

# In The Know

For Origin Housing customers in London and Hertfordshire

Summer edition 2011

## Blooming marvellous!



Every year, Origin provides annual grants of between £50 and £500 through the Irene Barclay Gardening Fund for residents to improve their local environment.

This year eleven Origin communities across Camden, Stevenage and Watford received money for gardening projects ranging from new allotment patches and wheelbarrows to nature trail equipment and greenhouse installation. Pennethorne House residents in Camden (pictured) received funding for new bedding plants, compost and pots.

Irene Barclay was the first female chartered surveyor in the UK and a former secretary of the St. Pancras housing association, Origin's predecessor. The fund was set up in her memory to continue the "housing is not enough" legacy established by fellow Origin founder, Basil Jellicoe.

The next round of applications will open in January 2012. In the meantime you can find out which groups received funding this year by visiting the news page on our website - [www.originhousing.org.uk](http://www.originhousing.org.uk).

## In this issue:



- Spotlight on doctors' changeover at Lister Hospital, Stevenage page 4



- Meet the new anti-social behaviour co-ordinator page 6



- Annual repairs programme for 2011/12 page 10

PLUS exciting photography competition!

Great homes  
positive people  
strong communities

  
origin HOUSING  
[www.originhousing.org.uk](http://www.originhousing.org.uk)

# Building new homes



## Message from Gareth Jones, Director of Development

At Origin we are well aware of the urgent need for more affordable housing and as a growing housing association we strive to maintain a programme of building new homes. Late last year, the government introduced the Localism Bill which contains the most wide-ranging changes to social housing

policies and new-build funding for over 20 years. Despite this, our Board has taken the decision to continue to build new homes and we have put in a bid to the Homes and Communities Agency for some grants to build and complete 266 new homes between 2012 and 2015.

The current recession has affected the amount of funding we receive to build new homes which means that we will have to charge higher rents (at up to 80% of market rents) on any new homes we build from now – this is called “affordable rents”. In light of this, Origin’s Board has established its own rent policy to ensure that all affordable rents will be genuinely affordable, taking into account proposed changes to welfare benefit. This means that whilst smaller properties may be calculated at closer to 80% of market rents (except in expensive inner London areas), larger family homes will be charged at, or close to, existing “social rents”.

The government will also expect Origin to charge “affordable rents” when our existing social housing is re-let to new tenants. This will NOT however apply to current tenants in their current homes or if they transfer to another or new Origin property – these tenants will keep the same tenancy and rent arrangements that they have now. Although the country’s economy has not yet recovered, Origin will continue to champion decent affordable housing that promote better neighbourhoods – in short, we will continue to put our customers first!

## Contents



• **Page 4:** Origin’s Lister hospital site faces its busiest time of the year this August; find out why...



• **Page 5:** Skill-sharing is back on the agenda with the Origin Time Bank relaunch;



• **Page 6:** Anti-social behaviour coordinator, Joynal Abdin, explains his role in making your neighbourhood better;



• **Page 7:** Neighbourhood roadshows, community festivals and fun days - all part of this summer’s activities;



• **Page 9:** You said, we did - update on your feedback and our actions;



• **Page 10:** Find out if your building is due for annual maintenance this year...



• **Page 12:** Got an eye for a good pic.? Enter our brand new photography competition!

# Welfare reforms update



The Government has started the biggest programme of welfare reform for 60 years. A bill currently going

through Parliament will introduce benefit cuts that are likely to have a big impact on social tenants. These include cuts in benefit for working age social tenants deemed to have a spare bedroom, and a cap of around £500 (or £350 for a single person) on the total amount of benefit that a household can receive. These proposals are expected to start in April 2013.

The government has already increased deductions for non-dependents in the private and social sectors. From April this year, tenants who have non-dependants (for example an adult son, daughter, relative or friend) living with them aged 18 and above will face a reduction in housing benefits payments.

If your housing benefit has been reduced because of this, or you are struggling to keep up with your rent payments or are worried about cuts in the future, please call our Income Management team on 020 7209 9231 and we will put you in touch with Staying Put Services (SPS), an independent Origin partner agency that can help you confidentially.

## First time lucky!



Members of Origin's Development team (from second left to third right) pose with royal hairdresser Denise McAdam (far left) and TV property presenter Phil Spencer (far right) at the First Time Buyer awards after scooping the award for 'Best Architectural Design' for our Watford development, The Wrap. The scheme, which is literally wrapped around Watford FC football stadium, was also a finalist for the Evening Standard's New Homes Awards in the 'Best Affordable Development' and 'Best Regeneration Project' categories.

# Tell us what you think

We're introducing a Letters Page for In the Know from next issue and we want to hear your thoughts! Write in and tell us what you like or don't like about the stories we cover – starting from this issue – and you could win a £10 high street shopping voucher if yours is the star letter! Email your comments to [Peter.taylor@originhousing.org.uk](mailto:Peter.taylor@originhousing.org.uk) or send a letter by post to: In the Know feedback, FAO Peter Taylor, 110 Eversholt Street, Euston, London NW1 1BS.

# Doctors' changeover at Lister hospital



**Lister Hospital in Stevenage is home to over 300 of Origin's affordable homes and accommodation, available to medical staff, police, the fire service and other key local professions.**

The homes are located at the Old School of Nursing on Corey's Mill Lane, right next to the hospital, and range from shared-room apartments and hotel facilities to four-bed houses that are used overnight or, on less frequent occasions, for much longer stays.

The first Monday in August of every year is doctors' changeover at the hospital sites and

a very busy period for the Origin Lister team. The first two weeks are spent sorting out temporary and permanent accommodation for an influx of first year doctors who arrive to start their one-year training a week before the old ones move on. Staff have to work evenings and weekends to accommodate the new arrivals and, in some cases, even get involved with cleaning and moving furniture to make the whole process as smooth as possible.

Last year we also became a housing provider to the pharmaceutical and healthcare company GlaxoSmithKline so we will be taking on their students for a year's placement in the last two weeks of August. This year we also have the possibility of providing accommodation to Herts Fire Service and Suffolk ambulance trainees for an 8-week period starting on 21st August. All this means a very busy August for the Lister team so roll on September!

## “Living here is very convenient”



**Peter Steele has worked for Lister Hospital as a Maintenance Assistant for the past 12 years and has found it convenient to live on the Origin site in shared accommodation during that time.**

**Peter recently moved to his own flat and loves having his own space. He says...**

*“I wish I'd done it earlier, I'm finding it a bit more peaceful! Living here is very convenient for my job; although you see people come and go all the time, I've stayed friendly with a few people and I like the Origin staff that work here. The girls in the office have been most helpful to me; they've all been very good, especially in helping me move things into the new place. I'm officially due to retire in July this year but I've been given another year's contract at the hospital so I'm staying put for now.”*

# Customer diversity and you



When you sign up to Origin as a tenant, (and annually afterwards), we give you a customer profile form to complete. This form includes questions about your age, religion, language, sexual orientation, ethnicity and any disabilities.

We ask for this information so we can make sure that our services are fair for everybody and to help us improve them where we can. And, in case you're wondering, Origin has a legal obligation to record information about the diversity of our tenants so it's not just us being nosy!

We have started using this information in some really useful ways including:

- Ensuring our services, opportunities and projects are available to all our customers, for example by providing information in a range of languages;
- Analysing customer satisfaction about repairs, complaints and new tenants;
- Targeting and planning community development activities;
- Looking for trends in reports of anti-social behaviour to see where we can combat it (see page 6).

We will also be adding in questions about welfare benefits due to the government reforms (see page 3). To help us target advice and support to those affected. Please help us continue to improve services by completing the customer profile form when we ask. If you have any questions about diversity and how Origin uses the information, please contact Sarah Eggenhuizen, our Data Integrity Officer, on 0800 040 7989.

# Trade your time, trade your skill



**Language lessons, bookkeeping and DIY – these are just some of the activities you can get help with as part of the newly relaunched Origin Time Bank Camden scheme!**

Time Bank is a chance for you to share your skills with your local community and get help from other members who may have skills that you need. For every hour

of time you give to another member, you receive one time credit which can then be exchanged for help from another member. Skills on offer can be anything from fixing a computer to writing a report or even looking after a pet, so once you sign up as a member (free of charge and open to all Origin tenants) you can start taking advantage immediately.

Origin Time Bank Camden has been running for over three years and has nearly 200 members. Thanks to the kind sponsorship from our building contractor Galliford Try, we now have enough funding to keep running for another year so there's never been a better time to get involved. To find out more please call Ben Frimston, our new Time Bank Co-ordinator, on 020 7209 9268 or email [ben.frimston@originhousing.org.uk](mailto:ben.frimston@originhousing.org.uk).

# Meet the ASB man



**Joynal Abdin joined Origin Housing in December 2010 as our Anti-social Behaviour Coordinator. Here he tells us a bit more about the role...**

## **So what exactly do you do?**

I investigate anti-social behaviour (ASB) complaints. I interview the person who made the complaint, the alleged perpetrator and any witnesses. Next I liaise with the police, social services or any other relevant agency to gather evidence to support the needs of the victim and in some cases, of the perpetrator where there might be underlying causes to the ASB. If no evidence is found I will close the case, but where the allegations are proven, I will work with different agencies to support the perpetrator to change their behaviour. If all

fails I take enforcement actions which may involve eviction, depending on how severe the case is.

## **What kinds of things constitute ASB?**

Anything from noise nuisance to verbal abuse, racial abuse, hate crime, threats of violence, actual violence, indirect harassment, obstruction, distress, or intimidation – both face-to-face and through electronic mail and social media like Facebook.

## **What should people do if they experience anti-social behaviour from a neighbour?**

Let me know! You can complain by phone, email or in person at one of our offices. We will ask you about the complaint, agree an action plan with you and work with you to resolve the case. You can call me on 020 7209 9347 or email [Joynal.Abdin@originhousing.org.uk](mailto:Joynal.Abdin@originhousing.org.uk)

# Heritage fund allocations



John Toomey Heritage Fund was launched in February this year to continue the legacy of John Toomey, a former Origin board member, tenant and one-

time Camden councillor. The Fund gives small grants of up to £5,000 every year to individual or group community projects that promote Origin's rich history and heritage.

The first round of funds opened in February with a deadline of 25th March for applications to be submitted before being reviewed by a panel made up of Origin staff, residents and a Board member. Three projects were successful this round:

- Scott Road Supported Housing Scheme,

Bishops Stortford received £500 for a 10-year anniversary party (pictured with the local Mayor), a monumental occasion for both the scheme and supported housing as a whole, many of which didn't exist before this;

- Callowlands tenants in Watford received £980 for a plaque to commemorate their historical property and frame their research on the building which is an old school over 100 years old;
- Origin Time Bank Coordinator Ben Frimston received £870 for an Origin-wide photography project to capture what it is like to live in Origin communities for a local exhibition. The competition has now launched with a September 2011 closing date (see back page for more details).

The next round of funding will open in February 2012. For more information email [mark.lee@originhousing.org.uk](mailto:mark.lee@originhousing.org.uk)

# Summer fun in the neighbourhood



Origin's Time Bank Coordinator Ben Frimstone (left) with Alexei Sayle

Comedian Alexei Sayle opened up the annual **Somers Town Festival of Cultures** this year on Saturday 9th July. The event, which takes place in Charlton Street, Camden, attracted over 12,000 visitors from the local area and beyond. Alexei made time to visit the Origin area where staff and volunteers set up displays about Time Bank (see page 5), gardening, youth projects and information about housing services.

On the other side of the river, the annual **Leavesden fun day** took place in Watford a month earlier giving local tenants the chance meet Origin staff to discuss any concerns, as well as enjoy some good food and entertainment from amateur wrestlers.

If you would like to get involved next year or have ideas for a community event in your area, contact your local Community Development Coordinator: Mark Lee (Hertfordshire) - 020 7209 9207 / [mark.lee@originhousing.org.uk](mailto:mark.lee@originhousing.org.uk); Joned Khan (Camden) - 020 7209 9208 / [joned.khan@originhousing.org.uk](mailto:joned.khan@originhousing.org.uk); or Trevor Willoughby (Enfield) - 020 8345 7982 / [trevor.willoughby@originhousing.org.uk](mailto:trevor.willoughby@originhousing.org.uk).

## 4 Kix football project



Enfield young people on Origin's 4 Kix project recently helped to run a charity football

event where they got to meet and mingle with local MPs and VIPs including ex Arsenal & Leeds United footballer Chris Whyte.

The Bellevue Mortlakes Charity 7-A-Side football tournament was organised by young volunteers Mohamed Osman and Faysal Osman under the guidance of Origin's Community Development workers Trevor Willoughby

and Andrew DuCille, and 4 Kix coach Kyle Fortune, pictured here with former Arsenal and Leeds United footballer Chris Whyte (far left) and David Burrowes, MP for Enfield Southgate (far right).

Origin's 4 Kix project is funded by the Football Foundation and aims to get young people in Camden and Enfield more involved in the community, develop their individual skills and improve their team's football performance at the same time. The nationwide programme allows young people (aged 16 to 25) to benefit from coaches, facilities, equipment and football training in return for volunteering in their local community and participating in formal award schemes such as Duke of Edinburgh and Youth Achievement.

## Neighbourhood roadshows are coming!

Your chance to meet your neighbourhood team and talk to us about any issues you like – coming this autumn. Look out for more details on our website ([www.originhousing.org.uk](http://www.originhousing.org.uk)) or on your estate bulletin.

# Origin in Stevenage



Origin's presence in Stevenage began in the 1970s when our founding organisation, St Pancras Housing (SPH), expanded its previously Camden-focused ethos of community housing to include Hertfordshire, Enfield and Watford. Now Origin manages 268 properties in Stevenage including sheltered flats and bungalows for older people and a number of supported housing properties for people with learning disabilities. Two of the learning disabilities schemes recently celebrated their 10-year anniversary – Dickenson Way in April (pictured with the Mayor of Ware) and Scott Road in June.

## Home Improvement Agency is the new Care & Repair



The Home Improvement Agency – HIA for short – is the new name for our Handyman and Adaptation services for older (over 55) private tenants and homeowners in Camden and Islington. The name was agreed with our funders and is generally used by other home improvement agencies in England.

Last year we carried out 100 major adaptations (walk in showers, ramps etc) and over 2,000 handyman jobs with 100% customer satisfaction. If you are an elderly, disabled or vulnerable owner-occupier or private tenant and need to have repairs or adaptations made to your home, you may qualify for a grant depending on your circumstances. To find out more call our HIA team on 020 7284 5450.

# You said, we did - service update

## **YOU SAID: “Fix our faulty fuse boxes!”**

If you’ve ever been in a situation where you’ve moved into a newly refurbished property and your fuse box “trips out” (or cuts) your electricity, you would understandably be straight on the phone to customer service as many readers have done in the past. However, the “faulty” fuse box situation is often a simple case of a faulty appliance that requires the fuse box to be reset.

**WE DID:** We are now including an information sheet about fuse boxes and what to do if this happens in the sign up packs for all new residents. If you are an existing resident and would like one sent to you, please contact our Customer Service team on 0800 040 7989.



Origin property in Hendon

## **YOU SAID: “We want more awareness around moving homes and viewing new property.”**

**WE DID:** We’ve made some changes to the way we communicate this information to you to make sure you don’t miss out on a property. For all applicants who have been shortlisted to view a property, the changes are:

- Everyone who has given a mobile number and email address will be contacted through this method. If you do not show up for your viewing, you will be contacted by a member of our Lettings team and may be offered another viewing date;
- If you have requested to be contacted by post, a red stamp stating “viewing offer letter” is now marked on the envelope to immediately draw your attention to the letter contents;
- You should not make moving arrangements (including buying new furniture) until you have written confirmation of the offer – this is now stated in your viewing offer letter;
- The transfers application form now features the size of the properties we have to the areas of choice so you are aware of what areas may be suitable for you when choosing where to transfer to.

**If there are any areas of service you are not entirely satisfied with, please contact our Service Improvement team on 020 7209 9293 and we will be happy to help.**

# Planned repairs programme for 2011/12



In addition to the day-to-day repairs we carry out when something goes wrong in your home, we also have an overall

programme of repairs and maintenance to carry out on our properties on a yearly basis – we call this our “cyclical maintenance” programme.

This financial year (April to March 2012) we plan to carry out maintenance to over 600 properties. As with previous years, much of the programme will be carried out by our contractors TH Kenyon. Works in the outer London areas (Stevenage, Watford, Welwyn Garden City and Hertfordshire) will start around July or August with an expected finish of November 2011; works within the

London area are likely to start this winter or early 2012 if there is bad weather.

**What to do if the works do not go as planned...** If you are dissatisfied in any way with the progress or quality of the works being carried out to your home or block, please contact us by phone, email, or in person at our offices. Your first point of contact should be the contractor’s Tenant Liaison Officer who is onsite for the whole of the work programme. You will have the chance to meet him or her during tenant consultation meetings or surgeries that will happen prior to any work starting. If for any reason they are unable to resolve your issue, please contact Origin surveyor, Nigel Davis on 020 7209 9212.

You can also contact the Complaints Officer, Charlotte McGovern, to make a formal complaint or send in a compliment about what you feel went well with the works being carried out.

## Properties due for cyclical maintenance in 2011/12

- Apollo Way, Stevenage, Flats Nos 1-11 odds
- Apollo Way, Stevenage, Flats Nos 13-23 odds
- Apollo Way, Stevenage, Flats 63-75 odds
- Apollo Way, Stevenage Houses Nos 20-32 evens & 25-59 odds
- Columbus Close, Stevenage (Houses 1-3 & 12-19)
- Columbus Close, Stevenage (Flats 8-11)
- Columbus Close, Stevenage (Flats 20-23)
- Columbus Close, Stevenage (Flats, 8, 9 and 22), (scattered among other blocks)
- The Hedgerows, Chells Manor, Stevenage
- Julia Gate, Stevenage (Nos 62-67)
- Julia Gate, Stevenage (Nos 68-73)
- Jellicoe Road, West Watford (Nos 1-4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 31-41 odds)
- Stripling Way, West Watford (1-45 odds only)
- Orion Gate, Bedwell Crescent, Stevenage
- Orchard House Spenser Way, Hertfordshire
- 55 Bedford Way, Holborn
- Mora Burnet House, Camden
- Dowdney Close, Camden
- Maud Wilkes Close, Camden
- York Rise, Camden
- 11 Bayham St, Camden (Nos 1-6)
- Sienna Terrace, Comber Close, Brent
- Rowan House, Brent (Nos 1-4)
- Pargraves Court, Middlesex
- Diploma Court, East Finchley
- Deanary, East Finchley
- Chalice, East Finchley
- Birch Court, Welywn Garden City
- 140 All Souls Avenue, Brent
- 104 Haverstock Hill, Camden
- 1 Walkden, Station Rd Ashwell, Hertfordshire
- 12 Walkden, Hertfordshire
- Cambridge Court, Covent Garden (Nos 1-17)
- Normanhurst, Cambridge
- 54 Crowndale Road, Camden
- Blakeney House, Stevenage
- 74 Neal Street, Covent Garden
- 42 Twisden Road, Camden

We have tried to cater for all our customers but if you would like a copy in larger font then please let your neighbourhood officer or scheme manager know -or call 0800 040 7989.

إذا أردت الحصول على ترجمة للمطوية الإخبارية "إن ذي نوو" ("In the Know") - خدمة المعلومات المقدمة من مالك عقارك، تفضل بالاتصال بمسؤول الحي الذي تقيم به أو بمدير البرنامج أو اتصل على رقم 0800 040 7989.

Arabic

আপনি যদি "ইন দ্য নো" নিউজলেটার - সার্ভিস ইনফরমেশন ফ্রম ইউর ল্যান্ডলর্ড এর কোন অনুবাদ চান তাহলে অনুগ্রহ করে আপনার নেইবারহুড অফিসার, স্কিম ম্যানেজার অথবা 0800 040 7989 নম্বর ফোনে যোগাযোগ করুন।

Bengali

倘若您需要 "In the Know' newsletter - Service Information from your landlord (內情簡報 - 業主提供的服務資訊)" 的翻譯件，請聯絡負責您的居民社區官 (Neighbourhood Officer)、計畫部經理 (Scheme Manager)、或致電：0800 040 7989。

Cantonese

Αν επιθυμείτε να λάβετε μετάφραση του ενημερωτικού δελτίου «Σωστή Ενημέρωση» - Πληροφορίες σχετικά με υπηρεσίες από τον ιδιοκτήτη σας («In the Know» newsletter - Service Information from your landlord), παρακαλούμε επικοινωνήστε με τον Υπεύθυνο Γειτονιάς, τον Προϊστάμενο του Κτιρίου ή καλέστε το 0800 040 7989.

Greek

ئەگەر حەزەدەکتەیت پەيام نامەى (In the Know)، كە خۆزمەتگۆزارىەكى هەموال پێداتە لەلایەن خاوەن خانووەكت، بۆ تەرجومە بکەیت تەكایە پەيوەندى بکە بە فەرمانبەرى گەردەکتە (Neighbourhood Officer) یان بەرێوەبەرى بەرنامە (Scheme Manager) یان بە ژمارە تەلەفۆنى 0800 040 7989.

Kurdish

Hadii aad jeceshahay in lagu turjumo 'ogeysiinta' warqada aqbaarta – Adeega ogeysiinta kuwa guryaha iska leh' fadlan la' soo xariir Shaqaalaha qaabilsan xafaddaada, manajerka meesha maamula ama 0800 040 7989.

Somali

Si desea una traducción del boletín "In the Know' - Service Information from your landlord" (Información de servicios prestados por el propietario), rogamos que se ponga en contacto con el oficial de vecindario (Neighbourhood Officer), el jefe del esquema (Scheme Manager) o que llame el tel.: 0800 040 7989.

Spanish

'In the Know (Vakıf)' – ev sahibinizden Hizmet Bilgileri haber bülteninin kendi dilinize tercüme edilmesini istiyorsanız, lütfen Mahalli Daire Memuru, Proje Yöneticinizle irtibat kurun, ya da 0800 040 7989 e telefon edin.

Turkish

اگر آپ کو اس کتابچے بعنوان 'ان دا نو' خبرنامہ: آپ کے لیٹڈ لارڈ کی جانب سے مہیا کی جانے والی خدمات سے متعلق معلومات (In the Know' newsletter - Service Information from your landlord) کا ترجمہ درکار ہو تو براہ مہربانی اپنے لیٹڈ آفیسر، اسکیم مینیجر یا نمبر 0800 040 7989 سے رابطہ کریں۔

Urdu

## Origin home sales website launches

If you're looking to buy a home at an affordable price, log on to our brand new Origin sales website at [www.originsales.co.uk](http://www.originsales.co.uk). We've currently got brand new A1 Apartments available for sale on Great North Way, Hendon, so log on today to see what's on offer and arrange a viewing today!

# News in brief

## New gas contractor



As of May 2011, Integral replaced Essex and Taylor Heating as the sole domestic gas maintenance contractor for Origin Housing properties. Integral are currently setting up appointments with customers to ensure gas boilers and other fittings are checked every year. Once you receive an appointment request, please contact 0800 183 3949 (free from landlines) or 0330 123 9019 (local call rate from your mobile) as soon as possible to confirm a date and time. Please continue to contact Origin Housing direct on 0800 040 7989 for all repairs queries.

## Snap-tastic photo competition!



Do you have an eye for a good shot? Have you ever been out and saw something that made you wish you had a camera to hand? Are you an amateur photographer keen to get exposure for your work? If so, our photography competition might be for you!

We are looking for the best pictures that capture the area you live in three categories:

community, structures and people. We will accept photos in any format – from camera phone to high res images – and you can send your entry to us by email or post as prints or on a memory stick.

The competition is in association with the John Toomey Heritage Fund and is open to all Origin Housing customers in two separate age groups – under and over 18s – as well as family and friends who live in the local area. All work submitted will be exhibited at a local gallery and the best photos will have the chance to win vouchers to spend on photography equipment and professional training with a top industry professional.

Closing date for entries is Monday 19th September 2011 so get snapping and send your photo with your name, address, age and the category to [ben.frimston@originhousing.org.uk](mailto:ben.frimston@originhousing.org.uk) or Ben Frimston, Origin Housing, 110 Eversholt Street, London NW1 1BS. For more information call Ben Frimston on 020 7209 9268.