



## My work experience at Odu-Dua

In April a student from Hampstead School Visar Hyseni joined us at Odu-Dua to do a one week work experience placement.

Here it what he said about his experience.....

At first I thought working in a office would be easy, well I take that back. At the end of each day I was exhausted, as well as working in the office carrying out duties such as updating files, data inputting, filing, re-creating documents and many more office duties I also got work with the finance department. The best part of my experience was working with the Repairs Officer and the Estate Services Co-ordinator this is because I enjoy being outside. I enjoyed carrying out repair inspections at different properties and also carrying out the estate inspections.

I would like to say a massive thank you to all the staff at Odu-Dua for having me and to the CEO who took time to sit down and have a chat about how to run your own business, I took away a lot from this talk and I came away thinking I can achieve my goals. I really enjoyed my time here and I have learnt so much.

## Meet The Odu-Dua Team



### Odu-Dua's staff members' roles & contact details

<b>Neil Ayre</b> Interim CEO nayre@odu-dua.org	<b>Rudolph Rutherford</b> Repairs Officer rrutherford@odu-dua.org	<b>Rakesh Outar</b> Finance Officer routar@odu-dua.org
<b>Jyotika Patel</b> Operations Manager jpatel@odu-dua.org	<b>Diana Duncan</b> Housing Officer dduncan@odu-dua.org	<b>Joshua Fagunwa</b> Finance assistant jfagunwa@odu-dua.org
<b>Nadine Bunting</b> Customer Services Officer nbunting@odu-dua.org	<b>Frank Beddows</b> Estate Services Co-ordinator fbeddows@odu-dua.org	

All staff members can be contacted on 020 7625 1799 , Frank Beddows (Estate Services Co-ordinator )for Ebony House Lithos Road can be contacted on 020 7794 4549.

### Hampstead Wells & Camden Trust

We have received donations of various household items from Hampstead Wells and Camden Trust. The packs include: Plates, cups, cutlery, kettle, toaster, food hampers, house hold cleaning products, single and double bed duvets, pillows and bed linen.

These items will be given out to families who are vulnerable, who have young children, people with disabilities and families on a low income. Only one pack will be given out per household, so if you have received one before you will not be entitled to another. Due to Hampstead Wells & Camden Trust eligibility criteria, items can only be given to tenants living in the NW3 and NW6 Postcode areas.

If you meet the above criteria and would like to be considered for a household pack please contact your Housing Officer Diana Duncan on 020 7625 1799.

# Tenants' Newsletter

## Odu-Dua Housing Association



## New gas contractor

We have appointed a new gas contractor **MCP Property Services Limited**, who are now responsible for all gas related repairs and gas safety checks. This means if you have a boiler breakdown, problems with your gas central heating, radiators or with your hot water supply you should now ring **MCP directly on Freephone 0333 320 7380 any time of day**. You no longer have to call Odu-Dua to report any repairs of this kind and you should not contact any other contractor. This is for gas related repairs only. Please refer to the leaflet we sent out recently; if you would like another copy please contact the main office on 020 7625 1799.



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## Fire safety in your home

Most fires in the home start accidentally and the effects can be devastating.

Its important that you know how to reduce the chances of a fire in your home and what to do in the event of a fire to keep yourself, your family and others safe.

Did you know...

- 21 people die each year because the battery in their smoke alarm is flat or missing at the time of fire.
- Around half of home fires are caused by cooking accidents.

### Some important things to remember:

Make sure your smoke alarm is working. Make testing your smoke alarm part of your regular household routine and ensure batteries are promptly replaced when necessary.

Be prepared by making a plan of escape - if your escape is blocked and you can't get out, get everyone into one room, ideally with a window and phone. Put bedding around the bottom of the door to block out smoke, open the window and call for help.

Make sure candles are secured in a proper holder and away from materials that may catch fire like curtains. Ensure you extinguish candles before leaving the property or going to bed.

Stub cigarettes out properly and dispose of the them carefully - Take extra care if you smoke when your tired and never smoke in bed.



**Don't forget if there is a fire inside your home get out, call 999 and do not try to tackle the fire yourself.**

**We will be putting some information about fire safety on our website soon, please look out for it.**

## Competition Time

We are looking for a new name for our newsletter and we need your help. Why not send your suggestions into us by email [admin@odu-dua.org](mailto:admin@odu-dua.org) or by post to Odu-Dua Housing Association 84-88 Kingsgate Road NW6 4LA by 31st August 2015 The winning entry will receive a £20 gift voucher .

**Please keep us informed of any changes to your contact details**



There may be occasions where we have to contact you, this could be to arrange for repairs to be carried out in your property, or discussing tenancy matters so its important for you to let us know of any changes to your contact details.

## Are you looking to swap home? Are you on Homeswapper?

Tenants can increase their chances of finding the right exchange by:

- Registering with the biggest swapping website (homeswapper.co.uk)\*
- Refreshing your advert by adding plenty of photos of your home
- Include good descriptions of your home
- List local amenities in your Home Swapper descriptions
- Be proactive in seeking a swap partner by carrying out regular weekly searches on Home Swapper
- Be flexible on the areas to move to and types of properties you are willing to consider

Most of all don't give up. The more people you contact the more likely you are to find some-one to swap with and to move .

\*This is free of charge to tenants as Odu-Dua has subscribed to Homeswapper but we cannot approve registrations if you are in rent arrears.

An example of a good advert is shown here:

Large bright one bedroom ground floor flat in purpose built block. Spacious living room with garden access-for own use.



- New fitted kitchen
- Good size bathroom
- Large double sized bedroom with fitted cupboards
- Central heating
- Communal parking
- Less than 5 minutes' walk to Kilburn Underground Station (Jubilee Line)
- 8 minutes' walk to Kilburn High Road Overground Station
- Good bus links (routes no: 6, 16, 46, 98, 187, 332, 414)

## It's easier to save water than you think....

In the UK every person uses approximately 150 litres of water a day; if we also take in to account the water that is needed to produce the food and products we consume in our day-to-day life we actually consume 3400 litres per day. This quite alarming if you consider that the UK has less available water per person than most other European countries. There are many ways which enable us to save water. Just by making a few small changes and being wiser with the water we use will help us save money on our water and energy bill as well as doing our bit for the environment.

**Why not make a start with our tips:**

Turn off taps tightly after use

Keep a jug of water in the fridge  
*Planning ahead means there is no need to run the water until it gets cold*

Turn off taps when brushing your teeth

Fix leaking taps  
*A leaking tap can waste more 60 litres of water per week*

Have a shower instead of taking a bath

Don't leave the tap running to clean dishes and vegetables

Fully load your washing machine and dishwasher before using

Water lawns less often

Only flush the toilet when necessary

## Discontinuation of Rent Surgeries



After a trial period of 3 months we have decided to discontinue on with the Rent Surgeries. This is because take up for this service by tenants was very low. Our last rent surgery took place on Wednesday 24 June 2015. Tenants who wish to discuss their rent outside our normal office hours can book an appointment by contacting the Housing officer on 020 7625 1799. Please note this service will only be available for those who genuinely cannot come in during normal office opening hours.

## Don't become a homeless statistic

This year we have evicted another tenant and more tenants are facing court action which may result in eviction. If you fall behind with your rent payments, you must act quickly and get in touch with your Housing Officer. We can discuss your situation, see what assistance we can offer you including making a rent repayment plan or referring you to agencies who maybe able to help you.

**If you fail to engage with us, fail to make or keep to a rent agreement, you may find yourself in court and risk losing your home.**

## Pest control and service charges



Mice and rats can cause many problems including spreading diseases and causing damage by chewing through structures and cables, this is why it is important to make sure that we are helping to prevent this. If we can all be aware and follow some simple steps we can take control to prevent infestation. One of the main problems for attracting vermin is our general waste not being disposed of correctly, we must make sure that all rubbish goes into the bins that are provided by your local council. Rubbish bags should not be left out side wheelie bins as councils will not remove these or empty bins if obstructed. Please remember if children are not tall enough to reach the bins they are likely to leave the rubbish bags on the floor, so please do not let young children take the rubbish out.

### Pest Control and Service Charges

Service charges are used to pay for pest control treatment in communal areas. Tenants remain responsible for the treatment of pests in their home s and we will assist by carrying out pest proofing work where this is required—this means filling and covering up holes and gaps in the property where it is reasonable to do so. In exceptional circumstances we can carry out pest treatment to individual properties but this maybe rechargeable.

As an organisation it cost us money every time we have to call out pest control to treat infestation or cleaners to remove and clean up dumped rubbish. Costs will be passed to you in the form of an increase in your service charge.



**By keeping the area we live in clean and tidy will prevent vermin entering our homes.**

## How to avoid boiler break downs in the winter

During the summer months we wouldn't dream of turning our heating on.....but by turning your heating on for about an hour during the summer (on a day that is not too hot of course) will help prevent valves and pumps from seizing up in the winter when you put your heating system back on. Another useful tip is to vent radiators to maintain the correct pressure of the boiler.

We would remind tenants to ensure they have sufficient credit on their meter when work has been scheduled in their property. If for whatever reason you are unable to credit your meter please let us or the contractor know before hand so that we can re-schedule your appointment. Failure to notify us can result in you being re-charged.