

Date: March 2009

78 QUAKER STREET,
LONDON E1 6SW TEL:
0207 392 5400
FAX 0207 392 5401
WWW.SPITALFIELDSHA.
CO.UK

for better homes, the better choice

is



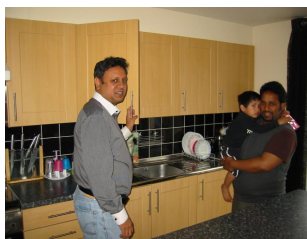
Spitalfields

Housing Association Ltd

স্পিটালফিল্ডস্ হাউজিং এসোসিয়েশন লি:

What is SHA doing about making sure my home meets the Decency Standard?

Over one and a half million households in England and Wales live in homes that are not decent. The quality of your home and the environment around it has a major impact on both the physical and mental health, and well being of those that live there. The Government has set a decent home standard and a deadline for all social housing to meet this standard. If you would like to know more about what this standard is please contact **Graeme Seely on 0207 392 5414**.



“we really appreciate the new kitchen”

What is SHA doing to bring all its homes up to the Decent Homes Standard

SHA is in the process of conducting a stock condition survey. So far we have surveyed about 200 properties, we aim to complete at least 65 each year. We have begun our surveys of the oldest properties first. Each year we set aside a budget for our decent homes work that is separate from our ongoing day to day repairs service

We use the survey to identify those properties which are in the poorest condition and these properties come into the decent homes programme.

Our programme of works is based on hard evidence of the survey and tackling those properties that most need it first.

So far we have carried works to the following properties:

Casson Street , Fakruddin Street, Princelet Street, Settle s Street, Lichfield Road, Spelman Street, Monthope Road, Parfett Street, Antill Road, Rancliff Road, Bartle Avenue.

The refurbished Dinmont Estate will be completed this year and all the units will meet the Decent Homes Standard.

If you do not want work carried out to your home to bring it up to the Decent Homes Standard, then we shall postpone the work until you leave your home, (at which point we shall undertake the necessary work).

Clearly, the exception to this rule is where works are required to maintain the structural integrity of your home or to prevent it from further deterioration.

The decent homes standard does not apply to leasehold or shared ownership properties. However, as part of our duty to bring our stock up to decency standards, we shall be carrying out works to blocks of flats that are occupied by both tenants and leaseholders. Depending on the terms of the lease, lessees will be charged for their share of the cost of the works.

If you are to be included in this year’s Decent Homes programme, you will receive notification from the Development & Maintenance team in advance of the works starting.

Before any works take place, we aim to bring tenants together at an ‘Open Evening’ to discuss the programme of works and invite your views and comments.

Don't forget to complete your tenant profile, we will call residents who haven't returned the form

Inside:-

- Estate inspector form
- Free internet use at our office
- Application for summer trips

Tenants' Conference

We organised a tenants' conference on January 17th. 33 residents came, 40 % were women. Residents came from all areas we have homes. It was a good day. We were delighted that most people said that they wanted to continue to be involved.

At the conference residents discussed both the tenants' survey results and how they wanted to be involved in SHA. The event was based on short presentations followed by discussions. There were 2 groups, one for women and one for men. Tent Participation Advisory Service ran the day for SHA and only 3 staff attended so that residents could be confident that this was their chance to be heard.

What you said to us

- Residents felt that Customer Care is not as good as it could be
- Our general communication with residents could improve,
- It is important that our contact with residents is personal and face to face
- Repairs communication needs to be clearer about what will be done, and when it will be done
- We need to improve the resident involvement and choice in decent homes work and monitor the quality of the works more effectively

You were concerned about

- The effectiveness of our TAs
- How seriously SHA takes the TAs
- The range and numbers of people involved
- Level of resident involvement in shaping the services we provide.

There were a number of very positive suggestions made by residents about how to address these issues. Here are some of those suggestions:

- Customer Care training for staff
- Improve message handling and reporting
- Integrate residents into the monitoring of the customer based services we provide
- Establish a team of residents who check our publications for legibility/clarity and

edit the newsletter.

- Better information about the services we provide and who we should contact to discuss issues.
- Joint estate inspections with Housing Officers and residents
- Dedicated repairs telephone line
- Better monitoring of contractors
- Repairs focus group to better involve residents in monitoring of repairs performance
- Invest and build TAs
- Clearer identity and purpose for the Tenants Forum
- Create women's focus groups

If you would like a full copy of the report of the conference please contact **Jessica Leech 0207 392 5408**.

Equality and Diversity Training

The Tenants Services Authority [TSA – formerly the Housing Corporation] requires Housing Associations to have Action Plans in place to ensure we comply with legislation and regulations in respect of equality, with particular emphasis on Gender equality and Disability. This is a complex and demanding project and so we have established a timetable of stages we need to go through to achieve this.

The first stage was to organize training on the subject for staff, board members and residents.

Two residents attended the training.

It was a very interesting and thought provoking day, and we came away with lots of ideas about how we are going to go about making what we need to happen a reality and about how we can involve residents in the process as often and as fully as possible. If you are interested in equality issues please get in touch with **Stephanie McDonald** on 0207 393 5403.

The second stage is to create an accurate profile of our residents. If you have not completed and returned the questionnaire a member of our staff will be calling you to ask the questions.

“We said what we wanted to say for a long time leaving with a smile and hope”



SHA response to resident concerns

SHA is working on how to improve its services in response to what you have said and put into practice some of the suggestions you have made.

Estate inspections We think resident estate inspectors are a great idea. All residents who attended the conference will be contacted by their Housing Officer to ask if they would like to join them on regular estate visits. *If you are interested in finding out more about being an estate inspector please get in touch by completing the form enclosed.* Once there is group of 10 who have volunteered we will organize training for you. All our volunteers will receive a clear job description and be told what you can expect from us. If you would like more information please call **Stephanie McDonald 0207 392 5403.**

Customer Care We have organized customer care training for all staff that contact residents. We would like 2 residents to join us on this training who will help us to write our procedure. Training will take place 11th and 12th of June. If you are interested please call Stephanie McDonald 0207 392 5403.

Repairs Hotline From 1st of April we will introduce a dedicated repairs hotline. **The number to call will be 0207 392 5409.** All callers who ring the office to report a repair on another line will be asked to call back on this number. There will be an employee whose role it is to receive and report repairs. We hope these changes to the way in which repairs re-

porting is handled will substantially improve the service.

Gas repair contract Our new 3 star gas contractor will be appointing someone to act as a residents liaison officer, who will be seconded to work from our office 4 days a week.

Service level leaflets SHA is currently writing 17 short leaflets that explain our commitments to residents on a range of subjects. This includes housing management, repairs service and tenant involvement. We expect the set to be complete and published by September 2009. We want our leaflets to be clear for residents so they really answer the questions you have asked. We want all our communication to be clear and in language that is understood by every one. *To help us do this we would like a small group of residents to volunteer to read what we write before we print. If you are interested in this (which won't take much time) please get in touch with Jessica Leech 0207 392 5408.*

This newsletter Some of the articles in this newsletter have been written because residents said they wanted to know more about that issue. As the editor it has made it easier for me to pull the magazine together. I would like more input from residents in the future. I would like to set up an editorial board for the newsletter. If you are interested in this (I estimate that this would only take up about 16 to 20 hours over the year) please get in touch with **Jessica Leech 0207 392 5408.**

“really enjoyed today's event. It was a great idea who ever thought it up.”

Get involved in a Tenants Association in Ford Sq, Ashfield Street, Clark St and Sidney St Area

SHA has been contacted by few local tenants and residents who are very much interested to set up a tenant association in your area.

SHA is helping these residents set up a TA. When tenants wish to become more involved in the management of their homes they often consider setting up a tenants or residents association. In getting together with other tenants you can share information and support each other. Groups of people acting together can have more effect than individuals.

We want you to become more involved. SHA wants to support its residents to have greater influence in the decision making process of SHA, the Police and the local Authority. We believe that a group of people acting together can have more effect than individuals. Our Community Development Officer Murselin Islam will be in contact with you very soon to organise a general meeting with the aim of setting up a resident association. If you are interested please get in touch directly. **Murselin Islam 0207 392 5407.**

TENANTS' NEWS

**Tuesday 26th
May 2009—
Good
neighbours' Day
Princelet St
Garden**

**Saturday 27th
June 2009—
Fruit Picking
Trip**

**Saturday 25th
July 2009— Day
trip to
Eastbourne**

Play Days 2009:

**Ford Sq
Thursday 30th
July**

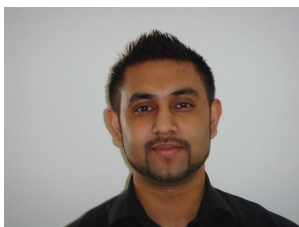
**Dinmont Estate
Saturday 8th
August**

**Fakruddin St
Thursday 13th
August**

**We would like
to save this
space for you to
let us and other
residents know
what's
happening
in your
neighbourhood.**

Please send your
story to
murselin
@spitalfieldsha.co.
uk

Meet the team



Tonu Miah

Tonu is a Customer Services Officer. His is one of the first faces you will see when you come to the office and one of the first voices you hear when you phone the main office number and select customer services.

Tonu can help with your general enquiries and will record cash and cheques if you come to the office to pay your rent. He is the person to speak to if you need a parking permit or if you are experiencing problems with parking, for example if someone has parked their car in your bay.

His direct dial number is 0207 392 5400

Housing Officers

They are here to help tenants when they have problems paying rent. They can help you plan how to repay your

arrears in amounts that are affordable for you.

They are also the people to speak to if you are experiencing problems with neighbours, be it noise or disputes, or if you want to make any changes to your tenancy such as moving out, mutual exchanges, bringing in additional household members etc.

We have two Housing Officers Faruque Uddin and Nurul Islam.



Faruque Uddin

Faruque Uddin is your Housing officer if you live in Bow, Stepney, or Wapping and if you are living in temporary accommodation Faruque is your contact at SHA. His direct dial number is 0207 392 5415.



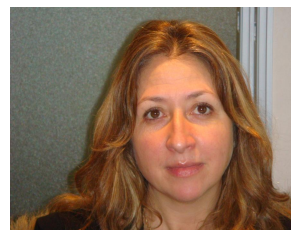
Nurul Islam

Nurul is also a Housing Officer. If you live in Spitalfields, Bethnal Green, or Whitechapel Nurul is your Housing Officer. His direct dial number is 0207 392 5406.

Stephanie McDonald

Stephanie is the Housing Manager. She leads the above team. Stephanie can help if you have problems which Faruque, Nurul or Tonu have not been able to solve.

Her direct dial number is 0207 392 5403



Dinmont Update

Customer satisfaction is very important to Spitalfields. A great deal of planning, time and effort is expended, both at the pre-contract stage as well as during the actual works in order to ensure that tenant satisfaction is maximised.

In order that we can fully evaluate the progress of works, we have worked with both our Contract Administrator, (FFT), as well as our contractor, (Apollo), in order to fully evaluate customer satisfaction.

The feedback 'scores' on the Dinmont Estate have been very encouraging, with satisfaction

rates being above the industry average.

We believe that the appointment of a Bengali speaking Resident Liaison Officer is key to the success of this major works programme. The survey asks tenants to evaluate performance for the following topic areas:

- Quality of workmanship
- Availability of information.
- Politeness of staff

Spitalfields is using these survey results to strive towards continuous improvement. For more information please contact Graeme Seely on 0207 392 5414.