

Tenants' Conference

Southampton Novotel
Thursday 16 September 2021



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SOUTHAMPTON
CITY COUNCIL

Tenants' Conference

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Welcome!

Frank Boulton
Chairperson

Hello from Cllr Vassiliou

Cllr Spiros Vassiliou

**Cabinet Member for Communities,
Culture & Heritage**



**SOUTHAMPTON
CITY COUNCIL**

LOOKING AT

**COUNCIL
HOUSING
STIGMA**



**Lynda Walton & Magenta Catz
Tenant Inspectors**

SEE THE PERSON.

NOT THE STEREOTYPES

VISIT SEETHEPERSON.ORG







A new deal for
social housing



Chapter 4: Tackling stigma and celebrating thriving communities

Staff Questionnaire: Stigma in Council Housing



We are the Tenant Inspectors, a small group of tenants from across the city who investigate different areas of the housing service. We are currently examining *Stigma surrounding council housing*.

As staff who work as part of Council Housing we would appreciate your views on stigma, and your ideas on what the Council can do to tackle it.

All information will be treated anonymously.

About you

- 1) Which team do you currently work in? _____
- 2) How many years have you worked for the council? _____
- 3) Are you currently or formerly a council tenant? Yes No

Our definition of Council Housing Stigma is: "treating council tenants as inferior, assuming tenants as poor, uneducated, lazy and reliant on benefits. It is about defining tenants due to their tenure rather than as individuals."

- 4) Would you change or add anything to our definition of stigma as listed above? _____

Thinking about your work in Southampton City Council

- 5) Have you encountered the effects of stigma either in your tenant interactions or from other staff members? Yes No

If yes, can you briefly explain your encounter(s) _____

- 6) Do you think it would be beneficial to receive specific training on tackling stigma? Yes No
- 7) From your experience, do you feel the levels of stigma felt by tenants are increasing or decreasing?
Increasing Staying the same Decreasing
- 8) From your experience, do you feel the levels of stigma felt by colleagues are increasing or decreasing?
Increasing Staying the same Decreasing
- 9) Do you feel comfortable/confident in taking any issues around stigma to senior staff?
Yes No
- 10) How confident do you feel that the council deals with issues of stigma? Please indicate on the scale.
(1 = no confidence 5 = very confident)

5



4



3



2



1



Tenant Questionnaire: Your views on being a Council Tenant



We are the Tenant Inspectors, a small group of tenants from across the city that look into different areas of the housing service. We are currently examining *Stigma surrounding council housing*.

Stigma of Council Housing means being discriminated against in any way due to being a council tenant.

We would appreciate your views about how you find being a Council Tenant and your experience of dealing with Council Staff. **Please feel free to continue any answers on a separate sheet if necessary.**

As a token of our thanks, you can enter a free prize draw to win one of two £20 supermarket vouchers.

About you

- 1) How many years have you been a Council Tenant? _____
- 2) What type of property do you live in?
House
Flat
Maisonette
Tower Block
Supported Housing
Other (please state) _____
- 3) Please indicate which age bracket you fit into.
Under 30
30-50
50-70
70+
- 4) What is your postcode? _____

Your experiences of being a Southampton City Council tenant

- 5) What do you like about being a council tenant? _____

- 6) What are the not so good things about being a council tenant? _____

- 7) What makes you feel proud about your community and neighbourhood? _____

- 8) What could be done to improve your community and neighbourhood? _____

Stigma



Thank
you!!!
...



Stigma







SO18 **BIG LOCAL**

*Making a difference in Harefield,
Midanbury & Townhill Park*



Richard George, Emma Rowe & Jo Proctor

Introduction

- 150 Big Local areas across England, each awarded £1.1m to spend over 10+ years
- Funded by the National Lottery Community Fund, administered by Local Trust
- SO18 Big Local covers Townhill Park, Harefield & parts of Midanbury
- Crucially, Big Local projects are resident-led & the decision on what to spend the funds on has to be derived from what the **community** wants



Harefield Hub

- Lack of community centre in Harefield – SO18BL lease a shop unit from SCC to use as a Community Hub



Communication

- Talking to the community about what is really needed
- Often we're a conduit of information between the Community and the Council



SO18 BIG LOCAL
Making a difference in Harefield,
Midanbury & Townhill Park



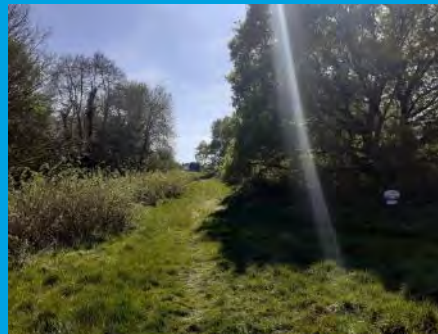
Mosaic Way

- One of our biggest projects, working with TWICS & part funded by the People's Health Trust Lottery
- 65+ mosaics now installed across the SO18BL area – thank you to SCC (and others) for giving permission!



Environmental work

- Fund a Community Gardener
- Organise local litter-picks
- Close relationship with SCC ecologists
- Working with SCC on plans for a “Friends group” for Townhill Park environment



SO18 BIG LOCAL
Making a difference in Harefield,
Midanbury & Townhill Park



Townhill Park Estate Regeneration

- Founded, organise & maintain the Townhill Park Estate Regeneration Forum – focus on improving communications & outcomes for residents
- Townhill Green, Frogs Copse, Roundhill Close, Decommissioning survey



Other collaborations

- Joint projects with the Junior Neighbourhood Wardens
- Aidan Cooper @ Decent Neighbourhoods



Communication, communication, communication!

- @SO18BigLocal
- www.SO18BigLocal.org.uk
- info@SO18BigLocal.org.uk



Creating attractive mosaics around the city

Mosaic Project

Will Rosie



**SOUTHAMPTON
CITY COUNCIL**



Welcome to
Millbrook Towers

WELCOME
TO
MILLBROOK
TOWERS







Welcome to
Millbrook Towers

MILLBROOK TOWERS











Local Housing Office

023 8078 9344

Shirley

Welcome to
**Shirley
Towers**



CCTV
FIA



Attendance dogs only

Notice











MOSAIC
COMING
HERE
SOON!

NOT A
MURDER

















SCC SQUOJI HUNTS!
(What is a squoji hunt?!)

Improving our repairs service

Tenant Repairs Panel

Helen Miller

TENANT REPAIR PANEL

UPDATE 2021



- Hello my name is Helen and I am a member of the Tenant Repair Panel and I am here to give you our yearly update, and what a year it has been !!!



THERE HAVE BEEN A NUMBER
OF CHANGES TAKEN PLACE
THIS YEAR TO PROTECT US
TENANTS AND STAFF ALIKE.

HOUSING OPERATIONS HAD
TO CONCENTRATE AND
PRIORITISE ONLY ON THOSE
REPAIRS THAT WERE DEEMED
URGENT



However all trades have been fully operational since the beginning of June 2020

As you can imagine there was quite a back log of repairs which were put on hold from March to May, however these were all cleared with the help of an external contractor.





The Repair Panel as all other Tenant Engagement Panels had to learn new skills by adjusting to using Zoom for our meetings to be held online rather than face to face meetings.

It has been a task to remember to turn on the microphone when we want to speak, instead of being told “you are on mute” but we have all got there!!!

- What have the Repairs Panel been doing?



- A small focus group have recently looked at the Repairs information on the SCC website to ensure it is clear and understandable. Suggestions have been passed on and changes will be made to the website.
- Some of you will know that the subject of a text reminder service for reported repairs has been discussed for many years. We are pleased to say that at long last the texting service is now in place!!
- We have suggested changes to the moving in standards

■ What have the Repairs Panel been doing?

- Back in 2019-20 following verbal complaints about how long it took to get through to report a repair because of staff shortage and number of menu options. The panel raised these issues with the Customer Contact Manager, we were advised more customer advisors were being recruited and were keen to work with customers to learn and shape the system and customer journey.

Moving forward to 2021 the phone system has recently changed with less menu options. There could even be a Mystery shop taking place on this new system so watch this space.

- We endorsed a sanitaryware review which highlighted environmental benefits and cost effectiveness.
- Flexible appointments for repairs have been raised and although it is not currently available, we will continue to strive to get this in place.





Thank you for listening.
We hope we have given an insight into the
work of the Repair Panel

We meet bi - monthly on a Monday
10am -1pm

If you would like more information, please
do not hesitate to speak to Debbie Collis,
Tenant Engagement Officer



The Tenants Resource Group

Lesley Beyleveld and Brenda Chahal



Galaxy J6



Michael Farleigh



Tim Roberts



iPhone



sloop



Dreena hartup



Lesley

What we would like to see happen next

- Keep a focus on Fuel Poverty
- See a programme to improve existing heating systems
- Continue investing to make existing properties more energy efficient.
- Better link up between Repairs and Properties regarding repair or replacement of faulty heating elements.
- More individual control for tenants.
- A plan to support more tenants to come off the communal heating charge
- More advertising/training courses to support tenants to change energy suppliers to save money





ARRIERS

**Contact us
direct at**

**SouthamptonTRG
@gmail.com**



The Tenants Resource Group

***Thanks for
listening!!***

The amazing Millbrook Garden Gang

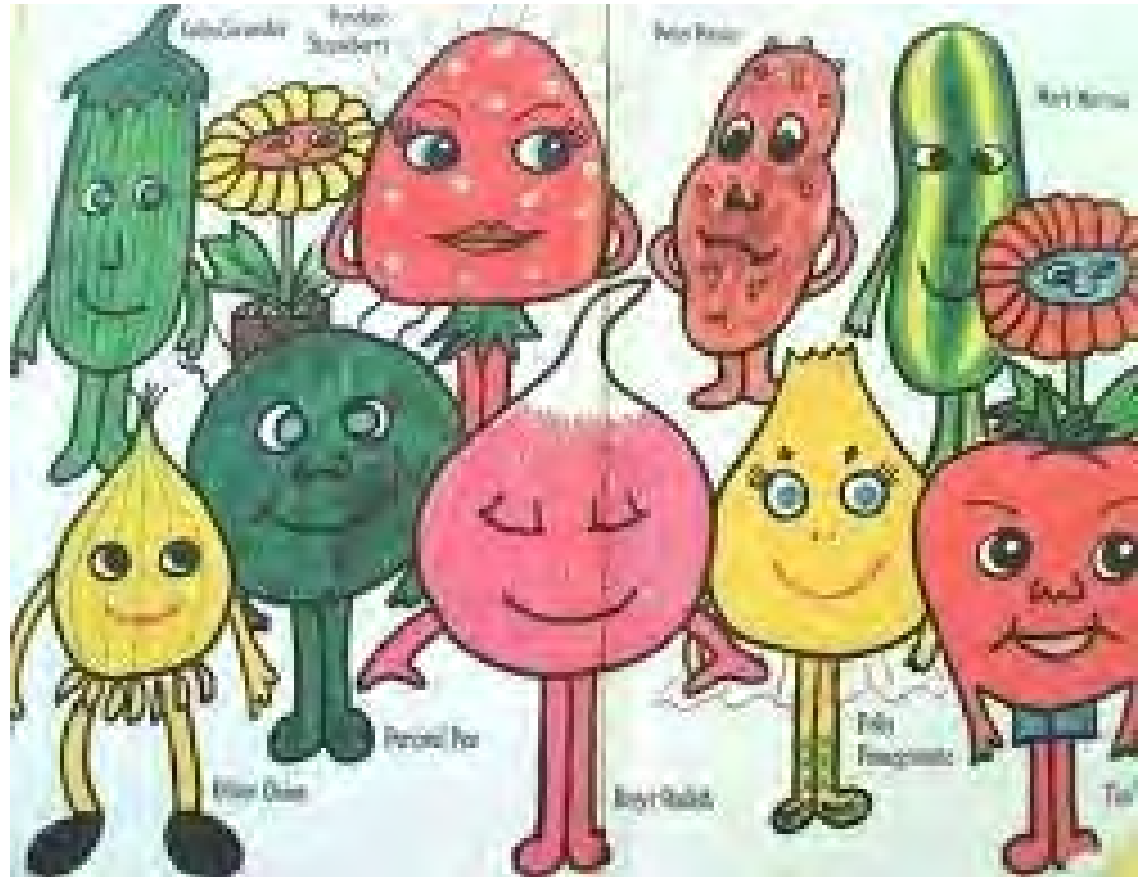
Terrie Rintoul



SOUTHAMPTON
CITY COUNCIL

The Garden Gang

- 36-46 Ennerdale Road



The Garden Gang

- **How it Began**
- **Objectives**
- **Process**

How it Began



Our Objectives

- To build a space for flowers, plants and vegetables.
- Encourage and teach the children about growing, looking after plants and encourage wildlife
- To bring people together that before were a divided community.
- To help with mental health, whether an adult or a child
- Place to relax for the community.

The Process

- Set up a constitution
- Committee
- Apply for a community bank account
- Regular meetings to discuss what we wanted to get out of the space ?
- Funding



Plants for People

- Aidan arranged planting session with Duncan Reade
- Plants from Mayfield Nurseries (part of Solent Mind)
- Parco Civil Engineering
- Artwork by Will Rosie



Lottery Funding

- Applied in April 21
- £10,000 awarded in June 2021



Future Plans

- Complete garden design
- Santorini is the dream
- Get building & planting
- Disabled Access
- Open days



Big Thanks

- Aidan Cooper
- Paul Best – Architect
- Duncan Reade – Solent Minds
- Craig Wilson - Dulux
- Russell Standing – Senior Neighbourhood Warden
- Will Rosie
- Mayfield Nurseries
- Parco Civil Engineering



BIZZIE BEES' GARDEN CLUB

We have started to buzz!

The BB's club was formed in September 2019



[This Photo](#) by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY SA](#)

- Thoughts of a garden club were considered prior to this date, but was taken forward in 2019. However, Covid-19 took hold and everything we hoped for, fell by the wayside.
- Fortunately, in recent months, with the ease of restrictions, we were able to move forward slowly. And now, fingers crossed, we can really make headway with plans, that all the residents in Leaside Way, can be involved in.

The original idea came about from people wanting to do a bit more in the gardens . To enhance what we have. And to give a helping hand, to those who were finding it a little more difficult to manage their own bit of space

We got together and formed a club. We made it formal, with a constitution, code of conduct and opened a bank account

We made a few items to sell, had a few individual donations and raised our first funds. But plans grew and developed so we knew we would need to find further funding.

So it seemed a good idea, for those who could do gardening to help those that couldn't.

Community Chest Funding



- Late in September 2019 we applied to the Community Chest for funding. We were very lucky to be awarded £700 to enable us to buy a shed, water butt, some tools and soil for planting. All of which allows everyone the chance to get in the garden and be involved in whatever way they wish.
- With the help of the team at Travis Perkins and a lady called Rita Ladd, we were able to purchase the shed at a discounted price, a discount that is given to all SCC residents. It took a while, due to shortages, but we got there in the end.



Welcome to Leaside Lodge!

- And our thanks to Ray Ball at SCC for the new addition to the properties. I am sure the new residents will love their new home





Plants donated
by CLC, the
contractors for
refurbishments,
on behalf of SCC.

No jokes about
the size of the
butt please!



Thanks to Decent Neighbourhood Projects

- Our thanks go to Aidan Cooper, and his Team of Dave and Matt. As part of the Project, we were able to have compost bins delivered. The team made the bases and we had trellis made to fit. In time, various plants will hide the trellis and bins, in particular, climbing planting. It will also bring more insects, birds and bees to the gardens.
- Of course, again thanks to the Project, Aidan was able to match fund the donations we have received.





Green City Community Grant



- An application was made to the Green City Community Grant for some equipment. We were again so lucky to be awarded a grant for loppers, a four wheeled trolley and a water barrel. Having these means, residents will not have to lift and carry heavy items around the gardens. Making it even more suitable for those with a mobility issue. Apart from the physical issues, we are very keen to help with the wellbeing of residents. Having been cooped up for 18 months, it was important that we had space to enjoy, with both family, friends and neighbours.



Unfortunately, the deer that manage to get into the gardens, also liked the plants! And a few have been eaten 😞

The gardens are visited by foxes on a regular basis and this year cubs were seen playing. We had a flash mob, with 7 hedgehogs visiting, all at the same time!



Few of the plants that have been allowed to grow



Highways Agency



- Our thanks also go to the Highways Agency for their generous donation of £500. After a lightbulb moment, we approached the Agency for logs to make bug houses. Unfortunately, the logs I had seen had gone for chipping. However, James Butt, Highways Stakeholder Manager, got in touch and visited the gardens. After talking through the plan's, he very kindly donated the club money, which again was match funded. He also offered help with the physical side of gardening, so we will be taking up his offer in the autumn to plant 100's of daffodil bulbs!

Magic Little Grant of £500



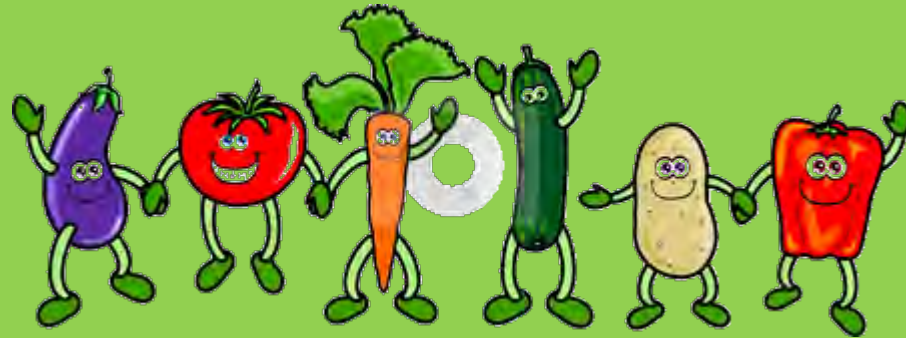
- We also applied for a grant from the above, being part of the Postcode Lottery.
- It was a one off amount of £500 and we were lucky to be awarded this amount, for raised beds to help all those, including those with mobility issues, to be involved with gardening in a community space.



- We have a lot to do in the coming months, but with the help of Southampton City Council Community Chest, the Decent Neighbourhood Project, CLC, the Postcode Lottery and the Green City Community Grant, we have the opportunity, to make our gardens a place to enjoy. Get to know our neighbours a little better, to become better neighbours, make friends, and to improve our health and wellbeing.
- We will be trying things that will work and some that won't work. But we will all learn new skills, pick up new tips from other gardening groups, and look forward to seeing the garden grow.
- Hopefully, we will all be Bizzie Bees and buzzing with excitement 😊

Thank you for listening and we hope it will encourage others to do something similar!

A moment of silence



Dinner time!



Welcome Back!

Frank Boulton
Chairperson

Do we have a good complaints service?

Tenants Scrutiny Panel

Alex Williamson, Abbey Scofield-Marlowe &
Vicky Lee Egerton

**Tenant
Scrutiny
Panel**



**Conference
Update**

What is the Tenant Scrutiny Panel?

The Tenant Scrutiny Panel is a group of trained volunteer council tenants who review the services delivered by Southampton City Council's (SCC) housing department.

We are in a valued position to work in partnership with the council's housing dept, but our decision-making procedure is self-autonomous.

We are proud to say that two of our panel members are also members of the Housing Ombudsman National Tenant Complaints panel

Our main aims and objectives are to:

Scrutinise the housing services that are delivered to all tenants

Make recommendations on how to improve services and implement changes

Act as the final stage in the council's complaints procedure for housing issues.



Personal testimonies from new panel members why they joined the Tenant Scrutiny Panel

Alex

Why did I join the Tenant Scrutiny Panel ? As a block rep, I quickly realised that many of the tenants I represented had no awareness of council procedures or how these were being implemented. Through my Scrutiny panel role I can therefore work to raise awareness and ensure that the procedures in place are accessible to tenants, at the same time as improving SCC's housing performance.

Vicky-Lee

Having been involved in needing the council's help, I looked at their website to find the necessary information and realised it was full of jargon and very ambiguous on procedures. I therefore joined the panel to address this issue but also to gain some insight to the view of the council. I want to help residents get the best service possible and hold Southampton City Council to account on this.



Our activities this year 20- 21



Complaints Report



We undertook this report to check the performance and quality of Housing complaints.

It was found that only 40% were responded to within the set time of 20 days and only 30% were using the correct response template.

We submitted a report to senior staff with recommendations to improve the complaints process.

Just before we finished our Complaints report it was announced The Housing Ombudsman were introducing a new Complaints Handling Code for Local Authority's to adhere to


Complaints Report

There were numerous suggestions in the complaints report, including staff training and to ensure that trends are recorded and lessons are learnt.

Some of these recommendations were also published in the Housing Ombudsman Complaints handling code




We are pleased to say that following our recommendations, the most recent complaint information shows an improvement. We will be continuing to monitor this.



What else has
kept us busy
this year?

- **We designed a supported housing community room booking form with guidelines to remove inconsistency across the city. These are now being used for all tenants that book these community rooms.**
- **Revisited an Anti Social Behavior report previously undertaken to get an update on the recommendations**
- **Suggested Improvements to the moving in standards**
- **Have regularly discussed staff sickness with the relevant dept, given suggestions and received feedback to improve these figures**
- **Developed an action plan to raise awareness of Scrutiny with staff and tenants**
- **Input into updating the Tenants Handbook**



What else has
kept us busy
this year?

- Reviewed and made changes to the Green Space Commitments. These Commitments are what the City Services Team (previously known as Open Spaces) must undertake as part of the grass cutting, weed spraying etc service.
- Worked to identify all Housing Policies and currently awaiting approval for the relevant policies to go on the SCC website. This will assist Tenants to know what services they should be receiving it will also promote openness and transparency.
- We undertook some TPAS successful scrutiny training
- Input into the new Poor Condition Property pilot. The pilot is for any staff who enter a SCC tenanted property to identify any poor conditions. They will then report this, and the tenant is contacted.
- Assisted in recent interviews for Community Engagement workers
- Assisted in reviewing the current maintenance recovery charges, that are charged when a tenant requests a repair, and the damages are caused by themselves or their family or friends

Near future work

- Trying to improve Homebid, which is the bidding site for Southampton properties, by introducing more detailed information about properties i.e. floor plan, photos etc.
- To implement adding the weed spraying schedule onto the SCC website for all to see when they are due in the area. The wildlife areas in the city are also hoped to be added to the website, to help clarify what should and shouldn't be cut back
- Trialling a different style of Scrutiny with a 'boot camp' approach

We hope we have given you an insight into the variety of topics the Tenant Scrutiny Panel cover and the work we have achieved over the last year.

We meet every 2 weeks on a Thursday from 1-3pm, you are welcome to join via Zoom or face to face meetings which will be restarting soon.

If you would like more information on how to join us please speak to Debbie Collis, Tenant Engagement Worker

Putting the support into the Supported Housing Forum

Ray White - Chairperson

Mystery shopping the local housing office

Frank Boulton



STARS IN THE COMMUNITY



Mary D'Arcy & Cllr Vassiliou



STARS IN THE COMMUNITY



STARS IN THE COMMUNITY AWARD

Well done to all our
nominees!



STARS IN THE COMMUNITY AWARD



Shirley (Bitterne)

Shirley has created some wonderful community gardens and runs social events for her neighbourhood.

As Chair of the Dahlia Gardening Club, Shirley has transformed an unloved drying area and created a garden which is now a “sea of intoxicating colour.”

Shirley organises lots of fun social events in the neighbourhood including –

- A VE Party for 30 residents
- A Garden Party for neighbours
- A minibus day out for residents.

Shirley is an energetic and creative fundraiser, funding lots of her activities through table top sales and raffles.

Star quote: “She needs a medal!!!”

STARS IN THE COMMUNITY AWARD

Julia (Northam)

Julia was determined no one should go hungry in Northam during the pandemic.

So she arranged for FareShare food to be delivered to her flat on Fridays and Sundays, which she then distributed to anyone in need on the estate.

As a Block Rep she loves a friendly chat, making sure everyone's ok and helping with their problems.

Star quote: "Julia is always out and about helping other people."



STARS IN THE COMMUNITY AWARD

Joao (Golden Grove)



New to the area but keen to help, Joao decided to set up a community group in Golden Grove called Golden Leaves.

Golden Leaves, which meets weekly, has inspired the community to work together to plant flowers, pick up leaves and care for the area. Golden Leaves has been brilliant at encouraging people to talk to and help one other.

Busy with a full time job, Joao spends his weekends helping people with their gardens and even does odd jobs like fixing blinds.

Star quote: “He is kind. He’s got a good heart. He’s a star around here.”

STARS IN THE COMMUNITY AWARD

Hani & Alex (Weston)

After chatting to local residents Hani and Alex realised that some of the community were going hungry.

So in their own time and using their own money, Hany and Alex set up a team to serve free food to the most vulnerable residents in Weston. Talking to local shops and restaurants they managed to get donations of free food.

At their peak Hani and Alex's team were serving food to a 100 people a day.

At Christmas the team were able to provide local children with 400 chocolate eggs and toys.

They are still delivering food today, to the most vulnerable and housebound.

Star quote: “The free food bank for the local community has been invaluable during lockdown.”



STARS IN THE COMMUNITY AWARD

Veronica (Thornhill)

For the past year Veronica has been volunteering at a local school, helping children with their reading difficulties.

For a number of years Veronica has looked after and cared for her ill neighbours, when they have not had anyone to care for them.

Veronica tries to ensure that her neighbours use the correct recycling bins and reminds residents of the refuse collection dates by printing refuse collection calendars.

Star quote: “She has been acting as block rep, without being elected.”



STARS IN THE COMMUNITY AWARD



Sarah (Golden Grove)

Using her own garden tools, Sarah likes to brighten up the communal areas on Golden Grove (and beyond), by planting colourful flowers, cutting back bushes and weeding communal areas.

Sarah also regularly does the “dirty work”, cleaning the estate bin areas.

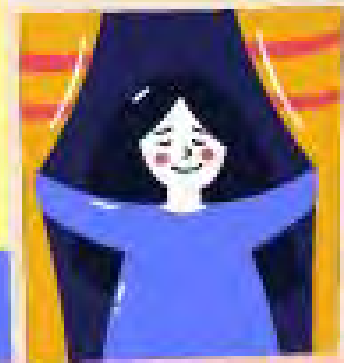
Sarah works tirelessly to make the area better for local residents.

Star quote: “She is an exceptional woman. She works from early morning doing gardening”



STARS IN THE COMMUNITY AWARD

Kate (Thornhill)



Keen to make her block of flats look fab, Kate buys and plants colourful flowers to brighten up the front of their block. Kate has also built wooden flower beds to add colour and greenery to the rear yard.

Kate regularly cleans and tidies the rear yard, creating a lovely sociable place for residents to relax and for kids to play.

Because of Kate the block is exceptionally clean, encouraging other residents to take a pride in their block.

Kate also makes sure that residents are welcomed to the block by placing lovely scented fragrances at the entrance.

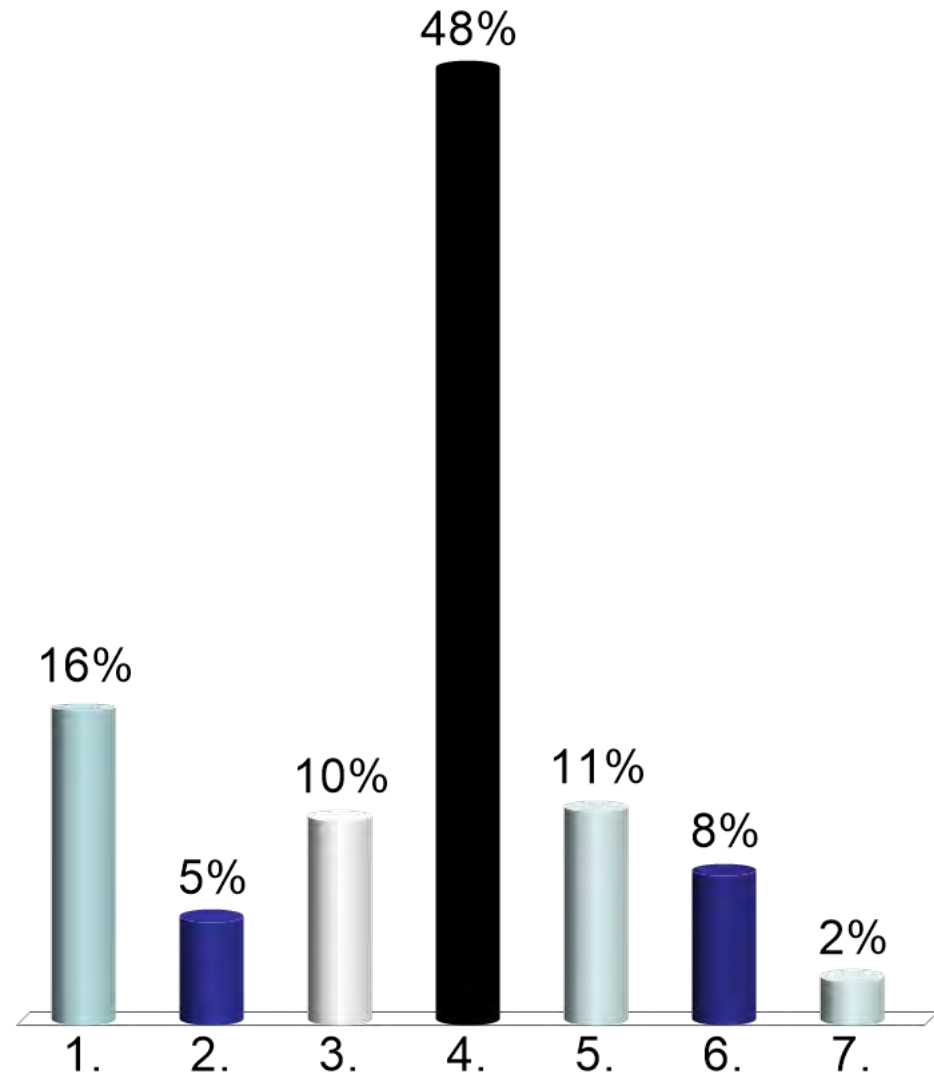
Star quote: “Nothing is beyond Kate to help others and teach the young ones pride in their block.”



Choose your favourite star/s

1. Shirley
2. Julia
3. Joao
4. Hany & Alex
5. Veronica
6. Sarah
7. Kate

84



A few words from Mary - our Executive Director

Mary D'Arcy

Conference evaluation

**Thank you for
attending**

Have a safe journey home