

Unity News

Summer 2014



NEW

New look newsletter
Same great features



Fun Runsie in South Leeds

Unity and building contractor Keepmoat jointly sponsored the Easter weekend event the 'Fun Runsie' at the Hunslet Club. A number of people from the local community attended the event in which children participated in games dressed in 'onesies'.

Unity's sponsorship of the event and our involvement in South Leeds community life complements the wider regeneration of the areas

of Beeston and Holbeck. If you live in, or have visited South Leeds recently, you will have noticed that there is a great deal of construction work taking place.

Unity is playing a major role in this redevelopment, with our next major scheme on Brown Lane East due to be complete later this year. The scheme on Brown Lane East, Holbeck will feature a mix of 42 flats and houses, some of which will provide opportunities for first-time buyers in that they will be available for shared-ownership. Turn to page 8 for more information.

UHA Shortlisted for National Award!

UKHA INSIDE HOUSING 2014 FINALIST

Unity Housing Association was shortlisted for the UK Housing Awards 2014. The awards, which recognise outstanding work by housing organisations to improve the lives of people in their communities, are organised by the Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH) and Inside Housing magazine.

Now in their 18th year, this year's awards attracted more than 250 entries from all over the UK. Unity Housing was one of six left in the running for the 'Small Social Landlord of the Year' Award.

Unity was nominated for the award owing to the success of its Employment Service which offers a bespoke service to individual tenants to help them access the training and qualifications they need to find work. The introduction of a dedicated Financial Inclusion Service also helped secure Unity's nomination. Unity's Financial Inclusion Officer provides advice and support relating to debt,

'The quality of the entries rose again this year so even to get this far is an amazing achievement. In the face of some really stiff competition, Unity Housing Association has shown it is performing at the highest level - well done!'

Stuart Macdonald, Editor of Inside Housing



Money Buddies win IMA Award

For the last year, a team of Money Buddies has been offering support and advice to keep people out of the red. The Money Buddy scheme was launched at Ebor Gardens Advice Centre to help people stay out of debt and manage their finances.

The dedicated team of volunteers offers support to switch utility suppliers, budgeting help and advice to set up savings schemes.

'The Money Buddies will help you make savings and maximise your income. They will also look at how you can make savings in relation to getting the cheapest deals on your utilities as well as write to your creditors.'

Sylvia Simpson, Project Manager

There are now 14 volunteers from the local community offering advice to people in East Leeds and beyond.

The Money Buddy service at Ebor Gardens Advice Centre were awarded 'The Best Financial Capability Project' Award at the Institute of Money Advice Awards 2014 in recognition for the excellent service they are providing to the community.

If you could benefit from some financial help and advice visit:

Ebor Gardens Advice Centre
173 Haslewood Drive, LS9 7RE

Upcoming events



Congratulations to **Miss Gardiner, Little London**, who is the winner of the £50 incentive for returning her repairs satisfaction survey

Get job-ready with GOALS

GOALS Workshops

Do you need a boost to your confidence and self-esteem? Need a hand taking the first step on the career ladder? Thinking about starting up your own business?

GOALS is a fantastic personal developmental programme that will improve your skills, communication and confidence and help you to develop a positive attitude and achieve your 'goals' in life.

Where: Leeds Federated Housing, 30 Westfield Road, Leeds, LS3 1DE

When: GOALS is a two-day workshop that runs once a month

To book: Places are free. Call Kelly on 0113 200 7738.

Holbeck Gala

Unity will be present at the annual Holbeck Gala again this year to offer local people free advice on housing, employment and welfare. We will also be promoting shared-ownership opportunities on our next planned development on Brown Lane East.

Please feel free to pay us a visit if you'd like some advice from a member of our team or if you're interested in taking the first-step on the property ladder and would like to know more about shared-ownership.

The Holbeck Gala is taking place on **Saturday 19th July, 11am - 4pm** on Holbeck Moor.

Housing Advice Surgery

You don't have to visit our stall at the Holbeck Gala to benefit from free housing advice. Unity Housing is pleased to offer free housing advice to tenants, their families and the general public at our offices. If you have queries about any of the following, our Housing Team may be able to help you!:

- Applying for a home
- Obtaining priority
- The bidding process
- Homelessness
- Mutual exchanges
- Hate Crime

If you could benefit from some free housing advice, pop into our offices at 113-117 Chapeltown Road, on any **Wednesday** between **2pm and 4pm**.

It's a brilliant course that leaves you feeling more confident, positive and inspired to keep moving forward





Unity Enterprise



Vintage Crafts Fair

In May the craftspeople at Unity Business Centre hosted an exhibition to display their marvellous work.

The exhibition was open all day to the public and a number of people from across the city attended to see the work on display and the facilities that Unity Business Centre has to offer budding local artists and craftspeople. Those who displayed work:

- **Nadeen Strachan**, an independent fashion designer and seamstress who, in the past, has made outfits that have appeared on TV.
- **Carol Sorhaindo**, a mixed media artist who takes inspiration from her African and Caribbean heritage and culture.
- **SAZi**, a business specialising in pottery and ceramics that also offer classes for those wishing to make their own items.
- **Hannah Stained Glass**, who makes bespoke stained glass windows for churches and chapels as well as smaller items including jewellery and homeware.
- **Millbeck Studio**, a company that makes clocks, candles and a number of other items by hand.
- **Echo Home Leeds**, who restore and recycle furniture and trade other collectables.



Improvement Works

Chapelton Enterprise Centre and Unity Business Centre are undergoing a major refurbishment this year to improve the services that we are able to offer our business tenants.

Works will include re-cladding roofs, new doors and windows, new lifts, re-wiring, new signage and data cabling for faster broadband. The £1.4 million project is part-funded by the European Regional Development Fund, Leeds City Council and Unity.

Unity Enterprise provides office and workshop units for small businesses and voluntary sector organisations. Located on the edge of Leeds City Centre, our business centres offer a wide range of accommodation and support at affordable prices. The spaces we have available would be ideal for

someone thinking about starting their own business; we are even appointing a new Business Support Advisor who will offer free support in setting up a business from scratch. The sites also benefit from:

- ✓ Easy access by public transport and road networks, with excellent links to the city centre and its bus and rail stations
- ✓ Full reception facilities including postal services and photocopying
- ✓ Individually alarmed units, 24 hour surveillance and security
- ✓ Free parking facilities
- ✓ Conference and meeting facilities
- ✓ Communal facilities including toilets and seating areas

If you are interested in renting some affordable workspace, please get in touch:

Leeds Media Centre

21 Savile Mount
Leeds
LS7 3HZ

 0113 200 7000

Unity Business Centre

26 Roundhay Road
Leeds
LS7 1AB

 0845 519 6150

Chapelton Enterprise Centre

231-235 Chapelton Road
Leeds
LS7 3DX

 0845 519 6150

Artist impression of Unity Business Centre, after refurbishments:





Employment Services



Noma Moyo, Employment Outreach Officer & Kelly Jennings, Outreach Support Worker



Kelly:

0113 200 7738

Noma:

0113 200 7746

Or text:

07730 870810

Our year in Unity

Kelly and Noma have been working very hard this year to help tenants, their friends and relatives into work and training.

Kelly and Noma work not only with unemployed people, but can also help people looking to take the next step in their career, help students with college and university applications, and can offer advice to people wishing to start their own businesses.

The Employment Team are always on the look out for more people to help - if you could benefit from some free one-to-one support and advice contact them today!

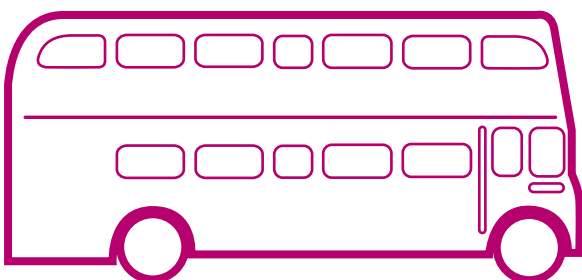
People we have helped:

	Total prior to March	Total 2012/13	Target	Q1	2013/14			Total 2013/14	Target 2014/15
					Q2	Q3	Q4		
Employment	38	35	35	5	12	11	16	44	50
Training	69	36	50	3	7	20	15	45	60
Voluntary	2	14	50	2	6	2	2	12	20

Reduced bus fares for Jobseekers

Collect a MetroRover leaflet/application form, available from the JobCentre plus and Bus Station Travel Centres.

Or visit www.wymetro.com for more information.



You are eligible for a MetroRover if:

- You are unemployed and are actively seeking employment
- And you are claiming Jobseeker's Allowance fortnightly (including national insurance credits only cases), or Employment Support Allowance in the Work Related Activity group.

The MetroRover entitles you to:

- Half-fare standard adult single tickets on almost all bus and train services in West Yorkshire
- Use for any journey, any time, any day of the week, whether for interviews or pleasure
- A 28-day ticket for only **£5**

MOST TRUSTED

Bagnalls scoop award!

The winners of Dulux Trade's annual search for the Most Trusted Contractor Painter, and Most Trusted Decorated were announced at a presentation ceremony at Walton Hall, Warwickshire.

Nathan, of Bagnalls was chosen as the North West regional winner after being nominated by his Branch Manager, Mike Worrall, who praised him for his dedication, rapport with customers and high standard of work.

Commenting on his win, Nathan said 'Winning the regional title came as a big surprise and it's incredible to win the overall prize. I've been with the company for 30 years now and have had the chance to work on some fantastic projects. I'm very proud to be recognised in this way and would like to thank Bagnalls for supporting me'



Bagnalls are Unity's painting contractors and are currently in the middle of a five-year contract.

Unity's residents also attest for the quality of Bagnalls' work with 90% of residents whose homes have recently been repainted reporting that they were happy with both the service from the contractor and the quality of work.



New improved gardening service

Unity is pleased to announce that we have appointed new gardening contractor. We are now working in partnership with Leeds Federated Housing Association who employ in-house gardeners.

Unity staff and residents alike have been involved in inspecting the quality of their work and have been impressed with what they have seen.

The contract started on 2nd June and is led by Joe Richardson. Apprentice Paul Scott is also working alongside Joe Richardson and Joe O'Shaughnessy. Another vacancy for a gardener is currently being advertised - anyone interested should call 0113 200 7700 for more information.

This is the fifth year Unity's gardening costs have remained the same, representing great value for money for our tenants..

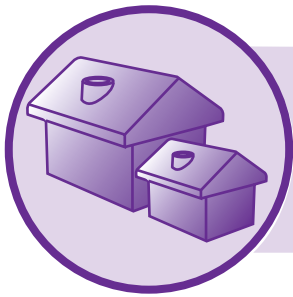
I haven't seen any gardeners for weeks! What's going on?

Due to a break in contracts between the previous contractors and our new ones, some areas have not been visited over the past few weeks.

Please be assured that the money you have paid towards gardening, through your service charge, will be reinvested into improving your communal areas in the future.

Unity does not make a profit on service charges.





Taking the first step on the property ladder?

Coming soon...

Brown Lane East, Holbeck



- ✓ The project is a redevelopment of a Brownfield site, complementing the wider regeneration of Beeston and Holbeck
- ✓ Work on the development is already underway and is due to be completed by November 2014
- ✓ The scheme will feature a mix of 42 houses and flats available for affordable rent and shared-ownership
- ✓ Properties are 40% more energy efficient than typical properties; lower fuel bills.
- ✓ Close to the city centre with excellent transport links too.

Want to know more?

Through the shared-ownership scheme you can purchase up to 75% of your property. The aim is to help people who can afford mortgage payments but can't afford a big deposit.

If you are interested in buying shares in a 3 or 4 bedroom house, please contact us on 0113 200 7700 for more information. We will take down your details and contact you when the properties become available.

Request a leaflet, or download one from unityha.co.uk for more information



Also coming soon...

Stratford Court, Chapel Allerton



Prices start from
£60,000 for a
50% equity share



- ✓ The properties will be aimed specifically at the over 55s.
- ✓ The scheme will feature a mix of 1 and 2 bedroom self-contained apartments available for affordable rent and low-cost sale.
- ✓ Set in the heart of the popular area of Chapel Allerton, close to shops and many other local amenities. Good transport links to city centre.
- ✓ 28 new homes will be created. This will be Unity's first development in the area of Chapel Allerton.
- ✓ Work has already commenced is expected to be completed by the end of 2014. The construction has provided jobs for 6 local people.

Want to know more?

Through the shared- ownership scheme you can purchase up to 75% of your property. The aim is to help people who can afford mortgage payments but can't afford a big deposit.

If you are interested in buying shares in a property, please contact 0113 200 7700 for more information. We will take down your details and contact you when the properties become available.

Apprenticeship opportunities

Unity is always looking to develop more homes, for people that need them. Where possible, our contractors employ local people to build them. In the past, our contractors have provided opportunities for building apprentices - many of whom have gone on to secure permanent jobs.



Brown Lane East apprentices

Earning and learning - help is at hand

When our contractors are next seeking apprentices, we will let you know. In the meantime, our Employment Team can help you find an apprenticeship, training or work opportunity to meet your needs. Call Noma on 0113 200 7746 or Kelly on 0113 200 7738.





Universal Credit

What is Universal Credit?

The Government intend to introduce Universal Credit. Universal Credit will replace:

- ✓ Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- ✓ Income-related Employment Support Allowance
- ✓ Income Support
- ✓ Working Tax Credit
- ✓ Child Tax Credit
- ✓ Housing Benefit

Claimants will need to submit an online application and then attend a face-to-face interview to find out if the claim has been successful and how much the claimant will receive.

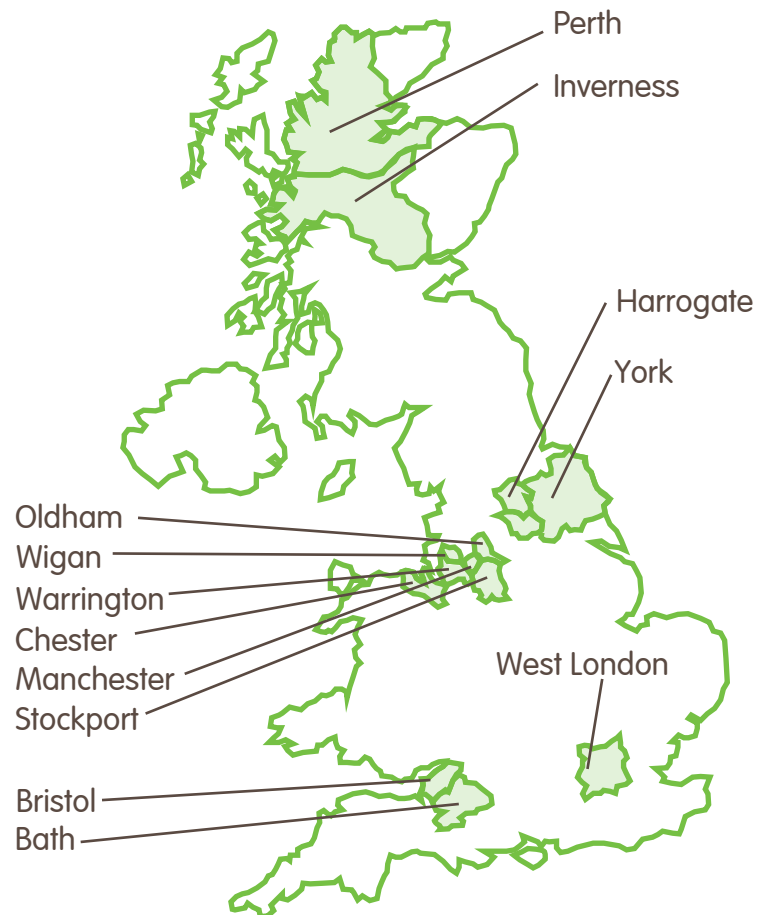
Successful claimants will receive their first payment one month and seven days after their claim has been submitted.

Claimant Commitment

Claimants who are able to work but are not currently employed, will have to sign a 'Claimant Commitment' in order to continue to receive Universal Credit. This is an agreement that the claimant comes to with their 'work coach' and stipulates the tasks the claimant must complete in order to sustain a claim. It could include things like:

- ✓ What they need to do to look for work
- ✓ How many hours they should spend looking for work
- ✓ Their circumstances including your work history, health, family and caring responsibilities

Areas where claimants are already eligible for Universal Credit:



Personal Workplans

Claimants will also be required to adhere to a Personal Work Plan. This document includes:

- ✓ A plan of what they need to do to find work
- ✓ A record of their progress
- ✓ Proof that they've been looking for work

Benefits & Drawbacks

Benefits

Only one claim to submit.

People working part-time (especially those on 0-hour contracts) could benefit. Claimants can work as many hours as they like and not risk losing all their benefits at once.

Drawbacks

The claim must be made online, so access to a computer device and the Internet will be required. The form is not necessarily compatible with Smart Phone devices.

New claimants will wait more than one month before their first payment, meaning they could go for as long as one month with no income.

Claimants require a bank or building society account.

Payments will be made directly to the claimant and as such they will need to have more control over their income and outgoings.

Payments are monthly meaning that claimants will have to budget for an entire month whereas they may be used to budgeting weekly or fortnightly.

What can I do to prepare?

If you are worried about the introduction of Universal Credit there are a number of things you can do to prepare and make the transition as smooth as possible.

- ✓ If you don't already have one, you could open a basic bank or building society account.
- ✓ If you are unfamiliar with computers, you could book yourself a place on a free computer course. Unity will be happy to help you find a course that suits your needs.
- ✓ As Universal Credit is paid in arrears, when it is introduced you could go one month without receiving anything. If you can afford it, you could set aside a few pounds each month to prepare you for this time.

- ✓ As Universal Credit will be paid directly to you - you will need to remember to pay your rent. If you pay your rent in cash, or make irregular payments using your card, you may wish to set up a standing order or direct debit instead.
- ✓ If you are not used to budgeting for a whole month, you could start practicing now. If you would like some help with saving and setting aside money or would like some free financial advice, call our Financial Inclusion Officer, Clive on 0113 200 7753.



Money worries?

Call:

Clive Greenwood
Financial Inclusion Officer

0113 200 7753



Tenant Involvement

Tenant Scrutiny up and running!

The Tenant Scrutiny Panel is back up and running again after following new interest from a number of residents.

Unity recently hosted two 'Tenant Scrutiny Panel' taster sessions for those who were interested to find out more about what is involved. The Scrutiny Panel has since held its first meeting of the financial year.

Request an info pack or download one from unityha.co.uk

What's Tenant Scrutiny?

Tenants who want to challenge and influence how Unity's services are influenced are encouraged to join our Tenant Scrutiny Panel.

Tenant scrutiny of services is a cornerstone of ensuring that Unity is properly run. Our Scrutiny Panel meets every three months to closely examine how Unity is performing. Because it is a more committed role that requires particular skills, tenants have to apply to join the Scrutiny Panel.

The role of the Scrutiny Panel is to:

- ✓ Scrutinise the services Unity provides, while promoting 'Value for Money'
- ✓ Ensure our policies and procedures meet the diverse needs of our tenants
- ✓ Enable our tenants to challenge our performance and plans
- ✓ Drive improvements from a tenants' perspective
- ✓ Make recommendations for service improvements
- ✓ Scrutinise the performance of individual contractors



Who can join the Scrutiny Panel?

The Tenant Scrutiny Panel is open to all tenants and shared-owners. As a minimum you will be expected to attend four meetings a year. You should also have:

- ✓ Good communicational skills
- ✓ Strong team working skills
- ✓ Ability to actively listen at meetings
- ✓ Ability to constructively challenge information

Benefits of getting involved

Shape the service you receive

Have a say on issues affecting your home and neighbourhood

Help us identify where we can save money

Meet with like-minded people

Support other tenants and residents

Promote equal opportunities

Develop your skills and interests

Free training, where required

Enhance your CV



Want to know more?

We still have vacancies on our Scrutiny Panel. We regularly hold 'taster' sessions for you to find out more about what's involved. If you'd like to come to our next session, contact Lewis on 0113 200 7751. We are very keen to hear from you.



Farewell from Emma!

Unity staff and residents will be sorry to hear that our current Resident Involvement Officer, Emma left Unity in June.

Emma worked for Unity for many years and carried out a number of roles. Tenant Panel members will be very familiar with Emma, but you may also recognise her from the neighbourhood and community outreach work she has been involved with on our estates over the years. Unity is very sorry to have lost her.

Meet Lewis, new contact for Resident Involvement

Emma's departure does not mean the end for Resident Involvement. We will be looking to fill Emma's position as soon as possible. In the meantime, please contact Lewis Holloway on 0113 200 7751 for all enquiries to do with Resident Involvement.

If you have been on one of Unity's free computer courses, or are taking part in the Real Life Reform project you will already know Lewis. He will also be responsible for editing Unity News - hence the new design. He is very keen to meet more residents so please feel free to get in touch!





Digital Inclusion

Looking for jobs



News



Transport



Entertainment



Social



Education and learning



Shopping



Getting online

There are 16 million people in the UK who lack basic IT skills. We can help if you're one of them.

The Internet has opened up a world of wonders for so many people - it is difficult for them to imagine life without it. Whether you would like to be able to search for and apply for jobs online, stay in touch with friends and family using email or compare fuel tariffs to make sure you are getting the best deal, it's worth getting online.

Did you know?

The Government intend to introduce Universal Credit to benefit claimants. This means that people claiming a range of benefits will no longer have separate claims for benefits but will have to submit a claim for a single monthly payment.

Universal Credit claimants will have to complete an online form. This means that if you need to make a claim you will need to access the Internet.

Am I on the waiting list?

A number of you have said that you'd like some help from Unity to get online. We are in the process of trying to get access to some more IT equipment so we can host bigger and better classes. If you have said you would like to attend a free computer class - **you are on the waiting list** - we have not forgotten about you!

Marketing & Communications Administrator Lewis will be in touch to let you know when the free computer classes are up and running again.

Upcoming courses

Although Unity will be happy to help any tenants who want to improve their computer skills - you may also wish to get help elsewhere. Citizens Online offers free computer courses to the general public which you may find just as useful.



Where:	When:	To book:	
Richmond Hill Community Centre Long Close Lane LS9 8NP	Thu 24th July	10.00 - 12.00	Call Peter Evans on 0113 247 6101
	Fri 25th July	10.00 - 12.00	
	Thu 31st July	10.00 - 12.00	
	Fri 1st August	10.00 - 12.00	
	Thu 7th August	10.00 - 12.00	
	Fri 8th August	10.00 - 12.00	
	Thu 14th August	10.00 - 12.00	
	Fri 15th August	10.00 - 12.00	
	Thu 21st August	10.00 - 12.00	
	Fri 22nd August	10.00 - 12.00	

Already Internet savvy? - Sign up to My Unity

No more waiting for your rent statement!

No more chasing up repairs!

Get 24/7 access to your tenancy account.

- ✓ Report repairs and see what repairs have been ordered against your property **and** when they are due
- ✓ Monitor your rent account - see your payments, charges and your balance.

Sign up today:

- 1 Visit www.unityha.co.uk
- 2 Click the link 'My Unity' at the top of the page.
- 3 Register your details. You will need your tenancy reference number and an email address.



Contacting Unity

T: 0113 200 7700

E: uha@unityha.co.uk

W: www.unityha.co.uk

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 ring our emergency repairs number (see below). If we have to change our emergency repairs number for any reason you can get the new one by phoning 0113 200 7700 and listening to the message.

Emergency Repairs  0845 634 2766

e.g. serious floods and leaks, total loss of water and electricity, the only toilet is blocked.

Emergency Gas Repairs  01757 244510

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

Transco (gas leaks)  0800 111 999

Repairs by email: repairs@unityha.co.uk

For information at your fingertips, visit our website at www.unityha.co.uk for leaflets, latest news and community information.


For comments and suggestions about this newsletter please contact Lewis Holloway on **0113 200 7751** or email lewis.holloway@unityha.co.uk

Leeds City Council Services

Adult Social Care

 0113 222 4401

Anti-Social Behaviour

 0113 222 4402

 onestop@leeds.gov.uk

Children Social Care

 0113 222 4403

Council tax and housing benefit

 0113 222 4404

 lcc.benefits@leeds.gov.uk

Complaints and compliments

 0113 222 4405


Environmental services

Contact the Council's environmental services to get bulky items taken away for free.

 0113 222 4406

 refusecollection@leeds.gov.uk

Highways

 0113 222 4407

 highways@leeds.gov.uk

Registrars

 0113 222 4408

Planning

 0113 222 4409

Minicom

 0113 222 4410



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INVESTORS
IN PEOPLE

Silver



business for neighbourhoods

