



# Pioneer Press

THE NEWSLETTER FOR RESIDENTS OF WOMEN'S PIONEER HOUSING

## Celebrating our centenary



Stanley Gardens, Ladbroke Grove  
source: Photographic print, WPH archive - London Metropolitan Archives

**This is a very special year for Women's Pioneer Housing as it is celebrating its centenary. In 1920 the Anglo-Irish suffragist, Etheldred Browning and a group of like-minded women founded Women's Pioneer Housing:**

*"to cater to the housing requirements of professional and other women of moderate means who require distinctive individual homes at moderate rents."*

To mark this momentous occasion, Women's Pioneer Housing decided to research its history in detail. Some volunteers from the U3A began the research in 2017. Three are still hard

at work. Lottery funding, awarded from 2018, paid for a project coordinator and a PhD student also joined the team.

### **What did we want to find out?**

The research team investigated the lives of our founders. Many of them were involved in the campaign for "Votes for Women". Some were among the first women to gain professional qualifications, including the association's first architect, Gertrude Leverkus and its first accountants, Miriam Homesham and Ethel Watts. We also sought answers to questions such as who lived in Women's Pioneer homes, how did

.....  
 continued on page 2

### Inside this issue

CENTENARY & HERITAGE PROJECT	2
WOOD LANE	3
UPDATED PROGRAMMES	4
DISABILITY BENEFITS	5
KIM & VIOLET	6
GARDENING COMPETITION	7
CHRISTMAS PARTIES	7
ETHELDRED BROWNING	8
NEW STAFF	8
RESP MEMBERS	9
QUIZ & RECIPE	10

continued from page 1

they earn a living and what jobs were women doing for the first time. "We also researched how Women's Pioneer was funded and run.

You can find an article about our founder and first Secretary Etheldred Browning on page 8.

### How did we do it?

The re-discovery of records from the organisation's earliest years and a folder of original plans and drawings dating to the 1920s to 1940s has been very helpful. We have also made use of the internet, especially Ancestry.com and FindMyPast.com, in order to research the lives of individual tenants.

### When can you see the results?

The exhibition *Pioneering Courage: Housing and the Working Woman 1919 – 1939* is showing from 9th -27th March at Mary Smith Court. Do come to the private view on the 9th! Ten banners explain why WPH was needed, how it was set up and financed, who lived in the first flats, their jobs and careers, and how they spent their spare time. The exhibition then goes on tour to a number of different libraries.

Future plans include a follow-up to the film *Pioneering Courage: the Women's Pioneer Story*, a 5-minute film in which WPH staff, residents and volunteers explain how the WPH pioneers have inspired them. We are also working on public internet access to detailed research and complementary learning materials. These will be launched at Founders' Day on 1st October 2020.

If you would like to know about the exhibitions or events in 2020 please contact us: inajara.shuaber@womenspioneer.co.uk

# SOME DATES FOR YOUR DIARY



## PIONEERING COURAGE : Housing and the Working Woman 1919- 1939

### Exhibition Dates:

#### March

9th – 27th (Residents and guests only.)

#### Private View

#### 9th

Launch of touring exhibition at Mary Smith Court, Trebovir Road, Earl's Court, SW5 9NF.

#### April

1st – 22nd

Exhibition on display at London Metropolitan Archives  
40 Northampton Road, Clerkenwell, EC1R 0HB.

#### Wednesday 15th April

3:00 – 5:00pm An afternoon exploring WPH's heritage

5:30 – 7:00pm A centenary celebration for residents, staff and Board members.

#### June

1st- 26th

#### Exhibition at Fulham Library

598 Fulham Road, Fulham, SW6 5NX.

#### July

2nd – 31st

#### Exhibition at Kensington Library

Kensington Town Hall, Phillimore Road.

#### August

3rd Aug – 15th Aug

#### Brompton Library

210 Old Brompton Road, Kensington, London SW5 0BS.

#### August/September

17th Aug – 19th Sept

#### Feminist Library

161 Sumner Road, Peckham SE15 6JL.

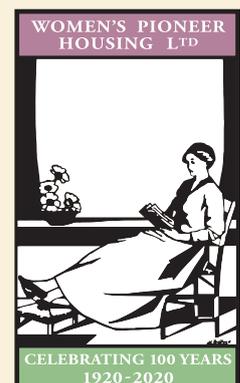
#### October

1st October

#### Founders' Day

#### Bush Hall

310 Uxbridge Road , Shepherds Bush, W12 7LJ.



# WOOD LANE

In the Spring 19 edition of Pioneer Press, we shared the news that we had entered into a contract with developers Hub to redevelop the site of our current offices and Browning House.

In return for a long lease and the chance to develop to an exciting co-living scheme, Hub will be building us new offices and around 80 affordable self-contained homes for women. The development represents a unique opportunity to provide a significant number of high quality one-bedroom flats to be let at affordable rents to a range of single women seeking women-led accommodation.

## Project engagement

We and our development partners have spent the time since then engaging with local people both individually and through local interest groups and with our residents.

We arranged two design groups for

our residents to come and ask questions about the proposed designs and to provide comment for us to consider. There was support for the size of the proposed flats at 50m2 and the proposed layout.

Those attending liked the fact that each flat had a balcony, offering the opportunity to create personalised green spaces. There was also broad support for the approach being taken to environmental sustainability. Thank you for all who attended these workshops.

## Project exhibition

We also arranged for an exhibition event to be held at Mary Smith Court to which all residents were invited.



This offered an opportunity for our residents to meet our development partner Hub and to hear about our joint proposals.

The meeting was well attended and the responses received were very positive. Again the design of the WPH offices and flats was welcomed. Our development partner's intention to provide accommodation for rent on the site was also seen as complimentary to our use of the land.

Having taken on board comments raised through engagement, we have now made a planning application to Hammersmith and Fulham and hope to have a decision in May which will allow us to get the works underway before the end of the year .



Wood Lane projection

## Do not look now: Answer to our Women's History Month Quiz

1. Hilary Mantel.
2. Charlotte, Emily and Anne.
3. 1994.
4. Into space.
5. Labour Party.
6. Frida Kahlo.
7. Mary (Robinson, in 1990, and McAleese, 1997 and 2004)
8. Sylvia Pankhurst.
9. 21 (she has won three times).
10. November 19.

# Kitchen & Bathroom Replacement Programme



Over the last couple of months, we have been running a pilot programme of kitchen and bathroom replacements using colour schemes and designs influenced by tenants. 18 kitchens are included in this pilot and 5 bathrooms.

We do appreciate how much of an upheaval major works such as this can be within an occupied flat so we do appreciate the co-operation that we have had from tenants while carrying out these works.

## Norman Court

We will soon be starting on a kitchen and bathroom replacement project in Norman Court where a further 20 kitchens and 9 bathrooms will be replaced.

## Kitchens and Bathrooms replacement

Our main kitchen, bathroom and

major voids programme has been delayed slightly due to some contractual issues that need to be resolved, but we are hopeful to get into contract during February. This contract will be for 6 years and will enable us to replace the kitchens and bathrooms that are over 20 and 25 years old respectively.

We will be contacting tenants in due course to advise them when their kitchen and or bathroom are due for replacement.

## Feedback

At the time of writing, the feedback from tenants has been good. We will be inviting several tenants who have recently had new kitchens and bathrooms to a meeting to review the pilot works so far. We want to make sure that tenants are happy with the designs and equipment that we are fitting in your homes.



New kitchens designed by the replacement programme

**In the meantime, if you have any questions please contact the Repairs team: [repairsresponseteam@womenspioneer.co.uk](mailto:repairsresponseteam@womenspioneer.co.uk)**

## Cost of living rent rises

For residents with assured tenancies, any changes to your rent on an annual basis are made in line with guidance issued by the government. Over the last 4 years government guidance has meant that rent charges have been reducing by 1% each year. However, after April 2020, the

government have confirmed that rents can now increase, which means that for residents with a July rent anniversary, the rent will increase by no more than 2.7%. This is needed to cover the increases in costs we face e.g. for repairs and maintenance. Please note this does not relate to

your service charges which could increase or decrease in line with the services being provided at your building.

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact your Housing Officer.



# Kim & Violet

This year, Kim and Violet celebrate 25 years working together and say goodbye to colleagues and tenants.

Kim and Violet will be known to many of you as the people who are our reception team and the voices on the main line to our head office. Their combined careers at Women's Pioneer spans 55 years, with 2020 commemorating 25 years working as a team but marking a key change for them and the wider team as they move on to pursue other interests. Violet leaves Women's Pioneer in March and Kim will be taking a one year sabbatical in May.

They share their experience and memories.

## Kim's Memories

I have had the opportunity to work for 25 years alongside my colleague Violet who has decided to leave WPH for pastures new. We have forged a great friendship and I will miss her terribly but I know that she will do well in whatever venture she takes on in the future.

This prompted many questions on the changes I have experienced during my time with WPH that led to a wonderful trip down memory lane. I was excited to begin my journey with WPH because I held and still have very strong views on the uphill

struggle that many women face in the area of housing, especially those experienced by women led households.

The biggest change that I have experienced is probably the introduction of new technology to improve the services we offer – when I first started at WPH, I was using a golf ball typewriter!! The introduction and use of continually changing and updated applications has allowed us to offer a constantly evolving and improved service to tenants, which is at the heart of all we do.

I have decided to take a year's sabbatical starting on the 1st June this year to enable me to do some travelling and follow some other pursuits.

I look forward on my return to seeing the further improvements and changes that will have most certainly taken place in my absence!

## Violet's memories

I joined WPH in 1995 as a Corporate Services Administrator. My sister saw the ad and prompted me to go for the position as I had studied Womens Studies and she knew that I wanted to work in an organisation which was



Kim and Violet around 20 years ago

special and where I would be in a position to help and influence.

When I arrived my colleague, Kim Culhane was already in post and we hit it off straightway, Kim often jokes that she spends more time with me than her husband and it would not be untrue to say we are a couple!

As frontline staff my interaction with, tenants was special. I have seen tenants move into their homes, I met their families, seen them have children of their own and their children having children themselves, along the way watching people's lives change as part of my work has been an experience.

I will miss answering the phone and hearing tenants say "is that you Violet?"

I have enjoyed 25 happy years working with amazing people past and present. Colleagues who became friends and supported and encouraged me to go that much further. I look back fondly at meeting and speaking to hundreds if not thousands of WPH residents over a significant part of my working life. I now look forward, excited about my future. I will miss you all and thank you for contributing to making my time at WPH very special.



Kim & Violet in front of Women's Pioneer office

# Women's Pioneer Garden Competition 2020

## Calling all our creative gardening residents!

We are celebrating all the hard work that our talented gardeners put in to make their homes greener and more colourful by running our annual garden competition for all our residents.

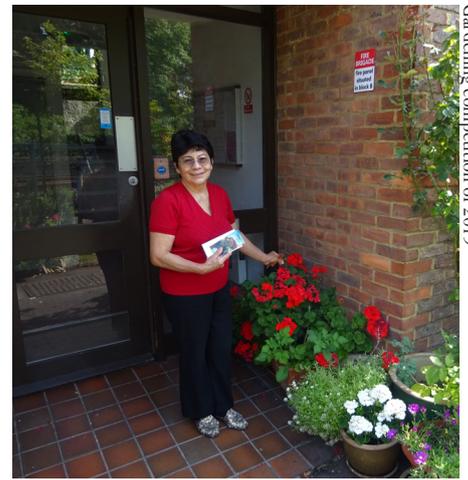
The judging will take place between 11a.m. and 3p.m. on Friday 17 July. There will be six categories to judge and the winners of each will be announced at a celebratory event with tea and cake later that day.

The categories are:

- Individual garden
- Window box

- General Needs communal garden
- Sheltered Housing communal garden
- Balcony display
- Eco-friendly (plants to encourage butterflies and birds, renewable resources (compost) or materials used.)

If you live in a house or scheme with a communal garden and would like to enter for this category, please discuss with your neighbours to make sure there is only one entry. You can of course enter other categories such as window box or balcony as well as for the communal garden.



Gardening competition of 2019

If you would like to enter, please contact Women's Pioneer on 0208 749 7112 or email [info@womenspioneer.co.uk](mailto:info@womenspioneer.co.uk) to ask for an application form.

You can pick up a form from reception at 227 Wood Lane W12 0EX or if you live in one of our sheltered schemes, from your scheme manager or download one from our website.

Closing date: 30/06/2020



## Two christmas parties in sheltered housing: There were two lovely parties at Mary Smith Court and Mary Flux Court

"We had a lovely Christmas Party at Mary Smith Court on Friday 20 December. The sitting room was filled with a good crowd of ladies coming together to help start the Christmas Holidays off in style." Linda Wade

"Christmas lunch for residents of Mary Flux Court had discounted traditional turkey fare from a generous M&S combined with chicken biryanis options, all cooked by residents." Diane Humphrey



Christmas party at Mary Flux Court



Christmas party at Mary Smith Court

# Etheldred Anna Browning, the woman who founded Women's Pioneer Housing

Women's Pioneer Housing was the brainchild of Etheldred Browning, a campaigner for women's suffrage from Dublin. Etheldred founded WPH in October 1920 and managed it until her retirement in 1938.

Ladies prominently identified at the Women's Suffrage in Dublin. Etheldred Browning is circled in yellow



## Early life

Edith Anna Browning was born on 17th September 1869 in Dublin, the third of four children of Jeffrey Browning, a lawyer, and Julia Smart. By the age of 17, she was using the name Etheldred Anna Browning.

## Education and early career in Ireland

We have not found any information about Etheldred's schooling but in November 1886, at the age of 17, she enrolled at the Metropolitan School of Art in Dublin.

## Suffrage Activities and First World War

The Irish Independent newspaper has several articles about suffrage activities featuring Etheldred and in December 1913 she is included in a photograph of 'Ladies Prominently Identified with Suffrage Week in Ireland'. She also researched and campaigned on women's employment and wages. She supported various initiatives during the First World War.

## Life in London

Etheldred moved to London sometime after the end of the war. In 1920 she published two articles in Common Cause, a suffrage magazine. She was also lecturing 'on various

aspects of the Housing Problem'.

It may have been because of her speaking or writing activities that she was invited to join the Women's Section of the Garden Cities and Town Planning Association (GCTPA) in 1919. The following year she spoke at the GCTPA women's conference and published three articles in The Woman Leader covering housing and town planning issues.

## Women's Pioneer Housing

Etheldred founded WPH with the assistance of Dublin friends, suffrage

contacts and colleagues from the Women's Section of the GCPTA in October 1920 when she was 51. For the first few years she was the sole employee, carrying out nearly all the work of the fledgling organisation and dealing with everyone from bankers to builders. She had voluntary help from members of the Committee of Management but did not have an assistant until November 1923.

Etheldred continued to be the driving force behind the growing organisation until 1938 when at the age of 68 she was asked to retire.

## Later life

In 1934 Etheldred moved to 8 Cheltenham Terrace, Chelsea. The 1939 War Register records her as living in Eton. By 1942 Etheldred had moved back to 8 Cheltenham Terrace; By 1945, she was living at 1 Spencer Park, Wandsworth.

Etheldred died in Chelsea in 1946.

## NEW STAFF

Jack, who worked with us for a year, left last summer to travel and is temporarily back as our Housing Officer. Jack will cover the area patch 3, working with Francisco Velazquez Ruiz responsible for all housing management services.

Maggie is joining us as Corporate Services Executive Officer. Maggie provides PA support to our Chief Executive and works closely with our Head of HR & Corporate Services developing our business processes.



Maggie & Jack

# RESP ACTIVITIES IN 2020

Our Resident Engagement and Scrutiny Panel will be meeting on March 2 2020 at Mary Flux Court, 25 Bramham Gardens, SW5 0JE (see below for other dates this year). This will be the panel's first meeting this year, and will be an opportunity for anyone interested in joining the panel to come along and find out how the process works.

## RESP will elect a new chair

RESP members will also be electing a new chair to oversee its work, following on from the sterling efforts of Laura Hardin, whose term as chair came to an end in December 2019. The chair will serve for a twelve month term, although they can be re-elected when that term finishes.

## RESP services and achievements

The panel holds quarterly meetings, which are also attended by members of staff from WPH, and its aim to scrutinise our performance and work with us to engage with a wider range of residents.

This year, RESP members will be carrying out service reviews of three areas of WPH's work:

- Repairs.
- Complaints.
- Resident engagement.

These are key areas for WPH to get right, and many of you will have direct experience of them.

## Meeting dates this year (all held at Mary Flux Court):

2 March, 1 June, 7 September, 7 December.



.....  
**If you would like to become a RESP member, or to work on one of the reviews, or would just like to attend a meeting to see what it involves, then please get in touch with our Housing Assistant, Farha Din on 020 8749 7112 farha.din @womenspioneer.co.uk**  
.....

# Editorial panel

**Pioneer Press is put together every quarter, and is a collaborative effort between members of staff and our residents.**

We have an editorial panel that meets in advance of each issue to discuss what the content might be, and to agree who is going to write what.

We currently have one resident who sits on the panel, Marcia Davies, but would love to have at least a couple more to help us make sure that we are coming up with articles and features that are genuinely of interest to you all. If you would like to get involved,

please get in touch for a chat with Inajara Shuaber, our Communications Officer– the time commitment is pretty low, and we can guarantee biscuits and a cup of tea when the editorial panel meets!

Alternatively, if you have a specific issue that you would like us to cover, please get intouch and let us know – if you would like to write about it, all the better!



The resident Marcia Davies and Aidan McCarthy in our Editorial Panel Meeting

# TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE: Women's History Month

What do you know about Women's History? Try your memory with this Quiz prepared by Aidan McCarthy.



- 1** The Mirror and The Light, due to be published in 2020, is the third volume in a trilogy by which author?  
.....
- 2** Can you name all three Brontë sisters?  
.....
- 3** In what year were women first ordained as priests by the Church of England?  
.....
- 4** In 1991, Helen Sharman became the first Briton to go... where?  
.....
- 5** Rebecca Long Bailey, Jess Phillips, Lisa Nandy and Emily Thornberry all stood for the leadership of which British political party this year?  
.....
- 6** Salma Hayek portrayed which Mexican artist in a film released in 2002?  
.....
- 7** All women who have ever been elected President of Ireland have had the same first name. What is it?  
.....
- 8** Which prominent suffragette was arrested on International Women's Day in 1914 before she could address a crowd in Trafalgar Square?  
.....
- 9** How many times has Meryl Streep been nominated for an Academy Award?  
.....
- 10** Contrary to popular belief, there is also an International Men's Day – when is it?  
.....

## INTO THE KITCHEN AT FORK-POINT

### COD WITH TOMATO, OLIVE AND CHORIZO SAUCE



#### INGREDIENTS

- 100g bulgar wheat
- 2tbsp olive oil
- 100g chorizo chopped
- 2 cloves of garlic sliced
- 400g tin of tomatoes
- 2 thick skinless cod loins
- 10 pitted black olives
- Handful of chopped flat leaf parsley
- Salt and pepper to season

#### COOKING METHOD

- 1.** Put the bulgar wheat in a bowl, pour over enough just boiled water to cover, then season and put a plate on top. Leave to swell up while you make the sauce.

- 2.** Heat the olive oil in a large lidded frying pan and cook the chorizo until it releases oil. Add the garlic and cook for 3 minutes then tip in the tomatoes, season and simmer for 10 minutes or until thickened. Nestle in the cod fillets and olives, season the top of the cod and drizzle with a little more oil. Put on the lid and cook for 10 minutes or until the fish is cooked.

Drain the bulgar wheat really well, stir through half the parsley and season. Spoon into bowls then top with the cod, sauce and another sprinkling of parsley.

Serves 2!

# Free events March to June

**07 March**

## **REMARKABLE LIVES OF THE SUFFRAGETTES: AN AFTERNOON WITH DIANE ATKINSON**

Wanstead Library, Spratt Hall Road, E11 2RQ. From 4pm to 6pm. Diane's afternoon talk will chart women's struggle for the vote through the lives of those who took part – and describe the vitriol they faced. What comes through is the power and courage of the 'bloody difficult' women who continued to challenge the establishment and, at the same time, changed the perception of women, for the better, before the war in 1914.

**08 March**

## **INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY WALK**

Russel Square to Bedford Square, WC1N 1LJ. From 2 to 4pm. Interesting walk to mark International Women's day with and for Camden Mayor & her charity Solace Women's Aid. Led by team of 3 CTGA guides. Come on a walk to learn the stories of fallen women, women of scandal, educated women, women of courage, every woman.

**15 March**

## **ST PATRICK'S DAY PARADE**

Trafalgar Square, WC2 5DN. London's St Patrick's Day parade lines the streets from Piccadilly to Trafalgar Square and cheers on a stream of leprechaun floats, traditional musicians and squads of Irish dancers. The main stage at Trafalgar Square will be surrounded by a street food market and a 'tea tent', with a line-up of Irish bands. Basically, it's a big, rip-roaring one-day festival, only the pints are a shade of Gaelic green.

**25 April**

## **VAISAKHI FESTIVAL**

Trafalgar Square, WC2 5DN. Vaisakhi, also known as Baisakhi, Vaishakhi, or Vasakhi is a historical and religious festival in Hinduism and Sikhism. The annual London festival has been celebrated by more than 30,000 people in recent years and marks the start of the Sikh New Year. Enjoy free live music performances, see works by Sikh artists, try out gatka or the army-led obstacle course, and tuck into traditional food from the stalls in Trafalgar Square.

**Until 26 April**

## **MUSHROOMS: THE ART, DESIGN AND FUTURE OF FUNGI AT SOMERSET HOUSE**

Strand, WC2R 1LA, All day. Explore fungi's colourful cultural legacy, from poetry to psychedelics, by visiting Mushrooms: The Art, Design and Future of Fungi at Somerset House. See works from more than 40 leading artists. The exhibition looks at innovative experiments in design, textiles and architecture.

**30 MAY**

## **EID FESTIVAL IN LONDON**

Trafalgar Square, WC2 5DN. From 12pm to 6pm. Join the Eid Festival celebrations and learn more about Muslim culture in Trafalgar Square. Everyone is invited to mark the end of Ramadan, the Islamic holy month of fasting, at this annual event in central London. Feast on food from around the world, join in a range of family activities, and enjoy live music and entertainment on the main stage.

**20 to 21 JUNE**

## **ART NIGHT**

Throughout Walthamstow and Kings Cross. Follow a trail of art across London during the all-night arts festival, Art Night. Art Night presents a free one-night programme of contemporary art, performance, music and architecture, which takes place from early evening until dawn and moves to a different part of London each year. Many of the free festival's works are site-specific and directly engage with the culture and heritage of the area.

**From June to July**

## **BP BIG SCREENS**

Trafalgar Square, Wembley Park, Television Centre in White City and Arena Square in Wembley. Grab a spot and experience live opera and ballet for free, with the Royal Opera House's BP Big Screens 2020. Watch captivating opera, ballet and exclusive backstage footage as the shows are broadcast from Covent Garden's Royal Opera House to locations across the UK. Make sure to arrive early to secure a space and catch the full pre-show screenings.

**From 19 June to 04 July**

## **GREENWICH+ DOCKLANDS INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL**

Royal Greenwich, Docklands and Tower Hamlets. See the world differently with innovative art productions, UK premieres and family activities. Part of Royal Greenwich Festivals, the annual festival of outdoor theatre and performing arts presents an extensive programme of art installations, street theatre, circus, dance acts and music events, produced by UK and international artists.

# Ordering repairs

Call the team directly Monday to Friday between 9.30am and 5.30pm:

 **020 8743 4422.**

The emergency numbers to the left are only to be used for a situation that cannot wait until our office reopens.

# Contact us

**Our Wood Lane office is open from Monday to Friday, 9.30am to 5.30pm.**

Call in or write to:  
227 Wood Lane, London, W12 0EX.

Phone us:  **020 8749 7112**

Email: [info@womenspioneer.co.uk](mailto:info@womenspioneer.co.uk)

Feedback: [feedback@womenspioneer.co.uk](mailto:feedback@womenspioneer.co.uk)

Twitter: [@womenspioneer](https://twitter.com/womenspioneer)  
Instagram: [@womenspioneer](https://www.instagram.com/womenspioneer)

Interested in joining the **Pioneer Press editorial panel?**  
Email: [inajara.shuaber@womenspioneer.co.uk](mailto:inajara.shuaber@womenspioneer.co.uk)

# Emergency out of hours numbers

If you have an emergency repair when our office is closed, details of who to contact for the different types of repairs can be found below. Our repairs line 020 8743 4422 provides a recorded announcement of our emergency contractors and their telephone numbers. You will not be able to report a repair if you dial this number, but you will be able to listen to an audio recording of who to call.

## **Building Maintenance**

(roofing, windows, carpentry, plumbing and electrical):

24 Hour Solutions Ltd -

**0845 544 2842**

Confirm when calling that you are a WPH tenant

## **Locksmiths**

Hagan Locksmiths

**0800 865 4808**

## **Power cut to the whole house:**

UK Power Network

**0800 056 6341** or **0333 32 32 105**

## **Gas leak:**

National Grid

**0800 111 999**

## **Lift breakdown:**

Specialist Lift Services

**01732 455 771**

## **Warden Call systems:**

S.E.A

**01322 619 155**

## **All heating and hot water including individual boilers, radiators, heating controls and communal boilers:**

S&S Burners

**020 8330 7992**

Please leave your full name, telephone number and address when calling S&S Burners. They will be able to contact you as soon as possible.

## **Faulty fire alarm in a shared part of your building:**

Chameleon

**01757 244 511.**