

Providing housing choice

Improving life opportunities

Addressing inequalities



Supporting BME Communities
and Multi-Cultural Neighbourhoods

News

Winter 2013/14

Uniting the Community Thru Martial Arts

Special 2-for-1 offer for karate lessons for children from Unity homes, with free karate suits!

Unity Enterprise's support of local organisation '**Karate for Inner City Kids**' (KICK) has helped to transform the lives of many local young people, providing them with opportunities to excel at national level and to obtain GCSE qualifications. During the last six months, KICK has provided subsidised training at their dojo on Mexborough Grove in Chapeltown. In addition, three world champions and movie stars have visited to inspire young people to follow in their footsteps.

All this has been achieved through the commitment of a team of martial artists who have provided their services for free for the benefit of the local community.

To say 'thank you' for Unity's ongoing support, KICK is pleased to announce an introductory offer available to all Unity tenants in January 2014. This will provide an opportunity to access sport and top-up education at an unbeatable price.

Enrol one child for monthly classes and get free membership for one additional child and free karate suits for both.

Classes available - children's, family, Panda Club, Little Dragons, Fitness, Self-Defence.

Enrolment at The Dojo, Mexborough Grove (behind the Chapeltown Enterprise Centre) at 4pm, Monday 6th January 2014, and every Monday thereafter until Monday 27th January 2014. To find out more, just call in!



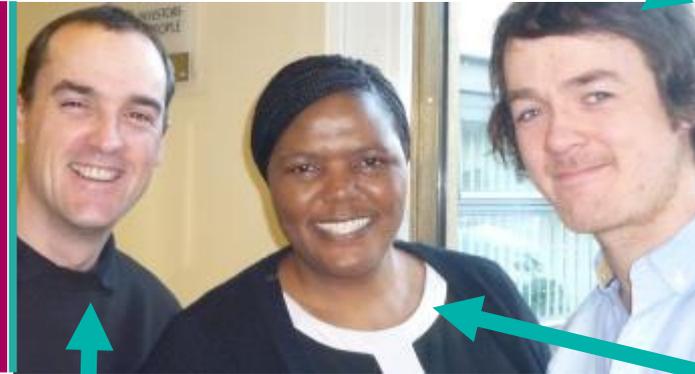
Affordable contents insurance offer

Unity has just negotiated a cheaper price for all our tenants, covering your treasured possessions in case of fire, theft and flood. This national scheme offers pay-as-you-go cover (fortnightly, monthly or annually) with no excess, so you get the maximum pay-out when you need it.

To get a free quote, call them on **0845 337 2463**, email **myhome@iltgroup.com** or send back the enclosed card in the freepost envelope provided.



New faces



Antony Wilson - Handyperson

With one Anthony (aka Tony) in our Maintenance team already, we thought we'd confuse things by getting another. Ant's down-to-earth nature and friendly personality have meant that he's already a firm favourite with tenants.

"Everybody's made me feel really welcome - now I've just got to find out where everywhere is!"

Peter Scott - Maintenance Administrator

With a university degree in music to his name, double-bass player Peter is new to housing. However, his practical mind and common-sense approach have seen him quickly settle into Unity's maintenance team.

"Having worked in bigger organisations like the NHS, it's a really welcome change at Unity - a real family atmosphere."

Noma Moyo - Employment Outreach Officer

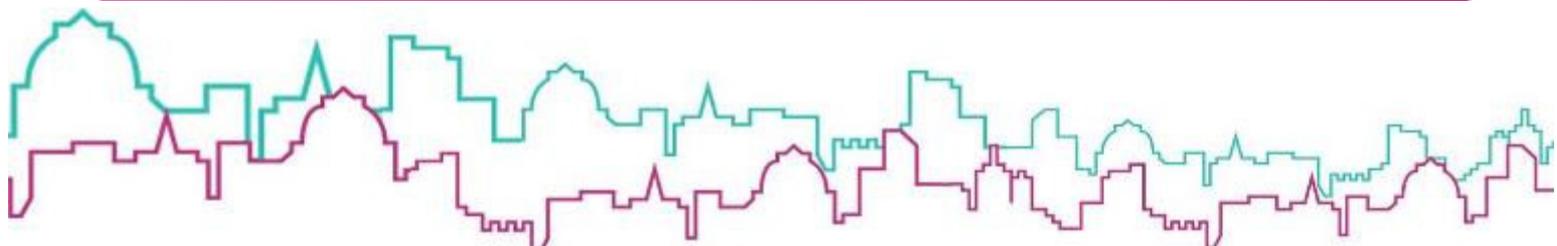
Noma will be working with Kelly Jennings to provide high-quality advice, training and support to Unity tenants and other members of their communities.

"I have a passion about seeing people reach their potential. People are affected in so many ways by the welfare reforms, so I need to see how I can empower them to make the best life possible for them and their families."

Easy ways to pay rent - find the best way for you

You'll need an Allpay card to pay over the internet, by text or at PayPoint outlets. Please call us on **0113 200 7700** to order one.

- **Direct debit.** Weekly, fortnightly, monthly - whatever suits you the best. It changes automatically when your rent changes, so it's the easiest method. Call us to set one up.
- **Standing order.** You're in control with this method, but you have to amend it every time your rent or benefit levels change.
- **By phone:** Call us to pay by debit or credit card.
- **At our office:** Pay with cash, cheque, debit card or credit card.
- **Paypoint outlet:** Use your Allpay card to pay by cash or card.
- **Online:** Go to www.unityha.co.uk and follow the links. You'll need your Allpay card.
- **Mobile text:** Register on the Allpay website at <https://www.allpayments.net/textpay>



Brown Lane East, Holbeck - December 2014

A mixed development of 42 houses and flats, for rent or sale through shared ownership



Keepmoat's contractors are cracking on with building 42 new, energy-efficient homes for rent and sale.

The homes are a range of different sizes, designed to meet the needs of households in that area.

- 18 x 2-bed flats
- 18 x 3-bed houses
- 6 x 4-bed houses

Stratford Court, Chapel Allerton - December 2014

New 1 & 2-bed flats and bungalows for rent and sale to over 55's



Before: out-of-date bedsits.



After: attractive flats to rent or buy at low cost.

Planning permission has now been granted for Unity's Stratford Court scheme, so construction is due to start in February.

This development of 28 properties is designed for the over 55's, as there is a shortage of this kind of housing in the area. If you are over 55 and currently living in a Unity family-sized house, please get in touch so that we can see if we can help you move to a more suitable home.

Are you interested in getting your foot on the housing ladder with one of our affordable homes? Want to get the latest news on purchasing opportunities at Brown Lane East or Stratford Court? Please call our Customer Services team on (0113) 200 7700 to register your interest in buying a home.

If you are interested in applying for a rented home on Brown Lane East or Stratford Court, you do not need to contact us. The properties will be advertised in the Leeds HOMES flyer in summer 2014.

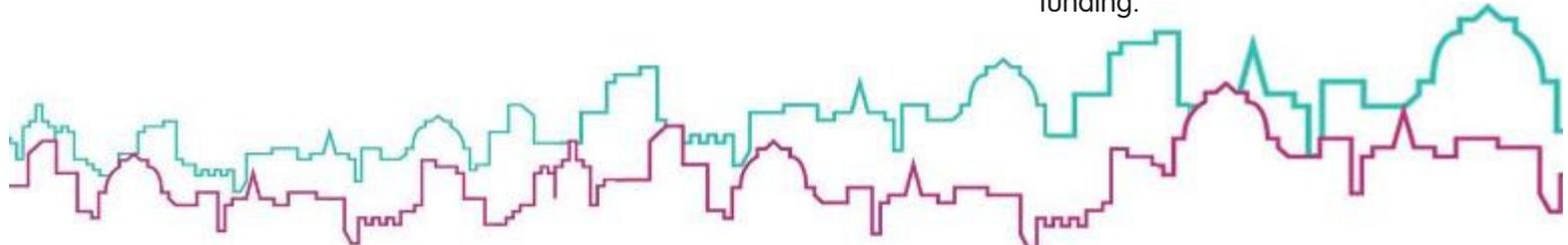
Unity Enterprise refurbishment - January-July 2014

Chapeltown Enterprise Centre and Unity Business Centre get grant-funded makeovers in the New Year



Work is set to start on the whole scale refurbishment of two of our enterprise centres. Works will include recladding roofs, new doors & windows, new lifts, PV panels, re-wiring, new signage and data cabling for faster broadband.

The improvements are being paid for with £1.4m of government and Unity funding.



Everybody needs a hand sometimes. If someone that you know is finding things difficult in the New Year, there's plenty of help out there. You just have to know where to look.

Debt advice

Don't let money problems get out of control. If you're struggling, get help sooner rather than later. Organisations like StepChange can provide you with a range of effective support and advice, and all for free.



0800 138 1111 Freephone
(also free from all mobiles)
www.stepchange.org

What people say about StepChange

"Not only did you help during a time of extreme stress, you also saved my home."

"Thanks so much because I don't have to worry about money even though I don't have any!!!"

Help with 'bedroom tax' housing benefit reductions

Don't forget to ask us about Discretionary Housing Payments if you are struggling with the Bedroom Tax. You still may be able to get help from 2013, whether you are struggling due to illness or financial pressures.

Call **Clive Greenwood**, Financial Inclusion Officer on **0113 200 7753**.

Food banks

New food banks have been springing up across Leeds. It's a bad sign that they're needed so much, but we're glad that they're there. This is how they work.

- **Frontline professionals identify people in need.** Care professionals such as doctors, health visitors, social workers, Citizens Advice Bureau staff, welfare officers, the police and probation officers, amongst others, identify people in crisis and issue them with a foodbank voucher.
- **Clients receive food.** Clients bring their voucher to a foodbank centre where it can be exchanged for three days supply of emergency food. Some foodbanks also run a delivery service for those who cannot get to a foodbank.
- **Clients are signposted to further support.** Volunteers meet clients over a cup of tea or hot meal and are able to signpost people to agencies who can help resolve the longer-term problem.



Monday: 11am - 1pm

Wednesday: 11am - 1pm

Friday: 11am - 1pm

Moortown Methodist Church
Alderton Rise, Leeds LS17 5LH

T: 0754 218 9059



Monday: 2pm - 4pm

Health For All Café
Belle Isle Road
Leeds LS10 3PG

Tuesday: 10am - 12 noon

Middleton Methodist Church
Hopewell View, Leeds LS10 3TE

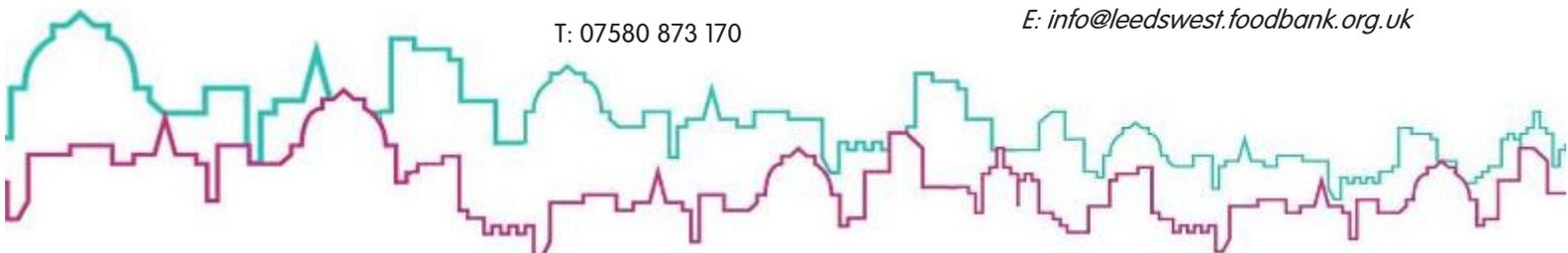
T: 07580 873 170



Leeds (West) Foodbank is under development.

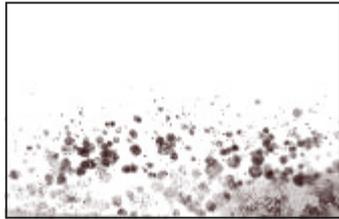
They moved into premises in November 2013 and are in the process of transforming them into a foodstore and office. They aim to open their first foodbank centre at the end of January 2014, followed by a further 3 centres across west Leeds.

E: info@leedswest.foodbank.org.uk



At this time of year, we're getting calls from tenants saying, "I've got damp!" when in fact they've got a condensation problem. The two issues have different causes and need dealing with in different ways, so here's how to tell the difference.

Misted up windows? Black mould on walls, ceilings, tiles or curtains? You have problems with **CONDENSATION**.



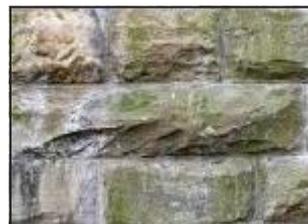
Surface damp and mould is caused by water condensation. It is common in bathrooms where hot water makes the atmosphere steamy, but it can affect other rooms as well. It happens when warm, moist air hits a cold surface.

There are three cures - **VENTILATION**, **WARMTH** and **LESS MOISTURE**.

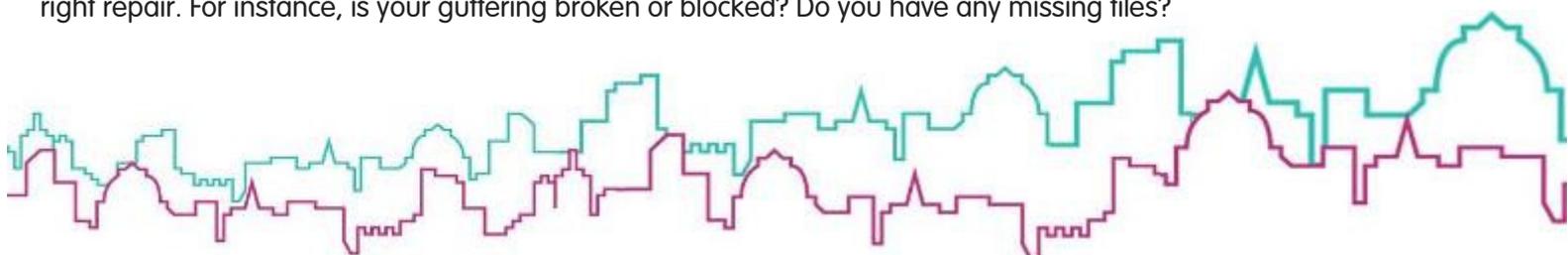
You need to get the right balance in your home between keeping it warm, keeping it well-ventilated and stopping as much moisture as possible from getting into the air (e.g. from drying clothes, baths, showers or cooking).

- After a bath or shower, open a window and close the bathroom door.
- Dry clothes out of doors or in a dryer. If drying clothes indoors, open a window in that room and shut the door.
- Black mould feeds on residues from shampoos and soaps. Make sure that you clean the tiling, grouting and sealant in your bathroom at least once a fortnight, even if it doesn't look dirty.
- Don't push furniture against walls. Leave a gap of at least 5cm for warm air to get to the walls.
- Keep rooms warm and well ventilated.
- If you're doing something steamy, shut the door and use an extractor fan or open the window.
- It's better to keep your heating on low for longer, rather than on high for a short time.
- Small patches of mould can be wiped off but big patches need further action. Call us for advice.

Brown stains on ceilings? Green algae round drainpipes or on walls? Powdery salts on walls? You have problems with **LEAKS** or **DAMP**.



Call us to report any leaks or damp patches. Try to describe the problem as well as you can so that we can order the right repair. For instance, is your guttering broken or blocked? Do you have any missing tiles?



How to bleed your radiators

If your radiators are getting warm at the top but staying cold at the bottom, they need bleeding. It's easy to do. If you do it regularly you will stop serious air locks and get more heat for free!

Warning for combi boilers: when you bleed your radiators, your boiler pressure might go down. You will need to top up your water pressure by using your filling loop - see below.

To bleed your radiators, you need:

- A **radiator key** - available from hardware shops

1. Switch your heating off. Leave it to cool for an hour before you start.
2. Find the radiator bleed valve. It is at the top of the radiator at one end. Hold a cloth under the radiator valve to catch any water that comes out.
3. Open the bleed valve with the radiator key - about one turn anti-clockwise. You will hear the air hiss out. When the air stops coming out and it's just water, tighten the valve again.
4. **Combi boilers only:** check that your boiler pressure is still over 1 bar. If it is too low, use your filling loop to top it up.



radiator keys

turn anti-clockwise to open



radiator bleed valve

Topping up your boiler pressure

If you have a combi boiler, the pressure should be around 1 - 1.5 bar when the system's cold. If it falls below 1 bar, you'll need to top up its water level to restore the pressure. **Warning** - run the water in carefully and do not increase your pressure above 1.5 bar. If it goes too high, call us for advice.

If your boiler pressure keeps on dropping for no reason, you may have a leak in your system. Call Unity.

To top up your boiler pressure, you need:

- A **filling loop** - this should be attached to your boiler or kept nearby.

1. Switch your heating off. Leave it to cool for an hour before you start.
2. Check your boiler pressure. It should be 1 - 1.5 bar when cold. If it's dropped under 1 bar, you need to top up the water levels to increase the pressure.
3. If it's not already on, attach your filling loop to the filling points on your pipework (see right). It won't fit anything that it's not meant to.
4. Carefully turn the valve on the filling loop to let water into the system. Turn it off when the pressure reaches just over 1 bar (see right). If you accidentally put a bit too much water in, you can reduce the pressure by bleeding a radiator. However, if you've put far too much water in, leave your boiler turned off and call us for advice.
5. This job is easy enough to do yourself if you're a practical kind of person.



Filling loop



However, if in doubt, call Unity to get the professionals out.

Elderly? Disabled? Need a shower?

If you're struggling to get in and out of your bath, then you can apply for a free shower through our Aids & Adaptations service.

If you need a shower for medical reasons (or because your legs aren't as young as they used to be), then you can apply for one using the council's Disabled Facilities Grant scheme. It's easy to do and is your quickest route to getting a new shower.



1. Arrange an appointment with an Occupational Therapist.

Call the council's Adult Social Care team on **0113 222 4401**. Tell them that you'd like to arrange an assessment from an Occupational Therapist (OT), as you think you need some adaptations in your home because of a disability.

2. The Occupational Therapist visits you at home.

They meet you at your home and assess what help you need to enable you to use your home comfortably.

3. The Occupational Therapist makes recommendations in a written report.

If you need expensive adaptations over £1,000, they will help you to apply for a Disabled Facilities Grant from the council to pay for the work. If you need smaller adaptations, they will write to Unity to ask us to carry out the work. As long as we have funding available, we will do the work as soon as possible.

4. Your new shower is installed, along with any other adaptations that you need.

If the council fits it under a Disabled Facilities Grant, they are responsible for the first 12 months. Then Unity takes over.

Tony's tips

Maintenance man Tony has a word



Time to oil your locks!

Winter's an awful time to have a sticking door lock. The last thing you want is to be stuck outside in the cold & dark, trying to get your key to turn.

If your lock has started sticking or is hard to use, you can sort it out straight away with a quick bit of oil.

All you need is a can of penetrating lubricant, like WD40. Give the inside of the lock a quick squirt. Then spray a bit of oil onto the key and move it in and out of the lock a few times, to spread the oil about.

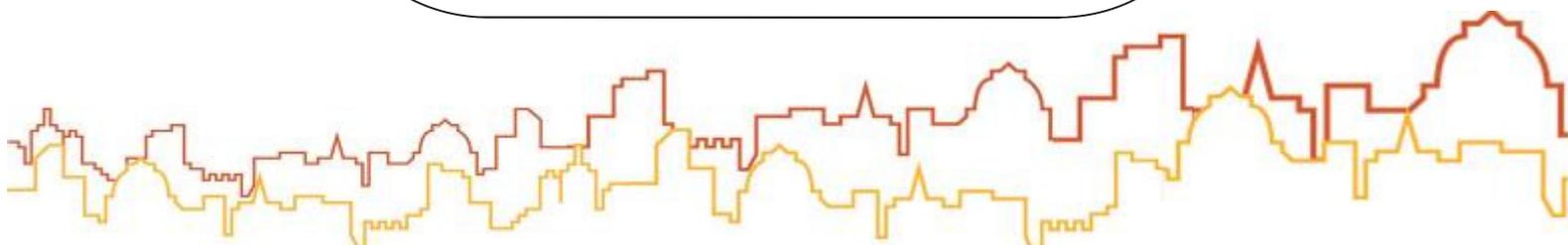
Always use a spray penetrating oil for best results. Don't use household oil (like 3-in-1 oil or vegetable oil) unless it's an emergency, as it will attract dirt and will eventually gum up the lock.



This issue's **£50** repairs satisfaction slip prize draw winner is Mr & Mrs Sattar from Harehills.



If you have a repair, send your slip back and you could win **£50!**



08 Employment Team successes

Over the past few months our Customer Services team has been contacting tenants to introduce the Employment Team and see if they can be of assistance to tenants wanting to find employment or training opportunities. We've helped many new clients - maybe we could help you?

Unity's Employment Team isn't just for Unity tenants - we'll assist family members, friends or neighbours, even if they don't live in one of our homes. We know that if we improve things for the important people in your life, we make things better for you too.

CV's, mock interviews, application forms, job search, training, employment rights - we can help with all of these things and more. Give the team a call on **0113 200 7738** to see what we can do for you.



Case studies

Female, age 25, single mum with two kids

When the Employment Team met this tenant she had been out of employment for 2 years. She had 5 years' experience within a customer service environment but unfortunately due to the economic climate the store was forced to close.

Progression so far: This tenant came to the Employment Team for support in September 2012. The Employment Team helped develop her CV and did interview preparation to boost her confidence. Within one month she had found permanent part-time employment to fit around her children. The Employment Team has recently been back in touch with her - she is enjoying work and has increased her hours.

- ✓ Child-friendly job
- ✓ Better CV
- ✓ Increased hours

Male, age 43, father of three

This tenant had very low self-confidence, which had been knocked when he was made redundant from a company he had worked for over 10 years.

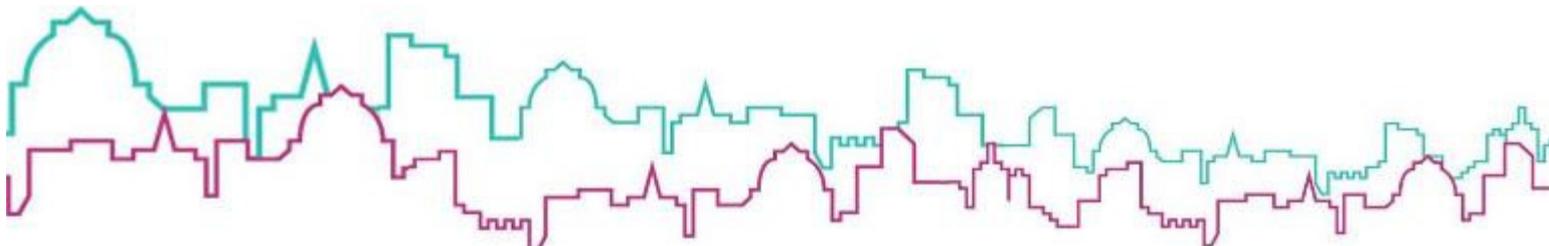
Progression so far: The Employment Team helped build his CV and referred him to a confidence building course. The team have also helped with interview techniques both face to face and over the telephone. He is now in permanent employment and his confidence is building gradually.

- ✓ More self-confidence
- ✓ Interview skills
- ✓ Permanent job

Contact our Employment Team:

Noma Moyo T: 0113 200 7746 E: noma.moyo@unityha.co.uk

Kelly Jennings T: 0113 200 7738 E: kelly.jennings@unityha.co.uk



If you want more say in where you live and the services you get, join **Unity's Tenant Panel**.

Our friendly, informal meetings are held on the first Tuesday of every month. They're your chance to meet with managers, influence strategy and change things where you live.

Recent Tenant Panel activities

Unity's Tenant Panel members have been getting involved in scrutinising Unity's performance in all sorts of areas.

- **Allocating up to £10,000 spending on updating communal landscaped areas:** Having thoroughly inspected all Unity's schemes in the summer, Panel members have prioritised the following areas. When they know how much money is left, they will move onto their next priorities.
 - **Spencer Place flats** - new bin areas
 - **Ashton Court** - replanting the flower bed at the front
 - **Leicester Close** - tidying up an uneven bed
 - **Briarsdale Mews** - replacing three dead trees with new saplings which are suited to an urban location
- **Reinspecting the Fielding Gate estate in Armley to check that Unity had acted on their recommendations.**

"We're really pleased with the progress that's been made and with how both Unity and the Fielding Gate residents had improved the estate in 2013."

- **Taking part in a project to see if token-meter users are getting a raw deal.**

Next Tenant Panel meeting dates

- **Tuesday 4th February, 1 - 2.45pm @ Unity's offices**
- **Tuesday 4th March, 1 - 2.45pm @ Unity's offices**
- **Tuesday 1st April, 1 - 2.45pm @ Unity's offices**

We also hold evening Tenant Panel sessions when there is demand - please call us to ask if you're not free during office hours.

To find out more, contact Emma Oates, Unity's Tenant, Neighbourhood & Involvement Officer, on (0113) 200 7743 or at emma.oates@unityha.co.uk.

Recent events

Gardening service

We've been looking at ways to keep costs down for tenants who pay towards the upkeep of landscaped areas that they share with other people.

Our gardening contract is up for renewal in April 2014, so we've asked over 120 households if they want a cheaper service.

TV aerials

Because our communal TV aerial upgrades were cheaper than we thought they'd be, we've audited our accounts and passed the savings on to tenants, who will be paying less through their service charge.



Tenant Panel members give the Fielding Gate estate a big thumbs up



Housing officers out and about

Our housing officers check all our homes every three months. They'll be happy to call in at your home so that you can show them any problems in your area. If you want your housing officer to call on you on their next visit, please call us to arrange.



**Rashpal
Sahota**

**Additional
languages:**

- Hindi
- Punjabi

Monday 3rd March 10.30 - 12.30	Burmantofts & others: Haslewoods, Rigton Green, Glenthorpe Crescent, Leopold Street, Ashton Court
Wednesday 5th March 10.00 - 12.00	Chapelton: Jackie Smart Court, Louis Street, Cowper Street, Dodgson Ave, Hillcrests, Frankland Place, Granges, Hamiltons
Friday 14th March 10.00 - 12.30	Chapelton: Harehills Ave, Newtons, Pear Tree House, Windrush Court
Friday 7th March 10.00 - 12.00	Chapelton: Spencer Place, Markham Avenue, Vicars Road, Gathorne Terrace, Pasture Road
Wednesday 12th March 10.30 - 12.30	Beeston: Harlech Park Court, Beverleys, Joy Row, Rington Road, Burlington Road, Lodge Lane, The Grange
Friday 10th January 10.00 - 12.00	Little London: Devon Close, Leicester Close
Thursday 16th January 10.00 - 12.30	Woodhouse & North Leeds: Cliff Terrace, Unity Close, Deighton View, Blackmoor Road, Fir Tree Approach
Wednesday 22nd January 10.00 - 12.30	Meanwood: Stainbecks, Bentleys, Stonegates

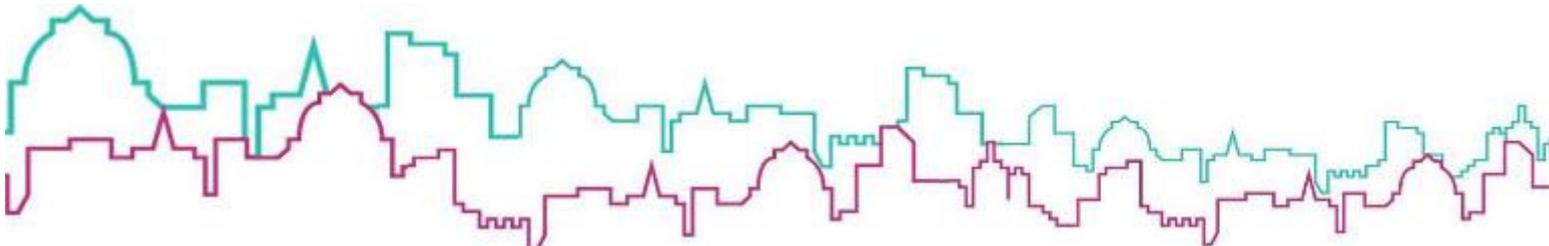


**Kamila
Maqsood**

**Additional
languages:**

- Urdu
- Mirpuri

Thursday 16th January 10.30 - 12.30	Harehills: Copgrove Road, Ryan Place, Upland Gardens, Fearnville Road, Montague Avenue, Lawrence Gardens, Dorset Road, Ruthven View, Luxor Road, Cowper Grove
Thursday 23rd January 10.30 - 12.30	North Leeds: Scott Halls, Fieldhouse Drive, Pennythorne Drive
Thursday 30th January 10.30 - 12.30	Harehills: Ponderosa Close, Hill Top Mount, Ellers, Alcesters, Bayswaters, Bexleys, Elford
Wednesday 5th February 1.30 - 3.30	Beeston: Parkwoods, Stratfords, Sefton Terrace
Friday 14th February 10.30 - 12.30	Hyde Park & Armley: Rosebank Crescent, Hessle Road, Royal Parks, Tagore House, Mitford Road, Model Avenue, School Mews, Wesley Road, Fielding Gate, Mistress Lane, Highfields, Reyden Mews
Friday 21st February 10.30 - 12.30	Crossgates & Harehills: Thorn Drive, Briarsdales, Nowells, Kitcheners, Kimberleys, Pooles, Maryfields, Thornfield Way
Thursday 27th February 1.30 - 12.30	Chapelton: Sholebrokes, Mandela Court, Orlika Court, Chapelton Road, Mexboroughs, Reginalds



In autumn, Unity tenants benefitted from a free IT course to help them to develop their computer skills and practise using the Internet.

Before, they had virtually no computer skills or experience. Now, they can all use a mouse, type with the keyboard, use a word-processor, use an Internet browser, and send emails.

Unity is working with Connect Housing to deliver free I.T. training to our tenants, as they will need these skills in future. Many jobs are already advertised online and tenants will be expected to claim benefits like Universal Credit online too.

The Internet has opened up a world of wonders for so many people – it is difficult for them to imagine life without it!

If you, or someone you know, would be interested in learning how to use a computer and the Internet please get in touch with us. We will register your interest and invite you to a course when there are spaces available.



Interested in a free IT course for beginners?

Contact Lewis on 0113 200 7751 or ask at Unity's reception.

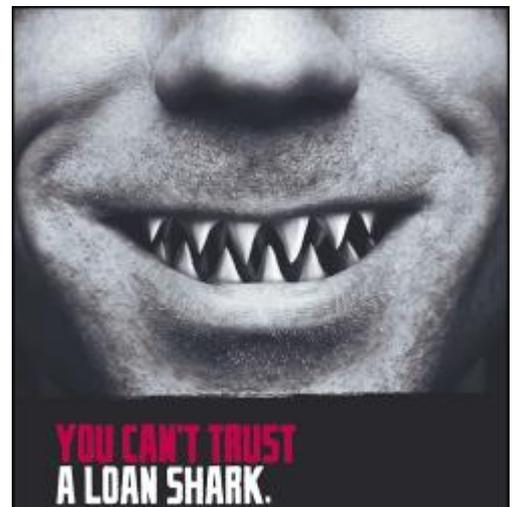
Gipton loan shark arrests

Two people were arrested on suspicion of illegal money lending in December, following an operation in Leeds.

The England Illegal Money Lending Team, working in partnership with West Yorkshire Trading Standards, executed a warrant at a residential address in the Gipton area. The suspects a male aged 41 and a female aged 40 were taken into custody and questioned by officers.

David Lodge, Divisional Manger at West Yorkshire Trading Standards, said, *"Illegal money lending is a despicable crime which causes nothing but harm in our communities. We would urge anyone who has been affected to call the Illegal Money Lending team in confidence."*

Nationally the Illegal Money Lending Teams have secured 298 prosecutions, leading to more than 189 years worth of custodial sentences. They have written off £42 million worth of illegal debt and helped over 23,000 victims.



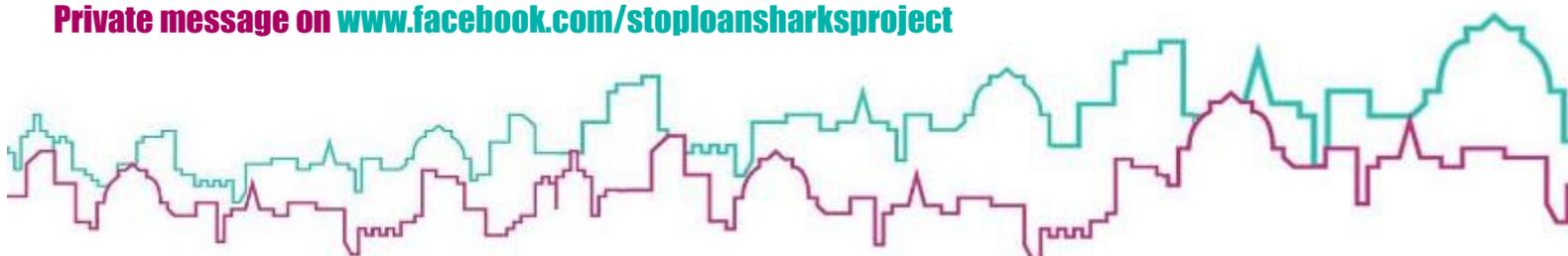
To report a loan shark:

Call the 24/7 confidential hotline on 0300 555 2222

Text 'loan shark + your message' to 60003

E-mail reportaloanshark@stoploansharks.gov.uk

Private message on www.facebook.com/stoploansharksproject



Useful information

Contacting Unity

T: (0113) 200 7700

F: (0113) 200 7701

E: uha@unityha.co.uk (general)

repairs@unityha.co.uk (repairs)

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 numbers (see below).

If we have to change our emergency numbers 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 & leaks, total loss of water and electricity, only toilet is blocked)

Emergency gas repairs ☎ 01757 244 510

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

Transco (gas leaks) ☎ 0800 111 999

Leeds City Council services

These are the contact numbers for the council services that you are entitled to.

Adult social care ☎ (0113) 222 4401

Anti-Social Behaviour ☎ (0113) 222 4402
onestop@leeds.gov.uk

Children social care ☎ (0113) 222 4403

Council tax, housing benefit ☎ (0113) 222 4404
lcc.benefits@leeds.gov.uk

Complaints & compliments ☎ (0113) 222 4405

Environmental services ☎ (0113) 222 4406
Refuse collection, recycling, noise nuisance, pest control, grass cutting, graffiti removal, dog wardens
refusecollection@leeds.gov.uk

Highways ☎ (0113) 222 4407
Street cleaning, street lighting highways@leeds.gov.uk

Registrars ☎ (0113) 222 4408
Births, deaths & marriages

Planning ☎ (0113) 222 4409

Minicom ☎ (0113) 222 4410

Contact the council's environmental services on (0113) 222 4406 to get bulky waste items taken away for free - old furniture, carpets, boxes, bagged rubbish.



Homes & Enterprise

Supporting BME Communities
and Multi-Cultural Neighbourhoods

Unity Housing Association
113-117 Chapeltown Road
Leeds LS7 3HY

STOP HATE CRIME
0800 138 1625
24 HOUR HELP LINE

**Unity's office is a Hate
Incident Reporting Centre**

