

Tenants' Newsletter

Odu-Dua Housing Association



Happy New Year To All Our Tenants

To all our tenants at Odu-Dua we hope you all enjoyed the festive period and we wish you all a very Happy New Year.



Staff changes: goodbyes and hellos

As you may know there have been a few changes to the Odu-Dua staff team. We said goodbye to Ying-Shan Lee and Akima Bailey-Fraser who worked with Odu-Dua for a number of years and contributed to providing an excellent service to all our tenants. We would like to wish them success in their new careers. In the meantime we would like to welcome our two newest members, Nadine Bunting who started off as a volunteer in May 2014 and is now the Customer Services Officer and Omar Tunkara who is the new Estate Services Co-ordinator. Omar manages the communal areas at Lithos Road and can be contacted on 020 7794 4549.

Inside this issue.....

- Happy New Year.....p1
- Staff changes.....p1
- Call out re-charges....p1
- 2.2% rent increase...p1
- Disposing of waste correctly.....p2
- Repairs & maintenancep2
- Contractors showing IDp2
- Tips on keeping warm & safe this winter.....p2
- Are you entitled to any extra winter help.....p2

Call out re-charges

We will recharge tenants for call outs where the prepayment meters have not been in credit and a repair was not needed, also where appointments have been made between the tenant and the contractor and access denied on more than one occasion. Please call the contractor if you are unable to keep an appointment as soon as possible or the Repairs Officer at Odu-Dua.

We will soon be sending out a repairs leaflet reminding tenants of their responsibilities as well as what Odu-Dua is responsible for in the repairs and maintenance of their homes.

2.2% Rent Increase

Rent Increases for 2015-16

Odu-Dua's management board have agreed the level that rents will be increased by for next year. From Monday 6 April 2015, rents will be increased by 2.2%. This is in line with guidelines from our regulator, the Homes and Communities Agency. Service charges will also be increasing to reflect the increase in costs due to inflation in providing services but will increase by no more than 2.2%. As you may recollect, rents were not increased last April. However, it is necessary to increase the rents this April to ensure there are adequate resources to provide housing management and repairs services to tenants.

We plan to send you a formal rent increase notice in the next month or so.

Disposing of waste correctly

We would like to remind our tenants that their local authority will not dispose of the refuse if it is not in the correct bins. Please do not put domestic food waste in the recycling bins. Bulk rubbish should be removed by calling your local authority and making arrangements for collection; if you are on a low income some local authorities will collect for free or contact your local recycling organisation.



Repairs & Maintenance



Despite the cold weather please remember to ventilate your home. Condensation is often mistaken for damp and can still cause repair issues in your home. Clothes should not be dried on radiators and wall vents should not be covered up.

We would also like to remind our tenants on prepayment meters for their gas and electricity to check they are in credit before ringing the repairs department for repairs regarding no heating and hot water or electrical faults, remember boilers need electricity to function. If you smell gas please contact your gas provider immediately and follow the emergency procedures.

Contractors showing ID



Our contractors carry identification badges and these should be shown on arrival. If they fail to do so please ask them to identify themselves and the company they work for by showing their ID card. Also make sure when the contractor calls you to make an appointment to make a note of the date the time and the contractor, for example APM or Craftworks. If for any reason you are in doubt call the office before letting them into your home.

Tips on keeping warm & safe this winter



- The best way to keep warm is by wearing lots of thin layers of clothing, rather than just one bulky item.
- Wrap up warm when out and wear a hat.
- Use blankets to keep the chill off.
- Your body needs food to keep itself warm so what you eat can make a real difference. Try to eat a balanced diet, with hot dinners and don't forget that hot drinks can help too.
- Many people forget the importance of keeping wrapped up and warm at night. You don't need to keep your heating running all night though. Just set it to come on about half an hour before you get up, and wear bedclothes and socks. You could also use a hot water bottle, or an electric blanket - though not together of course.
- Look out for your neighbours, particularly the elderly or a young family on their own.
- Seal your doors. Check around the door frame and also under the door. You may want to buy weather stripping or a door sweep. Again, at minimum, make a draft blocker (if you're the crafty sort) or stuff a towel at the bottom of the doors.
- Wear appropriate footwear in ice and snow.
- Only travel when it is essential to do so.
- If driving make sure your windows and lights are clear of ice and snow and drive according to the conditions.
- Remove snow and ice from paths and doorsteps—use salt, grit or defrosting granules from a local garden centre.

Are you entitled to any extra winter help?

Winter is a tough time for many, but there are some funds which may help...

[Cold weather payments](#). Anyone on specific income support/jobseeker's allowance/pension credit automatically gets £25 for every seven days their local temperature is either recorded as, or forecast to be, an average of zero degrees Celsius or below between 1 November and 31 March 2015.

Choosing between heating and eating? If you're seriously behind with your utility bills, or in general financial hardship, you may be eligible for special tariffs/help. Try the [Home Heat Helpline](#) on 0800 33 66 99.