

# PARTNERSHIP NEWS

Winter 2010 Issue 31



Resident Inspectors

## Graduate with Honours

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# Chair's chat



Welcome to the Winter Edition of Partnership News. I hope you are all keeping well. How are the Christmas preparations going? I am really looking forward to the celebrations and being with family over the festive period.

At BHP, we are wholly committed to resident satisfaction and we were very pleased to see that our very

own Warden Service has been performing exceptionally well in the eyes of our residents. The resident satisfaction survey showed that residents are happy with the wardens; satisfaction has improved from last year and in some cases achieving 99% satisfaction rates, which is brilliant.

We are continuing to build and manage our own homes. I am very excited about the three family homes we have built in Aldbury Avenue; we are hoping to have families move in just in time for Christmas.

Health and safety of our residents is also top of our agenda. We urge you to keep safe over the Christmas period. During your festivities, be especially mindful of fire safety and fire hazards. We have included a section on fire safety in this edition. So please bear this in mind and contact us if you have any queries.

So keep safe and well, and I look forward to our next chat in the new year.

Regards

*Kathy*

**Kathy Ellison, Chair of BHP Board**



## Who is BHP to you?

**The function of BHP is very simple, BHP manages your home! Brent Council is the landlord. BHP is the managing agent.**

BHP was formed in October 2002 and we have always worked very closely with our residents. BHP not only involves residents but empowers them.

Our head office is in Chancel House, Neasden.

### What is BHP Responsible for?

- Repairs
- Wardens Service
- Tenancy Management
- Major Works Projects
- Supporting Vulnerable Residents
- Maintaining Building Services
- Rent Collection
- Anti Social Behaviour
- Leasehold Management
- Complaints
- Gas Servicing
- Brent Direct Leasing Scheme
- Cleaning and Grounds Maintenance
- Right to Buy
- Health and Safety
- Disabled Adaptations in Council Properties

### BHP New Homes

BHP also owns and manages our own homes in addition to those we manage on behalf of Brent Council. There are several projects underway to either build or acquire new homes.



## Earn Money to Move

The council are operating an Incentive Scheme for under-occupancy. Those who are interested in exchanging their larger properties for a one bed property will receive £4000 plus free removal assistance.

**Please call the tenancy team for further information on 020 8937 2424**

## Elders Voice

Elders Voice is a registered charity that works with about 3,000 older people across Brent each year. They provide services that enable older people to live independently and have a good quality of life.

### Services they offer include:

- Accident Prevention Service - making homes safer through a team of handymen. All labour is free. They do repairs, fit adaptations, and are skilled in small plumbing carpentry and electrics.
- Floating Support- helps older people who may want support to stay safe in their homes or decide how to move somewhere more suited to them.
- The Whole Community- clubs and classes for older people to get involved as volunteers and participants across Brent.

## Philomena O’Riordan

27 December 1931 - 28 August 2010



### **BHP and Brent Council wish to pay tribute to Philomena O’Riordan who sadly passed away on 28 August 2010.**

Philomena lived on the Brentfield Estate, was a council resident and a pillar of the community. She was awarded a Neighbourhood Champion Award by BHP in August 2009. The honour was presented to Philomena by the Mayor of Brent.

Philomena was an incredibly active and dynamic member of the Brent community. She was Chair of the Brentfield Resident Association, Chair of the Area Housing Board, a contract monitoring representative, a regular attendee of neighbourhood walkabouts, a representative on the Stonebridge Ward Panel and a member of BHPs scrutiny panel to name a few.

A very admirable quality that Philomena possessed was not being afraid to stand up for what she believed in. She championed young people’s rights and on one occasion took on Tony Blair regarding the facilities for young people in the area. She also tirelessly campaigned for the Gibbons Recreation Ground to not be converted into a car park and won.

She was a remarkable lady, kind and larger than life who would do anything for anyone. When staff called her, she would always answer with such warmth saying “hello luvey” and ended it normally with “don’t do anything I wouldn’t do!”

Philomena gave up her house in July and was being looked after in the final months by her daughter Linda in Luton. Philomena will be sorely missed and never forgotten. Our condolences are with her family at this difficult time.

- Carers Project - support for unpaid Carers including respite for older people receiving care.
- Older people’s day services and resource centre.
- Gardening project – help with gardens to make them safe and beautiful.
- Reliable volunteers always very welcome!

To find out more about any of the above services, please contact:

Elders Voice, 181 Mortimer Road, London, NW10 5TN

Tel: 020 8968 8170

[www.eldersvoice.org.uk](http://www.eldersvoice.org.uk)



### **Residents’ Christmas Parties**

Chairs, Secretaries and Treasurers of Residents’ Associations have formed a Community Event Group which is chaired by Tenant Board Member, Karin Jaeger.

The group has been meeting regularly to organise Christmas parties across Brent. They have been fundraising and have so far received funds or gifts from: John Lewis, The Body Shop, the Household Cavalry and the House of Lords.

#### **Christmas Parties confirmed so far:**

<b>Barham Park</b>	Adults: 10 Dec Children: 20 Dec
<b>Carlton House</b>	Party for all: 28 Dec
<b>Fiveways</b>	Over 50s lunch: 12 Dec Children: 18 Dec
<b>Lodge and Manor Court</b>	Party for all: 8 Jan Over 50s: 18 Jan

The parties will be a good opportunity to meet residents on your estate as well as enjoy some good food, drink and entertainment. There are still more dates and venues to be confirmed.

The Community Event Group has generated a lot of interest and will be working to organise more social events throughout the year.

**For further information please speak to your Resident Association or contact Karin Jaeger on 020 8965 3436 or email: [karinjaeger@btinternet.com](mailto:karinjaeger@btinternet.com)**



## Brent Council's Local Offer to Tenants 2010-2011

### What is a 'Local Offer'

The new Tenants' Services Authority (TSA) regulations require local authorities and other housing providers to make a 'Local Offer' to their tenants each year.

Local Offers are the priorities for service improvements which tenants have told us they want in the areas where they live.

BHP have been providing 'Local Offers' for the last three years by consulting with residents. These priorities have been set out in local neighbourhood compacts which have been monitored by resident representatives attending Area Housing Boards.

The TSA now requires all social housing providers in England to produce 'Local Offers' for their tenants.

### Where did the information for Brent Council's 'Local Offer' come from?

Through a series of consultation sessions held at 16 venues across the borough which took place in July and August to discuss BHP's performance against the TSA Standards. Over 130 tenants attended the consultation sessions and the results from the sessions were put in the document.

In addition to the consultation sessions we have drawn information to be included in the Local Offer from feedback from complaints, and from other forms of tenant participation.

The 'Local Offer' is a living document which can be added to at any time by agreement with the 'Local Offer Working Group' (see below).

An online form will be available on BHP's website [www.bhphousing.co.uk](http://www.bhphousing.co.uk) for residents to add their comments about BHP's performance on the TSA Standards.

### Who will monitor the effectiveness of the Local Offer?

Scrutiny and monitoring of the overall effectiveness of the 'Local Offer' will take place by BHP's Board via its Sub Committees, the Area Housing Board, the Board Scrutiny Panel and a 'Local Offer Working Group' made up of tenant representatives from across the borough together with officers from the council and BHP who will meet at least quarterly.

**If you want to get involved in any of the projects detailed in the 'Local Offer' or to join the Local Offer Working Group, please contact the Head of Corporate Services on 020 8937 2356 at BHP.**



## Performance Figures April to Sept 2010

	2009-10 actual	Apr to Sept 10	BHP target 10-11
<b>Rent arrears of current tenants as a proportion of the rent roll</b>	2.2%	1.9%	2.5%
<b>Percentage rent loss through void properties</b>	0.8%	0.7%	2.5%
<b>Number of racial incidents reported and percentage which resulted in further action</b>	100%	100% (5/5)	100%
<b>Number of ASB cases responded to within time scale (5 days)</b>	99.7%	100.0% (194/194)	96%
<b>Percentage of residents satisfied with internal cleaning</b>	New for 2010-2011	<b>94%</b>	90%
<b>Percentage of residents satisfied with external cleaning</b>	New for 2010-2011	<b>88%</b>	90%
<b>Average number of days taken to re-let council housing</b>	27	28	27
<b>Percentage of Stage 1 complaints answered in 15 working days</b>	93.8%	93%	90%
<b>Average number of days to respond to Stage 1 complaints</b>	11	10	10
<b>Percentage of phone calls answered in 15 seconds</b>	84%	87%	87%

Local Offer	How will this be delivered?	By when?
<b>We will improve the way we deliver newsletters, brochures and leaflets to tenants</b>	The Local Offer Working Group will examine various options and costs for the delivery of newsletters, leaflets and brochures which are guaranteed to reach all tenants' homes	March 2011
<b>We will update the borough-wide residents' compact and ensure a copy reaches all tenants</b>	A working group of residents and BHP officers will review the current borough wide Compact and analyse the most cost effective method for delivery to all tenants	April 2011
<b>We will measure the effectiveness of the Resident Involvement Strategy 2009-2013</b>	A working group of residents and BHP officers will carry out an annual review of the 2009-2013 Resident Involvement Strategy and publish the results in Partnership News	June 2011
<b>We will review and update the Customer Services Charter and ensure a user friendly version reaches all tenants</b>	A working group of residents and BHP officers will carry out a review of BHP's customer service standards, devising a user friendly version to be sent to all tenants by the most cost effective means and available on BHP's website	January 2011
<b>We will introduce a new 'Opti-time' repairs system ensuring more repairs are completed 'right first time'</b>	Pilot system currently taking place and will go 'live' in November 2010. Effectiveness will be determined by telephone post inspections and results published in Partnership News	November 2010
<b>We will publish information on BHP's website and in Partnership News about the Incentive Scheme available for tenants who are under-occupying</b>	BHP officers will update their website with up to date information on the council's incentive scheme of £4,000 for tenants willing to down-size at least 2 bedrooms	November 2010
<b>We will publish annual updates in Partnership News about the number of tenancy verifications BHP have undertaken and the number of tenants evicted for illegal sub-letting</b>	BHP officers will prepare an annual article for inclusion in Partnership News detailing the number of tenancy verifications and number of evictions carried out for illegal sub-letting	April 2011
<b>We will work with residents and partner agencies to look at more innovative ways to tackle anti social behaviour on our estates</b>	BHP officers to set up a meeting with resident representatives from across the borough together with representatives from the council's youth team and other relevant agencies to consider areas for improvement	November 2010
<b>We will work with tenants and partners to identify options to secure resources to support works not covered by the decent homes standard, for example external decorations and improvements to communal and public areas</b>	Officers will set up meeting with partners, tenants and others as appropriate to identify and assess existing and newly arising opportunities	November 2010
<b>We will publish information on how expenditure has been prioritised in relation to each of the standards and in the delivery of local offers</b>	Information on the priorities for costs against each standard will be prepared by BHP officers in consultation with the Local Offer Working Group and published in BHP's 2010-2011 Annual Report & Accounts	October 2011

## The 2010 National Fraud Initiative

**As part of the National Fraud Initiative (NFI) Brent Council is required by the Audit Commission (an independent watchdog) to provide information about council housing tenants using data held on the housing rents system.**

The purpose of this exercise is to identify any potential cases of fraud for example, housing benefit, residents having more than one tenancy and so on. This will enable the council to ensure that there is no manipulation of the system which is there to help those in true housing need.

There is no need to panic as the NFI initiative is a sophisticated data matching exercise and will only highlight cases if there is an anomaly and fraud is suspected.

The most recent exercise in 2006/07 identified £215 million of fraud and error across the United Kingdom (UK) from local government, central government, the NHS and a number of private sector pension bodies.

**For more information visit**

**[www.brent.gov.uk/privacy](http://www.brent.gov.uk/privacy) and scroll down to the sub-heading; Code of data matching practice.**

## Jenny's Cleaning Tips



Jenny Halpert is the Treasurer of the Alexandra Court Residents' Association in Wembley. She has lived in Brent for 47 years and has always been heavily involved with BHP. She is a true community champion who cares passionately about where she lives and her neighbours. Jenny always goes out of her way to

ensure that residents' needs are met and that the estate is spotless. Jenny's passion has made her a wealth of knowledge in keeping homes and communal areas clean and functional.

**Here are some of Jenny's top cleaning tips:**

**Communal areas:**

- Use strong black bin bags for your rubbish especially if you are leaving your bags outside for a few days. This prevents leaks and breakage
- **DO NOT POUR OIL DOWN THE KITCHEN SINK!** The build up of oil will cause a blockage. Put your extra oil in a plastic cup or old washing up liquid bottle and wrap it in newspaper, tie it with an elastic band and dispose of it in your household waste
- To prevent hairs being trapped in the bath or shower, you can purchase a metal strainer from any pound shop or supermarket. They catch hair very effectively and prevent blockages
- **DO NOT** put household waste in a communal bin that is already full up. This causes a mess, attracts rats and other rodents and is inconsiderate to your neighbours!

## Credit Union Launched for Council Residents

BHP has launched a partnership with Ealing Credit Unions (ECU) to promote their services with staff and residents.

Credit Unions make it much easier for people to save money and take out loans.

They also enable you to:

- Save money from as little as 50 pence
- Access loans at a very reasonable rate of interest
- Prevent people turning to loan sharks
- Bill-payment facilities

BHP residents will be able to start saving from 1 November 2010.

**How to apply:**

**If you are interested please call NOW for a Ealing Credit Union Application Form.**

**Call 020 8756 3864 or email [admin@creditunionsolutions.co.uk](mailto:admin@creditunionsolutions.co.uk)**

BHP will be arranging sessions on saving with residents which will be very useful to those who are not used to having savings before. We will contact you with more information nearer the time.

**PLEASE NOTE: ECU will make an assessment of each loan application and consider whether an advance can be made and the applicable interest rate. BHP is not advocating reckless borrowing but promoting a service that may be of interest to residents and staff. All arrangements will be directly with ECU.**



# LEASEHOLDER NEWS

## Subletting Your Home

Under the terms of your lease, you are required to register all sublets within **21 days of the sublet commencing.**

If your home is to be sublet, we require you to send us:

- Details of the tenancy or a copy of the Tenancy Agreement
- A registration fee of £50 + VAT
- An alternative mailing address so that the accounts (and any other formal notices) can be sent directly to you. There is an additional charge of £50 + VAT for this service
- A contact number for you and your managing agent, if you have one, in case an emergency arises

Please note that this requirement applies whether the property is sublet to an individual or to an organisation such as a company, a registered social landlord or a housing association.

Any legal notices, including consultation notices for major works will be delivered to your property and to the forwarding address you give us. As an extra safeguard you should ask your tenant to make sure these documents are sent on to you or your agent.

If an existing tenancy agreement with your sub-tenant is renewed you will not need to pay a further registration fee. We only require details or a copy of the renewal of the tenancy.

## Gas Safety for Leaseholders: Servicing of Gas Appliances



If you sublet your home for less than seven years you are responsible for meeting the landlord's statutory obligations under the **Gas Safety (Installation & Use) Regulations 1998.** This means you must:

- Ensure that all gas appliances, installation pipework and flues for which you are responsible, are in a safe condition
- Arrange for your gas appliances and flues to be checked for safety every 12 months
- Ensure the work is carried out using a CORGI registered fitter by asking to see a current CORGI registration certificate or ringing CORGI on 01256 372300
- Keep a record of all safety checks carried out for at least two years after the safety check
- Ensure your sub-tenant receives a copy of the gas safety check record within 28 days of the inspection
- Ensure any new sub-tenant receives a copy of the current gas safety check record before they move in for the first time



**If you need further advice about gas safety issues call the Health & Safety Executive Gas Safety Advice Line on 0800 300363.**

## Parking restrictions over the Christmas and New Year period:

The Controlled Parking Zones (CPZ's) that operate on Bank Holidays are: Ealing Road ('E'), Temple Zone ('T'), Wembley Hill ('W'), Dyne Road ('KD'), Kilburn Lane ('KG'), Kensal Rise ('KL'), Malvern Road ('KM'), Chamberlayne Road ('KR').

On 26 December 2010 the Wembley Stadium Protective Parking Scheme restrictions will apply throughout the event day zone, as there is an event at Wembley Stadium on that date.

Please ensure you read the time plate at the location before you park your vehicle.

[www.brent.gov.uk/parking](http://www.brent.gov.uk/parking)

24/12/10	Normal restrictions
25/12/10	None
26/12/10	Normal Sunday restrictions
27/12/10	Bank Holiday restrictions
28/12/10	Bank Holiday restrictions
29/12/10	Normal restrictions
30/12/10	Normal restrictions
31/12/10	Normal restrictions
01/01/11	Normal Saturday restrictions
02/01/11	Normal Sunday restrictions
03/01/11	Bank Holiday restrictions
04/01/11	Normal restrictions

## Graduate Resident Inspectors get ready to assess landlords' services

BHP residents were among 12 residents from across London who successfully graduated from a groundbreaking Resident Quality Inspector Course which qualifies them to monitor and scrutinise their housing estates.

The Resident Quality Inspector Course is a Level 2 certificate accredited by the Chartered Institute of Housing. Now that residents are qualified, they can carry out planned and structured inspections and assessments of specific aspects of services provided by landlords such as:

- estates and neighbourhoods
- communal areas
- void properties
- repairs
- gas maintenance
- major improvements

The course was instigated by BHP working in partnership with a group of housing providers including Barnet Homes, Ealing Homes, Origin Housing Group, Stadium Housing and Metropolitan Housing Partnership.

This is the first time that a group of landlords have worked together to provide an accredited course for their residents. The landlords all share a mutual passion for getting residents involved in all aspects of their services.

Residents are in a much better position to inspect the service provided to them. They are better placed to comment on whether services need to be improved.

Residents' views are essential in enabling landlords to continuously improve and provide a better service. Many residents have already started their inspections and are enjoying the experience.

The qualified residents can also work with the other housing providers involved to inspect each others' services and provide constructive feedback.

Beverley Wilson, BHP resident said:

"The course has been very useful for me. There should be more courses like this. I have already been doing inspections on my estate which I have found incredibly empowering. I want to use this qualification as a stepping stone to further my career."



## Promoting Independence for our Vulnerable Residents

On April 1st 2009, BHP created a new in-house Aids and Adaptations Team which took over the responsibility from Brent Council for carrying out adaptations to residents' homes.

This has been a huge success and residents have been extremely happy with the changes carried out to their homes. Council resident, Mrs Joyce Godleman from Willesden, is one such resident. She had adaptations carried out to her home to enable her to live more independently and has said these have made a huge difference to her life.

In the last few years, Mrs Godleman has been experiencing mobility issues and has been finding it increasingly difficult to get around and especially walking up the stairs. She relies on a Zimmer frame to help her walk.

BHP's Aids and Adaptations Team visited Mrs Godleman and surveyed her property. They proposed the creation of a downstairs toilet and walk-in shower room where the kitchen was. The dining area was then converted into a new kitchen which is much more practical, spacious and easier for Mrs Godleman to move around in and to prepare her meals.

Everything was completed with four weeks with little inconvenience to the Mrs Godleman and she is very happy with all the changes. She said: "The adaptations have made a huge difference. It was getting increasingly difficult to move around the house and climb the stairs. It's so much easier for me now. I have all the facilities I need to enable me to live a more independent life."



## Aldbury Avenue Near Completion

BHP's three new build family homes in Aldbury Avenue, Wembley are approaching the final hurdle.

The homes will be completed any day now and families, who are to be nominated by the council, will be in their new homes by Christmas.

BHP and Brent Council have worked in partnership on this project. The land was transferred to BHP by the council at nil value as they are keen to tackle the severe affordable housing shortage in the borough.



## CESP funding renewable energy

BHP is currently looking into carrying out sustainable energy measures to more council properties around Brent. We are in the process of identifying suitable properties that will benefit from such measures and are applying for CESP funding in order to meet these objectives.

### Which areas qualify?

It is proposed that CESP should target those areas of Great Britain that have significant levels of low income households. It is these areas that have the most dense concentration of households in need of assistance, and where energy efficiency improvements should have the greatest impact on fuel bills whilst also delivering carbon savings.

BHP is now planning to carry out feasibility studies to ascertain which measures are more suitable for properties in Brent. BHP is committed to lowering carbon emissions in the borough to help the government reach its reduction targets.



### WAYS TO PAY:



You wouldn't want to receive  
one of these for Christmas!

**DON'T FORGET TO PAY YOUR RENT!**

# HEALTH & SAFETY

## Fire Safety in your homes - Keep Your Family Safe:

Fire safety is an important issue for everyone. We have put together some key information on how to keep yourself and your family safe – how to help prevent a fire from starting, and what to do if there is a fire in your building.

What can you do in your home?

There are many simple measures you can take to help prevent a fire in your home:

- If you don't have a smoke alarm, please let us know and we will arrange to fit one in for you
- Have a safety check on your gas boiler every year – make sure you provide BHP access to your home when your safety check is due
- Think about how old your gas and electrical appliances are, and where they are positioned – if you are not sure all your appliances are safe, get expert advice (see page 5)
- Do not overload electrical wall sockets
- Keep a fire blanket in an accessible place in your kitchen

- Do not damage, remove or wedge open internal doors
- Do not use or store petroleum spirit (petrol, diesel or paraffin) or liquid propane gas cylinders in your home
- Have a plan in case your home is involved in a fire and make sure everyone in your family knows what the plan is.



## Partnership day at Mapes House

The Safer Neighbourhoods Team (SNT) organised a Partnership Day for the local community and residents of Brent on Monday 25 October. The event took place at Mapes House in Kilburn and consisted of stalls, entertainment for children and refreshments.

Local people were able to meet community groups and service providers that work within Brent, in regards to preventing crime and anti-social behaviour.

The event provided residents with important information and enabled them to meet other residents in an informal capacity.

As well as BHP, other partners who attended were Brent Council's Anti-Social Behaviour Team, the Mayhew Animal Hospital and the Fiveways Residents' Association.

It was a fun event with a focus on fighting crime and preventing anti-social behaviour and nuisance.



## Neighbourhood Champion & Young Neighbourhood Champion Awards 2011

Do you know a Brent Council resident who deserves a Neighbourhood Champion Award?

This award recognises the unsung heroes that are helping to make Brent a safer and better place to live by taking a stand against anti-social behavior.

Each champion will get an award and a £50 cash prize for their efforts.

There are two categories

- Neighbourhood Champion (above 21 years of age)
- Young Neighbourhood Champion (21 years of age or younger)

Who should I contact if I want to nominate someone?

If you would like to nominate someone please contact us as soon as possible.

**Jane Lambert, Warden Services Manager**  
**Brent Housing Partnership, Chancel House**  
**Neasden Lane, Neasden, London, NW10 2UF**  
**Tel: 020 8451 5050**  
**Email: wardens@bhphousing.co.uk**

**The deadline for receipt of nominations is**  
**Monday 31 January 2011**



## Replacement Fob Keys

Please note that if you lose your fob keys or want additional copies, the prices are to be harmonised across the borough as of 4 January 2011

The costs will be:

Fobs £15

Assa Keys £20

Gerda Keys £30



The following payment is accepted:

Cheque with guarantee card or postal orders made payable to "London Borough of Brent"

**Please Contact:**

**Repairs 020 8937 2750/2666**

## Supporting home based enterprise

The Prime Minister has set a challenge to create a decade of enterprise. This will involve changing perceptions for people in every part of our society that working for yourself is a viable and attainable employment option, and removing obstacles that get in our way.

BHP is supportive of this endeavour and we want to make it easier for our residents to run a business from their property. There are many cases of people who genuinely want to work but have restricting circumstances such as caring for sick relatives or having a long term sickness or disability. Working from home and being self-employed offers greater flexibility and more control of your working patterns.

### Did you know?

There isn't a blanket ban on working from your council home. However, it does state in your tenancy agreement, that if you are interested in setting up a business from your home you must ask for our permission in writing. We will offer you support where possible and try to signpost you to the relevant organisations that can help. Here are some useful websites:

- [www.smallbusiness.co.uk](http://www.smallbusiness.co.uk)
- [www.businesslink.gov.uk](http://www.businesslink.gov.uk)
- [www.bytestart.co.uk](http://www.bytestart.co.uk)
- [www.startups.co.uk](http://www.startups.co.uk)

Please be aware that you are responsible for ensuring that you obtain and comply with all necessary legal and regulatory requirements.

**If you have any queries,**  
**please contact us on: 020 8937 2244**



# BRENTHOUSING PARTNERSHIP

Youth Magazine  
Winter 2010  
issue 2

# our say



## Sir Ian McKellen raises issue of homophobia in schools

By Peter Nugent, aged 17

**Sir Ian McKellen (AKA Gandalf in Lord of the Rings)** was invited as a guest speaker at Preston Manor High School's Anti-Homophobic Bullying Day. Sir Ian spoke openly about his personal experience of being gay and how he used acting as a means to express himself. He also spoke of the negative affect that homophobic bullying had on the people around him, how it had driven them to extremes and near death. Sir Ian stated that days such as this needed to be more frequent to remove the negativity surrounding homophobia and there needed to be an encouragement in the discussion of the subject.

Head Boy and Editor of Our Say, Peter Nugent, interviewed Sir Ian McKellen to get a further understanding about his views on homophobia:

### 1) What do you think should be done to reduce homophobia among young people?

Talk about it and be more open and people can be more understanding. It's an issue because people are forced to lie and hide about it. Have days like this one and people will be less suspicious and hostile towards it.

### 2) Should there be more education in schools about these issues?

Yes, particularly around section 28 of the Local Government Act brought about by Margaret Thatcher. This clause stated that local authorities and schools should not intentionally promote homosexuality. This caused hardship for many people as they had nowhere to turn.

### 3) Are teachers doing enough to prevent homophobia?

Some are doing enough but it's not consistent across all teachers.

### 4) Should there be support officers based in school who young people can talk in?

Definitely.

### 5) Should we be having more open discussions?

Yes it's a way to remove the suspicion and hostility away from the issue. It will make people more comfortable with homosexuality, so people will be open about being gay rather than hiding.



## Bridging the age gap

By Our Say Team



There seems to be some friction between young people and older people on housing estates in Brent. A lot of this friction tends to arise from a lack of dialogue, misunderstandings and fear of one another. "Our Say" discussed ways in which the two generations could build bridges and complement each other.

We felt that both generations could make an effort by smiling at each other more and being friendly and polite. This would break down the fear factor.

Going one step further, we felt that it would be useful for young and older people to do activities together and transferring skills to one another such as knitting, dancing, computers and modern technology. We thought that a group activity with mixed generational teams such as quizzes, bingo, dominoes or cricket matches would help develop a bond between the age groups.

Having a history club would help younger people relive important events through the older generation and learn a great deal in the process. This could help the younger generation to appreciate what older people had been through and experienced. As well as a history club, we thought it would be good to have open discussions about general topics so that we could understand one another's views.

We felt that working on a project together would build relationships, such as organising a community day, producing short films about one another and having movie nights where we would alternate by watching old movies one week and then modern movies another week.

We decided that both younger and older people have so much to give to society, and complement each other. Therefore it would strengthen communities by having the two generations working side by side and helping one another.

## Meet the Team

Frank Farci,  
aged 12



Tim Poole,  
aged 17



Peter Nugent,  
aged 17



Daisy Farci,  
aged 14



Michael  
Barrett,  
aged 16



Paul Nugent,  
aged 17



## COMPETITION WINNER

The winner of the iPod Shuffle competition is Ashif Khan, aged 14 from Neasden.

We would like to congratulate Ashif on his prize!



## Dispersal Zones in Brent

By Our Say Team



Brent Police and Brent Council introduced a dispersal zone in South Kilburn and Wembley in August which ran until November after residents were persistently complaining of nuisance behaviour.

### What does this mean?

Well it means that under the dispersal, groups of individuals causing anti-social behaviour (ASB) can be dispersed by police constables and police community support officers (PCSOs). They will be instructed to leave and not return for a period of 24 hours. If they return and continue to cause problems, they can be arrested or fined up to £2,500.

This dispersal zone mainly affects young people, some of the Our Say Team gave their views on the subject:

### Paul Nugent, aged 17 said:

“Well, just like ASBOs, it is a bad idea as you are taking away one’s freedom of assembling, which I am pretty sure is a human right. So it firstly breaks that and it also will mean nothing except that young people will find another place to hang out. It’s as simple as that!”

### Peter Nugent, aged 17 said:

“If you’re going to stop people hanging around in groups all they’re going to do is move on to somewhere else. It could be argued that a lot of young people have nothing to do in terms of activities in their spare time; therefore they hang around in groups. Instead of wasting resources on dispersal zones why not use it to create somewhere where they can hang out and not be “intimidating””.

### Daisy Farci, aged 14 said:

“Ummmm, it is a good and bad idea as I think that it is ok to hang around in a public area during the day, but not after it gets dark as it can scare people. If groups are making loud noises and causing trouble then I think they should be told to move”.



## Brent Youth Parliament

By Our Say Team



Two of the BHP’s Youth Editorial Board were appointed as members of Brent Youth Parliament (BYP). Michael Barrett (aged 16) and Paul Nugent (aged 17), both residents of Brent Council, will be representing the views of young council tenants at local government level.

BYP is a group for young people in Brent to express their views and have a say about decisions that affect them. The youth parliament is made up of young people aged 10-19 years old, from all walks of life.

Parliament members decide on the issues that they want to look at and then work with councillors and council officers to bring about changes that will improve local services for young people.

### Paul Nugent said:

“The elected members of BYP do a brilliant job in tackling issues facing young members of our society.

For example, last year the main issue that BYP dealt with was “Break the Stereotype, Fix the Impression”. This campaign focused on the stereotypes of young people and looked to break them with positive events all year with MPs, councillors and other influential people. It concluded with a massive media summit in August 2010”

### Michael Barrett said:

“I thought that BYP was fun and very informative. I liked meeting new people and engaging with others. I am inspired by the chance to make a difference for other young people in Brent and raise awareness of young people’s needs.”

**Find out more about your representative, all schools and most youth groups have one; voice your opinion and grievances which they will present to BYP for us to deal with.**

**To contact your BHP representative, please email us on: [nadia.khan@bhphousing.co.uk](mailto:nadia.khan@bhphousing.co.uk)**

**Or log on to our facebook page: <http://www.facebook.com/home.php?#!/pages/Our-Say/126948454027771>**

## What I really think about school meals...

By Frank Farci, aged 12



School food is not always ideal. I would prefer to have my own food half the time at school. The food is nice when we have our favourite menus. At my school, my favourite menu is meatballs with rice or pasta and sausages with mash and gravy. However, due to the recent healthy food movement my favourite meals can hardly be served. In a way I understand, as healthy food is better for you, but surely they could make better healthy meals that match my favourite food in taste but is just better for you.

Surprising I also dislike the desserts. Sometimes the desserts look mouldy and inedible like the chocolate mousse, or the rice pudding. But just like the main meals, I have my favourite dishes like vanilla ice cream or the crumbles, and if it were up to me they would be served every day.



## Life as We Know It- Film Review

By Daisy Farci, aged 14



I went to see "Life as We Know it" a few weeks ago and was really quite shocked.

The film was a lot better than I expected; it was a comedy, romantic and tear jerker all in one film. The actors Katherine Heigl and Josh Duhamel made a wonderful performance. As soon as this film comes out on DVD I'll be right down the shops to buy it, I recommend you do too.

## Translations

This is Brent Housing Partnership's Newsletter Partnership News. Please contact Communications on 020 8937 2363 should you require a translated version or the assistance of an interpreter.

Kjo fletushkë flet për sigurinë në bllokun tuaj të banimit. Lutemi kontaktoni Komunikimet në numrin 020 8937 2363, në qoftë se dëshironi versionin e përkthyer ose ndihmën e një përkthyesi.

هذا المنشور يخص الأمن في قطعك السكنية. الرجاء الاتصال بالاتصالات على الرقم: 020 8937 2363 إذا احتجت نسخة مترجمة أو مساعدة من مترجم.

این نشریه مربوط به امنیت در بلوک تان است - لطفاً در صورتی که شما به متن ترجمه شده و یا به کمک مترجم شفاهی نیاز داشته باشید با ارتباطها (Communications) به شماره تلفن 020 8937 2363 تماس بگیرید.

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Kan waa Warsidaha Akhbaarta Shuraakadda ee Guryeynta Brent. Fadlan kala xiriir xarunta Xiriirada taleefanka 020 8937 2363 haddii aad u baahato qoraal tarjubaan ama caawin qof tarjubaan ah.

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یہ برینٹ ہاؤسنگ پارٹنرشپ نیوز لیٹر کی مشترکہ خبریں (پارٹنرشپ نیوز) ہیں۔ اگر آپ کو ترجمہ شدہ کاپی یا مترجم کی خدمات درکار ہوں تو براہ مہربانی کمیونیکیشن سے ٹیلیفون نمبر 020 8937 2363 پر رابطہ کیجئے۔

**IF YOU WOULD LIKE A COPY IN A LARGER PRINT, PLEASE CONTACT COMMUNICATIONS ON 020 8937 2399**

## How & where to pay your rent

**You can pay your rent:**



By **DIRECT DEBIT**: Mandates are available from your housing officer, any One Stop Service or online at [www.bhphousing.co.uk](http://www.bhphousing.co.uk)



At any shop, petrol station, newsagent or outlet displaying the **PAYPOINT** double PP sign. If your card is lost or damaged you can get a replacement from BHP by calling 0208 937 2480. Please keep your PayPoint receipts as proof of payment.



By **STANDING ORDER**: Forms available from any One Stop Service or **ONLINE** at [www.bhphousing.co.uk](http://www.bhphousing.co.uk)



On the **CREDIT CARD HOTLINE** by debit or credit card on 020 8937 1717



At any **POST OFFICE** branch using your PayPoint card, debit card, cash or cheque. Cheques must be made payable to Post Office Ltd.

## BHP SERVICES

Repairs Contact Centre	020 8937 2750 020 8937 2666
Leasehold Management	020 8937 2601
Estate Services	020 8937 2400
Right-to-Buy Team	020 8937 2600
Anti-Social Behaviour Team	020 8937 2951
Housing Support Team	020 8937 2952
Housing Tenancy & Rent Enquiries	020 8937 2740 020 8937 2730 020 8937 2424
Customer Services	020 8937 2323
Gas Monitoring	020 8937 2475
Major Works	020 8937 2490
Communications	020 8937 2363
Wardens Service	020 8451 5050

## Contact us

If you would like to contribute to the next edition of Partnership News, please contact:



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**T 020 8937 2363**

**E [nadia.khan@bhphousing.co.uk](mailto:nadia.khan@bhphousing.co.uk)**

### Repairs Number

There have been cases of residents misdialling the BHP repairs number.

This is a reminder that the Repairs number for Brent is:

**020 8937 2750**

**Please dial carefully!**



**BRENTHOUSING  
PARTNERSHIP**

Chancel House, Neasden Lane  
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