

Serpentine Court Quarterly Update

Summer 2024



Welcome

Welcome to the latest newsletter for Serpentine Court residents. This edition includes the news on the Housing Needs Assessments and an introduction to a key member of the team. It also includes messages from the Serpentine Court Steering Group and MKCC Assets Team.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to get in touch. You can reach the Community Engagement Team via email on regeneration@milton-keynes.gov.uk or by calling 07443 204 793

Message from Serpentine Court Steering Group

Time to take part...

It is good to see the building work is progressing well and it all seems to be on track. To add to this progress the Housing Needs Assessments have now begun.

This is an important part of the regeneration of Serpentine Court as this is your opportunity to discuss your housing needs directly with an officer from Milton Keynes City Council. This newsletter has more details about what this entails and what you can do to prepare for the meeting. I urge all residents to take part and bring any relevant paperwork to your meeting with the Allocations Team.

Danielle Slaymaker - Chair of Serpentine Court Steering Group (SCSG)



Green Light for Green Homes

Milton Keynes City Council has secured funding through the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) to deliver energy efficiency upgrades to council properties across the city including some homes on the Lakes Estate. Energy upgrades will vary according to the level of need and could range from small insulation projects to entire wraparounds with new ventilation. The scheme will boost property energy ratings and could save council tenants hundreds of pounds on energy bills.

There will be a number of homes on the Lakes Estate that will benefit from the SHDF initiative and MEARS will be carrying out the work. Please note this is a separate project to the new homes being built by GRAHAM. If you have any queries/questions regarding the SHDF project please call MEARS on: 0330 123 2522 option 5

Shops on Serpentine

As you may be aware the remaining shops in Serpentine Court have now closed or will be closed shortly, this includes Jardines Pharmacy, the Happy Shopper and the Chicken and Pizza Palace. The main reason for these closures is the deteriorating condition of the properties making it unsafe and unhygienic for the shopkeepers to continue to operate. As a result of these closures partners including Bletchley and Fenny Town Council, NHS Community Connector and Milton Keynes City Council have been listing current options and also working to find further options for residents.

Below is a list of the retail offers currently available:

- ASDA Newton Leys: Islay Court, Jersey Dr, Newton Leys, Bletchley Milton Keynes MK3 5QW
- Co-op Water Eaton: 198 Water Eaton Rd Bletchley Milton Keynes MK2 3AQ
- Water Hall Community Larder, Water Hall Primary School, Fern Grove, Bletchley, MK2 3QF. Every Friday from 1:30pm to 3pm. Tel: 01908 366122
- Saplings Community Larder, Knowles Nursery Centre, Queensway, Bletchley, MK2 2HB. Every Thursday 2pm to 4pm Tel: 01908 366122
- Water Eaton Community Hub/Larder, Water Eaton Church Centre, Drayton Road, Bletchley, MK2 3RR every Tuesday between 2pm-4pm. Tel: 07883 984091
- Food Bank Top Up mobile shop, Sir Herbert Leon Academy, Fern Grove, Bletchley, MK2 3HQ. Every Thursday 10:00am to 11:30am. Tel: 0300 303 4933
- Jo's Hope Shop/warehouse, 49 Barton Road, Bletchley, MK2 3HU

Please note Food Bank and community larders may have certain criteria/subscriptions needed to use the service, please contact the organisations directly for more information.



Message from Nicola Watson, Allocations Officer

I would like the opportunity to introduce myself, Nicola Watson, as your dedicated point of contact for the Housing Needs Assessment and allocations.

I have been working alongside Milton Keynes residents needing to move home for several years and will use my experience to support and guide you throughout your move. You may have seen me out and about, as I have been out to meet some of you already. I will arrange to meet each resident at a time that suits you, you can contact me on the contact details below to arrange the visit. Please note I will also be at Spotlight every Tuesday from 1pm to 4pm for anyone who wants to drop in and see me, no appointment needed.

What is the home visit for?

Initially I am hoping to be able to answer any questions or concerns that you may have. It will be helpful for me to collect details on medical conditions, schools, workplaces, and support needs as part of finding a suitable offer of accommodation for you and your household. This information helps to determine the size, type and location of the property we can offer you. If you would feel more comfortable with me coming back to discuss these needs and prefer the first visit to be more about your questions or concerns, I will be happy to arrange further visits to talk about housing needs.

Please phone, text or email me using the information below to arrange your appointment. I look forward to meeting you soon.

Nicola Watson, Housing allocations officer.

T: 07483 123953

E: nicola.watson@milton-keynes.gov.uk



Independent Advice

Independent advisor TPAS has a freephone telephone line and email address specifically for Serpentine Court residents. If you would like to find out more about the current consultation on the future of Serpentine Court; have any questions or wish to put your point of view across, you can contact Kevin Farrell for free Independent Advice using the freephone and email details below:

Freephone: 0800 731 1619

Email: serpentinecourt@tpas.org.uk

Repairs and Maintenance on Serpentine Court

As previously reported MKCC continues to carry out repairs and maintenance work at Serpentine Court. Where items are beyond repair, MKCC will replace or upgrade as needed; this is being done on a case-by-case basis. Please continue to report any communal issues in the usual way, especially external lighting. If you have any damp or mould issues in your property, please report it to MEARS using the contact details below.

MKCC continue to carry out safety checks to fire doors and emergency lighting. Other safety measures include fencing off some parts of the estate and taking them out of use. Where this has happened, alternative routes have been made available. Structural work is needed to communal areas around Serpentine Court, this is planned work that has been brought forward. You may notice some scaffolding in/around the shops whilst this work is being carried out. There are also safety works planned for the precinct area in and around the steps near the Bakers. This is currently at the planning stage. More details will be shared with everyone in the next newsletter.

Signage has been installed at the back of the shops to remind people not to go onto these flat roofs. The roofs are only designed to take the load of the roof, not people. If you see anyone on these flat roofs, please report it to Thames Valley Police and your neighbourhood officer. They are putting themselves at risk, as well as breaking the law. There has also been an increase in the amount of fly tipping in the area, this is a real concern due to health and safety, fire risk, rodents and anti-social behaviour. If you see anyone fly tipping/dumping rubbish please report it to your housing officer.

We are pleased to report that Serpentine Court Steering Groups has given Buckinghamshire Fire Service the green light to use empty blocks, shops and apartments for fire safety training. This potentially lifesaving training will allow fire fighters to use a real building to practice how they access flats and shops and carry out their duties. We will send letters to all homes to give advance notice as to when this will happen.

To report your repair and maintenance issues please use one of the following:

Telephone Mears on 0330 123 2522, this is answered 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Email: repairs.miltonkeynes@mearsgroup.co.uk

If you have any other housing related issues your neighbourhood officers are here to help. Please call or email them on:

- Andrew Johnson Tel: 07584 884557 or email Andrew.Johnson@milton-keynes.gov.uk
- Rachel Harding Tel: 07785 474093 or email Rachel.Harding@milton-keynes.gov.uk

Please note MKCC officers carry their ID with them at all times, please ask to see ID before letting them in, if you are still not sure please call MKCC on 01908 691 691