AUTUMN 2006
newsletter

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HACKNEY CHOICE – A NEW WAY TO MOVE

Attention all Hackney residents! On the 22 September, Hackney Housing launched a new way of allocating homes in the borough. This will affect any of our tenants that are on the Hackney Housing Register.

In the past, when you joined the local authority housing register, you would be offered a property when you reached the top of the waiting list and this would probably be the only offer you could expect.

The new system puts you in the driving seat and means you don't have to consider any property unless you choose to.

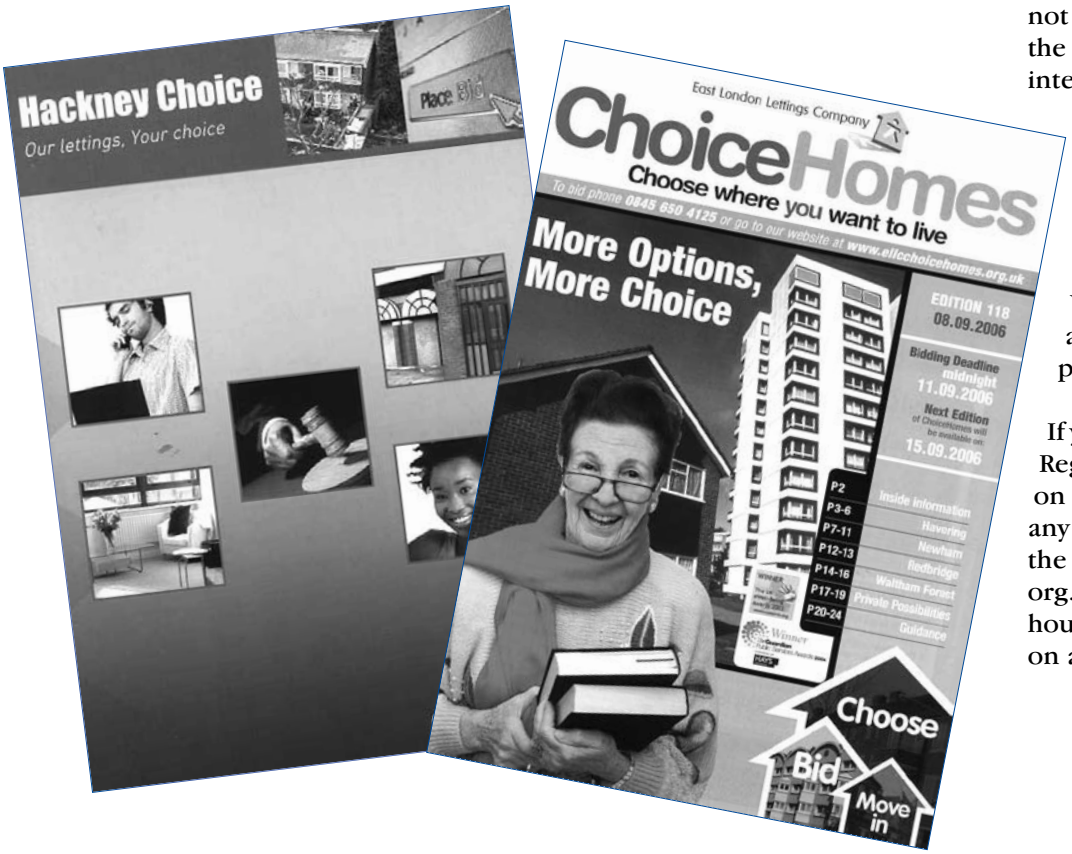
This new system is called 'Choice Based Lettings'. It is already in operation in Tower Hamlets and Southwark. Soon, IDS will be using this system for all its new lettings, including internal transfers.

All available properties will, in future, be advertised in a magazine called 'Choice Homes', published by the East London Lettings Company. You can get a copy of this at many places around the borough, including libraries, community centres, neighbourhood offices and the Town Hall. It can also be accessed by telephone and via the internet, where information is available in 28 languages. The internet service includes British Sign Language and you can choose either written or spoken text.

If you find a property you are interested in listed in the magazine, you make a 'Bid' for it. This does not involve money! It is simply the term you use to express your interest. Once the 'bidding' has closed the person who is the highest bidder – this means the person that is highest on the waiting list – will receive the offer of the property.

You can have two bids active at any one time and the magazine is published fortnightly.

If you would like to join the Housing Register or need more information on the scheme, you can find it at any Hackney Council office or via the website www.ellcchoicehomes.org.uk. You will need to join the housing register before you can bid on advertised properties.



GETTING YOU MORE INVOLVED

NEW TENANTS' ASSOCIATION

Tenants meeting at Evelyn Court

"Congratulations" to the tenants at Evelyn Court & Imperial and Coronation Avenue (our Stoke Newington Estate) for forming Tenants' Associations on each estate.

Tenants' Associations play an important role in community life, especially on estates, often by being a vehicle for tenants to communicate more effectively with their landlords on issues that are affecting them. Tenants' Associations help tenants by becoming more involved in the decision-making process and applying for funding to help improve their estates.

IDS looks forward to empowering, supporting and working together with our tenants to improve community life on each estate.

HOW TO KNOW WHEN YOU ARE A SENIOR CITIZEN

Thanks to Leila Abraham from Ajex House for finding this little tongue-in-cheek checklist in the Hackney Pensioners' Press, submitting the following for the newsletter here:

- Everything aches – what doesn't ache doesn't work
- That gleam in your eye is only the sun shining in your bifocals
- You feel like the morning after, but you never went anywhere the night before
- You get out of breath playing cards
- The only names in your little black book begin with Dr
- A dripping tap causes an uncontrollable urge
- Your children begin to look middle aged
- You look forward to a quiet evening
- You need glasses to find your glasses
- You sit in the rocking chair, but can't make it rock
- Your back goes out more than you do
- Your knees buckle, but your belt won't
- You sink your teeth into a choice steak and they stay there
- You have the answers, but nobody asks the right questions
- You decide to get your own back and live long enough to be a problem to your kids

POEM BY S RUDD AT AJEX HOUSE

We are born into this earth for a purpose,

This, you will agree, I am sure.

In all walks of life,

There is trouble and strife

Whether you are rich or you're poor.

Now, remember to help one another,

That's the best thing in life you can do.

As the same G-D that's made you

Is the same G-D that takes you,

Whatever in life you can do.

ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

Antisocial Behaviour (ASB) is a subject at the forefront of national politics, local government, Police agendas and public concern; so what is IDS doing about it?

IDS recognises that it has a responsibility to its tenants to manage antisocial behaviour in its neighbourhoods.

IDS has a robust Antisocial Behaviour Policy and has actively engaged the available tools and powers to deal with issues of ASB on your behalf; however, we recognise the need to continually develop and adapt to the new challenges posed by ASB.

With the recent development of the Government's Respect Action Plan, IDS has taken the opportunity to evolve the way they tackle antisocial behaviour. Working to implement closer community inclusive initiatives, IDS will develop specific neighbourhood strategies aimed at focusing on the needs of individual estates.

As part of the formulation of our neighbourhood strategies, a series of consultations will be held over the coming months. Tenants will have the opportunity to discuss issues of

HEALTHY DAY AT EVELYN COURT

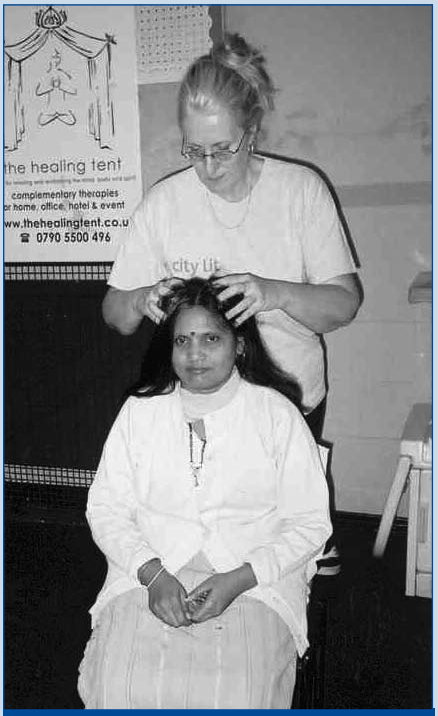
The Healthy Living Bus

Information on healthy living

Tenants at Evelyn Court were treated to a special healthy day on Saturday 2nd September when The Big Purple Healthy Living Bus parked up on the estate for the day.

A joint collaboration between Evelyn Court Book Club, Peabody Estate and The Healing Tent provided the tenants with a day of relaxation through complementary therapies such as reflexology, head, and neck and foot massages, as well as healthy eating options of fruit and vegetable smoothies.

IDS would like to thank Dolores Crump, the Evelyn Court tenant representative, Clea, Sara and Manjeet from Peabody Trust and Pete and his team from the Healing Tent for this joint collaboration in providing a fun and healthy day.



Indian head massage

importance and IDS will use this information to help prepare detailed community-based plans for tackling the antisocial issues raised.

IDS will also work to introduce "Good Neighbour Agreements"; these agreements will promote positive behaviour and reinforce community values, addressing a range of antisocial practices from noise nuisance to drug dealing and violence.

The key contributor to these ASB strategies is you, the tenant; by setting a shared set of community standards and expectations, we can work together to ensure your neighbourhood is a place where you can enjoy a peaceful and respected life.

EXTRA HELP FOR SHELTERED TENANTS

IDS has around 250 tenants (including couples) living in eight sheltered housing schemes. The extra help tenants receive from their sheltered scheme manager, together with a cost of the warden call system, is paid for by the Supporting People section of the Council with a Supporting People grant. In order to get this grant, IDS has to enter into a contract with the Council to provide a good quality service to its tenants. This includes the requirement that every tenant has a written support plan, which has to be reviewed every year.

The support plan is drawn up by the scheme manager with each tenant. It is a confidential document which we will not discuss with anyone else without the consent of the tenant. It helps tenants in sheltered housing to identify things they need assistance with. It also helps IDS to provide them with the most appropriate assistance to help them to stay independent and to look after their health. We recognise that some tenants feel that the extra form filling required these days is a nuisance, but we ask you to bear with us as, without this, we are unable to obtain help for you with the cost of the support we provide.

If you are one of the older tenants who is finding it difficult to manage in your home, have you thought about moving to one of our sheltered schemes? You would have your own self- contained flat, modern and comfortable, with a sheltered scheme manager on duty during the week to help you with day-to-day matters relating to your housing and welfare. The scheme manager does not provide personal care, however, although she can help to arrange this.

If you would like to know more, please speak to one of our Housing Welfare Managers, Annette or Robert on 020 8800 9606.

JEWISH FESTIVALS – TABERNACLES

The IDS newsletter is starting a series to look at the meanings of some of the key Jewish festivals over the year. This month we start with the "Feast of Tabernacles" one of the three foot festivals when the Jewish populace travelled to the temple in Jerusalem.

Suchoth (or the Feast of Tabernacles) commences on the 15th day of the Jewish month of Tishri (this year this is 7th October) and lasts for seven days. The word suchoth means booths or huts. During this holiday, Jews eat their meals, entertain guests, relax, and even sleep in a succah (the singular of suchoth), a temporary dwelling place which forms one of the central symbols of the festival. The succah commemorates the fact that the children of Israel lived in temporary dwellings during their 40 years of wandering in the desert after the exodus from Egypt, and reflects G-d's benevolence in providing for all their needs in the desert.

The festival is celebrated with special prayer services and holiday meals. The succah itself is a structure with a roof made of an organic material which has been disconnected from the ground. It should be at least three feet tall and be positioned so that all, or part of, its roof is open to the sky (only the part which is under the sky is kosher). Many people hang decorations such as dried or plastic fruit, streamers, shiny ornaments, and pictures from the interior walls and ceiling beams of a succah. Families may also line the interior walls with white sheeting, in order to recall the "Clouds of Glory" that surrounded the Jewish nation during their wanderings in the desert.

At Abraham Cohen Court, residents and members of the synagogue next door are able to use the succah which is erected in the back garden. IDS provided the framework as part of the development and the synagogue provides the panels which form the walls, temporary roof and all the decorations. Ajex House also has its own succah.

The succah at Abraham Cohen Court

EVELYN COURT WINDOW REPLACEMENT & REDECORATION

Works started in September at Evelyn Court on the first of three phases. The work has been divided into the following packages:-

Phase 1 (2006-07) - Blocks A, B & E	Phase 2 (2007-08) - Blocks C, D, F & G	Phase 3 (2008-09) - Blocks H, J & K

The colour schemes selected by consensus as a result of tenant consultation is cream for the external and lilac for the internal stairwells.

The windows for each flat are programmed to be completed in one day and we anticipate completing the works to each block over a period of 8 weeks, with the entire works for phase 1 due to be completed before the Christmas break.

We would like to thank tenants for the positive response to the colour scheme consultation and for their co-operation during the works.

KEEP FIT CLASSES

You are welcome to join the weekly keep-fit and aerobics classes at Evelyn Court and Navarino Mansions, taught by Nasima Pandor, a Qualified Fitness Instructor & Complementary Therapist.

Evelyn Court:
Mondays 7pm - 8pm

Navarino Mansions:
Wednesdays 6.30pm - 7.30pm

Price:
£3 per session

Contact:
07956 278142
for more information