



# Westminster Community Homes

Building a Brighter Future for All.



Annual Newsletter and  
Tenant Survey  
2022

# Westminster Community Homes welcome our tenants to our first Annual Newsletter and Tenant Survey

The past couple of years have not been without their share of new challenges for us as well as our tenants. We want our tenants to know that we are there to assist with issues.

With that in mind, we are presenting our new annual newsletter. Inside, you will find information and advice on coping with the cost-of-living and preventing mould and damp as we move into Autumn/Winter. This also includes updates on our Healthy Homes Surveys and the opportunity to provide us with your feedback in our Tenant Survey.

Best of all, as a reward for giving your feedback on the Tenant Survey, you may opt in to **WIN** one of 13 bikes which have been provided by Westminster Wheels, a fantastic new community initiative that we support with funding. More of that on page 11.



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## Meet The WCH Team:



Steve Moore, CEX



Hannah Callender, Operations Manager



Sophie Sheekey, Operations Officer



Anton Robinson, Ebury Regen Leasehold Negotiator



Ian Sellens, Church Street Regen, Leasehold Negotiator

## Meet The Housing Officers:



Timothy Malaulu, Housing Manager



Sabina Hafeez, Officer for North Westminster



Fatima Bibi, Officer for Central Westminster

Eric Otoo, Officer for South Westminster



Church Street Regeneration Area

# Let's Discuss; Cost Of Living



The cost of living is affecting us all.

Westminster Community Homes tenants have access to various services provided by the City Council to support with finance advice.

In response to this crisis, the City Council launched their cost of living strategy in July 2022, an 8-point package built around **three main pillars**:

- ➔ Targeting an initial £5.6m package of support to help families in Westminster that are struggling with the rising cost of living
- ➔ Working with our partners to ensure that we coordinate and maximise our impact
- ➔ Making sure our residents have the information they need to access all the support that is on offer to them

- WCC are targeting an initial £5.5m package of support to help Westminster households that need it most.
- WCC have provided Council Tax rebates of £150 per household
- They are providing ways for residents to switch to lower energy tariffs and keep food on the table.
- We are supporting residents with energy efficiency measures, which encourage greener lifestyles and lower bills.
- We are making sure everyone gets the benefits they are entitled to receive.
- We are helping residents with debt and financial advice.
- We are supporting the most vulnerable members of our society.
- We are maximising the impact we're having by coordinating our efforts with our partners.

## Coping with debt

### Worrying about money?

Debt can be a major cause of concern, but if you're finding it a struggle to make ends meet, there are options open to you. Whether coping with a sudden and unexpected expense or just figuring out how to stretch your income far enough to cover the bills, this interactive 'money worries' web form <https://www.worryingaboutmoney.co.uk/westminster> can provide advice tailored to your specific situation. The form is also available in Arabic and Bengali.



# HEALTHY HOMES SURVEYS



Westminster Community Homes are committed to ensuring that our tenants have a healthy and safe home to live in.

Regulations are changing in areas such as fire safety, and we want to ensure we are up to date with those requirements.

In the past few months we have been conducting Healthy Homes surveys. These appointments are to inspect each of our tenant's homes to ensure that each home:

1. Is Energy Efficient - It is a legal requirement for us to have a valid energy performance certificate.
2. Has a smoke alarm installed which is working correctly and will install a Carbon Monoxide detector if the property is supplied with gas.
3. Is Fire safe - We will be working with the City Council to carry out inspections to see if your current front door needs to be replaced or improved. Each property has also been gifted a "LifeSafe" Box of fire extinguishing materials.
4. Is free from damp and mould -We want to ensure that your home is properly ventilated so we will be checking to see if there are any signs of damp and mould. If there are, we will work with you to help you understand how you can make small changes to improve this, as well as installing improved ventilation where we need to.
5. In good condition - Lastly, we want to take a look at the general condition of your home. The survey will give us some important information that will help us to make our homes more durable for the future.

We have been working with a firm of surveyors, Philip Panks Partnership (PPP) to carry out this project. Greg Ravenscroft has carried out the majority of the surveys and so far we have managed to visit over 200 properties, and this number is increasing each week. We thank you for your co-operation with providing access, especially for those how have altered their usual schedule to permit this. It is a requirement of your Tenancy to provide us with access, so please work with us to allow these important inspections to take place.

WCH will be putting the work, identified though these surveys, out to tender. We estimate that work will begin in 2023.

To check if Greg is in your area, and book an appointment please call



## Repairs

We will not be looking at general repairs in our inspections for the Healthy Homes Surveys. Instead to raise a repair, you should do this the normal way by contacting the WCC Repairs Team on: 0800 358 3783 or email: [housing.enquires@westminster.gov.uk](mailto:housing.enquires@westminster.gov.uk)  
Option 2 to report a new urgent repair  
Option 3 to report a routine repair  
Option 4 to discuss an ongoing repair

# Breaking The Mould



Whilst we have been carrying out our Healthy Homes Surveys, we are looking to improve our tenant's homes through simple measures to alleviate damp and mould and the installation of improved ventilation in some areas. There are various simple measures that you can take to prevent this.

## Tips to reduce condensation and mould in your home

- Use saucepan lids when cooking.
- Use the extractor fans fitted in your kitchen and bathroom while cooking and washing.
- Keep the kitchen and bathroom doors closed when cooking or washing to stop moisture moving around the home.
- Dry wet clothes using an airer outside, where possible, and not on a radiator.
- Keep all trickle vents on your windows open to help moisture in the air escape your home.
- Open your windows.
- Do not block vents.
- Do not over fill wardrobes and cupboard as this restricts air circulation.
- Keep a gap of at least 50mm between large pieces of furniture and the walls
- Clean the mould by spraying it with a mixture of 1 part bleach to 4 parts water.

## Help with Rising Energy Costs

Westminster City Council have provided links on their website to offer advice on money struggles during the ongoing energy crisis.

<https://www.westminster.gov.uk/advice-and-financial-help-residents>

<https://www.westminster.gov.uk/housing/help-and-support-rising-energy-costs>

## The three MAIN factors that cause condensation and mould in your home are:

**Too much moisture in your home** Moisture is produced inside your home by everyday activities such as cooking, drying clothes and showering. These routine daily activities can produce up to 26 pints of moisture **a day** in your home. If this moisture is allowed to build up it can cause excessive condensation, and this can lead to damp. Damp in your home can increase the risk of respiratory illness and cause black mould growth on walls, ceilings, furniture and clothing.

**Not enough ventilation** Properly ventilating your home can help to reduce condensation by removing moist air and replacing it with dryer air from outside. This can be done by simply opening windows and trickle vents and using extractor fans in the kitchen and bathroom. Ventilate the kitchen when cooking or washing up by opening a window and use the extractor fan provided. They are inexpensive to run and are very effective against condensation. If your extractor fan has a fault or has stopped working, please report it immediately to WCC Repairs: 0800 358 3783

**The temperature of your home** Warm air holds more moisture than cooler air and this is more likely to deposit droplets of condensation around your home. Heating one room to a high level and leaving other rooms cold can make condensation worse. Setting your thermostat to a low temperature all day in cold weather will help reduce condensation as well as energy usage. When the whole property is warmer, condensation becomes less likely to form, therefore it is recommended to set temperature between 18 to 20 degrees.



# TENANT SURVEY 2022

Your opinion matters to us so it is important that we get your feedback each year in order for us to see what we are getting right and where we can improve.

Please take a few minutes to complete this survey and return to us by Monday 28<sup>th</sup> November, to be included in the draw of our giveaway to receive one of our 13 bikes donated by Westminster Wheels.

Please circle your answers and fill in any comments. This paper copy version can be removed from the newsletter, filled out and returned to us or it can be filled out online.



To fill out the form online, please scan the QR code with your phone

## About You (Lead Tenant)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

| Which of the following options best describes your household? |                                  |                                  |                                         |                              |       |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|------------------------------|-------|
| Single                                                        | Two Adults                       | One Adult and at least one child | Two or More adults & at least one child | Other                        |       |
| What is your current economic status?                         |                                  |                                  |                                         |                              |       |
| Full time education                                           | Full time job (30+ hours a week) | Part time job (under 30 hours)   | Unemployed                              | Permanently sick or disabled | Other |

## Housing and Services

| To what extent do you agree with the following statements (all questions are about Westminster Community Homes): |                |       |                            |          |                   |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|-------|----------------------------|----------|-------------------|
|                                                                                                                  | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
| Westminster Community Homes have friendly and approachable staff                                                 |                |       |                            |          |                   |
| They provide an effective and efficient service                                                                  |                |       |                            |          |                   |
| I would be happy to recommend them to family or friends                                                          |                |       |                            |          |                   |
| Would you say that Westminster Community Homes are easy to communicate with?                                     |                |       |                            |          |                   |
| WCH provide me with a safe and secure home                                                                       |                |       |                            |          |                   |

| Which of the following, in terms of our service is most in need of improvement? |                  |             |                                      |                           |                  |       |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|-------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------|-------|
| Anti-social Behaviour                                                           | Communal Repairs | Major Works | Estate services (cleaning/gardening) | Advice About Your Tenancy | Help With Paying | Other |

## Please tell us about your overall satisfaction

| How satisfied are you with,                | Very Satisfied | Satisfied | Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied | Dissatisfied | Very Dissatisfied | Not Applicable |
|--------------------------------------------|----------------|-----------|------------------------------------|--------------|-------------------|----------------|
| Overall Satisfaction with service provided |                |           |                                    |              |                   |                |
| The quality of your home                   |                |           |                                    |              |                   |                |
| That the rent is value for money           |                |           |                                    |              |                   |                |
| the cleaning of communal areas?            |                |           |                                    |              |                   |                |



| <b>How satisfied are you with,</b>                          | <b>Very Satisfied</b> | <b>Satisfied</b> | <b>Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied</b> | <b>Dissatisfied</b> | <b>Very Dissatisfied</b> | <b>Not Applicable</b> |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------|-------------------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| your payment options for paying rent?                       |                       |                  |                                           |                     |                          |                       |
| how quick to respond the repairs team are?                  |                       |                  |                                           |                     |                          |                       |
| the quality of a most recent repairs request?               |                       |                  |                                           |                     |                          |                       |
| WCH ensures communal areas clean, safe, and well-maintained |                       |                  |                                           |                     |                          |                       |
| WCH approach to handling of anti-social behaviour           |                       |                  |                                           |                     |                          |                       |
| WCH approach to handling of complaints                      |                       |                  |                                           |                     |                          |                       |
| WCH listens to tenants' views and acts upon them            |                       |                  |                                           |                     |                          |                       |
| WCH treats tenants fairly and with respect                  |                       |                  |                                           |                     |                          |                       |
| WCH keeps tenants informed about things that matter to them |                       |                  |                                           |                     |                          |                       |
| WCH makes a positive contribution to neighbourhoods         |                       |                  |                                           |                     |                          |                       |

Give your comments about our service,  
anything we should know or improve upon?

Would you Like to be entered for the draw to win a bike? If so,  
let us know your preference of adult or child bike here:

|       |      |
|-------|------|
| Adult | Kids |
|-------|------|

Thank you for filling in our Tenant Survey. You can tear this  
centre section from the rest of the newsletter.

The freepost envelope included can be used in any post  
box.

The results of this survey will be available to view on our  
website from early next year.



Your local community bike shop, making the difference one bike at a time.

Westminster Community Homes are supporting this fantastic project helping young people who are not in education or employment train to gain a City and Guilds Level 2 Mechanic qualification.



To give thanks for our Community Funding, Westminster Wheels have provided WCH with 13 bikes, which we are going to distribute to winning tenants who fill out the Tenant Survey included in this newsletter (Page 7).



Each year WCH funds a programme of Community Grants within its budget.

This year's programme will see WCH roll forward with the previous programme which provides a mixture of sports training, support for youth clubs, farm trips, and homework and breakfast clubs. It will also allocate an increased budget across education, providing an opportunity for new schools to apply for funding to support homework clubs or activities that fulfil an educational need, along with training funding delivered through Westminster Wheels, a City Council backed enterprise.

Did you know, we also fund other community projects within Westminster including London Tigers youth football team, Marylebone Bangladeshi Society, and various homework clubs



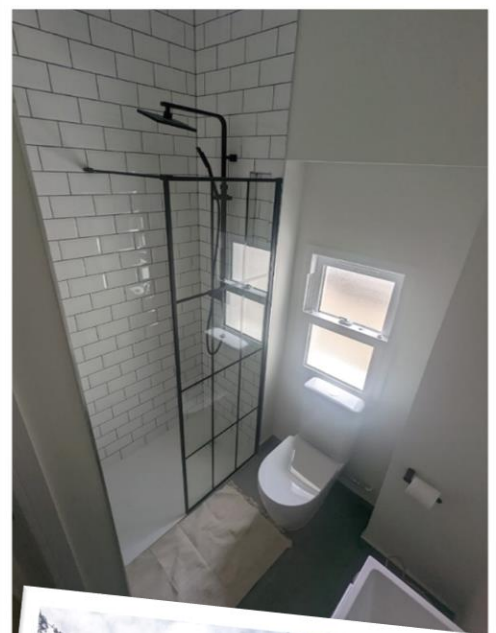
# Update on Developments

## 2A Bravington Road, W9

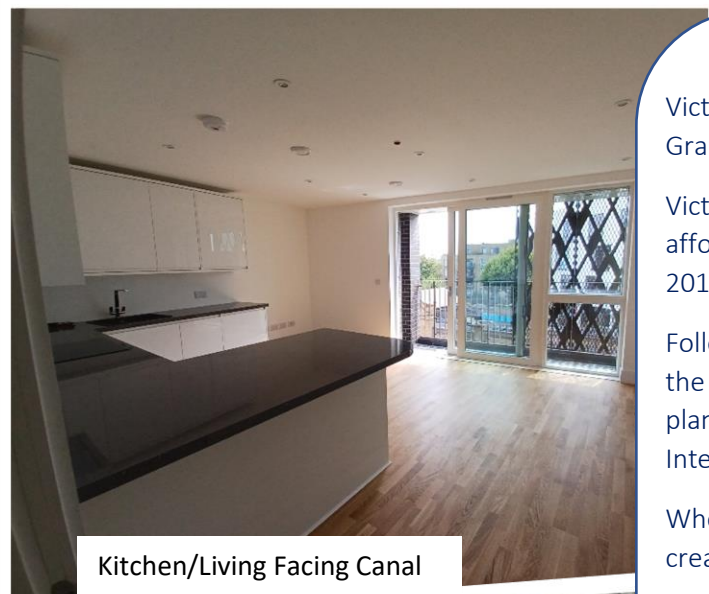
WCH will very shortly complete works to 2A Bravington Road which has been substantially rebuilt internally to create 3 x 1 bed units for Shared Ownership.

Marketing has now been completed and there were high levels of demand for these homes which provide an initial step into Home Ownership for first time buyers.

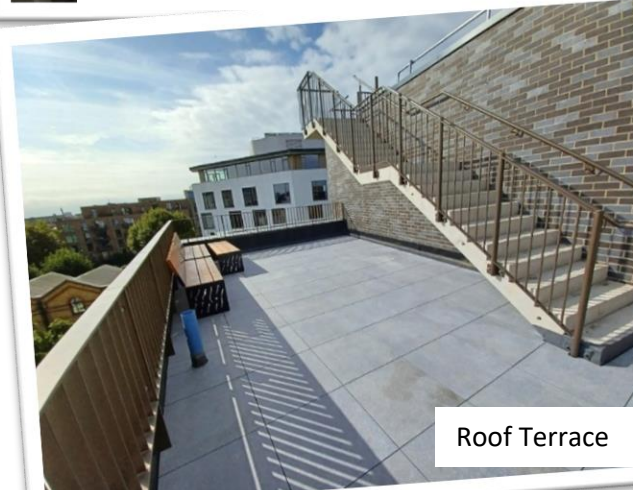
For more details on other shared ownership opportunities in Westminster contact Homeownership Westminster.







Kitchen/Living Facing Canal



Roof Terrace

**Victoria Wharf will be ready to let from November.**

To see whether you are eligible and register to view the show flat, please contact Homeownership Westminster  
info@homeownershipwestminster.gov.uk

#### Victoria Wharf – Second Phase:

Victoria Wharf sits in a lovely position alongside the Grand Union Canal by Ladbroke Grove Bridge.

Victoria Wharf (phase 1) was an award-winning affordable housing scheme which completed in 2018. This provides 22 homes for Intermediate Rent.

Following its completion WCH were able to acquire the adjoining land and successfully applied for planning permission for a further 20 homes for Intermediate Rent.

When completed the two phases will link together to create a single scheme of 42 homes.

Works are scheduled to complete on phase 2 in late November this year.

The properties will be advertised through Homeownership Westminster.

To be eligible to apply for one of these properties you must be registered with HOW. Eligibility requirements are as follows:

- Must be either living or working in Westminster
  - Must be earning between £33k and £60k
  - Must have right to rent in the UK.
- Please note that priority will be given to households who are registered as overcrowded with the City Council.



MOT Yard

Coming soon

WCH has acquired 581 – 587 Harrow Road W10 and are currently working on proposals for its future development for affordable housing.

More details will follow.



## Horizon Scheme

Our Intermediate Rent scheme which assists you to take your first step on the Home Ownership ladder.

WCH offer high quality and newly refurbished accommodation at a discount against the average market rent in Westminster. This creates affordable London living, which can help assist your household budget and help save towards home ownership (incl. Shared Ownership).

The Horizon scheme provides up to £10,000 towards the cost of moving into Home Ownership through a contribution of a maximum £2,000 per completed year of Tenancy. This is subject to meeting our “Good Tenants” requirement and when you are moving into home ownership directly after your tenancy with Westminster Community Homes. See Full terms at [www.westminstercommunityhomes.org.uk](http://www.westminstercommunityhomes.org.uk)

Unique bed pods built to accommodate each studio flat



So far, Westminster Community Homes have assisted a number of our tenants with funds that they have used towards their move into Home Ownership and the number of cases is increasing.

Of these tenants, two have moved into our own Shared Ownership properties using funds that we have provided towards their deposit.

Find out more on our website.

Register your interest at <https://www.homeownershipwestminster.co.uk/register>

# Regeneration

## Church Street Regeneration

WCH are working with the City Council on their plans for the development of the Church St Regeneration Area. Our role has been to initiate contact, maintain good working relations and lead the negotiations with leaseholders in Church Street, to ultimately acquire these properties and bring them into the City Council's ownership.

We offer a bespoke service to lessees whose homes are due for demolition. This includes negotiating a purchase price with the leaseholders and taking them through to successful completion as well as nurturing a strong working relationship, assessing their re-housing requirements and working with them to enable the acquisition of suitable alternative accommodation.

The City Council plans for the site are well advanced and a detailed planning application has already been submitted for site A (the first phase of the development) and an outline area application for sites B and C.

WCH has assisted in the City Council acquiring 16 leasehold interests in the Church St renewal area since the beginning of 2022. Across site A, WCH has been instrumental in the City Council gaining ownership of almost 75% of what previously were Leasehold interests.

A small number of leasehold interests remain on site A and WCH will continue to work with these leaseholders to voluntarily acquire their properties. Equally if leaseholders in the later phases are interested in selling, WCH will purchase their property. All leaseholders are entitled to a package of compensation, plus the market value of their property.

If you are interested in what is happening in the Church St Regeneration Area, please do contact me. My details are below. I will be happy to address any queries you have,

Ian Sellens

[isellens@westminster.gov.uk](mailto:isellens@westminster.gov.uk)

07790980127

## Ebury Bridge Regeneration

WCH continue to be successful on the Ebury Bridge Regeneration by further achieving site assembly across the site. Having negotiated the successful acquisitions of 120 leasehold interests out of the complete 140, there are further 12 interests where terms have been agreed, leaving WCH with just 8 lessees to agree terms.

Planning was approved in April 2021, providing detailed planning for phase 1, and outlining planning for the rest of the estate. By this time WCH was well underway with their acquisitions programme on the estate.

Phase 1 of the new development is well underway. This is due to complete in 2024. The first two blocks will consist of a mixture of 1, 2, 3 & 4 bedroom units, and will cater for lessees and tenants intending to return to the new estate.

In recent months, the City Council has gone through the process of applying for a compulsory purchase order. This went to a public inquiry, and we have learnt in the past few days that this application has been approved.

WCH will continue to negotiate to reach an agreement with the remaining lessees on the estate in the coming months, with the aim to complete these acquisitions in a timely manner to achieve full site assembly.

If you would like to raise any queries relating to the regeneration of the Ebury Bridge Estate, please do contact me on the details below.

Anton Robinson

[Arobinson3@westminster.gov.uk](mailto:Arobinson3@westminster.gov.uk)

07971 626 377



LORD'S

European Union  
European  
Social Fund

Department  
for Work &  
Pensions

City of Westminster

City of Westminster

Westminster  
Employment  
Service

Getting to work together

ALL ROLES PAY AT LEAST  
THE LONDON LIVING WAGE

**GET HIRED**  
BY SOME OF THE  
**BIGGEST**  
NAMES IN  
**BUSINESS**

Including...

NHS

VEOLIA

Marriott  
HOTELS & RESORTS

TESLA

G

CAPITA  
...and many more.

Register your free ticket

www.eventbrite.com/  
e/westminster-autumn  
-jobs-fair-2022-tickets  
+405320102337

31 October  
Nursery Pavilion  
Lord's Cricket Ground

**Find your next job in  
Westminster!**

Westminster Employment Service provides free help and support to unemployed residents looking for a job.

Come and join us at Westminster Autumn Jobs Fair 2022, with over **50 employers** exhibiting there will be no shortage of opportunities available. From Tesla to Edwardian, this event will enable you to meet with **London Living Wage** paying employers face-to-face to find out all about their current vacancies and apply to roles on the spot!



To access our latest vacancies and training opportunities,  
our Jobs Bulletin using the QR code below

For further information visit our website:

[www.westminster.gov.uk/westminster-employment-service-residents](http://www.westminster.gov.uk/westminster-employment-service-residents)

Email: [employmentteam@westminster.gov.uk](mailto:employmentteam@westminster.gov.uk)

Telephone: 07971 026709