

# The Involver

ISSUE 3 | JANUARY 2009

GET  
INVOLVED!

Welcome to Issue 3 of The Involver and a happy new year to you all! 2008 is behind us and our sights are now firmly set on 2009 and bringing about further improvements to Lewisham Homes' services. As involved residents, you achieved a great deal in 2008 that you should be proud of, from challenging the business plan to taking part in the summer activities with your children. It all adds up to better services, satisfied residents and a stronger community. Do you know a resident who has worked particularly hard for the good of the community? Why not nominate them for a national award? See page 7 to find out how.

Check out the article on The Involver Conference on page 2 and see who were the deserving winners of the Community Involvement Awards, and see the article below to find out how young resident Dwayne Johnson has turned his life around and become a Young Champion! With all that and loads more we're sure that you will enjoy reading this issue of The Involver. Please continue to get involved and make a difference. We can't do it without you!

Best wishes,  
The Community Involvement Team

## Young Champion turns back on crime

Pikethorne Estate resident Dwayne Johnson is a busy young man. When he is not at college he may be found cleaning up his estate, rallying up support for his latest campaign or even encouraging other young people to aim high and work hard.

Dwayne was recently rewarded for his achievements by winning the Young Champion Award at the Lewisham Homes Involver Conference in November. He managed to find time in his busy schedule for a quick chat to [The Involver](#)...

**Congratulations on winning the Young Champion Award. Tell us about the work you did in your community which earned you this award:**

I applied for funding from the Playbuilder scheme for a play area for children on my estate and I'm still waiting to hear the outcome of that bid. I also take kids back to school when I see them out of school. I've also got my friends to help me clean up graffiti from the walls on my estate.

**Wow that's really impressive, but you haven't always been a champion in your community have you? Tell us a bit about your life a few years ago...**

I was the trouble maker on the estate. I used to break windows and doors, smash car windows and stop young kids playing games that they wanted to play. I was also in a gang. At the time when I joined the gang I felt I had no choice, there was lots of pressure but then I realised it wasn't for me.

**What was the turning point?**

I got arrested for robbery last year and that was a wake up call. I realised I didn't want to spend my life in and out of police cells.

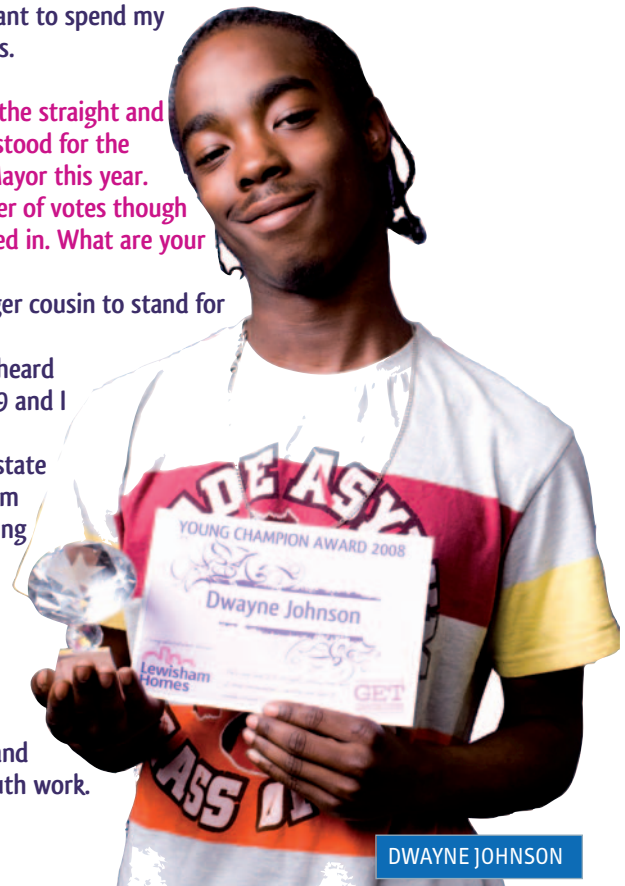
**Well thankfully you are on the straight and narrow now and you even stood for the prestigious role of Young Mayor this year. You got a really high number of votes though another candidate was voted in. What are your ambitions for 2009?**

I'm going to help my younger cousin to stand for Young Mayor next year.

I also want my voice to be heard louder and stronger in 2009 and I want to continue making a positive difference to my estate and to young people. My aim is to get 30 per cent of young people off the streets and into education or employment.

**And what about plans for your future?**

I'm going to finish college and then go to uni to study youth work. After that I want to be a Youth Worker.



DWAYNE JOHNSON

# THE INVOLVER CONFERENCE & AWARDS



80 involved residents attended our first ever conference and awards ceremony. It was a chance for residents to work with staff on the organisation's Business Plan and included debates, workshops and guest speakers.

Lewisham Homes Board Champion for Community Involvement and Somerville Estate resident Alan Barker said, "The Involver Conference is yet another stepping stone on the pathway to ensuring that tenants and residents are not only at the heart of Lewisham Homes, but also driving forward and shaping the agenda of the future."

The event, which was partly funded by Lewisham Tenants Fund, also featured an awards ceremony to celebrate the achievements of residents and staff who have gone the extra mile for their community. A highlight of the day for Alan was the recognition of the achievements of the young people involved in the 'Brighter Futures' project. "As the adults of tomorrow it was inspirational to hear about the time that the young people voluntary gave to help make their neighbourhoods more inclusive and better places to live."

Another winner was Honor Oak Tenants and Residents Association who won the award for 'Most Creative Initiative by a Tenants and Residents Association' for a community event they hosted in the summer.

Simon Smith, a resident from Honor Oak said, "It feels really good to have won as team work was rocky at times but getting the award gave us the enthusiasm to do better next time".

## THE FULL LIST OF WINNERS IS AS FOLLOWS:

Carol Mew, Lewisham Disability Coalition, Community Empowerment Award  
Dwayne Johnson, Young Champion Award  
Erdogan Nedjat (Jumbo), Unsung Hero Award  
Honor Oak TRA, Most creative initiative by a TRA  
Lucy George, Good Neighbour Award  
Michael Oforikumah, Caretaker of the year Award  
Alanna Curd, Customer Service Excellence Award

Congratulations to all winners and nominees!

## EVENT OUTCOMES

- The business planning process is still happening but the information from the conference was fed into the Senior Management Team away day on the 7th and 8th of November.
- The Brighter Futures young people had the chance to share with residents the work they had done to improve their estates. We are looking to roll out this programme to other estates and to also set up a Youth Council, which is an idea from the Involver conference.
- The Council's repair service was officially signed over to Lewisham Homes by the Mayor and the free phone repairs number was launched.
- Workshops on antisocial behaviour, community involvement and repairs occurred and this information is being fed into service reviews.
- Residents and staff were recognised for their contribution at the awards ceremony. The Community Involvement Team will be using the nominations received at the Involver conference to apply for national awards such as the National Federation of Arms Length Management Organisations awards and Tenant Participation Advisory Service Connecting People Awards.
- Residents were consulted on the magazine and other communication tools and a number of residents signed up to the new major works forum.
- Lewisham Tenants Fund and Somerville and Friends Tenants and Residents Association did a presentation to residents on how to access the Fund and what it can be used for.
- Residents had the chance to question our Senior Management Team direct and get answers in a public forum.



# 2008 Round up

2008 is over and our sights are now set on 2009 and bringing about further improvements to our services. Look at some of the highlights!



## February 08

- 10 residents took part in the business plan challenge session
- 11 residents trained as Resident Inspectors and went on to carry out five inspections each across all Lewisham Homes services
- Approximately 90 residents took part in the Honor Oak Week of Action
- 15 young people not in training, education or employment undertook the High-5 employability skills programme



## April 08

- 10 young people from the Pepys Estate took part in the pilot of the Brighter Futures project and successfully decorated the ball court on the estate
- The Area Panels introduced performance indicators
- The Resident Led Programme was launched and 70 applications were received. 10 residents formed the judging panels and spent hours visiting all the sites of the proposed works.
- There was an inter-estate football tournament between Hazel Grove, Hillcrest and Dacres Estates.



## May 08

- The Honor Oak's Got Talent show was held with acts competing for the prize of performing at People's Day 08. The Honor Oak Tenants and Residents' Association was re-launched at this event.



## June 08

- Residents applied for funding from the Mayor's Playbuilder Fund for play areas and ball courts. Hazel Grove was successful in the first year of funding! We are still waiting to hear on the outcome of the other bids.
- 202 residents were involved in the equalities consultation across 19 services.



## July/August 08

- 12 more residents completed the Resident Inspectors Training and along with some residents from the first round, went on to complete up to five inspections each. The findings in the report have been fed into the customer service strategy.
- Approximately 500 young people attended the Summer Roadshows on 10 estates across the Borough. Nearly 150 of them took part in video interviews about living on their estate and 80 joined our young people's database.
- We took 35 people to the Tenant Participation Advisory Service conference in Birmingham.



## September 08

- We had the first meeting of the Community Forum.
- Over 1000 residents attended the Lewisham Homes Open Day at Ladywell Fields
- Over the last six months we have trained 134 residents in computing skills, resolving conflict, chairing, treasurer and secretary skills, involving everyone, keeping your TRA active, influencing and negotiating, cultural awareness, time management, newsletters and publicity, plumbing, painting and decorating, food hygiene and first aid.



## November 08

- 80 residents attended The Involver Conference
- 70 residents took part in focus groups with Audit Commission inspectors



## December 08

- The major works forum was launched and was attended by 18 residents. The forum and its three sub groups will be planning how to spend the money we are applying to the government for to bring your homes up to the Decent Homes Standard and will be monitoring the works.

From Community Involvement and all the other staff at Lewisham Homes, a big THANK YOU!

Lewisham Homes produce a quarterly magazine **Home**. This is a regular communication which includes important information about our services. Look out for your March issue! If you would like to subscribe to **Home** by email contact [communications@lewishamhomes.org.uk](mailto:communications@lewishamhomes.org.uk)



# Repairing Your Repairs Service

The last few months have been busy for both Building and Property Services. On 1 November 2008 Building Services transferred from Lewisham Council to Lewisham Homes and now falls under the Property Services directorate. More changes are planned over the coming months in the aid of improving the service you receive.

Over this period there are a number of ways that residents can get involved to help us make the service a better one.

In January there will be two focus groups, one in the north and one in the south of the borough. Residents will be able to come and talk to us about:

- The automated message you hear when you call the Repairs Call Centre and agreeing the script

- The possibility of logging repairs via voicemail
  - Discussing effective use text messaging
- We will also be setting up a repairs call centre monitoring group. The group will carry out a one hour session monitoring pre-recorded calls the call centre has received. Interested residents will receive training and be given a £15 gift voucher for each session they do.

We hope that resident involvement will help repair the service you receive and make it a better one.

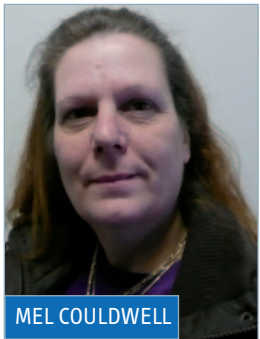
If you would like more information about this opportunities please contact Community Involvement on 020 8314 9267 or [getinvolved@lewishamhomes.org.uk](mailto:getinvolved@lewishamhomes.org.uk).

**NEWSFLASH!**  
Residents can now log their repairs using a freephone number! **0800 028 2 028**

Calls are free from landlines, but residents calling from a mobile phone will be charged - the cost varies depending on your network rate. Residents calling from a mobile will find it cheaper to call 020 8314 8314. You can also log repairs at your housing office, by emailing [repairs@lewishamhomes.org.uk](mailto:repairs@lewishamhomes.org.uk) or online at [www.lewishamhomes.org.uk](http://www.lewishamhomes.org.uk).



## RESIDENT GOES BEHIND THE SCENES



MEL COULDWELL

Somerville Estate resident Mel Couldwell recently spent a day shadowing Mark Agnew, Director of Property Services in order to see for herself how the service is really run.

Mark spent time with Mel explaining Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to her and also what changes he planned to make once Lewisham Homes took over Building Services from the Council on 1 November.

Mel, who is a Lewisham Homes board member, met all the staff who work in the Property Services directorate at the Home Park office, as well as some of the operatives, who explained to her what their jobs involve.

Mel found the day to be an enlightening experience. "It really opened my eyes to how the repairs service works. I now understand the whole process and why repairs can't be carried out immediately. I would really recommend that other residents shadow staff at Lewisham Homes. It will completely change your perception of how the services work and what their jobs really involve."

Now Mel has her sights on shadowing other services and caretaking is next on her list. "I would like to spend some time with the Environmental Services Manager and speak to the caretakers about what their jobs entail."

Would you like to shadow a service? We would like to give you the opportunity to spend some time with a member of staff to see what they do and what goes on behind the scenes. If you are interested, simply fill out the reply slip opposite and send it back to the Freepost address provided.

I WOULD LIKE TO GET BEHIND THE SCENES AT LEWISHAM HOMES!

Name

Service you would like to shadow:

Address

Phone

Mobile

Email

PLEASE cut out the return slip and send by Friday 27

February to the freepost address below:

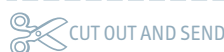
Lewisham Homes

Community Involvement Team

FREEPOST

SE6 4TW

**GET INVOLVED!**





## Fancy yourself an inspector?

We need people with a great eye for detail to inspect our void properties and estates. There will be two separate training sessions in the last two weeks of February, one on voids and one on estate inspections, they will run from 10am-3pm and will cover:

- The voids training will cover the lettable standard while the estate inspection training will cover the criteria used to mark an estate.
- How the information will help us improve services.
- Health and safety briefing.
- Using the photography equipment.
- Doing on site inspections to test out your new knowledge!

For both of these opportunities you will need to be available during business hours and be able to give half a day a month. Once you have completed the training, the staff will talk to you about the schedule over the next three months. Initially, all inspections will be done with staff.

This will be a rolling three month programme and residents who complete inspections will be paid £25 in shopping vouchers per completed inspection.

Interested? Contact Community Involvement on 020 8314 9267 or email [getinvolved@lewishamhomes.org.uk](mailto:getinvolved@lewishamhomes.org.uk) to register your place!

## Vote for Lewisham's parks and help them win a make-over!

The Mayor of Lewisham, Sir Steve Bullock, is calling on all residents to vote for one of two local parks in the borough, to win a slice of investment funding.

The Mayor of London has just announced online voting is taking place now on 47 parks around the capital. Local Authorities were asked to submit parks in their borough – more than a hundred of the capital's parks were put forward by all 33 London boroughs. These were then whittled down at the Greater London Authority to the final 47.

The final 10 winning parks to receive a slice of investment funding will be decided by a public vote via the GLA website. Investment funding of up to £400,000 each for the winning parks could be won.

Mayor of Lewisham, Sir Steve Bullock, said: "We may be in the middle of a city, but Lewisham has the most fantastic parks and open spaces. Two of our parks need your votes to help them win money for a make-over. I urge everyone in the borough – young or old – to vote for their favourite. MAKE YOUR VOTE COUNT and help give a Lewisham park a face-lift!"

The two parks in Lewisham that residents are being asked to vote for are:

- Mayow Park in Forest Hill
- Deptford Park

Londoners can vote to choose which parks get the £400,000 simply by logging on to [www.london.gov.uk/parksvote](http://www.london.gov.uk/parksvote), by text message or by postal vote. Voting closes on Friday 30 January 2009.

In addition to the regular contract work carried out on Lewisham's parks, the Council has invested a further £1.3 million in parks over the past 12 months, secured from both internal and external funding, to undertake the regeneration of Broadway Fields, the Quercus project in Ladywell Fields, improvements to play facilities and Green Flag improvements.

Any money secured from this scheme would compliment the long term award winning investment that the Council has already made across Lewisham.



### Date for your diary!

Saturday 24 January is the consultation day for the Residents' Charter. To sign up for the event contact Community Involvement on 020 8314 9267, Text 'Charter' to 07781 481 783 or email [getinvolved@lewishamhomes.org.uk](mailto:getinvolved@lewishamhomes.org.uk) RSVP by Friday 16 January.

There will be a crèche available but you must pre-register your children to guarantee their place.

# Listening to leaseholders

2008 saw the implementation of the leasehold consultation programme. From the Residents' Charter we started the Leasehold Special Interest Group who meet bi-monthly to discuss specific leasehold issues and to receive feedback from the focus groups that have taken place.

So far we have held focus groups on service charges, buildings insurance and major works. Here are some of your suggestions:

- **The service charge bill should show a clear breakdown and explanation of the individual costs.**

We are amending the information on the service charge bill and will include further explanation of the charges in the leasehold newsletter accompanying the bill.

- **The Leasehold team should hold surgeries on estates when the estimates and actual costs come out.**

This will be implemented in April 2009.

- **Information about the buildings insurance scheme with Ocaso should be more widely publicised.**

Information went out in the following Leasehold Newsletter in September 2008 and is online at [www.lewishamhomes.org.uk](http://www.lewishamhomes.org.uk).

- **More notice should be given about major works bills when possible.**

Leaseholders are invited to be part of the Major Works Forum and the sub groups: Planning, Procurement and Delivery. Not

only will this enable leaseholders to be more informed of the planned works, but it will also enable them to have a say in which works are delivered, by whom and when they will be delivered. See the article below for further information.

## DO YOU WANT TO HAVE YOUR SAY ON LEASEHOLD ISSUES?

- Focus Group: Working with leaseholders who do not live in their property and those who are landlords, 17 February 2009.
- Leasehold Special Interest Group: Review of 2008 consultation, feedback from February focus group, 19 March 2009.

You can read the minutes from previous meetings at [www.lewishamhomes.org.uk](http://www.lewishamhomes.org.uk). If you are interested in taking part in leasehold consultation contact Leasehold Services on 020 8314 8211 or [leasehold@lewishamhomes.org.uk](mailto:leasehold@lewishamhomes.org.uk).



## Major Works Forum launches

The first meeting of the Major Works Forum was held on 11 December. The Forum has been set up to plan how Lewisham Homes is going to spend the money we are bidding to government for in order to improve your homes.

The purpose of this initial meeting was to establish the three working groups which will report to the Forum at the quarterly meetings on their progress. The three groups are: Planning, Procurement and Delivery. The remits of these groups are:  
 Planning: This group will agree the standard for the works, then programme which properties will receive the works and when.

Procurement: This group will be involved in selecting the right contractors to complete the major works.

Delivery: This group will plan what happens when contractors get on site and will be involved in ensuring that projects



are delivered on time and to a high standard.

18 residents attended the first meeting and some have already put their name down for one of the working groups. The groups will begin meeting in January and the start of the year will be particularly busy for the Planning and Procurement

groups with regular meetings, visits to other housing organisations and training planned to take place in January and February.

The next meeting of the Major Works Forum is on 12th March 2009 at The Civic Suite, Catford. If you would like to attend please contact the Community Involvement Team on 020 8314 9267 or email [getinvolved@lewishamhomes.org.uk](mailto:getinvolved@lewishamhomes.org.uk).

Spaces on the working groups are limited and you will need to commit for a period of six months and be available during the day.

# Sway: A Poem by Danielle Heath

I am a giving person and I believe in continuing it as far as I can undergo before I become dough.  
 I love to give the vibe of a positive type.  
 I smile, I laugh, I giggle and sway high and low while I contemplate and realise with no surprise  
 How much of what I really need, I give away with no array  
 Although, I know how critical and little people are prepared to give in return; no sun rays.  
 As I release more laughter, more smiles, lots of giggles, I sway away...  
 No wonder community engagement is so hard to sustain. It always seems that there is more pain than any gain. It rains and rains...  
 More laughter, more smiles, lots of giggles, yes I may.  
 It doesn't change my inspirations; it gives more realisations to my creations.  
 My vision is of union, yet my reality is of a sole role.  
 Some sadness, oh yes, but so much more of laughter, smiles, lots of giggles, sway, sway...  
 I champion here, I rescue over there, I share here, I deliver there, I create here, I nurture over there,  
 I do, do , do and do.  
 At home and at work,  
 At the nursery school and children centre,  
 At the Primary School and Drama Club,  
 At the Parents Forum, at the Local Fair,  
 At the Community Theatre, in my garden,  
 At the secondary school and the Youth Club,  
 At the TRA and the few safety teams in Milton Court,

At projects with health and environmental improvements goals,  
 At my own personal development ... and of the diverse community, too.

... ....  
 Green spaces, less carbon foot print  
 Rosemary, lavender and mint around my apple tree  
 Planted in front of my door  
 Small space that you can see all  
 The drama, the karma, rice and peas, Alabama  
 Dalai Lama, Arizona  
 Fried duck, fish and chips  
 Goat, lamb, fried fish with no relish  
 Wildlife  
 Rats, mice and pigeons  
 Buildings, towers, square. Where is the Amazon gone?  
 Faith with so many meanings...  
 Nonstop go  
 Leadership seems so low  
 Young people strive for knives and guns, oh no!  
 Fear of crime grows...  
 Nonstop go  
 Here comes another issue that someone throws  
 Nonstop go  
 Sway, sway...  
 Thank you all for helping us so...

Written by Danielle M. Heath -Milton Court TRA Chair,  
 Parent Liaison Officer at Deptford Green Extended Services,  
 Parent Facilitator and consultant.

## CONNECTING PEOPLE AWARDS: GET YOUR NOMINATIONS IN NOW!



The Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS) and Northern, Midlands and Southern Housing magazines are pleased to announce the 2nd Connecting People Awards, rewarding tenants and people who work in communities across England.

There will be FIVE categories:

- Tenant of the Year Award
- Tenant Liaison Officer of the Year Award – Landlord
- Tenant Liaison Officer of the Year Award – Contractor
- Green Project/Initiative in the Community Award
- Best Practice in the Community Award

There will be an awards dinner to announce the regional category winners, who will then go forward to the final at the TPAS conference in Birmingham.

The deadline for nominations is 2 February 2008. Request a nomination form or find out more from Community Involvement:

● 020 8314 9267

● [getinvolved@lewishamhomes.org.uk](mailto:getinvolved@lewishamhomes.org.uk)

# The Involver

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# GET INVOLVED!

## Training opportunities

### FEBRUARY

● **Speedwriting,**

3 February, 9.30am-4.30pm, Town Hall, Catford

By the end of this course delegates will be able to take notes and minutes using speedwriting techniques.

● **Food hygiene,**  
17 February

This course covers good food hygiene practice and how to prevent contamination.

● **First Aid,**  
18 February, 9.30am-4.30pm, Kings College

This is a one day course to teach the duties of a first aider and basic first aid skills.

### MARCH

● **Intermediate Word**  
10 March, 9.30am-4.30pm

This course is for anyone who has used Word to create simple documents and now wants to extend knowledge. Learn more complex formatting and layout options, keyboard shortcuts, and mailshots, letters and labels.

● **Intermediate Excel**  
17 March, 9.30am-4.30pm

This course covers the use of Excel to set up a simple database and manage lists.

Places are limited and allocated on a first come first served basis. Contact us now to book your place.



Call us on 020 8314 9267



[getinvolved@lewishamhomes.org.uk](mailto:getinvolved@lewishamhomes.org.uk)



Text 'Involved' to 07781 481 783

CUT OUT AND SEND

### Translation and other format request

- Community Involvement – Improve our services by giving your ideas. Please provide your details below.
  - Përfshirja e Komunitetit – Përmirësoni shërbimet tuaja duke shprehur idetë tuaja.
  - Ju lutemi jepni të dhënat tuaja më poshtë.
  - 社区改善——提出您的想法，改善我们的服务。请在下方提供您的详细信息。
  - சமுதாயத்தில் ஈடுபாடு - உங்கள் கருத்துக்களை அளிப்பதன் மூலம் எங்கள் சேவைகளை மேம்படுத்துதல். தயவுசெய்து உங்கள் விவரங்களைக் கீழே அளிக்கவும்.
  - Toplum katılımı – Sizin fikirleriniz ile verdığımız hizmetleri iyileştirmek için. Lütfen aşağıya bilgilerinizi yazınız.
  - Sự tham gia của Cộng đồng - Nâng cao chất lượng dịch vụ của chúng tôi bằng cách nêu lên ý kiến của quý vị. Xin cung cấp thông tin về quý đây.
  - Implication dans la communauté – Améliorez nos services en nous faisant part de vos idées. Veuillez noter vos coordonnées ci-dessous.
  - Ka Qeybgalka Bulshada –Wanaaji adeegyadaada adiga oo fikradahaaga ka dhiibanaya. Fadlan faafaahintaada ku bixi halkan hoose.
- Name, Emri. Nom, 姓名, Magac, பெயர், Isim, Tên:  
 Telephone No, Numri i telefonit, Numéro de téléphone, 电话号码, Lambarka telefoonka, தொலைபேசி எண், Telefon no, Số điện thoại:  
 Address, Adresa. Adresse, 地址, Cinwaanka, முகவரி, Adres, Đĩa chỉ:

- Gjuhët/Albanian
- 中文/Mandarin
- தமிழ்/Tamil
- Tiếng Việt/Vietnamese

- Français/French
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**Lewisham Homes**  
**Freepost (No stamp required)**  
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TRANSLATION REQUEST