

DECEMBER 2021

# H*in*oming

The magazine for Harrow Council's tenants and leaseholders

**WIN**  
**£25**  
See p15

## MEET SAEED

**HARROW'S FIRST FULLY  
ACCESSIBLE PLAYGROUND**

**SEE P4**

**AFFORDABLE NEW HOMES P7**

**HOW TO STAY WELL  
THIS WINTER P6**

**FREE CAB ADVICE WORKSHOPS**

**SEE INSERT**

Join the Housing  
Matters webinar  
**WEDNESDAY**  
**9 FEBRUARY 2022**  
6pm

*Harrow*COUNCIL  
LONDON

# Photo CORNER

Paige Wilson from Harrow on the Hill, said, "This is my beautiful model cat Kimi who is saying to the camera: "Take the shot. I'm ready for my closeup!"

**£10**  
for every  
printed picture



Why not send in your favourite photo of Harrow or a photo of your pet to [anthea.watkins@harrow.gov.uk](mailto:anthea.watkins@harrow.gov.uk) and win £10 shopping vouchers when printed

## HELLO FROM PHILLIP O'DELL



I am passionate about seeing how we can re-engage with residents, where open face to face meetings are still tricky due to restrictions on numbers attending community centres and the need for lots of ventilation.

However, our new 'estate-based' websites will hopefully change the way you access housing information, raise queries and find who to report issues to. Through software called 'Commonplace', we are launching the website to all residents living on a particular estate. Our first five are:

1. Headstone / Augustine Road
2. Honeybun
3. Little Stanmore/ Berridge estate
4. Weald Village
5. Pinner Grove estate

We will see how these go before rolling them out to all 33 council estates.

Secondly I would like to say a big thank you to one of our key partners, MyYard Charity, based in South Harrow. MyYard has just completed 3 years supplying free surplus food to several 'hubs' including Grange Farm estate, some sheltered residents and residents living on Hazeldene estate. They also support environmental gardening projects and carry out regular youth outreach work.

**Cllr Phillip O'Dell**  
Portfolio holder for Housing  
✉ [phillip.odell@harrow.gov.uk](mailto:phillip.odell@harrow.gov.uk)  
☎ 0208 4242 1897



## HOUSING MATTERS ONLINE EVENT

Please join us at the Housing Matters Webinar on Wednesday 9 February. Webinar at 6pm – 7.30pm via MS TEAMS. To get the meeting link contact: ✉ [rinvolve@harrow.gov.uk](mailto:rinvolve@harrow.gov.uk)

## HOMELESSNESS

If anyone you know is at risk of homelessness, tell them to contact the Council as soon as possible. Although the majority of the staff are working remotely, the service still remains inclusive. ☎ 0208 424 1093

Cover: Saeed enjoying using the playground at Cedars Park Open Space

## HOUSING PORTAL

We have made significant improvements to the information on our website: [www.harrow.gov.uk/housing](http://www.harrow.gov.uk/housing) (taking into account feedback and common queries that arise from tenants) and there are lots of useful online forms to log service enquiries. The new Housing Portal will be launched in Spring 2022.

## VACCINES: THE KEY TO STAYING WELL THIS WINTER

by Public Health team

Now it's cooler outside, we're spending more time inside, which means it's easier for viruses like Covid and flu to spread between people. However, you and your family can look after yourselves and stop the spread just by getting vaccinated.

■ If you are eligible for a booster because of your age or because you have a health condition that puts you at higher risk of Covid, have your booster as soon as you can.

■ Have a flu vaccine – it's free if you qualify. During the pandemic, fewer people built up immunity to flu because of lockdown and social distancing, so having a flu jab is a great idea, especially this winter.

■ If you have only had one dose of the Covid vaccine, you can still get your second dose or even your first, it's not too late. The vaccine is safe, effective and has saved thousands of lives – so have yours as soon as you can.

■ Children aged 12-15 are being vaccinated against Covid with one dose and this is being rolled out via schools. You can also book online or walk into some clinics.

For all the facts about vaccines, go to websites you can trust, like [nhs.uk/wintervaccinations](http://nhs.uk/wintervaccinations).

# MEET DIPTI PATEL



## Dipti has joined Harrow Council as Corporate Director Community

**D**ipti Patel recently joined Harrow as Corporate Director of Communities covering a broad portfolio of services from Environment, Housing, Economy, Culture through to Regeneration and Development.

Dipti has worked as a senior leader in the public sector for many years, most recently holding the role of Director of Place Delivery responsible for both Housing and Environmental Services at Ealing Council. She has significant experience of leading strategic operations, delivering borough investment programmes and a strong track record of delivering service improvements and major

projects. "Harrow is one of the most ethnically rich and diverse boroughs in London and a place I know well. I'm excited to work together with colleagues, partners and our communities to deliver its ambitions and make a difference for Harrow. In terms of Housing, I want to ensure we continue to deliver decent, sustainable and genuinely affordable homes for local people, making sure our tenants are safe in good quality homes, tackling homelessness and improving the private rented sector. I'm really keen to get out in Harrow, meet and listen to residents/communities ensuring Harrow continues to be a great place to live."

**"I'm really keen to get out in Harrow, meet and listen to residents/communities"**

## YOUR STORIES, YOUR MAG



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Community garden at Hazeldene

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Poem by Ranjan



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Puzzle

# TURNING INCLUSIVE PLAY ON ITS HEAD



## Harrow's first inclusive and all-ability adventure Playground

By resident, **Olivia King-Boateng, Chief Executive, Special Needs Community C.I.C**

In 2017, because children in wheelchairs had to travel to outside of Harrow to specialist play centres, a project was launched by Harrow parents with children with special education needs and disability (SEND), to develop Harrow's first disability-friendly specialist adventure playground.

The group consulted lots of parents and children and agencies, raised money and with council financial support succeeded in building the first part of the playground in October 2020.

The idea was to 'turn inclusion on its head' and encourage children of any ability to play side by side in the same playground. The specialist four swing set is a good example of this as it allows children with any ability/disability to sit on a swing next to each other according to their mobility or coordination needs. (It includes a wheelchair swing, a normal swing seat, a moulded swing seat and a nest/basket swing).

Other equipment includes wheelchair trampoline and a roundabout. Phase 2 will include a bike track/roundabout and a gazebo for families to get together, and this is due in 2022.



A roundabout which accommodates a wheelchair user



Vision for Cedars Park Open Space, Harrow Weald



Saeed Qureshi enjoying the wheelchair swing



Swings for everyone



Nest/ basket swing

If anyone wants to know about the playground development  
[info@specialneedscommunity.org.uk](mailto:info@specialneedscommunity.org.uk)

### FACT FILE

- 60 parks and open spaces in Harrow - 25 have a playground
- According to the Harrow Parks Forum, Cedars Open Space is the most accessible due to the new disability swing, unique for Harrow
- 4,663 pupils with SEN in Harrow schools (aged 5-18) and there are 4 main special schools. Approximately 500 are wheelchairs users.

### SUPPORT AND ADVICE



■ The Harrow Local Offer provides information about services for children and young people aged 0-25 years with Special Educational Needs & Disabilities.

[www.harrowlocaloffer.co.uk](http://www.harrowlocaloffer.co.uk)

■ Short breaks Core Offer is a form of support provided by Harrow Council to families who receive the middle rate of care or mobility rate of Disability Living Allowance for their child or young person with disability. A short break may be for a few hours, evening, overnight or weekend activity and may take place at home, in a paid carer's home or in the community.

Call MASH Team  
 0208 901 2690

■ Harrow Parent Carer Forum is the Department of Education funded local parent forum set up to represent voices of parent carers of children with SEND from birth to 25 years old. The forum is free to join and run by local parent carers.

[www.harrowparentforum.org](http://www.harrowparentforum.org)  
 07928 577689

**60 parks and open spaces in Harrow - 25 have a playground**

# Advice

## How to stay well in winter

If you are 65 or over, or in one of the other at-risk groups, it is important to get medical help as soon as you feel unwell.

Changes to our bodies as we get older mean that cold weather and winter bugs affect us more than they used to.

This winter we also need to live with Covid-19, which we know can have more of an impact the older we are.

We know that many residents do not have anyone nearby and family may be further away or abroad.

You can get help and advice from:

■ **a pharmacy** – pharmacists can give treatment advice for a range of minor illnesses and can tell you if you need to see a doctor

■ **Your GP** – you may be able to speak to a GP online or over the phone, or go in for an appointment if they think you need to

■ **NHS 111** – go to 111.nhs.uk or call 111 if you have an urgent medical problem and you're not sure what to do

■ **Harrow citizens advice** - Isolated during covid-19? For advice and support call: 020 3011 3257 Tuesdays & Thursdays 1pm to 3:30 pm.

### VOLUNTARY SECTOR SUPPORT

#### MIND Harrow

**Somali Hayaan**  
Project for 18+ adults and affected by mental health issues.  
Accept self referrals:  
contact Abdi Gure  
☎ 020 8515 7872  
✉ a.gure@mindinharrow.org.uk

#### How to contact Harrow Citizens Advice

[www.citizensadviceharrow.org.uk/](http://www.citizensadviceharrow.org.uk/)  
✉ advice@citizensadviceharrow.org.uk  
Advice by telephone:  
☎ 020 8427 9477  
Monday & Tuesday 9:30am to 3:30pm & Thursday & Friday 9:30am to 1pm.  
☎ Freephone 0808 250 5705  
**Speaking Tamil and need advice?**  
☎ 020 3011 3256  
Wednesdays 10am to 3pm.

Young people – please take care your drink is not spiked if you are drinking in crowded, less well-lit venues.



# AFFORDABLE NEW HOMES

Higgins Construction building new affordable homes on Grange Farm estate, phase 1

## Planning to build over 1000+ new homes

With our current grant of £32m we aim to build 639 new council homes, including Grange Farm Phase 1 and 2. Most of these homes are being built on under-used Housing land but some are planned to come through via other sites owned by the council including on sites within the recently approved Harrow Strategic Development Partnership (HSDP).

This year we are delighted to have been awarded a grant of £44.3m to develop an additional 411 new homes – the majority of which will be delivered on the HSDP sites (mainly Poets' Corner).

Grange Farm, South Harrow, Phase 3 85 homes is additional to these numbers. In total we are aiming to build 1,138 new homes – 887 are planned to be for affordable rent and 248 for shared ownership.



## 'Airspace' plan for 48 affordable rooftop homes

The London Borough of Harrow has approved an 'airspace' project for affordable homes at the Berridge Estate in Edgware, in partnership with developer Apex Airspace, where they will build 48 rooftop homes on top of the existing 3 storey block. The new homes will be acquired and managed by the council.

Drawing of new rooftop homes



## Chichester Court - 26 new council homes



3 bedroom affordable homes at Chichester Court

12 families moved into their new homes in September as part of the Chichester Court development scheme. The remaining 14 homes will be available by the end of the year. Following the final homes being completed the contractor will finish the roadway and pavement and finalise some parking spaces. Residents could choose some social value outcomes, and chose to have picnic tables and benches and some trees and plants – thank you Bugler. This is another example of building on small, underused parcels of housing land to provide much needed homes at affordable rent.

# MONEY

*in your pocket*



## Case study

### How the Harrow Housing income team can help

**M**rs W, a Harrow council resident, has really struggled to access UC and other benefits in recent months. Life is pretty chaotic including caring for a disabled son. When her Employment Support Allowance (ESA) ended Mrs W then needed to apply for Universal Credit and that is when Housing's Income team got involved. A referral was made to the CAB Money Advice service and they talked through all the necessary forms, while the Income Officer was at her home, and able to explain what was needed.

The CAB is now currently challenging the UC benefit amount on her behalf and helping answer any questions raised. The family have also put in a Personal Independence Payment (PIP)

application and the Income Officer is advising on this too.

#### IF YOU ARE IN A SIMILAR POSITION:

**1** Please contact you Income Officer immediately. We will be able to help and offer advice or signpost you to another source of help

**2** The income team can assist at every step of the way to get you out of a financial crisis, from interpreting what is needed, to form filling, to referring you to the CAB for professional money advice.

**For help, please contact your Income Officer:**

✉ [housing.residentservices@harrow.gov.uk](mailto:housing.residentservices@harrow.gov.uk)  
☎ 020 8901 2630

## Harrow Citizens Advice

### Online workshops

#### Workshop 1 Help available if struggling with debts

■ 12 January, 2 February, 2 March  
■ 10.30am and again at 6.00pm

#### Workshop 2 Practical tips for budgeting on a low income

■ 19 January, 9 February, 9 March  
■ 10.30am and again at 6.00pm

#### Workshop 3 How to save and get the best deal from gas and electric providers

■ 27 January, 17 February, 17 March  
■ 10.30am and again at 6.00pm

These are very friendly, helpful workshops where you can ask lots of questions. We can help you get the MS Teams meeting set up:

✉ [rinvolve@harrow.gov.uk](mailto:rinvolve@harrow.gov.uk)  
☎ 020 8901 2630

## Wealdstone babybank

The Wealdstone babybank is open every Friday at 10am to 12 noon at Wealdstone Methodist Church, Locket Road, Wealdstone, HA3 7ND. They have all sorts of items for babies and toddlers up to 24 months, just come along for a chat and a look.

**To donate items:**  
☎ 07727 687328  
✉ [w.babybank@gmail.com](mailto:w.babybank@gmail.com)

# Residents' engagement

## Residents' Board welcome by Chair, Janice Johnson



“ There may be some of you reading this thinking ‘what’s this Residents’ Board’?”

The Residents’ Board is made up of council tenants and leaseholders, with a representative from the Harrow Federation of Tenants and Residents Associations (HFTRA).

I joined the board, because I was disappointed with some of the services the council provide to “their customers” and the way these are delivered. I am a person that can articulate what I need or question what I am not happy with. However, I know that not everyone has a voice, or even knows how to use it, so when I saw an article in Homing In in 2017, about joining a resident board, I thought why not, as I was fed up of not being listened to.

I became the Chair in early 2020, just before the pandemic.

We started meetings again in early 2021, but for me, not a lot had changed, BUT since the publication of the Social Housing White Paper, we can see a real partnership forming, because the voice of all council residents will be heard and acted on - or there will be consequences.

The Residents’ Board has helped to draft the new Resident Engagement Strategy, and we will soon publish our own Charter for all residents, to state clearly what we expect from our landlord, exercising our right to have the services we believe are our due.

So, if you also believe in having your voice heard, apply to join the Residents’ Board, and help us to make the difference.”

**For further details please contact:**  
✉ [rinvolve@harrow.gov.uk](mailto:rinvolve@harrow.gov.uk)

## Residents' Board

## Meeting dates for resident groups

### Housing Matters open meeting

■ 9/2/22  
■ 11/5/22  
■ 7/9/22

### Residents Board

■ 27/1/22  
■ 24/3/22  
■ 26/5/22  
■ 28/7/22  
■ 22/9/22  
■ 24/11/22

### Leasehold Improvement Group

■ 18/1/22  
■ 15/3/22  
■ 17/5/22  
■ 19/7/22  
■ 20/9/22  
■ 15/11/22

### For further details please contact:

✉ [rinvolve@harrow.gov.uk](mailto:rinvolve@harrow.gov.uk)



## Re-opening community centres

OPEN

Estate Services are reviving the community spirit by re-opening the community halls throughout the borough. So far, Grange Farm and Pinner Hall are open for business. We are in the process of re-opening Northolt Road and Churchill Place. The plan is to have all halls open for hire by customers and for staff to use as an occasional base subject to approval, and taking into account Covid and health and safety regulations.



Plenty of opportunities to be heard

Community Gardening and Biodiversity Enhancements at the Hazeldene Drive Estate, Pinner by Simon Joshua, Harrow Biodiversity and Environment



Newly installed raised vegetable beds filled with peat free compost



# HAZELDENE 'GARDENS'



Raised beds planted with donated plants from residents

The journey has been long and quite difficult at times, but the estate in Pinner has been transformed this year from a green wasteland, to a haven with pockets of wildlife friendly meadows, garden beds for residents to grow their own vegetables, but most importantly a wonderful community space. The grant from Near Neighbours has helped the estate to be transformed from blocks of flats with green space of little value to wildlife, to a buzzing and flowering oasis for pollinators, mammals and birds. We even managed to build a wildlife friendly pond.

Recent work by myself and local resident Karen Pillai (whose vision it was that started this project), has transformed the raised beds into productive spaces for residents to grow plants of their choosing. We hope that more residents will come

on board during the spring and that the coming year will prove highly productive. Thank you to Harrow Council for your support.

## Partnering with MyYard charity

The charity, My Yard, is supporting some residents with deliveries each week with surplus food from local supermarkets and regular collections from the local Marks and Spencers Food Halls in Pinner. A huge variety of foods are saved from being wasted, but we also deliver fantastic bouquets of flowers and brighten up the lives of many of the residents.

## Going green

Our efforts include:

- Margins of the natural areas are kept neatly mowed by residents.
- Grasses will be left throughout the winter in some areas as they support

many over wintering insects.

- Any green waste is being composted on site.
- Paths and mulch are being used, sourced from locally produced wood chip from All Seasons Tree Services.
- The raised beds and paths are lined with cardboard as weed control, using cardboard from the food surplus collections.
- Repaired guttering on garages to collect the rainwater. This is vital for the pond and watering plants.
- An amazing raised-bed has been donated by a resident and this has been planted with plants purchased by Karen
- MyYard funded a trip to go badger watching with Hazeldene residents.

Altogether, this has been an amazing community project and we hope it will develop further in the coming year.

**Simon Joshua, Harrow Biodiversity and Environment**



The MyYard surplus food market for residents with food donations from M&S Pinner



# High speed internet connectivity coming to Harrow

**H**arrow Council signed a Wayleave Agreement with Community Fibre in April 2021 to bring full fibre broadband to Harrow owned social housing with high-speed internet connectivity up to 1 Gbps or 3 Gbps depending on the area. Community Fibre are paying the installation costs.

## What is the timing?

The infrastructure will take a couple of years to install, with the roll out programme starting by the end of 2021.

## How does this benefit tenants?

If you don't have great broadband in your area, having full fibre broadband will improve the capacity and speed. However, it is up to each household whether you sign up now or in the future or stay with your current broadband provider.

## Will Community Fibre need access inside properties?

No, the engineers completing the installation works will not require access inside any property.

## Who is monitoring the works?

There are stringent H&S guidelines and Highways colleagues and housing surveyors will check to ensure there is nothing unsightly or unsafe during and after the works.

## Will individual homes be connected?

Eventually yes, Community Fibre has committed to providing 100% coverage, so in theory single dwelling units will get this infrastructure. However, there may be some locations where this is not technically practical.

## Will Community Fibre offer something to benefit the wider community?

As part of our agreement, Community Fibre will provide free broadband connections to a number of our community centres. They will also provide training to residents on how to make the best use out of broadband as part of their Digital Ambassador Programme. Community Fibre will also work with the Council's employment team - "Xcite" - to help residents access new jobs and training opportunities.

# RESIDENTS' WALL

Residents doing a site visit of Grange Farm phase 1

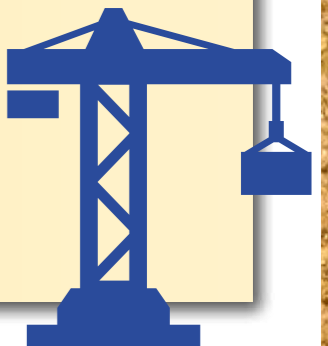


## Our Grange

Few years ago, flight sound delay our grange.  
I can hear different sounds.  
Now time to time different sound we can hear  
Very interesting and enjoyable sound  
It makes so many people happy and hopes  
Builders fixing, drilling, hammering sounds,  
Few months ago, I walked around the soil smell give a different feeling.  
Again, hammering sound, I would like to thank the builders what the wonderful work  
And the wonderful team. Our grange is waiting.  
We have two different teams supporting our grange and one saying mind the gap.  
The other one we are here to fix your new home with pride  
Harrow Council.  
As soon we will get a new home it will be a happy ending.  
Until that time, be safe from Covid-19



Poem by Ranjan Narayanasamy, resident of Grange Farm estate, July 2021



PLEASE SEND ANY NEWS ARTICLES, PHOTOS, OR JOKES TO ✉ ANTHEA.WATKINS@HARROW.GOV.UK  
AND IF IT IS PRINTED, WE'LL SEND YOU A £10 SHOPPING VOUCHER.

Send in your questions  
and I will answer them

✉ charlene.samms@harrow.gov.uk

☎ 07783 875 969

📍 Customer Service & Resident Engagement Manager,  
Housing, Harrow Council, Civic Centre, Harrow, HA1 2XF



# Ask Charlene

Report the mould  
condition after  
trying these lifestyle  
recommendations



## What can I do to help prevent damp in my home?

**Charlene:** Damp is the most common problem in all homes during the winter months, with the main offender being condensation.

As the weather turns and winter sets in, damp can become a problem to your home. Damp doesn't discriminate. It can occur in any home, from a studio flat to a sprawling mansion. If left untreated, condensation can lead to mould growth, which can be potentially harmful and lead to serious health issues and breathing difficulties.

By following a few simple steps, you

will prevent the growth of harmful moulds:

- If you have a washing machine or tumble dryer, make sure that it is vented correctly.
- Where possible, try to dry your clothes outdoors to prevent excess moisture from building up in your property
- When cooking food, boiling the kettle or taking a shower, ensure that your kitchen or bathroom door is kept closed.
- Do not overfill your wardrobes or kitchen cupboards.

**INTERESTING FACT**  
Four people living in a three-bedroom property would create 112 pints of moisture a week from just breathing, cooking, showering and boiling the kettle.

- Move furniture away from the walls so that air can circulate.
  - Open the trickle vents on your windows or open the windows and air the room for 15 mins each day.
- If this does not work, then do report your mould/damp so that it can be investigated, and a surveyor will attend.

☎ 020 8901 2630

**Report online: search Harrow council report repair**

# Puzzles Page

## Word Search

Try and find the 10 words below! The clue is religious holidays or festivals, and there is an extra bonus answer – see if you can spot it.



|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| S | A | M | T | S | I | R | H | C |
| T | N | A | V | R | A | T | R | I |
| L | R | E | V | O | S | S | A | P |
| U | Z | Y | X | Z | X | R | Z | Q |
| C | Q | K | K | Q | R | A | X | Y |
| I | X | J | W | T | Q | M | Q | U |
| A | V | J | S | Y | P | A | Y | L |
| D | P | A | W | E | I | D | V | E |
| A | E | H | D | I | W | A | L | I |
| Y | H | A | K | K | U | N | A | H |

### TO ENTER

For your chance to win £25 Love2shop vouchers, send your 10 words with your contact details by 15 January 2022 to:  
✉ Anthea Watkins  
Harrow Council, Civic 1,  
Housing, Station Road,  
Harrow HA1 2XY  
✉ anthea.watkins@harrow.gov.uk

Love2shop vouchers can be used at Iceland, Wilkinson, WHSmith, Homebase, Boots, Superdrug, Matalan and many other stores.

**WINNER** Congratulations to Paige Wilson and her Mum from Harrow on the Hill, who won £25 shopping vouchers for winning the July Puzzle.

**Puzzle answers for 'Clues within the magazine', July 2021**

Here are the 10 words or phrases:

Fire, caretaker, leasehold, portal, job, panel, Xcite, insurance, eco, repairs





**Food Support**

**Advice & Support Services**

**Mental Health**

# HelpHarrow

HelpHarrow is a way of connecting residents to vital services in the borough during these very difficult times.

HelpHarrow currently offers support for food poverty, advice and information in all areas of life, as well as mental health and emotional wellbeing support.

## Help and support is available

- ✘ Benefits and Universal Credit
- ✘ Employment
- ✘ Debt and money
- ✘ Housing and homelessness
- ✘ Family and relationships
- ✘ Bereavement
- ✘ Legal support
- ✘ Mental Health and Wellbeing
- ✘ Food support and foodbanks
- ✘ Disabilities
- ✘ Older people
- ✘ Caring for somebody



Visit [helpharrow.org](http://helpharrow.org) to get  
**Advice, Support and Food**