



# Tenants' Newsletter



April 2013

## Odu-Dua Housing Association

### Late opening on every Wednesday



Are you unable to contact us between 9am and 5pm?

**Our office is open until 6pm every Wednesday.**

**Note: For those tenants who live on Lithos Road estate, the office on the ground floor of Ebony House is now open until 7pm every Wednesday.**

**Inside this issue...**

**Late opening on every Wednesday .....p1**

**Say hello to new staff!.....p1**

**Fire safety, everyone's responsibilities....p1**

**Changes to Council Tax Benefits.....p2**

**Nursery places available.....p2**

**Free career fairs.....p2**

### Say hello to new staff!

In the mean time, Sereka



As many of you may know, Jason left Odu-Dua at the end of

February 2013. It was sad to see him go. But we wish him the best of luck in his future career.

Robert has joined us. She will be working with us for two months as a Housing Assistant. You may have already spoken to her on the phone. She will be assisting Akima with your rent and housing issues.

### Fire safety, everyone's responsibilities



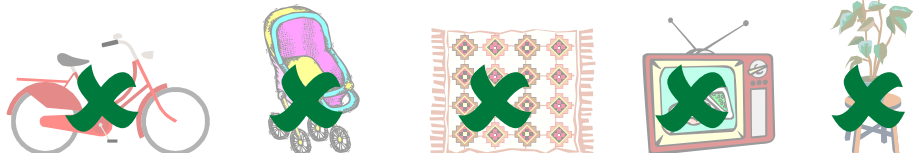
#### Why is it important to keep communal areas clear?

As your landlord, Odu-Dua has the responsibility to keep your communal areas free for access especially when there's an emergency. We have to make sure that you can escape from the flats or buildings where you live in.

Therefore, it is really important that you don't leave your things outside your flats as they may block someone's escape in an emergency. The storage may even trigger other pockets of fires.

According to the laws and regulations, nothing is allowed to be left in the communal areas. Some items seem to be safe but may actually lead to a higher danger. For example, some types of bikes and buggies can burst at high temperatures, and their materials can catch light easily.

However, during our visits to some of your homes, we have found push chairs, bicycles, door mats amongst other items outside your flats occasionally. We would like you to remove any items on the corridors, hallways, stairs and communal soft lofts immediately. If items are not removed after several notification letters, we will send out workers to remove your items and invoice you for the cost. Let's work together to ensure you avoid fire risks by keeping the communal areas clear.



# Changes to Council Tax Benefits



**The Council Tax Benefit scheme was abolished by the government and ended on 31 March 2013. All local councils have been required to launch their locally designed Council Tax Support/ Reduction Schemes from 1 April 2013. Are you aware of how you will be affected?**

London Boroughs of Camden, Brent, Barnet and Hillingdon have consulted the Boroughs' local groups and residents. New schemes are agreed and implemented from this month. The aim is to continue to protect the most vulnerable members of the communities. The biggest changes affect the amount of help that you currently receive to pay your Council Tax.

Everyone of working age is affected. People who are of pensionable age are not affected.

The changes generally fall into four criteria:

## Maximum Council Tax Reduction

There will be a maximum Council Tax Reduction implemented in each council. In Camden and Barnet, you will have to contribute at least 8.5% towards your Council Tax Bill. In Brent and Hillingdon, you will have to contribute at least 20% towards your Council Tax Bill.

## Second Adult Rebate

There is no Second Adult Rebate under the Council Tax Support/ Reduction schemes. Anyone who was only entitled to Second Adult Rebate will not be entitled to a discount under the new schemes.

## Applications for the new schemes

If you already receive Council Tax Benefit or apply for it before 1 April 2013, you will be transferred automatically to the new schemes. New claimants should be able to find the new application process for your local Council Tax Support/ Reduction scheme.

## Military Compensation Payments

The income from War Widows and Widowers Pensions, War Disablement Pensions and Armed Forces Compensation Scheme payments will not be taken into account when local councils calculate how much support you are eligible for.

The above list is not exhaustive. The actual changes vary among different councils. To understand how you are affected more specifically, contact your local councils. The contact numbers of each borough are shown in the bottom of this page.



## Nursery places available



The Caraf Centre is offering Odu-Dua's tenants two nursery places with a 10% discount for 12 months. The Sunshine Day Nursery provides high quality of child care for children aged from 18 months to 4 years old. Half day places are also available.

Call The Caraf Centre on 020 7284 0030 for more information.

## Free career fairs

### Camden Council employment and skills opportunities

**Date: 10am—2pm,  
Thursday, 18th April 2013  
Location: Arlington House,  
220 Arlington Road,  
London NW1 7HE**

Camden Council will hold an employment and skills opportunities fair, to help support Camden residents to find work or training. Everyone is welcome.

### Reach Society's Careers Conference

**Date: 10am—4pm,  
Thursday, 4th April 2013  
Location: The Charing  
Cross Hotel, The Strand,  
London, WC2N 5HX**

Professional men and business from local minority communities will interact with young people to inspire them. Parents and carers are also invited. For further enquires please contact 07949 431 992.

<b>Camden</b> 020 7974 4444 (Option 3)	<b>Brent</b> 020 8937 1610	<b>Barnet</b> 020 8359 2111	<b>Hillingdon</b> 01895 556666
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