

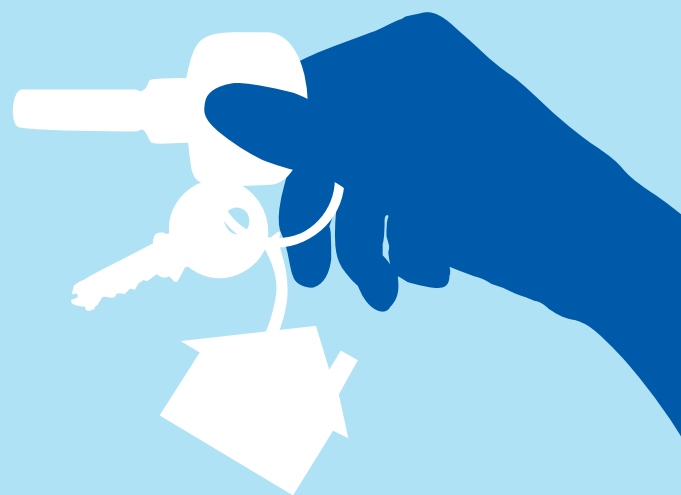
Moving on

Housing Options is the website gateway to all affordable housing in London. If you are unable to afford to buy your own home or rent a good quality home on the open market then they can help you.

The Housing Options Service has been designed so that anyone looking for an affordable home in London will only need to fill in one application form to gain access to all the different Housing Associations.

On this website, you will find all the homes that are available to buy through New Build HomeBuy (formerly known as shared ownership), a 'part buy, part rent' opportunity and other affordable housing schemes. There are two HomeBuy Agents in London, Metropolitan Home Ownership and Tower Homes.

As soon as you Create a User Account for free and fill in an application form, you can view all the available, affordable homes across London. You can view all properties across London by clicking on property search - you don't have to Create a



User Account to view. Once you have filled in your application form outlining your favourite searches, you will receive weekly updates on homes that match your needs.

For more information and to register your details please visit www.housingoptions.co.uk



Complaints Policy

We aim to provide a first class service, but there may be occasions when you are not happy about something and if this is the case it is important that you tell us. You can complain about any aspect of our service, for example:

- If a repair has not been carried out properly
- If you have not received information you have asked for
- If you feel that a member of staff, a board member or a contractor has not behaved reasonably towards you.

We hope that complaints can be sorted out informally, but if not then the formal procedure will have to be followed. If after exhausting this procedure you are still not happy you can refer your complaint to the Independent Housing Ombudsman and the contact details are set out below:

Housing Ombudsman Service
81 Aldwych
London
WC2B 4HN
Telephone: 020 7421 3800
Lo Call: 0845 7125 973
Website: www.ihos.org.uk
Email: info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk

New Tenant Services Authority replaces the Housing Corporation

From 1 December 2008 the Housing Corporation ceased to exist. It has been replaced by two new organisations – the Tenant Services Authority (TSA) and the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA). Tenant Services Authority (TSA) is the new independent regulator of affordable housing in England. As a Social Landlord, Crown Housing Association is registered with them.

For more information the contact details are:

Tenant Services Authority
Maple House
149 Tottenham Court Road
London
W1T 7BN
Telephone number: 0845 230 7000
Website: www.tenantservicesauthority.org

CHAtterbox

CROWN HOUSING ASSOCIATION • TENANTS' NEWSLETTER • SUMMER 2009



The sun was shining, the weather was hot, and what a fabulous day the tenants and their friends and families had at the Open Day at The Highbury Terrace and Ronalds Road Sheltered Scheme on Saturday 13 June 09.

The Open Day saw the long awaited opening of our first communal space here, The Conservatory. This was opened officially by the Mayor of Islington, Cllr. Anna Berent. The day started with the Tenants' Involvement Group (TIG) meeting and then the fun started at 12 noon when the Mayor arrived. The Mayor met our tenants including the oldest tenant 95 year old Anna.

Representatives from Age Concern, The National Pensioners' Convention and The London Fire Service were available to provide information to the tenants. A tombola stall, a good-as-new

stall and a raffle helped raise funds for the tenants' group.

There was a live "The Good Old Days" show in the garden and everyone joined in. "We all loved it" declared one happy tenant.

This was followed by cash bingo then a few drinks and a fish and chip supper. Everyone commented how nice the day had been.

A BIG thank you to all those, too numerous to mention, that helped make the day a success.

My Money Man

by Helena Deacons, Housing Officer

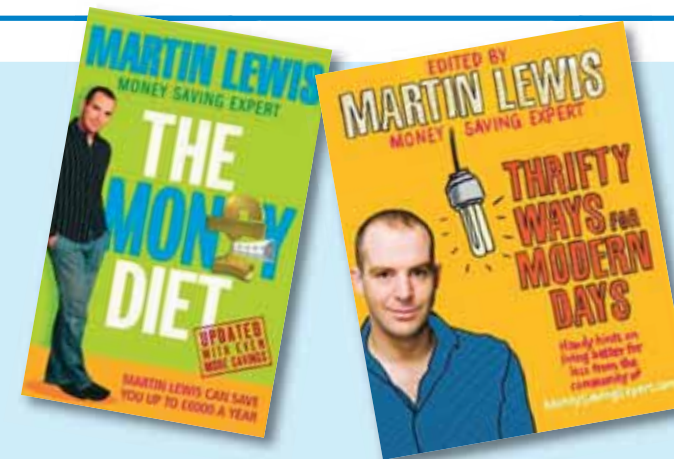
Okay, he's not *My money man*, I don't have an exclusive relationship with him, I'll share him with you. Martin Lewis, creator of moneysavingexpert.com, is my favourite factual author.

I bought his book, *The Money Diet*, a couple of years ago when my husband left work to start a new business and we only had one (small) income coming in. The book starts by asking 'Why have you bought this book, haven't you heard of libraries?' (my words). It starts off good, and just gets better. It's easy to read and easy to follow. The book has been updated since I bought it, and there are two others out now; *The Three Most Important Lessons You've Never Been Taught* and *Thrifty Ways for Modern Days*.

On the website you can review your finances and see where you can make savings. The Budget Planner will answer two important questions for you:

- Do I spend more than I earn?
- What can I afford to spend?

For those with access to the internet, you can receive a free weekly email of money saving tips. Along with ways to cut heating, food and shopping bills, these often include discount vouchers for high street restaurant chains, for those who, like me, just have to go out, dahling!



MY THREE TOP TIPS FOR SAVINGS INCLUDE:

Utilities

Switch provider.

Stop saving if you have debts.

I know Mum always said to save for a rainy day but if you are paying 15% to 30% for your lending, but you're earning virtually nothing on your savings, the sums don't make sense. Clear your debts first, and then start saving.

Stop buying daily papers –

they only make you depressed anyway.

If you get into financial difficulty... ACT STRAIGHT AWAY

STEP 1:

You need to make us aware: Your rent must be your number one priority (along with Council Tax). These are the two bills you must pay each month – before going out, cigarettes, holidays. Yes, I know I'm no fun, but at least you'll have a roof over your head. I really don't like taking people to court for possession of their homes, but by the time I've got to court, I've been left with no other choice.

STEP 2:

You should also seek advice from your local Citizens Advice Bureaux, who have excellent debt advisers (see your local telephone book for contact details).

Alternatively, call the free debt advice services of the National Debtline 0800 808 4000 or the Consumer Credit Counselling Service on 0800 138 1111.

**Whatever you do, do something.
DON'T IGNORE DEBT –
IT WON'T GO AWAY.**

Estate Inspection Dates for July to December 2009

Alan Marre House	8 July	7 October
Archbishop Coggan House	2 September	2 December
Beck House	9 September	18 November
Broadmead	15 July	14 October
Conifer House	9 September	18 November
Connaught House	6 August	4 November
Durham Road	12 August	11 November
Eltham Hill / Kingsground	8 July	7 October
Graysbrook	21 October	9 December
Griffiths Road	12 August	11 November
Grove Court	15 July	14 October
Haling Grove	21 October	9 December

Havelock House	2 September	2 December
Highbury Terrace/ Ronalds Road	Scheme Manager will notify	
John Vetch House	2 September	2 December
Mackenzie Trench House	15 July	14 October
Mount Close	15 July	14 October
Raynesfield	12 August	11 November
Southbank	9 September	18 November
Spring Court	8 July	7 October
Westhaven	21 October	9 December

These dates are subject to change if court dates and other urgent situations arise. We welcome tenants to get involved and if you wish to come along please contact the office.

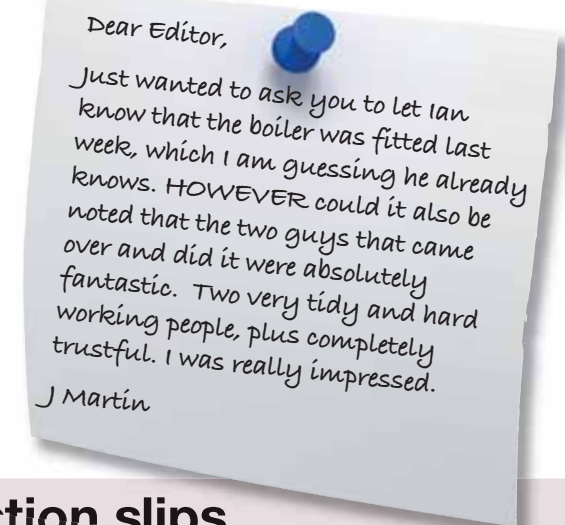
Gas Safe Register replaces CORGI

From 1 April 2009, Gas Safe Register replaced the CORGI gas registration scheme in Great Britain. With 14 people dying from carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning last year due to badly installed, repaired and maintained gas appliances, keeping the public safe is Gas Safe Register's top priority.

It is essential that we get into every home each year to carry out a gas safety check and service. Please help us - it could save your life.

All contractors that work for Crown Housing Association have been vetted to ensure that they comply with the new legislation. Every Gas Safe registered engineer has a photo ID card with a unique licence number, and details of the work they are qualified to do.

To check this information simply call the helpline on **0800 408 5500** or enter the engineer's licence number on the website www.gassaferegister.co.uk



Tenant satisfaction slips

Every year we receive around 1500 requests for repairs which we categorise as Emergency, Urgent or Routine. Satisfaction slips are sent out to every tenant with every order. On average only 16% of the forms are returned. The other 84% satisfaction slips are vital to us so that we can monitor contractors' performance, completion times, attendance and that you are

happy with the service that has been provided.

Due to the low number of returned forms, we will not be sending out the satisfaction slips any longer, but we will be telephoning every tenant that requests a repair to find out if the job has been completed and if you are satisfied with the works carried out. Sheltered tenants

will continue to receive Tenant Satisfaction Slips as normal and these can be returned to the Scheme Manager.

The telephone survey only takes a few minutes and is an essential way of us keeping in touch with you and receiving your feedback on the services provided. Please check that we have up-to-date contact numbers for you.