

## Latest updates for residents at The Ridgeway

**December 2023**



### Contact centre opening hours and service over the festive period

As always, we aim to provide you with a good service at all times including over the festive period.

| Date                  | Office opening hours* | Contact centre opening hours |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|
| Friday 22 December    | 9am to 1pm*           | 8am to 1pm                   |
| Monday 25 December    | Closed                | Closed                       |
| Tuesday 26 December   | Closed                | Closed                       |
| Wednesday 27 December | 9am to 5pm*           | 8am to 6pm                   |
| Thursday 28 December  | 9am to 5pm*           | 8am to 6pm                   |
| Friday 29 December    | 9am to 5pm*           | 8am to 6pm                   |
| Monday 1 January      | Closed                | Closed                       |
| Tuesday 2 January     | 9am to 5pm            | 8am to 6pm                   |

Our offices and contact centre will be open as usual from Tuesday 2 January 2022. Usual office opening hours are Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm and our contact centre hours are 8am to 6pm. If you have an emergency repair while we are closed, please contact us on **0300 373 3000** and you'll be directed to our out of hours repairs service.

\*Please note, our Hertford office will close at 12pm on 22 December and only our Wembley office will be open from 27 to 29 December.

### Sele Community Hub – Christmas Fun at the Hub



Come and join us at Sele Farm Community Hub on 20 December for an afternoon of Christmas fun.

What can be more fun than face painting and games?! You can also win presents with our free tombola! We look forward to seeing you here.

The Sele Community Hub at 18 Fleming Crescent is free to Sele Farm Community Groups to use for events, meetings, etc. If you're interested in using the Hub, please contact Tim Goodwin at [Tim.goodwin@networkhomes.org.uk](mailto:Tim.goodwin@networkhomes.org.uk).

You can book The Hub directly via CVS: email [selebookings@cvsbeh.org.uk](mailto:selebookings@cvsbeh.org.uk) or call 0300 123 1034.

## Try out our new digital assistant for customers

We've launched our digital assistant for customers which gives you another convenient way to raise or get an update on repairs, check your account balance, or make a payment. The digital assistant comes in the form of a chatbot which you can find on our website and your My Network Homes online account.

The digital assistant is available at any time of the day, seven days a week. It will help you with your enquiry by giving you options to select so it can support you as quickly as it can. During set times, currently Monday to Friday, 10am to 3pm, if it's unable to answer your query or help you to complete your service request, it will give you the option to chat online to one of our customer service advisors.

You can try out the digital assistant the next time you want to raise a repair, check your account balance or make a payment. Simply open the chatbot feature by clicking on the purple 'Chat with us' bubble on our website at [www.networkhomes.org.uk](http://www.networkhomes.org.uk)

## Estate walkabout

Please check out our website at [www.networkhomes.org.uk/get-involved/estate-inspections](http://www.networkhomes.org.uk/get-involved/estate-inspections) for the dates of the upcoming Estate Walkabouts with partner agencies. Please get in touch with Steve Cherry, your Neighbourhood Officer, on 0300 373 3000 or by email at [customerservice@networkhomes.org.uk](mailto:customerservice@networkhomes.org.uk) if you would like to attend. If we have a lot of interest, we will need to ensure we are compliant with current restrictions, but there will be other opportunities to work with us in the future.

## Estate inspection findings update for your site

Your neighbourhood officer, Steve Cherry has identified the below issues:

| Issue identified    | Location                          | Action taken                               | Any other notes  |
|---------------------|-----------------------------------|--|--|
| Bin stores          | Henrietta Court & Georgiana Court | Monitoring how bin stores are being used   | On my previous estate inspection at The Ridgeway, I have been concentrating on the bin stores where there have been historic issues with customers not putting rubbish in the bins but leaving it on the floor. I am happy to say that this has improved in recent months, however, we will continue to monitor the situation. |
| Grounds maintenance | Henrietta & Georgiana Court       | Referred to Grounds maintenance contractor | Noted that some of the planting areas needed attention with some weeding and pruning required. I have raised this with Newgreen contractors  |

## Pigeons on your estate and around your home

There's a high cost each year to local authorities and housing associations to clean, repair buildings, and provide pest control proofing. If you feed pigeons around your home, you are encouraging them to roost and perch nearby. Pigeon droppings are acidic and can erode stonework, resulting in long term costly damage. The feeding of pigeons also attracts rats and mice, which take any uneaten food and can also cause a health risk to you and your family. Please do not feed pigeons anywhere on your estate.

Certain scents repel pigeons, such as cinnamon, peppermint, essential oils, vinegar, perfume, onions, garlic, cumin, cologne, ghost peppers and even jalapenos. Pigeons have a strange relationship with cinnamon. Because of its pungent scent, it becomes a good deterrent, and its natural medical properties help to cure various pigeons' diseases.

Prevention is better than cure. You can purchase netting cheaply online or at most DIY stores to prevent pigeons from perching.



## Condensation, damp and mould

Too much moisture in your home can lead to damp and mould. Excess moisture can enter your home in several ways and the most common causes are from condensation and penetrative or rising damp. If too much moisture builds up and is left untreated, mould may start to grow.

There are a few things you can do to help reduce excess moisture in your home. Here are some tips to try out:

- Close the kitchen and bathroom doors when they are in use. This helps prevent moisture reaching other rooms, especially bedrooms, which are often colder and more likely to get condensation.
- Avoid drying washing on your radiators, or if you do, then dry it in the bathroom with the door closed and window open.
- Use saucepan lids when cooking.
- Put a small amount of cold water in the bath before you turn on the hot tap.
- Place furniture slightly away from the wall. Where possible, position wardrobes and furniture against internal walls.
- Wipe down condensation or water (including on window ledges and sills) with a cloth every morning, and ensure it is wrung out and dried properly between use.

To find out more ways to reduce excess moisture in your home, information on the causes of damp, mould or condensation, how to tackle it and how we manage these issues, visit the condensation, damp and mould page on our website at [www.networkhomes.org.uk/condensation](http://www.networkhomes.org.uk/condensation).

## Join us on a winter Health Walk today

Walking during the colder months may feel harder at first. After all, the weather can be damp and unpredictable. However, getting out of the house into the fresh air is a great "pick me up." Not only can walking lift your mood but it can boost your energy levels and strengthen your heart and lungs. Did you know walking uses 200 muscles?

We have three free walks in Sele Farm. Everyone is welcome. Simply turn up on the day and "walk and talk" in the company of others. The full list of our fun group walks can be found on [East Herts Health Walks Programme Sept to Dec 2023](#). Our walks are for all fitness levels and led by friendly volunteers. Our First Steps Walk in Sele, Hertford, is ideal for people who haven't walked in a while or who are returning from illness.

People who want more of work-out might want to pop along to the walk going to Panshanger Park or one of our longer walks in Hartham Common and Stanstead Abbots. Please arrive 10 minutes before the start to complete a New Walker Form, if it's your first walk. If you prefer, you can Register online.

If you are a regular walker and would like to help others experience the health benefits of walking why not become a Health Walk Volunteer?

Click on [Health Walk Volunteers | Hertfordshire County Council](#) to find out more. Upcoming training in Hatfield January 16th and February 15th in Bishop's Stortford.



Hertfordshire  
**H H W**  
Health Walks

**Are you looking for something to do during the day? Where you meet new people and get outdoors?**

**If so, join our friendly Health Walks in Sele**  
Long walks Mondays Short Thursdays  
Meet on grassed area opposite the shops at 10am  
Fleming Crescent SG14 2DJ

Walking is the simplest way to improve your fitness. It's:

**FREE  
Gentle  
All welcome  
Fun**



To find out more, contact Claire on  
claire.pullen@hertfordshire.gov.uk  
Scan the QR code or visit our website on:  
[www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/healthwalks](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/healthwalks)

healthwalks.cms@hertfordshire.gov.uk  
01992 555 888

**DAMBLERS  
WELLBEING  
WALKS**



## Anti-Social behaviour (ASB)

If you think you're experiencing ASB, please check out our ASB toolkit to help you identify ASB and understand the steps you need to take if you're experiencing it. You can find the toolkit on our website at [www.networkhomes.org.uk/asbtoolkit](http://www.networkhomes.org.uk/asbtoolkit)

You may report ASB to us between 9am to 5pm from Monday to Friday. If it's out of office hours, please contact the Police or your Local Authority Environmental Health team.

## Fire Risk Assessments (FRA) – no items in communal areas

We have a zero-tolerance policy on items left in communal areas. Our FRA action plan also applies to car park areas and will be enforced without exception. Our policy means that we have removed and will continue to remove items found in communal areas without notice. We will dispose of any items we remove as we do not store/keep items.

Shared communal areas include stairways, lifts, landings, hallways, and car parks. Please ensure you do not leave any items in these areas including shoes, shoe racks, prams, pushchairs, bicycles, children's toys, plant stands etc. Items stored in shared areas are a hazard as they can prevent people from leaving the building safely in a fire.

## Stay put fire safety strategy for your building

**The fire strategy is a stay put policy.** This means unless you're directly affected by a fire, told by the emergency services or an SNG staff member to evacuate, you should stay in your home. Remember if you do need to evacuate because of a fire, do not use the lifts. Close the door behind you and safely make your way out of the building before calling the emergency services on 999. If you require an additional fire safety information or any assistance development your escape plan in the event of a fire, please contact SNG on **0300 373 3000**.

## Important contacts

If you have any **issues with communal cleaning or grounds maintenance service**, call New Green on 01707 871 516 or email [admin@newgreen.co.uk](mailto:admin@newgreen.co.uk).

**Steve Cherry is your Neighbourhood Officer who manages your estate.** You can contact Steve by phone on 0300 373 3000 or by email at [customerservice@networkhomes.org.uk](mailto:customerservice@networkhomes.org.uk).

If you need to report a repair, check on the progress of an existing repair or need any other information get in touch by:

- Your My Network Homes account – [www.mynetworkhomes.org.uk](http://www.mynetworkhomes.org.uk)
- Phone – **0300 373 3000**
- Email – [customerservice@networkhomes.org.uk](mailto:customerservice@networkhomes.org.uk)
- Website – [www.networkhomes.org.uk/contact-us](http://www.networkhomes.org.uk/contact-us)
- Facebook – **Networkhomesuk**
- Twitter – **asknetworkhomes**.

If you need to **report crime**, please visit <https://online.et.police.uk> to report minor or non-urgent crimes.

## What do you think of this newsletter?

Tell us what you thought of this newsletter using the feedback link below or leave us a Google Review.

[Click here to complete the feedback survey](#)