

# Southway Stories

The magazine for  
Southway Housing  
customers

Winter 2018

**UC** Universal  
Credit

Supporting you  
through your claims

P4

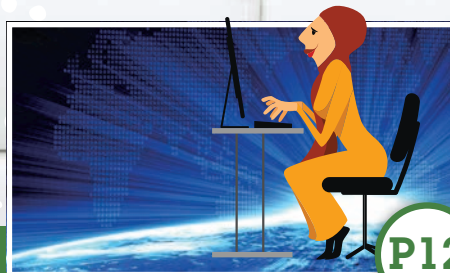
We're here and  
happy to help you!



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## YOUR PERSONAL DATA

How we use it



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## FREE DIGITAL QUALIFICATION

Gain work-focussed  
computer skills



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## MONEY FOR YOUR PROJECTS

Our Beautiful South Fund



In our last edition of Southway Stories we launched our new Customer Involvement Strategy which really puts our tenants at the heart of what we do.

This means we would like more tenants to get involved and give their views. We would particularly like people to join the groups below:

## Tenant Scrutiny Panel

The Tenant Scrutiny Panel is a group of tenants who take a detailed look at our services to check if they are being delivered in the best way for tenants and if efficiency is being achieved.

In order to do this the panel looks at performance and costs, interviews staff and talks to other customers.

So far the panel has scrutinised complaints, out of hours repairs, communication relating to rent, anti-social behaviour and empty properties and will be looking at communications about repairs next. If you are interested in joining please contact Jim or Maureen to find out more.

**Maureen Ward**

[m.ward@southwayhousing.co.uk](mailto:m.ward@southwayhousing.co.uk) 0161 448 4200.

**Jim Hutton**

[jimhutton03@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:jimhutton03@yahoo.co.uk)

## Complaints Service Improvement Group

This group looks at a selection of complaints made to Southway by tenants to check if they were handled effectively and within target.

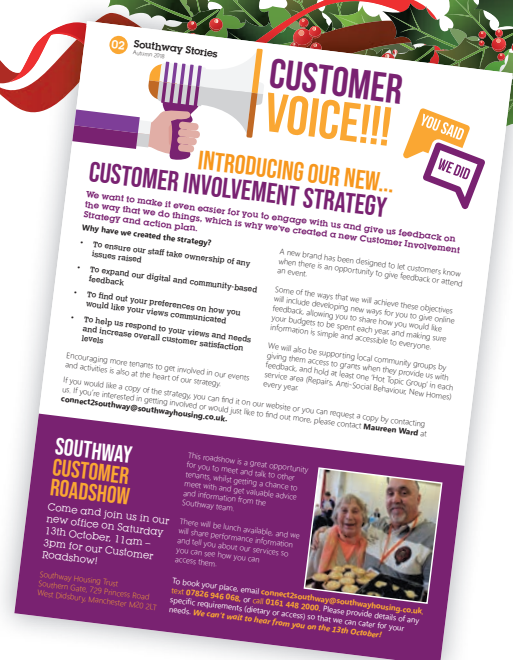
Members of the group comment on whether the complaint could have been dealt with better and lessons are learned from this group.

## Residents Consultative Group

The Consultative Group is made up of tenant group representatives, two leaseholders, two owner-occupiers, tenants and Southway staff.

The group meets every six weeks to discuss policies and current issues and influences decisions and helps to shape services.

If you are interested in current issues and Southway's performance this is the group for you!



## DOES THIS APPEAL TO YOU? PLEASE GET IN TOUCH!

You can keep up to date with the way we are responding to tenant's views on our website at:  
[www.southwayhousing.co.uk/yousaidwedid](http://www.southwayhousing.co.uk/yousaidwedid)





Southway  
**Rewards** ★

# WIN FAMILY DAYS OUT



**Would you like to win a family ticket to the Crystal Maze, Chill Factore, Breakout Manchester, Legoland Discovery Centre, or restaurant or cinema vouchers?**

We're giving these amazing prizes away as part of Southway Rewards, to tenants who simply enter the competition on our website portal by December 11th!

To get in the draw, you just need tick a box on the entry form in the Tenant Portal by midnight on Tuesday 11th December.

The direct link is  
**[my.southwayhousing.co.uk/more/rewards/](https://my.southwayhousing.co.uk/more/rewards/)**

Or, when you Log in to the portal, find it by clicking:

- **More**
- **Enter Southway Rewards**

If you need any help registering or logging into the MySouthway Portal, contact us and we will guide you through it. Setting up a portal account is the most convenient way to manage your repairs, rent, and other things concerning your tenancy.

## REMEMBER...

To be eligible for any reward prize draw, you will also need to meet the three main criteria and have:

- **A credit/zero balance on your rent account or you should be able to show you have stuck to your rent repayment agreement for 13 weeks or more**
- **No breaches of your tenancy (e.g. good garden and property condition, no ASB etc.)**

If you meet this criteria every month you have the chance to win a cash prize of **£500 or £250!**

Definitely not something you want to miss out on! Contact us for more information and support to find out what you need to do to meet this criteria.



# UC *Universal Credit*

## You could be getting more.



In November's latest budget announcement, we learned that Universal Credit work allowances will increase by £1,000 a year for working families and those with disabilities; this means you could have an extra £630 a year. (Announced in November's budget.)

If you're employed, your Universal Credit reduces as you earn more – for every £1 you earn, your payment reduces by 63p.

However, from April 2019, you'll be able to earn an additional £1,000 a year before your universal credit is affected. This is because you won't lose the 63p per £1 on this £1,000 (so you will get an extra £630 in your pocket!)

If you or your partner are responsible for a child or are living with a disability or condition that affects your ability to work, you're eligible for a work allowance.

The work allowance is a set amount you can earn before your Universal Credit is reduced.

There are two levels of work allowances, depending on your circumstances:

- **If you're getting help towards your rent you can earn £2,376 a year in your pay packet.**
- **If you're NOT getting help towards your rent you can earn £4,908 a year in your pay packet.**







## HOW SOUTHWAY CAN ASSIST YOU TO MAKE YOUR FIRST CLAIM FOR UNIVERSAL CREDIT

Hello my name is **Nadine Currie** and my role is to help you make your first claim for **Universal Credit**.

### Why would you need my help?

When you make a claim for Universal Credit there is a lot of information you must provide and sometimes filling out forms on the internet can be a bit daunting.

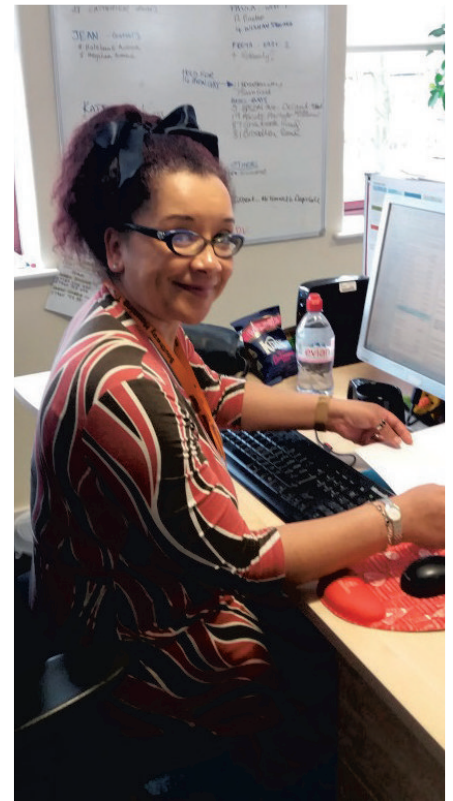
### What if I get a family member to do Universal Credit online application for me?

That is no problem.

We are here to help and support you to make your claim and can fully explain how Universal Credit works.

We can help make the claim process quicker and smoother and inform you what additional support there is available to make sure your claim process runs smoothly.

**If you live in a Southway property and need help making a claim please contact me on 0161 448 4263.**



## Smart Moves A GETTING INTO WORK EVENT

Our Smart Moves employment event held at Hough End Centre on Mauldeth Rd West in October was a great success. The event aimed to provide support, advice and resources for people looking to get back into work, pursue a change in career or for those interested in self employment.

There were lots of different organisations who support people into work, provide guidance on business, self-employment, finance, benefits, apprenticeships and more.

Smart Works; a Stockport based charity who provide designer outfits and valuable tips for women who have a job interview lined up were also there.

Tenants seeking work were each bought a smart outfit that they could wear to job interviews and were given a make-over on the day by professional hair and make-up stylists which they showed off as part of a clothes show on the day. The show went down really well with the audience and the tenant models saying how confident they felt with their new, smart look.

In March we plan to run another employment event featuring a jobs fair with a range of local employers and large organisations invited,



offering jobs, apprenticeships and training opportunities. Look out for event publicity in the spring!





# YOUR GREEN PROJECTS



## The Queen's Canopy



**We spent a busy day planting trees across south Manchester as part of the Commonwealth Canopy – a project creating a network of forest conservation initiatives throughout the 53 nations of the Commonwealth to mark Her Majesty's service and dedication.**

Throughout this project an amazing 50,000 trees will be planted across the UK.

We worked with the Woodland Trust, Jeff Smith MP and students from Old Moat Primary School and St Cuthberts Primary to plant these trees. You can see the new trees growing at Withington Community Garden and Ladybarn Park.



## Southern Gate Wildlife Garden

**Southway staff have also been busy adding to the wildlife garden at our new Didsbury office.**

This has included making bird boxes and feeding stations, hedgehog homes, and insect homes: a single story 'Bugalow' and a huge 'Btingham Palace' (pictured) on the 'Insectville' estate.

**If you'd like to volunteer or work with us on a Green Project, there are so many things you can do to get involved, from becoming a Green Champion to tree planting to joining our litter pick walks. Check our website and contact us to register your interest!**







# SOUTHWAY'S SOCIAL IMPACTS

Our mission is to create **resilient** and **thriving** communities by investing in the people who live in our homes and neighbourhoods. By doing this, we're able to deliver social outcomes across south Manchester. **This was the social value delivered in 2017/18...**



## Employment



52

residents into employment



390

supported towards employment



45.6%

of resources spent with local businesses



£438K

spent with not-for-profits



255

apprentice weeks worked



## Participation



735

tenants engaged



332

tenants volunteered



13,775

tenant volunteering hours



160

staff volunteered



1,120

staff volunteering hours



## Community



28

community groups supported



145K

awarded to the community



4

partnerships



## Living



210

staff paid the Living Wage



£2.01M

received for our customers by helping them with benefits and grants



## Environment



136

staff carbon literate



17

incidents of fly-tipping cleared



## Housing



31

homeless into homes



3

new homes completed with

201

in the pipeline



## Equity



92.2%

of staff live in Greater Manchester



7

tenants are staff

## CELEBRATING OUR FIRST SECTION 106

**In September, we celebrated the completion of our first Section 106 onsite at The Larches in Wilmslow.**

A Section 106 is an agreement between a private developer and the council; this means the developer has to provide a certain number of affordable homes on a new development as part of the planning permission.

We marked the special occasion by gifting hampers to the residents who have recently moved into the three affordable-rent bungalows. Karen Mitchell, Chief Executive at Southway, David Squires Head of Neighbourhoods at Southway, and Andy Morgan from Elan Homes were accompanied by members of Southway's Development Team who played a key part in the completion of the scheme.

As well as providing much-needed affordable housing, the properties have been designed to offer accessibility for tenants with mobility issues. Our new tenant commented that the simple layout of the bungalow has eased her day-to-day living.



**Southway has acquired a further 36 homes so far this year through the benefits of Section 106 agreements and we are working closely with a number of developers on new projects – so watch this space for new property opportunities!**

## HOW WE USE YOUR PERSONAL DATA

**You will probably have noticed lots of emails and information on websites about General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) that started around May this year. This was down to a change in the law about how all organisations, including Southway, handle your data.**

### **What does it all mean?**

Your privacy rights were strengthened as a result; for example, all organisations, including Southway can only send you marketing information if you have 'opted-in' and given permission to receive this.

You can also ask us to delete records we hold about you, (exceptions being made where there are legitimate reasons to keep these on record).

If you want to know more about the law and your rights, have a look at the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) website; they are the regulator for data protection.

We have been working hard to make sure we are using your information responsibly and one of our website we provide clear information about how we use your data. This information can be found within the Privacy Notice on our website, which covers all our activities and also gives you more information about your rights and our obligations. If you need this in an alternative format, such as large print of Braille, please let us know.

If you have any questions or concerns about data protection please contact Matthew Maouati, the Head of Governance and Performance via our website or by calling us.





# FREE EVENTS FOR THE OVER 50s

**Old Moat, a naturally occurring retirement community**

## The Season To Be Jolly

**Thursday 13th December 2018 ♦ 12pm-2:30pm**

We'll be getting into the Christmas spirit with some fun carol singing with the chance to make some Christmas crafts over a **festive buffet lunch**. Don't forget to don your Christmas hat.

To book your place contact **Jamie Dean** by calling **0161 448 4227** or emailing **j.dean@southwayhousing.co.uk**

## Fill up on Casserole Event

**Thursday 17th January 2019 ♦ 12pm-2:30pm**

After the busy festive season, get together and relax with a hot bowl of casserole and play some Bingo.

**Both at St Christopher's Church, Old Moat M20 1HE**

**Southway Stories**

**09**

✉ connect@southwayhousing.co.uk 🌐 www.southwayhousing.co.uk



age friendly  
Southway Housing Trust

## Need support getting back on track?

### Motiv8 can help...

Are you aged 25 or over, living in Greater Manchester and not in employment or training? If so, we can help you get back on track.

We will support you with a personal action plan that is unique to your own needs. Your issues could range from debt and financial hardship, homelessness, domestic abuse, physical health, mental wellbeing and alcohol and drug dependency - and many more besides.

Participation in Motiv8 is voluntary. By helping to improve your health and wellbeing, self-confidence, self-esteem, finance and employability skills we will improve your chances of accessing training or finding a job.



For more information contact us:

Web: **www.motiv8mcr.org**

Telephone: **0161 331 2048**

E-mail: **info@manchesterbbo.co.uk**

Twitter: **@Motiv8GM**



**NATIONAL  
LOTTERY FUNDED**



**European Union**  
European  
Social Fund

# SUPPORTING VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES

**Southway has committed to supporting the Armed Forces Community by signing an Armed Forces Covenant. The covenant is a promise ensuring that those who serve or have served in the Armed Forces, and their families, are treated fairly. Businesses, local authorities, charities and individuals who sign commit to delivering the best possible outcomes for the Armed Forces community.**

For Housing Providers such as Southway this includes supporting veterans and their families through the offer of priority housing, employment and apprenticeship opportunities.

Greater Manchester Combined Authority held its first Armed Forces Summit in May. At the summit Southway, alongside many of the region's housing providers, pledged our commitment to the Armed

Forces Covenant and committed to delivering a 'guaranteed minimum offer' to veterans and their families.

Manchester Housing Providers gathered at the Imperial War Museum North on 25th October to discuss how best to collectively deliver on this promise. We heard presentations from the Mayor of Greater Manchester, Andy Burnham, and Warren Smith, Lord Lieutenant of Greater Manchester, on how

providers can support at both a regional and local level.

We took part in some brilliant discussions on pathways into housing, and collaborating with other support organisations, including Walking with the Wounded and Nacro, to ensure that we have the tools to help and advise effectively. We will keep you updated on how we plan to deliver on our covenant pledge in 2019.



## FRIENDLY HELP WITH YOUR JOB SEARCH

**Are you looking for work, voluntary work or training?**



## JOB CLUB SOUTH MANCHESTER

We've recently teamed up with Westcroft Community Centre and Ladybarn Community Hub to launch a Job Club. You can drop in for help with a range of things:

- **Creating or updating CVs**
- **Applying for jobs online and filling out application forms**
- **Finding training and voluntary opportunities**
- **Interview skills**

Come along to pick up valuable skills and receive advice in a friendly, relaxed setting.

Job hunting can be tough; people who've used the club in the past say it helped them to overcome their lack of confidence with job hunting, as there's no pressure or expectations. Many people come alone and have found it a great chance to meet new, like-minded people and socialise as well!

**Our weekly clubs run every:**

**Thursday** from 12-3pm at Westcroft Community Centre, 24-26 Westcroft Road, Burnage, M20 6EF. Call 0161 448 8232 for more information.

**Friday** from 1-4pm at Ladybarn Community Hub, Royle Street, Fallowfield, M14 6RN. Call 0161 224 3733 for more information.

***The right job for you is out there... and we can help you find it!***





# STAYING WARM AND WELL THIS WINTER



**With the winter months approaching it's important to think ahead and be prepared for the cold weather, as it can affect your health. Keep yourself well and your home warm during winter by following these easy steps:**

1. Wear **multiple thin layers** of clothing; they will keep you warmer than one thick layer, as the layers trap warm air.
2. A lot of heat is lost through the head and neck, so if you're chilly indoors, **try wearing a warm scarf, shawl or hat.**
3. Get your **flu vaccination**, if you're eligible it's free!
4. Heat your rooms to **at least 18°C / 21°C**. Draw your curtains as soon as it gets dark to stop the heat escaping and the draughts coming in.
5. Keep moving! Staying active keeps you fit and healthy and also generates heat to keep you warm. **Try to move around at least once an hour** and if your mobility is limited, try moving your arms and legs while sitting or just wiggling your fingers and toes.
6. Your body keeps warm by burning food you've eaten, so make sure you have **regular hot meals** that contain carbohydrates like potatoes, pasta, bread and rice. Try porridge with hot milk for breakfast and soups and stews for lunch and dinner.
7. Wear **warm clothes in bed**; when it's really cold, wear thermal underwear, bed socks and even a hat.
8. It's important that you don't run out of your medication over winter; **remember to order prescriptions ahead of time.** It's also a good idea to keep simple cold, flu and sore throat remedies at home, just in case you become unwell.
9. Keep your spirits up - it's not unusual to feel down in winter, particularly as the days get shorter. **Try to do something you enjoy every day** and keep in contact with friends and family by phone if you can't get out and about.
10. You might be eligible for **financial support** to make your home more energy efficient, to improve your heating or help with bills – **check our website or contact our Advice Team for more help and information.**

**If you are aged over 65, or know of an older relative or neighbour who would benefit from a free 'Winter Warmth' pack please contact Southway via our website or on 0161 448 4200.**



# IMPROVE YOUR DIGITAL LITERACY WITH A FREE DIGITAL QUALIFICATION



**Southway has become the first housing association to launch a free, globally recognized digital literacy qualification for tenants, that teaches essential IT skills for the work place.**

We recently moved our office to West Didsbury so we could provide improvements, such as state-of-the-art, digital services for tenants.

At the same time we launched the new "IC3 Digital Literacy" course for tenants and staff. Those people that sign up for the new initiative are provided with comprehensive online training via a video course, with practice tests and a final online exam.

Successful candidates will be able to use the qualification to prove their digital skills to potential employers and develop the knowledge needed to get a job that involves regular use of IT.

**Joe Sandwick, Southway's Digital Inclusion Officer said,** "We are very excited to launch this programme for our tenants, particularly with our older tenants who often feel excluded with the relentless drive towards digital services. By completing an IC3 certification, tenants will benefit from something as simple as being able to keep in touch with relatives and friends which can be of enormous importance and often taken for granted by younger, digitally savvy people. It is also a fantastic opportunity for younger tenants who are looking to improve their digital literacy skills in order to help them find work."

**Karen Mitchell, Chief Executive, Southway Housing said,**

*"We have been running a small-scale pilot with staff members for some months now and the take-up and feedback has been very positive. As an organisation that is committed to developing sustainable communities in which people feel included and valued, it is important for us to give something back. We hope that through the IC3 certification, our tenants will have an even greater chance to succeed in life and take advantage of the huge growth in employment that is currently underway in Manchester."*

*As the digital economy grows, we want to make sure that our tenants are equipped to apply for these opportunities that come up. Having a globally recognised digital certification will certainly help in terms of recognition from employers, as well as giving them the confidence to succeed."*

*I myself will be taking the certification once the dust settles on our current office move."*



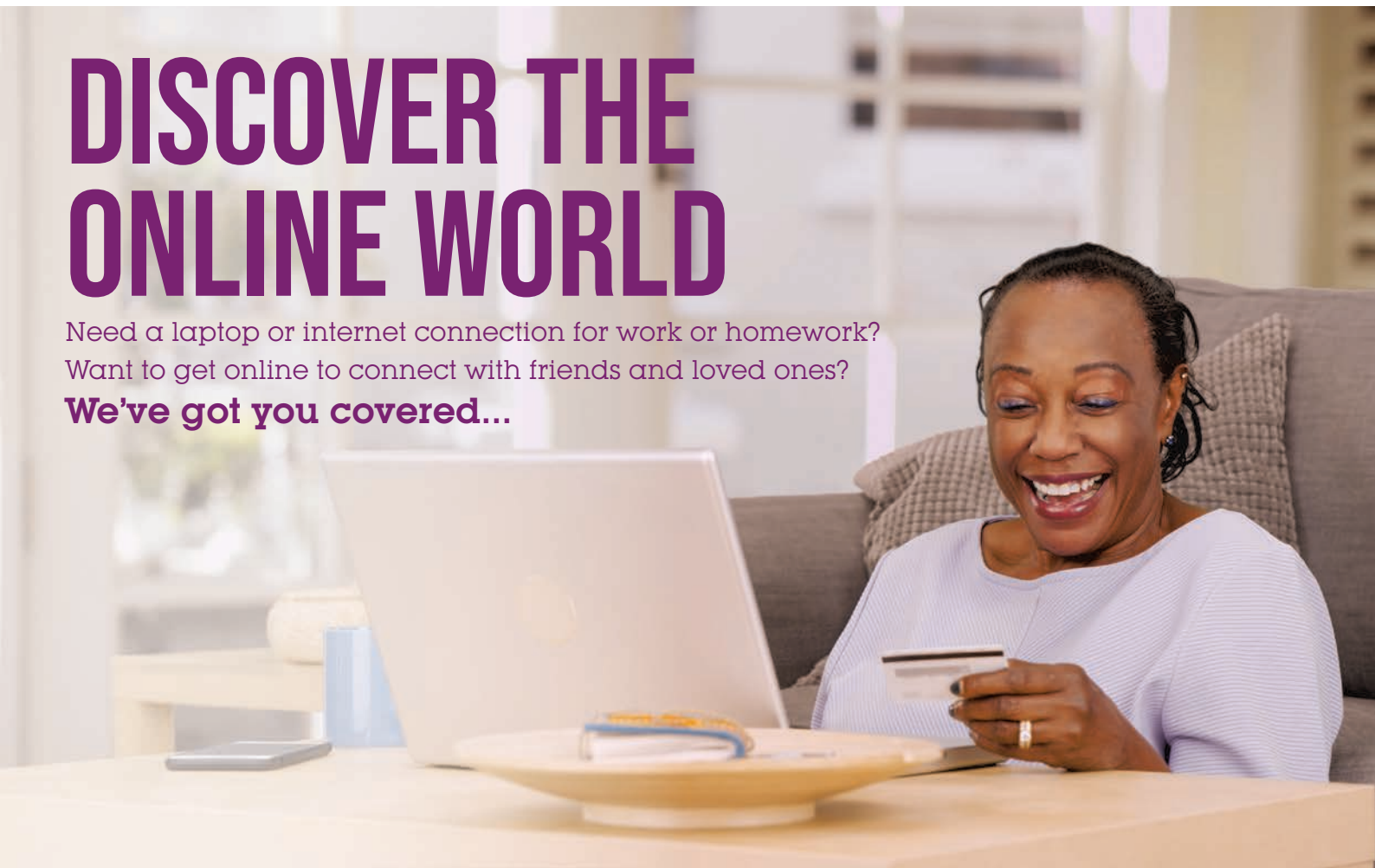
**To find out more or to sign up to the course, contact us.**





# DISCOVER THE ONLINE WORLD

Need a laptop or internet connection for work or homework?  
Want to get online to connect with friends and loved ones?  
**We've got you covered...**



## Laptop Loan

Did you know that Southway lends up to 20 free laptops to tenants? They're available to keep for up to three months and tenants don't need to worry if they don't have internet access, as this can be provided in the form of a MiFi device. Contact us to apply.

## Help buying a computer

If you are interested in buying a computer, Southway tenants get discount at 'Computer Recyclers' – just contact us to find out how to claim this discount.

## 1:1 support

Our Digital Champions can offer 1:1 help with using your computer; if you need a little help, or have a niggling question, just let us know and we will put you in touch with one of our champions.

Or, if you are in a position where you are competent with computers and would like to volunteer your time to become a Digital Champion, we'd love to hear from you! You'll get involve with helping out on computer courses and 1:1 tutoring. Full training will be provided and it's stand-out experience on your CV!

We also offer a free computer course called 'Internet Savvy' which can help you with:

- **Basic computer skills (switching on the computer, using a mouse, etc.)**
- **Setting up an email address**
- **Providing advice on the best and cheapest equipment and internet deals**
- **Searching online for jobs**
- **Signing up to the Southway portal (so that you can book repairs online)**
- **Using the internet to save money**

At the end of the course, Southway will pay half the cost of a laptop, and can advise on the cheapest way to get online.

**For information information on any of the above, contact Joe Sandwick on 0161 448 4200 or email [j.sandwick@southwayhousing.co.uk](mailto:j.sandwick@southwayhousing.co.uk).**





# THE BEAUTIFUL SOUTH FUND

**We know from the work that we do with our tenants, that South Manchester is a beautiful place, full of people who look after and support their communities.**

We want to help those of you with a community initiative or idea in mind to make south Manchester even more beautiful – which is why we've launched the Beautiful South Fund.

The fund is for any group or individual with an idea focussed around community projects, whether they are big or small, that help improve and bring people together within your neighbourhood.

**Some community initiative ideas could include:**

- Improving the green space in your neighbourhood
- Funding a local football team
- Hosting coffee mornings
- Organising meet ups between neighbours

**Some common themes your initiatives would include:**

- Helping your neighbours
- Caring for your community
- Increasing community spirit
- Getting community members to talk to each other



## INTERESTED IN APPLYING?

*If you have an idea to improve your community and neighbourhood, or want to find out more, contact Helen Sharples or Maureen Ward at [connect@southwayhousing.co.uk](mailto:connect@southwayhousing.co.uk) or call 0161 448 4200.*





# TAKE THE PINCH OUT OF CHRISTMAS

We realise Christmas can be a costly time, so we've teamed up with South Manchester Credit Union again who are helping to make it more affordable so you don't quite feel the full force of the pinch. If you're not part of the Credit Union, it's never too late to join and start saving!

Many of our Southway staff have joined and save regularly via payroll deduction and are always amazed how quickly their savings build up.

## What else does the Credit Union offer?

The Credit Union also offer affordable loans and run our Southway Solutions loan scheme which allows you to borrow up to £300. The interest from the Southway scheme goes into a development fund that is used to help the Credit Union grow. Over the past year this has paid for a post graduate media student, Ryan Cusack who done a great job in improving our publicity and social media presence.

For details of their savings and loans The **South Manchester Credit Union** can be contacted on **0161 448 0200** or speak to **Elaine Wilkinson** at **Southway Advice Team** via our website, or call **0161 448 4200**.



Recently Ryan worked with other Manchester credit unions to run a wide-spread publicity campaign called **Soundpound**.

The aim was to increase awareness of credit unions and of their ethical, fair approach to saving and borrowing.

Look out for their adverts on the Metro and on a large digital screen at Salford Arch in the run up to Christmas!

To help promote Soundpound, South Manchester Credit Union visited Southway and many staff members joined them for a group photo shoot.

## COMMUNITY MEET UPS

Have you heard about our TimeBank, but want to learn more or meet those involved before committing?

Come along to one of our TimeBank monthly meet ups – they are family-friendly events for the whole community where you can learn about the scheme, meet other members, see what help people are offering and make new friends.

## SKILLS AND ACTIVITIES SHOWCASED THIS TIME INCLUDE:

- Origami class
- Card making
- Arts & crafts
- Storytelling & games
- Watercolour painting
- Sewing workshop
- Clothes alterations & repairs

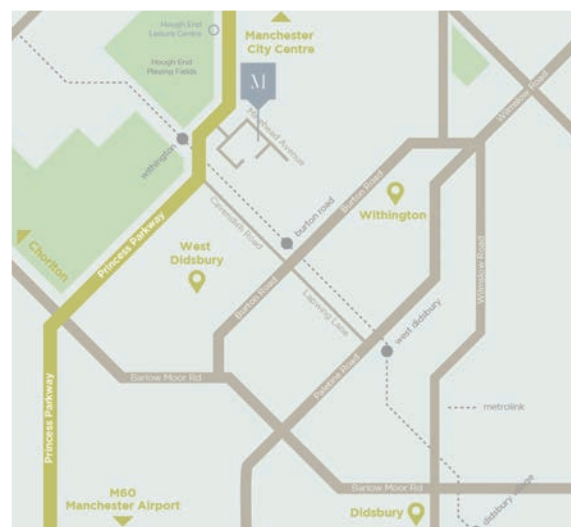
**LIGHT REFRESHMENTS ARE PROVIDED AND EVERYONE IS WELCOME.**

## NEXT MEET UPS:

- **19th December, 10.30am-12.30pm**  
Westcroft Community Centre,  
Westcroft Road, M20 6EF
- **30th January, 12-2pm**  
Ladybarn Community Centre,  
Royle St, M14 6RN

**For more information or to get involved, contact your Timebank co-ordinator Jim at [j.doyle@southwayhousing.co.uk](mailto:j.doyle@southwayhousing.co.uk)**

Coming Soon  
a stylish new community  
of houses & apartments



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SHARED OWNERSHIP | AFFORDABLE RENT | AGE 55+



## 2 BED HOUSES

SHARED OWNERSHIP



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