

Unity News

Autumn 2022

Unity

Homes & Enterprise

Supporting BME Communities
and Multi-Cultural Neighbourhoods

Leeds Carnival comes back for 2022



See inside to see how Unity Housing Association supports the Carnival

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Bell Group Delivers Free Paint to Unity Residents

In the last issue of Unity News we informed you that Bell painting who are Unity's painting contractor had free paint to offer for residents.

We are pleased to announce that in September Bell Painting distributed 115 litres of paint to several Unity residents across Leeds.

We hope that we can do this again so keep a eye out for updates



Resident Satisfaction Survey



Callerz are continuing to phone Unity residents to ask you to rate satisfaction with Unity Services. We are taking note of your comments and if you are dissatisfied with our services, you may receive a follow up call from Unity staff. For the latest survey results please see the performance section on our website. Unityha.co.uk

3. Cost of Living Increases



We all are aware of the increased costs of living that are affecting people in the UK, the rise in prices of people's energy bills, food and transport costs have pushed the inflation rate beyond 10% meaning increased costs for goods and services across the Country.

Unity has had increased costs of providing a housing service (materials, salaries, contractors etc) at a time when we need to invest in our homes to ensure they are energy efficient and modernised through our planned maintenance programme. We now face the challenge of maintaining these services.

Government Rent Cap

The government regulates how much social housing rents can increase each year. On the 31st August the government introduced a rent cap on the amount social housing landlords can increase the rent for 2023/24. Under proposals being consulted on, a cap on social housing rent increases would be put in place for the coming financial year, with options of a rent increase at 3%, 5% and 7% being considered.

Consultation

The government has started a consultation to invite views from social housing tenants and landlords on a proposed rent cap to understand how best to support households with the cost of living. This will end on 12th October 2022 after which the amount which social landlords can raise the rent will be set.

If you would like to submit comments on the proposed rent increases, please see the government website <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/social-housing-rents-consultation>.

When Unity is aware of the rent increase, we will write to you one month in advance of 1st April 2023 setting out what your new rent will be.

4. Leeds West Indian Carnival



On 29TH August 2022 the Leeds West Indian Carnival was back on the streets of Chapeltown and Harehills for the first time in 2 years. It was great to see people coming together to enjoy an amazing event.

The gloriously colourful sites of the magnificent costumes and troupes, the distinctive sounds and rhythms making us want to join the party, the tantalising smells and tastes of the array of food on offer all amounts to a welcomed return to assault all our senses, showcasing the very best of Caribbean culture and a celebration for all.

Over the years, the music festival has attracted a vast array of performers and is well attended by local and non-local people. The carnival started in 1967 and is the oldest caribbean carnival in Europe. Over 200,000 people regularly attend the event which draws people in from all over the world.

Unity have had strong links to the carnival as it is held where many of our residents live and is a focus for the community. A number of our long standing and recent Unity Enterprise tenants are dedicated to creating the various costumes for the event.

This year Unity sponsored the Leeds Black Music Festival (Which is held the day before the carnival and takes place in Potternewton Park, Chapeltown) and the Leeds West Indian Carnival. Unity provided a £3000 donation towards the gigantic screen shown at the music festival.

One of the main features of the carnival are the amazing costumes that people have created for the event. Unity business centre has provided a space where some of these costumes have been created.

Pictured below are Rebekah (bottom left) and Claire who make costumes for the carnival on a voluntary basis.

They have been involved in the carnival all their lives as both sets of parents have been involved for many years. Claire's mum is Sheila Haworth (pictured below) who works for the carnival at UBC, and her Great Uncle is Arthur France, is one of the founders.



5. Leeds Carnival Stories



Rebekah's Story

“Growing up in Leeds with Caribbean heritage I have had the privilege to attend Leeds carnival from a young age. My mother was part of the carnival committee when she was younger and

participated for many years after. The carnival is a time where we all gather together, have fun, drink, dance and create lasting memories, surrounded by the most beautiful handmade costumes which one day I will wear.

I have also been lucky enough to experience carnival in St Lucia which is my second home. The experience is very similar. Everyone's dancing having a good time and enjoying the music, predominantly Socca.

I hold The Leeds West Indian carnival close to my heart as its part of my history and I'm so grateful we are still celebrating it to this day.”



Dom's Story

“I went to the Leeds West Indian Carnival this year and my highlights were the food, the music and the dancing. The carnival is a huge part of my life and culture, especially being from Caribbean Parentage, the carnival is the main event I look forward to every year.

The carnival brings so many people together from all ethnic backgrounds and the opportunity for everyone to taste the authentic food from the Caribbean such as, Jerk Chicken, Rice & Peas, Fried Fish and Patties plus so much more.

The costumes are also something I look forward to as each year there is a theme, and the costumes are a big part of the carnival and so much effort and money goes into making them.

I feel that that the carnival is a great way to celebrate Caribbean culture and I love the atmosphere and party spirit which it brings to Chapeltown”.

6. Devon Close Action Day

**Devon
Close**

LS2



It is important to Unity that residents are happy with the services they receive, the results of the resident satisfaction survey indicated that there was a lower than average satisfaction from residents of Devon Close in a number of services, in order to try and improve satisfaction at Devon Close Unity organized an estate action day.



What happened on the action day

Waste Removal staff were available, to assist with the removal of large items to remove from gardens.

A **general estate “clean up”** took place, to remove any rubbish from the estate.

Maintenance Officers were available to inspect homes and discuss repairs with residents.

Housing Officers were available to discuss any housing or tenancy enquiries residents had.

Income Officers were available to discuss any concerns in relation to your rent and payments.

Employment Service Officers were available to discuss any support residents needed about enhancing their employment options.

Gardeners were available to perform some basic gardening to those who needed some assistance.

A **joiner and plumber** were in attendance to sort out any quick basic repairs that were needed.

It was a nice sunny day for organizing a clear out of resident's gardens, a tipper truck was made available by GTD contractors who also provided their staff to assist in the clean up day. Large bulky items such as mattresses, bikes and gardening waste were disposed of, in total GTD carried out 7 trips to the tip.



7. Devon Close Action Day



Unity staff provided help to residents with their gardens by cutting back hedges as well as removing rubbish. It was good to see much improved gardens on the estate.

Leeds Federated Housing who provide a gardening service to Unity, attended with a number of their contractors, they carried out small gardening jobs such as pruning, mowing and strimming, they also helped to tidy up and sweep the street.



Maintenance staff attended each house on Devon Close to identify repairs that were needed, rent officers were in attendance to offer financial support, and the employment services staff were on hand to offer advice.

Does your street need an action day? let us know by calling 0113 2007700

8. Unity 35 Years

**Celebrating
35 Years**

Unity Housing Association was established in 1987 to alleviate the housing needs of BME people living in Chapeltown, Leeds. We've been an essential part of the local community ever since, 35 years on, our operations now include, Chapeltown, Harehills, Beeston, Holbeck and Meanwood to name but a few. Over the last 7 years our brand of high-quality homes has expanded beyond Leeds and now contributes to social housing supply in Kirklees.

Unity is not just about providing homes though, in the year 2000 Unity Enterprise was formed, which gave accommodation and support to local business in Leeds, this has gone from strength to strength and we now have 3 sites for business support.

One thing we are particularly proud of is our employment services team which over the years have assisted people into work through offering training courses, volunteering, and employment opportunities to local people.

We thought it would be good to share with you our journey over the years.



In 1988 Unity had 13 properties



In 1990 Unity had its first development and managed 68 homes



By 1997 Unity had 700 newly built or refurbished homes



In 2000 Unity Enterprise forms offering local business support and accommodation

9. Unity 35 Years

**Celebrating
35 Years**



Our employments services helped get local people employment



We continued to build new homes in the heart of the community



New business flourished with Unity support



In 2015 we developed homes in Huddersfield



Our head office received a makeover in 2013



In 2022 Our latest development in Chapeltown sees us manage over 1350 homes

10. Right to Acquire Your Home



What is Right to Acquire?

The 'Right to Acquire' is a government policy that gives some housing association tenants the right to buy their homes. If you qualify for the Right to Acquire, you can buy your home with a £10,000 discount off the market price.

Do I Qualify for Right to Acquire?

Your home must have been built or bought by Unity after 31 March 1997 (and funded through a social housing grant provided by the Housing Corporation or local council)

Your home is a self-contained house or flat that is your only or main home.

Your home It is not one of a group of homes particularly suitable for elderly people and let to a person aged 60 or over.

You have been a resident of Unity for over 2 years.

You are not subject to a Notice of Seeking Possession.

How do I apply?

To see if you are eligible for Right to Acquire you must first ensure that you qualify for the criteria stated. If you are not aware of when your property was built or bought by Unity or have any other questions, then contact us and we will let you know.

If you are eligible, then you would need to submit an application form which we would send you. In return Unity would reply to you within 4 weeks outlining whether your application is successful

For further info see www.gov.uk/right-to.acquire

Contact for Enquiries

**Right to Acquire
Finance Manager
Unity Housing Association
113-117 Chapeltown Road
Leeds LS7 3HY
0113 2007700**

11. Puzzle Corner

Test your knowledge by completing these puzzles. Send completed page back to Unity 117 Chapeltown Road Leeds Freepost NEA2498 LS7 3HY by 31st October all correct entries will be entered into a draw to win £50 in vouchers, please remember to enclose your name and address.



Wordsearch Clues

- Banana
- Apple
- Grapes
- Orange
- Pear
- Peach
- Melon
- Lemon



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

1.					2.				3.			
					4.							5.
	6.											
							7.					
8.												

Crossword Clues

Across

- 1. Capital of France (5)
- 3. You can have these boiled, poached or fried (3)
- 4. Dig the garden with a..... (5)
- 8. Brass wind instrument (7)

Down

- 2. Japanese rice and fish dish (5)
- 5. Test you to take at school (4)
- 6. Orange root vegetable (6)
- 7. You walk the dog on a....(4)

Congratulations to Mrs S of Stonegate Crescent 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: 1pm – 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.

