! There's advice and help available for those of you looking for work and also guidance if you are struggling with your finances.

Keeping the community spirit alive, our new feature, get to know your neighbours, investigates our cultural and religious diversity. This time we cover family life during the fasting month of Ramadan. We also talk about our shared garden scheme, where you can work on your neighbour's garden in return for a small part of it to grow your own flowers and vegetables – it's a great idea!

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We recently received this letter from one of our tenants:

LETTER OF THANKS

With all the troubles the country is going through and all the talk of cut backs in services, it was a pleasant surprise to find that WDC are still responding to repairs in what must be considered in anyone's standard as an excellent time.

Twice recently I had to call the Council about repairs. Both times the contractor, Rok, came out within one and a half hours and did the repairs one plumbing and one electrical very efficiently. So well done to both WDC and Rok. Keep up the good work.

Many thanks

Mr Mountford
Kenilworth

Leaseholders News

The Leaseholders Action Group (LAG) has a new committee;

Chair	Gerald Haseldine
Secretary	Lorraine Web
Treasurer	Bernie Cuffe
Members	Mark Leeson Heather Graughran

Planning to be much more active in the future, the new committee hopes that more Leaseholders will attend their General Meetings and get involved.

Meetings will be held at the Town Hall, 7.30pm on the following dates;

1 December 2010
2 March 2011

More information will be sent to all leaseholders as usual in the next issue of The Leaseholder.

HOMENEWS ON-LINE

More and more information is being held on line now and your Home News is no exception! You can find the latest edition (and some back issues) of the Home News, by visiting Warwick District Council's website and type in the link below;

www.warwickdc.gov.uk/homenews

If you would like to see a version that looks like the real thing, then you can find it at;

www.wdcprintroom.co.uk/homenews_portal.html





TENANT PARTICIPATION



EVERYMAN BLUE DAY 18 JUNE

The Housing Surgeries at Southorn Court, Lillington re-launched in conjunction with an event raising awareness for testicular cancer in men. All the Housing staff wore their promotional t shirts and were on hand to talk about your housing issues.



GET INVOLVED AND HAVE YOUR SAY!

There are a number of ways in which you can get involved with Housing and Property Services;

1 Join our Tenant Panel and help us to shape the future of Housing at Warwick District Council. You would need to commit to quarterly meetings, usually held in the evening at the Town Hall in Leamington Spa. The purpose of this panel is to look at housing standards and decide what needs to be prioritised and changed. Minutes of these meetings are circulated to tenants and housing staff.

2 Become a Mystery shopper by phoning Customer Services with typical housing queries and reporting back on the service you received and the outcome of your phonecall. This helps Housing to ensure that all staff you come into contact with can provide the right help and advice. Training is provided.

3 Become a Tenant Inspector – get out and about inspecting community areas across the district and report back to Housing whether they are kept clean and tidy, whether there is rubbish building up for example. It helps to monitor problem areas and how this can be addressed.

If you would like more information about any of these then please give Margaret Allen, Tenant Participation Officer a call – contact details right.



TENANT PARTICIPATION

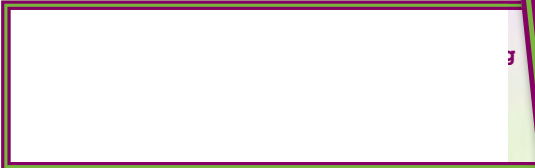
TENANT PANEL MEETING

The first meeting took place at the Town Hall on 2nd September and we were pleased to see so many of you turn up from across the district, keen to get involved and have your say!

This meeting was an introduction to the panel, the sort of involvement we need and the way the meetings will be run. The tenant panel will monitor and challenge the Council's performance as landlord, questioning what we do and how we do things. The panel will also work with housing staff to improve services.

It was agreed that future meetings will adopt a formal structure and a committee will be elected at the next panel meeting, this will comprise a Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary.

Future meetings to be held on the first Tuesday of each month, the next one will be at the Town Hall on Tuesday 5 October, 7pm



JOIN US FOR COFFEE

Come and meet your housing team over coffee and a chat at the following venues across the district;

Discuss your housing queries with our housing officers, including rent and repairs.

October	November
Thursday 14 October –Packmores, 10am – 12noon	Thursday 11 November – Packmores, 10am – 12noon
Tuesday 19 October – Cubbington Village Hall, 10am – 12noon	Tuesday 16 November – Cubbington Village Hall, 10am – 12noon
Thursday 21 October – The GAP, Warwick, 2pm – 4pm	Thursday 25 November – The GAP, Warwick, 2pm – 4pm

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF..... A KINETICS ENGINEER

There are many people who might visit your home throughout your tenancy, whether it is in connection with maintenance or repairs, recycling or rent and we thought you might be interested to find out a bit more about them. Most of you will have had a visit from Kinetics at some point, they are the contractors who provide gas servicing and maintenance. This issue, we follow our Kinetics team as they go about their daily work.



Phillip fixing a leaking boiler

Phillip is a Supervisor who works in Warwick District. He travels in from Birmingham everyday to reach his first appointment by 8am and manages a team of engineers who respond to your calls for servicing or repair work.

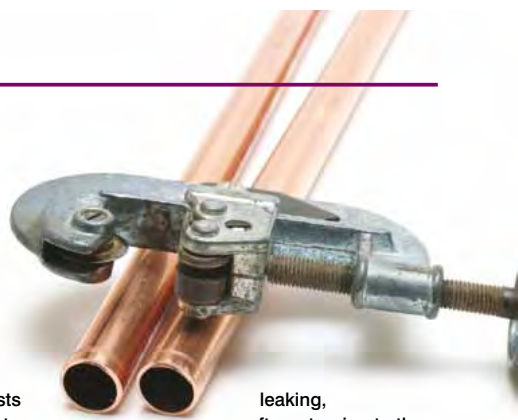
His schedule for the day is sent

onto his phone, which lists the addresses he needs to visit and a brief description of the job. It is his responsibility to make sure his van is well stocked with all the equipment and parts that he might need, so he checks it regularly.

First stop is a boiler leak. The gentleman had noticed this over the weekend and put down towels and a container to catch the water, but was unsure whether or not to use his hot water. He called Housing Repairs to report the problem and was given a date and a time to expect the engineer and was pleased to see that this had been passed onto Phillip, who turned up right on time!

Kinetics engineers all carry identification and will show you this before they enter your home. Do not be afraid to ask for it, if they don't show it to you!

Phillip confirmed why he was there and set about identifying the problem – initially switching the water off and then checking the pipes around the boiler. It turned out that one of the plastic fittings was



leaking, so after returning to the van to fetch the new part, he was able to fix it quickly. He then confirmed he had completed the job by filling in his schedule on the phone and the tenant signed to agree this.

Next stop was low water pressure in Warwick! Phillip tests every tap in the house to check whether there is a problem. He is sure there is nothing wrong and explains to the tenant how to set the water pressure on the boiler, so that they can do it themselves. Another satisfied customer and we're off to another low water pressure job. This time the tenant has forgotten how to use the pressure switches on the boiler. Phillip gives a demonstration of this and is assured that they will remember what to do for next time, so that they won't need to wait for another engineer to show them.

