

Connect

Tenants and Service Users' News JULY 2013



Features:

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St Martins
SUPPORTING INDEPENDENT FUTURES

Welcome

Welcome to the summer edition of Connect.



Finally the sun has started shining after a very cold and wet spring. It's time to get out and get active. There are lots of free festivals and activities all over London during the summer. Have a look at www.viewlondon.co.uk.

In this edition we have articles from Ali at Wilton Villas and Franklin at Chalkhill Road. We also have an article by Peter Spelman who is a Board Member and we have an article from a new member of staff, Amarjeet Kang, Senior HR Advisor. Finally we have an article by John, a resident at Davenant Road, about interesting walks around London. So get your walking boots on and join him in seeing the city from a new perspective.

John Thompson Chief Executive

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Show time!

It will be St Martins' AGM in late September, and once again, this is an opportunity for you to display your artistic talents. As with previous years, there will be an exhibition for any residents who wish to display their artwork, poetry or sculpture.



Service user exhibition, 2011

St Martins has set up a Communications Group of staff and residents who will meet before the AGM to plan the exhibition. Please join in if this is of interest for you. Details of this meeting will be given to you and advertised on communal notice boards.

Three, two, one. Action!

Like many of you, Franklin is taking part in the filmmaking workshops that Ibi Vaughan from Art of Life is running over the next year with St Martins. This is what he is working on.



Filming in progress

“When Ibi came to discuss the filmmaking project, I showed her a book that I wrote in 2006 when I was in custody called *The Boy Is Hell Damned*. It’s about a young boy who was chosen by the workers of evil and is a science-fiction drama.

It’s a little complex but hopefully would appeal to a mass audience. When I showed her this, she told me she loved it and wanted to make a film out of it. I’ve also been thinking about making music for the feature. I’m hoping to turn it into a short film with the help of Ibi.

Ibi showed me some work she had done with St Martins in Finsbury Park that I liked. After I showed her my book this got me thinking about what I could do with my writing. Copyright of my work is very important to me, and Ibi has already drafted a contract that I have read and signed. Once the project is in motion I would like management at St Martins to sign this contract so that I have full ownership of my work.”

Filmmaking workshops are taking place:

At Chalkhill Road or New North Road & Wilton Villas every other Tuesday afternoon

At Ferrini House or Davenant Road every other Thursday

Staff Corner

Amarjeet Kang joined St Martins in April 2013.

“My experience is varied, having worked in local authorities, the NHS, charities and the private sector, in London and Yorkshire. My route into Human Resources has been through training & development and finally specialising in employment law and practice within the HR context. My role as Senior Human Resources Advisor at St Martins includes:



- Ensuring that policies and procedures affecting our staff are kept updated in relation to employment law and Human Resources good practice.
- Supporting line managers and staff in understanding these policies and procedures and their consistent application throughout the organisation.
- Supporting all staff to carry out their roles in continuing to provide high quality support for residents, at the same time bearing in mind the goals, ethics and principles of St Martins as an organisation.
- Working on specific HR and other projects supporting Managers and Senior Managers as St Martins continues its high quality work, develops and grows.
- Helping to ensure that residents are able to get the best support and care possible from St Martins through its staff.

My aim is to ensure that St Martins will continue to attract committed staff, who want to enable residents to make the best of their situation. St Martins offers excellent training and development opportunities and I intend to continue to support these objectives for all employees. I believe that, with support and encouragement, everyone can improve and carry out their work more effectively.

We all have dreams and ambitions and we should aspire to achieve these ideals by working towards them, without harming others. I very much look forward to working with you, to support positive work with all our residents.”

A case of poetry

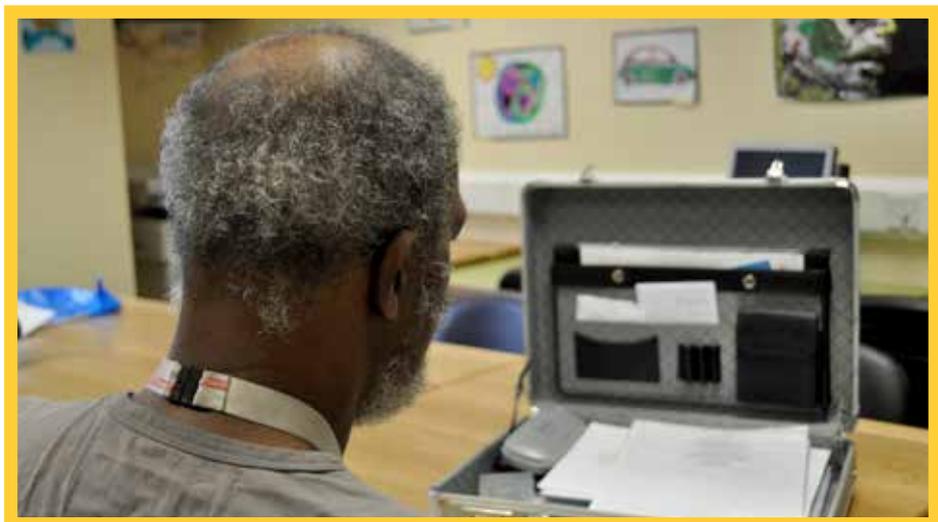
Ali has been writing poetry for most of his life and his briefcase contains around 200 poems, many of which will be published in a new book.

“I have a spinal injury, so writing is difficult for me. But I work with some dictation software, where I can speak into a microphone and the words appear on the screen of a computer. I can then edit them, or get help from someone to edit them under my direction. Here’s an extract from my poem, *O’ My Beautiful English Rose*:

*I prune and splice you
Water your tree with water sweet
I tend your flower with love
Look at you slim and slender
Glowing with splendour*

I’d like to publish my poems and I have explored a few options. I met a publisher who wanted me to pay £2,499 to publish a 500 page book full of my poems. In return they were going to do marketing and promotion. They also said they would organise a book launch, and visits to bookshops to read poems, if the shops agreed to the latter. It was too much money. I also spoke to another publisher who wanted me to sign away all my rights. I didn’t like their contract and rejected that option too.

So I am looking at self-publishing options. I plan to self-publish an ebook, where people can download an extract for free and buy the whole thing for £5. At some point, I’d like to get these poems published in paperback too.”



Finding the right words

Lords of the Ring

John has been on some Capital Ring walks and invites you to join him for a good day out and some great exercise.



On the path to improved health

“Walking is good for you. It’s healthy exercise. It doesn’t cost anything. It’s always been the best way of getting from A to B. I was pleased when St Martins organised some walks around the Capital Ring. A member of staff and a volunteer come and it’s open to any service users who want to join in.

On our first walk we went to Harrow. We got a train to Harrow-on-the-Hill and walked up the high street. We passed a pretty church and went into the grounds of the famous Harrow school where the future leaders of tomorrow are taught. They have some nice landscaped gardens there. We saw some older kids having a chemistry lesson, but there was no sign of small kids in blazers or funny hats.

Our second walk was in Greenwich. We went through the park to the Royal Observatory. We had a look at the National Maritime Museum and walked past the Cutty Sark. We also saw the Naval College and walked under the foot tunnel to Island Gardens on the Isle of Dogs. To round off a good day out we usually have a bite to eat and a coffee.

There are lots more interesting places to see on the Capital Ring. It would be good if more people joined in.”

There are 9 Capital Ring walks planned between July and October. Look out for posters advertising them.

Board Member Corner



Meet Board Member Peter Spelman who looks forward to developing services at St Martins in the years ahead.

“Whilst still at school I was very lucky to get a job in a local Children’s Home. I enjoyed talking to and playing games with children in care, many of whom were barely younger than me. This led me to undertake social work. My interest in mental health began early in my career. I became an Approved Mental Health Professional. AMHPs (formerly known as Approved Social Workers) are responsible for assessment of people to decide if compulsory admission under the Mental Health Act is appropriate.

I had overall responsibility for managing mental health social work and budgets for over 20 years in two North East London boroughs. This included purchasing care for people who needed placements such as those provided by St Martins.

My most recent experience enables me to combine my interest in mental health and children. I currently work with young people and their families in a Child and Adolescent Mental Health Team. This team works with children who have a wide range of problems. I also work out of office hours in Social Services Emergency Duty Teams.

I believe that over recent years St Martins has built an excellent reputation in providing care for people with mental health difficulties. I very much enjoy being a board member and working with other board members and St Martin’s management team to grow and develop services further in coming years.”

Get involved!

As always, there are plenty of activities for you to get involved in. There are things to get involved in where you live, as well as all the things you can do externally, like attending college, drop in centres, appointments and doing sport. Taking part in activities is sociable and teaches you valuable new skills to help you become more independent.

Below are some of the activities available. Please note that start times are given, but these may change a little bit from time to time. You will be kept updated about changes to the activities timetable and more information is available from your keyworker or managers.

Monday

Letters and Numbers

Letters and numbers can seem complex, but being confident reading, writing and doing sums are vital skills that help you live more independently. Held at NNR from **2.30pm**.

Music Beats

Do you play the guitar, drums, another instrument or sing? Or maybe you just like listening to music. Come and get involved in all things musical at Davenant Road, from **2.30pm**.

Tuesday

Healthy Eating

It's time to give up expensive takeaways, and learn how to make yourselves delicious food that keeps you fit and healthy. This cost-saving class takes place at Ferrini House, from **1pm**.

Filmmaking Workshops

Develop scripts and storyboards, learn how to shoot and edit short films or make a video CV about your skills, **3pm every other Tuesday** at New North Road/ Wilton Villas or Chalkhill Road.

Wednesday

Active Time

Staying active helps everyone to feel on top of things, happy and relaxed. Warm up with activities designed to stimulate body and mind at Davenant Road, from **2.30pm**.

Art Group

Grab your pens, pencils, crayons, paints, charcoal and pastels and express yourself in all sorts of glorious colours, shapes and sizes from **3.30pm** at New North Road/ Wilton Villas.

Thursday

Breakfast Club

A delicious, healthy, early morning breakfast is provided by and for service users at Davenant Road, at **9.30am**. It's a pleasant way to start the day and quite a sociable occasion.

Nutrition Class

This class teaches you not only how to make good food, but also about ingredients and eating habits that have high nutritional value. Meet in NNR Kitchen from **3pm**.

Friday

Engagement with the community

An opportunity for you to join a weekly workshop run by different members of the local community and learn more about things you can get involved in nearby. Held at Ferrini House from **10am**.

Drama Group

Come have some fun developing scenes and characters in weekly drama sessions with a trained actor. During sunny weather this group meets in the garden at New North Road, from **12.30pm**.

Saturday

Current Affairs Group

What is going on in the wider world, and what are the stories behind the headlines? This group discusses and analyses the big issues of the day, held at Chalkhill Road from **5.30pm**.

Film Night

This is your weekly chance to select a film for everyone at Davenant Road to see. So will it be comedy, action, drama or perhaps a thriller? **Films shown every Saturday evening**.

Look out for the following trips

• Capital ring walks around London • Visiting the seaside • Boat trips • River trips to Greenwich • Tours of Wembley Stadium • Market and fairground trips •

If you have any ideas or suggestions for trips or activities you'd like to do, please speak to your keyworker or a manager.

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