



One year in,  
more tenants  
are Quids In  
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# Free laptops on loan

**Do you need a computer, but you don't have the funds to buy a new one? Has your computer broken and you can't afford to fix it? Do the kids need a computer to do their homework?**

You can now loan a computer from Southway for free for up to three months, and we'll also provide you with free Internet access throughout that time.

During the loan you'll be supported by a Southway Digital Champion who will help you if you need to learn how to use it.

## Need digital training?

We're also running another computer course for beginners at Old Moat Sure Start Centre starting in mid January. This is a free 12 week course of 2 hour weekly sessions.

If you're interested in loaning a laptop or signing up to our course, contact [connect2southway@southwayhousing.co.uk](mailto:connect2southway@southwayhousing.co.uk) or call the Customer Hub on 0161 448 4200 and ask to speak to Joe Sandwick, our Digital Inclusion Officer.

## Thank you

**Firstly, we want to say a big thank you to all our customers for bearing with us while we've been updating the landlord service. We are aware that the extended waiting times in our Customer Hub have caused issues for some customers and we appreciate your patience with the call queues, which are now gradually improving.**

More of you contact us in alternative ways now, and many have told us they've found these services better suited to their needs – so here's a reminder of the many ways to access Southway services which you might find preferable to a phone call:

- We are available 8.30am-5.30pm to deal with enquiries

over **social media** (we are @SouthwayHousing), where we respond immediately. It means you can chat to us from your laptop or mobile while you go about your day.

- You can **email us** on [connect2southway@southwayhousing.co.uk](mailto:connect2southway@southwayhousing.co.uk). This way we can redirect your enquiry to the right department and respond with all the information you need. It's also easy for you to attach any documents and photos we might need for reference.
- We've seen more and more of you sign up to the **tenant portal** on our website [www.southwayhousing.co.uk](http://www.southwayhousing.co.uk) which we've continued to improve. All your basic transactions – booking repairs, paying rent, checking your account – can be done here in minutes, and without you needing to fit in with our office hours. There's also information here that you

can't access anywhere else, such as your up-to-date rent account balance.

For how to register see our Online Guide at [www.southwayhousing.co.uk/onlineguide](http://www.southwayhousing.co.uk/onlineguide).

If you've forgotten any of your log in details, let us know and we will send them to you.

- Our Learning Hubs, Community Centres and office all have free Wi-Fi and computers, plus staff and volunteers on hand to help with a range of queries. We have one in each local area: Burnage, Didsbury, Chorlton and Old Moat. Check page 5 for contact details.

Of course, we are always here to talk to those of you who really need a phone call, via our Customer Hub 0161 448 4200. Use the menu to pick the service you need.

# Adaptations

Our Asset and Property Services teams are now carrying out major and minor adaptation work to properties, not only for Southway residents but also residents of other Registered Social Landlords.

Over the past few months we've carried out many different disabled adaptations, from wet rooms to complete kitchen replacements.

We recently replaced a kitchen for Chorlton tenants Karen and Peter Farnen, who are both wheelchair users.

Before the installation Karen was worried about the extent of the work, but she and Peter were so thrilled with their new kitchen that they wanted to tell other Southway residents how smooth and successful it all was.



Southway carries out adaptations on behalf of MSIL (Manchester's Service for Independent Living). Any residents who feel that they are in need of a disabled adaptation must be self-referred through to their primary assessment team, who can be reached on 0161 234 500.

If successful cases are individually assessed by MSIL, who will provide a specification to Southway.

## How do I bleed my radiator?

**Bleeding your radiators is important. It removes pockets of air that are trapped in the central heating system, helping your radiator to run efficiently and effectively.**

### Step 1 – Turn on the heat

Switch your heating on so that all the radiators in your home start to warm up. You'll need to wait until they are fully heated before moving on to the next stage.

### Step 2 - Identify radiators which need bleeding

Check each radiator in your home to make sure all parts of the radiator are radiating heat. Be careful not to burn yourself.

If a radiator has cool spots along the top of the panel, you'll need to bleed the radiator to remove the air pocket inside.

### Step 3 - Prepare

Before you start to bleed a radiator, make sure your central heating system is switched back off. You'll need the radiators to be cool enough to handle.

Some modern radiators can be bled with a screwdriver. However, for most types of radiator you'll need to use a radiator key. Radiator keys can be purchased cheaply from any homeware or DIY shop.

### Step 4 - Bleed the radiators

- Attach the radiator key into the square section in the centre of the radiator valve
- Use a cloth or strong tissue paper to hold the radiator key



- Have another cloth under the radiator valve to catch any drips
- Turn the radiator key slowly in an anti-clockwise direction
- If air is escaping you'll hear a hissing sound
- Once the air has escaped, liquid will start to leak from the valve
- Close the valve quickly by turning the radiator key

### Step 5 - Check the pressure of your heating system

Once you've bled the radiators, check the pressure gauge on your boiler. If the pressure is too low, you'll need to repressurise the boiler.



# Join our Survey Group you could win £100!

We're still looking for people to help Southway improve its services.

All we ask is for you to complete an online survey three times per year.

All new members will receive a memory stick and after completing all three surveys you will be entered in to an annual prize draw to win **£100**.

If this is of interest to you, please send your email address to Tina Murphy at [t.murphy@southwayhousing.co.uk](mailto:t.murphy@southwayhousing.co.uk) with "Armchair Survey" as the subject.



## Get Involved!

**There are lots of ways to get involved at Southway. These range from attending meetings and events to giving feedback online.**

At the moment we are particularly looking for new people to join our Scrutiny Panel.

The Tenant Scrutiny Panel has been reported on in this newsletter many times and is still doing an excellent job of reviewing our services and making recommendations for changes. The Panel wants to ensure that Southway tenants receive the best possible service and that value for money is achieved.

The Panel is currently looking at how we communicate with our tenants regarding rent statements and rent arrears. They will produce a report detailing all their findings and recommendations next year. There is a lot of work involved and the Panel usually meets every fortnight.



If this is something you would like to be involved in, or if you would just like to observe a meeting, please contact Maureen Ward. All out of pocket expenses will be paid and lunch is provided. Training can be provided.

If you don't think Tenant Scrutiny is for you, but would like to get involved in another way, please get in touch.

**We look forward to hearing from you soon!**

Email Maureen Ward at [connect2southway@southwayhousing.co.uk](mailto:connect2southway@southwayhousing.co.uk) or call the Customer Hub.

# Winter treats at Buckthorn House

This month at Buckthorn House we're holding a Winter Activity Event. Join us on Wednesday 21st December, 4pm - 6pm for treats, arts and crafts, homemade soup and hot drinks. We'll also be selling handmade baby clothes, jams and chutneys, and cookies and truffles wrapped up nicely for stocking fillers, and holding a general jumble sale for last minute presents.

We are closed from 24th December - 6th January and reopening with our normal schedule from 9th January:

- Monday 11am – 1pm Food Bank collection point
- Tuesdays 10am - 1pm Taste Testers food club £2/week



- Wednesdays 10am - 1pm Painting and Drawing
- Thursdays COMING SOON Quids In food club
- Fridays 10am - 12pm Brew & Browse Internet Café
- Fridays 1 - 3pm Knitting and Crochet

We also have more computer courses coming up for all abilities.



For more information please contact Joe Sandwick at connect2southway@southwayhousing or drop in to Buckthorn and leave your name and contact details.

**Buckthorn House**, 2-4 Buckthorn Close, Chorlton M21 7UG

## Opportunities at the Learning Hubs

**Looking for work? Need advice, to learn new skills, or help with money?**

Southway sponsors Learning Hubs that can help you to get into work, volunteering and training opportunities.

Whether you have no work history, are starting over after a long time in one job or are anywhere in between, the Information Advice and Guidance workers are qualified, experienced and able to help.

You can call or pop in to book an appointment:

### CHORLTON

BMCA Learning Hub

23 Mersey Bank Avenue,  
Chorlton M21 7NT

📞 0161 446 4806 option 2

🌐 [www.barlowmoorca.co.uk](http://www.barlowmoorca.co.uk)

📘 BMCALtd

🐦 @BMCALtd



### WITHINGTON/ OLD MOAT

Old Moat Learning Hub

'Community Minded'  
Old Moat Sure Start Centre  
Old Moat Lane, Withington M20 1DE

📞 01614462131 or 07718286250

🌐 [www.community-minded.co.uk](http://www.community-minded.co.uk)

📘 Old Moat Learning Hub



All our sessions are free! For further information please speak to a member of the team at Westcroft Community Centre, we are happy to help.

## Monday

Coffee Morning **9.30am – 11.30am**

ESOL English classes for beginners **1pm – 3pm**

## Tuesday

Internet Café **10am – 2.30pm**

Computers for Beginners **10am – 12 noon**

UK online session/ IT Support **12:30pm – 2:30pm**



Working Well **9am – 4pm**  
(referral/appointment required)  
Age Friendly drop-in session  
**10am – 1pm**

## Wednesday

Quids In food project **10.30am – 3pm**

Knitting session **1pm – 3pm**

## Thursday

Internet Café **10am – 2.30pm**

Gardening club **2pm – 3.30pm**

Job Club **12:30pm – 2.30pm**



## Friday

Sew What, sewing session  
**9.30am – 2.30pm**

Self Help services (referral/  
appointment required)  
**9am – 4pm**

**24 - 26 Westcroft Road, Burnage, Manchester, M20 6EF.**

**Email: westcroftcommunitycentre@gmail.com**

**Tel: 0161 448 8232**

## New at Westcroft

### Sporting memories

The Sporting Memories Network (SMN) will be delivering weekly sessions for residents at Westcroft Community Centre in the New Year.

SMN provides free training and resources to help organisations run activities that improve the mental and physical well-being of older people (50+) and those living with dementia, by tapping into their passion, knowledge and love of sport as a player, fan and spectator.

Using iconic images, reports and memorabilia to unlock long-term memories of watching or playing sport, the approach promotes socialising, communication and cognitive functioning. It also often rekindles an urge to take part in sports, games and gentle exercise which, where possible, are incorporated in the sessions.

Sessions will rely heavily upon the assistance of committed individuals who support the work. All volunteers will receive training, resources and support throughout, making it a great opportunity to build skills.

For further information on how to attend or volunteer, please contact Matthew Barker on 0161 448 8232 or email [m.barker@southwayhousing.co.uk](mailto:m.barker@southwayhousing.co.uk).

### Yoga

New sessions now running on Thursday evenings 7.30 - 8.30pm.

For all ages and abilities – all welcome. £5 per session.

**No need to book, simply drop in on Thursday. For more information contact Jenni on 07950 657264.**



# Activities for Over-50s



At Grove Lane Community Centre in Didsbury we hold weekly and monthly activities as well as bigger events throughout the year aimed at the over-50s. All are free and open to all Southway tenants.

## Armchair exercise class 50+ – Tuesdays 10.30 - 11.30am

This course is designed to address problems of age-related physiological changes. It concentrates on good alignment in sitting and standing, two-way stretch of the spine, the head-neck-back relationship, and balance.

## Tai Chi class 50+ – Wednesdays 10.30 - 11.30am

Tai Chi is a martial art that focuses on mental and spiritual aspects integrated into movement. Benefits of Tai Chi for seniors include:

- Relieves physical effects of stress.
- Improves lower body and leg strength.
- Helps with arthritis pain.
- Reduces blood pressure.
- Enhances mental capacity and concentration.
- Improves balance and stability.
- Promotes fast recovery from strokes and heart attacks.
- Improves conditions of Alzheimer's, Multiple Sclerosis and Parkinson's.

## IT Course/ Drop-in – Fridays 10.30am -12.30pm

A seven-week course started in November giving people a chance to brush up on IT skills, learn how to get the best out of devices, how to stay safe online, how to shop online, edit photos and everything you need to know about social media and email.

Even if you have missed the course you can still carry on learning as the 'Digital Hub' will

be open every Friday morning at Grove Lane from 10.30am -12.30pm.

## U3A groups – Various times

University of the Third Age (U3A) is a unique and exciting self-help educational movement for people no longer in full-time work. It gives you the opportunity to pursue learning for sheer enjoyment, to share learning experiences and to make new friendships.

### U3A groups held at Grove Lane:

- **Gardening group** – 2nd Thursday of the month. 1.30 - 3.30pm.
- **Poetry** – 3rd Monday of the month. 1.30 - 3.30pm.
- **Music** - 3rd Thursday of the month. 1.30 - 3.30pm.
- **Book Club** – 4th Thursday of the month. 1.30 - 3.30pm.

For more information, contact Joanne Brown at Grove Lane on 0161 446 2015.

## Age Friendly update

In partnership with Manchester School of Architecture, Southway has continued to roll out the Age Friendly Burnage Programme. Over the last few months we've held several community events and plan more for 2017. If you would like to be informed directly about upcoming events, please let us know.

The team is currently conducting research and wants to speak to as many residents as possible to hear views and ideas about Burnage. This can be done either in person, or in writing by completing the Age Friendly Burnage Neighbourhood Survey which will be posted out in the new year.

The established resident-led board meets every six weeks and has already funded seven projects

developed and delivered by local older people, ranging from dance classes to a computer graphics course.



If you are a Burnage resident and would like to find out more, take part in a project or even develop one of your own, call into our informal drop-in sessions for a chat. They are held every Tuesday morning 10am -12pm at Westcroft Community Centre, Westcroft Rd, Burnage, M20 6EF.

Alternatively contact Catherine Morris at Southway at [connect2southway@southwayhousing.co.uk](mailto:connect2southway@southwayhousing.co.uk), or Kat Wong at Manchester University at [k.wong@mmu.ac.uk](mailto:k.wong@mmu.ac.uk) or on 07973 973 183.

# Oasis Close: a haven of new homes

**Moving home can be a stressful experience for anyone, but for older people it can be an even greater upheaval. Welfare Reforms leave increasing numbers of tenants needing to relocate to smaller properties and - in areas with limited affordable options like South Manchester – this often means moving away from family and friends, to flats not suited to older people’s needs.**

Developments like ‘Oasis Close’ however aim to address this issue by providing purpose-built homes for older people in their own neighbourhoods.

Oasis Close is a development of 14 Age Friendly flats in a self-enclosed estate just off the Kingsway Road in Burnage.

One of the main aims of Southway’s Age Friendly developments is helping tenants like Elsie Beadow. Elsie, who is 83, has downsized from a three-bedroom property five minutes from Oasis Close: “I lived in my previous property for 61 years but I have problems, and realistically I needed to downsize. So far I’ve fitted in perfectly and it’s very comfortable. The flat has all the facilities I need – I’m lucky to have one with a wet room - plus no stairs!

“It’s a bus stop and a half from where I was so not too far at all and I’ll still have friends nearby. I also know others here – my neighbours are moving next door.”

The site was purpose-designed with the safety, security and involvement of older

residents in mind. By replacing the site with a self-enclosed neighbourhood the Close helps create a sense of community and prevents isolation. Before redevelopment the area suffered from fly tipping and antisocial behaviour; the changes should bring benefits to the whole community.

“It’s very quiet. I feel safe and I like the high surrounding fencing - we’re as secure as you could make us here.”

All flats have been allocated to Southway downsizers, meaning those previously affected by the ‘bedroom tax’ are helped and in turn larger family homes are freed up; seven 3-bed and seven 2-bed properties have been made available.

These investments are vital to areas such as South Manchester. As Elsie comments: “To feel provided for is important, as unfortunately we do not live in a very Age Friendly society. I am over the moon to be here.”

Karen Mitchell, Chief Executive of



Southway, said: “With over 50% of our tenants over 50, helping people like Elsie find a secure home is a priority; we are proud to be investing in housing and communities in a way that improves older people’s lives. We always aim to genuinely listen to the views and needs of tenants and shape our services around them, which this build is a credit to.

**“Manchester needs a range of genuinely affordable options that address the variety of needs of the people that live here, and our new build programme will continue to deliver them.”**



# 'Quids In' birthday

In October the Merseybank 'Quids In' food club celebrated its first year. At a special birthday event members watched cooking demonstrations by community chef Maz Linford from Fareshare and enjoyed sampling the delicious healthy dishes she created.

All used ingredients that are normally available at the shop and recipe sheets were given out so that members could easily recreate the dishes at home. Children also had fun decorating lanterns.

The club, which has over 100 members, owes much of its success to the dedicated team of volunteers who run the service. They were all presented with flowers to thank them for their hard work over the last year.

## Three more clubs

Our second 'Quids In' food club in Burnage, which opens every Wednesday at the Westcroft Centre, has also been extremely popular. Due to the level of interest we are opening three more clubs, at Buckthorn House, Burnage Community Centre and Old Moat Children's Centre.

As with the other clubs, members pay £2 a week and can select at least 10 items from a range of foods including chilled and fresh produce. You must also be claiming at least some Housing Benefit. We expect a lot of interest and places will be limited, so joining early is recommended.



We are also looking for volunteers to help run the clubs. If you are looking for work this is a great opportunity to add to your CV and improve employment chances.

To join, enquire about volunteering or find out more contact Elaine Wilkinson at Southway via [connect2southway@southwayhousing.co.uk](mailto:connect2southway@southwayhousing.co.uk) or the Customer Hub number.



# Benefit Cap update

**In July 2013, the UK Government introduced a cap on the total amount of Benefit that working age people could receive.**

The cap was set at £500 per week for families (including couples and lone parents) and £350 per week for single adults.

If your total weekly income from the Benefits was more than £500 per week (couples and families), £350 per week (single adults) and you were not claiming a Benefit that exempt you from Benefit Cap, your Housing Benefit payments were reduced to bring you down to your cap level.

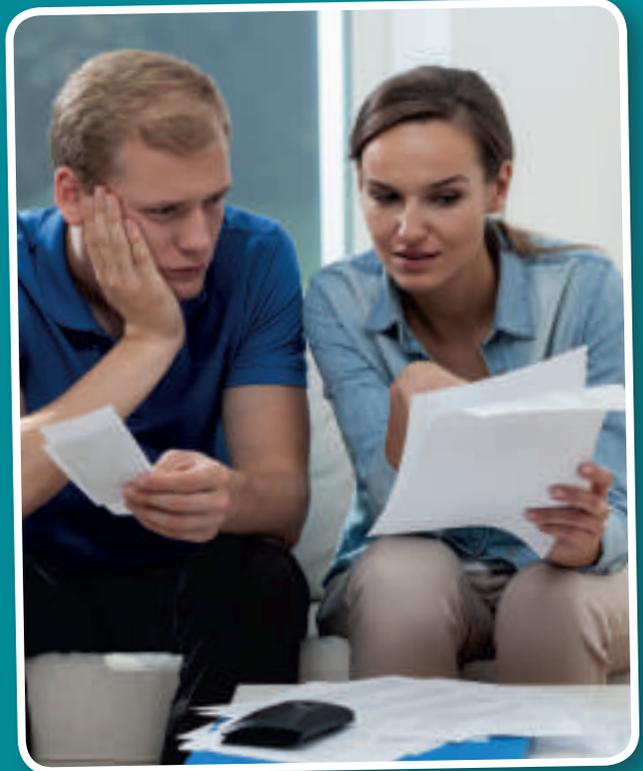
For those who were claiming Universal Credit, their Universal Credit was reduced to bring them within the cap level.

## **Changes from November 7th 2016**

On the 7th November, the level of the Benefit Cap was reduced again.

The change means that the maximum Benefit income people of working age can now claim per week is:

- **£384.62 (couples and families)**
- **£257.69 (single people without children)**



Those who have had their Benefits capped previously will be affected. If you are claiming Housing Benefit, Manchester City Council will have written to you to inform you of the new cap to your Benefits.

If you have lost more than £25 a week because of the change, you will have been sent a form to apply for a Discretionary Housing Payment. When you receive this form it is important that you complete it and return it as soon as possible to receive help with your rent.

If you have lost less than £25 per week, you can still be considered for a Discretionary Housing Payment. Those who are already receiving a discretionary housing payment do not need to return the form as it will be adjusted to take the change into account.



# Rewards for being wildlife-friendly



**Have you seen a hedgehog snuffling around your garden recently? Do you like seeing birds and butterflies fluttering past outside your window?**

Some of our best-loved garden wildlife - including house sparrows and hedgehogs - is in trouble, due to a loss of places for them to safely breed and find food. So, Southway has partnered with the RSPB to show you how easy it is to give nature a home in your outdoor space... plus we want to reward you for your efforts!

Earlier this year, together with Manchester City Council, we created two new wildlife gardens at Fletcher Moss in Didsbury and at Chorlton Water Park. The gardens are designed to showcase easy, fun and inexpensive ways you can make your space more wildlife-friendly, whether you have a few flower pots, a balcony or a big garden.

Using the ideas from the gardens and through the RSPB's Giving Nature a Home website ([www.rspb.org.uk/homes](http://www.rspb.org.uk/homes)), we're giving you the chance to earn rewards for completing projects that will give wildlife a safe place to breed, feed and thrive.

On the Giving Nature a Home website you can create your own personal plan and find instructions on how to complete a range of tasks. As you complete tasks, you can earn prizes such as a garden wildlife book, pin badge and a variety of homes for nature such as bat and bird boxes.

All you need to do is record the projects you've completed on the website, and then share pictures of your achievements! Please send your photos to [Mersey.Valley@rspb.org.uk](mailto:Mersey.Valley@rspb.org.uk) or share them on Facebook or Twitter using #wildsouthway. You can also call 0207 054 9271 to request a pack to be sent out to you through the post.

Don't forget to keep an eye out for details of the free 'Giving Nature a Home' workshops taking place in 2017 - these will be a great opportunity to learn how easy it is to make your outdoor space even better for wildlife, plus you can make a home to take away.

If you don't have an outdoor space, don't worry - there are lots of opportunities for you to be involved in other ways by volunteering some time at a local green space to earn your rewards - just email [Mersey.Valley@rspb.org.uk](mailto:Mersey.Valley@rspb.org.uk) or contact Southway's Environmental team for more information.



The Colly family giving nature a home.



# Christmas on a Budget



Christmas is a time when we can feel under pressure to spend. But for those who overspend, a merry Christmas can result in an unhappy New Year, burdened with debts that take months, or even years, to repay.

Here are some tips to help get you through:

- Work out what you can afford to spend and stick to it. Remember you still have other bills to budget for like rent, Council Tax and energy.
- See what can be done without spending. Making your own cards, decorations and gifts saves loads and can be great fun. Time spent together as a family will be remembered in future. Expensive toys are soon forgotten.
- Make sure you don't overdraw without talking to your bank first. Unauthorised overdrafts

are horrendously expensive, even if only in the red by a few pounds. Most banks charge £5 per day and some charge another £5 for each transaction.

- If you do have to borrow, make sure you know the full costs involved and can afford the repayments. Consider whether your income is likely to drop and if you would still be able to make the payments. Late payment fees increase the debt significantly and can make it unmanageable.
- Borrowing from South Manchester Credit Union can be a much better option and

they can even help you save for next Christmas. They also have saver accounts for children.

Southway has its own Solutions loan scheme which may also be worth considering. This allows you to borrow up to £300 and is also administered by the credit union. At 42.6%, the APR is slightly higher than their own rates.

**To enquire about a Solutions loan, see [www.southwayhousing.co.uk/solutions](http://www.southwayhousing.co.uk/solutions) or call 0161 448 4200.**

**To speak to South Manchester Credit Union directly, call 0161 448 0200.**

## Young tenants make an impact

### Graffiti Project

The Environmental team has been working with local schools to develop a green space on Holcombe Gardens in Burnage. The schools came up with several ideas of how the space could be designed so that students could use it as an outdoor classroom known as "The Green Room".

To brighten up the location, six students from Burnage Academy spent a day with Street Style Surgery graffiti artist Jamie Rennie, spray painting the wall with a design around nature. Passers-by commented on how nice the artwork looked and how it enhanced the area, with some rating it 12/10!



There is more work to be done in this space by the environmental team and the whole thing should be completed by Spring - watch this space!

### Work Experience

Southway took on eight work experience placements in August for a three-month programme in partnership with Manchester College. When the programme came to an end, the Property Services team kept one placement on for an extra three months, and the digital inclusion apprentice continued to volunteer with Southway to further develop her skills.

This has been the second year that the work experience project in partnership with Manchester City College, which gives different working opportunities to local young people in the Southway neighbourhoods, has been offered.

If you are a young person and would like help finding work experience, to improve your CV, or any other careers-related advice, contact or visit your local learning hub (see page 5).

# Pub lunch club



**A new pub lunch club is being launched in Old Moat in January as a result of work being done to help older people remain independent and active and to connect with their community.**

In 2015, the Old Moat Naturally Occurring Retirement Community (NORC) project was launched by Southway to develop projects, systems and activities to help older people to stay engaged and connected to their community. A NORC is a community which was not originally built for older people, but that over the years has become home to a lot of older residents.



When we talked to people in Old Moat they said having access to regular local activities was important. They also wanted to explore the possibility of developing a Peer Support Network.

## **They said:**

- There are lots of single, older people who need change and want to 'get out' and meet people
- We want to recreate a sense of neighbouring
- We need to find out where people live or how to make contact
- There is a lack of central 'club' spaces for people to meet

- There is no 'natural' centre to Old Moat, so no central shops where people could meet
- Access to transport is still an issue, particularly at the weekend.



Quite a few people wanted to be involved in the support network, but felt concerned about their skills and were not sure what they could contribute. To help improve people's confidence we offered Community Organiser training sessions. Nineteen older people took part in all or part of the training and the feedback was very positive.

'I feel respected and that people have listened to me when talking about the Peer Support Network and other NORC projects.'

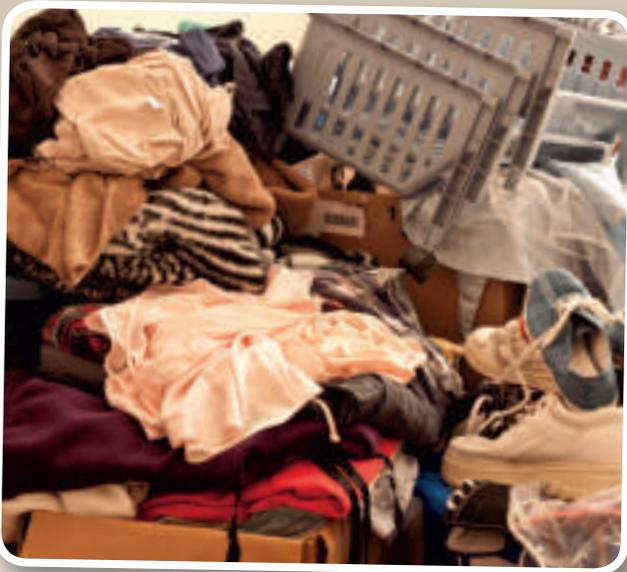
Following the training, the group decided that their first task would be to develop a pub lunch club, which will meet monthly in the Old Moat/Withington area from January 2017.

**If you would like more information on how to get involved with the peer support network, about the NORC project, or when and where the pub group will meet, please contact Cathy Ayrtton at [connect2southway@southwayhousing.co.uk](mailto:connect2southway@southwayhousing.co.uk) or call the Customer Hub.**

# Tidy Homes Tidy Minds

## A project by Southway's Community Support Team

We recognise that some people living in our homes reach a point where they require intensive support, and many have lost the help they had been receiving from other agencies.



Southway's Community Support Team provides one-to-one support to adults and families who will benefit the most from their involvement. The Officers dedicate time to sorting out a situation, working with other agencies, using specialist knowledge and experience, and being fully involved in a case so that it can be dealt with sensitively and effectively.

Our Support Officers specialise in particular subjects, attend training and keep up to date with information, legislation and approaches to working. They provide all-round support in often complex situations to help people live independently, aiming for them to manage their homes themselves, to get support in their neighbourhood and live fulfilled lives.

The Tidy Homes Tidy Minds project deals with properties affected by hoarding. It aims to make a real long-term difference to the person's life. The approach equips the individual with skills and coping techniques to maintain their homes in the future, as well as providing a better and safer living environment.

### What is hoarding?

**Hoarding is defined by the NHS as:**

"Excessively acquiring items that appear of little or no value and not being able to throw them away, resulting in unmanageable amounts of clutter".

Compulsive hoarding can be a distressing and debilitating psychological condition.

Since 2013 hoarding disorder has been recognised as a Mental Health condition. Hoarding is not a condition anyone is born with - it is most often linked to circumstances that have happened in a person's life.

A property affected by hoarding causes a fire, health and safety risk to the occupants, the property, neighbours and neighbouring properties. Some properties affected by hoarding may be clean and tidy but still cause a fire, health and safety risk, as exits may be blocked and rooms cannot be used for the intended purpose, e.g. a kitchen or bathroom.

High profile cases have highlighted the need for agencies to work in partnership to tackle poor property condition and hoarding specifically. Many agencies feel powerless and lack the specialist knowledge to intervene successfully; the threat of enforcement can often deter individuals from engaging.

### How can we help?

Our in-house Community Support Team is expert in engaging tenants suffering with a Hoarding Disorder. Over a two-year period, we have successfully helped 13 tenants to deal with their hoarding behaviour, using practical and emotional support to cut the clutter in their property.

We use internationally recognised methods to classify the extent of the hoard, setting and agreeing an action plan and offering practical support. The Support Officers have been trained

to help the individual understand what makes it difficult to throw things away and the reasons why the clutter has built up.

While we are clear that the property condition must be improved, practical support is provided to reduce the hoard. We work with the individual to dispose of items to either tips, charity shops or recycling schemes. We place importance on the responsibility of the individual for clearing the clutter from their home, working with the Officer as well as completing tasks set for them to do independently.

The Support Officers work in partnership with the Greater Manchester Fire Service when inspecting

the property to rate the fire risk.

**The proven benefits of the project are:**

- **Reduction in fire, health and safety risks**
- **Working with people whose health and wellbeing may prevent them from accessing traditional services**
- **Addressing unmet needs within the community, and working with people who don't have access to other support (family / agency)**
- **Helping people remain independent and in their own homes**

## CASE STUDY

Working with Adult Social Services, our Support Officer met Mr X who was in his 60s and suffering with early symptoms of dementia.

The issues were hoarding and poor condition of the property which was assessed as high risk of a fire. In addition, Mr X did not have basic facilities for day-to-day living, for example he slept on a sofa. It was clear that Mr X could not cope and needed help.

The main aim was to get his bedroom sorted and make it into what it was intended for, and to ensure that he had basic needs met as care services couldn't get in to attend to his health needs.

Mr X had many items that he had collected over a long period as well as a mountain of cold calling cards, mail order catalogues and letters. He cooperated from the start and made good progress with the involvement of family members who helped to buy essential items for his home.

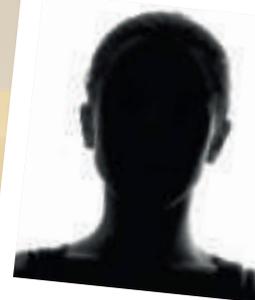
The process did take time, more than seven months to get the property into a condition where repair work could be carried out and

Mr X could receive the care services he needed. The bedroom is now cleared and re-decorated with new carpet, a bed and other furniture. The kitchen has a washer/dryer, new fridge-freezer and cooker, and in the front room the old sofa has been disposed of and Mr X now has a comfy two-seater.

As well as the new items purchased by the family, our Support Officer assisted Mr X with items that had been left in empty properties and with clearing rubbish and other big items from the property.

Before ending the support, the Fire Service returned to reassess the fire risk which they found is now low to medium and our Support Officer ensured that care services are going to continue to meet Mr X's health and wellbeing needs.

If you or someone you know is affected by a hoarding disorder, please contact Southway's Customer Hub and ask about the help we provide. Please note the tenant/s does need to give their consent or engage with support offered.



If you would like this information in another language or style please contact us.

**Tel:** 0161 448 4200 **Fax:** 0161 448 4334 **Textphone:** 0161 448 4349

**Email:** connect2southway@southwayhousing.co.uk **Web:** www.southwayhousing.co.uk

**SMS:** 07554 400781 (include your address and no more than 160 characters please)

للحصول على هذه المعلومات بأي لغة أو بالبرايل أو بالحروف الكبيرة أو على شريط الرجاء الإتصال برقم الهاتف الموجود أسفله.

### Arabic

এই তথ্যগুলো অন্যান্য ভাষায়, ব্রেইলে, বড় অক্ষরে অথবা সিডিতে পেতে চাইলে দয়া করে নীচে দেওয়া নম্বরে টেলিফোন করুন।

### Bangla

如欲索取這資料以任何語言或盲人用點字、大字印刷編制的版本或錄音帶，請致電下列號碼。

### Chinese

لطفاً برای دریافت این اطلاعات به زبان های دیگر، به خط بریل (خط ویژه افراد نابینا)، چاپ درشت و یا بر روی نوار با شماره تلفن زیر تماس بگیرید.

### Farsi

Pour recevoir ces informations dans d'autres langues, en Braille, en gros caractères, ou sur bande sonore, prière d'appeler le numéro de téléphone ci-dessous.

### French

यदि आप यह जानकारी किसी दूसरी भाषा, ब्रेल, बड़े प्रिन्ट या टेप में चाहते हैं तो कृपया नीचे दिये गये नम्बर पर फोन कीजिए।

### Hindi

بۇ بەدەست ھېتائى نام زانیاریانە بە ھەر زمانیک یان بە بریل، پیتی گموره یان لاسەر شریت، نەوا تکایە تەلەفون بگە بۇ نام ژمارەیی خوارەو.

### Kurdish

که چیری تاسی دا مالومات به یو بیله ژبه باندی، یا د رندو خلکو د پاره خاص لیک باندی، به غتو تکو کتبی یا په سی-دی کتبی بند تر لاشه کول غواری نو بیا مهربانی وکړی او مونږ ته په لاندی ورکړی شوی تلفون شمیره زنگ وکړی

### Pushto

Si aad u hesho macluumaadkaani oo ku qoran luqad kasta, tan indhoolaha, daabacaad balaaran ama cajal ku duuban fadlan telefoonka hoos ku qoran:

### Somali

Bu bilgiyi digەر dillerde, Braille olarak , büyük puntoda ya da CD de almak isterseniz lütfen aşağıdaki numarayı arayınız.

### Turkish

یہ معلومات کسی بھی زبان، بریل، بڑے حروف یا ٹیپ پر حاصل کرنے کے لئے براہ کرم ذیل کے نمبر پر فون کیجئے۔

### Urdu

**Southway Housing Trust**  
Aspen House, 825 Wilmslow Road, M20 2SN



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