

Press release

22 January 2009

Hackney Homes gives three tenants a month's rent for free

Helping residents to stay out of arrears is a priority for Hackney Homes. That is why over the festive period, Hackney Homes ran an awareness campaign to encourage tenants to pay their rent on time by offering three tenants to chance to win their January month for free.

Over the festive period, nearly 12,000 tenants paid their rent on time and over a thousand cleared their rent accounts of outstanding money totalling over £138,000. This is a significant improvement on last year when we saw an increase in rent arrears of £45,000 and around 4977 tenants falling behind with rent payments.

Charlotte Graves, Hackney Homes Chief Executive said "We know that it is a busy time for our tenants with Christmas and the New Year and we are pleased that so many have kept up with their weekly rent payments.

"We will continue to support our tenants with debt advice and payment options should they struggle to pay their rent. These facilities are available via the five neighbourhood housing offices across the borough".

If you would like to speak to someone about your rent, you can contact your local neighbourhood office or check the Hackney Homes Website www.hackneyhomes.org.uk for more information.

The three lucky winners are:

- Mrs G Sapians from Stoke Newington
- Mr J Kirwan from Dalston
- Mr O Davies from Homerton

Ends

Press queries to Olaide Oyekanmi on 0208 356 3522, 0777 2565514 or email Olaide.Oyekanmi@hackneyhomes.org.uk

Notes to Editors

- Pictures of winner Mrs Gloria Sapians is available on request.
- Every year tenants get in to debt over the festive period. This year, with rising fuel bills and a slow down in the economy many of our tenants will face difficult choices this winter.

Our mission is to deliver excellent, responsive housing services with decent homes and estates. To help residents lead healthy lives in safe and sustainable communities.

- In December last year we saw an increase in rent arrears of £45K between 02 Dec 07 and 30 Dec 07 - this amounts to 500 tenants falling into rent arrears during the month of December. Out of 22500 tenants we found that 4977 increased their rent arrears during the festive period.
- The Buy One Get One Free campaign on rent featured on the front page of the December issue of Hackney Homes News and was also being featured on advertising boards on the main bus routes throughout the borough through the month of December.
- Hackney Homes provides a range of ways for tenants to pay their rent including Direct Debit, online via the Hackney Homes website, via PayPoint, over the phone, at the post office or in the Cash Office.
- The Hackney Homes website has an online benefits calculator for tenants who wish to find out how much housing and council tax benefit they may qualify for. Hackney Homes encourages all tenants to use this to ensure that they are claiming all the benefits that they are entitled to.