

Unity News

Summer 2016

Unity

Homes & Enterprise

Supporting BME Communities
and Multi-Cultural Neighbourhoods

Forrest apprentices receive recognition at awards ceremony

In March, Unity's repairs and maintenance contractor, Forrest, celebrated the hard work of their apprentices and trainees over the last 12 months by inviting them to an awards ceremony.



Forrest, as one of the leading repairs and maintenance contractors in the North of England, is especially renowned for employing apprentices and trainees.

Many of the people who have trained with Forrest have gone on to secure permanent roles in maintenance, and include a few of Unity's tenants. The 'Apprentice & Trainee Awards' was attended by directors, senior managers and 31 apprentices and trainees and their mentors, together with Unity's Maintenance Manager, David Caron (pictured left) who was invited to present an award.

Unity has been working in partnership with Forrest, the social housing regeneration specialist, for the past 5 years. By offering a 5 year contract, Unity has achieved Value for Money savings.

Forrest's 'Respond' team offers 24-hour-a-day, seven day a week responsive maintenance support while its 'Refurbish' team is responsible for implementing our planned maintenance programme. (Story continues overleaf)

Want to improve your home without spending lots of money? See page for tips and ideas.

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Ideas to improve your home without spending a lot of money. Plus information on where to find second-hand furniture at next-to-nothing prices.

Headlines



Back in 2010, when Unity's partnership with Forrest began, Andrew Stubbs, director of frameworks for Forrest Leeds, said:

Unity's commitment to building strong and sustainable communities mirrors our own core values based on creating and supporting green neighbourhoods.

Chief Executive of Unity Housing, Ali Akbor said:

Forrest's operational team have provided an excellent level of service which, most importantly, has led to very positive feedback from our tenants





Unity in Bloom

Unity is pleased to announce the **Unity in Bloom** competition. **£300** worth of Argos vouchers are up for grabs!

If you wish to enter the competition, please contact **your Housing Officer**. We will arrange with you a time when our Judging Panel can visit your property. Terms and conditions apply.

In the hope of encouraging residents to take pride in their outdoor spaces, and to promote healthy lifestyles – Unity provided a number of tenants with **FREE** pots, seeds and soil to grow a range of fruit, vegetables and herbs.

Tenants were also provided with advice and guidance on how to nurture their seedlings and plants to get the best out of them, and were given a handy guide on how to take care of the seeds and plants we had to offer.

An apology...

We would like to apologise to all the tenants who weren't able to benefit from the offer of free seeds and plants this year. We had originally intended to visit all the estates – but the weather was not as kind as we hoped so some of the workshops were rained off.

If we didn't see you this year, we will make it our priority to visit your estate next spring.

Keep in touch...

We heard that many of you got some really good results from the seeds and plants we gave away. Please send us any photos of your harvests; we'd love to include them in the next newsletter.

FRUIT & VEG GIVEAWAY

Seeds offered

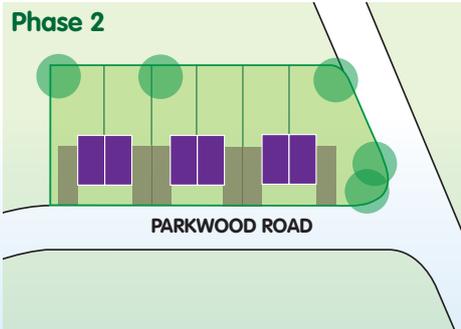
Tomatoes, peppers, courgettes, cucumbers and more!



Building the dream!

New homes and job opportunities coming soon

Phase 1



Unity secures permission to build a further 6 houses on Parkwood Road - Beeston.

The second phase of the Parkwood Road development will complement the 18 houses that Unity is already building at this site, and the wider regeneration of the Beeston area.

Leeds City Council, who own a great deal of the surrounding properties, are currently carrying out improvement works to raise the appearance of the area. Works will include the re-roofing and re-cladding of some properties as well as environmental improvements to the landscape.

The proposed development will now provide a total 24 new homes, which will comprise of a mix of 2 and 3 bedroom houses. These high quality homes will be constructed to the Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3, meaning that they will be more energy efficient than typical properties of their type.

Work is expected to be completed in early 2017. If you, or someone you know is interested in renting a property – please call **0113 200 7700** to express your interest.

Applicants will be advised when the properties are available to bid on. Only applicants on the Leeds Homes register, with a local connection to the area and with excellent tenancy references will be considered.





Tenant Panel members get the opportunity to visit each of the sites and a guided tour by Regeneration Director, Wayne.



Rocheford Court

The proposed development will provide 11 new homes, which will comprise of a mix of 2 and 3 bedroom houses and bungalows. Work is expected to be completed in November/December 2016.

Holborn Court

The proposed development will provide 12 new general needs flats and 2 bungalows. The development will complement the wider regeneration of the Little London area that Leeds City Council has already undertaken. Work is expected to be completed in November/December 2016.

Kick start your career in construction with a work placement

We are looking for people who have experience in the following trades, plus a CSCS card:

- Multi-trade construction
- Groundworks
- Bricklaying
- Joinery
- Plastering
- Mechanical & Electrical
- Painting & Decorating

Paid positions!

Noma Moyo
Employment Outreach Officer

☎ 0113 200 7746 📞 07714 134 531

✉ noma.moyo@unityha.co.uk

Kelly Jennings
Outreach Support Worker

☎ 0113 200 7738 📞 07730 870 810

✉ kelly.jennings@unityha.co.uk



Introducing our Regeneration Manager & Employment Services Team



Alison Day is Unity's Regeneration Manager and will be supporting Regeneration Director, Wayne Noteman to deliver Unity's new development programme. She takes over the role from Clare Wright, who left Unity in February to spend more time with her family.

Alison will also be supervising the Employment Services Team and helping them to meet their ambitious targets:

Total number of people helped to access:

	Total 2012/13	Total 2013/14	Total 2014/15	Target 2015/16	Total 2015/16	Target 2016/17
Employment	35	44	60	70	77	80
Training	36	45	61	100	120	120

Unity's Employment Service Team not only help tenants to find work opportunities, they can also help you access training courses and support applications to colleges and universities. Since they joined Unity in 2012, they have helped hundreds of people!

 **Noma:** 0113 200 7746

 **Kelly:** 0113 200 7738

Unity's Employment Services Team

Unity Employment Services was established in May 2011 to support Unity tenants getting back into work and training. The Employment Team offer a free tailor-made employment service to suit the needs of individuals.

Noma



Kelly



Farewell from Lewis...

I would like to thank Unity Housing for giving me the opportunity to work with the Tenant Panel to improve services. I would also like to thank our Tenant Panel for their commitment, their honesty, and above all, their hard work over the past few years. I feel as though we have come a long way together and I hope that they continue to keep up the good work. Thank you to all tenants and colleagues who made my time at Unity Housing so enjoyable and rewarding.

Comments from Management:

Lewis is leaving us at the end of May after being with us for four years. We want to take this opportunity to thank him on behalf of Unity and our Tenant Panel members for his hard work and commitment. We are sure that he will be a success in his new role as a Research & Insight Officer with another housing association.

Housing Benefit

Changes came into effect in April

The bad news...

The cuts to benefits that we warned you about in the last newsletter came into effect in April. See below for a reminder, and to find out if you are likely to be affected by any of them.

The good news...

The Income Management Team have a good understanding of the changes and are well placed to help you minimise how the benefit changes will affect you.

The best advice we can give you is to talk to us if you are going to be affected by any change to your pay, working hours or benefits. Any delay now could cost you dearly.

Secondly we can help you plan and budget to prepare your finances in case you are affected in the future. Unfortunately nothing in the economy is certain and saving money now could be really important in the future.

Lastly in most circumstances we can provide the forms or even the computer facilities you need to successfully make or inform your benefit claims. For Universal Credit you will need rent and tenancy details that we can provide to you at your request.

Income Management Officers



Sam



Matt



Russell

☎ Sam: **0113 200 7737**

☎ Matt: **0113 200 7733**

☎ Russell: **0113 200 7752**

TAX CREDITS?

Reduced entitlements to **Housing Benefit** and **Tax Credits** for families expecting more children.

UNIVERSAL CREDIT?

Single people who lose work and would have applied for Job Seekers Allowance (JSA), now apply for **Universal Credit**. The application process is online, and first payment may be up to **6 weeks after application** and includes a month's worth of rent cost.

BENEFITS?

Housing Benefit claims will only be backdated for **4 weeks maximum**.

If you go abroad for longer than one month **Housing Benefit will stop**.



Tenancy HEALTH Checks

We will be in touch soon...

As part of our commitment to support individual households to maintain their tenancies, Housing Officers Kamila and Rashpal would like to visit every tenant on a two yearly basis. This equates to 15 visits a month per Housing Officer. The visits will be carried out in addition to the estate inspections that they already carry out. The HEALTH check is for your benefit and will cover the following:



H **Housing Condition** - The Housing Officers will check that your living conditions are adequate and that you are taking good care of your property and its surroundings.

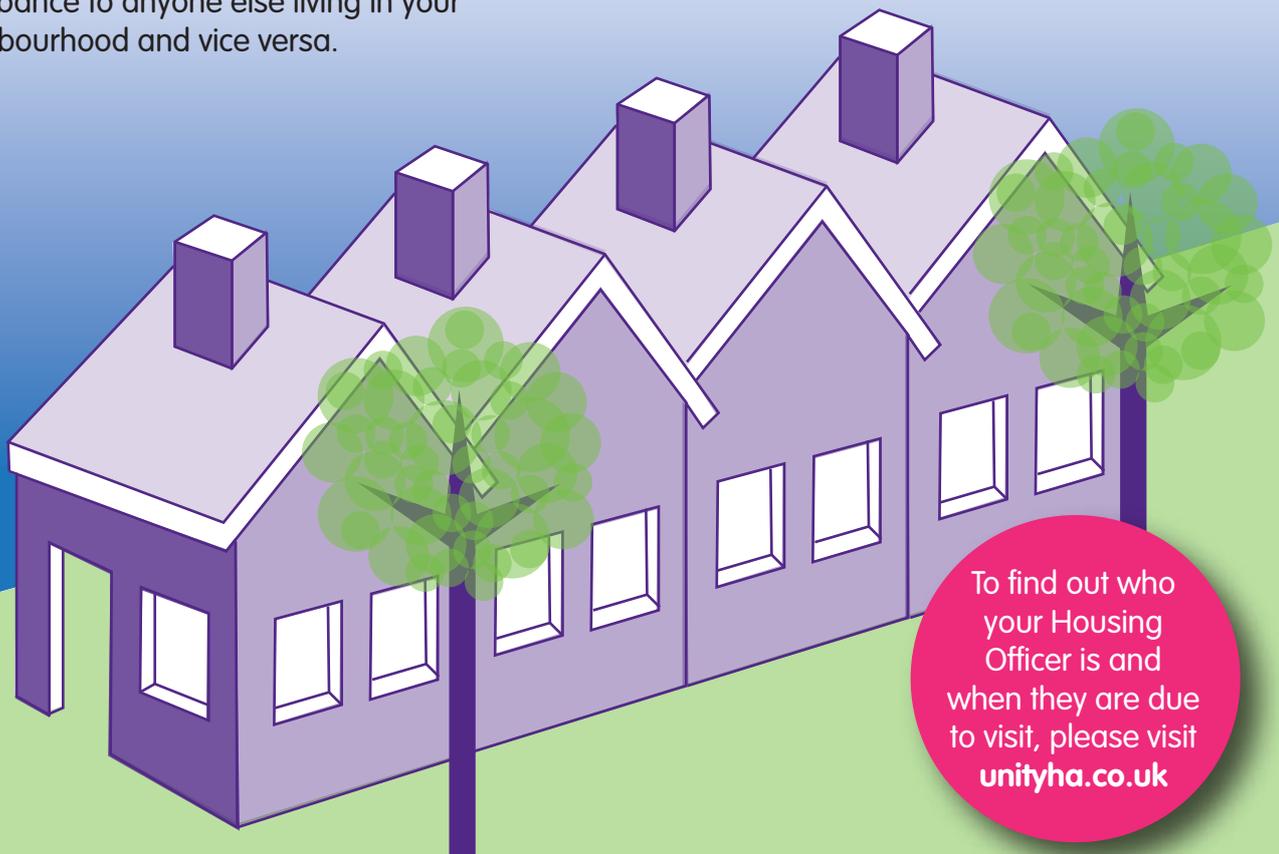
E **Environment** - You will have the opportunity to bring to the attention of your housing officer any concerns you have about your neighbourhood or estate.

A **Attitude** - Your Housing Officer will ask you about your attitude towards your neighbours and their attitude towards you. They may also ask you if you have experienced any anti-social behaviour.

L **Lifestyle** - Your Housing Officer will make sure that your lifestyle is not causing a disturbance to anyone else living in your neighbourhood and vice versa.

T **Tenancy Enforcement** - Your Housing Officer will check that you have not breached the terms of your tenancy agreement in any way and advise you about what you can do to rectify any issues.

H **Health** - Your Housing Officer will check that your physical and emotional health is satisfactory and give you advice about services that may be able to help you, if your needs are not being met.



To find out who your Housing Officer is and when they are due to visit, please visit unityha.co.uk

Kamila's Estate Walkabouts

Thursday 9th June & Thursday 28th July

Copgrove Road, Ryan Place, Upland Gardens, Fearnville Road, Montagu Avenue, Lawrence Gardens, Dorset Road, Ruthven View, Luxor Road, Cowper Grove

Wednesday 15th June & Friday 5th August

Scott Halls, Fieldhouse Drive, Pennythorne Drive

Thursday 23rd June & Wednesday 10th August

Ponderosa Close, Hill Top Mount, Ellers, Alcester Terrace, Bayswaters, Bexleys, Elford

Friday 1st July & Thursday 18th August

Parkwood Crescent

Wednesday 6th July & Thursday 25th August

Rosebank Crescent, Hessle Road, Royal Parks, Tagore House, Mitford Road, Model Avenue, School Mews, Wesley Road, Fielding Gate/Mews, Mistress Lane, Highfield Gardens, Reyden Mews

Thursday 14th July & Thursday 1st September

Thorn Drive, Briarsdales, Kitcheners, Kimberley Place, Poole Crescent/Road, Maryfield Crescent, Thornfield Way

Friday 22nd July & Friday 9th September

Sholebroskes, Mandela Court, Umoja House, Orlika Court, Chapeltown Road, Mexboroughs, Reginalds



Rashpal's Estate Walkabouts

Tuesday 5th July – Devon Close, Leicester Close

Thursday 14th July – Cliff Terrace, Unity Close, Deighton View, Blackmoor Road, Fir Tree Approach

Tuesday 19th July – Stainbeck Road/Avenue, Bentleys, Stonegates

Thursday 4th August - Haslewood Drive/View, Rigton Green, Leopold Street, Ashton Court

Tuesday 9th August - Jackie Smart Court, Louis Street, Cowper Street, Dodgson Avenue, Frankland Place, Hamilton Avenue

Tuesday 16th August – Harehills Ave, Newton Grove, Pear Tree House, Windrush Court

Help us to improve our service by returning your Census form

Unity carries out a Census of all our tenants about once every four years so that we know who is living in our properties.

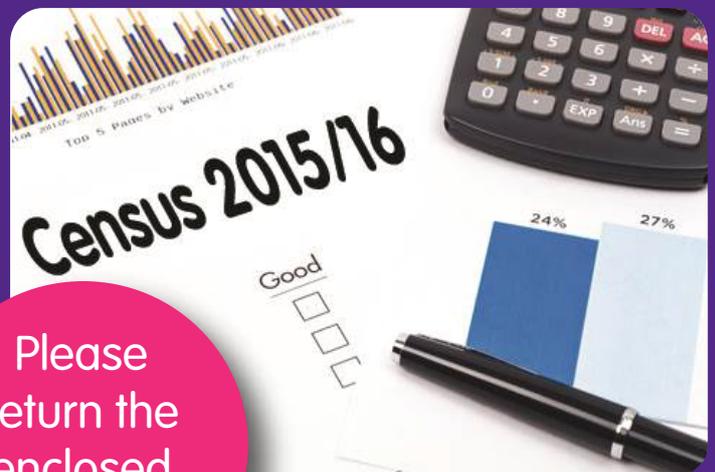
We use the information to provide a better service, tailored to your individual needs – so please check the details on the enclosed form, correct any details as necessary and return it using the FREEPOST envelope provided.

You will also find instructions about how you can confirm your details are up to date by text message on the enclosed letter.

If there is no letter enclosed, either you have already been sent one, or we have already heard from you.

Please
return the
enclosed
form!

Thank you to all tenants who have already completed the form. This is a great help to us.



Nightmare Neighbours

Is someone is making your life a misery?

Anti-Social Behaviour

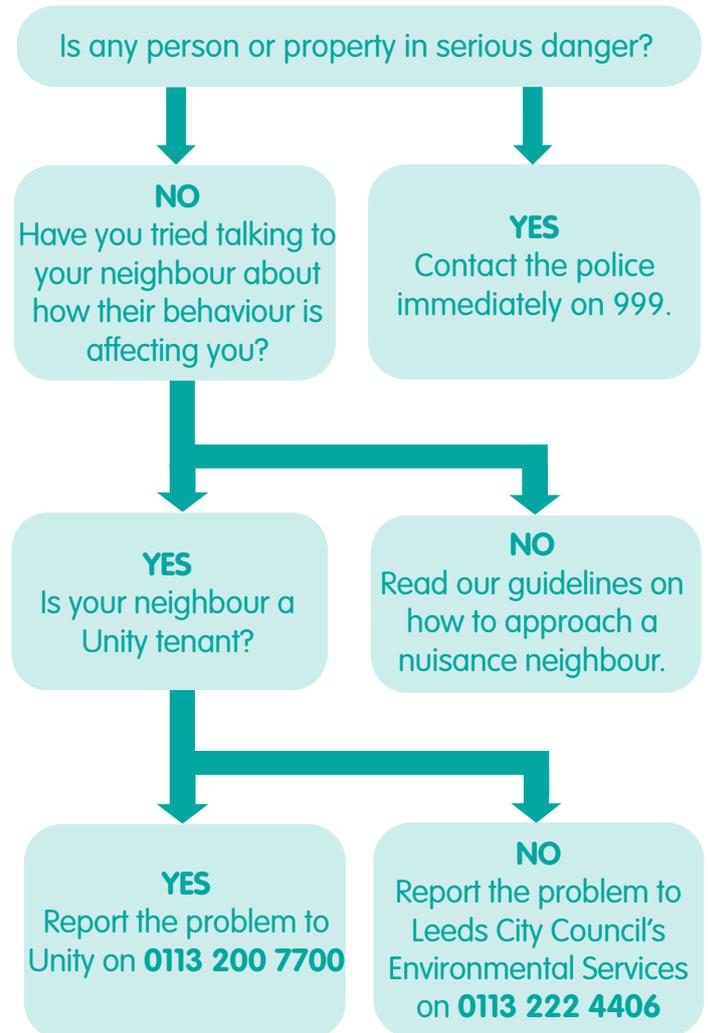
ASB stands for 'Anti-Social Behaviour'. It's the general term used to describe a range of actions that may cause distress, fear or upset other people.

Unity will take reports of ASB seriously, investigate them thoroughly and take action where we can – but we'll need you to co-operate. In some cases you may be able to resolve issues amicably yourself:

Approaching a nuisance neighbour

- ✓ Try talk to them when you're not angry or upset
- ✓ Explain what the nuisance is and how it is affecting you
- ✓ Keep it short and keep to the facts
- ✓ Listen to their response
- ✓ If you find yourself getting angry during the conversation or if the other person is getting angry, walk away.
- ✓ If the nuisance is being caused by children, **do not** speak to them directly; **always** speak to their parent or guardian.
- ✓ **Do not retaliate** - Any action you take in retaliation could limit or stop any action we take. Also you could end up having an ASB complaint made against you.

How do I report ASB?



As the weather gets warmer, we have more enquiries about how to deal with pest problems. Unity does not take responsibility for treating any type of infestation, and unfortunately, due to budget cuts, neither does Leeds City Council.

Problems with pests?

 Try **Axial Pest Control** on **07957 911030**

- Rats
- Mice
- Cockroaches
- Moles
- Pigeons
- Wasps
- Ants
- Bedbugs
- Flies

Unity cannot endorse any other contractors or third parties. Always get a quote before any work is carried out

If you find mice, rats, fleas, cockroaches or any other pests in your home, you need to contact a local pest-control company to treat them. You will have to make these arrangements yourself and pay for the service you receive.

Beat the Bogus Callers

If in doubt, keep them out!

We have recently had reports of bogus callers attempting to get access to properties. Sadly, they have targeted older and vulnerable people. Please share this advice, from **West Yorkshire Police**, with your relatives, friends and neighbours.

What is 'bogus caller'?

The aim of the bogus caller is to try and talk their way into your home. Bogus callers vary in appearance and use a number of excuses to try and trick their way into peoples homes. Follow this advice to avoid being duped:

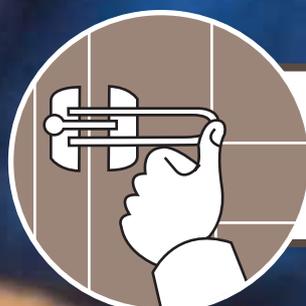
- Before you open the door check to see who it is by looking through your front window or by using a door viewer if you have one.
- Open the door when you have put the chain on.
- Get a good look at their clothing, some official callers will have a uniform bearing their company or organisation logo.

- Utility services may operate a password system, contact your local branch to find out more.
- Suggest that the caller should come back later, you can then check their story by telephoning the organisation or company they claim to represent.
- Check any phone number they give you in your own telephone directory. Do not rely on the number on their card, it may be the number of their partner in crime.
- Always lock the back door before opening the front or vice versa. Bogus callers sometimes work in pairs, one caller could be distracting you at the front and the other sneaking in at the back.
- Let the police and your neighbours know if you have had a suspicious caller at the door.
- Locks and chains are only a deterrent if they are used!
- Remember if in doubt keep them out.



STOP

Is anyone **expected**?
Back door **locked**?



CHAIN

Put the **chain** on
before answering



CHECK

Ask for the caller's **ID**.
Check it by **phone**



Leeds Black Elders Association

Helping you to maintain your home

Leeds Black Elders Association was established in 1991 and provides a number of services. The Association was built on a firm foundation of dedicated committee members, staff and volunteers.

Leeds Black Elders Association takes great pride in providing specialised provision for black elders, ensuring that their particular needs are being met but, their main aim is to address the many issues affecting **all** elders in the community.

Gardening Scheme

The gardening scheme became a Social Enterprise in 2007. It is aimed at older people or the less physically able - who are no longer able to maintain their outdoor spaces.

This scheme is a seasonal service. Usually commencing in spring and ending autumn although they may take other types of outside work, like fencing, in the out of season months. It covers:

- Clearing overgrown gardens
- Cutting and pruning hedges/bushes
- Mowing lawns
- Planting

Handyperson Scheme

The Handyperson Scheme was created to help elders with minor repairs and improvements around their homes. LBEA has a list of qualified tradesmen who are CRB checked who will undertake the larger jobs at a reduced price to service users.

Contacting LBEA

These are not a free services, but the rates are affordable and you can trust the contractors. If you require either of these services, please contact:

Leeds Black Elders Association
3 Reginald Terrace, LS7 3EZ

 0113 245 8863

 info@lbea.co.uk

Leeds Black Elders Association offers a range of other services. Please visit their website **lbea.co.uk** for full details.

Leeds Black Elders would also be keen to hear from anyone who is interested in volunteering in working with the elderly and is looking to gain new skills.



SK Nailz now at Unity Business Centre!

Unity Business Centre welcomes SK Nailz, an exclusive nail studio with an extensive range of treatments provided for men and women. Specialties include:

- Manicures
- Pedicures
- Shellac and UV Gel manicures
- Acrylic Enhancements
- Nail Art

Manicures from £10
and other competitively priced treatments

For more details please visit
Unit 8, Unity Business Centre, 26 Roundhay Road, LS7 1AB
or contact Lianne  **07478358353**.

Do It Yourself Dream Come True

Ideas to improve your home for next to nothing



Hyde Park Source

Hyde Park Source is an organisation which works with local communities to improve their surroundings, designing and creating attractive, exciting, safe and useful places for people to live, work and play. The majority of their projects are in LS6, but they run a host of other projects across Leeds. Their latest mission is to set up a Tool library, in the basement of their headquarters on Rosebank Road.

What is a tool library?

Tool Libraries are a community resource which enable their members to access and share tools, knowledge and skills – just like a normal library except with drills, saws and hammers!

FREE gardening equipment hire:

Hyde Park Source already offers a range of gardening equipment which you may find useful, for FREE hire (although they will happily accept donations if you can afford it).



Seagulls Paint

Seagulls is an environmental social enterprise working to promote and develop a community resource centre in Leeds. They accept donations of half-used tins of paint and mix their own paints on site. They sell paint to the public very cheaply. There are no half empty paint pots on the shelves and the paint has gone through a quality control process to ensure it is of good quality.

Harehills

10-12 Hudson Road,
Harehills, Leeds,
LS9 6DJ

 0113 249 6285

Tuesday - Friday
10.00am - 4.00pm

Kirkstall

Units 3 & 4,
Aire Place Mills,
off Kirkstall Road,
Leeds, LS3 1JL

 0113 245 8863

Monday - Sunday
10.00am - 4.00pm

FREE Tool Hire
Hyde Park Source

 2 Rosebank Road, LS3 1HH 

 0113 245 8863 



Pre-Loved Furniture Stores

Find something unique at a price you can afford

Is this your first home? Or were you unable to take your old furniture with you when you moved? Are you looking for something unique at a low price?

Or maybe you have some good-quality furniture which you'd like to go to a good home. We suggest you try:

Poverty Aid UK

A self-funding non-profit organisation to help some of the most vulnerable people in Leeds.

165 - 169 Cardigan Road, Leeds, LS6 1QL

Opening hours:

Monday - Saturday 10.00am - 6.00pm

Sunday 1.00pm - 4.00pm

 0113 274 4009

www.povertyaiduk.co.uk

Emmaus Leeds

A quality second-hand furniture store with a cafe, hire out meeting/leisure room and a supervised car park free for the public to use. Since 2007, Emmaus have also had a furniture stall in Leeds Market near the corn exchange.

St Mary's Street, Leeds, LS9 7DP

Opening hours:

Monday to Saturday 9.00am - 4.45pm

 0113 248 4288

www.emmaus.org.uk/leeds

Sydney Bridge Furniture Project

Help for people on low incomes, for instance those receiving Tax Credits or Benefits.

395-397 Harehills Lane, Leeds, LS9 6AP

Opening hours:

Monday - Friday 9.30am - 5.00pm

Saturday 11.30am - 5.00pm

 0113 217 5388

www.sydneybridge.org.uk



SLATE (South Leeds Alternative Trading Enterprise)

Quality unused and second-hand furniture and electrical goods. They also sell beds and white goods. Local delivery service available.

1 Low Road, Leeds, LS10 1QR

Opening hours:
Monday - Friday 9.30am - 4.00pm

 0113 270 4005

www.slateleeds.org.uk

Feel Good Furniture

New store, part of the SLATE Enterprise. SLATE established the original Feel Good Furniture Shop in 2005 to provide training for adults with learning disabilities and to help reuse people's unwanted furniture.

44-46 Canal Road, LS12 2PL

www.slateleeds.org.uk

Revive Leads

Accepts donations and sells low cost furniture and clothes to the general public.

East Leeds Waste Sorting Site
Limewood Road, Leeds, LS14 1LU

Opening hours:
8.00am - 4.00pm (November - March)
8.00am - 6.00pm (April - October)

Leeds & Moortown Furniture Stores

Provides, via referral agencies, donated household furniture and furnishings to people resident in Leeds. They collect items free of charge.

Unit D, Seacroft Industrial & Trade Park
Coal Road
Leeds, LS14 2AQ

 0113 243 5455

www.leedsandmoortown.org.uk

FREE Fruit & Veg Plants Plus tips and advice



Back to Front is an organisation aimed at encouraging residents of Chapeltown and Harehills to use their front gardens to grow fruit, vegetables and other produce.

Initially, Back to Front built three demonstration gardens in Chapeltown and Harehills to show what could be possible. The colourful gardens produced so much food that one family said that they made a curry nearly everyday from their own front garden!

If you'd like to get hold of some free plants, seeds and gardening tips, why not attend this free workshop?

Dates:

Tuesday 14th June

Tuesday 12th July

Tuesday 9th August

Tuesday 6th September

Tuesday 4th October

Tuesday 1st November

Where?

SHINE, Harehills Road,
LS8 5HS

Time:

10.30am

FREE!

Contacting Unity

T: 0113 200 7700

E: uha@unityha.co.uk

W: www.unityha.co.uk

Office Hours:

Monday: 9am - 5pm

Tuesday: 9am - 5pm

Wednesday: 10am - 5pm

Thursday: 9am - 5pm

Friday: 9am - 5pm

If you have an emergency repair when the office is shut, please ring our emergency repairs number (see below). If we have to change our emergency repairs number for any reason you can get the new one by phoning 0113 200 7700 and listening to the message.

Emergency Repairs  0845 634 2766

e.g. serious floods and leaks, total loss of water and electricity, the only toilet is blocked.

Emergency Gas Repairs  01757 244510

e.g. total heating or hot water failure when Unity's office is closed the next day.

Transco (gas leaks)  0800 111 999

Repairs by email: repairs@unityha.co.uk

For information at your fingertips, visit our website at www.unityha.co.uk for leaflets, latest news and community information.

For comments and suggestions about this newsletter please contact Lewis Holloway on **0113 200 7751** or email lewis.holloway@unityha.co.uk

Leeds City Council Services

Adult Social Care

 0113 222 4401

Anti-Social Behaviour

 0113 222 4402

 onestop@leeds.gov.uk

Children Social Care

 0113 222 4403

Council tax and housing benefit

 0113 222 4404

 lcc.benefits@leeds.gov.uk

Complaints and compliments

 0113 222 4405

Environmental services

Contact the Council's environmental services to get bulky items taken away for free.

 0113 222 4406

 refusecollection@leeds.gov.uk

Highways

 0113 222 4407

 highways@leeds.gov.uk

Registrars

 0113 222 4408

Planning

 0113 222 4409

Minicom

 0113 222 4410



Problems understanding?

If you need any of our information translating or if you need an interpreter, please contact us. We can also provide this information in large print or on CD if you need us to.