

Dolphin Living



RESIDENT NEWSLETTER

2021



“

Brand new building, great size, excellent quality and service from Touchstone as repairs are done in a promptly manner. Dolphin staff have always been so friendly, in line with what would be expected from such an organisation.

Thorney Street resident

”

WELCOME

TO OUR 2021 NEWSLETTER

Dolphin Living is delighted to welcome you to our second resident newsletter. 2020 was a unique year and in this edition we explain how we reacted to the pandemic and supported our residents.

We wish you all a safe and healthy 2021.

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Accelerator Scheme**

Supporting London's essential workers



Welcome to Dolphin Living's annual newsletter, keeping you up-to-date with our latest activities.

First, a short reminder of who we are. Dolphin Living is the collective name for the Dolphin Square Charitable Foundation. We support Londoners on modest incomes by providing homes for workers at below market rents. We own 800 homes across nine London boroughs all within a 30-minute commute to Westminster; over 80% of which are let at below market rent. We buy and develop new homes, as well as managing our portfolio.

2020 was tumultuous. Despite adverse circumstances, Dolphin Living worked hard to keep your homes safe and we celebrated some successes. In particular we completed 140 homes during the first lockdown and the team has worked hard to let all of the homes, whilst ensuring working practices were in place to keep visitors, residents and staff safe. We are grateful to all of you for your co-operation with our staff and service providers.

Last year was difficult for all of us – uncertain for some and life-changing for others. As a responsible landlord we want to work with you to enable you to maintain your tenancy should your circumstances change. The most important thing we can do is listen to you and we encourage you to contact us if your circumstances change and you need support to pay your rent.

We started 2020 with plans to review conditions and health and safety matters at a number of our homes. Despite some Covid-related delays, the reviews have been completed and contracts have been awarded for a refurbishment of one of our properties, Grove Court in Ealing, which will commence in early 2021. Work will also begin on replacing front doors at over 150 of our homes, in compliance with evolving fire safety guidance. Prior to the start of any works, we will be in touch with those who will be affected.

Our planned resident events had to be put on hold during 2020; however, we kept in contact with residents, in particular those identified as being potentially vulnerable. Resident events will resume as soon as it is safe to do so and we look forward to seeing many of you in 2021 – both familiar faces and new residents.

Our commitment to providing homes to London's workers on modest incomes remains strong and the last year highlighted how much we all rely on critical workers. We continue to highlight the need for more support for workers on modest incomes, particularly in respect of housing, and have written numerous articles for local, sector and national publications in support of London's workers.

Dolphin homes are needed more than ever for London to remain a safe, desirable and vibrant place to live and work.

Olivia Harris
CEO Dolphin Living

Touchstone: your first point of contact

Dolphin Living is your landlord and owns the building you live in. Touchstone is the first point of contact for our residents, and acts on Dolphin Living's behalf as your property managers.

As a responsible landlord, Dolphin Living is committed to regularly reviewing our relationships with the businesses that we work with. We're delighted to say that, following a competitive tender exercise in the final months of 2020, Touchstone will be re-appointed as our management partner for at least the next three years. The Touchstone team has been with us from the start, helping us deliver and maintain affordable homes for Londoners, and their reappointment will provide continuity for Dolphin and our customers.

Focusing on you

Central to Dolphin's plans for the future is a greater focus on customers, both in their homes and in the wider community, and Touchstone will work closely with us to achieve this. Additional team members will be appointed in London and a programme of interaction with customers developed, delivering greater communication and more events (which will be virtual for the time being given the ongoing Covid-19 restrictions). This programme will build on our 'You Said, We Did' initiative and we'll continue to seek your feedback to help us continue to develop our service and to understand how well we're doing.

The experience with the whole team of Touchstone was great from the beginning... everyone has been extremely helpful and great to deal with!

Dolphin Living resident

Benefitting from tech

Alongside this move to support a greater focus on you and your communities are other initiatives to improve the customer experience and provide management efficiencies through a greater use of technology. These include the implementation of a fully on-line customer application process, a move towards all customers paying by Direct Debit and improved reporting tools to allow Dolphin more insight into the performance of our homes and Touchstone's role in managing them.

If you need to get in touch with Touchstone, please call 01225 838 490 or email info@touchstonecps.com

Customer Satisfaction Survey 2020

In March 2020 we sent our annual satisfaction survey to all our residents; this helped us to understand more about who you are and what you thought of your Dolphin Living homes. Thank you to everyone that responded to the survey.

 **86%**
of you are satisfied with the
QUALITY OF YOUR HOME

85% 
of your home gives you
VALUE FOR MONEY

 **62%**
of you living in
a Dolphin Living property
ARE ENABLED TO SAVE

 *Right from the start to the end everything went smoothly. Staff were very polite, friendly and helpful.* 
Dolphin resident



Our 2021 Survey

In March, Touchstone will email you a short survey giving you the opportunity to provide feedback on your experience with Touchstone and your home. If you prefer to carry out the survey via phone, Touchstone will give you a call.

You Said, We Did

You asked for a better way of reporting repairs.

Fixflo has been rolled out across all our developments – this allows you to log a repair online at any time of the day and rate your contractor. This provides valuable feedback for how we manage future repairs. See page 12 for more information.

You asked us to review 'meet and greet' entrances due to Covid-19 restrictions.

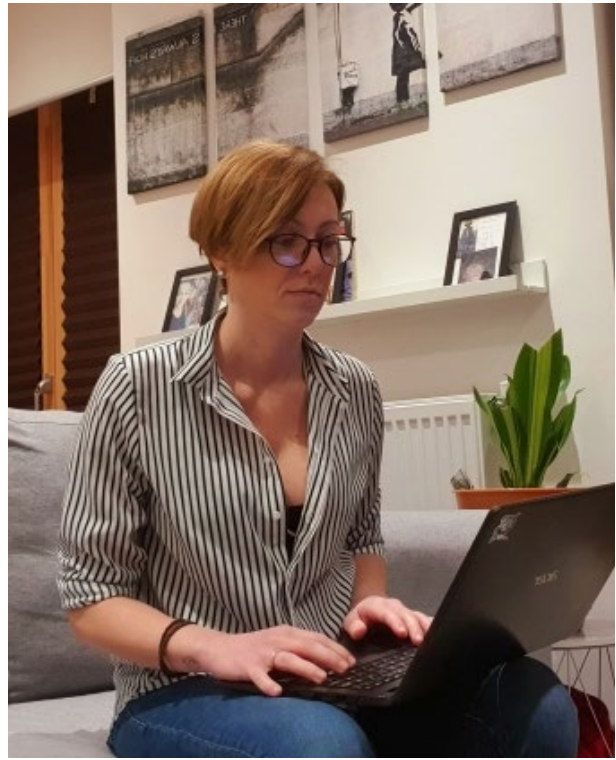
We understand that some residents may have to self-isolate and so, in our properties where a meet and greet system is in place, we have allowed for the second door to be unlocked so you can receive deliveries to your door. If you are having to self-isolate and are having any difficulties please contact your Property Manager.

Our Ealing residents asked for improvements to the communal external areas.

We improved security, painted garden sheds, tidied the bin stores and a replacement front door programme will commence shortly.

With increasing numbers of home deliveries, you asked for better security in communal areas where packages are left.

We installed frosted glass on building front doors to obscure the view of communal areas to passers-by. We encourage residents to request couriers notify them when deliveries have been made to also help mitigate problems.



“ The team members from Dolphin were extremely friendly and so helpful, can’t thank them enough. The same goes for Touchstone... great work from them. ”

Dolphin resident



Building Community Resident Events

You have told us you like opportunities to meet your Dolphin Living neighbours and to bring the community closer. With this in mind we planned to host events throughout summer 2020; unfortunately, many of these had to be postponed.

We did however hold a virtual meeting for our Kennington Lane and Holyoak Road residents at the end of the year, and we are looking forward to holding more virtually in 2021, until we are able to safely meet in person.

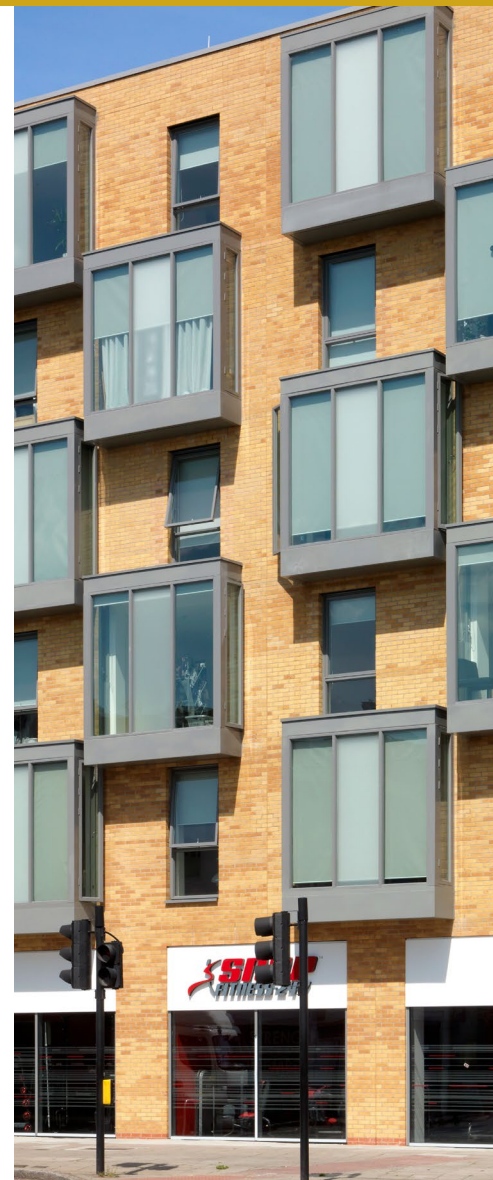
We'll be in touch with you soon to let you know the definite dates for the 2021 events, our proposed months for events for each development are:

January Porchester Road and Wollstonecraft Street

February Gorleston Street and Thorney Street

March Hopkins Street, Lanhill Road and One Church Square

April Lanark Road, Lanhill Road, Havelock House, The Hermitage and Mount Close



Want to set up a Resident Forum?

Many residents have expressed an interest in establishing Resident Forums. These forums give you the opportunity to discuss common issues, like repairs and maintenance, organise social activities and represent resident views to Dolphin Living and Touchstone.

We believe these provide a great opportunity to promote and support community spirit and cooperation amongst residents. To form a Resident Forum, 51% of homes within a building will need to agree to join, and Dolphin Living would be very happy to help you set up and get going.

Please do get in touch if you are interested in creating or taking part in a Resident Forum, and we can provide information and guidance:

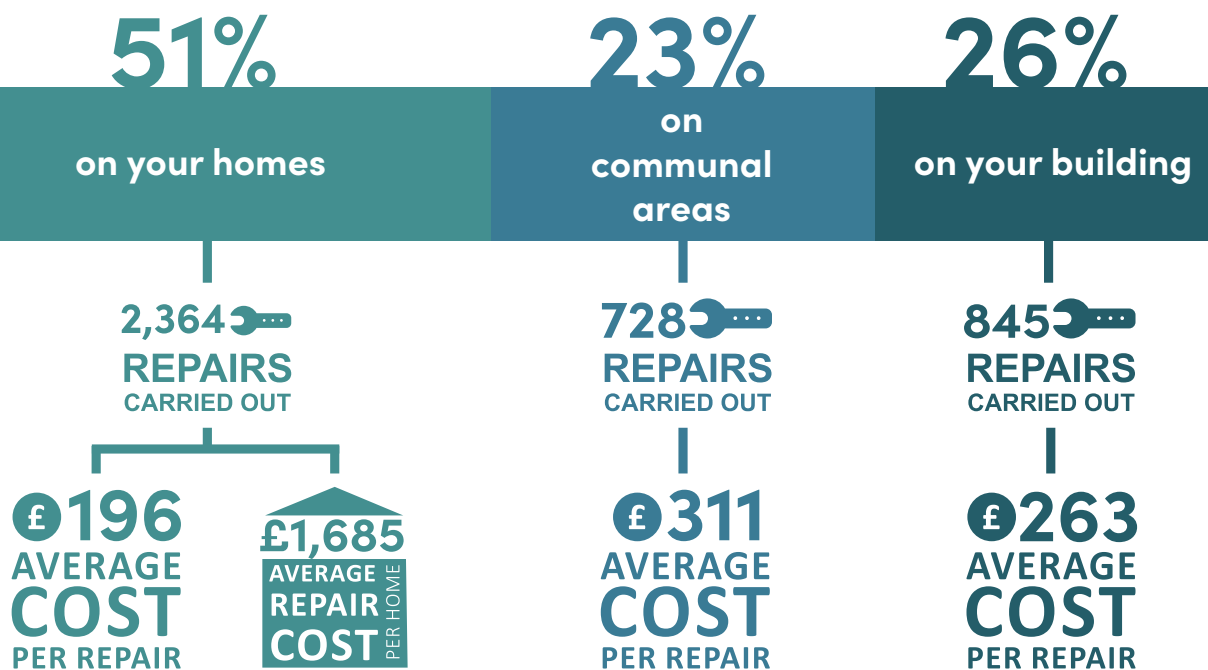
ValentineOhagwa@dolphinliving.com

Our performance

We strive continuously to improve and upgrade your homes. Despite the challenges of 2020, we spent £940,000 on day-to-day repairs and maintenance to ensure your homes are safe and well-maintained.

We increased cleaning in all communal areas and ensured all flats were Covid-safe prior to new residents moving in. Despite the pandemic we maintained 100% compliance with statutory health and safety checks.

Breakdown of spend across the whole portfolio:



Five highest spends across the whole portfolio:



In-flat repairs



Heating & hot water



Health & safety



Plumbing & drainage



Building repairs

Visit our new website!

www.dolphinliving.com

This has a dedicated area for our residents which we hope helps answer some of your common queries, and also provides easy access to the Resident Portal where you can log repair issues through Fixflo, and deal with tenancy-related issues.



Reporting repairs

You can access our online repairs portal at any time for all your repair concerns. You can log into the portal directly through our new website to quickly and efficiently diagnose and report a fault.

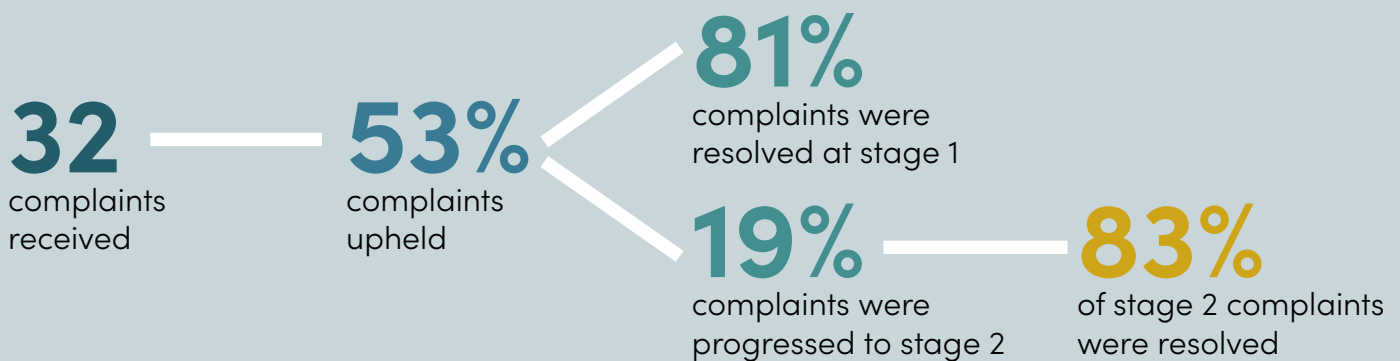


Need to report a repair now? [Click here.](#)

Your feedback

We cannot always get it right and we welcome feedback from you. What you tell us enables us to improve all elements of our service to you: from how we communicate, to repair times and communal area improvements – and whatever else you want to tell us about. So please get in touch:

Claudia.Bidoia@touchstoneresi.co.uk



Our complaints procedure has been updated for 2021; you still report them in the same way but we will now aim to give a first response within 10 working days. Full details of the policy can be found on the [Resident Portal](#).

A photograph of a brick building with a large tree in the foreground and a yellow text overlay. The building is made of red brick and has several windows. A large, leafy green tree is in the foreground, partially obscuring the building. A yellow rectangular box is overlaid on the image, containing white text. The text reads: "Helping you buy a home:" followed by a horizontal line, and then "Westminster Homeownership Accelerator Scheme".

Helping you
buy a home:

Westminster
Homeownership
Accelerator Scheme



Our Accelerator Scheme helps working Londoners become home-owners. Residents in the scheme have household earnings of less than £90,000 per year and savings of at least £22,500. They live in one of our homes for a period of up to three years and earn money on their savings to help them secure enough for a deposit on a new home in London.

We have helped 17 households move into homeownership in the last four years. Accelerator participants have bought homes throughout London, from Bexley to Haringey, Merton to Southwark, and Brent to Westminster. Participants have purchased on the open market, through Help to Buy, Discount Market Sale or Shared Ownership; and received between £6,000 and £19,000 worth of grant from Dolphin Living.

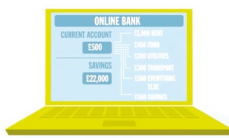




In February 2017, a couple and their toddler moved into our Lanhill Road development in Westminster.



Alice* was a self-employed artist, and Robert* was a partner in a start-up events company.



They had a combined annual income of £52,000 and savings of £31,400.



They lived happily at Lanhill Road for three years, having previously paid much higher rent to live in Westminster.



Over three years Dolphin Living was able to help increase their deposit by an additional £19,000 which helped them purchase, through Help to Buy, a three-bedroom home in Brent.



The extra space was much-needed – baby number two had been born whilst living at Lanhill Road. Their growing family moved into their new home in May 2020.

** The facts described in this story are all true, however names have been changed due to family sensitivities*

Click on the link to find out more about our Accelerator scheme:
www.dolphinliving.com/find-a-home/home-accelerator

If you have any queries please
contact us at info@touchstonecps.com
or call 01225 838 490.

www.dolphinliving.com



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