

WARDUR RESIDENTS SAVE ON FUEL BILLS



Wood chip technology keeps Wardur residents warm in winter and a bit better off

Residents at the brand new Wardur House and Court are making big savings on their fuel bills, without making any effort at all! RSMHA, which opened the brand new housing development in Walton-on-Thames recently, designed in a wood chip powered biomass communal boiler which keeps all the homes toasty.

Not only is the system the very latest in 'green' technology, but it is helping to provide cheaper heating and hot water bills to the 22 residents at the scheme. So far, we estimate that most residents are paying at least a third less than if they had a conventional boiler in their home!

CHEAPER GAS AND ELECTRICITY BILLS

With gas and electricity bills seeming to go up every winter, it's important to shop around to find the cheapest deals.

My Home Energy Switch lets you compare all energy suppliers simply and quickly to make sure you're getting the best price for your gas and electricity.

Provided in partnership by the National Housing Federation (of which RSMHA is member) and uSwitch.com, **My Home Energy Switch** gives housing association tenants a free, impartial online or telephone comparison. Switching service can help you save hundreds of pounds a year on your fuel bills, so why not give it a try?

Call **0800 015 5346** or see www.myhomeenergyswitch.org.uk today for more details and to start switching and saving.

Remember, this service is **FREE**, **IMPARTIAL** and **SIMPLE** to use.

GARDENING AND CLEANING UNDER THE SPOTLIGHT

If you live at a scheme with shared gardens or internal hallways, we want to know what you think about the quality of communal gardening and cleaning services - and any changes you'd like us to make.

We'll be sending a satisfaction survey to every resident at schemes listed below shortly. Everyone who returns a completed form will go into the hat for a free prize draw to win a £25 Marks & Spencers gift card!

- Alstonfield • Avonmore • Bank House • Beslize House • Cardinal Court • Clockhouse Court • Edgar Court • Elizabeth Hart Court • Gunters Mead • Hanover Court • Leighdale • Mole Abbey • Nicholas Lodge • Simmons Court • St Andrews • Swinburne Court • Sydenham Road • The Fairings • Threeways • Wardur Court & House • Williamson Cottages •

CHRISTMAS OPENING TIMES

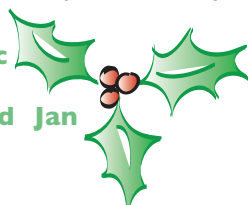
As in past years, RSMHA's Esher office will be open to provide our usual service for residents throughout the festive period, except on weekends and public holidays, as follows:

Sat 24th to Tues 27th Dec inclusive: closed

Sat 31st Dec to Monday 2nd Jan inclusive: closed

Emergency repairs

To report an emergency repair to RSMHA while we're closed over Christmas, please contact our out-of-hours emergency repairs service **Homeserve** - see right.



CONTACT US

Tel: **01372 461 440**

Email: enquiries@rsmha.org.uk

Customer services: Louise Stevens, Ellie Melham

Repairs: Jackie Younis

Housing and tenancy enquiries:
Karen Woolton (RSMHA)
Elaine Gregory (FHT & Esher)

Leasehold enquiries: Jeremy Lowry

Out of hours emergency repairs:
Tel: **Homeserve 08457 573 842**



60 NEW HOMES ON THE WAY

RSMHA SECURES £5 MILLION FUNDING

Despite the difficult economic climate, RSMHA is delighted to have secured £5 million of funding for 60 new affordable homes to help ease housing shortages in the south east. Property Director Ian Lines says: "The funding will allow us to go ahead with the development of brand new, high quality homes for rent across Surrey which we aim to complete by 2013".

At two of these new developments, in Thames Ditton and Byfleet, we're replacing existing schemes that had become very tired and uneconomical to refurbish with modern, larger homes. We've designed some of these specifically to meet the needs of disabled and older residents.



Coming down ... brand new homes fit for modern day living will replace these outdated properties at Imber Court in Thames Ditton.



Over in Guildford, we'll also be building two developments in popular residential locations and in Egham plans are being finalised for a small development just moments from the town centre.

Under the Government's new Affordable Rent framework, which now funds most house building by housing associations, the rents at two our new

developments in Egham and Guildford will have be set at up to 80% of open market levels.

These higher rents will only affect new residents who move into these schemes. If you're already living in an RSMHA home, or if you're a new resident moving into a vacancy elsewhere in our stock, you will continue to pay the same social housing rent.

CHANGES TO COMMUNITY ALARM SERVICE

A new provider started running the community alarm service for residents living in our sheltered and leasehold retirement schemes from 25 November. Mole Valley Telecare Services, based in Leatherhead, took over from Guildford Council. Mole Valley and RSMHA will ensure that the caring, quick and professional response to calls that residents expect will remain just the same as it has always been. In changing provider we've also managed to save some money too and these savings will be passed on to residents.

INSIDE THIS NEWSLETTER ... INSIDE THIS NEWSLETTER ... INSIDE THIS NEWSLETTER
MEET THE MONEY PEOPLE

COME AND SEE FOR YOURSELF

We know that while many residents might not want to commit to become full Board members for RSMHA, they're still interested in finding out how well the association is performing and how decisions about our services are taken by Board members. Our Housing Committee which is made up of Board members, including a Resident, and staff, looks at all aspects of customer service including how well we're doing on resident satisfaction with repairs, re-letting empty properties and responding to customer complaints.

We're therefore offering residents the chance to come along to our Housing Committee to see how it all works, with no strings attached. The committee meets every three months, usually on a Thursday evening, from 6.30pm.

To find out more please contact Nick Coverdale, Housing Director (**01372 461445** or ncoverdale@rsmha.org.uk) or Jenny Edwards, Resident Board Member (jenny1311@gmail.com)

Dear Resident

It's time to move on!

You may have already heard that I will be leaving Rosemary Simmons at Christmas to become Chief Executive of The Wimbledon Guild. The Guild is involved in a huge range of charitable activities and will be a great new challenge for



me - as well as being very close to home, so that I can be around for my children who are now seven and ten.

I have been at Rosemary Simmons now for almost fourteen years and the organisation has changed out of all recognition during that time. We have built excellent staff and management teams and have brought all of our homes up to high standards. We have also managed to remain financially solvent through these difficult economic times and still have plans to build high quality new homes, despite all of the pressures on us.

On a personal note I have very much valued the support that I have received from staff, residents and Board Members in my role, both in the good times (two lots of maternity leave!) and the not so good (period of ill health a year or so ago, all now happily behind me). I am sure that I would not have stayed so long had I not been surrounded by such a talented and inspiring group of people.

Plans are in hand to appoint another Chief Executive. Interviews will be in December and the new person will start in the New Year.

So I wish everyone all the very best for the future and I look forward to hearing reports of Rosemary Simmons continuing to go from strength to strength.

Wendy Pridmore

NEW PANEL GIVES YOU MORE CHOICE

We are setting up a new Residents' Panel to offer you more choice in how you are consulted and give you a say on services and local issues where you live.

Life is just too busy for many people to attend meetings or get to speak with members of staff during the day. Our new panel will make it easier for you to give feedback from the comfort of your own home at times that suit you best!

If you decide to join the panel, your name will be placed on a confidential mailing list so that from time to time we can contact you, by email or post, to get your views and ideas on the services we provide. Your feedback will help us to make the right decisions for residents.

Interested in possibly joining our Residents Panel?

Please contact:

Nick Coverdale

Housing Director

01372 461440 or email

ncoverdale@rsmha.org.uk

SUPPORTING PEOPLE FUNDING

Like most local authorities, Surrey County Council has to look closely at future funding for housing associations such as RSMHA. The funding pays for tenancy support services for older people - such as scheme managers and the emergency call service.

We understand how important these services are to many residents and we're in talks with the Council on how best to secure funding for our schemes in Hersham and West Molesey.

Our aim is to try to reduce the impact on residents of any possible budget cuts. We'll share more information with residents who may be affected in due course.

Please contact your scheme manager or RSMHA if you'd like to discuss this matter further in the meantime.

MEET THE MONEY PEOPLE

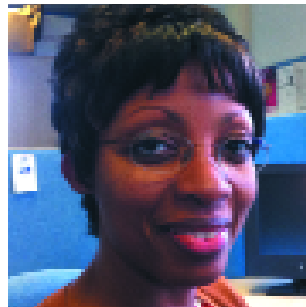
We'd like to introduce our dedicated team of finance staff, the unsung heroes who keep track of every last pound that we spend on your homes and services and make sure that your rent and service charge payments are well used.

The buck stops with our Finance Director, Shaun, who joined RSMHA in 2009.

He has ultimate responsibility for seeing that we stay in the black and don't spend more money than we have! Some of you may have met Shaun who regularly attends service charge review meetings with residents.



Yi, our Senior Finance Officer, has been with us for 11 years. She makes sure that our bank accounts tally up and produces detailed income and expenditure reports to keep track of our money.



Aure, our Finance Officer, has been with RSMHA for 9 years and oversees Fellowship Houses Trust finances. Aure also oversees RSMHA's corporate services work.



Catherine, who is also a Finance Officer, has been with us since 2004. She makes sure your rent payments go into the right account and that we offer residents many different ways to pay, including by Direct Debit, AllPay and online via our website.



Pat is the final, crucial cog in the finance wheel. She checks and pays the many contractor invoices that we have to process every week.



DIGITAL TV SWITCHOVER

How will it affect you?

Television across the whole UK is switching from an analogue signal to a digital one. The switchover is happening at different times, depending on where you live in the south east. Digitaluk has given these dates for switchover for RSMHA residents:

- **Hove and Worthing (Whitehawk Hill transmitter): 7-12 March 2012**
- **Surrey and greater London (Crystal Palace transmitter): 4-18 April 2012**
- **Lancing (Newhaven transmitter): 30 May-13 June 2012**

Most old TV sets can easily be converted with a digital box, available to buy relatively cheaply.

If you have a new TV with a digital Freeview service built-in, or intend to buy one, you will still need to re-tune your set at switchover.

Those aged 75 or over or who are disabled can also receive help with making the switchover, including easy-to-use digital equipment, help with installation and 12 months aftercare.

For more information contact **Digitaluk tel 08456 50 50 50** or visit **digitaluk.co.uk**

