

Join our new Residents Association Network

After a meeting with several MK Residents Associations in February and listening to the ideas that everyone came up with, we have set up a new **Residents Association Network**. This will be an informal meeting for anyone involved in RAs or housing involvement groups, to get together and share their knowledge and experiences.

**Tuesday 21st April from 5-7pm
Room 2, Civic Offices**

Please come along to meet other RAs, enjoy a cup of tea, and maybe you could teach someone something or learn something new!

Our next Housing Services Forum is on Thursday 14th May @ Civic Offices. Book your place on 01908 253264.

Community Partnership Team

As you will probably all be aware, Paula Mason left us in February for a new role in MKC. We thank her for all her hard work over the years and wish her the best of luck in her new role.

We are now recruiting a replacement. We will be interviewing in March and hope to appoint soon after.

If you need anything in the meantime, please feel free to contact Lizzie on 01908 253624 or lizzie.bailes@milton-keynes.gov.uk

Our 2015 Tenants Survey is now live!

We have 500 surveys to send out to a sample of our tenants. By completing the survey, tenants can enter into a prize draw to win **£50 worth of shopping vouchers**.



Tenants can respond in lots of ways:

- Pop it in the post to us.
- You can drop it at Civic Offices.
- Give it to your Housing Officer.
- You can also fill it in online:
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/TenantsSurvey2015>

Changes to the Annual Healthchecks from April 2015

We are changing the way we support Residents Associations (RAs), to help them access more money, become more independent and do more in their community.

What will change?

- We will have more opportunities for RAs to meet each other informally, to share ideas and challenges around project ideas and funding, etc. We have set up a new **Residents Association Network** (details on front page.)
- We will shout about the work of Residents Associations more! We will dedicate sections in our future newsletters and MK@Home, celebrating work, achievements and sharing RA contact details.
- An additional grant fund will be available for applications twice a year, to help RAs deliver more projects.
- The annual RA Support Plans will have lots more helpful information about who to contact at MKC for different specialist support and information, e.g. Housing, Environment or Planning teams.
- The process for printing will change. You no longer need to send your leaflets to Paula or Lizzie, you can send them straight to the print room and they will print them for you. You will need to pay for this out of the new, bigger grant that you will receive from completing the Healthcheck.

What will stay the same?

- Healthchecks will still be carried out once a year, with the Community Partnership team on hand to help go through it. The responses given will give your group an accreditation and a small grant.
- Money given to your group is allocated in line with number of tenants in the area.
- The Community Partnership team will be there to support your group, with advice, funding, and to help keep you updated with training and networking opportunities.

Rent Review

This year, we are carrying out a **User Led Rent Review** with tenants, to look at the local issues around the rate of rent in Milton Keynes. Paul Gibson is leading the review and has attended 2 Resident Involvement Review Groups (RIRG) and last month's Housing Services Forum to give an overview of what the purpose of the Rent Review (to inform MKC's new Rent Strategy) and how we could structure the review.

At February's RIRG, we agreed to look at the 3 different sectors – MKC Housing, Housing Associations and Private Sector. We will look at each of these on their own over the next 3 months, and then come together again to look at what issues we have found and how these can shape the review.

Upcoming meeting details are on the back page.

YOUR VOTE MATTERS

MAKE SURE YOU'RE IN



Make your voice heard on 7 May

On **Thursday, 7 May 2015** there will be a UK Parliamentary General Election and local government elections in Milton Keynes.

UK Parliamentary General Election: To elect a Member of Parliament (MP) for the Milton Keynes North and Milton Keynes South constituencies.

Local Government Elections: To elect local Councillors to represent the 19 wards across MK.

Neighbourhood Plan Referendum: Central MK Business Neighbourhood Plan, produced by Central MK Town Council in an alliance with local business leaders and with the involvement of Milton Keynes Council. Neighbourhood planning helps the local community play a direct role in planning the area in which they live and work by showing how they want land to be used and developed in that area. Information on this can be found at: www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-policy/central-milton-keynes-neighbourhood-plan or telephone 01908 252358.

Parish Council Elections: In some areas, you will be able to elect local Parish Councillor's to represent areas in your Parish.

To vote in these elections you must be registered to vote by 20 April.

It's easy to register, just go to www.gov.uk/register-to-vote or telephone 01908 254706 or email elections@milton-keynes.gov.uk

Polling stations will be open on from 7am to 10pm on 7 May. Your vote matters so if you are going to be away on Thursday, 7 May you can apply for a postal vote. Applications for postal votes for these elections must be with us by **5pm on 21 April**.

From April, details of the candidates will be available on the Council's website – www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/elections and you will receive further information about your polling station in early April.

MKC Current Consultations

You can find out more about consultations or submit your opinion on our consultation finder at: www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/mkcconsultation/

- Proposed change in age range at The Willows School and Early Years Centre (Fishermead), Jubilee Wood Primary School (Fishermead), Oldbrook First School (Oldbrook) and proposed change of age and removal of residential provision at Romans Field School.
- Primary and Secondary Schools Admission 2016.
- Highway Guide for Milton Keynes Consultation.

Get Involved Calender

March, April and May 2015

Tuesday 3 rd March	Scrutiny Group meeting - For info, contact Janette Bobey on 01908 676320
Tuesday 17 th March	Scrutiny Group meeting - For info, contact Janette Bobey on 01908 676320
Wednesday 18 th March	Resident Involvement Review Group Room 2 @ 10.30 – discussing the Rent Review
Tuesday 31 st March	Scrutiny Group meeting - For info, contact Janette Bobey on 01908 676320
Tuesday 14 th April	Scrutiny Group meeting - For info, contact Janette Bobey on 01908 676320
Wednesday 15 th April	Resident Involvement Review Group Room 4 @ 10.30 – discussing the Rent Review
Tuesday 21 st April	Residents Association Networking Event, Room 2 @ 5-7pm
Tuesday 28 th April	Scrutiny Group meeting - For info, contact Janette Bobey on 01908 676320
Tuesday 12 th May	Scrutiny Group meeting - For info, contact Janette Bobey on 01908 676320
Thursday 14 th May	Housing Services Forum, Bronte Suite @ 7:30pm – discussing the Rent Review
Wednesday 20 th May	Resident Involvement Review Group Room 4 @ 10.30 – discussing the Rent Review
Tuesday 26 th May	Scrutiny Group meeting - For info, contact Janette Bobey on 01908 676320

To book a place on any of these events you can contact Lizzie from the Community Partnership Team on **01908 253264** or email lizzie.bailes@milton-keynes.gov.uk

Meetings include light refreshments and we can arrange transport if you need it.

Share your story

Do you have something to shout about?

We would like to include more things from your group in this newsletter and MK@Home.

Please contact **Lizzie** with anything you might want to share, including achievements, projects, events – it could be about individuals or whole groups.

The Resident Involvement Newsletter is produced by The Community Partnership Team

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Text/mobile 07900135889

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Copies are available in alternative formats on request.