

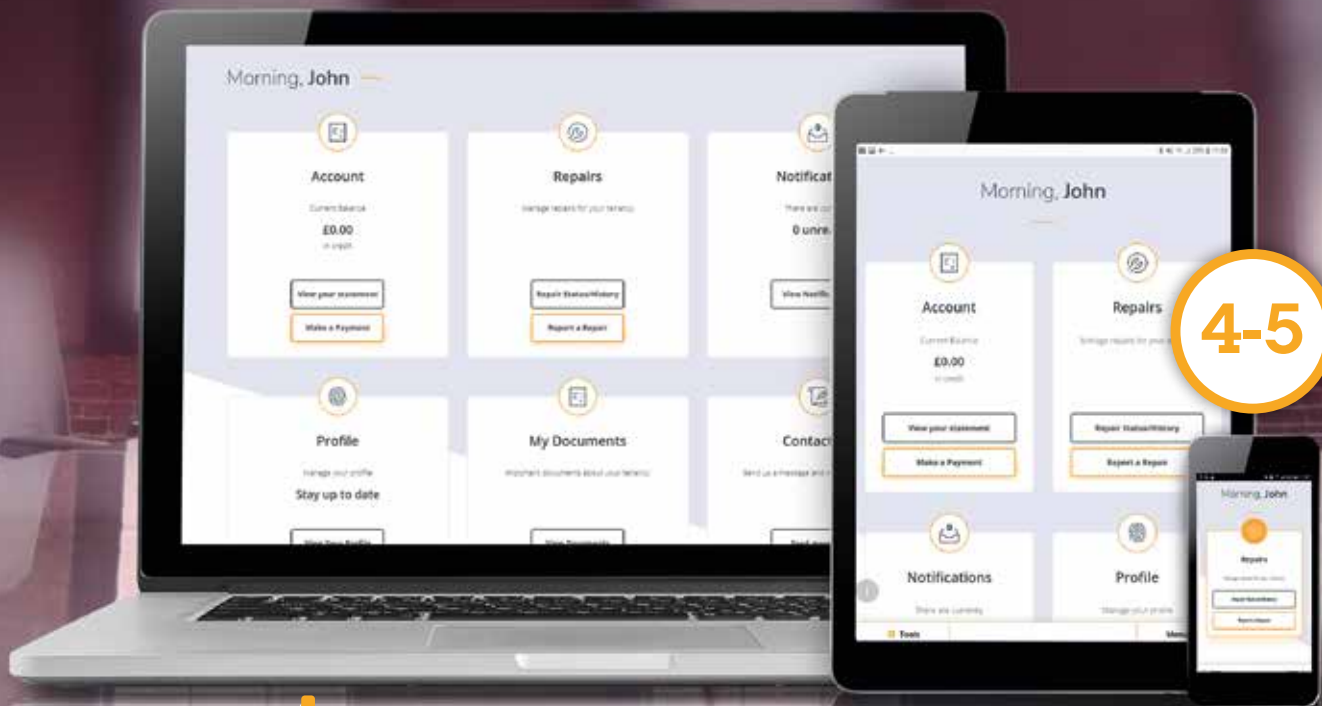
Southway Stories

The magazine for
Southway Housing
customers
Autumn 2018

Introducing MySouthway

Your 24/7 repairs and rent service | Guide on pages 4-5

Flip for
Annual
Report



OUR NEW CUSTOMER STRATEGY

Page 2



CLAIMING UNIVERSAL CREDIT

Pages 6 & 7



AGE-FRIENDLY FUNDING AVAILABLE

Page 11



CUSTOMER VOICE!!!



INTRODUCING OUR NEW... CUSTOMER INVOLVEMENT STRATEGY

We want to make it even easier for you to engage with us and give us feedback on the way that we do things, which is why we've created a new Customer Involvement Strategy and action plan.

Why have we created the strategy?

- To ensure our staff take ownership of any issues raised
- To expand our digital and community-based feedback
- To find out your preferences on how you would like your views communicated
- To help us respond to your views and needs and increase overall customer satisfaction levels

Encouraging more tenants to get involved in our events and activities is also at the heart of our strategy.

If you would like a copy of the strategy, you can find it on our website or you can request a copy by contacting us. If you're interested in getting involved or would just like to find out more, please contact **Maureen Ward** at connect2southway@southwayhousing.co.uk.

A new brand has been designed to let customers know when there is an opportunity to give feedback or attend an event.

Some of the ways that we will achieve these objectives will include developing new ways for you to give online feedback, allowing you to share how you would like your budgets to be spent each year, and making sure information is simple and accessible to everyone.

We will also be supporting local community groups by giving them access to grants when they provide us with feedback, and hold at least one 'Hot Topic Group' in each service area (Repairs, Anti-Social Behaviour, New Homes) every year.

SOUTHWAY CUSTOMER ROADSHOW

Come and join us in our new office on Saturday 13th October, 11am – 3pm for our Customer Roadshow!

Southway Housing Trust
Southern Gate, 729 Princess Road
West Didsbury, Manchester M20 2LT

This roadshow is a great opportunity for you to meet and talk to other tenants, whilst getting a chance to meet with and get valuable advice and information from the Southway team.

There will be lunch available, and we will share performance information and tell you about our services so you can see how you can access them.



To book your place, email connect2southway@southwayhousing.co.uk, text **07826 946 068**, or call **0161 448 2000**. Please provide details of any specific requirements (dietary or access) so that we can cater for your needs. ***We can't wait to hear from you on the 13th October!***

TENANT SCRUTINY PANEL WHO ARE THEY?

The 'Tenant Scrutiny Panel' is a group of tenants who take a detailed look at our services to check that they are running efficiently and in the best way possible for you, by looking at performance and costs, interviewing staff members and talking to other tenants.

Panel members then write a report which sets out their findings and makes recommendations which are reported to senior management at Southway and to the People and Places Committee.

The recommendations are then turned into tasks and put into an 'action plan' for staff to deliver over a set period of time. Past examples of work include challenging the complaints procedure, out-of-hours

repairs, anti-social behaviour and empty properties.

We would like to hear from you...

We want to hear from you about what topic you want us to look at next. Please let Maureen Ward or Jim Hutton, Chair of the Scrutiny Panel know if you have any suggestions. We are also looking for new members for the panel. If you're

interested in coming along and dropping into a meeting to see if it's a role that would suit you, or even to 'buddy' up with an existing panel member to gain further insight, please contact Maureen or Jim (details below).

Panel members attend conferences and networking events throughout the year, and out-of-pocket expenses are all paid for.



jimhutton03@yahoo.co.uk / m.ward@southwayhousing.co.uk / 07826 946 068

WE NEED YOU

We are creating a list of tenants who are interested in becoming a Board or Committee member in the future. We will providing training, mentoring and support to give you the skills and confidence to apply for these roles when available vacancies come up.

What do the Board and Committee do?

The Board is responsible for deciding what Southway does, and holds senior staff responsible for their decisions.

Our Committees take a more in-depth look at specific services, such as repairs and dealing with anti-

social behaviour. Please see our website for more details on what both do.

Talented Tenants Training Programme

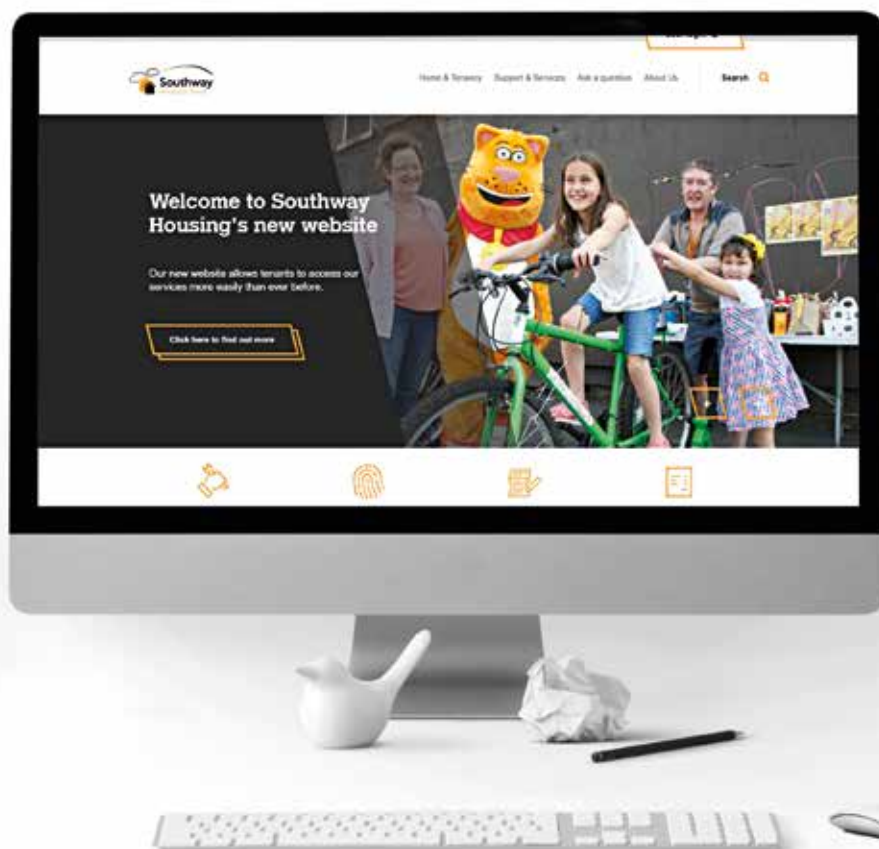
If you would like to get involved, but feel you don't have enough experience, this programme prepares you with the vital skills and offers in-house and external training, plus access to IT equipment to develop your skills. A senior member of Southway's management team will act as your own personal mentor. All expenses incurred on this programme will be paid back to you by Southway.

Memuna, Chair of the People and Places Committee, said:

"When I joined the Board, I had never done this kind of leadership role before. I completed a Leadership Programme which gave me more confidence and really helped me to chair meetings. I also did a qualification with the Chartered Institute of Housing, which helped when I (successfully) applied for a job at another housing association."



If you want to know more about training or becoming a Board or Committee member in the future, please get in touch with the Governance Officer. **Email connect@southwayhousing.co.uk or call 0161 448 4200**



SOUTHWAY IS ONLINE



We have now launched our new website! It's really simple to use, with all the information you need no more than three clicks away.

An area for **you**

Have you seen the new tenant log in area? Here you have access to an easy-to-use repair booking system 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

You can also pay your rent online, view and print your rent statement, access your tenancy information and much more.

Repairs booking like never before

The 24/7 online repairs booking system is a much quicker and easier option than calling us; you can even

book multiple repairs at the same time with our basket function. After you have logged in to your account (or created it following a simple sign up process) you take three simple steps:

- 1. Search for the repair you want in the search bar**
- 2. Add extra information if necessary**
- 3. Choose your repair time slot**

Done!

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.

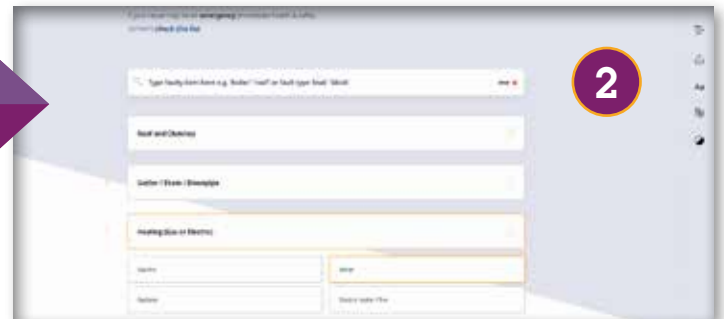
EXAMPLE



1

In Repairs you have the option to View Repairs Status /History or Report a Repair.

Click Report a Repair.



2

Select the repair from the list below, or type keywords in the search box to find the repair needed. Click the problem (i.e. Heating) and from the drop down menu choose the faulty item (i.e. Boiler).



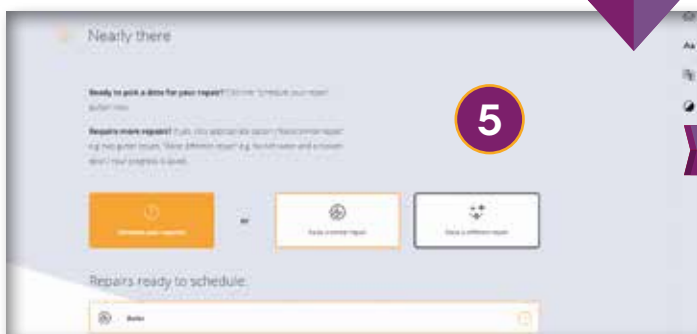
3



4

You'll see a summary of what you are about to book and a text box to add optional extra information.

Confirm and continue.



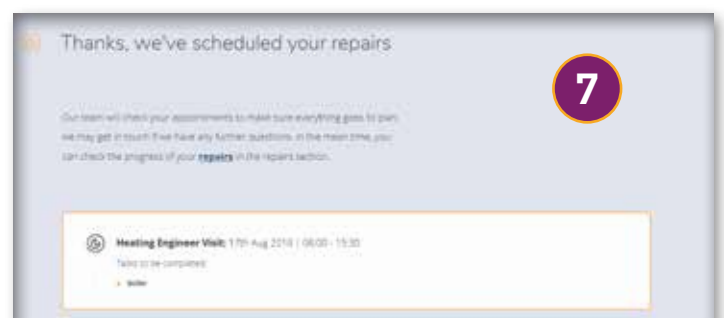
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Once confirmed, you can add another repair if necessary, or go on on to **Schedule your repair(s).**



6

Choose a date and time slot and **be sure to click the box below your chosen time to "Confirm this time slot".**



7

You're done!

You'll be presented with a summary of what you have just booked and you will also receive an email confirmation.

UNIVERSAL CREDIT: THE TRANSITION

Universal Credit can be hard to get your head around. Southway has been putting various solutions in place to help you understand this change.

We've asked Nadine Currie, our Universal Credit Officer, to share some easy steps to helping you get to grips with Universal Credit:

1. You need to make sure you have all the documents and information required before applying for Universal Credit.

If you have decided as part of your Universal Credit application you are going to confirm your identity online, you must provide one of the following for the online identity check:

- An EU Passport with photo ID
- A Non EU Passport with photo ID
- An identity card for EU
- A residence permit
- A permanent residence card
- Biometric immigration documents
- An immigration status document
- A UK driving license with photo ID

NB: *If you do not have one of these documents to do the online identity check, don't worry - you can make an appointment and JCP will work with you to verify your identification.*

2. You will need the following documents and information about yourself to complete the online Universal Credit application:

- Proof of your address (an official letter from your bank or energy company)
- A copy of your tenancy agreement (you can get a copy from Southway reception)
- Details of current rent including service charges broken down separately
- National insurance number

- Bank account details for Universal Credit payments to be paid into
- Details of any savings or capital investments including shares or property that you own
- Details of any other income (income from an insurance plan or pension)
- Details of how much you earn from work including any recent payslips
- Details of any other benefits already received (e.g. PIP)
- A current fit note (If you are transitioning from ESA or making a fresh claim for UC LCTW)
- Full list of all health conditions (if you are transitioning from ESA or making a fresh claim for UC LCTW)
- Your email address

NB: *When you visit the job centre for your Universal Credit interview, you will need to your identification with you. The purpose of the interview is to check you are who you say you are.*

If you are a vulnerable tenant and are transitioning from ESA, or are not able to use a computer (not able to use email, Facebook, or other online programmes or you're unable to use a smartphone, then contact the Job Centre Plus on 0800 328 5644 or Southway Housing on 0161 448 4200. You can get access to help to make your initial Universal credit application.

Though Southway and JCP can help you with your initial claim, you need to understand Universal credit is a digital benefit which means you need to interact with your JCP work coach through the Universal credit online journal. If you are not responding to communications through your online Universal Credit journal or your online to-do list, it could affect your benefit payments.

Don't forget, Southway are here to help you. Though we are not able to manage your Universal credit account for you, if you are worried about anything to do with the new scheme, please do not hesitate to contact the **Southway Housing Advice team on 0161 448 4200.**

UC *Universal Credit*

CLAIMING UNIVERSAL CREDIT?



Have you applied for **Council Tax Support?**

We now live in a Universal Credit area.



If you claim Universal Credit and have to pay council tax, you will have to make a separate claim for Council Tax Support.

If you are currently responsible for paying rent and council tax at your property, your housing costs will be included in your single monthly Universal Credit payment. However, you will need to make a separate application for your Council Tax Support from Manchester City Council.

If you do not put in a claim for Council Tax Support when you claim Universal Credit, you may end up with arrears of council tax and it may be difficult to

get back those benefit payments that are owed to you.

If you don't keep up with your council tax payments, this could even lead to a court summons, legal fees and Bailiffs.

You can claim Council Tax Support using the online claim form on Manchester City Council's website (www.manchester.gov.uk). If you do not have access to Wi-Fi, feel free to call into our offices where we have computers for you to use to make a claim (see page 10).

If you have any issues with your benefit claims, you can contact us on **0161 448 4200** where our HUB can make a referral to the Advice Team, or contact the team directly at **advice team referrals@southwayhousing.co.uk**.

BANK ACCOUNTS

WHY DO YOU NEED A BANK ACCOUNT?

It is becoming more and more important to manage our financial transactions using the right type of bank account, especially as we increasingly become a cashless society. A bank account that accepts electronic payments is also crucial to claiming the new **Universal Credit benefit**.

So which account should I choose?

There are three main types of account:

Basic Account – This is usually free and comes with a debit card that allows you to pay for goods and services in shops, by phone and online. You can also use the card to take money out from cash machines (ATMs) and another benefit is that it has no overdraft facility, which some may find useful to avoid getting into debt. Some accounts have a 'buffer zone' where you can go overdrawn, usually for a direct debit, by a small amount and avoid being charged.

Current Account – This includes all the benefits of a basic account, but can also come with monthly fees, especially if it includes things like travel insurance and breakdown cover. It also includes a chequebook and the bank can allow a chargeable overdraft facility. You must get permission for the overdraft facility, otherwise you might find you have to pay very high charges to your account!

Savings Account – This is good for putting money to one side, and you can usually earn interest on your savings, though rates may not be good. Credit Unions also offer good accounts for savings – they don't earn interest but pay members a sum at the end of the financial year (sometimes more than the interest banks give!).



How do I open an account?

You will need to choose a suitable account type and then decide on a bank. You will need to make an appointment at a local branch unless you want to apply online.

What ID do I need?

You will need to prove who you are and where you live.

- Documents accepted as personal ID include:
- A current passport
- A full UK/EU photo driving licence (or paper copy with your current address)
- A UK blue disabled driver's pass (with photo)
- The latest benefit award letter you've received confirming benefit being paid to you at the time of issue
- HMRC tax notification

Documents accepted as proof of address include:

- The latest council tax bill or exemption certificate
- A water, gas or electricity bill (from the last three months)
- A bank, credit union or credit card statement (from the last three months)
- A UK/EU photo driving license
- Your tenancy agreement

Bills and benefit letters must be less than a year old.

The same document, or documents from the same agency, can't be submitted for both categories. The bank websites that you are applying to will give you full details of documents.

Southway can help make an appointment for you, check your documentation is correct, and even accompany you to the bank. If you need assistance from Southway to open an account, then contact the Advice Services Team at adviceteamreferrals@southwayhousing.co.uk or 0161 448 4200.



Smart Moves

Get employment support and a free interview outfit

Are you looking for a career change, considering returning to work after a maternity leave, or would you just like to find out what support is available to you if you do return to work?

Come along to our free Smart Moves Employment event at: Hough End Leisure Centre Wednesday 24th October 12 - 4pm

Lots of businesses and support service organisations will be there to offer information and advice on a range of subjects including childcare, travel, job opportunities, training and apprenticeships.

We will also be promoting the charity Smartworks who provide designer outfits and confidence-

building advice for women who have job interviews lined up.

Get involved!

We are looking for local residents, both men and women, of any shape, age and background to model one of these Smartworks designer outfits and have a transformation make over. It's a great excuse to see how you look work-ready and show that anyone can create a great impression. Best of all, everyone who takes part will get to keep their outfit!

What about the little ones?

Don't worry, there'll be a range of activities to keep the children entertained including a 'What I want to be' dressing up corner, where they can transform into a doctor, fireman, racing driver, chef, or whatever they want to be when they grow up.

Keep your eyes on the 'News and Events' area of our website where we'll post further information on the event closer to the time.

If you are interested in seeing how you could look with a new work outfit and make over, contact **Elaine Wilkinson** (Employment and Money Coordinator) at connect2southway@southwayhousing.co.uk or on **0161 448 4200**.

Electrical Testing

Just like we test and service our gas installations for your safety, we now undertake similar electrical inspections but on a five-year cycle.

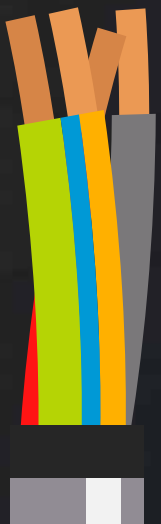
If you receive a call, letter or text message about these tests, please make sure you let Southway or contractor, AB Building & Electrical into your home to carry out these tests.

We must stress that it is part of your tenancy agreement to allow us access for testing. Each time we cannot gain access to your property,

Southway incurs costs, so your cooperation will help us to use our money in the best way possible to benefit you and other tenants!

As with gas, we take your safety with electrics extremely seriously.

Thanks in advance for your co-operation.



AT THE HEART OF YOUR COMMUNITY

Southway's offices moved in June 2018 to Southern Gate on Princess Road in West Didsbury. As well as being centrally placed for the convenience of our tenants and communities spread across Didsbury, Chorlton, Burnage, Old Moat and Withington, the building of our new office provides us with plenty of opportunities to give something back to local groups.

Our old office furniture from Aspen House went on display at an open day, where 21 local groups came along and claimed items ranging from coat stands to boardroom tables. These groups included small businesses and local community-run groups and they were all very thankful for the free furniture. We helped some of them move the equipment and worked with a furniture recycling company to remove the remaining furniture. Some of the leftover pieces were given to small businesses in Africa, so our big move has helped others from across the globe!

Our free stationery drop-in session for local community groups was successful too, with feedback showing that many groups were grateful for the stationery that would have otherwise been expensive to buy.

Not only did our recycling heavily reduce the amount of waste that we sent to landfill, but Southway is glad to have helped local groups in their quest for supplies.

We hope that you take advantage of our new prime location and come and visit us soon...

Come to our Customer Roadshow on 13th October (page 2).

Community group? Contact us about hosting meetings, classes and other activities (out of hours) at Southern Gate.

Visit our brand new ICT suite to access internet services and training.



SOUTHWAY RETAINS GREEN FLAG AWARD



Southway is proud to announce that we have been awarded a Green Flag Award for a second year for Barlow Hall Green Space! The Green Flag Award Scheme is run by the environmental charity 'Keep Britain Tidy' and recognises our space as being one of the very best in the world.

Barlow Hall Green Space in Chorlton Park is one of a record-breaking 1,883 UK parks and green spaces to have received a prestigious Green Flag Award to mark its high environmental standards, maintenance and excellent visitor facilities.

Our residents and visitors are always telling us how much quality green spaces matter, and this award celebrates the dedication that goes into maintaining Barlow Hall Green Space to such a high standard.

Southway's Environmental Manager, Philippa Reece, said:

"We are absolutely delighted to have received a Green Flag Award for the 2nd year running – and it's great to see the community pitching in to help us achieve this award. It is both a great achievement and reflection on the hard work of the local community, Barlow Hall Neighbourhood Group and the environment team."





age friendly
Southway Housing Trust

HOUSING AND CARE ADVISOR

Are you over 50 (or a family member of a Southway tenant over 50) and concerned about your (or your loved one's) current housing situation?



Our new Housing and Care Options Advisor, **Jacqueline Duncan**, can help you by looking at all of your housing needs.

Perhaps your current home is too big for you now that your children have flown the nest?

Or you live above the ground floor and are struggling to get in and out of your home due to mobility issues? It is the role of our Housing and Care Options Advisors to work with you

alongside other agencies to find the best possible solution.

Thinking about the future

There are a range of options available to you depending on your individual needs. Even if you are not planning on moving just yet, our service can still be useful in helping you forward-plan and start thinking about where you might like to live if your needs change in the future.

Our service has already supported over 175 tenants aged 50 and over from South Manchester since it launched last November.

Many residents have chosen to move and love their new home:

"I'm not struggling any longer now that my property is of a manageable size, and I feel less isolated on the estate I've moved to, which I feel has improved my overall health immensely!"

If you would like advice and support with your rehousing options please contact **connect2southway@southwayhousing.co.uk** or call Jacqueline via the Customer Hub for more information.



ambition
for
ageing

AGE-FRIENDLY BURNAGE

'Age-Friendly' is a term used to describe projects, services and neighbourhoods that support and include older people. These enable older people to actively take part in their community, to have a voice and to remain connected. They create opportunities for older people to keep healthy and active, to learn and to engage with others.

Since 2012 Southway has been working hard to develop age-friendly projects to better the lives of those aged 50 and over and this year we were delighted when Greater Manchester was named as the UK's first age-friendly city!

The 'Age-Friendly Burnage' project launched in 2016 after Burnage was chosen as one of the neighbourhoods included in the Ambition for Ageing Programme - a £10.2 million programme running across five years, funded by Big Lottery.

We've since supported the creation of a resident-led board which meets every six weeks. One key role of the board is managing the funding given to Burnage that supports new projects designed by local older people. So far, the board has agreed £35k spend on age-friendly projects. Over 100 local people have benefitted from craft workshops, local history classes and a bereavement support project. The funding will last until 2020 and the Board always welcome new ideas for Burnage-based projects.

We also did some research into identifying how age-friendly Burnage is looking at areas such as transport, social inclusion and housing – thank you to all tenants who took part and shared their views, experiences and ideas! We're happy to announce that we have now identified specific areas of improvement. These findings and recommendations have been compiled into an Action Plan to make Burnage more age-friendly, which you can find on our website at www.southwayhousing.co.uk/age-friendly



TEA DANCE

In July Southway held a tea dance in celebration of the 'Festival of Ageing'.

The dance took place at Christ Church on Darley Avenue and was open to all local residents aged 50 and above from Chorlton, Didsbury, Withington and Burnage.

This event was created to support and take part in the 'Festival of Ageing'. The celebrations aimed to help portray a more positive view of ageing, whilst encouraging policymakers to take much-needed action to improve the lives of Greater Manchester's ageing population.

Residents were in great spirits and a warm and welcoming atmosphere was created thanks to the venue, the beautiful decorations supplied by The Tea Party Company, the old classics played by the band, The George King Duo, the photographer Howard Barlow, and all staff who assisted. Southway would like to thank everyone involved, with particular thanks to Reverend Anne Pilkington for letting us use the church.

Why not get involved?

We now have a range of age friendly project and activities in most of our neighbourhoods. If you would like to find out more please contact Southway on **0161 448 4200**, via email on connect2southway@southwayhousing.co.uk or via the contact form on our website.