

Southway Stories

The magazine for Southway Housing customers
Summer 2018

WE'RE MOVING!

See page 3 for details



Our brand new
website is coming



SOUTH MANCHESTER EVENTS CALENDAR

There's always something to do in **South Manchester!**



AUGUST

Fun Day

Thursday 9th August

Drop in 11am-3pm

Westcroft Community Centre

Summer Wild Challenge

Wednesday 15th August

Drop in 10am-3pm

Fletcher Moss Gardens

RSPB event

Apple Day

Saturday 20th October

Drop in 12pm-3pm

Westcroft Community Centre

Autumn Wild Challenge

Wednesday 24th October

Drop in 10-3pm

Fletcher Moss Gardens

RSPB event

Halloween

Wednesday 30th October

Drop in 4pm-6pm

Westcroft Community Centre

Spooky Halloween Event

Tuesday 31st October

Drop in 3.30pm -5.30pm

Arrowfield Estate Play Area

SEPTEMBER

Fun and Feedback

Saturday 1st September

Drop in 11-3pm

Old Moat Lane Green Space

OCTOBER

World Mental Health

Day Walk

Wednesday 10th October

10am-12pm

St Christopher's Church, Old Moat

DECEMBER

Tree Dressing Day

Monday 3rd December

1.30pm-3.30pm (Switch on at 2pm)

Kingsway Crescent Green Space

REGULAR ACTIVITIES THROUGHOUT 2018

Over 50's Coffee Morning

Every other Thursday 10.30am-12pm
St Christopher's Church

Quids In Food Club

Every Wednesday 10am-3pm
Westcroft Community Centre

Quids In Food Club

Every Wednesday 9.30pm-12.30pm
Burnage Community Centre

Quids In Food Club

Every Thursday 10.30am-1.30pm
Brookfield House, Chorlton Park

Quids In Food Club

Every Friday 12pm-3pm
Old Moat Sure Start Centre

Quids In Food Club

Every Friday 12pm-4pm
Pop Up Shop Mersey Bank Parade

**For up to date events news
follow us on Twitter and
Facebook @southwayhousing**



SOUTHWAY HOUSING IS MOVING

We are delighted to announce we are moving home!

We are relocating to Southern Gate; a spot right in the heart of our community.

With our lease expiring at our current office (Aspen House), we saw the opportunity to review customer and community needs and focus on this when planning for new premises.

Our new home Southern Gate, (729 Princess Road) will have space available for local community groups, provide a hub for tenants and offer digital and online self-service facilities for tenant usage, from an ideal location central to our communities.

Office location

**Southern Gate
729 Princess Road
Manchester M20 2LT**

All services will run from our existing office at Aspen House until **15th June 2018.**

We open our new office on **Monday 18th June 2018, opening at 9am.**

All other contact details will remain the same.

We're really looking forward to seeing you at our new home in June and hope you can benefit from the services and community opportunities it will allow.

Benefits:

- Space for community groups to host meetings, classes and other activities (out of hours)
- New ICT suite for tenants to access internet services
- Improved meeting space to deliver support sessions (e.g. money management / getting online)
- Eco-friendly build materials inside and out
- Old furniture such as chairs and shelving donated to local community groups, schools and libraries
- In the heart of our communities for easy customer access. Check out the LOVE THY NEIGHBOURHOOD article on page 14 to read about some of the great projects we have delivered in the last 12 months!



'COOK SMART' SESSIONS HELP YOU SAVE

Whether you're looking to save some money, time, or to get yourself and your family a little healthier, having a few delicious home-cooked meals at your disposal is the best way to achieve your goal.

This June, we've organised a series of cooking demonstrations provided by community chef Maz Linford, who will be showing how to make a range of delicious, easily prepared, cost-saving recipes. Sessions will include lots of money-saving ideas and smart shopping tips and are especially beneficial to 'Quids In' food club members although they are open to all tenants. ***Food samples and refreshments will be available to try.***

Sessions will take place on:

Wednesday 6th June

The Pop Up Shop, 44 Merseybank Avenue, Chorlton at 11am–12pm and 12.30–1.30pm

Thursday 7th June

Brookfield House, Chorlton Park from 9.30am–12.30pm

Thursday 14th June

Old Moat Children's Centre from 9.30am–1pm

Don't worry, there's no need to book, just drop by!
For more information contact **Elaine Wilkinson** at **connect2southway@southwayhousing.co.uk**



BREAKFAST IS SERVED!

This summer Southway is again sponsoring a breakfast club organised by Community Minded and Old Moat Children's Centre for children living in the Old Moat area.

The club will run Monday to Friday throughout the school holidays and will include a programme of activities to keep children busy. The children's 'learn to cook' sessions that have proved popular in the past will also be included.

Contact Old Moat Children's Centre for more information. Email **n.peak@manchester.gov.uk** or call **0161 234 4711**.

Check our website for details of all upcoming events
www.southwayhousing.co.uk/events.



CAREER OPPORTUNITY

We are advertising for an exciting new position based in our Governance Team – and we would like someone living in a Southway property to benefit from this opportunity.

Working with our Board, Executive and Senior management, you will gain invaluable experience in office administration and earn an above living wage salary.

In addition to this, Southway will pay for you to pursue a related Level 4 qualification, equivalent to a degree, while you work.

Similar roles will also soon be available in our Finance and Environment teams.

This role is currently being advertised, with a closing date of 8th June 2018. Please visit our website for further details.

We're still looking for a new member of our People & Places Committee.

If you'd like to help shape your community, and Southway's services, get involved! For details, see our website or contact Matthew Maouati via the Customer Hub.

ONE-TO-ONE CAREER SUPPORT

Westcroft Community Centre has recently been successful in bidding for funding to expand its services.

Westcroft has decided to use the grant to pay for an additional adviser to provide one-to-one digital and employment support for residents.

To access this service, or for any other type of employment information, support or advice, contact **Elaine Wilkinson** at Southway – she will be able to refer or help you. See overleaf for the other services and activities run at Westcroft Community Centre.

DIGITAL AND EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT FOR CLAIMANTS

If a lack of computer experience is making it difficult to search for jobs or claim Universal Credit, please don't suffer in silence – we can help.

We are now running weekly Universal Credit digital sessions at the learning hubs that we support in the community.

Customers can get assistance to complete their UC claim online, as well as support with searching and applying for jobs.

Support can be found:

Thursday mornings at Barlow Moor Community Association

Wednesday afternoons at Old Moat Learning Hub



Southway adviser Joe Sandwick and resident at a UC drop in session.

case, primarily due to support of local residents who provided key witness statements for the court process"

SEE IT, REPORT IT, STOP IT

The Police and Southway work in a close partnership. Criminals who are also Southway tenants will face the prospect of eviction action by the Trust.

Please report any incidents of crime or anti-social behaviour and together we will stop crime and ASB in the Southway area.

You can do so anonymously if you prefer; please note any information given will always be treated in the strictest confidence to protect your identity and support you.

Or you can call **Crimestoppers** on **0800 555111** or use the anonymous form to safely and securely pass information about a crime on **crimestoppers-uk.org/give-information/give-information-online**

WHAT'S ON AT WESTCROFT?



| | 9am | 10am | 11am | 12pm | 1pm | 2pm | 3pm | 4pm | 5pm | 6pm | 7pm |
|-----------|-----|---|------|------|---|-----|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Monday | | Eat, Meet and Greet 9.30am-1pm (Cook and chat over a brew) | | | ESOL English classes 1-3pm (Beginners) | | | | | | |
| Tuesday | | Internet Café 10am-2.30pm | | | | | 24-26 Westcroft Road, Burnage, Manchester M20 6EF T: 0161 448 8232 E: westcroftcommunitycentre@gmail.com | | | | |
| | | Computers for Beginners 10am-12pm | | | | | | | | | |
| | | Age Friendly Drop in 10am-1pm | | | | | | | | | |
| Wednesday | | Quids in Food Club 10.30am-3pm | | | | | | | | | |
| | | Sew What, Sewing Group 9.30am-12.30pm | | | | | | | | | |
| | | Advice & Guidance Drop in Session 10am-1pm | | | | | | | | | |
| Thursday | | Internet Café 10am-2.30pm | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | Job Club 12.30-2.30pm | | | | | | |
| | | Slimming World 10am, 12pm, 5pm and 7pm | | | | | | | | | |
| Friday | | Patch What Sewing Group 9.30am-2.30pm | | | | | | | | | |
| | | Self Help Services (referral/appointment required) | | | | | | | | | |
| Saturday | | Slimming World 8am and 10pm | | | | | | | | | |



UNIVERSAL CREDIT CHANGES



My name is Nadine Currie; as the Universal Credit Officer for Southway Housing my role is to support tenants who need our help to move their benefits across to Universal Credit.

As you may already know, Universal Credit is the largest change to the welfare system in decades. It combines six working-age benefits, such as tax credits and housing benefit, into one simple monthly payment. It'll be a digital service which might be a bit daunting to you, especially if you don't feel very confident with digital technology. Don't worry, that's where we can help you.

Southway Housing have realised that not all our tenants are ready for this change and we have been putting various solutions in place to support you in making this big change.

There are three main areas that we can help support you with:

1. Preparation to move to Universal Credit
2. The move to Universal Credit
3. Management of your Universal Credit account

Each month I am going to share information on each of the three areas; this month I can explain how we can support you with the preparation to move from your current benefits onto Universal Credit.

PREPARATION

Universal Credit

Universal Credit is digitally based which means that the benefit is managed through the internet using your Universal Credit account.

To get this benefit paid to you, you need to be able to use a computer and the internet. If the thought of using a computer scares you, don't worry, there are various solutions dependant on your needs. One of those solutions is that we can support you by providing online training on a system called Learn My Way to help you increase your confidence with the digital world. These courses are all certificated which means that your efforts will be recognised.

Digital Access

Southway know that not all our tenants have access to computers and broadband which is why we have various solutions for you. We can provide:

- Free laptop loan scheme - with free WIFI also available
- Discounted laptops for purchase
- Digital champion volunteers who can help you use computers in your own home

Documentation needed to make a Universal Credit claim

Because there are various documents that you must have depending on the Universal Credit claim you are making, we can provide an online Universal Credit training course (**Learn my way**) which will provide more information. Without these documents your claim will not go through which will affect the payment of your benefits, so this training is both useful and important.



Leaflets

We understand that not all our tenants understand what Universal Credit is about, so we have produced a small, handy leaflet which explains the key changes to the way you receive your existing welfare payments. This has recently been updated and will be available in the Southway reception or from your Community Services Officer.

Universal Credit does mean changes. Change can sometime be a bit nerve-wracking which is why we are here to help and support you in making this change. If you have been asked to change your benefits to Universal Credit and you are not sure if you should, please contact your Community Services Officer.

If you have any problems with your benefits or need debt or employment advice you can also ask for help by contacting the Hub at **connect2southway@southwayhousing.co.uk** or on **0161 448 4200**, and one of the friendly advisors will arrange for the Advice team to contact you with some dates to set up an appointment to have a chat and see how they can help.

NEW WEBSITE

AND TENANT ACCOUNT

COMING SOON!

Southway is pleased to announce that this summer we will be releasing our brand new website and tenant account area. The new website will significantly improve your online experience with us, and provide a much quicker option than calling up!

We've made things as simple as possible and all information you need, such as booking repairs and viewing your rent statement is clear, quick and no more than three clicks away – that's even easier than buying something new on Amazon!

Why not check out the new website – it's really simple to navigate - or read on for more about everything you can do!

YOUR ACCOUNT

You can set up an online account quickly and easily with full access to do the following:

- View your rent account and statements
- Book repair jobs with our 24 hour repair booking service, as well as keeping track of live repair status and history
- View and edit your tenancy details
- Find key documents and personally tailored, relevant information for you

Do you have a Southway online account already?

If you are already registered, before you log in, just change your password.

Need to register a new account?

Just click the "User Log in" button and follow the quick and simple registration – then you can check or pay rent, book repairs and contact us. It's really simple!

Register now and take a look around at your personal account!

REPAIRS BOOKING LIKE NEVER BEFORE!

The 24/7 repairs booking system has been completely overhauled and now offers a much quicker and easier option than calling us.

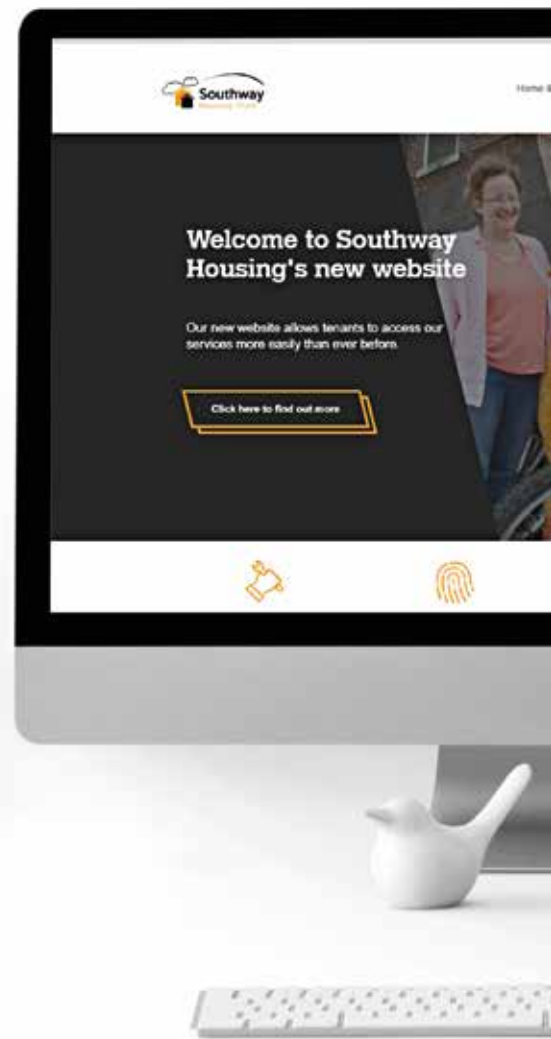
After you have logged in to your account you take three simple steps:

1. Search the repair you want to log in a search bar
2. Add extra information if necessary
3. Book your time slot

Done!

You can also book multiple repairs at the same time with our basket function.

You can even see the status of previous and live repairs, and you can change or cancel live repairs too all at the touch of a button.



RENT ACCOUNT

- You can make payments quickly and simply
- You can view your current balance
- You can view all previous/old statements
- You can print off information if necessary



OTHER ACCOUNT FEATURES

Tenancy Information - Here you can see useful information like your account reference number, your address etc. You can also change the personal details we have registered for you such as your phone number and e-mail address.

Contact Us - A form pre-filled with all your information so all you have to do is enter your query and send.

Document Library - Request personal documents to be uploaded to your account.

Notifications - We may send messages to tenants notifying them of any important account or neighbourhood information such as programmed work in your area, etc.

Outside of your account there are big changes too...

HOME & TENANCY

In the Home & Tenancy section, you'll find information on anything to do with the direct management of your property and tenancy, including:

- Paying rent
- General tenancy management
- Repairs to your home
- Your garden
- Exchanging or buying properties
- Looking for homes and application process



SUPPORT & SERVICES

We offer a wide range of support and services for you and your family that show we do more than just provide a roof over your head. Our range of services cover the following areas:

- Older, disabled or vulnerable tenants
- Anti-Social Behaviour & Crime
- Computers & Digital
- Employment Support
- Rent & Money
- Environment
- Volunteering & TimeBank
- Community Centres & Learning Hubs

ASK A QUESTION

If you can't find what you are looking for, use the **Ask a question** section to get a quick answer. We use our most frequently asked questions over phone and e-mail, to ensure this section provides useful and relevant information to you.

ABOUT US

All the corporate information about Southway and how we are run appears in the About Us section as well as ways to get involved with us and information on looking for jobs.

Karen Mitchell, Chief Executive of Southway Housing says: *"We're really pleased to be launching our new site making it much easier for tenants to find what they are looking for as well as use our online services. It'll provide a much quicker point of contact as well as allow tenants much more freedom to manage their tenancies whenever they want to."*

LONELY OR ISOLATED?

WE WANT TO CHANGE
ISOLATION WHERE YOU LIVE

In 2012, Southway completed extensive research around how we could make Old Moat more age friendly. This resulted in a range of actions including developing Old Moat as a 'Naturally Occurring Retirement Community'.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

A Naturally Occurring Retirement Community (NORC) has two parts – physical and conceptual (ideas.)

PHYSICAL

In a physical sense, a NORC is an area of residential accommodation, of any size, that over time mainly become populated with older residents. Properties won't have been specifically designed for this purpose, it is more of a coincidence that the community has developed in this way.

The Old Moat NORC project was established to develop activities, systems and processes to support 'ageing in place.'

CONCEPTUAL/IDEAS

The concept of the NORC is about:

- Giving people in the NORC a 'voice'
- Helping those living in the NORC to get involved in how it develops



BRINGING COMMUNITIES TOGETHER



- Creating connections within the community
- Creating a focal point where people can come together
- Maximising choice and independence
- Taking an all round, preventative approach to health and wellbeing
- Improving relationships between services
- Changing the way people access independent living information

The NORC model provides an chance to redesign and deliver services in a more efficient and effective way, whilst involving older people in participation and social roles, improving health outcomes and quality of life.

Many of the projects developed as part of the aim to reduce isolation.

We were awarded external funding from Comic Relief and we chosen to lead on community projects due to our successful model.

PROJECTS INCLUDE:

LINKAGES

This service involves GP referrals made for older people aged 50 years and over who face loneliness and isolation to non-medical sources of support. Creating LINKages supported our bid to lead on investigating a "Community Navigator Service" which focuses on older men living alone on low income.

PEER SUPPORT NETWORK (PSN)

In the Old Moat Ward, a large number of older residents live on low incomes, have a limiting illness or disability, a lower life expectancy than the Manchester average and are isolated due to lack of local amenities and transport. To improve older people's quality of life and wellbeing, we have supported a group of older people to develop a Peer Support Network. We funded a comprehensive Community Organiser training course to improve their skills and the network is now developing activities that improve health and wellbeing and reduce isolation. We have been awarded funding by Comic Relief to extend this model to Chorlton Park.

To get involved with any of the NORC projects, if you're interested in becoming an **Age Friendly Champion**, or if you have any ideas about making the area you live more Age Friendly, contact **Cathy Ayrton** at **connect2southway@southwayhousing.co.uk** – we'd be really pleased to have you involved.

GREENER NEIGHBOURHOODS

BOOSTING BIODIVERSITY
ACROSS MERSEYBANK

Southway is committed to improving our communities as a place to live. A big part of this is using our green spaces to create environmentally sustainable projects across the Southway area.

We can now announce that a huge grant of £13,500 has been awarded to our Environment team to turn an unloved, landlocked space off Darley Avenue, Merseybank into something more interesting courtesy of the **Veolia Environmental Trust**. We're excited to announce this money will be used to transform the area into a green community education resource

Outdoor furniture will be installed to support outdoor learning activities and community events including seating areas, a fire pit and appropriate signage, way markers and interpretation. The quality of the habitat will be improved by planting shrubs and wildflowers, installing a pond and thinning trees to allow those remaining to reach their full potential. Tenants groups will run events, engage new audiences and encourage more people to get involved in volunteering to look after their local green space.



Check out our Facebook page for more details of the project.



THE OLD MOAT TRAIL

In the year that we celebrated our 10th Anniversary, we were very pleased to work with our partners and local residents to create the Old Moat Legacy Trail to be used by the local community.

We've created an activity trail suited to all members of the community whether you're a family, fitness fan or older person looking to stretch your legs between the well positioned rest spots. The trail is packed with interesting features including fruit trees and fairy doors.

Karen Mitchell CEO, commented, *"We are incredibly proud of the way Old Moat has changed over our 10 years, and so we've designed this trail around the estate so that it can be enjoyed by the whole community, for a variety of different purposes."*

You can pick up a map from our offices and local community centres. If you can't see it there, let us know and we'll restock!

Find out more about the trail online at www.southwayhousing.co.uk/trail

CUSTOMER SERVICE

We're Record Breakers!

CUSTOMER
SERVICE
EXCELLENCE



CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

HOW WE USE YOUR FEEDBACK

We gather feedback through customer satisfaction surveys which helps us to improve our services.

In 2017/18 we received 1,457 pieces of feedback in this way with 56% being positive, telling us our customers are generally happy with our service. However, we did receive feedback that suggested there was room for improvement in the following areas: repairs, waiting for the phone to be answered and waiting for a member of staff to call tenants back.

Our satisfaction surveys are analysed daily and any issues or problems are forwarded to the Service Manager for them to make contact or take action to resolve with you as tenants. Often this is individual issues that we can address quickly to prevent them becoming bigger problems.

We are always looking to make improvements and we use this information to inform internal decisions. For example, looking at our call waiting times and feedback on repairs, we have vastly improved our online repairs booking in order to provide an alternative, much quicker option. Find out how in New Website and Tenant Account Portal on pages 8 & 9.

Keep an eye on our **"You said, We did"** articles in Southway Stories to discover other ways in which we take direct action based on your feedback.



Southway was recently assessed around our work practices to make sure that behind the scenes we are a company who puts you, our tenants, first when planning and delivering services. We are pleased to say that we came through with flying colours – demonstrating in record breaking fashion, that even if we don't always get it right, we always put our customers at the heart of everything we do.

Customer Service Excellence (CSE) is a nationwide standard assessment to make sure organisations are efficient, effective, empowering and that customers are at the centre of all services.

In summary, we have done incredibly well and further improved on our already excellent achievement of 9 Compliance Plus ratings* – by adding five more Compliance Plus.

**The definition of Compliance Plus is: 'Behaviours or practices that exceed the requirements of the standard and are viewed as exceptional or an exemplar for others, either within your organisation or in the sector.'*

To now have 14 Compliance Plus is a unique achievement and testament to the customer-focussed approach that our teams demonstrate.

Southway has achieved the largest number in recent history, with CSE unable to find an organisation that had achieved more, meaning that we've broken the record for the most Compliance Plus ratings!

Every other area is found to be fully compliant.

"A Compliance Plus recognition is only given when an organisation goes far above and beyond the requirements of one element of the Customer Service Excellence standard. Thus, achieving one is considered a great achievement. For Southway Housing to achieve 14 Compliance Plus recognitions is an incredible accomplishment that showcases their commitment to providing excellent service to their tenants."

Southway's clear focus on staff development and customer engagement shines through brightly in their assessment, encouraging feedback from employees and customers alike and visibly applying that feedback towards improving the organisation as a whole. Your achievement of 14 far outshines most other organisations that have obtained the standard! Well done to everyone at Southway Housing for such an inspiring achievement!"

Craig Forsythe
Centre for Assessment



LISTENING TO OUR CUSTOMERS

YOU SAID

WE DID

We welcome feedback from all of our tenants – it helps to improve the way we do things and our relationship with you! Here are some of the recent projects, events and service changes we've made as a result of feedback from customers...

Involving our Customers

This year we have been developing our Customer Involvement Strategy. This important document sets out the various opportunities we offer to you as tenants to have a real influence on the way we deliver our services and the types of projects you would like to see delivered in your communities. The strategy has been developed using feedback gathered at two community events, as well as feedback from our already involved tenants. We will be including a summary of the main points in the next edition of Southway Stories – so watch this space!

Community Crime Stoppers

Residents living on Newville Drive and Ashdale Drive in Withington raised community concerns around a number of youths causing anti social behaviour in their area. We have been working with Greater

Manchester Police and members of the community to address this and so far this has resulted in legal action against three people and installation of CCTV cameras at strategic points on these roads.

Is ASB a problem in your area? Help us to help you and get in touch today.

Hablo Español

We received several requests from local tenants for Spanish classes at the Westcroft Community Centre.

We are pleased to announce that these classes are now being run every week by a volunteer as part of our Timebank project.

Contact **Jim Doyle** via the Customer Hub if you would like to find out more about classes, or about joining the Timebank, where you can share your skills and benefit from the skills of other tenants across your community.

Setting Boundaries

As a result of feedback from Chorlton residents, we were able to resolve a longstanding complaint relating to boundaries (where land had been sold). In consultation with the tenant and the owner occupier, we were able to come to a resolution that suited both parties.

Eat, Meet & Greet

Our Westcroft Community Centre coffee morning has been expanded to become 'Eat, Meet and Greet sessions' in response to requests from attendees. These are a great opportunity to meet other people living in the community and we have received very positive feedback from tenants who have attended these. Interested in coming along? Simply turn up at the Westcroft Centre on a Monday morning from 9.30am for a warm welcome.

LOVE

THY NEIGHBOURHOOD

SO WHY ARE OUR AREAS SO DESIRABLE?



LOW CRIME RATES

Whilst every area has its share of issues, statistically, south Manchester has lower crime and anti-social behavioural issues when compared to other areas of Manchester.

GREEN

South Manchester is also one of the greenest areas of the city with a high proportion of trees and green areas included across our communities. Southway was proud to receive the prestigious Green Flag Award for the work we have carried out improving our green spaces.

DIVERSITY

Manchester is one of the most ethnically diverse cities in the world and our communities reflect this.

AGE FRIENDLY

Our neighbourhoods are age friendly and we are recognised globally for our work around this, with Commonwealth leaders and even HRH Princess Anne visiting our Old Moat Age Friendly project!

COMMUNITY

There is a real sense of community across our areas and we support a wide range of classes, projects and events all aimed at improving the lives of our tenants and bringing people together.



WHAT NEXT FOR SOUTH MANCHESTER?

Here are some of the events and projects that we have supported over the last 12 months:

- **4 Love Your Neighbourhood** (litter pick) events across the year – attended by staff and school children from local primary schools
- **Tree Dressing** in December, where over 90 children from local schools came along to get in the festive spirit
- **Quids In** – five fantastic food clubs across the area
- **Men In Sheds** – which opened in February 2018 in Chorlton providing a place for older residents to meet, socialise and share skills in the south of Manchester

- **Westcroft Community Centre** – loads of different projects and events, including hobby sessions, job club, Universal Credit drop in, Eat Meet and Greet (see page 6).
- **Hate crime awareness** events in the area
- **Green projects** delivered by the Environment team

As always - we welcome your opinions on what projects have worked well, or any suggestions or ideas you may have on how to further improve your neighbourhoods! Get in touch and let us know your views!



OUR OBLIGATIONS OUTDOORS



Over the summer, we get lots more enquiries than usual about work outdoors that unfortunately we cannot offer help with – but this is a good time to provide a reminder of what is your responsibility and what is ours.

GARDENS

Generally, it is your responsibility to manage and maintain your garden. It's much easier to keep on top of your garden through regular maintenance, rather than letting it get overgrown. We take a reasonable and fair approach to dealing with untidy gardens, but we do have to take necessary enforcement action against tenants who do not maintain their garden.

Failure to maintain gardens includes:

- Unkempt and overgrown vegetation
- Unauthorised alterations, e.g. car hard standings and removal of hedgerows
- Inappropriate storage materials causing nuisance; for example car parts, furniture, white goods, etc.
- Not cleaning up after pets

Exceptions

We recognise some tenants can not carry out garden work themselves for a variety of reasons. For our older and disabled tenants who meet the additional criteria, we offer a subsidised basic gardening service (with a yearly admin fee of £50).

FENCES & HEDGES

Strictly speaking, we do not have a legal responsibility to provide fencing, and we will not:

- Remove hedging to replace with fencing
- Put up new fencing, or repair existing fencing unless it is fencing that has already been provided by us. In cases where we have provided fencing, we will also look at plants or hedging as alternative options.

There are limited exceptional circumstances where we may decide to repair or renew fencing, but please note these are the exception and not the norm. If you report any broken or damaged fences, we will let you know whether or not the work you want can be done, and if so, when it will be done. If we decide it can't be done, we will provide you with reasons why.

TIPS!

The BBC and the RHS have helpful information about looking after your garden online. If you're really struggling, there are local volunteer groups such as **Withington Assist** that may be able to help.



TREES

All trees on Southway property are owned by Southway, even if planted by tenants. We actively manage our tree stock and will take action where trees are identified as damaged, dead, or otherwise presenting a specific health and safety risk.

We will not carry out pruning or removal of trees that are:

- Blocking out sunlight
- Growing too large or too tall
- Dropping leaves in gardens
- Dropping sap onto paths or cars
- Overhanging into gardens
- Affecting television or telephone reception

We will consider pruning of trees when they are:

- Overhanging into roads (at below 5 metres)
- Overhanging onto footpaths and/or signage
- Touching an adjacent structure
- Disturbing sight lines
- Affecting the stability of a structure

We will consider removal of trees when they are:

- Diseased or Dead
- Structurally unsafe
- Significantly damaged
- Preventing access, where pruning will not suffice
- Potentially hazardous to health
- Affecting the stability of a structure
- Outgrowing space allocated, where pruning will not suffice





GET INVOLVED!

There's lots of ways you can get involved at Southway, whether by attending meetings and events, or giving feedback online.

We're looking for new members for our Tenant Scrutiny Panel. The aim of the tenant panel is to consider whether our services are providing good value for money and benefitting tenants.

The Panel has already carried out reviews on several services and their next focus will be how we manage our empty properties.

INTERESTED IN BECOMING A MEMBER OF THE PANEL?

Please email connect2southway@southwayhousing.co.uk or call Maureen Ward for more information.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Interested in developing new skills, meeting local residents and making new connections? We currently have the volunteering opportunities listed opposite:

Quids In Food Club Assistant – We serve between 20 and 60 local residents each week; help prepare and serve food, have a chat with local residents or contribute new recipe ideas. Depending on how involved you would like to be, some training may be required.

Contact Maureen Ward for more information.

Be a Digital Champion – Help tenants to learn new computer skills – we will match volunteers with individuals or we will ask you to attend training sessions or events to help in a group setting.

Contact Joe Sandwick for more information.

If there are other ways you'd like to get involved or volunteer, get in touch and let us know. We're waiting to hear from you!

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

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