

Unity News

Autumn 2023



Homes & Enterprise

Supporting BME Communities
and Multi-Cultural Neighbourhoods



**Leeds West Indian Carnival comes to the streets
of Chapeltown and Harehills**

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The leader of Leeds City Council, Cllr James Lewis, and the chair of Unity Enterprise, Sharon Jandu OBE, have jointly unveiled a plaque to celebrate the opening of a fully refurbished Leeds Media Centre



Updating Our Website

We have consulted with Unity residents and staff on what people would like to see on a new Unity website. The feedback we have received is that we need a more modern website that has a better interaction for residents to use with easier functions for people to pay rent, order repairs, search for properties, and Unity vacancies as well introducing new features such as webchat a specialist employment service team page and an option to book an appointment with your housing officer.



3. Leeds Carnival Celebrations

August bank holiday saw the Leeds West Indian carnival parade come to the streets of Chapeltown and Harehills. Held annually since 1967 the carnival attracts over 100,000 people showcasing the best of Caribbean culture and providing a celebration for all. The parade started at Potternewton park and ran through the local streets which were lined with people dancing to steel pan and Soca music, the tropical rhythms creating a lively atmosphere, all topped off with the delights of mouth-watering Caribbean cuisine.



4. Unity Maintenance Team



**Abid Mustafa Maintenance
Manager**

Unity's maintenance team is responsible for the maintenance of your home, this includes day to day repairs, planned maintenance, and management of external contractors. In July 2023 a new maintenance manager was appointed at Unity, Abid Mustafa. Abid brings with him over 20 years of experience working with BME communities and specialising in repairs and maintenance. Here he explains his plans for the future "I am delighted to be afforded the opportunity to serve the Unity customer base and am looking forward to helping to make a significant difference in how we deliver our repairs function. We have a new team of individuals that have recently joined us, and together we will aspire to

work very hard to provide the best possible service to all our customers. We recognise that there are many improvements needed and would like to assure you that each of us will give our best to make these happen."

Maintenance Team Members



**Terry Thompson
Property Surveyor**



**Rebekah Cambridge
Maintenance Administrator**



**Darren Watson
Maintenance Surveyor**



**Antony Wilson
Maintenance Officer**

5. Maintenance Update

Fire Risk Assessments in Communal Blocks

At Unity resident safety is of paramount importance, and as such we will be undertaking a number of assessments of the communal blocks that we manage to ensure that they fulfil the requirements of the current fire safety regulations. These will involve various checks on the condition of fire doors, fire alarm equipment installed in the buildings and an update of documentation related to fire safety information.



Please ensure that you do not leave combustible items in the communal areas. If you live in a communal block, we will be writing to you to inform you of any changes we are making to your building relating to fire safety, if you would like more information on this please contact our customer services team on 0113 2007700.

Checking Your Heating

As the days get colder you maybe switching on your gas boiler on for the first time in a while here are some top tips for checking it is working efficiently

- Check the boiler pressure. *(Should be between 1 and 2 on the pressure gauge)*
- Ensure all your radiators are working.
- Turn up the heat slowly putting on the maximum setting will cost you more.
- Make sure there are no leaks if so contact us immediately so we can inspect your boiler and make sure it is safe to use.



Repair Satisfaction

If you have had a recent repair to your home, you may receive a phone call from Unity staff asking you to rate the satisfaction of you repair. Your feedback will help give us an insight into whether improvements to the repairs service are needed.

6. Unity Summer Estate Visits



Our housing officers attended several community events on estates over the summer. In August there was an event held at Kitchener Place in Harehills.

On a fine sunny day, the residents of the Kitchener's were invited to take part in a gardening competition and there were activities arranged for the local children with face painting a quiz and sunflower planting.

As well as this our garden maintenance team were on hand to do some planting of raised beds and assist residents in making their gardens look tidy.



Unity has over 1350 properties and over 40 communal schemes, your housing officer will visit at least 2 times a year to inspect your estate.

If you are interested in Unity holding an event where you live, please contact our tenant involvement officer Chris Whittaker on 0113 2007751 or scan the QR code below and



Tell us what event you would like to see Unity hold where you live.



7. Unity Summer Estate Visits

Our housing officers regularly visit estates to discuss with residents any housing issues they may have. It is important that we have resident views on environmental issues and the standards of the cleaning and gardening services.

Estates recently visited include Mandela Court, Orika Court, Stratford Court, Sholebroke avenue and Harding Villas.



We plan to visit more Unity residents in person, we hope to see you so that we can talk to you to discuss how we can improve the environment where you live.

We will also invite staff from the gardening maintenance contractor, our employment service team, and also other agencies such as the local police community support officers to attend these visits.

8. Employment Services Case Study



Unity's employment services team was set up to help people get into work, by providing support so that people can gain knowledge, skills, and confidence to gain employment: Below is a success story of how the employment service team helped Jill back to work.

What were the barriers you faced on joining our service?

The barriers I faced on joining the service were a lack of confidence and quite disillusioned upon returning to (any) working environment.

What support did you receive?

The support I received was completing a very detailed C.V, confidence building, support searching for employment, assistance when applying for a course, along with financial assistance, signposting to other services and consistency with follow up meetings.

How has this support helped you?

The support helped me reevaluate my abilities, skills which are/were transferable. It helped me build a timescale to achieve certain goals set, encouraged me to look into other areas of employment and to focus on my interests. It also gave me a purpose to get up to do things and to be accountable for my actions. Lorraine allowed me to be vulnerable and unsure without judgement and was always reassuring and saw the progress long before I recognised it. Her consistent approach helped build my confidence and decrease the self-doubt. The support helped me to return to work in which I now have a new role, in a new department and team.

If you were to recommend our service, what would you say?

I recommend the service because you are not rushed or forced to do things you are not ready to do, however if a plan is put in place, it works if you work with it, be honest with the parts you have to do. It is a service that has your best interests and encourages you to pursue avenues especially throughout challenging times without pressuring you. I found that accessibility of the service spot on and very welcoming. It is also a service that can offer other support services and networking opportunities if required. Even if you are someone who has worked for many years but have found yourself in a position of uncertainty, career change or need to



Need Help with finding
a job,

Contact employment
Services 013
2007738 or email.

Lorraine.Charlton@uni
tyha.co.uk

9. Unity Resident Support Fund

The increased cost of living has had an effect on people's finances, and it only takes a few unexpected costs to occur in the month to find that you could struggle to pay your rent.

At Unity we have consulted our resident scrutiny group and staff and have decided to set up a new resident support fund with the purpose of providing short term funding. It can be accessed for help

towards cost of IT equipment to help with employment opportunities, transport costs for work or to assist with the provision of shopping vouchers for essential items, where rent or other essentials would otherwise not be afforded. Helping our residents manage their tenancies, is extremely important to Unity by providing a small amount of support to those suffering financial hardship we can make a difference.



Who can apply for the fund?

Residents who are struggling financially, are eligible to apply for the fund.

How do I apply?

If you feel you would benefit from the support fund, please get in touch with our Customer Service Team, your Housing Officer or Income Management Officer on 0113 2007700.

What happens next?

You will be asked to some simple questions on your finances, why you think you would benefit from the fund and why you need additional help. Based on these answers you may qualify for the fund.

Financial Support

If you apply for the fund, you will also receive support from our Income Management Team who can advise you on options for increasing your income and refer you to support from other agencies that can help you manage your finances.

****Applications for the fund will be allocated on a first come first served basis and are subject to Unity funds being available. and your eligibility. Please note only one award will be made per year per household.***

10. Leeds Media Centre



Leeds Media Centre has recently been refurbished with money from the European Regional Development Fund, no money from Unity Housing Association was used for this.

Leeds Media Centre is home to a range of independent media and music companies, education providers and community projects.

The Centre provides managed workspace for media related projects, excellent conferencing facilities, as well as facilities for media training and education, such as recording studios and postproduction facilities for music and video.



Features and Benefits

- Excellent Links to Leeds City Centre
- Business hub offering hot desk and co-working.
- Reception including postal services and photocopying.
- Free Parking facilities
- Meeting facilities
- High speed Broadband
- Access control
- 24 Hour security



Contact Leeds Media Centre 21 Savile Mount Leeds LS7 3HZ unityps@unityha.co.uk
0113 2007000.

11. Puzzle Corner



Test your knowledge by completing these puzzles. Send completed page back to Unity 117 Chapeltown Road Leeds Freepost NEA2498 LSY 3HY by 30th November or send photo of completed page to chris.whittaker@unityha.co.uk all correct entries will be entered into a draw to win £50 in vouchers, please remember to enclose your name and address.

Wordsearch Clues

- Drizzle
- Cloudy
- Foggy
- Sunny
- Storm
- Hail
- Snow



S	T	O	R	M	J	B	I	S
X	N	M	F	V	W	T	L	N
D	O	M	C	O	P	A	K	O
R	A	H	L	B	G	L	J	W
I	H	D	O	S	I	G	I	T
Z	Z	S	U	N	N	Y	Y	L
Z	P	C	D	S	W	U	S	V
L	M	I	Y	F	E	R	H	P
E	H	O	J	D	H	A	I	L

1.				2.		
3.		4.				5.
		6.				
					7.	

Crossword Clues

Across

- 1. Fruit carved for Halloween (7)
- 3. Opposite of daytime (8)
- 6. Knife and _ _ _ _ (4)
- 7. Used for writing (3)

Down

- 1. Flightless bird in antarctica (7)
- 2. Used for heating water (6)
- 4. Animal with very long neck (7)
- 5. Students study for these (5)

Congratulations to Ms K of Mexborough Place who won the summer competition!

Contacting Unity

Telephone: 0113 200 7700

Email: uha@unityha.co.uk

Website: www.unityha.co.uk

Publications

You can access any of Unity's publications including leaflets, newsletters and reports for free on our website:

www.unityha.co.uk/publications

Office Hours:

Monday: 9am -- 5pm

Tuesday: 9am – 5pm

Wednesday: 10am – 5pm

Thursday: 9am – 5pm

Friday: 9am – 5pm

If you have an emergency repair when the Office is shut, please call our office number on **0113 200 7700** you will receive a number of options. Press 1 for **heating repairs**, press 2 for general **repairs**. This will connect you to our contractors GTD Maintenance call centre.

Emergency Gas Repairs 0113 200 7700

E.g. total heating or hot water failure when Unity's office is closed the next day.

National Grid (gas leaks) 0800 111 999

Repairs by email Repairs@unity.co.uk

For more information, visit our website at www.unity.co.uk for leaflets, latest news and community information.

For comments and suggestions about this newsletter please contact **Chris Whittaker** on **0113 2007751** or email chris.whittaker@unityha.co.uk

Leeds City Council Services

Adult Social Care 0113 2224401

Anti-Social Behaviour 0113 222 4402
onestop@leeds.gov.uk

Child Social Care 0113 222 4403

Council Housing 0800 188 4000

Council Tax 0113 222 4404

Environmental Health 0113 222 4406
refugecollections@leeds.gov.uk

Housing Advice 0113 222 4412

Roads and Pavements 0113 222 4407
highways@leeds.gov.uk

Universal Credit 0800 328 5644

Kirklees Council Services

Adult Social Care 01484 414933

gatewaytocare@kirklees.gov.uk

Anti-Social Behaviour 01484 221000
safer@kirklees.gov.uk

Child Protection 01484 414950

Council Tax and Benefits 01484 414950
Council.benefits@kirklees.gov.uk

Customer Service Centre 01484 221000
Customer.enquiries@kirklees.gov.uk

Housing Advice 01484 221350
Housing.solutions@kirklees.gov.uk

Problems Understanding?

If you need any of our information translating Or if you need an interpreter, please contact us. We can also provide this information in large Print or on CD if you need this.

