



Dudley Federation



of Tenants and Residents Associations

Newsletter May/June 2013



In this issue:

Page 3 Award winning dementia care

Page 4 Repairs - recharges and updated handbook

Page 5 Bowling Green helpline

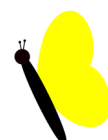
Page 6 TRA News

Page 7 5 Estates workshop

Page 8 DFTRA Update

If you would like an article, a thank you or any other information included in a future edition of this newsletter, please get in touch or send it to us at info@dftra.org.uk.

If you would like to get involved with DFTRA, or would like more information please call us on 01384 868 010 or email info@dftra.org.uk.



Award winning dementia care

Almost 1,000 Dudley borough residents have been supported by Dudley Council's award winning dementia service which provides innovative dementia care services across the borough.

Since the council's dementia gateway service was launched last year, it has notched up regional and national awards for its pioneering work. Over the past year more than 920 people have been referred to the service which is run by the council and NHS partners who work together to provide a consistent, co-ordinated one contact point approach to diagnosis, care and support

The service has three centres known as dementia gateways, these are located in Halesowen, Brierley Hill and Coseley and cover the whole of the Dudley borough between them. Staff offer effective and much needed support to people with dementia as well as their families and carers.

Anyone worried about dementia has the option to self-refer either themselves or a family member, by contacting the service directly, or they can ask their GP, healthcare worker or social worker to refer them.

A dementia advisor or dementia nurse will then visit the person to arrange a formal diagnosis and to develop a plan of support tailored to the person's own individual needs. This can include; attending therapeutic activity sessions, simply supporting people to maintain their independence at home, help and support with getting out and about in the community, providing respite care, as well support and care available for carers and families.

Michelle Nichols, dementia manager said:

"It's been so rewarding to receive such positive feedback from people using the new service. Often people struggling to receive a diagnosis, or worrying about themselves or a family member feel so alone. We aim to make sure that anyone concerned about dementia is given the right information, as well as on-going support from the first time that they make contact with us.

With the right treatment, particularly early treatment and the right on-going tailored support, people with dementia are able to lead active and fulfilling lives. We offer all of the support needed. There's no need for anyone to feel they are alone in dealing with this condition".

Anyone concerned about dementia can call the service for advice or to seek help.

Brett Young gateway, Halesowen (south) 01384 813600

Brettell Lane gateway, Brierley Hill (central) 01384 813315

Roseville gateway, Coseley (north) 01384 813645

Rechargeable repairs tariff

Most tenants maintain their property to a high standard and we feel it is unfair for all tenants to pay towards other people's neglect, or intentional damage of their home. Where appropriate we will charge for repairs which are not a result of fair wear and tear.

A new leaflet is now available online at:

www.dudley.gov.uk/resident/housing/council-housing/repairs-and-improvements/

This provides details of how much we will charge for such repairs.

Of course you can employ a contractor to undertake any work on your behalf, and we suggest that you refer to the 'Fix A Home Scheme' set up by Age Concern and Trading Standards (an approved trader scheme) at www.dudley.gov.uk/resident/your-council/trading-standards/fix-a-home/

If undertaking your own repairs they must be done in a reasonable time and be to a reasonable condition.

If you are charged for any repairs you have the right to appeal against any costs imposed.

Repairs handbook

The repairs handbook has been updated and is available online at:

www.dudley.gov.uk/resident/housing/council-housing/repairs-and-improvements

This is a really useful handbook as it includes information such as how to report a repair, rights and responsibilities, how to fix common repair problems, waiting time details, and lots more.

We recommend tenants who have a computer to save a copy to their files, and new tenants will receive a copy upon sign up.

This is a really useful document for you to keep.

All links on this page can also be found on the DFTRA website in the 'news' section.

A thank you for important tenant led services

Bowling Green TRA received a letter from local resident Paul Bartlett thanking them and their partners for all the hard work that they have put in over the last few years. He also gave recognition to the helpline set up to deal with tenants' issues, which combined with the TRA has helped to solve many issues in the area.

He said that the group that is led by Martin Smith and his hardworking team "form an invaluable link between residents and local agencies." He went on to say, "In these days of negative attitudes towards helping others I feel that our TRA is a shining example of voluntary work in the community of the very highest order."

Helpline for the Netherton Area

7 years ago, Bowling Green TRA were granted funding from the government's Respect awards fund in order to set up a helpline. Since the initial grant, the helpline has been financially supported by Virgin Media.

Over the last 7 years we have received over 15,000 calls, 87% of the calls have been requests for help with contact numbers or general information. The other 13% were calls which required help from other partners and groups who work closely with such as the Police and Dudley M.B.C.

The groups which the helpline initially covered were Netherton Central, Darby End, Saltwells and Bowling Green TRAs. In 2012 Green Street Gardens TRA joined the helpline and are now involved in taking and dealing with all of the calls specific to their area. The helpline runs 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

The helpline is not intended to replace any other services and everyone is encouraged to contact the right department in the first instance and contact the helpline only if there is a problem, we can then get the relevant people involved in order to resolve the issue. Virgin Media have agreed to support the helpline until 2015.

All of the groups involved with the helpline would like to thank everyone who has taken the time to call us over the last 7 years and all the partners who have worked with us to sort out the many issues that have been dealt with. A big thank you also goes to Virgin Media for their continued support.

Martin Smith—Chairperson Bowling Green T.R.A



Big Clean Up at Arley & Compton Estates.

Residents of Netherton took pride in their community by taking part in the Big clean up session organised at the Arley & Compton Estates on Tuesday 16th April 2013.

Volunteers from the Big Clean Up team and the 5 Estatesplus Project walked around the local area and collected rubbish from residents who were unable to make it to the site where the skips were located. In total two skips were filled.



Being a woman in a TRA



Christine Bate from Ellowes Hall TRA was a guest speaker at the International Women's day event on 8th March 2013. Here are some extracts from Christine's speech:

"When first asked to be involved in today, my first reaction was a feeling of complete blankness and I couldn't think of a thing to say, which is very unusual for me. Then I started to think about my involvement and how I became part of

the Tenants & Residents Association. I became involved with our local TRA (Ellowes Hall) 4 years ago this April and was nominated to become the secretary for the group.

How do I feel about being involved? It is about commitment, hard work, being passionate, determined about the community that I live in and working with a group of people who feel exactly the same as myself. I have been given the opportunity to understand more of what goes on directly within our community rather than know what might be going on. May I say that I feel very privileged to be able to speak on behalf of women in TRA as I am only one of many women in the TRAs that are as passionate and devoted as myself and will continue to make any difference they can for the better to their community".

The residents of Butterfield Court would like to send a big thank you to both Terry and Arnold for clearing the snow from the front of Butterfield Court and also the road outside during the last lot of bad weather. People said they would not have been able to get out if it had not been for these two very good neighbours. Once again a big thank you. Butterfield Court TRA.



Norton Green TRA

We held our Annual St George's Day Open House again this year on Saturday 20th April. The weather was kind to us and we had a good turnout, everyone thoroughly enjoyed themselves. We had a super buffet and a really well donated raffle which resulted in us raising £120 for the Air Ambulance who were really grateful for the donation.

Our last walkabout was very pleasing and our estate is now looking very good and our next event is a coach trip to Weston Super Mare on Saturday 6th July.

Bas Yeates, Chairperson

Volunteering in your community

The 5 Estatesplus Project in conjunction with Dudley Council's Participation and Development Team, organised a volunteering workshop on Wednesday 20th March 2013 at the Brambles function room in Dudley. The workshop was facilitated by Vicky Ngamsha from Extended Arm Ltd. The aim of the workshop was to demonstrate to participants the advantages of volunteering in their local communities and the opportunities that volunteering can open up for them. Participants were encouraged to work with other people from different cultures, meeting new friends with the purpose of making a difference in their community.

At the end of workshop, Tony Andrews from SWEDA held a supportive one to one session with anyone present who was interested in starting their own business.

"Meeting with Tony today has helped me to refocus my business idea," said Jean D. one of the participants.

One participant from the migrant community said; "I'm glad that I was able to attend this workshop, I met new friends and my CV will be enriched as I will seek to volunteer in my community and make a difference". Another participant from the TRA said "It is good that we came together and learnt about the benefit of volunteering in the community. Thanks to Vicky Ngamsha the facilitator and thanks to Cara Evens for giving us the information about opportunities available in the Dudley's Libraries".



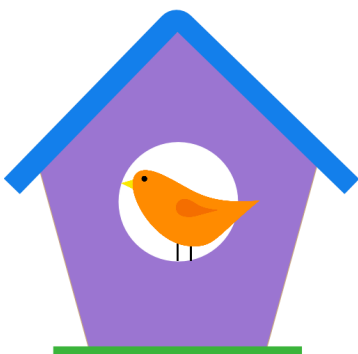
DFTRA Update

Partnership Meetings

- ☐ We are very pleased to announce that after discussions with Building Services regarding sealed unit lighting in bathrooms we can confirm that there has now been a change in the policy and anyone who has a sealed light unit including external security lights that have been fitted by Dudley Council can now report issues to the Repairs Management centre and one of their operatives will attend to carry out any repairs.
- ☐ DFTRA have received reports that PH Jones have been failing to keep appointments. This issue has been taken up with PH Jones and people should see an improvement in the service over the next few months.
- ☐ We are also involved with the Councillors for Brierley Hill and Brockmoor regarding a planning application for a food recycling plant. We have attended a meeting at Brockmoor school where over 60 people were present and there is a large petition to oppose the application. There are many issues with the application and Dudley Federation supports the tenants and residents of the areas affected and will be supporting them at these meetings.
- ☐ There has been an official management response regarding Housing Management attendance at your meetings. We can confirm that that Housing Managers no longer need the approval of their Team manager to attend TRA meetings. To view the official statement please see our website.

Website and Newsletter

- 💻 As well as the latest update on Housing managers, we have also uploaded this year's Service Level Agreement Report to the website. The 'Our Members' section of the website is now interactive and linked to all important information. If you would like anything added to your TRA's page, let us know.



Office Updates

- ★ Equipment for Resource Hub will be purchased soon and we are planning for our open days/evenings to be at the end of June. More information will be available soon.
- ★ We launched our bi-monthly email update at the start of May, this included any important information that we think may be useful to you and your TRA groups. If you didn't receive the update but would like to in the future, please email caroline@dftra.org.uk.

**The Ground Floor Complex, Booth Court
Lower Derry Street, Brierley Hill, DY5 2SJ**

-- Tel: 01384 868010 --

-- Website: www.dftra.org.uk --

-- E-mail: info@dftra.org.uk --

