

Dudley Federation Update

As we approach the end of the financial year, Dudley Federation are busy preparing the end of year report. This will be available online soon and a condensed version will be produced in the 2nd quarter of the next financial year 2018-19.

We are very pleased to officially welcome our 3 new Board members, Elaine Lloyd (Ellowes Hall & Area TRA) Tony Brain (Hill Street 3 Towers TRA) and George McClay (Beacon Hill TRA). They are currently getting to grips with Partnership meetings and are taking to their roles like ducks to water!

As always, if you have any issues or would like a DFTRA representative at your TRA meeting please let us know.

Fraud and Scams Awareness

The Community Safety Team on behalf of Safe and Sound, Dudley's Community Safety Partnership held Fraud and Scams Awareness seminars in February this year, providing vital information on the latest scams being carried out both in the local area and nationwide.

First up was Nadeem Mohammed, LIAISE Officer (Leads in awareness, intelligence, support and education) from the England Illegal Money Lending Team stoploansharks.co.uk. Nadeem gave stark figures of APR rates of money lenders, and some of them are technically legal! He warned of illegal money lenders - also known as 'loan sharks' and said that lenders can be checked via the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) register at register.fca.org.uk.

Chris King, Dudley Trading Standards Officer was up next. He focussed on the latest doorstep, letter and telephone scams. He said that people are massively overpaying doorstep con-artists to complete works to their properties, Chris said that the Construction Industry Scheme (CIS) produce a guideline for cost of works annually to give you an idea of what you should be charged - gov.uk/what-is-the-construction-industry-scheme. If you have any concerns over the legitimacy of a person or company, call the 24 hour Bogus Caller Hotline on **01384 812045**.

Cyber Crime and Fraud was the next topic, PCSO Sean Long was present to give advice on staying secure online. As well as the sound advice of not clicking on suspicious links in emails and always checking that the sender is legitimate, Sean advised of useful online tools to keep you secure.

howsecureismypassword.net—check how long it would take for a computer to crack your password and get tips on how to make it more secure.

havebeenpwned.com—find out if your email address has been compromised in any security breaches, if so where and what to do about it.

Other useful tools include Take 5 to Stop Fraud takefive-stopfraud.org.uk and the **Little Book of Big Scams** which can be found on met.police.uk.

All links in this article (as well as the rest of the newsletter) can be found on our website.

Home Affairs survey 2018

Dudley MBC are planning to develop a council-wide newsletter that will include information about all services within the council as well as a section dedicated to council tenants and leaseholders. This will then be distributed to all households in the borough. This information will also be available online via email or the DMBC website.

To help them develop this idea they would like you to tell them what you think of the Home Affairs newsletter by completing a short questionnaire at goo.gl/rpZTY1.

Stay up to date on meetings and events - sign up for FREE email and text alerts

 **Online** at www.dudley.gov.uk/housingalerts

 **Text** your surname, house number and postcode to 07797 870352
e.g. Brookes, 10, DY1 1HF (initial text will only cost your standard text rate)

or

 **Call** 01384 815168 to sign up to the service

Looking for What's Going on locally?

There are a plethora of activities taking place around the Borough but sometimes it can be difficult to find them. Luckily there are some useful resources which can help to identify things to do:

dudley.interests.me/calendar - Dudley has its' very own community page on interests.me which brings together what is happening around the borough. You can also add your TRA events! By signing up for the community emails at dudley.interests.me you'll be sent a weekly update too!

www.dudleyci.co.uk - The Dudley Community Information Directory have a **What's On** section which gives you all the upcoming events listed on the website.

Housing Operative Appointments

It is very important that you let Dudley MBC know as soon as possible if you are unable to keep an appointment for an operative to visit your property.

Simply call 0300 555 8283 to let them know.

STAR Survey

Dudley Council have commissioned Acuity – an independent market research agency to carry out our STAR customer satisfaction postal survey during March to April 2018.

What is STAR?

STAR – is the **Survey of Tenants and Residents satisfaction survey** developed by HouseMark, which has now replaced the STAR survey developed by the National Housing Federation. The benefits of using surveys like STAR are increasingly accepted as a method of incorporating the opinions and views of tenants into our organisation's corporate and planning strategy. The survey only goes out to a random sample of tenants and therefore not everyone will receive a postal survey.

Are surveys being sent to all tenants?

A random sample of 3400 tenants will be asked to take part in this survey, this excludes leaseholders, supported housing tenants and those in high rise due to be demolished awaiting transfer.

Who should I contact within DMBC if I have a query?

If you have any queries about the STAR survey please contact **Tracey Smith** on 01384 814026 or email tracey.smith@dudley.gov.uk or **Tom Day** on 01384 816161 or email tom.day@dudley.gov.uk.

Dudley Federation of Tenants and Residents Associations
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