



Getting Involved

Local tenant rep Fran Jefcoate will be helping us as we look to encourage our tenants to become more involved in shaping the future of IDS. Fran tells us, “Getting involved with my housing association has been a really positive experience, not only has it given me a better understanding of how and why things work the way they do but also the opportunity to take an active role to improve services within my community. When I started out almost 12 years ago I had no real knowledge of housing except as a resident, but I do have a genuine love of my area and a passion to see it be the best that it can be.

My estate was about to go through major regeneration due to a stock transfer so I joined the Steering Group and gradually found my voice and many other ways to get involved. I now sit on my Estate Board, Joint Estate Panel and Services Committee, with encouragement and support from my landlord I have now achieved a Level 1 qualification for Governance in the Public Sector of which I am very proud but my main role for the last four years has been around contractor monitoring and resident satisfaction, which has aided in making an already good service even better.

We are extremely fortunate to have landlords willing to listen to their residents and who value our local knowledge, many people I know are not so lucky and feel ignored and overlooked. I encourage everyone to engage with your landlord wherever the opportunity arises. I have found it so rewarding in many ways, having opportunities to broaden my horizons, meet like-minded people, and challenge my misconceptions around social housing and most importantly to do some valuable work within the organisation. I now look forward to sharing my experiences and knowledge with you and encouraging you to begin your own journeys.”

If you would like to meet Fran Jefcoate please come along to a special meeting for all tenants interested in finding out more about getting involved. The meeting will be informal and refreshments will be available. It will be held in the **community hall at Navarino Mansions, Dalston Lane, Hackney E8 1LB on Wednesday 6 December starting at 6.30pm.** Please join us then. All welcome!

How Ids Welfare Service Can Help

Robert Davenport is IDS’ Housing Welfare Officer based at Stoke Newington. Robert can offer advice and information to help tenants with rent arrears and a wide range of welfare issues. He liaises with the DWP, local authorities, statutory and voluntary organisations such as charities and makes referrals where appropriate.

Last year, Robert assisted 254 tenants to access over £31,000 of additional income. Issues ranged from rent arrears, benefits including Universal Credit, social services, occupational therapy, support organisations, family support, medical matters, income maximisation, debt, anti-social behaviour, sheltered housing, vulnerability and safeguarding issues, downsizing, discretionary housing payments (DHP), charity applications, repair issues and tenancy sustainment.

There has been an increasing number of ESA/Personal Independence Payment (PIP) cases that fail at the medical stage and can only be reviewed at Tribunal. This is time-consuming and Robert can offer support with the appeal process. Most appeals have been successful. The recent independent tenant satisfaction survey identified a 99% satisfaction rating of those who had contacted the housing welfare services. Robert can arrange to visit tenants in their own home or a meeting at one of our offices.

If you would like to speak to **Robert** or make an appointment, please contact **020 8800 9606** or email **rdavenport@ids.org.uk**

Stoke Newington In Bloom!

Here are pictures of an incredibly successful morning of community planting at Coronation and Imperial Avenue. 20 people came to join us and the weather stayed dry. We all got our hands dirty and a fun time was had by all.

Special thanks to our gardening contractors Lawrence and Michal from Creative Landscapes for all the advice and guidance given, not to mention Thameslink Building Services, Mills Larkswood, R Dunhams and Delta Security for their generous contribution of gardening tools. Find out more by contacting **Cath Gibson**, Estate Manager **020 7923 9676**



Bonfire Party

Tenants from Ajex House and Clifford Lawton House held a Bonfire Night party together to celebrate Bill Murtagh's birthday. Paul Ross entertained everyone with singing and dancing.



Family Fun Day At Evelyn Court

The IDS family fun day took place on 2nd September 2017 at Evelyn Court.

Activities included face painting, football competition, photo portraits, salsa lesson, live music, henna painting, sand cards, a magician and Bhangra dancers

Our thanks to Maggie Cooke (top left) and her fantastic team for all their help.

Dolores Crump (lower right) with IDS community award in recognition of her valuable and long service to the community at Evelyn Court



Carbon Monoxide, The Silent Killer!

Carbon monoxide is harmful when breathed and can starve the heart, brain and other vital organs of oxygen when inhaled. It can overcome a person in minutes without warning and can result in death by suffocation.

This is one more reason why every resident must give us access every year to inspect their boiler and gas appliances.

IDS are getting tough on tenants who fail to respond to our requests to carry out these vital checks.

We will take legal action to gain access where necessary and the costs for this will be passed back to the tenant.

Make safety your number one priority. Contact us and make an appointment if your safety inspection is due.

Telephone **020 8800 9606** email **housing@ids.org.uk** or contact your **Estate Office**.

Don't Stand Or Sit On Window Cills

For your own safety never stand, sit or lean on window cills. These are not designed to hold your weight. Please do not leave plant pots or objects on your window cills either.

Clifford Lawton House

We are pleased to confirm that windows and front entrance door at Clifford Lawton House are scheduled for replacement in early 2018. Work is underway to get planning consent and it is hoped to begin the replacements in the new year.

Property Safety Check Update

We would like to thank all our residents who provided access for recent checks for property safety. These checks are done periodically by all housing associations to ensure we meet all expected standards for fire, water hygiene, asbestos, electrical and gas safety. We are currently following this up with a programme of recommended improvements and have contractors engaged to carry these out. All contractors carry ID cards; if you are in doubt as to the identity of any person claiming to represent IDS you should call the office and check with us before you let them in.

Keep Stairwells Clear

Weekly and monthly inspections are on-going. Please help us by not leaving anything on the stairwells, landings or intake cupboards such as buggies, bikes, shoes, plants. We will remove these items.

These areas must be kept clear to reduce the risk of fire and to keep access clear.



Playground At Evelyn Court

The playground at Evelyn Court is currently going through a design consultation process, once this is concluded the work will be tendered. We hope to have works completed by the end of March 2018. This is a possible design. If you are interested in finding out more please contact Ernest Lee, Community Development Officer on 020 8809 8323



Four New Homes On Canvey Island

We are delighted to announce the recent purchase of four new homes for the Haredi Jewish community on Canvey Island, Essex.

A new community is being established there and we were keen to help in addressing the severe housing problems and overcrowding previously experienced by our new residents. Suzanne Wolfe, our Chief Executive credits Mr Joseph Stauber, a former member of the IDS board, who originally suggested that we should become involved in the Canvey Island project. IDS has bought four new-build properties in the area, designated as 'affordable rent' properties. There are two four-bedroom houses and two three-bedroom houses. We are very impressed with the new community on Canvey Island and pleased that so far we have been able to house 22 people there.



New Front Doors

IDS has completed a successful trial replacement of front doors at Evelyn Court and will be carrying out a replacement programme to many of our flats. New doors will offer residents improved fire safety and security. The programme is due to be rolled out in 2018.



Bingo!

Sid Joseph of Evelyn Court came out on top at the September Bingo event

Universal Credit Is Coming

Universal Credit (UC) will soon be rolled out to cover all areas where IDS tenants live, so here's an important update. UC is a new single benefit payment for people looking for work or on a low income. Claims will be managed online; money will be paid to you monthly in arrears including your housing costs so this will be a big change for many as you will need to use the housing cost element to help pay your rent.

UC will replace the following six 'legacy benefits': Income Support, Income based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA), Income related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA), Housing Benefit (HB – except for people in some kinds of supported accommodation and those over pension credit age), Child tax credits (CTC) and Working tax credits (WTC)

UC claims are made on line and can be made from a smart phone or tablet. To make a claim for UC please visit www.gov.uk/universal-credit and click on the claim button. To check when universal credit will be rolled out to all new claimants in your area check the DWP website www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/universal-credit-faqs.pdf.

If you do not currently use a computer or the internet it would be a good idea to find out how to get on line. There are lots of free sites to visit where you can learn internet skills at your own pace eg www.learnmyway.com. If you cannot access the internet or use a computer there are 'digital champions' available at job centres to help you make your claim. UC can only be paid into bank accounts and not Post Office accounts so you need to ensure you have this in place, speak to our Housing Welfare Officer if you need advice.

As part of the online claim for Universal Credit, claimants can see progress updates. A week before the payment date, the claimant will be sent a statement showing the date the claim will be paid and how their payment is broken down, for example, the childcare or housing costs element. The housing element may not be the same as your actual rent as caps on rent may apply for new tenancies in line with local housing allowance rates. If the housing element of Universal Credit is lower than the rent, the difference will need to be made up by the tenant.

If you have queries, please contact the UC helpline which becomes a freephone number this month **0345 600 0723**. Our Welfare Officer, **Robert Davenport**, can also be contacted on **020 8809 8306** or **07977 277 021**.

Christmas Opening Hours

Normal head and estate office opening times will apply up to and including Friday 22 December. If you have a maintenance emergency when our offices are closed and no caretaker is on duty on your estate, please contact **Barry Stewart** on the out-of-hours emergency line **07799 037 718**

Dates	Head Office	Estates
Monday 25 Dec 2017	Closed	Closed
Tuesday 26 Dec	Closed	Closed
Wednesday 27 Dec	Closed	Closed
Thursday 28 Dec	Normal opening hours	Normal opening hours
Friday 29 Dec	Normal opening hours	Normal opening hours
Saturday 30 Dec	Duty caretaker hours	Duty caretaker hours
Sunday 31 Dec	Duty caretaker hours	Duty caretaker hours
Monday 1 Jan 2018	Closed	Closed
Tuesday 2 Jan	Normal opening hours	Normal opening hours

Free Home Fire Safety Visit

Even a small fire can cause major damage and could mean you are unable to stay in your property for a number of weeks. London Fire Brigade offers free home fire safety visits to increase home safety and to stop fires happening within the home. Firefighters will visit your home and provide advice tailored to your household and lifestyle.

They can offer practical advice and assistance and may fit smoke alarms during the assessment. They can visit on any day of the week at a time convenient to you.

You can book a visit on line by visiting the website: <http://www.london-fire.gov.uk/HomeFireSafetyVisit.asp> or you can arrange an appointment by calling **0800 028 44 28**.

Have You Registered With HomeSwapper?

If you are thinking of moving, you should register with HomeSwapper for FREE! IDS are partners with HomeSwapper, the UK's most popular mutual exchange service with more than half a million members.

Since 2007, HomeSwapper has helped more than 260,000 families and individuals swap their homes. Every day, thousands of people log on to HomeSwapper because they want to move. For many this is because they need more space, or they're moving for work or to be closer to family.

Others may be in crisis situations, and need to make a new start. HomeSwapper is a self-service tool, intuitive and simple to use. You can access it from any pc, mobile or tablet or you can download the app at homeswapper.co.uk. One of our tenants recently told us "I am happy I swapped home. Found exactly what I was looking for. Thank you."