Welcome to your first resident newsletter for a while. This edition has a number of articles from North London and Central, which we hope you will find interesting, plus a helpful section at the back about the support available to residents.

Over the last few months, MTVH has been working on several projects to improve how we listen to residents and take action:

1. HACT (Housing Associations’ Charitable Trust) has completed the first phase of its independent review of how we listen and work with all residents. There will be a resident workshop in October, before recommendations go to our Board later this year.

2. We are pleased to be one of the first to work with the National Housing Federation (NHF) on the development of the Together with Tenants charter. Over 130 housing associations are collaborating to develop a clear set of service standards and to share best practice. All of this involves working closely with our residents to hear their opinions.

3. A National Customer Voice survey went out to over 20,000 MTVH residents in July. Thanks to everyone who responded with suggestions to shape how we create new resident groups and improved communication. Look out for more information in the next edition on what residents told us and what we will do in response.

Do you want to get involved?
Have you got a story or article for future issues? Have you got great ideas to help us improve communication with residents? We would love to hear from you – please contact us at yourvoice@mtvh.co.uk

Doing more for our residents

We’re now Metropolitan Thames Valley Housing (MTVH).

In October 2018 Metropolitan Housing Trust (MHT) and Thames Valley Housing (TVH) formed a partnership to become MTVH. We wanted to serve you – our residents – better and build more new homes and stronger communities.

We also wanted to create a stronger organisation that can help more people with housing and care and support services at a time of chronic need.

Helping our residents turn their lives around

Supported housing schemes can be life-lines for our residents. Kavi believes having a MTVH home has saved his life – not once, but twice.

Kavi was diagnosed with cancer in March 2016. When he and wife, Lata, first met Rachel, Housing with Support Manager of the scheme near Edgware, it was quite emotional. “I didn’t know it then, but this would be the place that would help restore my health completely,” he says.

During his recovery Kavi suffered two minor heart attacks, but because he didn’t have to worry about accommodation, he was able to focus on getting well. “We were so lucky to be living here, we were able to get help,” he says.

Everyone needs a place where they feel secure, where they can rest, and where they can live their lives. “MTVH provides this for us, and everyone who lives here. I’m so grateful,” says Kavi.

Maria, also a resident at the scheme, says a flat of her own has changed her life.

When her landlord breached his HMO (House in Multiple Occupancy) licence she lost her room and had nowhere to go. She is elated to have her own place. “For so long I’d shared everything. Now I have things that are my own. My own privacy. It’s priceless to me.”

Today Maria is an Uber driver. “I feel blessed living here and thankful to MTVH and Rachel. It’s through them I’ve been given the opportunity to start again.”
WHAT’S ON...

BEING WELL TOGETHER
COOKING LESSONS
Free five-week course. Come and find out how to make healthy changes to your diet.
Get new recipe ideas, cookery skills and a food bag to take home! In each session you will prepare a meal to share.
Dates: 3, 10 October 2019 at 10.30am to 12.30pm.
Green Towers Community Centre, Breakfast Room, 7 Plevna Road, Edmonton, London N9 0BU
To book contact: shingirai.nyabango@mtvh.co.uk or call 07738 714 145
Alternatively Saba.yazdani@mtvh.co.uk or call 020 3535 3925

ARE YOU READY TO GET FIGHTING FIT?
Free boxing classes at Edmonton Green Hub.
Dates: 17 October, 28 November, 9 January from 2-6pm.
Green Towers Community Centre, 7 Plevna Road, Edmonton, London N9 0BU
Transform and Achieve, a free training programme we’ve launched with J.P. Morgan, is supporting our unemployed or underemployed east London residents into work, training or volunteering.
Participants are given employment training and coaching in mental wellbeing, nutrition and fitness.
It is delivered as a six-week course at locations across east London. So far, 132 participants have secured jobs in various sectors.
One of the graduates, Christine from Hackney Wick, now has a part-time administrative position at the Ministry of Justice.
“Transform and Achieve’ has changed my life. I thank all the team members for believing in me and giving me the encouraging push to succeed in my personal goals,” she says.
Enrolment for the next course takes place on 15 and 16 October.

Women’s Agenda, a year-long women’s empowerment programme is part of our investment in the community in East London, tackling issues such as unemployment, debt, and poverty, and making a positive difference to residents’ lives.
Meg brought the topic of ‘Women in Parliament – Getting Women’s Voices Heard’ to life by hosting the women on a tour of the Houses of Parliament, and leading a discussion about supporting more women to participate in political life.
“It was a fantastic experience; I learnt a lot about the history of women in Parliament. I’m very proud of MTVH to be offering this programme. I feel I’m a confident woman now and I want to work to become a councillor from this experience,” says Ifatu.
For more information about Women’s Agenda contact Saiful Alam, Neighbourhood Investment Officer, 020 3535 2855 or 07702 537 723 or email saiful.alam@mtvh.co.uk

Visiting Parliament
Women from our 700-home Canalside estate in Hackney visited Parliament in July along with local Hackney MP Meg Hillier.
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For more information about Women’s Agenda contact Saiful Alam, Neighbourhood Investment Officer, 020 3535 2855 or 07702 537 723 or email saiful.alam@mtvh.co.uk

What The Edmonton Hub offers residents
Did you know about the range of services offered direct from our Edmonton Hub?
You can come and talk to us about your housing, repairs, money advice, employment and so much more.
For more information contact Shingirai Nyabango, ring on 07738 714 145 or you can email shingirai.nyabango@mtvh.co.uk

Canalside residents visiting Parliament.
Improving our residents’ wellbeing

We serve the community by funding projects that improve the health, welfare, social, educational and sporting wellbeing of our residents. Our Chalkhill Community Trust Fund (CCTF) has funded projects like the Chalkhill Children’s Summer Programme and the Love Chalkhill Festival. Last year we gave funds to the Lounge Café for ‘Pay it Forward’ a charity which feeds those who are hungry, isolated and depressed.

Brent Mixed Voices Choir has also received funds from CCTF. Singing has both physical and mental benefits, helping to improve confidence and wellbeing. Members say they feel they belong to something special and their regular performances give them a sense of achievement.

For more information about the CCTF contact Natalie Beccles on 07734 963 668 or info@metropolitan.org.uk

YEAR IN NUMBERS

While things change politically and economically, we have a stable base to continue to deliver good services to you. From building new homes for rent and sale, supporting residents into paid work and investing in modernising more homes than ever, to developing new care and support services, fixing repairs first time and making homes safer, here are some of the highlights of what we’ve delivered over the last year.

| 1,037 | new homes built |
| 6,506 | homes development pipeline |
| £118m | invested in existing homes |
| £361m | invested in acquiring land and building new homes |
| 747 | new kitchens |
| 732 | new bathrooms |
| 78.1% | Thames Valley Housing |
| 2,328 | new boilers |

Tracking down fraudsters

In the last year 41 homes were allocated to new residents as a result of our ongoing drive to track down fraudsters who have illegally sublet.

Did you know?

The Brent Mixed Voices Choir comes together once a week to sing, entertain, interact and build friendships.
Need advice to help get a job?

We offer:
- Advice and guidance
- CV and application support
- Interview preparation
- Training and apprenticeships
- Bursaries
- One-to-one support
- Financial assistance and travel support

For more information, please contact your local employment programme officer: Ash Loskor (West and North London). You can email on metroployment@metropolitan.org.uk, call: 020 3535 2891 or text: 07738 713 889.

Looking after YOU

Do you want to reduce your stress, anxiety, depression, fatigue, while improving sleep quality and resilience? We’re offering a new online ‘Be Mindful’ course. We’ve already successfully run a Mental Health Awareness course and a Mental Health First Aid course.

In fact, over the past year, 1,141 residents went on 224 training courses and we’ve awarded 28 bursaries to residents who are now a step closer to reaching their career goals.

For more information contact your Community Investment Officer on 020 3535 3535 or email Dawn on training@metropolitan.org.uk.

Money advice

Are you a resident in need of money advice and/or benefits advice? Here are some of the issues we regularly help residents with:

- Housing benefit
- Universal Credit
- Council tax
- Debt
- Energy bills
- Accessing grants
- Opening bank accounts
- Savings and budgeting

Please join us for a confidential chat or get in touch on 020 3535 3535 or moneymatters@metropolitan.org.uk.

HELP SHAPE MTVH ONLINE

We’re creating a new online service for all MTVH residents. It will make it easy to make payments, request repairs, update contact details and make enquiries. If you would like to be involved in our research and testing, please drop us a line on mtvhonline@mtvh.co.uk.

No IT skills or experience required.

One-to-one advice

We provide advice about money, employment and training, to help residents get their lives back on track.

Are you interested in learning online?

If you’re a MTVH resident you can sign up for free courses. Whatever your interests, there is sure to be a course for you.

From Business Administration and Equality & Diversity to Customer Service and Warehousing, there’s plenty to choose from.

These are all recognised Level 2 qualifications provided through the Learning Curve Group and are an ideal route into a career or to enable you to get the qualifications you need to study at a higher level.

Contact Shingirai Nyabango, our Neighbourhood Investment Officer on 07738 714 145 or shingirai.nyabangi@mtvh.co.uk.

Want to contact us? Call our contact centre on 020 3535 3535

- www.mtvh.co.uk
- Twitter: @MetTVH
- Facebook: @MTVHA