



GREENWICH HOUSING SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

December 2022

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Going to be away at Christmas and New Year?

Please let us know if you are going to be away over festive period just in case we need to contact you for any reason. Make sure you turn all your appliances off, and set the central heating to the Frost Stat setting, this will ensure that should the temperature drop it will automatically kick in to prevent freezing. If you need any help let Mary know.

Wherever you are over please take care, wrap up warmly, but most of all have a great time with your family and friends.

It's that time of year again the season of joy, goodwill and of course the GHS Seasonal Newsletter which I hope you enjoy and find informative.

2022 has been a very unusual year, it started with Covid-19 still prevalent with a variety of restrictions in place. Thanks to the vaccine we are by and large back to normal, although we still need to be cautious in some circumstances. We have had three Prime Ministers and four Chancellors of the Exchequer and war in Ukraine There were also the Platinum Jubilee celebrations in June and the sad death of Queen Elizabeth II in September, with a period of mourning and the funeral. It still feels odd hearing God save the King. However the Lioness's won the Women's European Football Championship Cup. Fingers crossed for England in The World Cup in Qatar.

On the domestic front we have seen the rapid rise in energy prices, interest rates and inflation which is making life very difficult for many people. As if that was not enough, there are strikes on the railway, the tubes, the post and nurses strikes planned for December.

Despite all of this Mary Loftus has continued to work tirelessly for GHS supported by Steve Kerridge the Chair of GHS.

It has been, as always, a busy year with a number of new residents moving into to both Glenluce Road and Hatfield Court. Sadly, Joseph McCormick who moved into Glenluce Road in February died in early November which was a shock to us all. Carol Hill moved from Hatfield to be closer to her family in October. We welcomed Steven Allen to Hatfield in February and more recently Roger Humphries also moved into Hatfield, finally Denis Bourg moved into Glenluce in November. Please give a warm welcome to these new residents into the GHS community, I am sure they would be pleased to meet other residents.

As ever John our gardener has ensured that the gardens remain in great condition and we have added two new planters and a compost bin at Hatfield.

You cannot have missed that we have been carrying out cyclical decorations to both Glenluce Road and Hatfield Court and we apologise for and disruption and disturbance during the decorations but it is essential that we continue to maintain our buildings for the future.

The team at Greenwich Housing Society wishes you a very Merry Christmas and all the best for the New Year.

Steve Kerridge (Chair)



*The Management Committee and staff
of Greenwich Housing Society wish
you a very Merry Christmas and all
the best for 2023*

Fire Safety

The Fire Alarm system at Hatfield Court has recently been replaced and we have a new contractor who will service, test and respond to callouts.

As far as staying safe in your own home please take care to turn off your cooker and remove pans from the hob when you finish cooking. Whilst candles look attractive and can provide a nice aroma we urge not to use real candles in your home as they are very high risk, both Mary and Steve have been involved in their careers in serious fires caused by candles.

It goes without saying that all common areas at both Hatfield Court and Glenluce Road are strictly no smoking.

Security

It is important for the safety and security of all residents that you do not let any unknown persons into the blocks. Remember always ask for some ID if you are letting people into your home. Don't be afraid to refuse entry.

Mould, damp and condensation

You will have seen in the press about the death of a two year old from a reaction to mould in a Housing Association property. We have received a letter from the Regulator of Social Housing reminding us of our responsibilities as social landlords. There are many reasons for damp and mould, in some cases it may be a failure of a building component such as the roof or an undetected leak, another cause is condensation. It is important that you ventilate your home properly, especially whilst cooking, after having showers (please use the fans in the bathroom and kitchen) or when drying clothes.

If you spot or suspect damp or mould please contact Mary Loftus and we will arrange to inspect and follow up.

Household Rubbish

At this time of year the rubbish collection service will be disrupted and take place on different days. Please ensure you double bag any food waste that is disposed of in the bin container - please do not leave any items outside the bin store or against the blue recycle bin as the refuse collectors will not remove these items.

The normal refuse collection day for both Hatfield Court and Glenluce Road is **Monday**

Over the seasonal period the collections will be on **Wednesday 28th December 2023 and Wednesday 4th January 2023**

If a bin collection is missed, you can call Greenwich Council on 0208 854 8888 or it is possible to report it online at: -

https://www.royalgreenwich.gov.uk/info/200171/recycling_and_rubbish/663/report_bin_or_collection_problems



Rent Statements

We have been producing rent statements for you for the past couple of years, they enable you to check that your payments have been received and see the balance on your account. The next statement will be as of 31st December 2022 which you will receive in January 2022.

Rent Increase

Each year we review the rents and service costs that we charge you. The amount of rent increase is governed by the Regulator of Social Housing, the service costs are for items such as electricity, gardening and window cleaning these are based on the charges we pay for. This year the Government has placed a cap on rents of 7% for social housing. The Management Committee of GHS will be setting the rents in January 2023 which will apply from April 2023. We will write to you with the details in February.

Washing Machines and Driers

If you use the washing machines or driers at Hatfield Court could make sure that you clean the soap trays out and the filter on the drier. This will ensure that it is ready for use by the next person.

Emergency Call Outs

We know that emergencies happen from time to time and we always respond quickly. However, if it is something that could wait until normal working hours, such as a failed light bulb or blocked sink it will save GHS considerable sums as we currently pay £300.00 for an out hours call. Don't hesitate to call us if there is a risk to life or a serious Health and Safety issue.

One particular problem has been with the intercom, where a fault has been reported but when an operative attended could find no fault. Please ask one of your neighbours to check the intercom and make sure that the handset is sitting properly in the cradle.

Home Visits

We need out carry regular checks of our properties we plan to carry out an annual inspection of your home in the spring of 2023, Mary will make appointments individually well in advance.

Christmas and New Year Arrangements 2022/2023

Gas and Electrical – British Gas



Call 0333 202 9797



You will need your postcode and the first line of your address

We also have electrical cover with British Gas you will need to provide your address and the agreement Number 911000729101

This information is displayed on the noticeboard in each scheme.

Mary Loftus – Mary can be contacted on the number you have for her, but again only if it is something serious.

Energy and the Cost of Living

This is a major cause of concern for everyone at the moment, below we provide some tips to keep your bills low. The Government has provided some additional help for everyone through The Energy Bills Support Scheme (EBSS), this amounts to £400 paid over six months, your energy provider will apply this automatically to your account, you should not have to do anything. Please be aware of scams do not respond to unsolicited texts, telephone calls or emails.

In addition, for those in receipt of the State Pension there is the winter fuel allowance. There may be other help available if you are in receipt of Housing Benefit, Universal Credit or other benefits. There are plenty of agencies available for energy advice including Citizens Advice, Age Concern and your energy provider can also help. Money Box on Radio 4 with Martin Lewis often has good advice and ways to save money and manage your finances. Of course feel free to speak to Mary or Steve as we will be able to give you some pointers. www.britishgas.co.uk/energy/energy-saving/energy-saving-tips.html

Composting

You may have noticed a compost bin in the garden at Hatfield recently courtesy of GHS. Here are a few tips and guidelines if you wish to use it.

The best way is to add thin layers of green then brown then green waste.

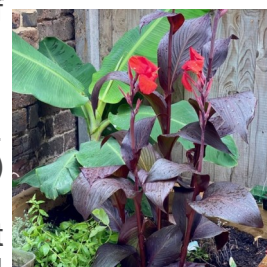
Fruit and vegetable scraps are great (green). Thin shrub and hedge prunings (brown).

Grass cuttings (green). Torn up newspaper, cardboard or paper shreadings.(brown)

Egg shells, coffee grounds and tea leaves are great.

No meat or fish as they encourage vermin, Avoid leaves they are slower to compost and should be done separately. Potato skins are ok but sometimes take root! Avoid pet droppings and perennial weeds. Please no plastic bags in either the compost or the Green Bin.

If you are in doubt use the council bins or ask John. Happy composting!



Christmas Wreaths and Hampers.

We hope you have enjoyed the Christmas wreaths that we have put up on the front doors, these were made for us by The Blackheath Flower Club, so a big thank-you to them.

If all goes well we will be hand delivering hampers for everyone before Christmas.

Useful Information



Royal Borough of Greenwich

www.royalgreenwich.gov.uk

Local Councillors

Cllr Christine St. Matthew-Daniel

Cllr Leo Fletcher

Cllr Mariam Lolavar

Your MP is

Matthew Pennycook

Transport for London

<https://tfl.gov.uk>

Marks and Spencer Stratheden Parade Opening Hours

Friday 23 rd	7.00am - 11.00pm
Christmas Eve	7.00am - 7.00pm
Christmas Day	Closed
Boxing Day	Closed
Tuesday 27th	8.00pm - 9.30pm
Wednesday 28th	8.00pm - 9.30pm



What have GHS has achieved this year

- Let 5 flats
- Replaced the fire alarm system in Glenluce and changed the servicing arrangements
- Ensured the gardens continue to be well maintained as a resource for everyone.
- Carried out cyclical decorations at Glenluce and Hatfield
- Continued to provide half yearly rent statements and two newsletters.
- Visited every week to ensure the safety and well being of residents.

Laundry

At Hatfield Court we provide a Washing Machine and a Tumble Dryer for the use of all residents in the block, these are currently coin operated. The contract for these machines is coming to an end in October 2023 and we are looking at alternatives for the future as the current arrangements mean that GHS loses money on the contract.

We will continue to provide both a washing machine and tumble dryer for residents, but will be exploring a variety of options.

- To supply machines under the same arrangement with both being operated by coins.
- To supply machines under the same arrangement but operated by a prepaid card.
- To provide the machines with no cost to the user, but to recover the cost through an additional service charge payable by all residents of Hatfield.

In the new year we will be talking to suppliers and will be able to provide further details and costings, once we have all the information we will consult with residents for your views on the options.

Gas Safety Inspections

Please ensure you book your gas safety inspection appointment as soon as you receive the reminder letter - it is your responsibility to ensure the date of the appointment is before the expiry of the certificate. GHS is legally required to ensure that the tests are carried annually and on time.

Any problems please let Mary know.

Smoke/Carbon monoxide detectors

Please ensure you regularly test your monitors - if you are unsure how to do this please have a chat with Mary.

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