

BRENTHOUSING  
PARTNERSHIP

Building on Excellence

# PARTNERSHIP NEWS

Summer 2011 Issue 33

YOUTH  
SECTION  
our  
“say”  
INSIDE



**KISS FM'S “CHOSEN ONE”  
INSPIRES BRENT YOUTH**

## Chair's chat



Welcome everyone to the Summer Edition of Partnership News. I hope this edition finds you well. I mentioned in my last chat that Mum hasn't been too well. She is at home now, but is regularly in and out of the hospital for appointments and tests. She keeps in good spirits though and has been distracted by the Royal

Wedding and other exciting events that have been taking place in London.

London has definitely been a very vibrant place to be over the last few months, we had the royal wedding and are now preparing for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee and the Olympics.

I know it's not until next year, but we should start thinking about street parties for the Diamond Jubilee. It's time to begin preparing your back gardens, front gardens, communal areas and window boxes. It will be nice to get our homes ready for next year's celebrations and show all our visitors what a beautiful place London really is. Let's get into the patriotic spirit!

Remember you can apply for the BHP Community Fund for gardening projects. In fact you can apply for the Community Fund for any project which benefits your community. Contact **020 8937 2574** for more information on how to apply or check out our website **www.bhphousing.co.uk**.

I would finally like to say farewell and express my sincere heartfelt thanks to fellow Board Members, Councillor Janice Long and Chirag Pandya who have stepped down from BHP's Board. They have been an asset to the team and will be thoroughly missed. I wish them the best of luck in the future and hope they keep in contact with us at BHP.

I look forward to speaking with you all next time, until then take care of yourselves and I hope you enjoy the summer.

*Kathy*

**Kathy Ellison, Chair of BHP Board**

## Brent to consult on the future of its ALMO

Brent Council's Executive has agreed to consult local residents on future arrangements for ownership, investment and management of its housing stock.

In light of changes to the funding regime for council housing, an independent review was commissioned earlier this year by Brent in order to consider options for the future of its housing stock which is currently managed by Brent Housing Partnership (BHP),

At its July meeting, the Council's Executive agreed the authority should retain its housing stock and consult residents on a new 'optimised ALMO' model of housing management run by BHP.

The new model would build on the strengths of BHP's existing approach, and specifically the emphasis that BHP place on resident engagement.

In the meantime the council and BHP will be seeking further improvements and efficiencies to the housing management services, and will be working together over the coming months on three main areas:

- To pull together a new long term management agreement between the council and BHP, setting clear service standards for the management of the housing stock.
- To undertake a full efficiencies review within BHP to consider how to best optimise its services, and in particular to explore how back office functions can be shared with the Council.
- To undertake a full governance review of BHP.

Brent Council will start consulting residents in the next few months to get their views on the proposed future management arrangements.

A report on findings is expected to go to the Council's Executive in early 2012 regarding a final decision on the future role of BHP.

### Board meeting dates:

**Thursday 28 July at 6.30pm**

**Thursday 29 September at 6.30pm**

The meetings will take place at Chancel House, Neasden Lane, London, NW10 2UF  
All Board meetings are open to the public

## Celebration at launch of new family homes

BHP has officially launched the completion of three new build family homes in Aldbury Avenue, Wembley. This is the first of a set of properties that BHP both owns and manages.

The construction site originally housed garages which had become under used and derelict over a number of years. It then started to be used for the dumping of unwanted household items such as fridges and freezers. It has now been transformed into three bedroom family homes and will provide essential accommodation for residents in Brent.

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.



## Illegal subletting for tenants

It is illegal to sub-let your property and you will be in breach of your tenancy agreement if you do.

Brent Council and BHP take illegal subletting very seriously and have been cracking down on tenants who have been involved in illegal subletting, with many cases going to court and properties being repossessed. Thirty three properties were recovered as a result of illegal sublets and fraudulent tenancies in the financial year to March 2011. There are a further 26 cases in the pipeline, 11 are awaiting hearings, 1 is awaiting an eviction date and there are 14 where notices have been served.

Central government has provided more funding for councils to deal with illegal subletting. As a result there are now 4 officers involved in Tenancy Investigation work at Brent Council.

Tenants who illegally sublet are denying people in genuine need the opportunity to get a council property.

If you suspect that a property has been illegally sublet, please contact the **CONFIDENTIAL** emergency hotline on **0800 937 777**.

## Summer trip 2011

BHP will be taking Brent residents to Brighton this year on Saturday 20 August. Come and join us for fun packed day out at the seaside for all the family.

Date: Saturday 20 August 2011

Leaving from 2 locations: Brent Town Hall and Willesden Green Library

Leaving at: 8am

Returning: 7pm

Cost: Only £5 per seat, over 60s and under 2s go free!

To book please call the Resident Involvement Team on:

**020 8937 2943/2579/2574**

or alternatively you can email:

**resident.involvement@bhphousing.co.uk**

**Please note: This trip is only available to Brent Council Residents**

## Opti-Time improves repairs service

BHP has completely transformed the way we carry out repairs...for the better!

This has all been possible through the implementation of a groundbreaking new system called "Opti-Time". When you call for a repair, you will receive a quicker response rate, a more accurate appointment time and are more likely to have your repair completed on the first visit. The reason for this is because we have made our service much more efficient in the interest of providing an excellent service to our residents.

Repairs operatives from Linbrook (BHP's repairs contractors) are now given jobs on an "as they come basis" from our Call Centre which enables them to keep appointment times. We also make sure to match operatives with appropriate skills for the job. Therefore if you need a plumber, you will be sent a plumber and not a carpenter. Operatives will only receive the job, once they have completed the previous job. This ensures that they do not have a back log of jobs and are able to give residents a more accurate appointment time. Linbrook's vehicles also now have a tracker system, and carry all the essential equipment and parts that may be required on jobs.

You would have noticed that operatives are using a PDA (Personal Digital Assistant) which enables them to input repairs directly into the computer system and send it back electronically to the office. They can update their jobs via the PDA and keep in communication with the office at all times. They also have reduced paperwork as they can complete their work status online and send it back to the office at the click of a button.

## Interview with AJ King

Kiss FM's "Chosen One", AJ King, lives in Wembley and is a Brent boy through and through. Now 28, he started as a presenter on local Brent radio station, Bang FM, for 4 years. This is where he learnt his trade whilst having no experience.

So how did AJ King win the Kiss "Chosen One" Competition against thousands of applicants? Why did he even apply? Well at first he didn't want to apply at all, however his very convincing friends managed to persuade him otherwise. AJ's great personality alongside his amazing talent gave him the potential to win the competition.

AJ has an amazing talent for mixing records, this was first noticed when he was covering a friend's slot at Bang FM. He said: "I turned up to Bang and I didn't even have any records. I used the ones they already had and did my own mix. The producers really liked it and asked me to come back for a regular show. So I continued with a regular slot whilst I was working as a personal banker."

How did he feel when he won the competition? "It was super exciting; I suppose it has changed part of my life, for example the part relating to my radio career. I'm doing what I want to do but at a professional level".

AJ is one hundred per cent dedicated to his career; in 2007 he had to make a tough decision to leave banking and enrolled on a full-time Creative Industry degree. He said: "I believe that if you work hard, you can do whatever you want in life. I knew what I wanted to do and will continue to work hard to pursue my goals".

As a Brent boy, AJ keeps in touch with the local area and what is happening on the ground. He has run DJ, mixing and radio workshops with young people and wants to do more. He said: "I love working with young people, I try to encourage them in their goals and aspirations. And if they are serious about presenting and working as a DJ, I would go out of my way to help."

So you think AJ King is a normal day-to-day DJ with a great personality... however our young DJ is not as normal as you would think.

AJ said: "I don't think I am overly superstitious. I do have a funny habit though, when I leave my house, my phone needs to be in my right pocket, my wallet in the left and my keys in the back right pocket. It just feels right to have it in this order and if they aren't like that then I feel strange. I have no idea why."

Listen to AJ's great show on Sunday mornings (6am-8am) on Kiss FM. He joins the ranks of DJ Swerve, Neev, Melvin, Ricky and Charlie.

By Krupa Kanadia, 17 and Paul Nugent, 18  
(BHP's Youth Editorial Board)



## Home contents insurance

It is a commonly held belief that the council automatically insures your furniture, belongings and decorations against fire, theft, vandalism or water damage such as burst pipes. This is not the case.

Accidents can be very expensive. It is advisable to protect the contents of your home through your own private insurance or through the council's house contents insurance scheme with Royal & Sun Alliance Insurance plc (managed by Brent Housing Partnership).

Please also note that if you have arranged your household insurance through the council your insurance policy is likely to be cancelled without notice if your rent account goes into arrears.

Your account must be in credit to become part of the scheme and remain in credit otherwise this will be treated as a breach of contract, entitling BHP on behalf of the council, to cancel your contents insurance.

Contact details

If you would like further information please contact our Tenancy Team or Rent Accounting Team.

- Tenancy: 020 8937 2424
- Rent Accounting: 020 8937 2480
- email: [info@bhphousing.co.uk](mailto:info@bhphousing.co.uk)

## Royal wedding street parties

Residents from across Brent came together to celebrate the Royal Wedding by hosting their very own street parties. Here are some of the pictures:



# HEALTH & SAFETY

## Water safety in your home

Water Safety in your homes is very important. If good standards of hygiene are not maintained, this can be dangerous and can cause health problems.

### What you can do in your home?

Some simple steps you can take

1. If the property has been vacated for several days, always run the taps for a few moments to flush through until the temperature cools down or heats to correct temperature
2. When rinsing food or other items, do not allow them to come into contact with the spout of the taps
3. Regularly clean showerheads and tap outlets to prevent the build up of limescale
4. After carrying out any cleaning of outlets, you should always run the outlets for several moments to remove any residues of any cleaning/disinfecting products that may remain
5. Run hot water through the taps or showers for about 5-10 minutes once every three months
6. Ensure that there are no unnecessary areas of stagnant or standing water

To contact us about any issues, concerns or for general advice:  
Call **020 8937 2475**, Building Services  
Email **info@bhphousing.co.uk**

## BHP awarded 5 stars for Health and Safety

BHP was officially awarded a certificate for achieving the top five star rating following their recent British Safety Council (BSC) Five Star Health and Safety Management System Audit. BHP was presented with their certificate at BSC's award ceremony held on 30 June at HQS Wellington.

Health and Safety has always been a top priority of BHP, this award is a result of a great deal of hard work right across the organisation in the last few years including areas such as Fire Safety, Gas Servicing, Lone Working, Legionella, Roof top Safety, Lifts, Asbestos Management and communal windows safety.

## All flats will get recycling from October



In the autumn Brent Council will introduce a new waste and recycling service, collecting mixed recycling and organic waste from all suitable flats and houses. The new service will increase the amount and type of waste that is recycled and reduce the amount sent to landfill, where rubbish is buried in the ground.

Sending waste to landfill is expensive because the government charge the council for doing this. It is also polluting. As landfill waste rots it gives off millions of tonnes of greenhouse gases, these hinder the planet from cooling, adding to global warming and causing major changes to our environment.

The new service will include many more items than at present, such as waxed fruit juice and milk cartons, and suitable blocks of flats will get a food waste collection for the first time. Residents will start to receive new bins and collection boxes during September but should not start to use them until the new service begins. Existing recycling boxes will be removed.

Full details of the new service will be publicised through the council's website, The Brent Magazine, the local press and in other ways from September. BHP residents and leaseholders should continue to recycle as normal until 3 October using existing bins and boxes.



## Performance figures April 2010 to March 2011

	2009-10 actual	Apr to Mar 11	BHP target 10-11
<b>Rent arrears of current tenants as a proportion of the rent roll</b>	2.2%	2.1%	2.3%
<b>Percentage rent loss through void properties</b>	0.8%	1.0%	no target
<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% (314/314)	96%
<b>Percentage of residents satisfied with internal cleaning</b>	New for 2010-2011	95%	90%
<b>Percentage of residents satisfied with external cleaning</b>	New for 2010-2011	89%	90%
<b>Average number of days taken to re-let council housing</b>	27	27	27%
<b>Percentage of Stage 1 complaints answered in 15 working days</b>	93.8%	94%	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%	82%	87%

## Tell us how we can improve your neighbourhood

### What would you like BHP and Brent Council to do?

As part of BHP's aim to make your neighbourhood, street, block or estate a place that you are proud to live in, we are asking all residents to tell us how we or Brent Council could improve any of the services that we both provide to you.

A few examples are listed below:

- the speed in which we answer the telephone
- whether we do enough to get residents involved in any of the services that we do provide
- dealing with graffiti
- litter
- cleaning and grounds maintenance
- could we do more to improve anti-social behaviour in your area
- Concerns where you live about flats being sub-let

It is that simple - is there anything that BHP or Brent Council could do to help you? The above are just a few examples you may have other concerns. We want to know what you think.

We will collate the results of the consultation and will publish a "Local Offer" to residents by 1 October 2011 detailing the action we will take to address the issues that have been raised

Please write your comments on the form to the right and send back to Linda Footer, Head of Corporate Services or alternatively take to any One Stop Shop in Brent. You can also telephone or email your comments through.



Name (Optional):

Name of road, block or estate:

Comment:

If you need more information, please feel free to contact us on the details below. Please return your comments before Friday 19th August 2011.

Linda Footer, Head of Corporate Services  
Brent Housing Partnership  
Chancel House, Neaden Lane, London, NW10 2UF  
T: **020 8937 2356**  
E: **[linda.footer@bhphousing.co.uk](mailto:linda.footer@bhphousing.co.uk)**

# LEASEHOLD NEWS

## Subletting charges reduced

BHP has reduced subletting fees as of April 2011. If you sublet your property the charges are now reduced from £120 to £60 (including VAT).

As you may know under the terms and conditions of the lease you have to notify the landlord when you sublet your property. When you inform us the following services are provided free of charge:

1. We will send your invoices or any correspondence to your forwarding address anywhere in the world without an additional fee
2. We can send a welcome pack to your tenants regarding the services available by BHP
3. We will communicate via email or telephone in case of emergency
4. Change of address is free of charge

This way you will always be aware of the issues affecting your property. So register now!

For further information:

email: [leaseholders@bhphousing.co.uk](mailto:leaseholders@bhphousing.co.uk)

telephone : **0208 937 2601**

## Insurance claims

If you suffer from water damage due to a leak from the flat above or any other insurance perils, please contact the Acumas Claims Department on 0845 218 0327 as soon as practicable. A delay in claim may affect your rights. Please note that leaseholders are encouraged to take out contents insurance as BHP only insure the building under the terms of the lease.

## Tenants Incentive Scheme

Brent Council operates an Incentive Scheme for tenants who would like to give up a bigger property and move into a 1 bed property. They will pay you £1000 and arrange for our removal contractors to move you into your new home.

If you are interested in this scheme contact your Housing Officer on **020 8937 2424**.

## DO NOT feed the pigeons

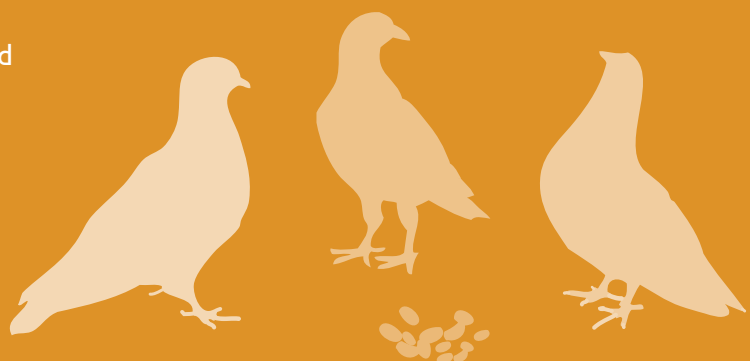
Did you know?

Pigeons are vermin, they are a nuisance and their droppings carry disease and can cause damage to properties and buildings.

If you leave food outside, drop rubbish or intentionally feed pigeons, this will result in more pigeons coming to the area in expectation of food. Leaving food outside can also attract rats and mice.

You should dispose of all your food waste in the communal bins provided or wheelie bins with the lid firmly closed.

Pigeons are wildlife. They are not domesticated and they are not dependant on us to feed them. Pigeons are natural scavengers and will find their own food source. The size of a flock is determined by the amount of food available to them. The more we feed them the more the numbers will increase. However if the food supply is reduced, the flock will also reduce. They will not die of starvation; they will simply breed less often.



## BHP bids farewell to outgoing Board Members



### Chirag Pandya

BHP sadly says goodbye to much loved resident Board Member, Chirag Pandya, who has decided to step down from the Board to pursue further education. Chirag joined BHP's Board of Management in September 2006;

I spoke to him about his time on the Board and what he plans to do with his future.

"I was a leaseholder in a Brent Council owned property and was always involved in my local community. Therefore when I saw BHP's advert looking for resident Board Members, I jumped at the opportunity.

"My career background is within finance and accounting in the food industry. However, I also have a keen interest in working with and helping build communities. I volunteered for a year in India where I helped to build a primary school and water pumps for a small village. One of the main priorities for the project was to develop sustainable housing for local people and to give them a sense of ownership and involvement with the whole project.

"Due to my background in finance, I sat on the finance and accounting sub-committee and the development sub-committee on the BHP Board. I was also the Chair of the New Homes sub-committee. I have learnt a great many things from my fellow colleagues including the importance of thinking outside of the box, never to assume anything and to always ask questions. BHP does some amazing work and is leading the way with resident involvement and I was proud to have been part of such a forward thinking organisation.

"I am now heading to Singapore to pursue a Masters in Business Administration, and from there the world is my oyster. One thing I know is that whatever path I take in life, it will involve working closely with communities and helping other people."



### Councillor Janice Long

Councillor Janice Long joined the BHP Board in 2002 when it all began, and she has been a dedicated and committed member all these years. She stepped down from the Board in May to take up her new role as Lead Member for Housing. I spoke to her

about her time on the board and her future plans.

"In 1994, I became a local councillor in Brent. Housing and environmental issues have always been my main interest. I have sat on many committees and forums relating to these fields.

"I have always taken a keen interest in housing as it is core to our well being. I feel that if we get housing right then other things fall into place and can lead to our overall happiness. More recently I have developed an interest in fuel poverty. The increase of fuel costs and static wages means many of our residents are suffering and this is not right.

"I joined the BHP Board in 2002 and now I can't remember my life without BHP. It has been a very enjoyable and rewarding experience, especially working to increase the standard of living for Brent residents through the Decent Homes programme.

"Being on the Board has taught me a great deal and my knowledge of housing has grown immensely. It has been an exciting journey and one which has been packed with progress and positive change. I have also formed many great friendships and will always remember my time fondly.

"I have now been elected as Lead Member of Housing. My main concern is the Localism Bill, government plans to change tenancies, caps on housing benefit and how this will affect social housing tenants by 2013. I will be very busy in the near future and am thoroughly looking forward to my new role".

## New Homes hit 200 mark

BHP has reached 200 properties in direct ownership, in addition to the 13,000 homes managed on behalf of Brent Council. This is a milestone for BHP and for the ALMO movement generally in the provision of new homes.

The total number of properties owned by BHP includes 110 homes on the Granville New Homes (GNH) development in South Kilburn. BHP also owns a selection of 1 bedroom flats mainly in NW2, NW6 and NW10 for letting at market rent.

In May 2009, BHP was allocated £10million from the Mayor of London's Targeted Funding Stream (Settled Homes Initiative). This was following a successful grant bid as part of a project to buy up to 286 properties to provide homes for homeless households nominated by

the council. So far BHP has purchased 45 properties, housing over 150 people.

In addition to the other projects, BHP has received grant funding from the Homes and Communities Agency to build new homes. The first three family size homes have already been built on a derelict garage site in Aldbury Avenue, Wembley.

On 1 April 2011, BHP registered as a small housing provider with the Tenant Services Authority (TSA). This means that the service BHP provides as a landlord for social rented homes is regulated by the TSA.

## Fiveways Allotment Project: the next chapter

The residents of the Fiveways Estate in North Kilburn, (which is made up of five buildings in close proximity to one another) began a groundbreaking allotment project last year. The project aimed to encourage residents to grow their own food and promote community cohesion. We visited the project one year on to see how it has developed.



The project initially started off small with residents growing items like pak choi, spinach, brussel sprouts and strawberries.

As it has proved to be such a success, the resident association applied for further funding from BHP's

community fund and other sources, which has resulted in an extension of the allotment to more green areas on the estate. They have been growing other items such as potatoes which have been planted on two raised beds and have produced 500 potatoes so far.

There has been a great deal of interest from residents on the estate to start up a herb garden and this is the next goal says Maureen Coughlin, Chair of Fiveways Tenants' and Residents' Association. She said: "The Allotment project has been very successful in bringing the community together, it has definitely created a positive community spirit and people are very enthusiastic about the whole thing. It has also created enthusiasm among the young people on the estate who have been working alongside the adults to help plant the seeds. They enjoy watching the seeds grow and it has taught them to look after and nurture something."

## Haircut for charity

Brave BHP resident, Frank Dodds from Sudbury, dyed his hair gold for charity and then invited members of the public to cut locks of his hair if they made a contribution to Macmillan Cancer Support. This all took place on Saturday 7 May outside Highlites Hairdressers in East Lane.

This was a huge step for Mr Dodds whose full head of hair has always been his crowning glory. I asked him why he was doing this and he said: "The mother of a close friend of mine had cancer and as soon as she was diagnosed the Macmillan nurses stepped in to give her and the family all the support they needed. I was very touched by what they did and wanted to do something to help. I wanted to raise awareness

for the cause and if I can save someone's life in the process then it is all worth it". Mr Dodds raised a total of £465 for Macmillan.



## 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.

### 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 2010 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

### 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 Linda Footer, Head of Corporate Services on **020 8937 2356** at BHP.

Local Offer	Progress Update as at 14 June 2011
We will improve the way we deliver newsletters, brochures and leaflets to tenants.	On 4 November 2010, the Local Offer Working Group considered quotations from three companies to send Partnership News to residents by Royal Mail. The three quotes were £5406, £4789 and £4445. This includes the cost of packaging and labelling the magazines. This was compared to the current cost of using a Distribution Company to hand deliver the magazines which is £1120. The Distribution Company have a satellite tracking system so that if there are any complaints about non delivery they can check this on their satellite tracking system. The Local Offer Working group decided to continue with the current arrangement which was a much cheaper option. Any complaints about non delivery or dumping in communal areas of blocks should be made to Nadia Khan on 020 8937 2363.
We will update the borough-wide residents' compact and ensure a copy reaches all tenants.	The government no longer requires Housing Organisations to produce a borough-wide Compact so this project has been scrapped.
We will measure the effectiveness of the Resident Involvement Strategy 2009-2013.	This project has recently started, and consultation with residents via Area Housing Boards and with the Local Offer Working Group will take place in the Autumn of 2011.
We will review and update the Customer Services Charter and ensure a user friendly version reaches all tenants.	The project commenced on 13 July. Any resident wishing to get involved should contact the Head of Corporate Services on 020 8937 2356.
We will introduce a new 'Opti-time' repairs system ensuring more repairs are completed 'right first time'.	The Opti-time system was implemented on 13 October 2010. It has already resulted in reduced repeat repair calls from residents, 7500 telephone calls per month before Opti time and 5500 calls per month since 13 October. A 46% reduction has been realised in the number of sub contractors used. The number of repairs completed on first visit has improved from 92% to 95%. The average number of days to complete a repair has improved from 100 days to 14 days.
We will publish information on BHP's website and in Partnership News about the Incentive Scheme available for tenants who are under-occupying.	BHP published information about the Incentive Scheme to tenants who are under-occupying in the Winter edition 2010 of Partnership News. A further article will appear in the Summer edition of our residents magazine.
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.	Article to appear in the Summer 2011 edition of Partnership News.
We will work with residents and partner agencies to look at more innovative ways to tackle anti social behaviour on our estates.	Funding has been approved for a Youth Worker to be employed by BHP for a six month pilot. Recently BHP arranged for a Youth Bus to visit one of the estates in Brent where anti social behaviour has been a serious problem.
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.	A review of the options for the long term investment needs of Brent's housing stock is currently taking place by Brent Council. This is expected to be finalised around October 2011.
We will publish information on how expenditure has been prioritised in relation to each of the standards and in the delivery of local offers.	This information will appear in the 2010-2011 Annual Report & Accounts which will be published at the end of September 2011.

For more details on the Local Offer, please refer to Brent Council's Annual Housing Report 2009-10. This is available to download on our website: [www.bhphousing.co.uk](http://www.bhphousing.co.uk)

**What would you like to see included in the local offer for 2010-2011? Please let us know by contacting the Head of Corporate Services on 020 8937 2356.**

## BRENTHOUSING PARTNERSHIP

Youth Magazine  
Summer 2011  
issue 5

our  
say



### What's the fuss behind parkour?

By Frank Farci

Parkour is a non-competitive idea, from French origin. It is a practical discipline, based on using your stamina and the surrounding environment to get to any wanted location in a very short period of time, meaning you can get to a location quicker than you would even if you were going by car. Nowadays free running has replaced parkour, yet it has become a competitive activity. Parkour can still be taught in free running clubs.

I tried it out to see what all the hype was about. After doing some free running for beginners I can say that although it is a fun sport, it does pose threats of injury.

**For information on free running or other sports activities in your area, please contact your local sports club for more information or Brent Sports Service on 020 8937 3707**

### Our Say's Young Champion 2011

Youth Editorial Board member, Peter Nugent, 18, was the deserving winner of BHP's Young Neighbourhood Champion of 2011 for his inspirational work in the community.

Peter Nugent lives on St Raphael's Estate and has been involved in the local community since he was small. He was the Chair of the St Raphael's Social Club Youth Group, Captain of the St Raphael's football team and was heavily involved in the diversionary activities that were organised on the estate in August 2010, which was sponsored by BHP's Community Fund.

In January 2010, Peter became a member of BHP's Youth Editorial Board. He attends every meeting and is a dedicated and committed member of the team. In his spare time, Peter loves to play football. Well done to Peter on this outstanding achievement.

## Aesthetics and architecture

By Peter Nugent, aged 18 & Deesha Kanadia, aged 18

**There has been a visible rise in new housing developments within Brent which have not all been welcomed by the local community. We sent Peter Nugent and Deesha Kanadia to visit a good example of new social housing in South Kilburn**

Some people may be in opposition to the new housing that has been coming up around the borough, but there are examples within Brent that shine a light on not only aesthetic but also functional designs. A good example was on our doorstep, a BHP owned and managed development called Granville New Homes (GNH) in South Kilburn. We went to investigate how GNH has not only made a difference to the appearance of the area but how it has made an impact on the local community since its launch in November 2009.

The redevelopment of South Kilburn is evidently underway; a fresh lick of paint to a few buildings has really added a fresh look to the area, surrounded by GNH with its cutting edge design. It has been a beacon in the new area and shows how fresh innovative designs can really change the area. The building was designed in close consultation with the community; they were involved in the whole process which included a visit to Denmark to see examples of social housing using the latest technologies. The visit resulted in the implementation of features such as solar panels, double glazing and under floor heating which all have a functional approach that also reduces bills for residents.

Another very impressive feature of Granville

is that it has a community facility and centre which is the focal point of the whole development. The centre includes activities for all generations and is constantly in use. Granville is truly a brilliant example of how new ideas can be implemented to bring about positive change within a community.

Granville has received a great deal of media attention since its launch in November 2009; it is seen as a good approach to the building of social housing within an inner city London area. The implementation of large outdoor communal areas and a pocket park have been more than welcomed by residents as well as the sustainable elements. We felt that Granville has a great new innovative design that has given many more areas the inspiration to be aesthetically pleasing and sustainable at the same time.

## Meet the Our Say team

The members of BHP's Youth Editorial Board are:

**Peter Nugent, 18**

**Deesha Kanadia, 18**

**Michael Barrett, 18**

**Paul Nugent, 18**

**Daisy Farci, 14**

**Krupa Kanadia, 17**

**Natisha Williams, 13**

**Frank Farci, 13**

**Samarah Sarpona, 14**

The Youth Editorial Board is a project which gives young people the opportunity to get involved with BHP and to work towards producing a quarterly youth magazine "Our Say". It also gives young people the freedom to have their say about issues affecting them within Brent and nationally. Any young people who are interested in being on the Youth Editorial Board should contact Nadia Khan, Communications Officer on **020 8937 2363**. [nadia.khan@bhphousing.co.uk](mailto:nadia.khan@bhphousing.co.uk)



## Reviewing "Momentum"

By Daisy Farci, aged 14

A few weeks ago my brother and I attended an author's book reading at Willesden Green library. The author was Saci Lloyd, a sixth form teacher and Head of Media at the New Vic, an inner city London College. She has written three books, The Carbon Diaries 2015, The Carbon Diaries 2017 and Momentum. Momentum was released on 2 June.

Saci Lloyd read from Momentum and it sounded really interesting and exciting. It is set in future London where there are worldwide energy wars, oil prices are off the radar and power cuts happen every day. The public are divided into either Citizens, supported by the powers that be, or the Outsiders who are not, and who are kept in control by cruel soldiers called the Kossacks.

Hunter is a teenager and a Citizen; he loves free running. He is also intrigued by the Outsiders, he meets Uma an Outsider and their lives become entwined.

Saci Lloyd was brilliant; she gave great advice on becoming a better writer and signed my books. I am still reading the Carbon Diaries which are interesting and thrilling and I cannot wait to get hold of a copy of Momentum.

It was a privilege to hear her read and I would recommend attending any other library book readings.



## Wembley competition winners

In the last edition of Partnership News we offered tickets to residents for the England vs Ghana match at Wembley Stadium. There were 3 lucky pairs of winners.

John Ashe from Wembley won one pair of tickets and he sent us an email. John said: *“My mum was recently put into a care home, and I have been visiting her daily and I also had to move flat so it’s been a very stressful time overall. When I heard the news about winning the tickets it was a great joy for me and something to look forward to. I would really like to show my appreciation at being one of your winners. My friend, Michael, was over the moon too as he has never seen inside the Stadium before. Once again my deepest gratitude for a wonderful evening out.”*



## Homelessness is not a joke

By Paul Nugent, aged 18 and Krupa Kanadia , aged 17

How would you define a case of homelessness? Is it a case of someone running away from home, someone who has been removed from their home by the family, or someone who has simply got no home? One in every 100 young people in the UK experiences homelessness every year.

Homelessness is a serious issue and there are many young people who really need help to get back on their feet.

However, there are also those who abuse the system and claim they are homeless thinking it’s an easy way to get their own place and freedom from rules in the home.

Some young people claim to be homeless in the hope that they will be granted their own flat or house, however, this is not the case as you are put into shared accommodation which is not as glamorous as they would first assume. The situation is thoroughly assessed by a representative from the housing department and social services if the issue is to do with family.

We spoke to Jenina Abbeyquaye, Young Persons Team Housing Advisor at Brent Council. She said: *“In many of the cases all that is needed is someone to mend the family ties and act as a mediator. This works well most of the time”*.

Many of the issues for leaving home are around fighting with parents, curfew complaints or issues with drink and drugs. We were told that in Brent 87% of young people who come to the homeless team return home with the help of intervention work.

So remember, homelessness is serious, if you need advice you can drop in and see the homelessness team at:

**Mahatma Gandhi House**  
**34 Wembley Hill Road**  
**Wembley**  
**Middlesex**  
**HA9 8AD**

For further information about homelessness you can visit the following websites:

**[www.centrepoin.org.uk](http://www.centrepoin.org.uk)**  
**[www.barnardos.org.uk](http://www.barnardos.org.uk)**



## My joy at becoming 18

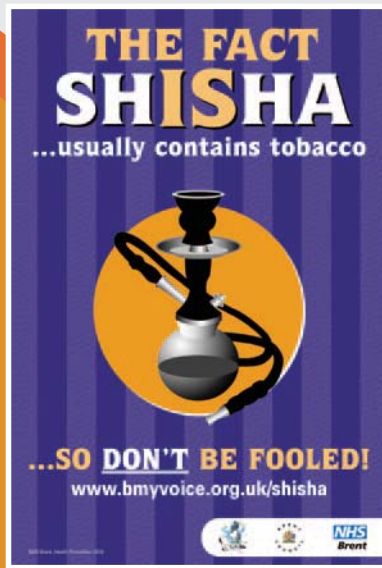
By Michael Barrett, aged 18



Turning 18 years old on 27 May was a really big deal for me. As well as the actual day which was fun, there are so many other things I can do now.

I can now go out and party, draw cash out from my bank account and also move out of my mum's house and live on my own.

If I have my own place, I can invite friends over whenever I want, cook my own food and go out late at night. I would like to get a job and help my mum pay the bills as well as help my friends and family with money if they need it.



## The dangers of shisha smoking

Brent Youth Parliament (BYP) is tackling the issue of shisha smoking amongst young people in Brent. They have created a short film to raise awareness of the issues with smoking Shisha. Shisha is also known as a hookah, hubble bubble, narghile, goza or water pipe.

Research shows that there are many misconceptions about shisha smoking, so BYP wanted to produce an engaging and informative film aimed at a youth audience. You can view this on:

[www.bmyvoice.org.uk/shisha](http://www.bmyvoice.org.uk/shisha)

Did you know that if you're caught smoking shisha in a public enclosed space, you can be fined £50 and up to £200 if prosecuted and convicted? It is illegal to sell shisha tobacco to people under the age of 18.

As it tastes sweet and doesn't smell bad, many people don't realise that it's not good for you.

There are some hard hitting facts that you should know about shisha:

## Should the government dictate what we wear?

By Natisha Williams, aged 13



There was an incident at a Harrow school recently where a young boy was suspended from school for having his hair in "corn rows". This case went to the High Court as his mother argued the point that the hairstyle is a cultural and family tradition. It also did not affect the young boy's performance at school. The school was found guilty of unlawful, indirect racial discrimination.

This made me think about how far such behaviour and bans can go. We can see an extreme version of this in France where the government have banned Muslim women from wearing their head covering, even though this is seen as a part of their religion and culture.

The issues in bans such as this are:

- Who decides what should be banned or shouldn't be banned
- This may lead to massive protest around the world
- Human rights are being affected

What will be banned next? Will Sikhs be stopped from wearing turban and Jews from wearing skull caps?

I spoke to a Brent resident who wears a headscarf and asked her if she was worried about the British government also banning the head covering.

She said: *"It isn't right to ban head covering as it is a religious requirement. If a ban ever took place in the UK I would try to raise awareness of the issue, start discussions and protest if necessary"*

**FACT** - Common flavours of shisha smoked in Brent contain addictive tobacco and other harmful ingredients

**FACT** - 45 minutes of smoking shisha is like inhaling 100 cigarettes

**FACT** - Shisha smokers are more likely to suffer from gum disease which can lead to tooth loss, than non-smokers or even cigarette smokers

**FACT** - Oral herpes & other more serious illnesses can be transmitted by sharing shisha

**FACT** - Shisha smoke contains cancer causing chemicals that are not filtered out through water

For further information contact:

Brent Youth Parliament on:

Tel: 020 8937 3446 / 07908 432520 [textphone].

Email: [byp@brent.gov.uk](mailto:byp@brent.gov.uk)

Or Brent Stop Smoking Service on 020 8795 6669

## 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.

આ પત્રિકા તમારા બ્લોકમાં સુરક્ષા વિશે છે. જો તમને તેનું ભાષાંતર કરાવેલું જોઈતું હોય અથવા દુભાષિયાની સહાયતા જોઈતી હોય, તો કૃપા કરીને કમ્યુનિકેશન્સનો 020 8937 2363 પર સંપર્ક કરો.

ਇਹ ਬਰੈਂਟ ਹਾਊਸਿੰਗ ਪਾਰਟਨਰਸ਼ਿਪ (BHP) ਵਾਲਿਆਂ ਦੀ ਨਿਊਜ਼ਲੈਟਰ ਪਾਰਟਨਰਸ਼ਿਪ ਨਿਊਜ਼ (ਸਾਂਝੀ ਖਬਰ) ਹੈ। ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਅਨੁਵਾਦ ਜਾਂ ਦੋਭਾਸ਼ੀਏ ਦੀ ਸਹਾਇਤਾ ਚਾਹੀਦੀ ਹੋਵੇ ਤਾਂ ਕਮਿਊਨੀਕੇਸ਼ਨ (ਸੰਚਾਰ-ਸਾਧਨ) ਵਾਲਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਟੈਲੀਫੋਨ ਨੰਬਰ 020 8937 2363 ਤੇ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰਨ ਦੀ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾਲਤਾ ਕਰਨੀ।

*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.*

இது பிரென்ட் ஹவுசிங் பார்ட்னர்சிப்பின் பார்ட்னர்சிப் செய்திகள் செய்திக் கடிதம். உங்களுக்கு இதன் மொழிபெயர்ப்பு அல்லது மொழிபெயர்ப்பாளர் ஒருவரின் உதவி தேவையாயின் தயவுசெய்து 020 8937 2363 ல் தொடர்பாளருடன் தொடர்பு கொள்ளவும்.

یہ ریٹ 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

## 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!**

**The call centre will answer your call between 9am to 5pm. If you have an urgent problem after this time, please call our out-of-hours service on: 020 8937 1234**

## Contact us

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



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**The Editor,**  
**Partnership News,**  
**Chancel House,**  
**Neasden Lane**  
**London NW10 2UF**

**T 020 8937 2363**

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



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