

SUTTON SCOOP

Spring 2024

In our 60th year,
we are pleased to
share this good
news with you...

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At the 2023 national Inside Housing affordable housing awards ceremony, held in November, we were highly commended in the best older people's landlord category.

Last September, Norman House was also shortlisted for the Inside Housing development awards for *best supported housing development – urban*, whilst not a winner, this was a significant achievement for our (small) organisation.

We are committed to helping our residents and in February 2024, the Board approved the budget for this year's Helping Hands fund. If you are in need of advice or support, please contact your Housing Officer, who will be happy to help or point you in the right direction.

We remain an investment partner with the GLA; with grant funding, together with the new funding secured from the CAF Bank, we are committed to building new homes for local people. Ronald House, our latest airspace development is nearing completion – although, we have had several challenges – with a new contractor completing these works. Over the coming year, other smaller new developments will also start, which are outlined in more detail within this newsletter. The Board approved the planned maintenance programme (2024/2025), which started in April

2024, with details shared on our website. However, one of the main projects over the coming year is the digital switchover of our telecare system before the 2025 deadline.

We welcomed one new board member to Sutton Housing Society and will be looking to recruit a further board member later this year.

Within the wider housing sector, the Regulator of Social Housing has issued its new consumer standards, as well as introducing the new TSMs (tenant satisfaction measures); we thank everyone who completed these surveys, which help us to fine-tune our services.

This year is our 60th year and should not go unrecognised. We held a celebration with residents on the anniversary on 19 February 2024. In 1963, local businessman Frank Griffiths had a dream to help local 'elderly' people – we are all proud to be continuing his legacy.





TOP:
NORMAN HOUSE

ABOVE:
OLD BREWERY
HOUSE

Development update

We are continuing to build new homes, as well as finding creative ways to source new development opportunities.

Recently we finished two conversion projects, transforming studio properties into self-contained one-bedroom flats at Norman House and Old Brewery House. These newly refurbished flats are designed and finished to the same standards as our new homes. The replanning of the internal space allows us to create a separate bedroom, bathroom and kitchen/lounge area.

Following a successful tendering exercise, the new bungalow at Bridges Court started on site on 4 March 2024. The works should take around seven months and the scheme is being part funded by grant from the GLA. This is the second development undertaken at Bridges Court.

Sadly, our contractor at Ronald House ceased trading in February 2024. Whilst this was a setback, we quickly secured a new contractor who is now working to complete the project by late June 2024.

When finished, the scheme, albeit on a smaller scale, will have the similar ‘boutique hotel’ feel to the Norman House development.

We are working on the development of Trickett House and look to start this project later in the year. The scheme is subject to securing funding from the GLA.

Finally, we are looking at other ‘infill’ opportunities, where we will be submitting planning applications in the next few months. Watch this space for more news!

20

BATHROOMS REPLACED

1,675

RAISED AND COMPLETED ORDERS WITH 99% POSITIVE FEEDBACK

6

STUDIO CONVERSIONS TO ONE-BEDROOM HOMES

15

KITCHENS REPLACED TO OUR NEW DEVELOPMENT STANDARD

20

DEFECTIVE BOILERS REPLACED

Property news

It was another busy year in the property team during 2023/2024. However, with the assistance of our contractors, it proved to be a successful one in terms of improving homes and staying compliant with the various rules and regulations. Sadly, we said ‘farewell and happy retirement’ to Steve Smith – and we already miss his expertise and experience.

During 2023/2024, we:

- raised and completed 1,675 repairs orders with 99% positive feedback on the work undertaken;
- replaced 20 bathrooms under the planned maintenance programme;
- replaced 15 kitchens to our new development standard;
- carried out internal improvements at Old Brewery House in consultation with residents. This included a new communal kitchen, WC, lighting, flooring and redecoration as well as new front doors to the individual homes. New fencing was installed to assist with improving security;
- worked with our contractor Acorn and the resident review group, to deliver a high standard of cleaning, grounds maintenance and window cleaning throughout the year and as result extended the contract for another five years;
- completed six studio conversions to one-bedroomed homes to offer more desirable accommodation;
- completed 14 empty homes to our development standard;
- completed works to 40 empty homes enabling 40 people in housing need to find a new home;
- remained 100% compliant across both current and new areas of operations;
- carried out adaptations to 29 homes, enabling residents to maintain an independent life in their own home. Lynn, our approved assessor, has been a valuable resource enabling us to deliver this;
- completed our second phase of fencing repairs at Wandle Valley;
- replaced doors and windows at Bridges Court;
- replaced 20 boilers;
- installed a new door entry system at Wandle Valley to enhance the recently installed security doors.



Please feel free to contact **Michael Kilkelly, Asset Manager** on 07710 095 887 or email michael.kilkelly@shsoc.org.uk

if you would like to discuss any aspects of your repair service.

Community engagement

We have had some fantastic events over the last few months and now with spring here, and a bit of sun and warmth, there is plenty to look forward to!

In January, we enjoyed another Burns Night (well, afternoon) at Trickett House with Scottish music, haggis, tartan, and some delicious shortbread.



February was a busy month for Sutton Housing Society residents. We celebrated Shrove Tuesday with a pancake party at Norman House and a 'friendship gathering' at Peppermint Court. There was a visit to Griffith Close from the students of Cheam Common Academy, a Kahoot! quiz between Norman House and Dorothy Pettingell House, a Ladies That Lunch outing and a Men's Club outing!

Creative Minds

Creative Minds sessions continue to be popular and provide a chance for residents to express themselves in various creative ways. Residents often find these sessions very therapeutic so if you haven't attended before, please do come along.

Men's Club

The Men's Club, our joint venture with Sutton Befrienders, will celebrate its second anniversary this Summer. The Men's Club is held the last Wednesday of the month and February's visit was a tour of the Army Reserve Centre in Sutton. For those gentlemen who missed out, they promise to host another visit later in the year.

Ladies That Lunch

Not to be outdone, the Ladies That Lunch enjoyed a meal at the Windsor Castle pub in Carshalton (all attendees pay for their own lunch). There will be more lunches to come.

Keeping fit!

If getting fit is your thing then we have chair-based exercise, Tai Chi and line dancing (which some of the residents demonstrated at the 60th party) to choose from. The sessions are friendly and fun!

We also work in partnership with Sutton Befrienders to offer Music and Movement sessions each fortnight. – just contact Angie if you would like to attend.

All these events are advertised on our digital noticeboards and on the Sutton Housing Society app.

Garden competition and the Pat Shaw Award

Our annual garden competition will be coming up again this summer. More details to follow in the next few months so get planting those bulbs and seeds! We want to see a riot of colour and some plump veggies...

Alongside this will be the Pat Shaw Award, where residents can nominate a neighbour who goes 'that extra mile' for their community; a special 'hats off' to them for what they do.

Keep checking the noticeboards for updates and details of what is to come and here's to a fun-filled spring.

To find out more about our community engagement work, please contact Angie Holland at angie.holland@shsoc.org.uk or call her on 07791 754 624.



Keep updated

To keep updated on our events and activities please check the monthly calendars on the digital noticeboards as well as following us on our social media platforms.

Alternatively, you can contact Angie on 07791 754 624 or email angie.holland@shsoc.org.uk



@SuttonHSociety



suttonhousingsociety

All things digital

154

RESIDENTS
NOW USING THE
SUTTON HOUSING
SOCIETY APP



Monthly Wi-Fi cafés

Come along to our Wi-Fi cafés if you are interested in learning how to connect to the Wi-Fi, browse the internet, download apps or shop online. Stacey hosts these sessions monthly, on a Wednesday, and the dates and times are advertised on the digital noticeboards, the resident app and our events calendar on our website.

No device? Don't worry! We have a tablet loan scheme available, where you can loan a tablet device from Sutton Housing Society free of charge. You can join us at a Wi-Fi café, and we will give you all the help you need to get you set up and started.

If there isn't a Wi-Fi café at your scheme, come and join us at another! Transport can be arranged if necessary.

Inter-scheme virtual quizzes

Every few months Angie and Stacey host 'Kahoot' quizzes between different schemes. The questions are multiple choice and there is a short time limit on answering the questions as the faster the answer the more points you can gain!

In February Norman House went head-to-head with Dorothy Pettingell House, and after a well contested fun quiz Dorothy Pettingell House came out on top!

Please keep an eye on the digital noticeboards and resident app for dates and times so that you don't miss out.

Wi-Fi

If you're experiencing problems with the communal Wi-Fi, Social Telecoms will be able to help, on 01743 730 100.

Our resident app

154 residents have now signed up to the Sutton Housing Society app! The app is any efficient way to view your rent balance and transactions made, report repairs, and see what's going on at schemes.

If you are interested in joining them, you can download the App via:



We are happy to help you with registering to the app at the monthly Wi-Fi cafés, but we also have some useful guides on our website –

www.suttonhousingsociety.org.uk

Our residents gallery

If you would like access the residents gallery on our website, just ask a member of staff for the password and they will be happy to provide this. The gallery includes albums of photos taken at our community events which you can download for your personal use.

If you would like more information about anything digital, please get in touch...



**Stacey Smither-Moore,
ICT Coordinator**

T: 07936 957 585

E: stacey.smither-moore@shtoc.org.uk

Follow us on social media...



X: @SuttonHSociety



Instagram: [suttonhousingsociety](https://www.instagram.com/suttonhousingsociety)



- CONTRACTORS
- SUTTON HOUSING SOCIETY COLLEAGUES
- SERVICE
- EVENTS
- OTHER

Complaints and compliments

(grumbles and thank yous!)

In the last edition of Sutton Scoop, we explained how we record all complaints (grumbles) and compliments (praises) that we receive and gave the half-yearly performance figures that showed between April and September 2023, we received no complaints and 70 compliments.

The figures for the full financial year now show that between April 2023 and March 2024, we had five complaints and 146 compliments. One of the complaints was escalated to stage 2 of our complaints policy and remained open for some time, until we had completed work to the heating system at Old Brewery House.

Three of the complaints relate to property matters (Old Brewery House, Dorothy Pettingell House and Margaret House), one to cleaning at Cloverdale Court and one related to a Sutton Housing Society employee. All of these issues have now been addressed.

The Housing Ombudsman, that deals with complaints escalated by residents who have gone through their landlord's complaints process and remain dissatisfied, launched a review of their Complaint Handling Code. This has now been upgraded to a statutory document that all social landlords should comply with.

One of the changes was to have a lead member from the management Board involved with our complaints handling. This is our Board Chair, Alistair Auty; our Operations Director, Glynis Gatenby, who is also the Sutton Housing Society Complaints Officer, ensures that Alistair (Auty) is kept up to speed on all complaints and the actions and time taken to remedy these.

Residents who are involved with any of the Sutton Housing Society resident engagement groups/ focus groups, were invited to attend a training session relating to complaints in February 2024. This was well received and these residents now have a greater understanding of when a complaint is a complaint and the processes Sutton Housing Society follow to address these.

Of the 146 compliments received, they are broken down by category as follows:

Contractors	42	29%
Sutton Housing Society colleagues	39	27%
Service (including repairs)	35	24%
Events	28	19%
Other	2	1%

If you have any questions about our complaints process or service, or if you would like to give us a compliment, please let Glynis know. You can contact Glynis Gatenby on **07714 229 868** or email glynis.gatenby@shsoc.org.uk



You said

Part of our Be the body... initiative

We did

You wanted Sutton Housing Society to celebrate its 60th birthday

A fabulous party was held for our residents from our older people sites on 19 February 2024 at the Sutton Cricket Club.

You wanted Sutton Housing Society to review the under 60 age of residents accessing our older people schemes

This is now underway.

You wanted a microwave in the small communal kitchen at Peppermint Court

This was provided and is in place for use by residents in the communal lounge.

You wanted updated communal facilities at Old Brewery House

The refurbishment is now complete.

You wanted a gazebo at Dorothy Pettingell House

Sutton Housing Society provided the base and some of the residents provided the gazebo.

You wanted bicycle storage at Old Brewery House

This is on order and should be in place soon.

You wanted a Ladies that Lunch club following the success of the Men's Club

This has been introduced. There will be more dates for your diary – so look out for these on the digital noticeboards...



Residents' Charter news



The Residents' Charter group has been running for a couple of years now and is helping Sutton Housing Society to respond to some of the big-ticket items prioritised by the government.

The group has reviewed the action plans that were put in place following the Tenant Satisfaction Measures 'perception' survey in the autumn last year and the follow up work undertaken.

The group is now focussing on how Sutton Housing Society is responding to the 'Better social housing review'. These residents are:

- influencing how Sutton Housing Society conducts its rolling stock condition survey;
- how Sutton Housing Society responds to 'weaknesses' in its property maintenance service;
- gaining an understanding of how Sutton Housing Society delivers suitable training for the wider team;

- helping Sutton Housing Society to involve more residents to influence the services provided and how they are delivered.

The group is also keen to better understand how residents would like to be involved with influencing the work of Sutton Housing Society. Please look at the questionnaire included with this newsletter to find out more!

We have residents involved with this group from Griffiths Close, Norman House, Old Brewery House, Peppermint Court and Trickett House. If you would like to get involved, or maybe just find out more, please contact Glynis at glynis.gatenby@shsoc.org.uk or by calling 020 8642 1500.

Pets policy and survey results update – housing for older people flats

Since our last update we have now completed our survey with Margaret House and Peppermint Court residents. A majority of residents at both schemes want us to keep the current no dogs or cats policy.

We will continue to survey all our housing for older people schemes and the next blocks will include Dorothy Pettingell House and Norman House.

As previously mentioned, our approach with the surveys is to consult on a block-by-block basis rather than consulting all our housing for older people schemes at the same time. We will keep you updated in future editions of this magazine.

Residents' charter group 'Have your say' flier

Please read the flier enclosed with the newsletter as this has been issued at the request of the Residents' Charter group to highlight ways you can be involved with, and make a difference at Sutton Housing Society.

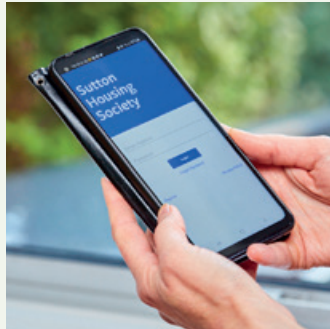
Want to contact us?

The Residents' Charter group told us that it can sometimes be confusing knowing who and how best to contact Sutton Housing Society, particularly when members of the Sutton Housing Society team are out and about visiting residents much of the time, or when someone is absent.

To help with this, below are the suggested best ways to get in touch. The email inboxes and answerphones listed are monitored regularly throughout the day:

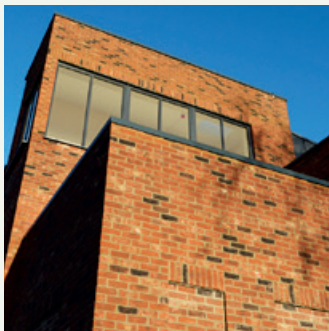
Development queries

E: Osei.sarfo-bonsu@shsoc.org.uk
E: hello@shsoc.org.uk
T: 07874 866 344



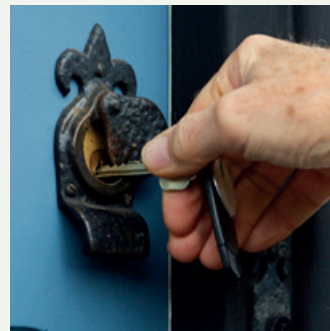
Housing enquiries

E: hello@shsoc.org.uk
T: 0208 642 1500



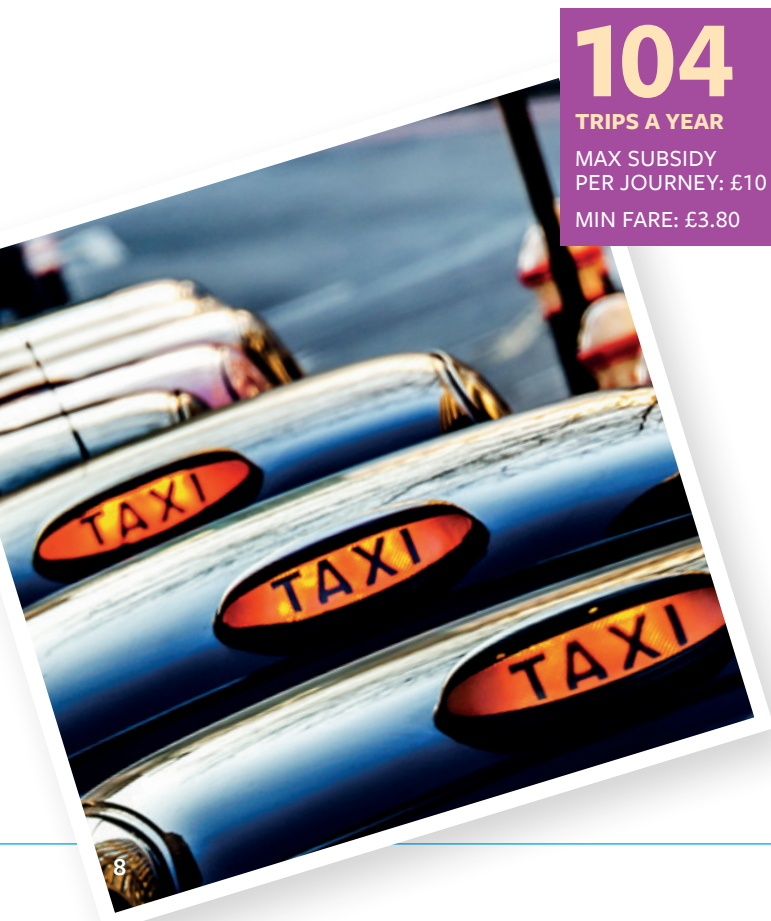
Wi-Fi/IT assistance

E: hello@shsoc.org.uk
T: 0208 642 1500



Repairs and property maintenance

E: repairs@shsoc.org.uk
T: 020 8661 5891
T: 07874 866 352



104

TRIPS A YEAR

MAX SUBSIDY PER JOURNEY: £10

MIN FARE: £3.80

London Taxicard scheme

The London Taxicard scheme provides subsidised door to door journeys in licensed taxis and private hire vehicles for London residents who find it difficult or impossible to use mainstream public transport due to permanent serious mobility or visual impairments.

The scheme is funded (subsidised) by London boroughs and Transport for London and is managed for qualifying Sutton residents, by the London Borough of Sutton.

The Taxicard scheme allows for 104 trips each year (pro-rata) with a maximum £10 subsidy per journey. There is a minimum fare cost of £3.80 (as at March 2024).

Full details of the Taxicard scheme can be found on the London Councils website: londoncouncils.gov.uk/services/taxicard. You can obtain an application form at: londoncouncils.gov.uk/services/taxicard/apply-taxicard-your-borough

What's that smell?

Within blocks of flats, the regular cleaning service, in the main, keeps things looking spik and span and smelling pleasant.

Occasionally we receive reports of individuals smoking cannabis and the smell travelling into neighbouring homes, which can be upsetting and annoying. (Cannabis remains illegal in the UK, apart from for prescribed medical use.)

The use of e-cigarettes or vapes is increasing, although the laws are changing to protect children from their harmful effects. The smell from vaping can travel

to near-by homes and can cause upset, nuisance and other concerns to neighbours.

If the housing team receives reports of illegal drug use, they will investigate. The illegal use of cannabis is a breach of tenancy conditions – anyone found to be using cannabis is putting their home at risk.

Reminder!

Smoking (cigarettes, vapes or illegal drugs) is not permitted within internal communal areas of blocks of flats.



Fish and chips!

Residents enjoyed the re-introduction of their long-awaited comeback of the fish and chip supper at Cloverdale.

Time to talk

We have set up a group 'Time to Talk' session on a regular basis to support those living with mental health challenges; residents feel they benefit from having this meeting weekly.

Cloverdale Corner

We are ready for spring at Cloverdale Court and recently had a visit from the charity SENSE to pickup unwanted bric-a-brac and clothing from residents. We always look forward to getting out into the gardens, planting bulbs and bedding plants, inbetween the rain showers!

Partnership working

Cloverdale Court and Friends of the Elderly day centre continue to provide joint activities and events. So far in 2024, these have included a men's club, ladies afternoon, quizzes, music/dance and prize bingo.

Trusted assessor

The Sutton Housing Society trained trusted assessor is Lynn Goodman. We hope that another colleague will soon be trained to assist with this area of work. This means that they can assess the need of individual residents for grab rails, shower seats and small adaptations in the home. Please contact your Housing Officer if you feel you would benefit from some adaptations in your home. They can refer you to the trusted assessor or to the Occupational Therapy team at the London Borough of Sutton. You too can contact the council directly to see if you qualify for major adaptations via the disability facilities grant.

Unwanted aids/equipment

Aids and equipment that are no longer needed should be returned to Croydon Solutions – and it is the responsibility of the resident or their family to contact them.

You can contact them on 0208 664 8860 or email them at cesadmincroydon.gov.uk to pick up any unwanted aids or equipment.

Please do not leave any unwanted equipment in the communal areas as this can cause a trip hazard – and as well as being unsightly, they may also be a risk during a fire emergency.



Reminder!

Grab rails should not be used to pull yourself up from a toilet or shower seat. Grab rails are there to steady yourself – they can easily be pulled off the wall, resulting in injury.



Join us!
17 June 2024
10am
On the corner of
Miller Close and
McRae Lane.

Wandle Valley update

As residents are aware, our Wandle Valley properties are managed by our two Housing Officers, Kelly Steers (covering properties on McRae Lane and Batley Close) and Lise Mellors (covering properties on Tull Street and Miller Close).



An estate inspection was carried out in December 2023 where there was found to be an excessive amount of fly-tipping, which had been reported to us. We have since arranged to clear this bulk waste – but this is an ongoing issue, which we would appreciate your support on.

We are working in partnership with London & Quadrant Housing Trust, our neighbouring landlord, and Gemma Munday who is the liberal democrat ward councillor for St Helier East, to try and enhance the overall appearance of the estate and improve local facilities for all to enjoy. If you would like more information please get in touch.

We would like to invite residents to join Kelly and Lise for the next planned estate inspection on **17 June at 10am**; please meet on the corner of Miller Close and McRae Lane.

Key Wandle Valley Sutton Housing Society contacts



Kelly Steers
Community Housing Officer
07714 229 866
kelly.steers@shsoc.org.uk

Lise Mellors
Community Housing Officer
07710 725 205
lise.mellors@shsoc.org.uk

Employee news: goodbye and hello!

We have bid a fond farewell to a couple of Sutton Housing Society colleagues in the last few months.



We said 'farewell, good luck and keep in touch' to **Steve Smith**, when he retired in December 2023 from his role at Property Compliance and Monitoring Officer. Steve was a popular member of the team with colleagues and residents alike.



We also said goodbye to Steve's 'replacement', **Terri Brandon**, who decided the role wasn't for her. However, we will shortly say 'hello' to Steve's replacement who is due to start with us in mid-June 2024, as the Property Compliance Officer.



We said farewell to **Xavier Pamment**, our ICT Assistant at the beginning of January 2024. Many residents will know that Xavier is an IT whizz who was able to assist with many IT issues, over and above using the Sutton Housing Society resident app and our website! Xavier is combining a new part-time role with his university studies and we wish him well for the future. At the moment, there are no plans to fill the ICT Assistant role.



At the end of this year, we will also say a fond 'farewell' to **Michael Kilkelly**, the Asset Manager, as he plans to semi-retire at Christmas 2024 and spend time with his wife travelling the globe as much as they can!

Sutton Housing Society is 60 years old!

On 19 February 1964, Sutton Housing Society was established by Frank Griffiths, a local businessman who wanted to provide suitable housing for older people in the borough... and 60 years on we are doing just that!

We definitely respect our past and keep in mind why Sutton Housing Society was set up in the first place, ensuring that our residents are our key focus.

Trickett House was the first development built by Sutton Housing Society – and we now have 502 homes (80% of which are for people aged 55+) – by the end of the year, we will have 509 homes with the six new homes at Ronald House due to be handed over to us in June and the new bungalow underway at Bridges Court. Our next development is at Trickett House, then Griffiths Close followed by Cloverdale Court. In tandem with this, we are also looking at small, in-fill opportunities, particularly at Wandle Valley.

To celebrate this key milestone, we held a fun-filled birthday celebration with many residents at the Sutton Cricket Club. In addition to music and dancing, residents were treated to a line dancing display led by Angie, our community engagement officer with some of the residents that attend the regular sessions! Residents also enjoyed the photo booth for a memento of their afternoon.

Thanks to the generosity of residents, the raffle raised a magnificent £137, with £100 donated to The Royal Marsden Cancer charity and £37 to The Stroke Association.

Here's to the next 60 years!



We achieved Gold!

In December 2023, we were delighted to find out that Sutton Housing Society had been recognised as an Investors in People (IiP) Gold employer.

Of all IiP employers, only 26% of organisations achieve Gold accreditation. In seven of the nine indicators that we are measured against, we were scored as 'advanced' – meaning that we outperform our peers.

This does not happen by accident; it takes a committed and focussed team of people that understand the vision, aims and aspirations of the organisation – and that we put our residents at the heart of what we do.

Sutton Housing Society has also recently reaffirmed its commitment to being a Living Wage employer. This means that not only are we committed to ensuring that employees are paid appropriately, but our contractors, and our supply chain, are too.



INVESTORS IN PEOPLE®
We invest in people Gold

“

A strongly focused and collaborative team, shared values, which drive a supportive, inclusive and productive culture, a well embedded approach to performance management and reward and recognition, an evident commitment to learning and development and an ability to innovate and change as needed to best meet resident needs.

THE IiP ASSESSORS



Easy ways to pay

If you are experiencing problems with paying your rent, please speak to Lise or Kelly, your Housing Officer, as soon as possible. They are here to help and will provide practical assistance and advice on what support may be available to you. Remember, don't miss your rent payments, or you risk losing your home.

Ways to pay your rent



Direct Debit

The easiest and most worry-free way for all residents to make regular rent payments. It is also the most efficient method for us to collect your rent.

We currently collect by Direct Debit on the following dates: 1st, 8th, 15th and 22nd of each month.

Direct Debit payers are covered by the Direct Debit Guarantee and can cancel at any time by contacting their bank.



Allpay rent payment card

This method allows you to choose when to pay. You apply to SHS for a card and can pay by:

- **Cash** – at the Post Office or anywhere displaying a PayPoint sign.
- **The Post Office** also accepts debit card and cheque payments.
- By debit card from your **bank account** – with your Allpay card, by phone, online or using the Allpay payment app; which is free to download.

T: 08445 578 320
www.allpay.net



The Allpay rent payment card has no monetary value and Allpay.net Limited has no record of account balances.

All queries should be directed to the Housing Team on 020 8915 2951.

Lise Mellors

Community Housing Officer
T: 020 8915 2954
M: 07710 725 205
E: lise.mellors@shsoc.org.uk

Kelly Steers

Community Housing Officer
T: 020 8915 2955
M: 07714 229 866
E: kelly.steers@shsoc.org.uk

Got some news you'd like to share? Please get in touch!

Sutton Housing Society

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