



Dolphin Living



# RESIDENT NEWSLETTER

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2023



“

*I love the flat – it is so modern and big!  
The staff at Dolphin Living are wonderful  
and made the process of applying  
and moving very easy.*

Dibdin House resident

”



# WELCOME

## TO OUR 2023 NEWSLETTER

Dolphin Living is delighted to welcome you to our annual resident newsletter.

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# Supporting London's essential workers: message from our CEO



*Welcome to Dolphin Living's annual newsletter, keeping you up-to-date with our latest activities and our plans for the future.*

2022 was a busy year for Dolphin: delivering new homes, letting homes to new residents, managing and maintaining our growing portfolio and recruiting new staff. We remain committed to providing homes for working Londoners on modest incomes at rents you can afford.

Life is back to normal, or at least the new normal, with many of us working from home (WFH) some of the time. With the removal of Covid restrictions, by early 2021 our services had also returned to normal – incorporating new ways of working that we learnt during the pandemic lockdowns. Many Dolphin Living homes are designed with capacity for WFH and we are rolling out full-fibre broadband to many of our homes making for speedier work and leisure connections.

## **Making more affordable homes available**

In 2022, we completed 31 new homes for intermediate rent in Westminster. These were all snapped up within a month of completion, thanks to high demand. And we also agreed to buy a further 25 homes for intermediate rent in Westminster due for completion in 2023. We won planning approval for a development of 85 homes in Southwark and for the rebuilding of the New Era estate in Hackney which will provide new and affordable homes.

## **Responding to your needs**

We made repairs at 3,365 of your homes in 2022, and in the latter half of the year we heard from many of you at residents' events that took place in person and online. We acted on what we heard and made some changes such as; improving the cleaning regime and using cleaning companies to get better value for money, improving security, forming resident forums and introducing residents who want to buy a home to a financial advisor. We hope you found these changes useful, and we'd like to make more, so please keep telling us how we can improve.

## **Helping the environment**

Sustainability is a crucial topic and Dolphin Living is playing a part. We are surveying older homes to understand how we can improve them, particularly their energy efficiency.

Many thanks to all of you who allowed access to your homes so we could scope out this work. We will be focusing on improving the sustainability of our homes in 2023 and beyond. We want to hear your views on how we can make your home more sustainable and environmentally friendly.

## **Ensuring satisfaction**

The social housing regulator has set out new tenant satisfaction measures that housing associations must follow.

We are reviewing this to understand how we can apply this across our business, and all of our properties. We have also recruited Jacqueline England, our Customer Services Director, who will be responsible for implementing these measures.

## **Championing the need for more affordable homes**

At the end of 2022 we carried out a survey of 1,000 London renters. We found that many of those who are paying market rent are, quite understandably, concerned about significant increases. The need for more affordable housing for London's workers on modest incomes providing essential services to our city; is indisputable. We will continue to champion London's essential workers, highlighting the benefit they bring to all who live and work in London.

I hope you enjoy reading this newsletter and I wish you a happy, healthy, and safe 2023.

**Olivia Harris**  
CEO Dolphin Living





## A word from our Chair:

2022 has been a positive year for Dolphin Living and I hope it has been for you too.

We are welcoming 2023 with increased efforts from our team to make your experience of living in a Dolphin home, a positive one. We will focus on more resident engagement, to make you feel heard and supported, as well as energy efficiency at our homes to assist you in keeping your living costs low and to play our part in the Net Zero agenda.

I wish you a happy 2023 and thank you for being a Dolphin Living resident.

**Andrew Giblin**  
Chair of Dolphin

# Resident Focus

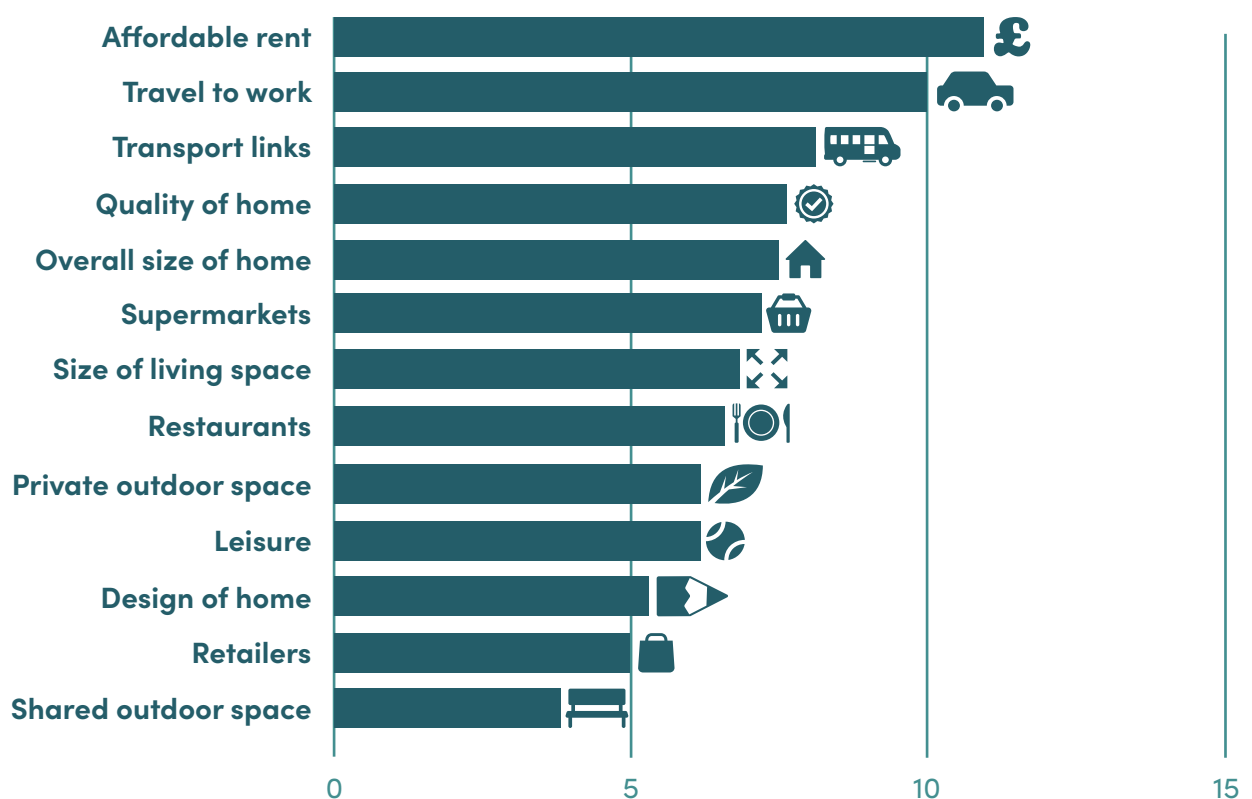
*This year we are focusing on how much we know about our residents and what you would like to see and hear from us. For us to be able to best support you, we are prioritising resident engagement through customer satisfaction surveys and holding more meetings.*

We have been made aware of issues that you are not satisfied with and we are looking for ways to improve our service and make your experience as enjoyable as possible. Through our surveys, we have found out more about you, as well as some of the important things you consider when deciding to look for a property. These include access to leisure activities, supermarkets, and retailers.

This has been insightful for us since our primary charitable objective is to support London's workers on modest incomes who cannot afford housing near to their place of work. Please see our findings below.

Most of our residents are full time working adults who work in healthcare, education and IT and technology services. The large majority work in Westminster and when choosing their home, the most important aspects are affordable rents and transport links. We are proud to be able to provide you with homes that meet those expectations.

**Important factors when you choose your home:** from not important (0) to very important (15)



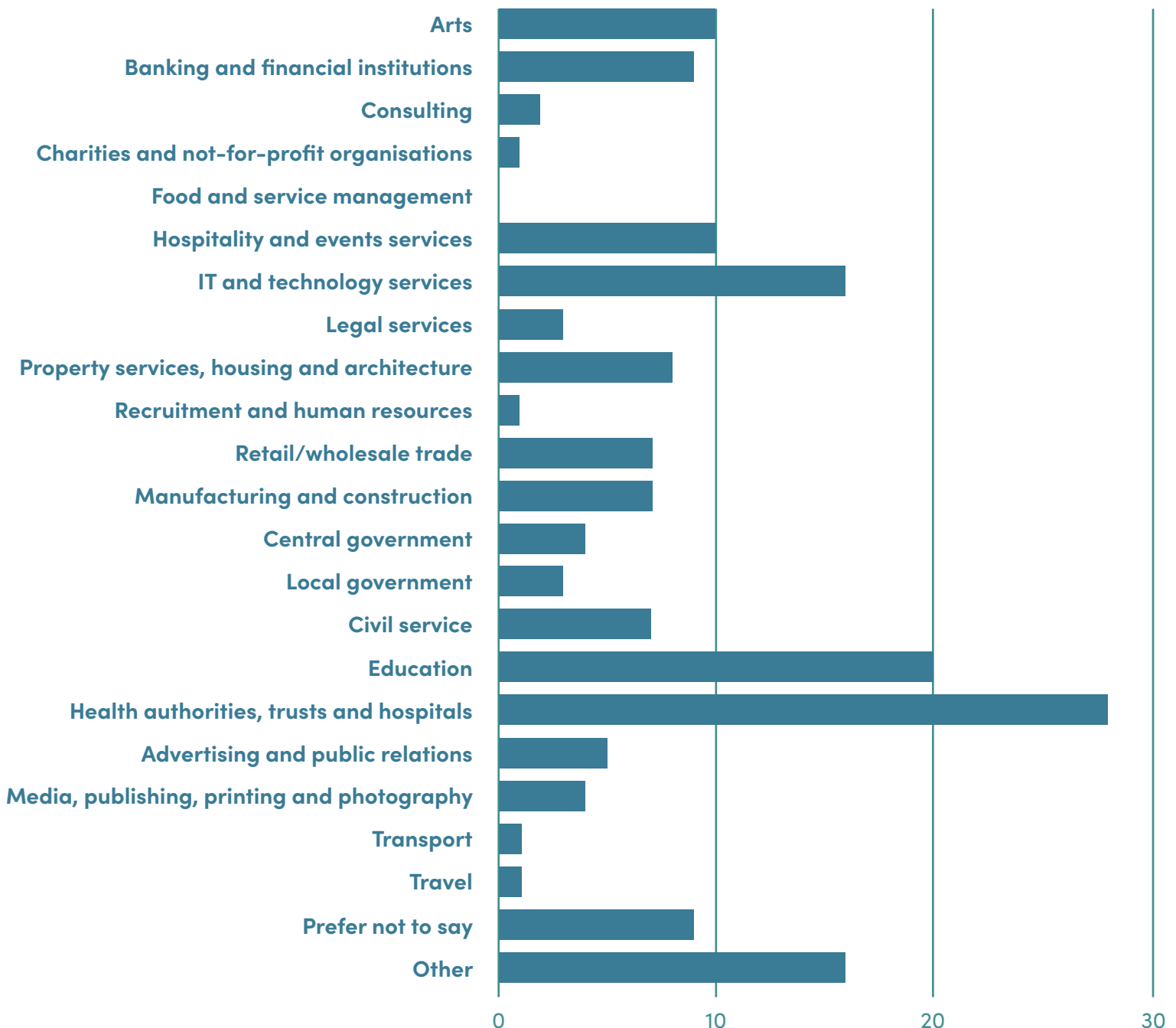
# Resident Focus

We appreciate that not all households chose to disclose their income, but of those who did answer have an annual income of between £35,000 and £70,000. Of those who responded, 43% of residents are regularly saving, with 41% of those saving towards Home Ownership. If you are interested in Home Ownership, please see more information on our Accelerator Scheme section if you are currently not on this scheme.

We have been working hard to understand our residents, their goals and how much of an impact we are making through our rental schemes. We would like to hear more of your suggestions on how we can improve our service.

## Sectors our residents work in:

*Total respondents = 212*

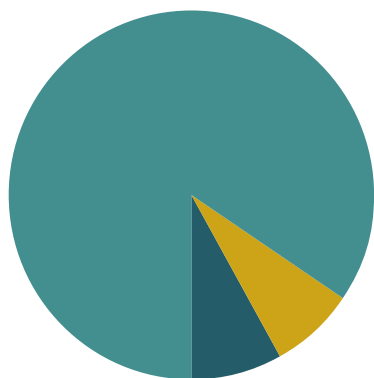


# Customer satisfaction response and results

*An annual satisfaction survey was sent to all Dolphin Living residents in February 2022.*

We received 212 responses - thank you to everyone that responded. You have been entered into a draw where five lucky winners will receive a £200 highstreet voucher. See page 10 for changes to our surveys and rewards for completing them.

You also brought to our attention two important issues: the promptness that issues and complaints are dealt with, and arrangements for engagement with residents. We are working with our managing agent Touchstone to improve the efficiency and delivery of our response times.



😊 **84.7%**

of residents are satisfied or very satisfied with the overall quality and condition of their homes

☹️ **7.4%**

were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied

😐 **7.9%**

responded neither





“

*“I feel very blessed to live in the incredible home I now live in. With modern fixtures, and such close proximity to work, I really couldn't have asked for more. Thanks to everyone at Dolphin for not only my home but the peace of mind they have given me!”*

Millbank resident

”



# Moving forward

*Whilst many of you were also happy with virtual meetings, most of you preferred in person events. We would like to be able see more of you more often, so we will be making a big effort to make resident engagement meetings in person.*

As a result of this feedback and to be able to achieve our objectives, Touchstone have hired a new Customer Services manager, **Ryan O'Connor** and Dolphin Living have hired a new Customer Services Co-ordinator, **Ummy Bajuny**. They will be working closely together to focus on the issues raised and on resident engagement.

As part of our effort to be more engaged with our residents, we will be looking into more marketing and social media. We are often looking for residents to feature in our newsletters, leaflets, and posters, as well as share feedback of how you value your Dolphin Living home. If you would like to be featured in any of our future communications, please contact [ummybajuny@dolphinliving.com](mailto:ummybajuny@dolphinliving.com) to register your interest.



## ENTER OUR NEW AND IMPROVED DOLPHIN LIVING PRIZE DRAW

As mentioned, we would like to hear more from you. So, we have decided to transform our customer satisfaction surveys into an annual **prize draw** with five great prizes for the winners.

All residents who complete our annual resident satisfaction survey will automatically be entered for the prize draw. You will only be able to enter once. All you need to do is answer 10 simple questions about your home and submit it through our online survey.

Five winners will be chosen at random when the survey closes after 30 days. The prizes will include:

- ★ **Meal cooked by a private chef** – a chef will come and cook a meal for you and three guests in your own home (4 person max)
- ★ **Full property clean** – a trusted cleaning partner will give your property a sparkling clean (including the oven!)
- ★ **£200 Ikea voucher** – who doesn't want to spend their Sunday afternoon's building flat-pack?
- ★ **£200 Amazon voucher** – exactly what it says on the tin.
- ★ **£200 M&S vouchers** – presents for loved ones, sorted...

*There is only one entry per household. To enter you must be a registered tenant.*

*We will be asking our lucky winners what they did with their prizes for stories in our next newsletter. Good luck and we look forward to hearing from you.*



# ★ Good news story ★

*We are proud to announce that we have been awarded two architecture awards for our property 333 Kingsland Road – The Neave Brown Award 2022 and the Civic Trust Award 2022.*

The **Neave Brown Award** is an annual award that recognises the UK's best new affordable homes. Our property at 333 Kingsland Road is made up of a primary school and 68 apartments, with 50% being offered at below market rent.

The **Civic Trust Award** 2022 recognises outstanding architecture, planning and design in the built environment. One of the judges said:

“

*This is an ambitious project, and the project team are to be applauded for the strategic resolution of the complexities of the site and client organisations.*

”





# Energy efficiency

*In 2021, the government announced the Net Zero Strategy. This was published to set out a guide for reaching net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.*










In the build-up to the Government's call to have an EPC rating of C, we have carried out an exercise to help us with energy efficiency. Dolphin has worked with a company called SHIFT and achieved a SILVER rating. SHIFT is run by Suss Housing to accredit Housing Associations and registered providers for sustainability. We have been ranked 18 out of the 40 most recent SHIFT assessment.

How did we achieve a SILVER rating?

Dolphin Living has been able to achieve this rating as all our new build properties are built to an EPC rating of B. Some of our new builds feature solar panels to produce energy. They also do not come with car parks, and this encourages people not to own cars that will emit fumes into the environment. Other efforts to be more energy efficient include having cycle stores, recycling bins and double or triple glazing to keep heat inside your homes. We have made a commitment to achieve more energy efficient homes and will be making efforts to include you in this process too.

## **So how can you be more energy efficient?**

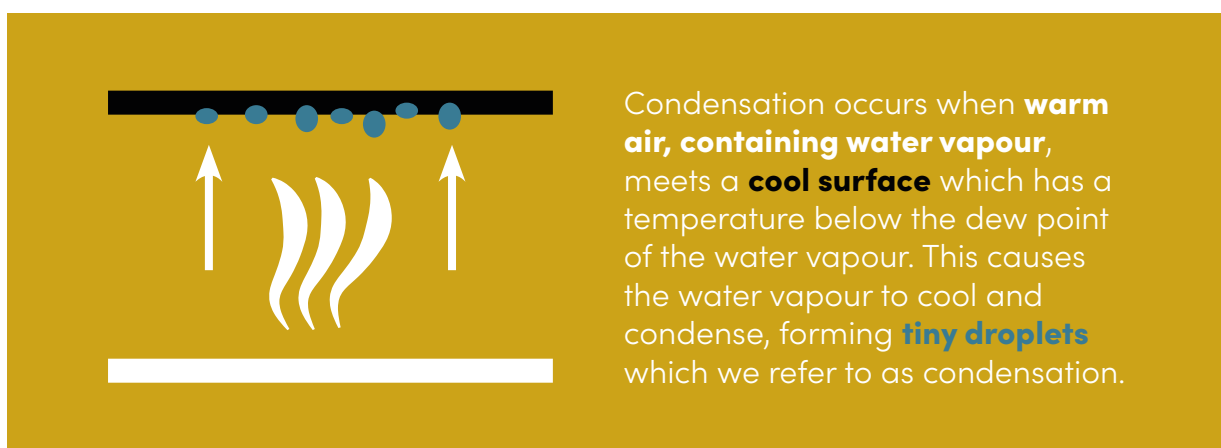
According to moneysupermarket.com, the average home containing four occupants uses up to 13 electronic appliances including TV's and laptops. Here are a few tips to help you become more energy efficient:

-  Turn off standby mode for your appliances
-  Avoid using your tumble drier and only run the dish washer when it's full
-  Insulate your home using carpets/rugs. If you feel a draught, seal it up
-  Use smart meters to monitor energy use
-  Buy energy efficient appliances rated A+ and above
-  Wash your clothes at 30 degrees
-  Don't use the oven at peak times. Use your microwave when you can.  
It's cheaper!
-  Use your dish washer/washing machine at night.  
Peak hours are between 5pm and 9pm
-  Change your light bulbs to LED

# Energy efficiency

## Let's keep the mould away too!

Mould is a form of fungus that breaks down dead organic material. It is usually produced in damp and humid conditions. Mould can be common in homes as they offer moisture, warm air, and materials to feed on, such as wallpaper, wood, and carpet. It can be harmful to your health, so it is important to prevent it.



## How to keep your home safe and prevent mould and condensation

- Use saucepan lids when cooking
- Use the extractor fans in your kitchen and bathroom when cooking and washing
- Keep your kitchen and bathroom doors closed when cooking and washing to stop moisture moving around the home
- Dry wet clothes using an airer outside, where possible – not on a radiator
- Keep all trickle vents on your windows open to help moisture escape your home
- Open your windows for some time during the day
- Don't block vents
- Don't over-fill wardrobes and cupboards. It restricts air circulation
- Keep a gap of at least 50mm between large pieces of furniture and the walls
- Clean the mould by spraying it with a mixture of one part bleach and four parts water and wiping away. Or contact Touchstone on **01225 838 490** to arrange a mould clean

If you require further information or are worried about mould in your property, please contact Touchstone.

# Broadband installations

*In 2023, we will be installing 100% full fibre during the year for residents who do not already have it. Full fibre will provide broadband speeds of up to 1 gigabit (1,000 megabits) depending on the package of your choice.*

We are working with several service providers including Hyperoptic, Community Fibre and G Network to ensure the services are reliable and get the best deals possible. This will give tenants more options on the service they would like at a cost they can afford.

One Church Square benefited from the installation of Community Fibre in 2021 and Goreleston Street had it installed in summer 2022. Kennington Lane & Holyoak Road, Lanhill Road and Lanark Road will be getting access to Hyperoptic at the beginning of the year. G Network will be rolled out in 2023.



“ We had a fantastic experience dealing with Dolphin Living, especially Eleasha! She helped us in getting the ball rolling quickly and kept us updated every step of the way. We would definitely recommend Eleasha and the team at Dolphin Living to anyone looking for a great affordable home and a wonderful service.

The Broadway  
resident

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# Helping you buy a home:

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## Accelerator Scheme





# 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.*

Since the scheme's inception in 2016 we have helped 38 households move into homeownership. Participants have purchased a mixture of one bedroom to five-bedroom homes on the open market, via shared ownership, share to buy or discount market sale, and have received between £6,000 and £36,000 worth of grant from Dolphin Living.



# Accelerator scheme

## Home Show 2022

We held a drop in session at the Dolphin Living offices on Monday 21st November 2022. This was an advisory session to those interested in Home Ownership.

In attendance were:

- **JDC Independent Financial Advisers** – Martin Fairchild, financial advisor:  
[www.jdcifa.com](http://www.jdcifa.com)
- **Home Ownership Westminster** – offered advice on any new or resale properties in the borough of Westminster: [www.homesforwestminster.co.uk](http://www.homesforwestminster.co.uk)
- **Notting Hill Genesis** – offered advice on their new and resale properties:  
[www.nhgsales.com](http://www.nhgsales.com)
- **Alexander JLO Solicitors** – understand the Westminster Home Ownership Accelerator Scheme and can act for applicants who commence the property purchase process:  
[www.london-law.co.uk](http://www.london-law.co.uk)
- **Pocket Living** – offered advice on their new and resale properties:  
[www.pocketliving.com](http://www.pocketliving.com)

Thank you to all those who attended, and we hope you benefited from the session. If you require copies of your photos taken during the evening and for further information on the accelerator scheme, please contact: [valentineohagwa@dolphinliving.com](mailto:valentineohagwa@dolphinliving.com)



“

*The session with Martin Fairchild was helpful and to the point! Saved me days of research.*

”

Home Show attendee



# In the event of an emergency

*In the event of an emergency in or close to your home, we want to ensure that all residents are safe and those who require additional assistance are given help quickly.*

For us to do this we need to ensure our records include details of any of your household who may be vulnerable and need additional assistance. Please let us know by contacting Touchstone, describing your support needs and how we may assist you.

For example:

- An incident occurs which means the emergency services ask all residents to evacuate your building by walking down the stairs. This may be difficult for residents who require the use of walking aids.
- Some residents may have medical equipment that uses electricity. An emergency that impacts power supplies will affect the functioning of that medical equipment.



Please let Touchstone know by emailing [lt@touchstoneresi.co.uk](mailto:lt@touchstoneresi.co.uk) or by telephone on **01225 259401**.



# 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 diagnose and report a fault quickly and efficiently.*

The portal also allows you to track progress and updates relating to your repair and to provide feedback. Any repairs reported by phone or email to Touchstone will be entered onto the portal; the quickest way to report repairs is to access the portal directly.



Please be reminded of the following information regarding your tenancy agreement:

- Pets – your tenancy agreement states that you are not allowed pets, so must not keep any without seeking permission first.
- Subletting – please do not sublet your property as this will result in a breach of your tenancy agreement, which will result in your tenancy being ended.
- Home swapping – unless eligible, you cannot sign up to home swapper. If you have any issues with your tenancy and would like to transfer or move, please get in touch with Touchstone.
- Complaints procedure – if you are not satisfied with the service you have received, whether that is with us or an ongoing issue, please follow our complaints procedure. You will need to contact our managing agent at Touchstone as your first point of contact, unless otherwise stated in your tenancy agreement. We aim to resolve your issue as quickly as possible.





If you have any queries please  
contact us at [info@touchstonecps.com](mailto:info@touchstonecps.com)  
or call 01225 838 490

[www.touchstoneresi.co.uk](http://www.touchstoneresi.co.uk)

[www.dolphinliving.com](http://www.dolphinliving.com)

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**Dolphin Living**