

Spring 2023, Number 28

Spring Newsletter 2023

Email Subscription

We hope that you enjoy this current edition of the Newsletter, for Spring 2023. It includes a summary of all current events and news updates.

In the autumn of 2022, we launched an email subscription initiative, to broaden the ways in which we communicate with you. This has helped us publish more focused information to residents at short notice. As of now, we have 122 subscribers, but still, we need more of you to subscribe.

Quite a few residents have reported that when we send updates about urgent block repairs, they have found it very useful. Similarly, updates about rent increases have been helpful. Some residents have joined our gardening workshops, something they might not otherwise know about, although printed flyers are delivered through your letter box.

If you are one of those residents that haven't quite got round to doing it, please subscribe. It's very simple, just drop us an email at rouPELLpark@lambeth.gov.uk and title it **New Subscriber**. When we reach 200 subscribers (and hopefully this will be before our next newsletter), we will have a lucky draw and one of our resident subscribers (this could be you!) will win a £50 Amazon voucher. So, subscribe now, while it's still fresh in your mind.



Website relaunch

We are just about to relaunch our website, and it is about to go live beginning of June 2023 at www.roupellpark.co.uk.

We think that it will be easier to navigate and more current, but it would be good to get your thoughts. If you'd like to comment, please drop us an email on roupellpark@lambeth.gov.uk.

Our next aim is going live with the payment portal so, for example, you will be able to purchase your parking permits online. But not pay your rent.

Heating Hot Water and other Charges

The Council are responsible for setting the rent and service charges for tenants on the Estate. However, many of our tenants, particularly those in the blocks served by the communal heating and hot water systems, who have faced increases of more than £35 a week, are very worried about the increased charges that they are now facing and have been approaching the RPRMO office for an explanation. For those who are still unsure, this article sets out the reasons for the changes, which is based on the information provided to us by the Council.

Firstly, the base rent has been increased by 7% from 1 April. This is in line with the guidance from Central Government and has been imposed by most Councils and Housing Associations across the country. This increase takes into account increased costs and is below the rate of inflation.

In relation to service and utility charges, these are based on the market costs to provide gas and electricity. The council has long term gas and electricity contracts where the rates are set by energy providers. Due to the nature of these contracts, Lambeth Council tenants did not see a rise in communal gas and electricity prices for 2023/24. Unfortunately, extreme inflation in the energy market has seen gas prices double, and electricity prices have increased by approximately 25% compared to 2022/23. These costs are outside of Lambeth Council's control and, whilst the council is using its funds to prevent a steeper increase for tenants, some of these costs are unavoidable, to cover the costs of heating and hot water.

The Council continues to work with its providers to ensure that supplies are purchased at the best prices available and any future reduction in costs will be passed through to tenants in future rent setting arrangements.

Pocket Park



Residents, who pay for any of their energy supply via a prepaid meter, who have not yet received the Energy Bill Support Scheme £400 payment, through email or postal vouchers or as automatic credit when topping up on Paypoint, should contact their energy supplier for more information.

Residents who do not have a direct relationship with an energy supplier and have not already received an Energy Bill Support Scheme payment may be eligible to receive £400 to help with their energy bills and can apply to the fund online at <https://www.gov.uk/apply-energy-bill-support-if-not-automatic>.


More information about the scheme can be found on the Council's website: <https://www.lambeth.gov.uk/energy-bills-support-scheme-ebss-alternative-funding>.

Lambeth Council also offers a range of additional support for residents impacted by the cost-of-living crisis. More information on the support available to you, including accessing financial support in an emergency or crisis, can be found online at www.lambeth.gov.uk/cost-living-crisis-support or by calling our helpline on 0345 302 2312.

It is also worth reminding everyone that the Council no longer collects water charges through its rent and service charges. This means that you must pay your water charges direct to Thames Water. You may wish to consider having a water meter installed in your home if you want to be more in control of what you pay.

Fire Safety

As we approach the 7th anniversary of the tragic fire at Grenfell Tower, we must all be aware that the risks have not gone away. None of the blocks on Roupell Park have dangerous cladding but nonetheless the risks of fire remain. Here are some basic rules which you must follow.

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- BBQ's are not permitted anywhere on the estate. This includes private balconies which pose an even more serious risk.
 - You should not store flammable material on private balconies or in store sheds on the landings of the blocks.
 - You must not store any belongings on the communal balconies and other communal areas of blocks. This includes bikes. Where we find these, we will give one warning for you to remove them and if they are not removed, will cut them off and put them into store.
 - Do not leave rubbish on the communal balconies. If you do this it simply means that the caretakers must remove it, which means they are not free to do the things that they should be doing.
 - Do not leave candles burning in a room when you are not there. More house fires are caused by candles than any other cause.
 - Do not prop open fire doors in communal areas.

These rules are for the safety of you, your family, and your neighbours. Please do not break them.

Rent and Service Charges

We know that the cost-of-living crisis is putting pressure on everyone to pay, sometimes for the most basic of things. However, you need to remember that not paying your rent and service charges does put your home at risk and, if we must take legal action, whatever the outcome, you will incur costs that will further increase your debts.

Our aim is always to support people to pay their rent and service charges and to avoid taking legal action. If you have a problem making a payment, then talk to us and we will support you.

That having been said, if debt is not reduced, we will have no option but to take legal action. For tenants this means starting proceedings for eviction. For leaseholders, we will approach your bank or building society for the debt to be added to your mortgage. This means you will pay interest on the debt, which may result in them taking action to foreclose on your mortgage.

For both tenants and leaseholders this will also mean that you will be unable to get credit in the future.

The Council no longer takes payment by payment card, and any payment you



make in this way will not get credited directly to your account. You should pay online, by phone, or by using the barcode on your rent statement. Better still, set up a Direct Debit or Standing Order to make sure the payments are made on time.



Landlord's Consent

If you wish to make improvements to your home that are non-standard, such as new flooring, removing walls, or renovating kitchens and bathrooms, you will require Landlord Consent prior to starting any works in the property. Landlord Consent requires a pre- and post-inspection, and the cost is £200.00. Applications for Landlord Consent are to be made to the Community Office and marked for the attention of the Contract Manager. Your proposals for alterations must be in writing, preferably with a drawing plan of the works that you propose to undertake.

A technical assessment of your proposals will be undertaken by the Landlord to ensure that the proposed works do not impact the structure or the fire integrity of the flat.

Please note that if you are a tenant of RPRMO/Lambeth and you make alterations to the property's fixtures and fittings, making them nonstandard, at the end of the tenancy you will be recharged the cost of returning the flat to its standard condition.

If you are decorating your home, hanging curtains or paintings in the property, Landlord consent is not required.

Under no circumstances are you to make alterations to the kitchen door or to the front entrance door, as these doors provide a minimum of 30 minutes fire resistance to enable you and your family to vacate the property safely in the event of a fire.

If your home is supplied with Communal Heating and Hot Water, Lambeth Council (the freeholders of Roupell Park) have stipulated that no alterations are to be made to the communal heating and hot water system. Under the terms and conditions of your tenancy or lease you cannot disconnect from the communal heating and hot water system.

Business Plan

Thank you to everyone that commented on the Business Plan. This is now up and running and we have already started to make progress on your priorities for spending some of the surplus fund.



New!! Amanda's Lunch Club Fridays 12noon – 2pm

We are delighted to announce that our grant application to run this exciting new project, 'Amanda's Lunch Club', has been successful. The funders, The London Community Foundation, have recognised how valuable this could be for our local community.

The social value of eating with friends and neighbours can be totally rejuvenating and transformative to our wellbeing; the nutritional value of a healthy meal, rebalances our energies and prevents mood swings.

The lunch club is now set up to run on **Fridays, at our Roupell Park Community Centre, from 12noon until 2.00pm**; right after the Chair Yoga session. This is all thanks to our delightful resident, Nouar. Nouar approached us with her idea for this venture. She used to help prepare lunches at her children's school, and prepared a hot meal for her neighbour, Amanda, who sadly passed away last year; we reported this in our last newsletter. Amanda was more like family than a neighbour.

Amanda was also very active in the community and had been a valuable Board member in recent years. Nouar started this project in her memory, as a way of giving something back to the community they have both valued so much.

We know that many people do not cook hot meals as part of a balanced diet, for whatever reasons.

Greening the Estate



Every Friday simple, hot, and nourishing food will be served, for residents, free of charge. The only requirement is that you arrive hungry. Nouar has been preparing for the launch and has trialled the meals with the Coffee Morning Group, and they absolutely loved it. Foods such as hot vegetarian stews, soups, chicken stews, and halal burgers were on the menu. All beautifully served, with a lot of thought and prepared with much care and love. The lunch club is open to all age groups. We can serve up to 15 residents per session, on a first-come first-served basis. For more information, please contact Eva EChristmas@lambeth.gov.uk or call on **07983 584767**.

Greening the estate - would you mind getting involved?

Roupell Park is committed to making environmental improvements on the estate and have made this a priority in our business plan. The first part of the improvements, the new sports pitch, was a great success, so we are now able to concentrate on our green spaces in the next phase.

In autumn 2022 we received funding from the Brockwell Live Community Fund to run a series of biodiversity themed workshops. The delivery partner for these workshops is Social Landscapes; we have successfully collaborated with them on previous projects, and they remain our key partner, delivering further projects as the 'greening' programme is rolled out.

The first three workshops have already taken place, so do not miss out on the remaining two. A small gardening group has been formed following the first three workshops, but we need more of you to get involved to fulfil our planting targets. Apart from contributing to the communal spaces, you have a chance to adopt your own planter, in front of your block, and you can choose what you'd like to grow, from plants, herbs, veggies or

flowers. A handful of residents have already come forward, so hurry if you'd like one too.

There is something very gratifying in watching things grow and bloom first hand. In return for your time, you will not only give a boost to your immediate environment but also a boost to your spirits in return; we promise. It's been shown that gardening routines do lighten one's mood and lower levels of stress and anxiety. Collectively, we do not spend enough time outdoors, so this activity could be enjoyably good for you.

The last two workshops will be held on **Saturday June 24th and July 22nd**

between 11am and 1pm. The meeting point is at Roupell Park Community Centre, adjacent to Hyperion House. Planting will be concentrated around planters.

Each workshop is free of charge, but you do need to register your name, as spaces are limited. Please contact Michel from Social Landscapes on **07901 036220**, or email **micel@sociallandscapes.co.uk**. We will send out separate flyers a week prior to the workshop, and those who have subscribed to our group email will receive notification in your email box. Away from these workshops, we have plans to work on wild gardens and to create other pocket gardens, similar to the one next to Hyperion House, which has totally transformed this space.

Coffee Morning



Coffee morning, Tuesdays

The coffee morning group meets on the same day, Tuesdays from 10.30am until 12pm, and has been together for several years now. It remains a focal point in which members look forward to a chat. A game of bingo and sometimes painting sessions keep members engaged. But key is to take the time to meet up with neighbours and escape the constraints of one's home. Molly, who runs the group, would love to see more people getting



involved. It's free of charge so do pop in, and feel free to bring family and friends who may not live on this estate.

Chair Exercise



Chair Exercise

Don't assume that you won't feel the exercise, just because you are in a seated position. Even much younger residents would benefit from these sessions; they are highly sociable, interactive, and fun.

Every Monday, Fulham Memories takes place from 2.15 - 3.30pm at the community centre. Fulham FCF coaches are leading this playful and highly interactive session for our more mature

residents, who strive to remain young and subtle. An average of 8 people participate in each session, with a total of 13 having subscribed. Quizzes and bocce are included too, depending on what the group wants. The average age of the participants is 80 years, with the oldest participant being 95. Everyone leaves the session feeling high-spirited. The coaches are repeatedly praised for the way they interact with the elderly. More residents are invited to join the group. For more information, please contact **Laura on 07825 111349**.

Every Friday, 11 – 12noon, Chair yoga session is taking place at the community centre and is led by one of our resident volunteers, Linda. Linda is a retired teacher and has a real passion for teaching and sharing knowledge and wants to give something back to her community. She has been doing this with great success. More residents are welcome to join this group. For more information, please call **Eva on 07983 584767**.

Walking football Open Day for adults is planned for June 2023 to reintroduce the session, which is particularly beneficial for those with mobility issues. For more information, please contact **Laura on 07825 111349**.

Organised sessions on the MUGA

A range of organised sessions are available on a weekly basis. They are all FREE of charge, but for most booking in advance is advisable.

Fulham Kicks for Juniors and Seniors

A number of young people already regularly attend Thursday sessions; in our last report, we had 96 sign ups, with an average of 23 attendees per session. But there is always room for more.

The first session is for Juniors, those who are from 10 - 14 years of age, and it takes place between 5.30 and 7.00pm. The session that follows on is for Seniors, those who are 15 - 18 years old. It runs from 7.00 until 8.30pm. Both sessions have two coaches and are geared to learning the principles of team play and improving your game.

To register, please go to Fulham's online portal <https://fulhamkicks.com/sessions> and select Roupell Park MUGA as the venue. You must book for each session separately, and It's advisable that you bring along a drink, especially now as the warmer weather is approaching.

Girls Kicks



Brixton Hill Girls Kicks

Girls'-only football, on Wednesdays from 5.30 - 7.00pm, for girls aged 10-18 years. This is a combined session with the St Matthew's Project and Fulham FCF, which has proven to be a great success. Our last report shows that we now have 48 girls registered, with an average attendance of 13 girls per session. Who says girls don't engage in sport?!



The sessions offer high level coaching with an edge, so the girls have a chance to take part in 6-a-side games. Quite a few girls from our estate are taking part and we'd like to think that they will continue to do so. For those looking to progress, St Matthew's have recently entered a new Capital Girls' League SW division.

To register, please go to Fulham's online portal: <https://fulhamkicks.com/sessions> and select Roupell Park MUGA and then Brixton Hill Girls Kicks.

For more information, contact **Dwight** on **07535 891 133** or email [dwightbarnett28@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:dwrightbarnett28@hotmail.co.uk).

Go Girls!

Patricio's Community Coaching for younger children

The session, on **Mondays from 5.00 – 6.00pm**, is set up to reach out to younger children (7-11 years) with **Pat Sanchez**, the head coach, who is also the chairman of the Brixistane Football club. As he already delivers coaching for the local

Holy Trinity primary school, so this was a natural evolution for him to deliver sessions outside the school curriculum. We now have 17 registrations with an average attendance of 6 children per session. Some children from the earlier primary school session remain on the pitch and join in.

Pat will teach children not only football skills but how to apply the principles of fair play and collaboration on the pitch, as this is what it takes to get the best results. Parents, please contact him for more information on **07739 694612**. How to register: **just turn up on the day**.

Fulham Kicks





Disability sessions MUGA (14 – 25 years)

In partnership with CEF Lyncx, we now run disability sessions on the pitch during the school holidays, **Monday to Friday from 10.00am – 1.00pm**; this consists of multi-sports and games activities. The next date this is available is 30 May until 2 June. For more information and how to register, contact **Navlet on 07984 337812** or email **navlet@cefi.org.uk**.

Workshops for empowering girls

Recently, we successfully secured a small grant of £2K, enough to enable us to run a number of empowering workshops, with CEF Lyncx as the delivery partner. The focus is on girls (13 – 20 years of age), to further develop their leadership skills and confidence. If you, or your child would like to find out more and want to apply, please contact **Christian on 077061 179851**. We are in the process of devising the programme, which will be announced later in the summer.

Break before Summer: 4 whole days of supervised activities.

The School Holiday Active Boot Camp will take place from 30 May until 2 June; it is taking place at the Windmill Gardens (Park), Blenheim Gardens SW2 5DA, from 10am until 4pm. Limited places are available, on a first-come-first-served basis. The camp is open to all young people from our estate, who want to take part. The idea is to forge wider partnerships, with other estates, to widen the area in which young people call home and feel safe. The activities include: multi games and football (they take place on our MUGA); arts and crafts, music and dance, educational workshops, bike workshops, and **FREE hot lunches** are provided each day.

Registration is **NOW OPEN ONLINE!!**
To Register go to **<http://cefi.org.uk/our-sharp-offer>**

For more information, you can also speak to **Christian on 07706 179851** or email:
community7@CEFI.org.uk