Everyone needs a Ted
Find out how Ted keeps house p18

INSIDE THIS ISSUE
p3 How good is your neighbour
p7 Next generation of builders
p21 Need a garage?

Visit Old MacDonald’s Farm for less than half price see p22
Dear residents

Welcome to the summer 2014 edition of At The Heart.

It was with great pleasure that I accepted the job as Cabinet Member for Housing following the recent elections and I am looking forward to meeting many of the Council’s tenants and leaseholders in the next few months.

I firmly believe that the Council needs to focus on the needs of tenants, listen even more to their views and, most importantly, act on those views so they are reflected not just in housing policies but also in the day to day work that has such a big impact on where people live.

At The Heart is an important part of that communication process. In this issue we report on the progress of the Decent Homes Programme and the jobs clubs which are helping tenants find work.

We also celebrate the success of our staff from community wardens who patrol our housing estates to a 75-year-old housekeeper who goes that extra mile for the residents in his care.

There is the chance for you to enter the Homes in Bloom 2014 competition, nominate someone for the Good Neighbour Awards or enjoy one of the four Residents’ Service Days being held across the Borough.

If you have any ideas for future issues do drop an email to attheheart@havering.gov.uk and we’ll be pleased to follow up your suggestion.

Councillor Damian White
Cabinet Member for Housing

At the Heart needs you!

Got any cooking or gardening tips or advice on saving cash? Or any other stories or ideas to make At the Heart an even more interesting and entertaining read? Then email your ideas to attheheart@havering.gov.uk or post them to: At the Heart, Communications, London Borough of Havering, Town Hall, Main Road, Romford RM1 3BD or call us on 01708 432013.
How good is your neighbour?

Everybody needs good neighbours but do yours go that extra mile to lend a helping hand?

Do you have a neighbour that: will do anything to help you; is caring and kind; runs a project; does environmental improvements for the neighbourhood? If so, we would like to recognise that kindness and reward them for all that they do.

You can help recognise the help they give by nominating them for a Havering Council Homes and Housing Good Neighbour Award 2014.

The help they give could be to individuals or to the wider community, can be from doing your shopping to maintaining a housing scheme's communal garden – the list is endless.

To make your nomination complete the form below and send it to:
Chelsea Potts, Community Engagement, Havering Council Homes and Housing, Chippenham Road, Harold Hill, RM3 8YQ.

Closing date Friday 14 November 2014.

The nominations will be agreed by a panel of the Residents Forum on Tuesday 2 December 2014.

HAVERING COUNCIL HOMES AND HOUSING GOOD NEIGHBOUR AWARD 2014

Name of person nominating

Your contact details

Person nominated

Their contact details

Reason for nomination

More info: www.havering.gov.uk/goodneighbouraward
E: chelsea.potts@havering.gov.uk
T: 01708 434668

Growing for gold

Whether you have green fingers or not the Homes and Housing in Bloom 2014 competition is looking for your entry.

It doesn’t matter if you have a massive garden, a display of hanging baskets and tubs or a single sunflower you can still win a prize and join us for a great presentation event.

The categories for the competition are:
- Best back garden
- Best front garden
- Best communal garden
- Best hanging basket
- Tallest sunflower

The entry form is on line and closing date for entries is Friday 8 August.

Prizes will be awarded for 1st, 2nd and 3rd place in each category. The judging will be held during the Summer and the prize winners will be informed in writing and invited to a presentation event.

More info:
www.havering.gov.uk/homes-in-bloom
getinvolved@havering.gov.uk
01708 430000
Litter louts and fly-tippers beware – the clean-up teams are heading your way.

While every road is regularly cleaned by Havering Council’s Streetcare staff there are times when a “deep clean” is needed which is why these special days have been organised.

The Big Clean-Ups will be on:

Wednesday 30 July at Waterloo Estate in Romford

Wednesday 29 October at Fyfield Road and Ongar Way in Rainham.

Caretakers will be on site doing a major rubbish clearance and the repairs staff will be there to identify work that needs to be completed.

And there is plenty to do for volunteers too so if you are free on either of the Big Clean-Up days it would be great to have you involved. Just get in touch to let us know when you can lend a hand. Gloves, rubbish sacks and litter pickers will be provided.
Making a difference through better homes

More than 4,500 families have already benefitted from Havering Council’s Decent Homes Programme and there’s another 1,300 still to come.

Launched three years ago the work to Council properties has included renewing kitchens and bathrooms to bring them up to modern standards, with walk-in showers installed in many sheltered housing schemes as they are easier and safer to use.

With the high cost of energy to heat homes a large part of the programme has been improving energy efficiency. Replacing draughty windows, insulating homes and installing energy efficient boilers mean lower fuel bills for residents while also helping the environment by reducing energy use.

Sadly not everyone who had work done had a good experience due to some difficulties with the performance of some contractors. Action was taken to tackle the problems and lessons have been learned for the current year so the problems are not repeated.

With the programme now starting its fourth and final year it is on track for 97 per cent of homes owned by Havering Council to meet the decent homes criteria by April 2015.
Community benefits from criminals’ behaviour

Two days every week criminals are at work on Havering Council’s housing estates as they pay back to the community for the crimes they have committed.

The work is part of the Community Payback project with offenders taking part in a range of projects that improve the environment including:

- Painting kick rails, gates and bollards
- Edging grass verges and removing weeds
- Sweeping garage areas and any communal vehicle hard standing areas
- Clearing weeds from paths and walkways

During the past year the orange jacketed offenders have completed projects on the Briar Road estate in Harold Hill, Cherry Tree estate in Rainham, Highfield estate in Collier Row and the Waterloo Estate in Romford.

In the next few months you are likely to see them working on other projects across the borough – clear evidence our community is benefitting from Community Payback.
The next generation of builders

Contractors Willmott Dixon Energy Services welcomed the pupils to their site in Prospect Place, Collier Row, where windows are being replaced and external insulation installed as part of Havering Council’s Decent Homes Programme. Roof repairs and work on the lightning conductors has also taken place.

Site Manager, Paul Cornwell, said: “Building sites are fascinating places for young people and we are keen to encourage people wanting to follow a career in construction.

“The visit by Parklands Infant School pupils gave us the chance to explain the work we are doing at Prospect Place and explain the different skills needed on a building site.

“We also explained how dangerous such sites can be and why we wear hard hats, good boots and high visibility jackets to reduce the risk of accidents.”

Deputy Headteacher, Linda Smith, said: “As part of our Crazy Construction topic we took three groups round at different times. The children were provided with high-visibility vests and hard hats, introduced to different people working there and were made aware of some of the safety rules in place for people on the site.

“Willmott Dixon were incredibly helpful and made sure the children had an enjoyable and memorable visit.”
Universal Credit is coming

Big changes are taking place in the benefits system with the introduction of Universal Credit which will mean one single monthly payment paid to individuals who claim certain benefits.

It will replace:

- Income-based Jobseekers Allowance
- Income related Employment and Support Allowance
- Income Support
- Child Tax Credits
- Working Tax Credits
- Housing Benefit

Part of the Universal Credit payment will include your rent.

Under the current system housing benefit is paid directly to the Council as a landlord but this will stop under the new system making everyone entitled to housing benefit responsible for paying their rent themselves to their landlord.

There are things you can do beforehand to make sure you are ready for the changes when they happen.

To be able to receive Universal Credit payments you will need to have a bank or building society account. If you have an account already, check that it's okay for receiving automated payments. Not all accounts are set up to receive Universal Credit.

The money you receive will need to last for the whole month.

All claims will need to be made online and you cannot make a claim on a mobile phone or tablet. If you are a couple then one of you needs to be the main claimant so you will need to decide this before you claim. Details about both of you are needed to make the claim.

Havering Council wants to support people through these changes and has a specialist welfare reform team that can give you a hand.

More info:
welfare.reforms@havering.gov.uk
01708 432537

Keep up to date to avoid court costs

If you fall behind with your rent payments you run the risk of being taken to court which could add a significant amount to your debt.

The Court Service has increased the fee it charges to issue proceedings for rent arrears to £250.

If Havering Council takes you to court because you are not paying your rent we will ask the court for an order to recover the court fee plus our Solicitors costs. This will increase the debt you owe by a minimum of between £300 and £400.

If you are having problems paying your rent the Income Recovery Team is here to give advice and support.

More info:
www.havering.gov.uk/rent-arrears
incomemgtteam@havering.gov.uk
01708 434044
Facts and fun are ideal combinations for a great day out at this summer’s Residents’ Service Days.

With four places across the borough to choose from there’s bound to be a day near you, or you can even come along to more than one.

Each day includes:
- Tenancy surgeries
- Fun activities for children
- Bouncy castle
- Zumba taster classes
- Face painting
- Circus skills
- Healthy cooking demonstrations
- Free micro chipping of your pet by the Dogs Trust
- NHS services information stand
- Estate services information stand
- Safer Neighbourhood Teams information stand

These are ideal days for children to have some fun while parents get the information they need.

Wednesday 06 August 9.00am to 4.00pm in Romford Market

Wednesday 13 August 12 noon to 5.00pm in the play area at Rush Green Gardens, Romford

Wednesday 20 August 12noon until 5.00pm on the green at Queenstown Gardens, Rainham

Wednesday 27 August 12noon until 5.00pm on the green at Kings Lynn Drive, Harold Hill
A new play-area at Rush Green Gardens is proving popular with youngsters out to enjoy the summer sun.

Havering Council consulted with tenants, offering a choice of different equipment that could be installed. This central area is surrounded by a large number of flats which are homes to families with young children.

The equipment installed, which cost around £30,000, includes an exciting climbing frame with slides and “cargo netting” to climb and a “tree house” as well as more traditional swings and see-saws.

There are also plenty of benches for parents to relax on or use when chatting with neighbours while watching the children play.

The new equipment is already being well-used and with the school summer holidays looming will be packed with local children having fun in the sun.

More info:
www.lighthousefurniture.org
T: 01277 222050
The committee at Thomas Sims Court in Elm Park has been working together for years organising activities for residents to enjoy.

Their hard work is clearly bringing results as residents at the scheme consider themselves to be one big family. Many of them have planned a big holiday together and will be heading for Fuerteventura in the Canary Islands this July.

Residents always have activities to look forward to and the complex is kept looking spic and span making it somewhere they are proud to call home.

Mike Droy, Arthur Medley, Doreen and Peter Cox are always busy but we interrupted Doreen Cox, who has lived at Thomas Sims Court for four years, to find out just what the committee has been up to recently.

Q: What events have you got planned for this year?
A: We have three day trips to the seaside planned. We’ll be at Leigh-on-Sea in May; Southend-on-Sea in June and Hastings in September and it won’t be just Thomas Sims’ residents on these trips as anyone from any sheltered housing scheme in Havering can join us for the day. The response has been fantastic and we’ll be taking more than one coach.

We will be celebrating Bonfire Night, have organised a trip to The Queen’s Theatre pantomime for December and will cook a Christmas lunch for everyone.

Q: So what happens each week?
A: On Mondays we have a tea and coffee morning with fresh cream cakes, we hold a raffle, play bingo and the bonus ball game. Peter and I also cook a two-course lunch for residents with plenty of fresh vegetables.

Tuesdays we play pool and serve teas and coffees while on Wednesdays we again have tea/coffee with fresh cream cakes followed by a craft afternoon and play cards in the evening.

Thursday is a quiet day without any planned activities.

Fridays start with tea/coffee and cake and then we serve a lunch of bacon and sausage sandwiches.

Once a month we run a pool evening with each game costing 50p; that money is being saved so we can buy a flat screen television in the near future so we can run film evenings.

We also have various entertainment evenings for residents throughout the year.

Q: What projects are currently underway?
A: Our committee is working on transforming the communal garden so residents can sit out in the summer evenings and we can have a summer garden party.

Q: Why do you do what you do?
A: It started the day Peter and I moved in. We were sitting in the lounge waiting to be shown round our apartment and a group of residents was huddled over a small television arguing about whether the carers and visitors coming in were for them or not.

They seemed very isolated and I made up my mind that something needed to change.

Everything in today’s world is technical and can leave people behind. We want to show people we genuinely care for them, that we are here if they need someone to talk to and most importantly show them they are not alone.
Interest-free schemes for major work payments

When major works are needed the cost is spread between leaseholders and can be a large sum to find on top of the normal budget. Changes to the payment options offered for leaseholders have been introduced with the new Discretionary Instalment Payment Plans.

The interest-free payment options for estimated major works invoices will now be linked to the size of the invoice for each leaseholder as shown below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Interest-Free Payment Period</th>
<th>Interest-free and Interest Bearing Periods</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>£250 to £1,500</td>
<td>12 months (1 year)</td>
<td>60 months interest free and 24 months interest bearing (total 7 years)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£1,501 to £3,000</td>
<td>24 months (2 years)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£3,001 to £5,000</td>
<td>36 months (3 years)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£5,001 to £10,000</td>
<td>60 months (5 years)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£10,001 and above</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If a leaseholder chooses to pay over seven years then the interest will only be added onto the last two years of the loan.

An administration charge of £45 for every payment plan must be paid in full before commencement of the payment plan period.

Stay safe and check your gas appliances

Leaseholders are responsible for maintaining all gas appliances and flues in their home and must have them checked for safety at least once every year.

If you have sublet your property, as a landlord you have a legal responsibility to your tenant under the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998. You must ensure that an annual safety inspection is carried out on each appliance and/or flue that you provide for tenants’ use, and that a record of each safety check is kept for at least two years.

Further information can be found at the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) website on gas safety.

Havering Council’s gas contractors SNF and QHS carry out gas servicing for tenants and have extended this service to leaseholders. If you would like to obtain a no obligation quote for a gas safety inspection you can contact S+F on 020 8663 0888 (for postcodes RM1, RM5, RM7, RM11, RM12, RM13 and RM14) or QHS on 01494 795000 (for postcodes RM2, RM3 and RM4).
Local residents get first chance for new homes

Local residents will be the first in line to move into new affordable homes being built on the Hilldene and Briar Road Estates in Harold Hill.

A total of 172 new homes are nearing completion at the two sites near the Hilldene shops. The new Hilldene Local Lettings Policy introduced by the Council means Harold Hill residents on the Housing Register will have top priority for these wonderful new homes being built by Notting Hill Housing Trust.

Across the two sites at Hilldene there will be:

- a mixture of high quality, affordable two, three and four bedroom houses with gardens, as well as some one-bed and two-bed flats
- a minimum of 237 car parking spaces
- improvements to Hilldene Shopping Centre
- a new, bigger library with modern facilities.

Notting Hill Housing Trust is also well underway building 102 new family homes on the Briar Road Estate. The estate’s regeneration also includes:

- better parking closer to where people live
- new recreational and play facilities on Bosworth Field and Farringdon Avenue
- improved street lighting
- improved pavements, kerbs and roads
- better use of green spaces

The Council’s new Briar Road Local Lettings Policy gives Briar Road residents on the Housing Register top priority for these new homes plus relets of existing council homes on the estate. Other Harold Hill residents will have second priority.

Havering Council’s Lead Member for Housing, Councillor Damian White, said:

“I am really pleased that these local lettings policies are now in operation. It’s crucial that Harold Hill residents benefit first from the improvements the Council is making throughout the area and I would urge all those interested to take advantage of their ability to get top priority when it comes to bidding for a new home.”

More info: www.havering.gov.uk/housing
Job Club proves useful for handyman

Hornchurch based resident, Liam Coughlan, 52, was out of work for almost three years but started a new job this spring thanks to Havering Council’s jobs club at the Betty Strathern Centre in Myrtle Road, Harold Hill.

Liam is working at East London Textiles as a Mechanical Handyman after previous unpaid stints as a volunteer caretaker at a local school.

Father of two, Liam, had a building and construction background. The 2010 recession saw such work harder to come by since Liam was mostly self-employed and potential roles became even more competitive.

He decided to work as a lorry driver for agencies and then picked up a volunteering role as a handyman and caretaker at Drapers Academy in 2010.

He said: “Since I worked for agencies it was difficult to get references and it was only after seeing an advert for the jobs club I thought I’d go along because at that point I would have tried anything. I’m hopeless at computers and virtually have no access to the internet, which is what you need to get a job.”

Other services available at the jobs clubs include:

- Access to computers with internet and printing facilities
- Free confidential and independent money advice
- Free computer training
- A realistic and mutually agreed action plan with set targets

Staff at the clubs also offer one-to-one sessions to help build up skills and can even hold mock interviews to help boost confidence.

Liam added: “The biggest help of all has been teaching me how to apply for a job and use the computer”.

More info:
infomyca@yahoo.co.uk
01708 521936
Great training leads to a good trade for Harry

After two years of being unemployed Harry Comb is now working as a plasterer thanks to a scheme run by Havering Council and contractor Willmott Dixon.

Harry, who lives in Romford and has three children, took a four-week plastering course at Specialist Trade Courses in Harold Wood following a suggestion from his JobCentre Plus advisor and, after successfully completing the training, got a temporary job with Willmott Dixon refurbishing council premises at Prospect Place in Collier Row.

Harry said: “The training course was great as the staff were really friendly and supportive; they put in a lot of effort to help you succeed.

“I had been looking for van driving jobs but when the placement came up at Willmott Dixon I thought I’d give it a go and I’m pleased I did. I’m now working there full-time and really enjoying it.

“I’m using Facebook to recommend this course to other people as it’s a great opportunity to get new skills and earn better money.”

Owner of Specialist Trade Courses, Rob Botten, said: “We moved to Harold Wood from Harlow in October last year because the unit at Bates Industrial Estate was more suitable for our needs and is in a great location with easy access to the A12 and M25 as well as being close to Harold Wood rail station.

“We have around 80 people a month train with us and each course lasts between 10 and 15 days for a Level One certificate. As well as the plastering course Harry did, we also offer painting and decorating, carpentry and tiling. All of them are very practical courses taught by people who have done the job themselves.

“Our trainees range from 19 to 65 years in age, with most being in their mid-twenties, and around 96 per cent leave us with a qualification.

“We were delighted Harry got the job with Willmott Dixon as he worked hard to complete the course to a high level; we’re sure he’ll do well as a plasterer and wish him every success.”

More info:
www.stccourses.co.uk
www.havering.gov.uk
Good advice... on your doorstep

Nearly 200 local residents were given good advice when Havering Council’s Community Warden Outdoor Display Unit visited the Waterloo Road Estate recently.

Working from the unit, which was parked in Queen Street, wardens Paul, Liam, Terry, Nadeem and Dan met with 104 residents who popped along to meet them and get simple, but valuable, information to prevent burglary and car crime. There were also some free gifts for the children.

The wardens also took the opportunity to speak with a further 78 youths playing in the area as well as putting up posters advising the new contact centre working hours and reporting nine essential repairs to be carried out.

The community wardens will be visiting other estates throughout the year so watch out for the dates and then pop along and see them when they are in your area.

Community Wardens are there to help

Set up to combat anti-social behaviour, graffiti and fly-tipping the wardens patrol on foot and in cars, providing an approachable, friendly and highly visible presence to make neighbourhood estates a clean and pleasant place to live.

Community Wardens Manager, Barry Armour, said: “All wardens are equipped with body cameras which means we can gather evidence of anti-social behaviour as it occurs. We use CCTV to record evidence of fly-tipping and graffiti,”

The Community Wardens also give advice on community safety at events including information on window locks, timers for lights and door security.

More info:
01708 434000
01708 726685
(Out of Hours)
communitywarden@havering.gov.uk
Joy wanted to find out more about the wardens’ work, particularly when patrolling the Council’s housing estates. First visits were to the Waterloo Road, Bell Avenue and Heaton Avenue housing estates where the wardens carry out Anti-Social Behaviour patrols with body camera CCTV. Joy was able to see first-hand where some of the blocks had vulnerable points which provided unrestricted access into the communal areas. Whilst driving through, a group of young people started smiling and waving at the patrol members who explained how, over many years, through patience and continuous engagement with these young people they were able to put a stop to nuisance activities, and channel their energies to other activities. Joy seemed impressed that the youths got on well with the wardens.

The next area visited was the Briar Road Estate in Harold Hill where Joy was shown the ambitious development programme being undertaken, building new homes and parking facilities. She was also able to see the new Myrtle Road play and sports facilities as well as the redeveloped Betty Strathern Centre.

The last patrol was at the Chudleigh Road Estate in Harold Hill so see where improvements are needed to further enhance the decent homes works carried out. Joy agreed this work was required and has asked for the work to be prioritised which is fantastic news for the residents.

After the patrol Joy said: “I was impressed by the work done by the Council’s community wardens and didn’t fully appreciate the range of issues they deal with and the many different skills they need to do their job effectively.

“The visit was also an opportunity to share ideas on how other Council departments can make use of the warden service too.

“I thoroughly enjoyed the patrol and will be using the experience when we look at how best to develop the service.”

Joy Hollister and Paul Daws ready to start their patrol
Most people start to take life easy when they retire but residents at the Solar, Serena and Sunrise Sheltered Housing Scheme are pleased that Ted Dixon decided he wanted to carry on working, and working, and working as they reckon he’s the best housekeeper in the borough.

Ted retired, aged 60, from the Royal Bank of Scotland after working there for 25 years and promptly applied to work for Havering Council at the Solar, Serena and Sunrise Sheltered Housing Scheme until he was 65 when he took his second retirement and his third job, this time with the Adecco Agency where he was for nine years but in the same role.

But even then he wasn’t ready to retire, so, in 2013, he signed on direct with the Council as a sheltered housing scheme housekeeper on an 18 month contract.

Ted, who celebrates his 75th birthday this August, is a popular character knowing all residents by name, remembering their needs and adjusting his services to meet their needs.

Ted told us: “I am getting to the same age as some of the residents I help look after which makes it easier for me to appreciate their circumstances and their needs. They also get to know me so they stop and have a chat and that feedback helps me know what needs doing for the housing scheme.

“To me every resident is special and the appreciation they show for my work spurs me on to work even harder.”

In 2011 the residents came together and wrote a poem which was presented to him and which he cherishes.

His routine includes much outside his housekeeping role including bringing in newspapers for some residents on a daily basis, helping carry the laundry for residents, who are too frail to do so, to their front door. He also meets residents coming in with their shopping helping them if needed and has an arrangement to pick up rubbish from outside the doors of residents too frail to carry rubbish to the bin room.

Ted also pushes a resident, who has had a hip replacement, in her wheelchair every Tuesday and Friday so she can attend the coffee morning meetings and brings her back to her front door after the meetings.

Every fourth Friday of the month, the residents have a group meal and Ted rearranges the lounge room so extra tables can be put in.

As well as making sure his housekeeping duties are carried out efficiently, Ted reports repairs on behalf of the residents and chases up any outstanding repairs for them.

Outside work Ted enjoys DIY and gardening. He also spends a lot of time watching his grandchild playing football. Ted is an Arsenal supporter and whenever he can watches the home games at the Emirates Stadium.

Ted plays a very important role and is integral to the smooth and successful running of the Solar, Serena and Sunrise Sheltered Complex.

In short, EVERYONE SHOULD HAVE A TED!!!
Quick thinking beats burglars

Community wardens regularly patrol Havering Council’s housing areas and those routine patrols can bring big benefits including beating would-be burglars.

Recently Community Wardens Liam and Ben were patrolling the Petersfield estate, in Harold Hill, when they saw five people acting suspiciously at one of our residential blocks of flats. They immediately telephoned the police who were on site within minutes and although the suspects had gone the wardens were able to give good descriptions which led to one of them being spotted at a local bus stop and questioned by the police. The police confirmed that there had been an attempted burglary at one of the ground floor flats so the wardens returned to reassure residents and give them crime prevention advice to deter further burglars.

Saying NO to domestic violence

Sometimes tenants become victims of domestic violence and Havering Council takes firm action to support those victims as this case study shows.

Recently in Rainham a resident who has young children became a victim of domestic violence from their partner. The victim’s front door and other fixtures were damaged in the incident so a report was made to the Police and the partner was arrested. As a matter of urgency Havering Council’s Neighbourhood Officer, Stephen Nyako arranged for repairs to be carried out in less than 24 hours. He also arranged for new locks on windows and extra door locks to make the property secure for the young family. The victim was referred to Victim Support and advised how to secure a non-molestation order which was granted by Romford County Court. The victim was recommended to be moved to an alternative property on a like-for-like basis, but she felt safe at her home with all the new safety measures in place.

The offender is currently on bail but his bail conditions do not allow him anywhere near the estate where the victim lives. The Neighbourhood Officer has been carrying out weekly welfare visits to the victim who now confirms she is safe.

More info:
National Domestic Violence Helpline
0808 2000 247
Havering Women’s Aid
01708 728759

www.havering.gov.uk
Ask before you DIY

It’s the time of year when DIY enthusiasm reaches a peak but before you get carried away with drills, hammers and chisels check whether you need permission to do the work you have planned.

Tenants and leaseholders need permission from their landlord to carry out certain work, full details are in the lease, including:

- Renewing doors or windows
- Erecting a satellite dish/aerial
- Building conservatories, extensions, porches or loft conversions
- Constructing a driveway, removing boundaries or erecting a car port
- Removing or building walls or chimney breasts

As well as getting the Council’s approval you may still need to obtain any relevant planning permission or building regulations approval, comply with gas, water and electricity regulations. You also must keep to any conditions set out if permission is granted.

If you have done alterations without first obtaining the Landlord’s permission it can cause delays when you try to sell your property as well as leaving you open to action for breaking the conditions of your Lease.

So the best thing to do before starting any DIY is to check if you need permission first.

How are we performing?

- **Anti-social behaviour case satisfaction**
  - Outcome: 100%
  - Target: 90.0%
- **Average time to re-let empty properties**
  - Outcome: 26.1 days
  - Target: 25 days
- **Percentage of all repairs completed within target**
  - Outcome: 82.1%
  - Target: 90%
- **Percentage of properties with valid gas certificate**
  - Outcome: 100%
  - Target: 100%
- **Average time waiting to speak to Contact Centre Advisor**
  - Outcome: 31 secs
  - Target: 45 secs

More info:
- homes@havering.gov.uk
- www.havering.gov.uk/housing
Supporting the community

Boost your chances of finding what or who you need by signing up to the Havering Community in Action Portal: www.haveringcommunityinaction.org.uk

This website is designed to help individuals or groups who want to develop services for local people in Havering. It is designed to guide you in starting a group, running a group or organisation, or finding one that already exists.

The portal has been created by the Havering Association of Voluntary and Community Organisations (HAVCO) and Havering Council, and they are keen for community groups to sign up. The website is free to use for organisations and volunteers.

Need a garage?

Council tenants can receive preferential rent rates for council garages. Weekly charges for council tenants range from £7.41 to £12.64 while costs for non-council tenants start at £9.02 to £15.30 a week.

There is a waiting list for some areas and you will need to ensure you are using the garage for a vehicle and not just for storage.

If you would like to apply to rent a garage you will need a driver’s licence and paper counterpart, log book, MOT certificate and proper insurance. Applicants with rent arrears will not be considered.

More info:
01708 434000
neighbourhoodservices@havering.gov.uk
Farming fun for summer

Want to meet Meerkats or race tractors? You can do that and much more at Old Macdonald's Educational and Leisure Farm Park and thanks to At The Heart you can get a big discount too!

There is a special deal for Havering Council tenants and leaseholders giving them less than half price entry to Old Macdonald's Educational and Leisure Farm Park in Weald Road, Brentwood – just over the M25 from Harold Hill.

And as an extra treat, on Monday 4 August, between 10am and 4pm, Havering Council’s Community Engagement Team will be giving out goody bags and housing advice.

Old Macdonald's has a good range of farm and other animals, including deer, owls, chipmunks and meerkats to watch. Add to that, there are attractions ranging from tractor racing to steam train rides, as well as indoor and outdoor play-areas to enjoy during your visit.

Ideal for an outing during the school holidays you can easily spend a full day there with plenty to occupy the whole family.

Just cut out the coupon below and hand it in when buying your tickets to get this special discount price of £6 for up to five people in any one group, instead of the usual adult price of £14.50 and child price of £13.50.

Using this voucher the entry fee is just £6 per head for an adult or child compared to usual price of £14.50 and £13.50 respectively. Children under two years old go free.

For safety reasons there must be a maximum of four children with any one adult.

Valid up to Wednesday 5 November 2014.

Can be used for a maximum of five people in any one party on any day the farm is open but cannot be used in conjunction with any other special offer.

Old Macdonald’s Educational and Leisure Farm Park, Weald Road, Brentwood, CM14 5AY.

More info:
www.omdfarm.co.uk
info@omdfarm.co.uk
01277 375177

Visit Old MacDonald’s Farm for less than half price with this special At The Heart deal.
JOB CLUBS

Every Monday 10.00am until 1.00pm at the Mardyke Community Centre, South Street, Rainham, RM13 8PJ.

Every Wednesday 10.00am until 1.00pm at the Betty Strathern Centre, 41 Myrtle Road, Harold Hill RM3 8XS.

To book a place:
E: infomyca@yahoo.co.uk
T: 01708 521936
M: 07922524125

FOOTBALL ACADEMY

The football academy has been set up with Terry Rice Soccer School. The aim is to bring all ages together to get active and work together as a team. All ages are welcome and it’s free.

Every Tuesday 4:30pm to 6:30pm Grass besides the skate park in Central Park, Gooshays Drive, Harold Hill, RM3 9LB.

Every Wednesday 4:30pm to 6:30pm at the ball park at the back of Oldchurch Gardens, Rush Green, RM7 0DJ.

Every Thursday 4:30pm to 6:30pm at Lawns Park, The Drive, Collier Row, RM5 3TS.

GENERAL

Wednesday 9 July 10.00am until 4.00pm at The Dogs Trust, Hucknall Close, Harold Hill RM3 9QS. Free Micro chipping and free dog advice.

Monday 4 August 10.00am to 4.00pm at Old Macdonald’s Educational and Leisure Farm Park, Weald Road, Brentwood CM14 5AY. A family day at Old Mcdonalds come and meet the Community Engagement Team – receive a free goody bag to keep the kids busy over the holidays. See the voucher on page 22 for reduced entry fee.

Tuesday 23 September 11am until 3pm at Central Library St Edwards Way, Romford RM1 3AR. Home Swap Event.

Wednesday 1 October 2pm until 5pm at Langtons House Billet Lane, Hornchurch, RM11 1XL. Older Person Conference.

RESIDENT SERVICE DAYS

Wednesday 6 August 9.00am to 4.00pm near Tollgate House, Romford Market, Romford RM1 3ER

Wednesday 13 August 12noon to 5.00pm at the green space between the flats, off Rush Green Road, Romford RM7 0QB

Wednesday 20 August 12noon to 5.00pm at Gisborne Gardens, Off Dunedin Road, Rainham RM13 8JL

Wednesday 27 August 12noon to 5.00pm at Kings Lynn Drive, Harold Hill, RM3 8BW

FAMILY BOOT CAMPS

Family Boot Camp is for all the family to come and take part in some form of physical activity. It’s a proper old fashioned school sports day combined with an army boot camp.

The following sessions will all finish with a healthy eating picnic!

Tuesday 29 July 12noon until 1.00pm at Lawns Park, Mashiters Hill, Collier Row RM1 4TL. Meet at Ball Park Cage.

Thursday 31 July 12noon until 1.00pm at Lawns Park, Mashiters Hill, Collier Row RM1 4TL. Meet at Ball Park Cage.

Tuesday 5 August 12 noon until 1.00pm at Central Park, Gooshays Drive, Harold Hill RM3 9LB. Meet at children’s play site.

Thursday 7 August 12 noon until 1.00pm at Central Park, Gooshays Drive, Harold Hill RM3 9LB. Meet at children’s play site.

Tuesday 12 August 12 noon until 1.00pm at Oldchurch Gardens, Rush Green RM7 0DJ. Meet at the ball park at the back of Oldchurch Gardens.

Thursday 14 August 12 noon until 1.00pm at Oldchurch Gardens, Rush Green RM7 0DJ. Meet at the ball park at the back of Oldchurch Gardens.

Tuesday 19 August 12noon until 1.00pm at Cottons Park, Mawney Road, Romford RM7 9QX. Meet by the children’s play site.

Wednesday 20 August 2.00pm at Gisborne Gardens, Off Dunedin Road, Rainham RM13 8JL.

More info:
www.facebook.com/haveringhousing
E: getinvolved@havering.gov.uk
T: 01277 375177
Works complete at William Tansley Smith House

Residents of William Tansley Smith House have been celebrating the completion of a six-week-long improvement programme which has seen 14 new bathrooms and 10 new kitchens installed.

The work, which is part of Havering Council’s Decent Homes Programme, has been done by building contractor, Wates.

To celebrate the completion of the project Wates hosted a tea party for residents.

Havering Council Project Manager, Jamie Curtis also attended to speak to residents and thank them for putting up with the disruption.

Winifred Boxhall of William Tansley Smith House said “The contractors couldn’t do enough for us. They were clean and tidy and the end product is perfect.”

Adrienne Bell in her new bathroom

At the end of the work a meeting was held to discuss the results

Winifred Boxhall in her new kitchen

Havering Council will consider requests for documents to be translated or converted into other formats. Please call 01708 434000 or email: homes@havering.gov.uk