



## **Incredible edibles**

Is there a community  
food garden near you?

PAGES 22 - 23

## **Fun in the sun**

Things to do over the  
summer holidays

PAGES 13 - 16

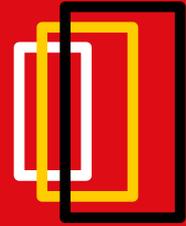
## **Cleaning up**

Our caretaking stars

PAGES 8 - 9

**Summer  
activities  
special**

**See centre  
pages**



## Centenary of council housing

Pages 3



26



## Our Financial Health Centre

Pages 4-5



## Our customer service standards

Pages 10-11



## Awards ceremony success

Pages 24-25



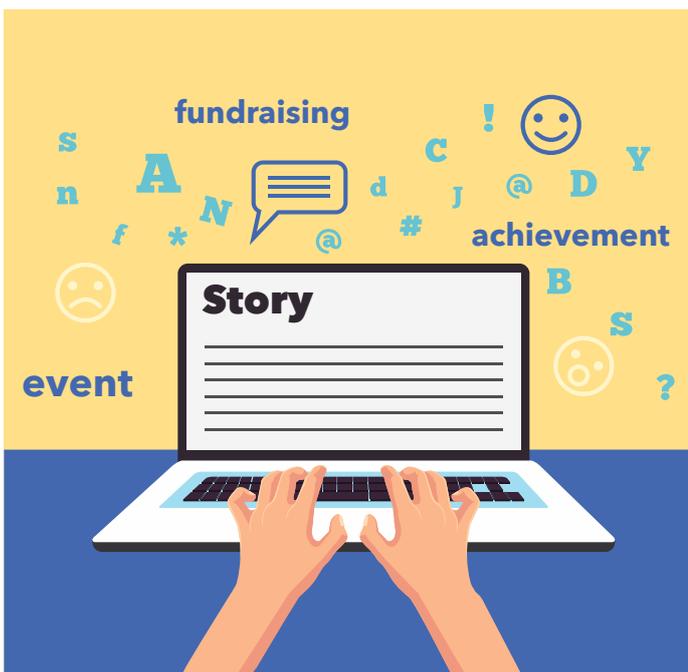
**TOWER HAMLETS HOMES**  
Summer 2019

### opendoor

**Publisher:**  
Tower Hamlets Homes  
Second floor  
City Reach  
5 Greenwich View Place  
London E14 9NN  
**Telephone:**  
020 7364 5015

**Email:**  
communications@thh.org.uk

**Twitter:** @THHomes  
**FB:** /towerhamletshomes



## Have your story featured in opendoor

If you've got a story you'd like to share – whether it's a personal achievement, a successful event or a fun-filled fundraiser – we'd like to hear from you. We want to see inspiring residents' stories in opendoor – so get in touch.

Contact our editors  
**Jane Bailey** or **Natalie Hughes**  
Communications Account Managers

020 7364 5015  
**communications@thh.org.uk**



# 100 years of council housing

Following the end of World War I in 1918, the then Prime Minister, David Lloyd George promised to provide 'homes fit for heroes who have won the war'.

In July 1919 the Housing Act from Christopher Addison (Minister of Health) became law. Local Authorities were given responsibility for building good quality, working-class housing in their areas and a programme of council-house building began. This year marks the centenary of the Addison Act.

## The first ever council estate is in Tower Hamlets

Decades before this though, the first housing scheme to be completed by a local authority was here in Tower Hamlets. The



Boundary estate in Bethnal Green was completed in 1890 and Tower Hamlets Homes manage the properties on behalf of Tower Hamlets Council. Built on the site of a notorious slum, the homes provided high quality housing for local working class residents. The estate is made up of blocks on streets which radiate out from a raised circular garden area with a bandstand

at the centre. In recognition of its historical and architectural heritage the estate is Grade II listed.

## The future of the Boundary

As would be expected with buildings that are over 125 years old, there are some maintenance requirements and a programme of major repair works is scheduled to start in 2020/21.

**Tower  
Hamlets  
Homes**



# FINANCIAL HEALTH CENTRE

## Need help and advice?



Tower Hamlets Homes' Financial Health Centre (FHC) opened last September and has so far helped over 1200 residents. The Centre has:

consolidated debts of  
over £360,000

made over  
£890,000 of benefit  
applications

supported over  
350 residents with  
employment and  
training advice

helped over  
120 people into  
employment.

The Centre is open from  
9:30am – 4:30pm Monday  
to Friday and acts as a hub

for partner organisations  
across the borough to deliver  
free, confidential services on  
everything from Universal Credit  
and money management to  
training and employment. Here  
are just a few of the services on  
offer and you can find out more  
at [thh.org.uk/fhc](http://thh.org.uk/fhc)



### Home visits now available

The FHC is now able to offer  
home visits for those residents  
who may have additional needs  
and are unable to leave their  
home to visit the Centre.

Our partners from Citizen's  
Advice Bureau (CAB) and  
Account3 can visit you at home  
to help with all types of issues  
– from welfare benefits and  
Universal Credit to Housing and  
Employment.

Ali Halil, Team Leader at Citizens  
Advice Tower Hamlets said:

"We know that it's not easy  
for some people to get out,  
so this new service means we  
can visit them at home. We can  
help with all types of benefits,  
housing and employment issues  
– residents just need to get in  
touch to book in a visit."

### Book a home visit

If you'd like to arrange a  
home visit, just contact us  
at [fhc@thh.org.uk](mailto:fhc@thh.org.uk) or  
020 7364 2200.

## GoTrain



Yasaar is an employment advisor at GoTrain



Looking for work or training? Since September our employment partner, GoTrain and partners, have provided training to 350 residents and helped over 120 into employment. Yasaar is GoTrain's employment advisor, he says:

"We have lots of vacancies to fill, from admin to retail or construction. We can help with everything from CV writing to filling in job applications and applying for training and most importantly we always have lots of jobs available. We promote all of our job vacancies on our website at [www.go-train.co.uk](http://www.go-train.co.uk) and on social media but residents can also just get in touch with me directly."

For more information email [yasaar.mahmood@go-train.co.uk](mailto:yasaar.mahmood@go-train.co.uk) or [zara.amjad@go-train.co.uk](mailto:zara.amjad@go-train.co.uk)

## Bromley by Bow Centre (BBBC) – money management and energy advice



The BBBC is now offering 1:1 advice in both money management and energy at the Financial Health Centre. Appointments are free, confidential and informal and are run on the first and second Monday of each month.

The money management 1:1 offers support around budgeting, income maximisation, saving and reducing debt.

The energy advice 1:1 can support you to look at switching to more affordable energy providers, setting up payment plans, applying for essential white goods and applying for grants to reduce debt.

To book a FREE appointment, contact the BBBC at: [gettingonwithmoney@bbbc.org.uk](mailto:gettingonwithmoney@bbbc.org.uk) (money management) [eastendenergyfit@bbbc.org.uk](mailto:eastendenergyfit@bbbc.org.uk) (energy advice)  
**Call: 0208 709 9737**

## Open to all Tower Hamlets residents

All of the advice on offer at the Financial Health Centre is free, confidential and open to all Tower Hamlets residents – you don't need to be a Tower Hamlets Homes resident.

### Find out more

**Website:** [thh.org.uk/fhc](http://thh.org.uk/fhc)  
**Email:** [fhc@thh.org.uk](mailto:fhc@thh.org.uk)  
**Phone:** 020 7364 2200.

## Case study

### Abdul Motin, Bethnal Green resident

Abdul is a THH resident who visited the FHC for some urgent help and advice about a new job that he'd been offered. The job required Abdul to apply for a DBS (security check) and he visited the Centre for some help with his application:



"I was really happy to be offered the job and just wanted to start as soon

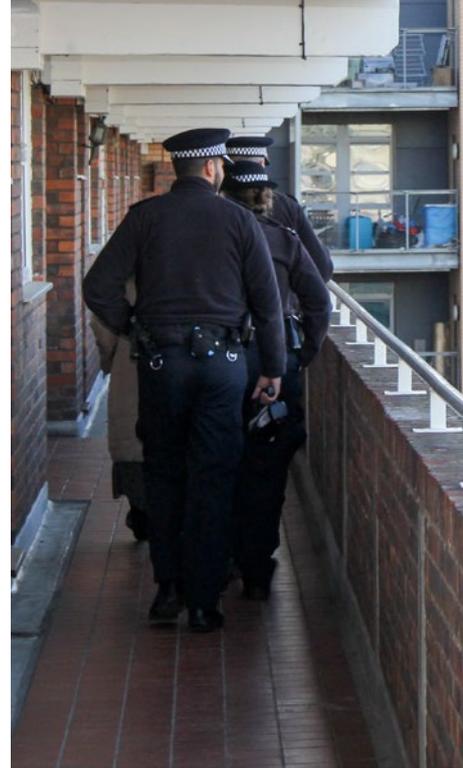
as possible and so was disappointed that there was a delay due to some clerical error that I did not know how to deal with. I had used the services at the FHC before and the advisors were really helpful, so my first thought was to rush there due to the deadline fast approaching.

An advisor sorted everything out for me and I was really thankful. The people there are really helpful and I'm really thankful there are services like the FHC in the borough"



# Message from the Mayor





## The Mayor of Tower Hamlets, John Biggs, gives an update on his key priorities

### Tackling the housing crisis

The Council under my leadership has made good progress towards delivering 2,000 new council homes by 2022. I know that because of London's housing crisis, many residents have had to live in unsuitable accommodation, or are worried about their children being able to find a suitable home in the borough. We cannot solve this problem alone but we can make progress, and it's one of my key priorities as Mayor.

We have identified the land and other parts of our programme to achieve this. In total we're investing £332m for new council housing schemes and temporary accommodation. Our work with housing associations and developers saw more affordable homes built in Tower Hamlets last year than almost anywhere else in the country.

### Making streets safer

We have continued to take action to make our streets safer by investing £3m in additional council funded police officers who, along with the Parkguard patrols on Tower Hamlets Homes estates, provide a visible presence to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour. We partnered with the police on Operation Continuum which is our joint initiative targeting drug dealers. Together, we've seen 390 dealers arrested and taken off the streets.

### Tackling poverty

I've also invested in a Tackling Poverty Fund which has offered advice and support to our most vulnerable residents. In partnership with Tower Hamlets Homes, we've opened a Financial Health Centre which has helped over 1,200 people since it opened in September 2018. In particular, it has offered support to residents who have been moved onto Universal Credit.

We're also helping residents into work so they are better able to support themselves –

over 1,100 last year through our WorkPath programme. There are great opportunities in our borough and I want to ensure that no one is left behind.

### Summer activities

My Liveable Streets programme will see a significant investment to improve the look and feel of the borough over the coming months. Despite cuts to our budget as a council we've continued to keep our libraries and Idea Stores, gyms and leisure centres and award winning parks open. Over the summer we'll again host our fantastic programme of free activities.

This is just a brief picture. We are getting a lot done, including in partnership with Tower Hamlets Homes.

### Get in touch

Got a question for the Mayor? Contact him in the following ways:

**Email:** [mayor@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:mayor@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

**Phone:** 020 7364 4000

**Twitter:** @mayorjohnbiggs



# They care a lot

The THH caretaking team swept up as they were awarded 'frontline team of the year' award, at the Housing Heroes 2019 Awards on 24 June.

Our fantastic caretakers were praised by the judges for their superb customer service skills and the way they deal with challenging situations, in all weathers and with a diverse range of residents.

Responsible for 22,000 properties across 900 blocks, caretakers are the first point of call in the event of emergencies. Our caretakers deal with

anything from snow clearances to burst pipes. They're there to keep estates safer for everyone but particularly those who may need an extra bit of help such as elderly residents.

### All in a day's work

Getting the job done is a massive team effort. Every week caretakers clean and sweep 1,500 stairways and 4,100 internal landings and

every day they:

- complete health and safety checks including fire risks for all shared areas such as entrances, lifts, lobbies and stairways as well as external areas and report any urgent communal repair
- check 1,200 bin chambers and chutes for blockages
- report and remove bulky items
- sweep or pick up litter and empty 2,500 litter bins.

## Last year's results

In 2018/19 caretakers used 12,000 mops, 7,000 pairs of gloves and 21,000 litres of degreaser to keep estates sparkling.

They also:

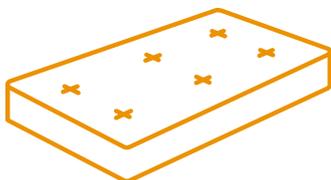
replaced **7,000** lightbulbs



removed **8,000** square metres of graffiti



cleared around **100,000** nitrous oxide canisters



disposed of **5,000** dumped mattresses



disposed of **11,200** dumped bulky items

# Meet Amber

**Amber Crook is a caretaking apprentice. She says:**

"After completing my training I felt confident to begin my apprenticeship course. I was excited to work outside, meeting residents and coming across different challenges. The whole course is allowing me to progress as a person, to grow and move forward. I'm really enjoying it.

"My team is really good. Everybody is bubbly, positive and they motivate me to help people. They are all team players and make me want to be a better team player. I love helping residents.

"Knowing that I'm doing a job that is meaningful motivates me to get out of bed every day. I get such a positive buzz. It makes me feel better as a person knowing that I'm helping people in my community.

"When residents thank me for doing things like sweeping leaves up, telling me that it makes a difference and the areas look better; it might seem like such a little thing to say, but to me it makes such a big difference.

"My message to every girl out there is - this is not just a guy's job you are capable of doing what they do."



# Our customer promises

In a series of customer satisfaction surveys last year you highlighted areas where we could improve our service; two of these things were communication and keeping you informed. We value what you say and have taken on board this feedback, which is why we have made our service standards accessible in one place, so that you know what to expect from us and in turn what we expect from you.

At Tower Hamlets Homes we understand that your home is vitally important to your quality of life. That's why we pride ourselves on our customer care and will ensure that you are kept informed whenever you need us.

**We've put our customer promises all in one place, and opposite are some of the highlights.**

## We promise to:

- provide a range of ways to get in touch, including face to face, by telephone and online
- treat you fairly and with respect, at all times
- reply to letters and emails within 10 working days
- see you within 10 minutes when you visit us
- show you identity cards when we visit you
- acknowledge complaints within two working days, and reply with a response within 20 working days
- provide information in alternative formats when you ask us to
- tell you where you can get extra help
- listen to what you are saying – we don't want to assume that we know
- provide you with opportunities and a choice of ways for you to get involved in how we manage your homes
- tell you how things you have told us have changed what we do
- tell you how well we are doing at least twice a year.
- consult you about issues affecting your home and neighbourhood
- work with Tenants and Resident Associations
- share information without having to be asked for it.

# Your responsibilities as a tenant or leaseholder

As well as refreshing our customer promises, we have also summarised your most important responsibilities as a Tower Hamlets Homes tenant or leaseholder.

## Your responsibilities as a tenant

If you are a **tenant** your responsibilities include:

- paying your rent and service charges in full and on time
- using the property as your

- only or main home
- ensuring that you or anyone living with or visiting you don't cause a nuisance from your home or neighbourhood
- taking care to avoid gas and fire risks in your home and communal areas
- keeping your home in good condition and repair.

## Your responsibilities as a leaseholder

If you are a leaseholder, your responsibilities include:

- paying your service charges in full and on time
- ensuring that you or anyone living with or visiting you don't cause a nuisance from your home or neighbourhood
- taking care to avoid gas and fire risks in your home and communal areas
- repairing and maintaining your home.

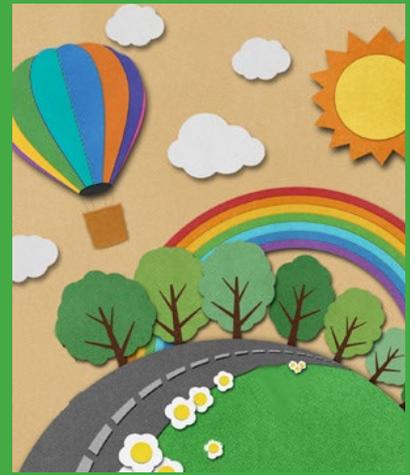
**Find out more**

**[thh.org.uk](http://thh.org.uk)**



# Spot the difference

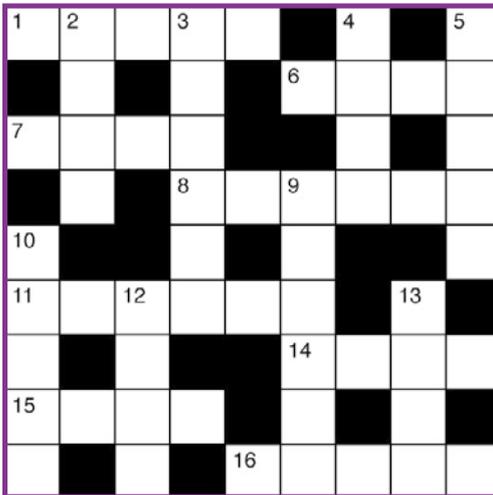
There are 5 differences between these two pictures – can you spot all the things that have changed in the second picture?



## Crossword

### ACROSS

1. A person who flies an aeroplane (5)
6. Two of a kind (4)
7. Lose footing and skid
8. Say again (6)
11. Grand \_ US landmark (6)
14. An animal's hooked nail (4)
15. Source of light (4)
16. A winding water slide (5)



### DOWN

2. Avoiding work (4)
3. Fish-eating bird of prey (6)
4. Not wild (4)
5. Mediterranean island ruled by Greece (5)

9. Drawing and writing tool (6)
10. Skin covering the head (5)
12. The word by which you are known (4)
13. A large tropical tree or shrub (4)

## True or false?

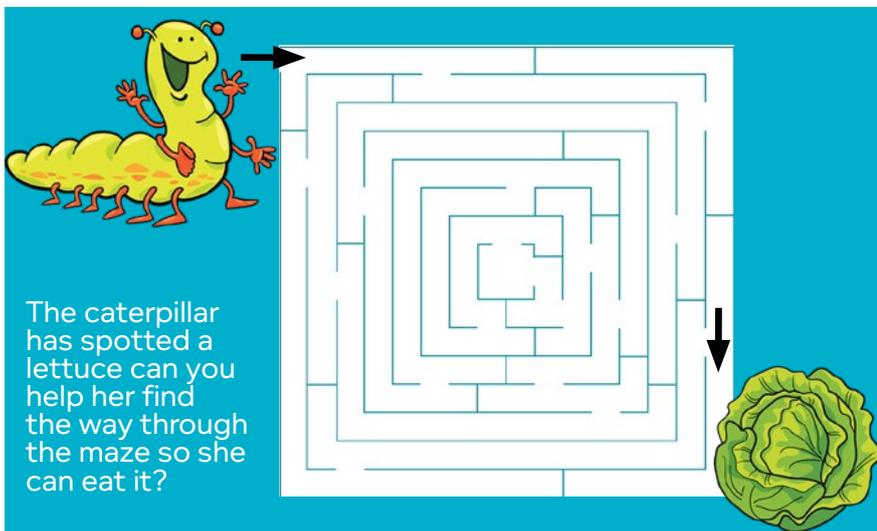
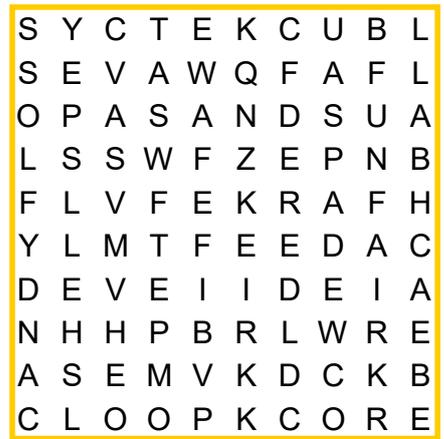
- 1 Earthworms wriggle to the surface of the soil when it rains
- 2 A frog drinks lots of water
- 3 A bee's wings move so fast they make a buzzing sound



## Wordsearch

Can you find 12 things that you might see at the seaside in the grid?

- BEACHBALL
- BUCKET
- CANDYFLOSS
- CLIFFS
- FUNFAIR
- PIER
- ROCKPOOL
- SAND
- SEAWEED
- SHELLS
- SPADE
- WAVES



The caterpillar has spotted a lettuce can you help her find the way through the maze so she can eat it?

**Solutions**

**CROSSWORD**

Across: 1 Pilot; 6 Pair; 7 Slip; 8 Repeat; 11 Canyon; 14 Claw; 15 Lamp; 16 Flume.

Down: 2 Idle; 3 Osprey; 4 Tame; 5 Crete; 9 Pencil; 10 Scalp; 12 Name; 13 Palm.

**TRUE OR FALSE**

1 True; 2 False; it absorbs water through its skin; 3 True.

# Fun summer things to do

## FABULOUS FARMS

We're really lucky in Tower Hamlets to have not just one, but three fantastic city farms. All three have a full range of farm animals as well as other family friendly activities, making a visit to the farm the perfect way to spend a sunny day.

### **Mudchute Farm – see the animals at mealtime**

Mudchute Park and Farm on the Isle of Dogs is completely free to enter and is open every day of the week. The farm houses over 100 animals including cows, pigs, sheep, goats, donkeys, llamas and chickens on a wonderful 32

acre site. Make sure you're at the farm between 9-9:45am or 3-4pm to catch the animals having their breakfast or dinner.

### **Stepney City Farm – with a farmer's market**

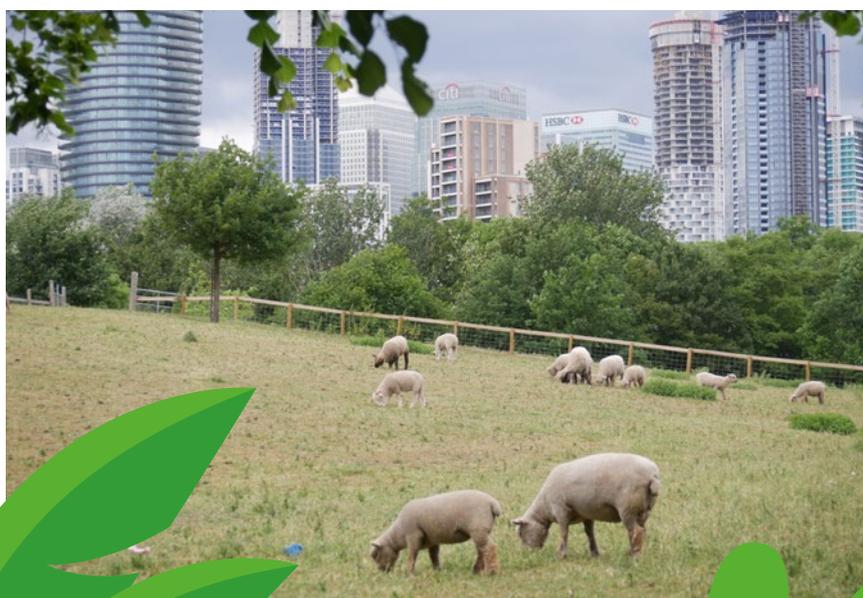
Visit Stepney City Farm to look at the animals and learn about growing your own food right



in the heart of Tower Hamlets. The farm is open between 10am and 4pm, Tuesday to Sunday and if you visit on a Saturday make sure to have a look around the popular farmer's market.

### **Spitalfields City Farm – from parrots to ferrets**

At Spitalfields City Farm there are pigs, rabbits, donkeys, goats, guinea pigs, parrots, ferrets and more. The farm is open Tuesday to Sunday and families can volunteer to help with gardening, animal care, healthy cooking and general maintenance in the families go wild sessions which are run every Saturday from 11:30 to 1pm. Go to [spitalfieldscityfarm.org](http://spitalfieldscityfarm.org) to sign up.



## PARKLIFE

**A great way to make the most of the sunshine is with a visit to one of the 120 parks in Tower Hamlets. The parks vary in size from small community pocket parks to Victoria Park which is a massive 86.16 hectares.**

A trip to your local park is a great excuse for a picnic, a run around and a chance to play in the playground. There are also a number of events taking place in the parks throughout the summer, including the Victoria Park Great Day out and the Sports and Healthy Living Day both of which are taking place in Victoria Park.

For more information about the parks and the events taking place in the parks this summer visit the Tower Hamlets Council website and search for 'parks'



### Get creative at St Margaret's House

St Margaret's House offers a wide range of projects and activities to take part in. They provide spaces to eat, shop, learn, create and enjoy a diverse cultural programme.

Make sure to catch the "Our Place, Our Story!" summer showcase which has been planned in conjunction with the Hollybush and Teesdale Tenant and Resident Association. Drop into a workshop or rehearsal, or attend the final performance at St Margaret's House on Tuesday 20 August at 7pm. The showcase promises to be an event you don't want to miss. Visit St Margaret's House's website for more information.

## TOWER HAMLETS HOMES - COMMUNITY EVENTS



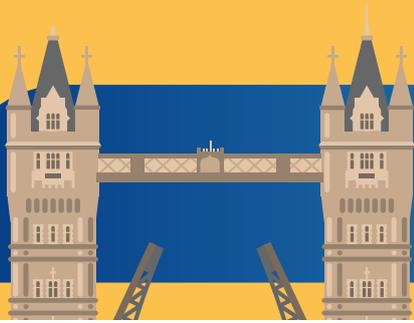
Here at Tower Hamlets Homes we have funded a number of community groups, through our Inspiring Communities Fund, to organise various events which will be taking place throughout the summer, right on your doorsteps. This is a great opportunity to get to know your neighbours, take part in some fun and games and arts and crafts and share some food with your neighbours. Keep a look out for details of events in your local community.

### **Tower Hamlets Youth Service – summer programme**

The 18 youth hubs in Tower Hamlets will be running fun, free activities for young people in the borough throughout the summer. There's a wide range of activities on offer. With sports, cooking, music, local volunteering and trips to bowling alleys, ice rinks and theme parks there's something for everyone's fancy.

For a complete list of the summer programme, visit [towerhamlets.gov.uk/youth](https://towerhamlets.gov.uk/youth)

Follow us on social media to get the latest news on events  
Twitter: @THHomes  
Facebook: /towerhamletshomes



## VISIT THE TOWER OF LONDON OR TOWER BRIDGE FOR JUST £1



Enjoy a visit to the Tower of London this summer. Tower Hamlets residents can explore the castle, see the crown jewels and hear the stories of its colourful history for only £1.

### 1000 years of history

The Tower of London has one thousand years of history. It holds tales of eight thousand prisoners, ten executions and sixty attempted escapes. It houses twenty three thousand, five hundred and seventy eight gems and the one hundred and five carat Koh-i-Noor diamond. All you need to do is bring along proof of address and an Idea Store card or Tower Hamlets Library Card for each adult.



### Tower Bridge for a quid

You can also visit Tower Bridge for £1. Explore this iconic landmark and discover its 125 year history and the stunning panoramic views of London. Look down through the unique glass floor to see an incredible birds-eye view of London life from 42 meters above the River Thames. To take advantage of this fantastic offer, just bring proof of address and photo ID for each adult with you when you visit. Up to four children will be eligible for £1 entry with each adult.



**Tower  
Hamlets  
Homes**

**MyTHH**

**Manage your  
account online 24/7**

**Tower  
Hamlets  
Homes**

Manage your services online 24/7  
with **MyTHH** | [my.thh.org.uk](http://my.thh.org.uk)  
[thh.org.uk](http://thh.org.uk) | 020 7364 5015

**More than 4,200 THH residents have now signed up - why not join them?  
Signing up is quick and easy – just follow the steps below and you'll be  
able to check all the details of your rent, leasehold or garage account  
online – whenever it suits you.**

### **Not registered yet? sign up at [my.thh.org.uk](http://my.thh.org.uk)**

Visit [my.thh.org.uk](http://my.thh.org.uk) and click 'view my details' – this will take you to the login page – at the bottom there's a link - 'Click here to sign up for MyTHH'

On the registration page you'll need to enter the following information:

- Surname
- Date of birth
- Payment reference number for tenants (on your rent payment card or any rent letters from us)
- Leasehold account number (on your statement of account).

This information will be matched with what we already hold about you.

### **Need help registering?**

If you're having trouble, try the following:

- **Surname** – check your statements and other letters we've sent you, have we got the correct spelling? You may find you can register if you match the spelling on the letter, or you may need to contact us on 020 7364 5015 to update your details before you can register.
- **Date of Birth** – If you're a leaseholder who purchased your property from an existing leaseholder it's likely you won't have given us your date of birth previously. To protect your account from unauthorised access we will have set your 'date of birth' on our system to the date you purchased your property. If you can't remember this date

or still have problems you may need to contact us on 020 7364 5015 to update your details before you can register.

Once you've registered we'll send you two emails – one containing your username and one containing your password. (Don't forget to check your junk/spam folder in your email account).

The first time you register you'll be able to change both of these to something more memorable. You'll also be asked to set a memorable question and answer, which you'll then be asked to enter every time you login.

If you're still having problems just follow our simple step-by-step guide, available on the website at [thh.org.uk/mythh](http://thh.org.uk/mythh)

# Paying your water rates



## Information for THH tenants

From 1 October 2019 there are changes to the way that THH tenants will be charged for water services. All tenants should already have received a letter from THH and will also receive ones from Thames Water in July and August.

## What's going to happen?

THH currently collects the charges for water from tenants on behalf of Thames Water; this will stop on 30 September 2019. From 1 October Thames Water will bill tenants directly and it will be their responsibility to pay directly to Thames Water.

## Why is it changing?

After a recent review of the agreement between THH and Thames Water, Thames Water have decided that it is simpler and easier if tenants are billed directly by Thames Water.

## What do tenants need to do?

There is no need for tenants to do anything immediately. Thames Water will be contacting all tenants in July to explain the changes in more detail. THH will be writing to all tenants who pay by standing order in September to let them know what they need to do.

## Can I continue to pay THH for my water?

THH won't be able to accept payments for water bills after 1 October 2019, and payments need to be made to Thames Water directly.

## How often will Thames Water send me a bill?

Bills will cover the period from 1 October 2019 to 31 March 2020. From next year, you'll receive an unmetered bill once a year between February and March. This bill will cover the period from 1 April to 31 March the following year.

## When do I get my first bill from Thames Water?

Thames Water will send you your first bill in September/October,

## How can I pay my bill?

Thames Water will split your bill into monthly instalments and send you a PayPoint card which can be used at any PayPoint outlet in the UK. Your card will come with instructions on how to use it as well as a list of your closest PayPoint outlets.

Thames Water will send you more details on how to set up a different payment method or change your instalments if you'd prefer weekly or fortnightly.

## Find out more

[thameswater.co.uk](http://thameswater.co.uk)  
0800 316 9800



## Do you pay your rent by direct debit?



If you're a tenant it's important to pay your rent on time. The money that THH receives helps pay for the services that we provide, such as repairs and keeping estates clean and tidy. Having a rent account that's kept up to date gives you access to other services, like garages and car spaces.



### The easiest way to pay your rent

Paying your rent by direct debit means no queuing in post offices or banks and no worrying about missed or late payments. It also

helps THH keep costs down, improving value for money for residents. It usually takes 5 working days to set up a direct debit payment.



### Pay on the date that's most convenient

Tenants can stay in control of your money by choosing to pay on:

- any date of the month from 1 to 28 for monthly payments, or
- any day of the week for weekly, fortnightly and four weekly payments



### How do I set up a direct debit?

You can sign up using MyTHH. If you haven't signed up already why not do it now? It's an easy way to lots of things online, such as checking your account balance.

You can complete a direct debit application form. The form is available on our website to print out at home. You can also phone us to set up the direct debit over the phone, or request that a form is sent by post.



### Returning your direct debit form

Send the completed form to:  
Tower Hamlets Homes, Rents Service, PO Box 66355, London E14 1GU

### Find out more

[thh.org.uk](http://thh.org.uk)  
[my.thh.org.uk](http://my.thh.org.uk)

# How we're doing

## Our key performance indicators

Our 'Super Seven' performance indicators were chosen by you (our residents). They help us check our performance, show residents how we're doing and show us where we need to make any improvements across our services.

**See our latest results – January to March 2018/19**

	Indicator	Target	Performance
1.	Tenant satisfaction with overall service	89%	89%
2.	Leaseholder satisfaction with overall service	73%	70%
3.	% calls answered	90%	91%
4.	% repairs in target	98.5%	98%
5.	Satisfaction with caretaking	85%	86%
6.	Satisfaction with THH keeping residents informed	85%	87%
7.	Satisfaction with handling of anti-social behaviour (ASB) case	55%	45%



# Staying safe from fire this summer



Summer is a great opportunity to spend more time outside. The warmer weather is a bonus but it can mean that the risk of a fire starting increases as the surroundings become drier.

Richard Wyatt, Station Manager at Poplar and Millwall fire station, is the London Fire Brigade's representative on our Joint Resident Working Group on Fire Safety.

Richard has given THH residents some useful advice on how to stay safe.

## Advice for hosting or attending a BBQ:

- ✗ Don't have BBQs anywhere near buildings, sheds, fences or trees and never on balconies.
- ✗ Never use petrol to light a BBQ
- ✓ Make sure that your BBQ is fully extinguished and cold before disposing of the contents
- ✓ Keep young children and ball games away from BBQs
- ✓ Keep a bucket of water or garden hose nearby in case of emergencies.

## General fire safety advice:

- ✓ Keep common areas and balconies clear of combustible material
- ✗ Don't smoke in common areas of blocks and make sure that cigarettes are extinguished properly before disposal.
- ✓ Get to know your escape route from your home in case you need to evacuate your building

## Find out more

Our website contains more useful information about fire safety, including what we have been doing to make our blocks as safe from fire as possible.

[thh.org.uk/firesafety](http://thh.org.uk/firesafety)  
[London-fire.gov.uk](http://London-fire.gov.uk)



Councillor Islam (Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Housing) and Susmita Sen (Chief Executive THH) open the new food garden in Wapping.

# Food, Glorious Food!

So far, Tower Hamlets Homes has helped local residents to set up 25 food gardens, 4 orchards and 5 wildflower meadows across the borough. In June we celebrated the opening of two more new gardens at Shadwell and Wapping.



The garden at Wapping was set up on land that had previously been a hot-spot for anti-social behaviour and residents wanted to reclaim the area.

So far, Tower Hamlets Homes has helped local residents to set up 25 food gardens, 4 orchards and 5 wildflower meadows across the borough. In June we celebrated the opening of two more new gardens at Shadwell and Wapping.

The Shadwell community garden was set up on land that had very little usage by residents, who wanted to see it used more.

THH Chief Executive Susmita Sen added:

**“Food Gardens are a great way for local people without gardens to grow their own food and meet their neighbours. It’s a good tool for people without a common language to socialise and also deters people from causing anti-social behaviour. We’ll always work with residents to find ways to make their estates work for them.”**



# Green fingered?

Fancy setting up your own garden?



The new community food garden in Shadwell

**Community Food Gardens can really improve people's health and wellbeing as well as giving local residents the chance to come together and spend time outdoors with their neighbours. THH can work with you to develop a cultivated green-space and neighbourhood gardens have the added bonus of acting as a deterrent to anti-social behaviour.**

## How do I set up a Community Food Garden?

You'll have to show that at least 10 residents are interested in forming a group – you can do this by getting people's signatures or support letters; then contact THH's Community Partnership Team with the idea or proposal.

With the help of our community partnerships team, we will:

- organise a site meeting with THH staff to consider feasibility
- investigate access to water, tool storage and security
- consult the rest of your estate and set up a Residents' Garden Club
- get garden requirements costed and identify a funding source(s)
- create the CFG and sign a licence agreement.

## Get in touch

Tower Hamlets Homes can support you to do all of this – just get in touch by emailing [community.partnerships@thh.org.uk](mailto:community.partnerships@thh.org.uk) with details of where you'd like a new garden to be set up.



# Landlord of

**On 1 May Tower Hamlets Homes received the Chartered Institute of Housing's *Landlord of the Year* award.**

Whilst THH are extremely proud to be recognised as amongst the best in the housing sector, it is an achievement that all residents, board and partners can also be proud of.

Our residents associations work hard to help us continually drive up service standards and to make sure that the priorities of residents are the priorities of THH.

### **Why we won**

When making their decision, the judges highlighted some of the reasons for selecting THH as the winner.

### **Financial Health Centre**

With the impact of welfare reform and Universal Credit, large numbers of residents are experiencing financial exclusion and greater poverty. Together with employability and training programmes, THH identified the need for more help for residents in dealing with financial matters and developed the borough's first Financial Health Centre.

The Financial Health Centre was opened in September 2018 and brings together nine local community organisations alongside THH's own rent and leasehold services teams. Residents can drop in or book appointments to get advice



# the year

on issues such as debt or employment issues.

## Fire safety

Following the Grenfell Tower tragedy, concerns around fire safety became more urgent to residents. Whilst fire safety has always been amongst the highest priorities for THH, and we worked closely with the London Fire Brigade to provide advice and reassurance.

A £32.7m programme of fire safety works is underway and last year an innovative fire safety team was launched, visiting residents in their homes to give them fire safety advice, with around 3,500 completed so far. The team

also identify fire risks, such as in communal areas of blocks and take action against residents who abuse safety regulations.

## Tackling anti-social behaviour (ASB)

Preventing and tackling ASB remains a top priority for residents and THH's unique approach to this was recognised as being a highly successful model. A partnership of 14 police officers who only work on THH estates, a security patrol service and specialist ASB officers employed by THH have achieved impressive results. During a period of 12 months:

- 1711 ASB warnings issued
- 183 arrests and cautions

- 40 cannabis related raids
- 32 penalty notices for disorder
- A 48% reduction in reports of ASB in the three most targeted neighbourhoods and a reduction of 18% in all other neighbourhoods.

Chief Executive of THH, Susmita Sen, said:  
"Thank you to all of our residents, board and partners who have helped us to win the award. Our vision and our values that go beyond traditional housing management and make us determined to make Tower Hamlets Homes the best homes to live in and our communities the best to be part of."

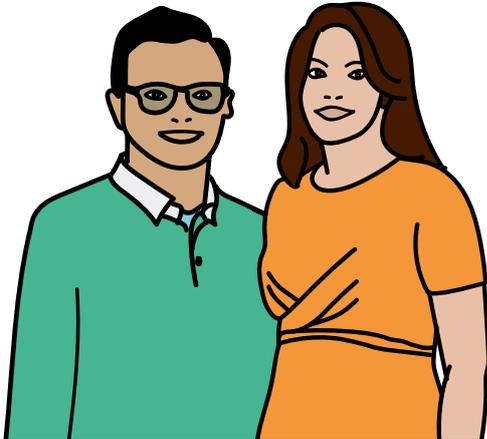
# Making Universal Credit go swimmingly

Universal Credit (UC) has rolled out in Tower Hamlets and will affect the way your benefits are paid.

Universal Credit (UC) is a benefit to support you if you're working and on a low income or you're out of work. (If you are of pension age this will not affect you).

You must claim UC online at [www.gov.uk/universal-credit](http://www.gov.uk/universal-credit). If you don't have a computer, you can access the internet at your local Job Centre Plus office or Idea Store.

We also have a friendly team of people (and links to professional Agencies) who can offer free, confidential advice to help you get your finances in shape.



**How does Universal Credit work?**  
Universal Credit replaces these 6 benefits:

- 1 Housing Benefit
- 2 Income – related Employment and Support Allowance
- 3 Income-based Job Seekers Allowance
- 4 Child Tax Credit
- 5 Working Tax Credits
- 6 Income Support

Instead of getting separate benefit payments for the above, you will receive one payment per calendar month, which combines all your benefits into one. Out of this payment you'll need to pay your rent direct to Tower Hamlets Homes - see "How do I pay my rent" on the next page.

## How do I pay my rent?

Your online UC journal (online via [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)) will set out how much you will receive for the housing element of your UC payment.

You must pay your rent in full to THH by Direct Debit (DD) or Standing Order as soon as you receive your UC payment.

Our preferred way to pay is by DD. You can pay any day, any frequency. We also accept standing order.





### Can I get help to manage my money?

We can help you to budget monthly, with free confidential help and advice. Just get in touch:

#### Rent Account & Payments

Rents@towerhamlets.gov.uk  
020 7364 5015 (Option 3, Option 3)

#### Benefits, Universal Credit & Budgeting

Financial Inclusion Team  
020 7364 5015 (Option 3, Option 4)

Debt management, Welfare benefits,  
Employment & training  
Financial Health Centre - Raynham House,  
Massingham Street, E1 4EB  
fhc@thh.org.uk 020 7364 2200

How can I help you?



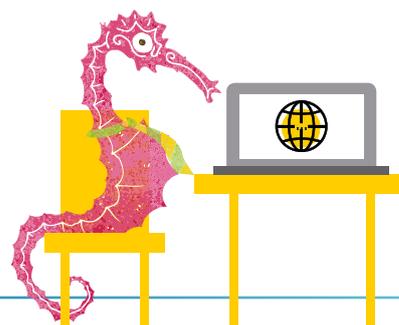
### How do I claim UC?

You must claim UC online at [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk). If you don't have a computer, you can access the internet at your local Job Centre Plus office or Idea Store. We can help you get access to the internet and training if you need it.

When your online application is completed it is known as your 'Journal' and this journal will record your job searches, training and UC payments.

When you make your online claim you will need to enter your landlord details. Your landlord is: TOWER HAMLETS HOMES, PO Box 66355 020 7364 5015

You must enter the correct Landlord details otherwise your claim will not be paid.



# Need help

# and advice?

The Financial Health Centre offers a range of free, confidential and independent services to residents of Tower Hamlets, including support on the following:

- **Debt**
- **Welfare Benefits**
- **Universal Credit**
- **Employment**
- **Housing**
- **Money Management**
- **Training & Job Search**
- **Disability Matters**



**Financial Health Centre**  
Raynham House  
Massingham Street, London E1 4EB

Open 9.30-4.30pm Monday – Friday

 [www.thh.org.uk/fhc](http://www.thh.org.uk/fhc)

Contact us to find out more  0207 364 2200  [fhc@thh.org.uk](mailto:fhc@thh.org.uk)



Tower Hamlets



TOYNBEE HALL



Limehouse Project

