

## Gateway celebrates residents' success!

### Strengthening Families, Strengthening Communities

Gateway residents took part in a parenting program aimed at strengthening families and strengthening communities, which took place at Huddleston Close.

In all, six Gateway residents completed the accredited program and attended a graduation ceremony on 4 February 2011, which also

included residents from Poplar HARCA, Swan Housing Association and Tower Hamlets Homes.

Congratulations to Halima Alim, Tracey Ann-Levitt, Ahar Begum, Aysha Begum, Fathima Dirr and Soybul Khanom.

The innovative program has really empowered the residents and created a real sense of community.

The six women are planning to remain friends and are looking to set up a women's group.

Gateway would like to say a big thank you to The Family Intervention Project Team, in particular Eva Nesbitt and Selina Akhtar and congratulate our residents for completing the program.

# Congratulations



## Welcome to the new look spring edition of Open Door

Following consultation with you and the feedback we have received, we are now moving to four editions of Open Door per year (Spring, Summer, Autumn & Winter). This is our first spring edition newsletter. Thank you to everyone that gave their comments.

### Gateway's Offer to Tenants Launched

On 31 March 2011, Gateway's Offer to Tenants was formally launched! We would like to thank all our residents that have contributed to 'Gateway's Offer to tenants'

We are pleased that following months of consultation we have agreed the Gateway 'local' offer to tenants. The Offer is a summary of our pledges to improving services and is a set of standards, targets and commitments that we make to all our residents.

### How have the Gateway Offer priorities been decided?

The priorities for Gateway's Offer have been agreed with YOU, our residents and have come from a range of sources including:

- Existing service standards which were agreed with our residents and form the basis for the offer
- Doorstep consultation reaching out to 200 Gateway residents that do not normally attend meetings
- Local Offers consultation meetings
- Co-regulation group
- Residents Fair consultation in 2010
- STATUS Survey priorities

We have captured the views of our residents in a range of ways and these have been reflected in the Offer.

The Offer is a summary of our current service standards, if you would like a full copy of our standards, please contact the Resident Involvement Team on 020 8709 4381 or email [involvement@gatewayhousing.org.uk](mailto:involvement@gatewayhousing.org.uk)

Gateway is also a full partner of the Tower Hamlets Housing Forum and is committed to meeting its obligations for the Tower Hamlets local standards.

### Summary of Gateway's offer to tenants



## New Appointments at Gateway

Gateway Housing Association is pleased to announce the appointment of Sheron Carter as the new Chief Executive who will take up her post in early May, and Helen Routledge the new Financial Director who will join us in April.



### Sheron Carter, Chief Executive

Sheron joins from ARHAG (African Refugee Housing Action Group) where she has worked as their Chief Executive since 2007. Sheron was instrumental in leading ARHAG out of supervision and transforming its reputation from a failing association to a one star organisation with promising prospects for improvement.

Sheron has over 26 years experience in the fields of social housing, homelessness, community development and regeneration, and brings with her a wealth of experience at senior level in leading and delivering service improvement.

*"I am really pleased to have the opportunity to lead Gateway Housing Association. Throughout Gateway's long history it has maintained its local community focus which has enabled the association to make strong connections with the diverse communities it serves. There is a rich mix of housing accommodation to support people in need throughout the various stages of life and solid partnerships for social and economic development. I look forward to working with the board and staff to build on these solid foundations."* – Sheron.



### Helen Routledge, Finance Director

Helen joins from Newham Homes where she has been the Director of Finance since 2008. Helen has worked for many years in the East London area in senior level positions within Social Housing.

At Newham Homes Helen was a member of the Executive Management Team which achieved a successful re-inspection by the Audit Commission. Helen played a key part in helping to maintain a good two star service with excellent prospects for improvement.

*"I am delighted to be joining Gateway and I look forward to work with my new colleagues to continue to improve services to the tenants"* – Helen.

Jon Rosser, Chair of the Board said *"I am delighted that people with both Sheron and Helen's experience and ability will be joining Gateway and I look forward to working with them to develop Gateways work in East London."*

Next Issue: Interview with Sheron Carter

## Supporting YOUR Tower Hamlets Gateway takes part in successful women's community safety event

Gateway took part in the recent Black & Minority Ethnic (BME) women's community safety event held at the London Muslim Centre in February 2011.

The event was aimed at informing BME women who live or work in Tower Hamlets about the range of services that are available to support those who experience crime and those generally concerned about their safety and well being. The event provided an opportunity for local residents and third sector organisations to find out from key

members from the Metropolitan Police, the LBTH Council and other key officials via panel discussions about the various services and priorities for BME women.

With over 200 people in attendance, mostly women the event gave an opportunity for women to express themselves and voice their concerns in matters of policing and community safety. The question and answer session was the highlight of the event, where panel members ranged from the Met Police Borough Commander, Heads of Services, and senior

representatives from key organisations. Questions were focused around hate crime, youth violence, and domestic abuse amongst other areas.

The event was organised by the Police & Community Safety Board who work with the local community in partnership with the Met Police, the council and third sector organisations in ensuring the community are at the forefront of all policing within the borough.

Gateway is proud to support such initiatives within the borough.



### Changing the way we govern at Gateway

At Gateway we are determined to continue to improve our services and we recognise that we will have to change the way we do many things, particularly as finances get tight.

Many of the changes we are bringing about are behind the scenes aimed at improving the efficiency of our back room services and as part of this we have been looking at the way the Board works.

The Board is a group of volunteers who oversee and direct what happens at Gateway and take the top level decisions about policy and the direction of the Association.

As Gateway has grown these decisions have become more complicated and Board Members need high level skills to be effective.

We have been looking at these skills as part of a package of changes to the way the Board works including tough performance and attendance

targets, annual appraisal and compulsory training.

One of the key posts on the Board is that of Chair of the Risk and Audit Committee. The Chair has to assess the financial and other risks Gateway faces as well as ensure that all accounts and financial practices are as they should be.

It can often be difficult to recruit to this post, particularly in view of the hours involved, the responsibility shouldered and the complexity of the task and to date this has been carried out totally on a voluntary basis.

The post is currently vacant and the Board is considering advertising this with a modest payment attached - possibly £6000.00

If you have any views on this please send them in writing to the Chief Executive at Gateway Housing Association. 409-413 Mile End Rd. London E3 4PB.

### Code of Conduct approved

Gateway has recently carried out a review of the code of conduct for resident representatives.

The review had feedback from involved residents and was approved on 28 February 2011. We would like to thank all Gateway residents that took part in the code of conduct review.

We have received universal approval from our residents who have stated that they feel the code is a fairer tool for the journey into co-regulation.

The code of conduct applies to residents wishing to get involved within Gateway' formal involvement structure, such as the Scrutiny Panel.

If you would like to receive a copy of the code of conduct, please contact the Resident Involvement Team on [involvement@gatewayhousing.org.uk](mailto:involvement@gatewayhousing.org.uk)

## Gateway proud of Kate Smith

Gateway would like to congratulate, Kate Smith, one of our residents who was awarded the prestigious Tower Hamlets civic award.

Kate received the special award in a ceremony at the Town Hall in March, where the nine award winners achievements were praised by MP Jim Fitzpatrick and presented with their awards by the chair of the council, Cllr Motin Uz-Zaman.

Kate, who works for the Bromley By Bow Centre as the Learning ambassador, received her award for 'Going beyond her paid duties to improve the quality of life for residents'.

*"We are all so proud of Kate and feel the award is so deserving, we know that Kate has done so much for the local community and are pleased that this has been recognized".*  
Mo Ali – Resident Involvement Manager.



## Tenants & Residents Associations – Making a difference

Do you want to get involved locally?  
Do you want to make a difference?

At Gateway we support our residents setting up Tenants & Residents Associations (TRA), which is an excellent way of getting involved locally and making a difference.

Our residents at Parfett Street, Fordham Street and Myrdle Street have a Tenants & Residents Association which has overseen major works, particularly the window replacement program.

Abdul Hamid, Chair of the TRA feels having a Tenants Association has made a huge difference during the major works consultation process.

*"The TRA has allowed the tenants to collectively raise issues that would have been difficult to raise individually. The achievements that the tenants have made through the TRA has greatly improved the lives of all the tenants. Without the TRA I believe we wouldn't have achieved what we have achieved in the last two years. I would recommend all tenants to take advantage of this service provided by Gateway"*

So, if you are interested in setting up a TRA for your area or would like to find out more, please contact the Resident Involvement Team on 020 8709 4381 or email [involvement@gatewayhousing.org.uk](mailto:involvement@gatewayhousing.org.uk)

## Proud to be a Gateway resident

Janice Hatt became a Gateway resident last year and moved into her home on Edinburgh Close.

Janice came to Gateway from the Ocean Estate and is keen to share her experience with Gateway and what she hopes for in the future

**What has been your experience of Gateway so far?**

Having lived in a flat for so many years, I was really pleased to move to a house with a garden.



My overall experience of Gateway has been positive, I am happy with Gateway and feel fortunate to be living in a house in Tower Hamlets.

**What has been your most memorable experience since you have moved to Gateway?**

I have been made to feel really welcomed by other residents and Gateway staff, and there have been a few memorable moments, perhaps attending my first Gateway meeting, which was quite daunting at first, however I was made to feel welcome and as the meeting went on I became more confident.

I recently attended a women's group event and seeing women from different backgrounds getting on made me feel really positive.

**What would you like improved most?**

I am a proud resident of Gateway and feel that as residents, we all have a responsibility to look after our homes. I feel strongly that it is important that we try and maintain the outside of our properties and I am quite proud that I have made the effort without spending huge amounts.

I would hope that all residents would take pride and really help improve our environment.

# Sheltered Housing Forum – Attention all sheltered residents!

Alan Pullen Chair of Sheltered Forum outlines his vision for how he wants to see the Sheltered Forum in future.

‘It was always intended for the sheltered forum to have representation from each schemes Tenant Involvement Group (TIG) and I am really keen to see every Gateway sheltered scheme have a representative attend the Sheltered Forum. I want to thank everyone that has supported the Sheltered Forum thus far and I am delighted to have a fantastic committee support me.

Our meetings are always informative, relevant, lively and fun and we normally get a fairly good turnout – if you have never been to a Sheltered Forum meeting before, please come along, you are always welcome’

### Sheltered Forum Committee

- Alan Pullen – Chair (Lawrence Close)
- Belle Harris – Vice Chair (Rochester Court)
- Roger Bardet – Secretary (Appian Court)
- Ivy Healey – Committee (Ruth Court)
- Jean Emmins – Committee (Ruth Court)

The Sheltered Housing Forum meets four times a year and meetings last about an hour and a half, which are followed by light refreshments.

### Dates of future Sheltered Forum meetings

- Wednesday 18 May 2011, 12 noon to 2pm  
Gateway Offices 409-413 Mile End Road, E3 4PB
- Wednesday 17 August 2011, 12 noon to 2pm  
Gateway Offices, 409-413 Mile End Road, E3 4PB
- Wednesday 23rd November 2011,  
Annual General Meeting venue to be confirmed

If you would like to attend the sheltered forum or would want assistance with transport, please contact the Resident Involvement Team on 020 8709 4381.



## Gateway’s Resident Estate Inspectors Team

We would like to introduce you to the Resident Estate Inspectors Team pictured here on a training session on “How to inspect a Gateway scheme.”

The team will be responsible for carrying out inspection on estate services on behalf of residents to ensure Gateway are delivering the same standards as accross our schemes.

The team has developed a terms of reference outlining how it will operate and each member is receiving training on how to carry out an inspection and any health and safety issues when on site. The team will start their inspections from May 2011 and will be visiting schemes every eight week.

The inspectors will be wearing Gateway visibility jackets so you should be able to easily identify

them if they visit your scheme and they will be accompanied by either Housing Officer or Manager. If you see a Resident Estate Inspector at your scheme please use it as an opportunity to say hello and welcome them.

If you are interested in joining the resident estate inspector’s team please contact Paulette Noble on 020 8709 4300 for further information.

Alternatively if you feel you cannot commit yourself to regular inspections you can visit our website and decide which inspections you can attend by viewing the estate inspection schedule, planned from April 2011 to March 2012.



Pictured left to right: Tim Penrice, David Carson, Ivy Healey, Jean Emmins, Alan Pullen, Pauline Canning and Eva Silver.

## Community Chest Funding



Are you planning to organise any activities for your community between now and October 2011?

Small grants are available for residents’ group for community activities that benefit Gateway residents and the local community. The maximum amount the group can apply for is £500.00.

Last year Constant and Holmsdale Tenants and Residents Association applied for community chest funding to hold an event to celebrate Eid and Christmas, they were awarded £250. Over 50 residents attended the event and enjoyed lots of home cooked food and the children had fun playing games organised by SPLASH ARTS.

For more information on community chest grant and application form please contact Shazna Khatun on 020 8709 4360.

Closing date for application is Friday 6 May 2011.

## Leaseholders' Forum meetings

We would like to invite all our leaseholders and shared owners to attend Leaseholders' Forum meetings.

The Leaseholders' Forum is open to all Gateway leaseholders and shared owners and meets four times a year.

### Dates of Leaseholders' Forum Meetings in 2011

- Wednesday 22 June 2011, 7pm
- Wednesday 12 October 2011, 7pm
- Wednesday 7 December 2011, 7pm

All Leaseholders' Forum meetings take place at Gateway Offices and start at 7pm and usually finish by 9pm. Refreshments are provided at meetings.

### Improving services for Leaseholders

Gateway is determined to improve services for our leaseholders and shared owners and we believe working in partnership with the Leaseholders' Forum is key to improving services.

## Your contacts in the Leasehold Team



**Steve Patching**  
Leasehold and Marketing Services Manager  
020 8709 4302  
steve.patching@gatewayhousing.org.uk



**Shopna Rob**  
Leasehold Services Officer  
020 8709 4355  
shopna.rob@gatewayhousing.org.uk



**Ron Augley**  
Marketing Services Officer  
020 8709 4352  
ron.augley@gatewayhousing.org.uk

As part of our service we will provide regular updates and advisory notes related to the day to day services that we provide. The first of these is below and if you would like to discuss this in more detail please contact us. We also welcome any ideas on topics that you might like to see.

## Did you know Gateway now offers gas servicing for leaseholders?

We will carry out a full service of all your gas appliances, including your boiler and cooker.

This service is available for a highly competitive fixed fee of £75 +VAT, which is upto 50% cheaper than some providers.

Call Patrick Rogan, Gas Safety Officer, on 020 8709 4353 or email [patrick.rogan@gatewayhousing.org.uk](mailto:patrick.rogan@gatewayhousing.org.uk) to find out more.

## Overcrowding

Gateway Housing are building more family sized homes and as a shared owner or leaseholder, if you are overcrowded, we might be able to help you to move into a larger shared ownership home more suited to your needs.

The following shared ownership developments have been designed to include large family homes.



**Emerald Court**  
1 Beale Place, Bow, E3  
One, two and three bedroom apartments.



**Bookbinders Court,**  
Cudworth St, Bethnal Green, E1  
One, two and three bedroom apartments.



**Harrison House**  
1 Martineau Sq, Shadwell, E1  
One, two and three bedroom apartments.

This development is being marketed on behalf of **Tower Hamlets Community Housing.**

If you are interested or know someone who might be, then please contact Ron on 020 8709 4352 to discuss how we can help.

## The Amount of Housing Benefit/Council Tax Benefit you receive is changing

From 4th April 2011 Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit is changing. Claimants who live with a non dependant will need to pay more towards their rent and Council Tax.

A non dependant is a person over 18, who lives with you on a non commercial basis. This means they don't pay rent although they may give you money towards their keep. Typically a non dependant would be an adult son, daughter, relative, or friend. They cannot be a partner, boarder, sub tenant or joint tenant.

When a person in receipt of Housing and Council Tax Benefit has a non dependant living with them, a fixed deduction is made from Housing and Council Tax Benefit

based on the non-dependants gross weekly income (before tax and National Insurance).

The new levels of non dependant deductions from 4th of April are as follows:

### Non Dependants who work less than 16 hours a week

If a non dependant works less than 16 hours a week, or does not work then from 4th of April there is usually a deduction of £9.40 from the weekly Housing Benefit and £2.85 from Council Tax Benefit.

### Non dependants who work 16 hours or more a week.

If a non dependant works 16 hours or more a week, then the following will be deducted:

Dependant Deductions in Housing BenefitB	Old Weekly Deductions	New Weekly Deductions	Increase
In receipt of state Pension or Pension Credit	Nil	Nil	Nil
In receipt of main phase ESA(IR)	£7.40	£9.40	£2.00
Aged 25 or over and on IS/JSA(IB) or aged 18 or over and not in remunerative work	£7.40	£9.40	£2.00
Gross income less than £122.00	£7.40	£9.40	£2.00
Gross income not less than £122.00 but less than £180.00	£17.00	£21.55	£4.55
Gross income not less than £180.00 but less than £234.00	£23.35	£29.60	£6.25
Gross income not less than £234.00 but less than £310.00	£38.20	£48.45	£10.25
Gross income not less than £310.00 but less than £387.00	£43.50	£55.20	£11.70
Gross income more than £387.00	£47.75	£60.60	£12.85

If you can not afford these amounts, you should speak to your non dependant about helping you to meet the shortfall.

However these amounts still have to be deducted from your benefit even if the non dependant does not contribute to your household expenses, or has no income.

If you do not understand how this change will affect you, or have any questions or need further advice or help please call us on

020 8709 4300 or alternatively you can contact the following Agencies:

**Tower Hamlets Housing Benefit**  
020 7364 5001

**Hackney Housing Benefit**  
020 8356 3399

**Newham Housing Benefit**  
020 8430 2000

**Fair Finance**  
020 7254 1976

**LookAhead**  
020 7481 7794

## Employment First and Gateway – Working together to help you find work!

Employment First provides:

- individualised job brokerage, advice and counselling
- services for everyone
- one-to-one support to create and maintain CV's and
- interview skills training
- employer mentor relationship and work placements
- directs users to suitable work opportunities and appropriate courses.

If you are seeking work anywhere in London please contact us or better still, come in and see our friendly and experienced staff who will help you find the right position in the shortest possible time.

We are now based at Gateway's Head Office, 409-413 Mile End Road, London E3 4PB on Mondays 10-1pm & 2-4pm. Book an appointment or just come in and see us!

Employment Consultant: Zia  
Tel: 07850 937 880 or 020 7377 6944  
Email: Info@employment-first.co.uk

**EmploymentFirst**  
WORKING TOWARDS A BETTER FUTURE

## Ceiling hoist - attention all residents



Do you or a family member have a ceiling track hoist?

If you do, please let us know by contacting Fiona Apsley on 020 8 709 4481

We are carrying out some routine checks to ensure the safety of our residents. Please contact Fiona as soon as you can, as the deadline for dealing with this is 23 May 2011.

Thank you in advance for your co-operation.

## Credit Union for Gateway residents

- Are you a Gateway resident of Tower Hamlets or Hackney?
- Do you need access to a bank account?
- Or could you benefit from a low cost loan?

### If so, we may be able to help.

Gateway Housing Association has linked up with London Community Credit Union. The credit union is available to all residents in Tower Hamlets and Hackney including Leaseholders to provide ethical and affordable financial services.

If you are a qualifying resident, you could access a wide range of products and special offers, including:

- Flexible savings accounts
- Affordable loans
- Current accounts with a debit or cash card
- Free insurance on your loans and savings

If you are interested please get in touch with London Community Credit Union, and find out if you can take advantage of this unique service.

Call London Community Credit Union on 0207 729 9218.

Email: [info@londoncu.co.uk](mailto:info@londoncu.co.uk)

Website:

[www.londoncu.co.uk](http://www.londoncu.co.uk)

**London Community Credit Union = a stronger financial future.**



## Smoke Alarms in your property

You are responsible for the following:

### • Testing your smoke alarm

When a smoke alarm has been fitted it is vital that you test it regularly to ensure it works properly.



### • Once a week

Test your smoke alarm each week using the test button.

### • Every six months

Every six months, open the case and gently vacuum the inside to remove dust from the sensor. If the smoke alarm doesn't open, vacuum through the holes.

### • Once a year

Change the battery every year (unless it is a ten year alarm) or when you need to.

### • Replacement

Replace the battery in your smoke alarm if the low battery warning sounds (an intermittent bleep).

## Gas Safety Reminder for 2011

We would like to thank you for allowing us to successfully carry out 100% gas safety checks and we want to continue our 100% record this year.

We could not have achieved this without your help, so please let us know when is the best time to carry out the gas service.

We offer morning or afternoon appointments, can avoid school times or offer you the first appointment. This means our gas engineers will save time, so they can complete more gas safety checks to achieve our 100% performance targets.

Please phone Patrick Rogan, Technical Support Officer (Gas), on 020 8709 4353 or [patrick.rogan@gatewayhousing.org.uk](mailto:patrick.rogan@gatewayhousing.org.uk) to let us know what times suit you best.

**Remember:** We are required, by law, to carry out a gas-safety check of every gas appliance that we own. If you do not let us into your home to carry out your gas safety check, you are breaking your tenancy agreement. We can legally force entry to your home and as from 1 April 2011 we will charge you the legal costs.



You can ask for this information in **large print**, in Braille, on audio tape or in your language. We will also provide an interpretation service. Please contact us on 020 8709 4300 to arrange this.

আপনি এই লেখাটি বড় ছাপায়, অডিও টেপে, ব্রায়েল লেখায় বা আপনার ভাষায় পেতে পারেন। এ ছাড়াও আমরা অনুবাদ সেবা প্রদান করি। এই সেবার জন্য দয়া করে আমাদের সাথে যোগাযোগ করুন ০২০ ৮৭০৯ ৪৩০০ নম্বরে। [Bengali]

Waxaad dalban kartaa macluumaadkan oo ku daabacan farta waawayn, ama ku daabacan farta loogu talagalay dadka indhaha la, ama ku duuban cajeladaha maqalka ama ku qoran luqaddaada. Waxa kale oo aannu kuu fidin karnaa adeeg ah tarjamad. Fadlan nagala soo xidhiidh 020 8709 4300 si aannu kuugu qabanqaabinno. [Somali]

Quý vị có thể xin cấp thông tin này bằng bản in chữ to, Braille (dành cho người mù), trên băng ghi âm hoặc bằng tiếng nói của quý vị. Chúng tôi cũng cung cấp dịch vụ thông dịch. Xin liên lạc với chúng tôi theo điện thoại số 020 8709 4300 để thu xếp việc này. [Vietnamese]

你可索取這份資訊的大字印刷體、盲文、錄音帶或你的語言譯本。同時，我們也提供傳譯服務，請致電 020 8709 4300 與我們聯絡安排。 [Chinese]