

# Southway Stories

The magazine for  
Southway Housing  
customers

Summer 2021

## HAVE WE HIT THE TARGET?

Your thoughts on  
Southway's delivery of  
services throughout  
the pandemic.

PAGES 10 & 11



P2



### INSPIRED BY OUR COMMUNITIES

How can we improve  
things for you?

P6



### SUPPORTING YOUR FINANCE THROUGHOUT THE PANDEMIC

What to do if  
you're struggling.

P16



### NATURE IN OUR GREEN SPACES

How we can  
all help.



# inspired by our communities

**In our last two editions of Southway Stories we introduced our Inspired By Our Communities consultation. It's really important to us to understand how you feel as we move into a post-Covid world, about what things could be improved for you and your family, in relation to our services and within your neighbourhood.**

We will use this information along with other feedback you've provided to make sure we shape the services we deliver over the coming months and years, in line with your priorities, concerns, and wishes.

**TAKE PART IN ALL THE SURVEYS  
TO DATE THROUGH OUR  
INSPIRED WEBSITE HOMEPAGE:**



## We are listening:

- To a range of people and views, making sure responses reflect the diversity of our communities
- To stories from people in their own words, so we hear and understand real life experiences
- In more ways – through the routes that suit you best, whether that's talking to us one on one, or answering a quick online survey
- Openly, sharing the results as we go

## By the end of the consultation, we aim to have:

- A better understanding of our residents' views and wishes
- Proposals to change or adapt policies, service standards and delivery
- Real-life examples and scenarios that will inform staff training in line with our values
- A knowledge base of ideas to adapt to the post-Covid world
- Plans to continue building trust and respect with our residents

## Early consultation responses

We started by speaking to small groups of tenants about what they felt the biggest issues that we faced coming out of Covid and what our priorities should be to address them. This gave us the following themes, which we could use to set the questions we are now asking everyone in Phase 2:

1. A fairer society – with less poverty and inequality
2. Healthy and happy communities, keeping community spirit going
3. Investment in local communities and hubs



## Healthy and happy communities, keeping community spirit going

4. Keeping people informed, involved, and in touch with each other
5. Helping with skills and confidence to achieve financial security
6. Caring for the environment and helping people benefit from the outdoors
7. Providing a safe, secure and comfortable place to call home

As of mid-June 2021, we have completed 200 in-depth phone interviews with tenants and we have had around 35 requests for further contact regarding either money management, employment, repairs or wanting to know more about what's going on in the neighbourhood. We will be completing over 100 more phone calls by the end of August.

### Take part weekly and win £25

To make sure everyone can take part that wants to, we're sending out weekly surveys on a different consultation theme through our e-newsletter, social media and on our website.

Every week that you take part you'll be entered into a draw to win £25. With about 120 entries per week, there are great odds of winning!

### Want to take part, but not online?

If you aren't confident using any of the online methods above, get in

touch with us, and we'll send out a paper survey for you to complete. There will also be surveys in our sheltered schemes.

### Inspired for kids

Check out the activity booklet included with this issue 'Inspired by YOU' where we've designed some activities for children to complete to take part in the consultation. We're going to be investing in some of these ideas that come from adults, the children and teenagers, so it's a great opportunity.



# WHAT'S ON AT Westcroft COMMUNITY CENTRE

The doors to Westcroft Community Centre are open again, and our volunteers and staff are thrilled to be welcoming people back again after a long year without visitors.

**At the time of writing the services currently running at the centre are:**

<b>Eat, Meet &amp; Greet</b> Mondays	<b>Advice and Guidance</b> Tuesdays	<b>Quids In Food Club</b> Wednesdays
<b>Universal Credit Drop In</b> Wednesdays	<b>Internet Café</b> Thursday AM	<b>Let's Cook Together</b> Thursday PM, Friday AM
<b>Jobs Club &amp; Employment Support</b> Thursdays and Fridays	<b>Self Help services</b> (Referral needed) Fridays	<b>Slimming World</b> Thursday, Friday & Saturday

More services are reopening all the time. Contact Westcroft to get more information: 24-26 Westcroft Road, Burnage, Manchester, M20 6EF

T: **0161 448 8232** E: **westcroftcommunitycentre@gmail.com**

## Menopause matters

The menopause affects so many of us, yet is discussed so little.

To change this, a new Menopause Support Group has been set up at Westcroft Community Centre.

Run by two Westcroft volunteers Linda and Bernie, this is a place where women can talk to others, ask questions, find new ideas and discover how others are coping with their symptoms and what support is available to them.

It will run on the last Thursday of the month from 4.30-6.30pm and you can drop in. If you'd like any more information, contact Westcroft.

A useful website for information about the menopause for both men and women is:

**[www.menopausematters.co.uk](http://www.menopausematters.co.uk)**

## JOIN US FOR A SUMMER PICNIC AT ARROWFIELD

We're holding a picnic and attendees will be given a picnic in a bag (on a first come first served basis) to enjoy with other members of your community.

You can also bring your own food if you wish (but no barbecues please!) If Government guidance at the time allows, we also hope to have a bouncy castle and other fun activities available.

Southway staff will be also be on hand to give general information about services and for local tenants to talk about the Arrowfield Zero Carbon Community Project. (See page 13 for more information)

**If you require any further information please contact Maureen Ward on 0161 448 4200 or [m.ward@southwayhousing.co.uk](mailto:m.ward@southwayhousing.co.uk)**

**TUESDAY 24 AUGUST,**  
12PM – 2.30PM

ON THE **GREEN SPACE** AT PLOVER TERRACE  
NEAR ARROWFIELD ROAD / WINTERMANS  
ROAD OFF NELL LANE IN CHORLTON





# SUCCESS FOR RESIDENTS SEEKING WORK



## ADANNA THE TIME IS NOW



Adanna is a resident in one of our local communities who had previously worked as a Teacher in Nigeria, but having moved to the UK in 2019, had only worked in volunteer roles alongside bringing up her young children.

Having been out of paid employment for 3 years, she attended and successfully completed our 5 week The Time is Now course. With continued employability support from Southway, Adanna worked on her CV, interview preparation and job searching, which helped to increase her confidence and recognise her own employability skills.

Through one of our training partners, we were able to refer her to the NHS-linked Step into Care programme run by WEA. This provided a route into social care, which was an area she wanted to work in but had little experience of. She was accepted on the course. Whilst studying, she was able to gain the tools she needed to pursue a career in care, and once successfully completed, she moved into a job placement with a residential care organisation where she has now secured permanent employment.

It was great to see each step of her journey contribute to helping her find sustainable employment in an industry that she has a huge passion to work in.

If you would like to join the next round of The Time is Now or get one to one employability support, contact us today!

## SEAN KICKSTART SCHEME



Kickstart roles are new 6-month placements for 16-24 year olds in receipt of Universal Credit. They are a great opportunity to gain skills and insight into working in a diverse area of housing, alongside knowledgeable and friendly teams.

Our first intake of placements through the Government's Kickstart scheme are already more than 2 months into their new roles, and it has been fantastic to see their development and growth so far at Southway.

The scheme has also been really positively embraced by all of the teams participating.

*"The Kickstart scheme has been a brilliant way for me to start a new career. I came from a very different working background but have been made to feel comfortable by the whole team. Any questions are always answered and any support needed is given. I am thoroughly enjoying the process."*

**Sean, Trainee Commercial and Leasehold Assistant**

*"Sean has been an asset to the Sales and Commercial Property Team since he started, picking up new skills quickly as well as bringing his own unique insights!"*

**Natalie, Sales and Commercial Property Manager**

We are looking forward to welcoming our next intake of Kickstart employees very soon! Keep an eye out on our website for new placements which are added all the time: [www.southwayhousing.co.uk/kickstart](http://www.southwayhousing.co.uk/kickstart)

# SUPPORT FOR TENANTS BEYOND THE EVICTION BAN

You may have heard about the government's ban on evictions coming to an end in May 2021. We know that many of our tenants have been affected by the coronavirus, losing work, and as a result have struggled to pay rent during the pandemic.

The consequences of this crisis are wide and people affected could face hardship for years to come.

That is why we and other housing associations have come together to make a permanent commitment to our tenants.

No one will be evicted from their

home as a result of financial hardship, as long as residents are engaging with their housing association on a plan to manage their rent if they fall into arrears.

Anyone worried about paying their rent should contact us, and we will help.

## UK HOUSING ASSOCIATIONS' JOINT STATEMENT ON EVICTIONS AND THE PANDEMIC

**During the pandemic and beyond, housing associations are committed to:**

### 1. Keeping people secure at home

No one will be evicted from a housing association home as a result of financial hardship, where they are working (or engaging) with their housing association to get their payments back on track.

### 2. Helping people to get the support they need

Housing associations are helping residents to access benefits and other support to alleviate financial hardship, including

supporting people to get into work where possible.

### 3. Acting compassionately and quickly where people are struggling

Housing associations will work with any resident who is struggling to pay rent, to make arrangements that are manageable for them in the long term. Legal action will only be taken in serious circumstances – for example as a last resort where a resident will not agree a plan with their landlord to pay their rent, or where it is needed urgently in cases of domestic abuse or of antisocial behaviour that is putting other residents or communities at risk.

## WHAT TO DO IF YOU'RE STRUGGLING

If you are worried, try checking the Coronavirus Financial Advice and Help with your money pages on our website, where you can find the latest updates and support.

As soon as you know you are going to have difficulty paying, contact your dedicated Income Officer at Southway for advice and support. Their details will be on any recent contact about your rent or you can ask the Customer Hub.

If you need any advice about claiming benefits or where you stand if your earnings have stopped, you can speak to one of our Advice Team.

If you send us the details about your situation, and how you would like to be contacted (by phone or email), the team will contact you as soon as possible to advise you.

*"The evictions process from social housing is very different to that in privately rented homes. Evictions are only carried out as a very last resort and in serious cases.*

*Housing associations are charitable landlords that exist to provide homes to people on low incomes and they want to work closely with residents who may be struggling financially.*

*Residents who are worried about paying their rent or have fallen into arrears should be reassured that their landlord is there to support them."*

**National Housing Federation**



# END OF UNIVERSAL CREDIT £20 UPLIFT

The extra £20 payment per week in Universal Credit will come to an end at the end of September 2021.

The increase was created to help people through the pandemic, and as the UK begins its recovery, this decision will affect many of you.

We can offer help with budgeting, employment and training advice; with lots of information on our website in the 'Help with your money' section (<https://southwayhousing.co.uk/money>)

If you think this reduction in payment of Universal Credit will affect paying your rent, speak to us sooner rather than later as we can offer lots of support and advice.



## SUPPORT OLD MOAT QUIDS IN AS YOU SHOP



Our Quids In Food Clubs supports 230 households each week to access essential food and provisions, with 45 of those households in Old Moat.

Between April 2020 and March 2021, the five Quids In food clubs distributed 11,723 food parcels and saved over 111,250 kg of food going to waste. This has been an absolutely essential service more so than ever during the past 12 months – and you can help.

You can support Old Moat Quids In Food Club when you shop at Co-op.

Co-op members who choose us as their local cause can add money to our fund each time they shop until October 2021 – at no extra cost. All the money raised will be used to buy breakfast food for our club members.

So next time you visit; please select us as your local cause <https://membership.coop.co.uk/causes/50016>! You can become a Co-op member online at [www.coop.co.uk/membership](http://www.coop.co.uk/membership) or ask in your local store.



## TREATMENT SPACE FOR HIRE IN OLD MOAT

Minehead Court, our new development of 54 apartments plus an onsite café is now hiring out the treatment space to deliver health treatments such as massage, sports therapy, physio or maybe some pampering, beauty treatments or counselling.

If you are a specialist in any health treatments that can benefit the community, please get in touch with Cathy Ayrton on 0161 448 4200.





## STRENGTH IN NUMBERS

## ASB PROACTIVE PARTNERSHIPS

Anti-social behaviour, though initiated by a minority of residents, can divide and disrupt communities and lives. But recent complaints in Chorlton lead to a proactive partnership which quickly delivered results for the wider area.

15 individuals and groups from the Merseybank area, which included residents, agencies and councillors, reported anti-social behaviour by a group of local youths.

**We were able to take the information and take action in collaboration with Greater Manchester Police and Manchester City Council. As a result:**

13

tenancy warnings issued to the households of the identified youths.

15

youths identified through multi-agency work with Youth Justice, Social Services, Police, ASBAT, the local schools and the local community and businesses.

3

appointments made with the 3 central youths and their parents or guardians to interview and sign ABC's. 2 were successful and 1 failed. Another ABC was issued by the City Council.

1

Injunction warning issued to the ringleader and parent under interview at the police station.

1

Dispersal zone authorised by GMP. This hasn't had to come into force, as the reports started to decline.

This was a large case with real impact. We have now seen a decline in the reports of ASB coming through, not just around Merseybank but the wider Chorlton estate.

This was made possible because of the number of reports and detail of records kept by local people, so thank you to everyone who was involved.

If you are experiencing ASB in your area, please make sure you report it without delay:

**You can report ASB on our website, over the phone, or on social media. Your reports can remain anonymous.**





# GETTING A BANK OR POST OFFICE ACCOUNT

## WHY DO WE NEED A BANK ACCOUNT?

Having a bank account is important to manage even the smallest financial transactions.

If you have a Post Office Card account for benefits, Tax Credits or State Pension payments, this will close in November this year. From 21st November DWP and HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) will stop making payments into PO card accounts so you will need to open a new bank account, arrange for any payments you receive to start being paid into it, then close your Post Office Card account. To close the account, get a P6703 account closure form from the post office or call their contact centre on 0345 722 3344 and ask for it to be posted to you.

## WHICH BANK ACCOUNT SHOULD I CHOOSE?

Below are 3 main types of account.

**Basic account** – Usually free. Includes a debit card that allows you to pay for goods and services in shops, over the phone and on-line, to get cashback in shops and to withdraw money from cash machines (ATMs). It has no chequebook or overdraft facility. Some accounts have a 'buffer zone' where you can go overdrawn by a very small amount without being charged.

**Current Account** – As above but can be subject to monthly fees. It includes a chequebook and the bank can authorize an overdraft facility, which will also be charged for. It is important to get permission for an overdraft facility or you may face very high charges.

**Savings Accounts** – Good for

putting money to one side for things like holidays, birthdays or Christmas. Usually earns some interest, though rates have not been good over the last few years. Credit Unions offer good accounts for saving. South Manchester Credit Union has a particularly good savings scheme at the moment called 'Prize Saver'. For every £ saved you get an entry into a monthly prize draw with a top prize of £5000 and 20 smaller prizes of £20. For details call South Manchester Credit Union on 0161 448 0200.

## HOW DO I OPEN A BANK ACCOUNT?

When you have decided which type of account is most suitable you need to decide which bank you prefer. Applications to open accounts are usually on line now but some banks can do applications by phone. After completing an application, the bank will contact you to let you know which branch to take your ID into. They will supply a code so your Identity documents will link to your on-line application.

## WHAT ID WILL I BE ASKED FOR?

To get an account you 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 have received confirming the benefit being paid to you. Includes Council Tax benefit

■ HMRC tax notification letter. Documents accepted as proof of address include:

- The latest Council Tax bill or exemption certificate for current year
- A water bill (current year), gas or electric bill (from last 3 months)
- A bank, credit union or credit card statement (from last 3 months)
- UK/EU photo driving licence (If not already used as personal ID)
- Your original Tenancy Agreement. Can accept a copy if produced and stamped by Southway

Council Tax 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 ID categories. It is important to make sure your name, and initials are the same on each document.

Check bank websites for full details of documents accepted.

Southway's Financial Inclusion Adviser can help you by checking you have the right documents to open an account and may suggest which bank and type of account might best suit your needs.

**If you need to open an account and want advice from Southway Phone 0161 448 4200 and ask to be referred to the Advice Team.**

# OUR PERFORMANCE

**EVERY YEAR WE SET PERFORMANCE AND SATISFACTION TARGETS FOR ALL OF OUR SERVICES, TO MAKE SURE WE'RE DELIVERING THE BEST EXPERIENCE AND VALUE FROM OUR RESOURCES THAT WE CAN.**

This has been a year of huge challenges for Southway, with the teams that deliver our frontline services particularly affected. This impacted on our performance in various ways. Despite this, we have focussed our services on the crucial areas and those most important to you. In the majority of cases, performance has been near (or above) the targets we set, in order to achieve the best possible service delivery.

**Some of these key service areas, and how we got on, are summarised here:**



CUSTOMER SATISFACTION: 4.5

## CALL HANDLING

As with most areas of our work, we faced difficulties with call handling because of the pandemic. It meant moving our entire call centre from office to home, a greater variance in the number of calls received, and an increase in complex calls that took staff longer to deal with.

This disruption initially increased waiting times, and we know that this was frustrating.

However, as the year went on we improved all call handling targets and were pleased to beat our target on call answering, with 92% of calls answered for the full year, compared to 87% in 2019-20.

### What did we do?

In 2020 we introduced a new call handling and administration rota. This is returning positive results because it helps Advisors clearly manage time between call handling and admin duties.

### What will we do next?

Our call waiting times are now improving, but do we want to improve further because you've told us this is such an important factor for you.



CUSTOMER SATISFACTION: 4.7

## REPAIRS

With lockdown and social distancing measures, for much of the year we were only able to carry out emergency repairs. Our Repairs Team worked very hard to maintain the repairs service while meeting covid safety measures and a full repairs service has now started up again, with the backlog created during lockdown being cleared.

Approximately 2500 repairs have built up since January 2021. However, a promising start has been made with 600 cleared in the first two weeks including all gas and electric repairs.

We're pleased to see that tenant satisfaction has remained high throughout the year despite challenging circumstances, and the year-end achievement of 4.7 against a target of 4.5 has been a positive end to a difficult year. Again, we would like to thank our tenants for your patience and understanding during this challenging time.



CUSTOMER SATISFACTION: 4.6

## INCOME

The team has achieved excellent performance, with the year-end income collection target met. Rent collection was particularly strong amongst Universal Credit claimants. This may in part be due to the additional £20 top up granted to claimants as part of coronavirus legislation, although targets were being achieved prior to this.

### What did we do?

Knowing the impact the pandemic had on people's finances, we stepped up the support offer from income officers, including ensuring anyone in arrears could contact their Income Officer directly and was referred to the Advice Team. More people got in touch with us to tell us they were struggling and this put both tenants, and ourselves, in a better position.

### What will we do next?

We'll be continuing with this approach to rent collection and keep you updated on how this is going.





CUSTOMER SATISFACTION: 3.7

## ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

Covid-19 restrictions impacted ASB reporting; there was a rise in complaints around neighbour nuisance, largely due to people spending more time at home. These included issues such as noise, parking disputes, and people having visitors.

### What did we do?

Due to being unable to visit homes, disputes needed to be resolved over the phone, which is not as effective as dealing with ASB complaints face to face. The government ban on evictions also meant we could not deal as effectively with very serious ASB issues where eviction would usually be a last, but necessary, resort.

Despite this, there was improvement in customer satisfaction, which demonstrates we are heading in the right direction.

### What will we do?

We'll be looking to further improve our work and satisfaction around ASB as lockdown restrictions ease. We recognise there is still work to do, and we will have more details on this in our next edition of Southway Stories.

IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF SOUTHWAY STORIES, WE'LL BE REPORTING ON THE RESULTS OF THE RECENT STAR SURVEY, WHERE WE'LL LOOK AT YOUR MORE IN-DEPTH FEEDBACK ON OUR SERVICES, AND TELL YOU THE ACTIONS WE'LL BE TAKING TO ACT ON IT.



CUSTOMER SATISFACTION: 4.9  
(Rating for Advice Services)

## COMMUNITY INVESTMENT

Our community-based services (events, activities, direct support and advice) were significantly affected by lockdown and social restrictions as many require face to face contact.

### What did we do?

We changed our focus so we could respond to the new priorities of our tenants and residents, in particular food support, and moved to the use of digital platforms to continue delivering services like employment support. Overall, satisfaction with services has been above target.

### What will we do?

We are currently doing our largest ever customer consultation, which will give us a very clear idea of how you want our services to look. We will have a more detailed review of our services and your satisfaction or areas for improvement in our next Southway Stories where we'll take a look at what you said in our STAR survey – as well as looking more in depth at our Inspired By Communities feedback (see pages 2-3).



# BIG PLANS FOR CHORLTON PARK

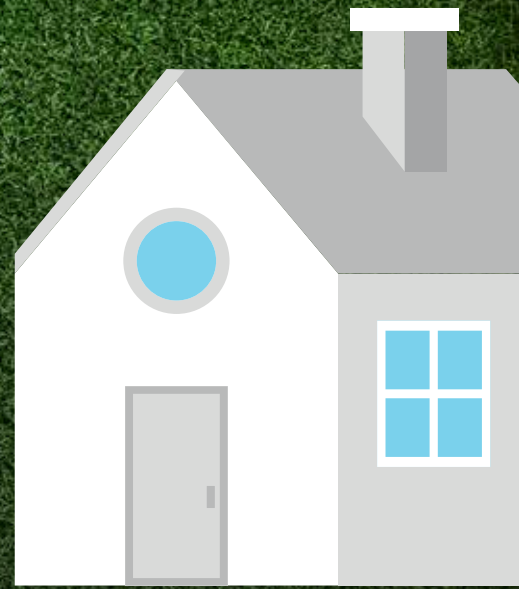
## AND YOUR IDEAS ARE WANTED!

There has been lots of work on Chorlton Park over the past year or so, improving play equipment, creating an outdoor gym, plus work on a skate park, and more.

Now, the big White House on Chorlton Park, one of the oldest houses in Chorlton, is due for a makeover to put it to better use for everyone.

A Community Project is looking to create a central hub that can support people's use of the park and improve wellbeing for people in Chorlton. To do this they would love to hear from you – what would you like it to be?

Ideas are being put together now and are welcome from everyone. Give your feedback on what you'd like or what you think, by e-mailing [jane.leach@i-architect.co.uk](mailto:jane.leach@i-architect.co.uk) or checking out the page 'Chorlton Park White House' on Facebook.



# ENERGY BUDDIES

## SAVING YOU ENERGY AND MONEY

We've successfully bid for funding and secured a grant of £259,000 to invest in a unique Green Energy project.

The grant was awarded by the Energy Redress Scheme, managed by the Energy Saving Trust, who distribute payments from energy companies that may have breached rules. Registered charities can apply for funds to deliver energy-related projects. We will be using this funding to create an "Energy Buddies" scheme; a dedicated team delivering tailored support to individual households and training frontline staff to help you with anything from switching to more affordable suppliers and looking at how energy is used in the home to get the best out of your energy and save money.

If you are interested in this scheme, get in touch or check our website for further plans we have for green schemes and energy saving.

**For more information, you can email [energybuddies@southwayhousing.co.uk](mailto:energybuddies@southwayhousing.co.uk)**





# INNOVATIVE ECO PROJECT IN SOUTH MANCHESTER ESTATE

It's really crucial that all social housing landlords and tenants respond directly to growing concerns of climate change, which is now being acknowledged as a climate emergency. Greater Manchester has a target to become carbon neutral by 2038 and you'll see lots of necessary changes to the way we work, the support we offer and crucially, information on how you can help this critical goal.

As a result of this, we are soon launching one of our biggest projects yet that looks to reduce environmental impact and help change behaviours; all to help the environment.

Our aim is to change our largest neighbourhood, Arrowfield in Chorlton, into a Zero Carbon Community – by replacing all gas boilers with energy efficient heating pumps, as well as a crucial community engagement programme aimed at creating greater knowledge around energy use to help behavioural change, supporting reductions in energy demand and increases in efficiency.

Plans for increasing and encouraging community engagement include the introduction of a 'Covid safe' show home for practical demonstrations of how the new systems work. The property will also become a hub from which to provide education, engagement and a consistent point of contact for residents until finally being handed over to a new tenant.

The £3.9 million project, part funded by the European Regional Development Fund, will hugely reduce carbon emissions and carbon monoxide in people's homes and neighbourhoods, while reducing their energy bills at the same time.

The main works are scheduled to be delivered from September 2021 to April 2023.

**For more information about any part of the project, you can e-mail [zerocarbon@southwayhousing.co.uk](mailto:zerocarbon@southwayhousing.co.uk)**



**European Union**  
European Regional  
Development Fund



# MERSEYBANK GETS A SPRING CLEAN

Southway were proud to support the 'BE(E) Merseybank 9 days of local action' event in May. Eden Merseybank and Merseybank Green Group put together an impressive programme of events, held between 15th and 23rd May, to clean up and improve the local area.

Activities included clearing playing fields, helping local residents to arrange refuse removal, tidying and gardening to improve shared spaces and gifting plants and bird feeders as well as a community picnic, estate-wide jumble trail and local history events.

Over the 9 days, 250 people took part in the event and made a huge difference to the area including...

- Mowing 7 lawns, cutting an overhanging hedge and weeding and planting several residents' gardens
- Helping more than 20 residents to clear rubbish and small items from gardens, filling 2 skips and making 7 tip runs
- Collecting up 45 contaminated recycling bins which were removed by Biffa
- Gifting 150 wicker patio planters filled with flowers, 70 trays of bedding plants, 50 bird feeders and 100 packets of wildflower seeds

Over 50 people enjoyed a sunny picnic at the start of the week and rain didn't put off the 11 residents who set up stalls to sell unwanted items on the jumble trail.

Local residents have been full of praise for the event and many have commented on how great the streets look, with some asking for more regular local actions to be arranged.



One of the organisers, Heather Walters of Eden Merseybank, said *"We've had an amazing week with many new connections made.... it's been lots of hard work, but lots of fun!"*

BE(E) Merseybank brought together local residents, councillors and community groups, BMCA, St Ambrose School, Ivy Church and companies including McDonalds, Biffa and Unicorn Grocery.

A grant from the Beautiful South Fund helped to equip the volunteers with trolleys, gardening tools, bird seed and wool for craft events and Southway Urban Rangers led volunteers' work to improve shared spaces.

**Brilliant work Merseybank, you should all BE(E) very proud of yourselves!**





# THE BEAUTIFUL SOUTH FUND

CARING FOR NEIGHBOURS AND COMMUNITIES



If you have an idea for an event or project in your local community that could improve your neighbourhood or bring people together, a grant from the Beautiful South Fund could help you to make it happen.

The Beautiful South Fund offers **grants of up to £2,500** to groups and organisations to make a difference in south Manchester.

The theme of the fund is 'neighbourliness' so we're looking for projects that will improve neighbourhoods, help people to connect and create a community spirit. The project must benefit Southway tenants.

All applications are considered by a panel of tenant volunteers, with support from Southway.

You can find out more about the Fund and download an application form on our website:

**[www.southwayhousing.co.uk/beautiful-south](http://www.southwayhousing.co.uk/beautiful-south)**

If you want to discuss your project, please contact Maureen Ward or Roz Hampson.

## JOIN THE PANEL



We're looking for new members to join the Beautiful South Fund decision-making panel. This is your chance to play a part in improving our neighbourhoods.

Meetings are held every 1-2 months (in person or by Zoom) and panel members are asked to read the applications in advance.

If you would like to find out more, contact Maureen Ward or Roz Hampson.





# NATURE IN OUR GREEN SPACES

Our green spaces are precious places for wildlife. From our largest trees to the tiniest blades of grass, plants provide food and shelter for a variety of wildlife.

At Southway our aim is to create green spaces which are great places for nature and as biodiverse as possible. We want them to look good for people to enjoy, to play in and to relax. We also want to involve you and other local residents in creating these lovely green spaces for people and nature.

## SO, WHAT HAVE WE DONE TO HELP NATURE IN OUR GREEN SPACES?

### SHELTERING MINI BEASTS

We're giving mini beasts (all types of invertebrates) a helping hand by creating Bug Hotels and other non-living structures for them to live and shelter in. Some invertebrates are nature's recyclers as they break down fallen leaves and other vegetation. Some invertebrates are pollinators of plants and crops and contribute on a huge scale to growing many of the plants that we eat. Some invertebrates are predators, and are of great help to gardeners by eating greenfly and other pest species. All invertebrates are vital part of a wider food chain and provide food for birds, frogs and hedgehogs.

1. Darley Avenue, 2. Wintermans Road, 3. Horsefield Close



1



2



3

“IF WE AND THE REST OF THE BACK-BONED ANIMALS WERE TO DISAPPEAR OVERNIGHT, THE REST OF THE WORLD WOULD GET ON PRETTY WELL. **BUT IF THE INVERTEBRATES WERE TO DISAPPEAR, THE WORLD'S ECOSYSTEMS WOULD COLLAPSE.**”

DAVID ATTENBOROUGH





## PLANTING FOR POLLINATORS

We're deliberately choosing plants that are loved by pollinators (bees and butterflies). This includes everything from the beautiful bulbs that we enjoy in Spring, to the wildflowers, long grass, shrubs and flowers which you see in borders. We have made some new **'Planted for Pollinators'** signs which you may spot around.

4. *Pyracantha* has fantastic flowers for Bees in early summer and berries for birds in the winter.  
5. Common Carder Bumblebee on Catmint. 6. Orange-tip Butterfly on Honesty.



## HELPING HEDGEHOGS

These lovely animals have suffered significant decline and have recently been classed as vulnerable to extinction in the UK. So we've added hedgehog homes to one of our quieter, wildlife-friendly communal garden areas. Look out in future editions of Southway Stories for more information about creating homes for and helping hedgehogs.

## INVOLVING THE COMMUNITY

Local people regularly volunteer to help the Environmental Team create places for nature on our green spaces. If you would like to help please contact our Urban Rangers:

**Debbie Wallace** for Chorlton, Arrowfield Estate, Merseybank, West Didsbury  
[d.wallace@southwayhousing.co.uk](mailto:d.wallace@southwayhousing.co.uk)

**Luke Stuttard** for Burnage, East Didsbury, Withington, Old Moat  
[l.stuttard@southwayhousing.co.uk](mailto:l.stuttard@southwayhousing.co.uk)

## LEADING THE WAY

On **5th June** our Environmental Team led our first Nature in our Green Spaces guided walk in Chorlton. During this socially distanced walk we saw first-hand how important our green spaces are for local wildlife.

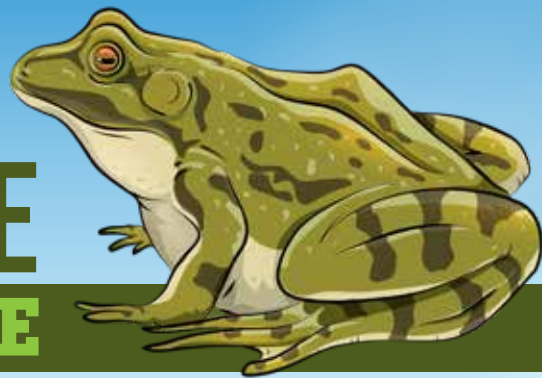
The flowers, which had been planted to benefit pollinating insects, were full of bees, hoverflies, butterflies and other invertebrates. The recently sewn wildflower meadow areas are showing the first signs of flowers. Everything we saw, from the mushrooms growing on the ground to the moss and lichen growing on the trees, plays an important role in our wider environment. Bees were collecting pollen and birds were singing and searching for food for their young. Taking a moment to

stop and listen to the natural sounds around us revealed the presence of eight different types of birds in just two minutes around one green space.

We will be leading guided walks again soon, but in the meantime why not enjoy your own walk around your local green spaces and take in the sights and sounds of nature. Do let us know what you see. We would love to hear from you!



# MAKING YOUR HOME A HOME FOR WILDLIFE



When we think of a place where wildlife would thrive our minds may go to a local park or favourite nature reserve.

It's easy to overlook the nature on our doorstep and the impact that our individual actions may have.

Even conservationists are only starting to realise just how important it is that everyone plays their part – our parks and nature reserves are only ever as good as the most wildlife-rich gardens, yards, balconies and window boxes.

Without them, our beloved wildlife becomes trapped and isolated from one another.

It's harder to find food, water, shelter and a mate, and ultimately it is upon these that our wildlife depends.

**The fight to prevent nature's decline starts at home, but how do we help?**

## THINK SMALL

Even the smallest spaces can make a big difference. You could plant up a window box or some plant pots with native wildflowers – like ox-eye daisy or meadow cranesbill – to create a bee buffet which plenty of other insects will enjoy too.

If in doubt about what to plant, we recommend keeping an eye out for the RHS Plants for Pollinators symbol on any seed packets and opting for peat-free composts as much as possible.

A healthy insect population underpins all other wildlife. Avoid nasty chemicals, fill the space with flowers and think about creating areas for insects to shelter – a pile of logs can make a world of difference.

## WATER, WATER EVERYWHERE

Making sure there is a fresh source of water available is valuable at any time of year but particularly now that the weather is warmer. A bowl of water will not only be important for birds, who might even take a refreshing paddle, but also insects and mammals like hedgehogs.

Placing a rock in the water will ensure that wildlife can get in and out safely and will make it easier for insects to access the water's edge. It's also very important that you are cleaning and topping up the water regularly to make sure it stays nice and clean and doesn't freeze over in the winter or evaporate in the summer.

You might also want to think about adding a pond. Even a small container pond can support dragonflies, damselflies, frogs and newts. Make sure to plant it up too, to help oxygenate the water and add an extra source of food and shelter. Two good options for small ponds are marsh marigold and water forget-me-not.

## LEAVE THE LAWN

A long, luscious lawn will provide an excellent habitat and hiding place for many of our beloved garden insects. The long blades of grass will also hold onto more moisture, providing a refreshing place for birds, insects and mammals to get a drink and cool-off.

And it's not just grass; you'll likely spot other plants begin to appear like clover, daisy, buttercup and dandelion – which provide a great, early source of food for our pollinators. These plants will encourage a whole host of mini-beasts to make a home in your garden too.

You could always consider just mowing a winding path down the centre or perhaps giving your lawn a shorter border if you still want to keep it looking neat. In any case, the best time to mow your lawn is once in early March and again towards the end of September or early October.

Creating a home for wildlife will not only benefit the natural world but will also provide no end of joy to you too. It's so rewarding to watch wildlife enjoy the space you have created, and regular contact with nature has also been linked to increased wellbeing.

Keep an eye out for our **My Wild Garden** leaflet this summer which is filled with even more tips to improve your space for wildlife or head to our website to find out more –

**[www.lancswt.org.uk/mywildcity](http://www.lancswt.org.uk/mywildcity)**



# COVID-19 CASES ARE INCREASING ACROSS MANCHESTER

The new variant is 60% easier to spread

We can help to stop this by:



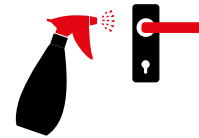
Washing  
hands often



Wearing face  
coverings



Letting fresh  
air in



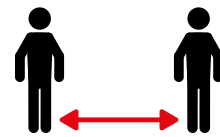
Wiping down  
surfaces



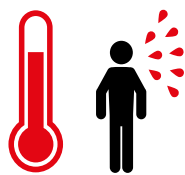
Please go for your  
COVID-19 vaccination  
when invited; it is vital  
you go for your second  
dose too



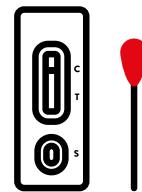
Self-isolate for ten days  
if you test positive  
or are a contact



Keeping distance  
and meeting  
outside where  
possible



If you have COVID-19 symptoms,  
book a PCR test by calling **119**  
or visiting [nhs.uk/coronavirus](https://nhs.uk/coronavirus)



Even if you don't have COVID-19  
symptoms, please take a rapid  
test twice a week, to help  
keep everyone safe

More details on COVID-19 testing and support to  
self-isolate: [manchester.gov.uk/coronavirus](https://manchester.gov.uk/coronavirus)

# VACANCY: SOUTHWAY PARENT BOARD



Southway Housing is a community based social business established in 2007. We're a trusted landlord and provide good quality affordable rented homes for around 6,000 households in and around south Manchester.

**Our interest is in People, Homes, and Neighbourhoods.** We take our role as a key stakeholder seriously, working in partnership with others to achieve more than we can alone.

We're looking for someone who shares our drive and passion for thriving communities to join our Parent Board. We want to hear from strategic leaders who can bring new ideas and insights.

We are particularly interested in people with experience of working in complementary industries; Health, Education, Employment and Skills, Carbon Reduction, or any sector that makes a positive impact on people's lives.

If you share our passion for making Manchester a great place to live get in touch and join an organisation that's all about community improvement and engagement.

## WANT TO KNOW MORE?

To request an application pack, or to find out more about the role including the opportunity for an informal discussion with our Chief Executive, Karen Mitchell, please e-mail [governance@southwayhousing.co.uk](mailto:governance@southwayhousing.co.uk).

### CLOSING DATE:

**30<sup>TH</sup> JULY**

### INTERVIEWS:

**DURING AUGUST**

### FORMAL APPOINTMENT:

**21<sup>ST</sup> SEPTEMBER AT THE  
PARENT BOARD MEETING**

30



**Please note that although Southway Board Members are not remunerated, this is an excellent opportunity to use your skills and experience to lead a community based social business. All reasonable expenses incurred on Southway Business will be reimbursed**