

Supporting the Commission on Cooperative & Mutual Housing

Cooperative and mutual housing is housing run by its users (whether this is in the form of full mutual ownership or member control of management and services). This is what WATMOS is all about so we are delighted to support the Commission on Cooperative and Mutual Housing as one of its sponsors.

The Commission was formed about a year ago to consider the contribution that cooperative and mutual housing has made in the past and to explore what its role might be in the future.

Despite the real success of cooperative and mutual housing in providing safe and pleasant places for people to live and in building strong and stable communities, this bit of the housing

sector remains small and often ignored by others.

WATMOS Chair, Terry Edis MBE is one of the Commissioners and Chief Executive, Stuart Masters has given evidence to the Commission about the WATMOS Group.

We wish the Commission every success in its work and pledge our continued support.



TMO's Breakfast Blow-Out... All in a good cause!

Burrowes Street TMO has launched a monthly charity breakfast morning to raise money for Macmillan Nurses and Walsall Hospice. The first 'breakfast blow-out' took place on Friday 30 January and raised £61 for these very good causes.

If you would like to know the dates of future breakfast mornings please contact Burrowes Street TMO on 01922 613292.



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Chuckery Design Competition

Chuckery TMO held a design competition for under 16's living on the estate to create a design for the area where several of their footpaths join.

Jordan Price aged 8 of Croft House provided the winning design and was awarded a gift voucher of £10. His design will be completed by Easter. Two runners up, Mark Page aged 11 of Bywater House and Jasmin Beale aged 12 of Millsum House received a £5 gift voucher each.



Who to contact

You can contact your TMO at the following:

Avenues TMO Office
10/11 Second Avenue
Brownhills, Walsall, WS8 6JA
Tel: 01922 427652
Fax: 01543 452905
Email: avenues@watmos.org.uk

Burrowes Street TMO Office
Burrowes Street
Walsall, WS2 8NN
Tel: 01922 613292
Fax: 01922 746949
Email: burrowes@watmos.org.uk

Chuckery TMO Office
2 Brookes House, Tantarra Street
Chuckery, Walsall, WS1 2HS
Tel: 01922 644456
Fax: 01922 634565
Email: chuckery@watmos.org.uk

Delves East and West TMO Office
West Bromwich Road
Delves, Walsall, WS5 4NW
Tel: 01922 720790
Fax: 01922 638658
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Leamore TMO Office
Dover House
Providence Close
Leamore, Walsall, WS2 8NN
Tel: 01922 493266
Fax: 01922 475181
Email: leamore@watmos.org.uk

Sandbank TMO Office
1a Clarke House
Bloxwich, Walsall, WS3 2HF
Tel: 01922 400333
Fax: 01922 400219
Email: sandbank@watmos.org.uk

Twin Crescents TMO Office
11 Grove Crescent
Pelsall, Walsall, WS3 4NG
Tel: 01922 682539
Fax: 01922 864109
Email: twincrecents@watmos.org.uk

Watmos Community Homes
29 Stafford Street
Walsall WS2 8DG
Tel 01922 471910
Fax 01922 612967
Email info@watmos.org.uk

You can find more information about WATMOS and the TMO's at www.watmos.org.uk

Tenants news

April 2009

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COMMUNITY HOMES
creating strong communities through tenant management

Burrows Home Comfort: Our New Repairs Partner

We are delighted to announce that following a rigorous tendering exercise, from the beginning of April Burrows Home Comfort will be our partner working with us over the next 4 years to deliver:

- Repairs to your home
- Our major works programme which includes work such as central heating and new bathrooms.
- The outside of normal working hours emergency repairs service
- The servicing of gas appliances

Burrows Home Comfort vehicles are easily identifiable and will have the WATMOS logo on them.



Having listened to the service improvements you said you wanted we have made a number of changes to the way the repairs service will be delivered in future. We hope you will notice real

BURROWS Home. Comfort.

improvement in the way we deal with your repairs. For example:

- A code of conduct for workmen attending your home
- 2 hour appointment slots to reduce the time you have to wait around
- Evening and weekend appointments if you are not in during the day
- Repairs operatives will be able to carry out additional work in your home whilst they are there if it is required.
- New tenants will be provided with a repairs operative for 2 hours to help them with items such as putting up curtain rails
- The standard for letting homes has been revised so that new tenants can clearly see what their new home should look like when they move in
- A decorating allowance procedure has been developed to ensure a consistent decorating allowance service for tenants who need it.

Before the new arrangements start we will send you a letter with further details and a fridge magnet that includes the emergency out of hours telephone number **0800 132473**.

We would like to thank everyone who took part in the review of the repairs service. This has helped us to make changes that will improve the repairs services you receive.

Operatives' Code of Conduct



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COMMUNITY HOMES

If you feel operatives visiting your home did not follow this code & wish to complain please contact (01922) 471910

Code of conduct for operatives carrying out work to your property

Our operatives will :

- always try to arrive on time
- always show an identification badge
- be polite, friendly & courteous
- explain what work they are to carry out
- protect furniture with dustsheets & treat your possessions with respect
- carry out all work in a safe manner
- clear away all debris, dust and rubbish from the works every day
- ensure that your home is secure at all times
- explain any follow-up work that is required

Our operatives will not:

- use radios, CD/mp3 players etc.
- smoke inside your house
- use your phone, electricity, water or toilet without asking
- use offensive language
- enter a home where only a child is present. If no other adult is present, they will not enter the premises, but seek a further appointment

BURROWS
Home. Comfort.

WATMOS Community Homes and Burrows Home Comfort:

Working in partnership to bring you an excellent service in repairs and major works!

We are delighted to announce that local firm Burrows Home Comfort has been selected as our partner in delivering repairs and major works services to you over the next four years.

We will be working together to make sure that you get the best repairs and major works services possible.



WATMOS Chair Terry Edis and Burrows Home Comfort Managing Director Darius Burrows

HAVING YOUR SAY: Standards in social housing

The Tenant Services Authority (TSA) is the new regulator for homes owned by housing associations and co-ops. From spring 2010, they are likely to be responsible for local council and arms-length management organisation (ALMO) landlords too.

The first thing the TSA needs to do is draw up a brand new set of standards for all social landlords. These standards are very important, as the TSA will be monitoring how landlords do in achieving them – and taking action against any who don't.

The Tenant Services Authority is listening to tenants across England to help them understand what you want to see in the new standards. WATMOS tenants have taken part in this process through two events held during February.

TMO Chairs & Vice Chairs – undertook a Local Conversation session on Tuesday 24 February.

The Tenant Panel - undertook a Local Conversation session on Friday 27 February.

Feedback from these sessions has been sent to the TSA to help draw up the new standards.

You can get more information about the TSA and the National conversation on the website: www.nationalconversation.co.uk



Anti Social Behaviour

Drunken and Rowdy Behaviour

We told you in the last newsletter that we had obtained Anti Social Behaviour Injunctions against the visitors of a tenant who lived in Burrows Street, and an Interim Injunction against the tenant. We returned to court in January 2009 and obtained a full Injunction against the tenant who was subsequently evicted from Winn House in February. The injunctions remain in force and prevent Susan Beck, Clare Cleaver and Mark Watson from causing a nuisance on the estate or from entering Winn House. We would like to acknowledge and thank the residents who were involved in these cases for giving evidence.



Drugs

A tenant from the Delves is being taken to court due to her property being used for the supply and use of Class A drugs. The tenant has not been living at the property since the summer last year following a drug raid, but refuses to give the property up. WATMOS has issued proceedings against the tenant for possession of the property, and is waiting for the trial date in court. Evidence is being given by residents and this is vital for the success of the case.

The action we are taking in these cases demonstrates that WATMOS and the TMOs will deal seriously with anti social behaviour and will take people to court and evict them where necessary.

Million of Pounds Worth of Major Works Starting Soon!

Working with Burrows Home Comfort we will be starting the first phase of our next improvement programme during the Summer months. This will include the following works:

Avenues TMO

- External Insulated Rendering
- New Bathrooms
- New Gas Central Heating System
- New Rainwater Guttering and Fascias

Burrows Street TMO

- New Gas Central Heating and Kitchens at Farringdon House
- External Redecoration

Delves East TMO

- Replacing Gas Fired Central Heating Back Boilers

Delves West TMO

- External Redecoration

Leamore TMO

- New Bathrooms
- Recovering and Panel Replacement to Balconies

Twin Crescents TMO

- Replacing Gas Fired Central Heating Back Boilers
- Recovering of Ground Floor, Stairs & Landings

FREE Keeping Well and Warm Packs

Walsall Housing Group and NHS Walsall have a number of free keeping well and warm packs to distribute in the following areas:

- Beechdale North
- Beechdale West
- Caldmore West
- Palfrey North
- Darlaston

You can be referred by your GP, Health Trainer, Housing, Community or Voluntary Sector Organisation or you can refer yourself.

To check if you qualify call Walsall Housing Group on 01922 426748.

The criteria you require to receive a pack are:

- Total household income below £21k
- Receive a qualifying benefit such as income support, disability living allowance, child tax credit, amongst others
- Have a health related condition such as asthma, diabetes, heart disease, cancer or other long term health conditions

There are a limited number of packs available, so please get in touch early to avoid disappointment.

Do something funny for money

On Friday 13 March WATMOS helped raise funds for Comic Relief. Red Noses were purchased by staff within the Group as well as competitions being held. A grand total of £95 was raised.

At Delves TMO, Committee member Zaneen Jarvis painted people's nails with red nose faces on throughout the week at the local Delves TMO office, Walsall South Library and Baptist Church in Bell Lane raising £27.50.



In support of Comic Relief, registered charity 326568 (England/Wales, SC039730 (Scotland)

Involving You and Empowering Our Communities

Community empowerment, including the involvement of residents in the management of their homes, is at the heart of everything we do. In order to make sure that we offer you meaningful consultation and the right opportunities to get involved we have recently undertaken a major review of this area.

The review involved a number of important activities including the use of questionnaires and focus groups, learning from other organisations and a self-assessment against the Audit Commission's national resident involvement standards.

After listening to everyone's views and comparing our services with other Housing Associations we have developed a plan which includes:

- Establishing a service standard that sets out the support you could receive if you got involved (e.g. travelling expenses and childcare).
- Providing training and support for volunteers and employees so that they have the skills needed to undertake consultation, involvement and social activities.
- Increasing the number and variety of social activities across the Group so that there are more opportunities to get involved.
- Improving the publicity of events so that you are aware of what's going on at your TMO.
- Exploring the possibility of annual TMO open days so that you can see what has been achieved over the previous year and comment on what you would like to see for the forthcoming year.
- Exploring the development of opportunities for residents to get involved in mystery shopping to help us test our services.
- Reviewing and clarifying the role of the WATMOS Tenant Panel.
- Ensuring that residents have the opportunity to test all new documents to make sure that they are user-

friendly and understandable.

We hope that these improvements will ensure that our consultation, involvement and empowerment activities meet your needs and show that WATMOS and the TMOs have established a really successful community-controlled housing association where tenants are genuinely in the driving seat.

We would like to give a big thank you to everyone who took part in the review over the last 9 months.



Expert Patients Programme

Are you living with a long term health condition such as Diabetes, Asthma, Heart Disease, Multiple Sclerosis, ME, Osteoporosis, Arthritis etc.? If you are, then why not attend the Expert Patients Programme (EPP) which is a free course that takes place over six weeks (2 ½ hours per week) and is for anyone who has a long-term health condition.

EPP aims to help you to take more control of your health by learning new skills to manage your condition better on a daily basis and help to improve your quality of life.

Course topics are:

- Pain management techniques
- Understanding nutrition
- Relaxation
- Exercise
- Managing tiredness
- Coping with depression

- Effective communication
- Planning for the future
- Community resources
- Stress on carers

If you would like to find out more or would like to book a place please contact the EPP Team on 01922 858673



Expert Patients Programme
Community Interest Company