



Tenants' Newsletter



February 2014

Odu-Dua Housing Association

Staff changes, service remains



In January, two members of staff left Odu-Dua. It was with a heavy heart that we said 'farewell' to Mr Miral Nandha, who started at Odu-Dua in 2008. During the last five and a half years, Miral delivered an excellent service to our tenants as a Repairs Officer. We wish her all the best of luck at her new post. We wish him success in his new

post. He will be greatly missed.

In the meantime, we also said goodbye to Miss Zoe Gayle, who held the role as a Estate Services Coordinator at Lithos Road. In the past seven months, Zoe enhanced the communal service to a high standard. She also successfully dealt with several anti-social behaviour issues. We wish her all the best of luck at her new post.

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Your new Repairs Officer



We would also like to congratulate Ms Sharon Dawe, who has been promoted internally to be our new Repairs Officer. Sharon will continue to deliver effective and efficient services to all our tenants. Along with Sharon, Housing Officer Akima and Housing Assistant Shantol will cover the role of Estate Services Coordinator for the following months.

Payment references required

It is a requirement that you put a name or address as a reference when using over the counter slips to pay your rent. This is even more important if you are not paying in at a branch of Lloyds

Putting a reference is essential when you make a payment over the counter in a bank. Without any references, we would not be able to allocate the money into the correct account. A reference can guarantee that your payment is allocated to your account correctly and promptly.

If a payment cannot be identified, we will try to find out who made the payment. If the unidentified payment is yours, you will be required to send the proof of payment to Odu-Dua before we can process the it.



A simpler way is to use the paying in book. It can be provided upon request, just contact us and we will send one to you.



Is your home electrically safe? Are the electrical installations in a satisfactory condition for continued use? An Electrical Inspection can help you to find the answers and keep you and your family safe.



As your landlord, Odu-Dua has the duty to carry out the Inspection in all of our properties. Letters informing you of this were sent out. T.T. Brown, the appointed contractor, will contact you directly in the following months to arrange an appointment. When they attend your property, they will test all your wiring and fixed electrical equipment to ensure their safety. They will also find any potential electric shock risks and fire hazards.

It is vital that you provide access for the contractor to attend and carry out the Inspection. When an appointment is arranged, you must keep the appointment and be available at home.

In rent arrears? Don't ignore it!



It is your responsibility to make sure that your rent is paid in full and on time. Rent arrears occur when your rent is not paid. It doesn't matter if you are getting full, part or no help from Housing Benefit. Ignoring it could mean that you are at risk of losing your home.

Rent arrears are priority debt. To avoid the risk of eviction, you should always prioritise rent arrears even if you have other debts.

- £ make a list of all your debts and put them in order of priority (rent payment should be on top of your list)
- £ write down all your income and expenses
- £ work out how much you can afford to pay to each creditor
- £ consider seeking advice from a debt agency
- £ most importantly, talk to your Housing Officer Akima



Reaching a payment agreement with your Housing Officer is a good way to gradually pay off the arrears. You can discuss your personal situation confidentially and only agree the amount that you can afford. You will also get help with income/ expenditure budgeting if required.

Remember that once your rent is being paid in full again, the arrears that have built up will still have to be paid off.



What will happen if your rent arrears continue to increase?

We will take following action until you make and keep to an agreement to pay your rent.

- ☞ serve a 'Notice of Seeking Possession'
- ☞ take you to court for possession of your home
- ☞ apply for an eviction warrant

We know that it can be difficult to manage all the bills, pay the rent, pay off any debts and find out about all the services and benefits that are available to help you. It is important that you talk to us if you are struggling. You can also find some useful contacts on the left-hand side of this page.

Useful links



Turn2us ☎ 0113 248 4126
to access benefits & grants (9am-2pm Mon-Fri)

help people in financial need gain access to welfare benefits, charitable grants and other financial help



the Money Advice Service ☎ 0300 500 5000
(8am-8pm Mon-Fri, 9am-1pm Sat)

This free service provides free, independent, practical advice either online, over the phone or face to face.



☎ 08444 111 444

www.adviceguide.org.uk

TextRelay 08444 111 445

help people resolve their legal, money and other problems by providing free, independent and confidential advice, and by influencing policymakers

Contacts for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction

Barnet Council

☎ 020 8359 2111,
9am-5pm Mon-Fri

Brent Council

☎ 020 8937 1800, 9am-5pm Mon-Fri

Camden Council

☎ 020 7974 4444, 9am-5pm Mon-Fri

Hillingdon Council

☎ 0300 123 1384, 9am-5pm Mon-Fri



Get online @ home

- at a cost you can afford

Get Online @ Home is an initiative from Microsoft and its partners to provide low cost refurbished desktop and laptop computers to support the Go ON UK digital inclusion programme.



It is a simple way to get an affordable and internet ready computer through getonline@home.

The benefits that you can get from Get Online @ Home are:

- ◇ Easy on your pocket
- ◇ Easy to get started
- ◇ Easy to keep in touch
- ◇ Easy to save money
- ◇ Easy to learn



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