

## Arawak Walton Leading the way in Addressing the Housing Crisis in Manchester

Arawak Walton Housing Association has unveiled its newly acquired and refurbished one-bed flats in Whalley Range, to address the desperate need for this accommodation in Manchester.

Arawak Walton purchased the scheme from a mainstream housing association in June, proving that large and small housing providers can work together through disposals and acquisitions to bring homes back into social rented use, as well as addressing the Housing First homelessness agenda, promoted by The Mayor of Greater Manchester, Andy Burnham MP.

The Housing First scheme is a housing and support approach which gives people who have experienced homelessness and chronic health and social care needs a stable home from which to rebuild their lives.

It provides intensive, person-centred, holistic support that is open-ended.

In addition to renovating the building, one property has been provided to the Housing First scheme.

This flat has been fully furnished to give the individual the best chance of sustaining their tenancy.

Jo Moon, customer services manager at Arawak Walton, project managed the design elements of the apartments. She said, "I was thrilled with the end product and it has been a delight to show the tenants their new homes, I decided to go with a 'Manchester' theme for our communal areas to

give the building a really contemporary feel".

A launch event was held on Wednesday 16th October attended by partners within the community and from neighbouring housing associations and the City Council.



The Lord Mayor, Councillor Abid Latif Chohan, opened the event and was supported by Councillor Suzanne Richards who has been an advocate for the work of Arawak Walton for many years in terms of our regeneration work in inner city Manchester.

Councillors for Whalley Range, Mary Watson and Angelika Stogia, attended the opening and spoke highly of the level of refurbishment that had been achieved in the property.

David Brown, deputy chair of the Board at Arawak Walton said that part of Arawak Walton's mission is to support and sustain the communities we serve in and around Manchester.

He said that they have been waiting for an opportunity to arise to introduce some desperately needed one bed homes into the community.



We may be relatively small in size, but we continue to be place makers and lead the way in showing how community cohesion really works to make areas attractive, vibrant, and sustainable.

Arawak Walton currently owns and manages around 1,100 homes in and around Manchester, Stockport and, Trafford and specialises in meeting the needs of Black and Minority Ethnic communities.

We would like to thank everybody who has helped to make the scheme such a success and who has supported the association in its mission to address housing the needs of people living in inner city areas.



In particular, a big Thank You to our partner associations, Delph Developments, Whitely Eaves Architects, EP&S Builders, and Carl Mein from Environmental Services in delivering the project.

Special thanks is extended to the guests on the day and in particular to the Lord Mayor Abid Latif Chohan, Councillor Suzanne Richards, Councillor Mary Watson, Councillor Angelika Stogia, and to the Arawak Walton staff team.



## Let's FIX the Housing Crisis for Good

Arawak Walton supports the 'Fix The Housing Crisis Campaign'.

Housing Associations across the UK are collaborating to lobby the government to think about housing everywhere.



This is following a National Housing Federation campaign which is using the hashtag

**#FixTheHousingCrisis**

Part of this campaign has seen Housing Associations and supporters taking selfies at iconic local landmarks including our very own Chief Executive Cym D'Souza, to

ensure housing was a priority in the 2019 General Elections.

Read more on the National Housing Federation website: <https://www.housing.org.uk/get-involved/promoting-our-sector/general-election-2019/>



## November Board Meeting

At the previous September Board meeting members formally appointed Evelyn Asante-Mensah as Chairperson, David Brown as Deputy Chair and Hilda Kaponda as Honorary Secretary.

In November, Board met with the Tenants Quality Panel (TQP) to discuss how to better involve and engage with tenants given the dispersed nature of our homes. It was agreed to consider the different options put forward at the January Board Conference.

In November members approved:

- The Management Accounts to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2019
- KPI's Report Quarter 2
- The Risk Changes Report

The Board also considered the business continuity and disaster recovery plan, the Safeguarding policy as well as the staff survey (see separate article) outcomes and the star survey outcomes (see separate article). A summary of the postal survey was also considered.



# New Board Members



Following a successful recruitment campaign, we are pleased to announce that we have officially appointed the following members onto our Board:



NEW

**Jenny McGarry** is the Head Teacher of St. Mary's CE Primary School in Moss Side, Manchester. She has been in educational senior leadership for over fifteen years in inner city Manchester. Jenny is a National Leader of Education and St. Mary's School works

hard to be at the heart of the community, raising the aspiration of pupils, and proving that all children can progress and achieve success.



NEW

**Elizabeth Webster** lives in an Arawak Walton home. As a tenant, Elizabeth will be able to bring the residents' perspective to Board Meetings. Her involvement with the Tenants' Quality Panel will allow her to liaise between the two bodies.

Elizabeth has worked in the Television, Film and Theatre industry for the last seventeen years.

**We welcome both members and look forward to the wealth of knowledge and experience they will be bringing onto the Board with them.**

## Staff News



NEW

**Robert Sheath**

We would like to welcome Robert as our new Maintenance Inspector who joined Arawak Walton in October. Robert previously worked at Great Places. He has worked in the industry for over 10 years and

has a wealth of experience working with contractors and tenants.



**Somayeh Shiri**

Somayeh has completed her 12-month contract as a Trainee Finance & Data Analyst and will sadly be leaving Arawak Walton in December.

**We wish Somayeh the best of luck for the future!**

## Staff Survey Outcomes

The association has carried out an external independent staff survey for the last 9 years, with a view to improving any highlighted areas of concern and as a measure of employee satisfaction. We are pleased to report an overall satisfaction rating of 1.8 in 2019 (1.9 in 2018) the lower the score the better.

The aims of the survey are to identify areas for improvement, to benchmark attitudes against the previous year and to allow employees another method of communicating their views, leading to increased engagement.

It was very pleasing to note that again, we did not have any areas highlighted as a weakness nor did we have any areas requiring significant improvement. Every single area had been rated as 'green' (using a traffic light system).

Whilst our results this year are fantastic, there is still some learning and some areas which we can focus on improving.

This year, as part of our sign up to the 'Time to Change Pledge', we asked some additional questions to gauge how well we are currently managing mental health issues within the workplace. We asked these questions with a view to taking some initial feedback before embarking on our action plan which includes wellbeing actions, recruiting MH Champions, First Aiders, appointing a new Employee Assistance Provider and reviewing our Occupational Health provision.

Next Steps? We will ensure the outcomes of this year's survey are reviewed in our managers meeting and fed back to staff at the Staff conference. We will build any actions into our People Strategy action plan for the year ahead.

## SICKLE CELL CARE MANCHESTER FUNDRAISING DINNER



Sickle Cell Care Manchester, one of our key community sponsorships held a fundraising dinner on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> November which was attended by some of our Staff and Board members.

The purpose of the event was to raise awareness of the disease and raise funds to support the work that they are currently doing, specifically to encourage more people to become blood donors, in particular those from a BME background in order to help those affected by the disease who need to have regular blood transfusions.

It was an entertaining evening for everyone who attended with an evening meal, various artists and a live band. The event raised over £500 on the night.

For more information on being a blood donor visit: [www.blood.co.uk](http://www.blood.co.uk)



## TAKE A SEAT NORTHMOOR

Arawak Walton worked in conjunction with Northmoor Community Association on the 'Take a Seat' campaign to make communities more age friendly.

The 'Take a Seat' campaign involved placing seating inside local shops, meaning older people can have a rest when they are out in the community. All shops who are involved in the campaign display a sticker in the window to let people passing know they are an age friendly shop. The launch of the campaign was a huge success with sandwiches, cake and entertainment.

Arawak Walton supported the event by purchasing the chairs and we even featured in the Manchester Evening News – <https://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/news/greater-manchester-news/longsight-take-a-seat-northmoor-17252191>



## STAR SURVEY (SURVEY OF TENANTS AND RESIDENTS)

Arawak Walton is committed to the ongoing consultation of its tenants and is continually improving services through these consultation exercises.

In May 2019, Arawak Walton Housing Association commissioned Kwest Research, an independent company to undertake a census resident satisfaction survey.

The 2019 survey findings confirm that Arawak Walton continues to provide homes and a range of services that meet the needs and expectations of the majority of customers. Evidence of this can be seen throughout the findings and includes results such as around nine in ten residents expressed satisfaction with our landlord service, repairs, home quality and neighbourhoods and communities. Satisfaction was also high for our staff dealing with various queries. The main findings were:

**92% of residents are satisfied with overall our landlord service**

**88% of residents are satisfied with our repairs and maintenance services**

**88% of residents are satisfied with advice given on rent payments**



**KWEST  
RESEARCH**

We are extremely proud of these fantastic results which demonstrates that supporting our tenants is at the heart of everything we do. More information on areas where we need to improve and what we are doing will appear in future newsletters.



## CHRISTMAS OPENING TIMES



The office will close on  
Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> December 2019 at 12.00pm  
and will re-open on  
Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2020 at 9.00am

**Arawak Walton would like to wish all our  
Stakeholders and Partners  
Health and Happiness over the festive season  
and a Happy New Year**

### HOW ARE WE PERFORMING



ARAWAK WALTON PERFORMANCE	SEP - 19	OCT - 19	NOV - 19	TARGET
VOIDS %	0.09%	0.09%	0.19%	1%
RENT ARREARS %	2.87%	2.84%	2.96%	3.20%
NUMBER OF DAYS TO RE-LET A PROPERTY	10	9	8	18.5
OVERALL SATISFACTION WITH REPAIRS %	100%	96.00%	96.00%	96%
REPAIRS COMPLETION STATS	SEP - 19	OCT - 19	NOV - 19	TARGET
EMERGENCY-COMPLETED WITHIN 24 HOURS %	100%	100%	95%	95%
URGENT-COMPLETED WITHIN 7 DAYS %	98.24%	98.06%	98.05%	92%
ROUTINE-COMPLETED WITHIN 21 DAYS %	98.03%	98.05%	98.01%	92%
<b>KEY</b> ON TARGET    MISSED TARGET				