

Convent
Co-operative



CONVENT CO-OPERATIVE LTD



RESIDENTS' HANDBOOK

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INTRODUCTION



This is a handbook for all residents of Convent Co-op. It should help you by giving you information about the housing services provided on your estate. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact the Convent Co-operative's Office on: **020 8874 6856**.

About Convent

Convent Co-op is located just off Putney Bridge Road . It is very central and well served by bus routes and mainline train services Wandsworth Town and East Putney Underground.



The vicinity is seen as a desirable place to live and is a mixed area in terms of private houses, private apartment blocks and housing estates. Convent which was built in 1980 comprises of four low rise blocks and 20 Houses. There are many gardens and trees surrounding the blocks making the estate a 'little oasis' in the middle of Wandsworth.

There are 90 flats , 61 of which are Leasehold and 20 houses of which 15 are Freehold .



SECTION 1

About Convent



Convent Co-operative

Convent Co-operative is a Tenant / Residents Management Organisation (TMO/ RMO) set up under 'Right to Manage' legislation. There are many TMOs in London and particularly in Wandsworth. Convent was developed by residents with the support of the London Borough of Wandsworth to take on the management of the estate, in 1981.

Our Aims and Objectives

Convent Co-operative objectives are to ensure the estate is maintained to the highest possible standards and to provide a first class service to the residents. Convent Co-operative is a registered Friendly Society and is run by a Management Committee who are elected at the Annual General Meeting. Membership is open to all residents whether Council tenants, leaseholder or freeholders. All lawful residents of the estate over the age of eighteen are eligible to join Convent Co-operative by purchasing a share, which costs £1 for life membership. If you have not joined as yet, please apply for your share now! As a member of Convent Co-operative you will be entitled to vote at meetings and help decide what the priorities for the estate should be. All members can stand for election to the Management Committee at the Annual General Meeting.

We aim to

- Check all common areas of the estate on a regular basis identifying priorities and ordering works as necessary.
- Remove rubbish and clean graffiti from the estate as soon as it is reported.
- Keep all entrances, corridors and stairways clean and tidy, responding to need rather than sticking to schedules.
- Maintain the gardens and the grassed areas of the estate to a high standard.
- Provide an efficient and accessible rent collection service for Council Tenants giving residents appropriate welfare advice.
- Provide an excellent repairs service aiming to complete repairs to a high standard well within the timescales laid down by Wandsworth Council.
- Deliver a good service to all Convent residents according to their needs.
- Encourage active participation by residents and help to foster a community on the estate.
- Ensure that all residents can attend meetings and have access to information about the objectives of the organisation.

Confidentiality



Convent has a very strict Code of Confidentiality. A copy can be obtained from the co-operative's Office. All personal information about any residents will be treated as confidential. Convent is registered for Data Protection

Equal Opportunities



Convent aims to be an Equal Opportunities Organisation. A copy of our complete Equal Opportunities Policy and Procedure forms part of our management agreement with the Council and can be obtained from the Convent Office, free of charge to members.

Membership



All eligible residents over the age of 18 are invited and encouraged to join Convent by buying a £1 shareholding. The more residents who are members - the more representative we are of our community. Holding a share entitles you to vote at all General Meetings and to stand for election to the Management Committee. You can influence what our priorities should be for the future by being a member.

The Management Committee



The Management Committee is made up of residents of the estate and one council nominee. It is responsible for employing staff and contractors and running the estate on your behalf. At every Annual General Meeting, one third of the Committee membership stand down to encourage new people to come forward although they can stand for re-election. The Committee meets regularly and all residents may request to attend meetings and or request items for discussion. The Board aims to keep you informed about what's going on through meetings, events and a regular newsletter. One reason our estate is so different from other council estates is that residents decide how things should be run, the only way to keep standards high is for people to get involved, stay involved and make sure that the decisions taken by Management Committee are the right ones! If you would like to be involved with the Management Committee please contact the office for more information (0208-874-6856)
New members are always required!

SECTION 2



FOR COUNCIL TENANTS

Moving into Your New Home.

When you signed the Tenancy Agreement, you will have been informed of the start date of your tenancy. This is the date you became the legal tenant. From this date you are responsible for the property and for payment of rent. You are responsible for arranging the connection of electricity, gas and water to your home. You should give the gas and electricity companies as much notice as possible of your moving in date. London Electricity usually require at least 3 days notice to connect your supply.

LONDON ELECTRICITY 0800 096 9000

BRITISH GAS 0845 955 5510

THAMES WATER 0845 200888

Paying your Rent

The Convent office will issue you with a paying-in book, which you must use to pay your rent. Rent must be paid weekly or monthly on a Monday. You will be advised exactly which dates you should pay your rent. Rent can be paid at all branches of Barclays or by standing order, a form can be collected from the estate office.

FOR LEASEHOLDERS & FREEHOLDERS

Paying your Service Charges

The Co-operative will send you a bill for your service charges in September, you should pay the Co-operative using the payment methods that they give you.

A ten month concessionary payment scheme is available for owner/occupiers. Absent Landlords will have to pay the charge in full.

SECTION 2
continued**Disposal of Rubbish**

Residents are responsible for ensuring that their own rubbish is disposed of only in their bin store cupboards. Rubbish must be placed in suitable refuse bags. Recycling must be put in to the recycling bags supplied by WBC. Do not leave rubbish bags in the corridors, on the balconies or stairwells. All rubbish including recycling is collected on Tuesdays.

Bulk Refuse

If you have any bulky items that you need help disposing of, please contact the Convent office and we will be happy to advise you. Do not leave any items of rubbish around the estate. This is a fire hazard and a danger to children. Dumping rubbish is a breach of your tenancy conditions / lease agreement.

Graffiti and Vandalism

In our effort to keep this estate a clean and welcoming environment for us all to live in, we would encourage all residents to work with us and report all graffiti to Convent staff. Removal of racist or offensive graffiti is a high priority and it will be cleaned off within 24 hours. The Council or Convent will take legal action against any person who damages the estate. Please help us to make Convent the home we want it to be. The Council runs a graffiti hotline where you can report graffiti which you have seen anywhere in the borough.

Graffiti hotline number is 0208 871 7049.

Elderly and Disabled Tenants

Elderly or disabled residents who have no-one else to help them can approach Convent to get help to carry out small jobs in certain circumstances. If you are an elderly or disabled tenant reporting a repair, please let us know, as in certain circumstances priority will be given.

SECTION 2
continued

Repairs Maintenance & Refurbishments

What you need to do

If you are planning any refurbishment or alteration works on your property. Please get in touch with the Co-op Office where staff will advise you on whether planning permission or other authorisation is required from Wandsworth Borough Council.

Leaseholders using contractors for interior works should ensure that any mess is cleared from common parts. If our cleaners are obliged to do extra work cleaning up after building or renovation work or if damage is caused to the communal areas The Co-operative reserves the right to charge the leaseholder responsible.

For any other repair or maintenance issue, please do not hesitate to contact the Co-operative and we will be happy to help.

Communal parts

For fire safety reasons no storage of any furniture, bikes, pushchairs or equipments is allowed in the common parts or under staircases even for a short period of time except for bikes on allocated bike racks. Contact the Co-ops Office for advice if you need to dispose of any furniture or bulk rubbish.

Balconies

Clean your balcony regularly and make sure that the drain is not blocked. Call the office if you think that there is a problem with the drains. BBQs are prohibited on the balconies

Roof Escape Areas

Areas accessed from properties on the top floor are for emergency use only. **You must not use these areas for any other purpose.**

SECTION 2 continued

**Dogs**

All dog owners must keep their pets on a leash on the estate and prevent them from fouling the common areas including the gardens. It is a requirement that pets do not cause any form of nuisance to the neighbours and must be micrhipped .

Stopcocks

You regularly need to check the state of the stopcocks in you property. They should be turned anticlockwise and back again at least once a year, to prevent them from seizing up. Most stopcocks can be found in the cupboard under the kitchen sink, under the bath or in the cupboard which store the water tanks.

Leaks

If you notice that water is leaking in your flat or that the sanitary equipment is leaking please call the Co-op office during working Hours or the Housing patrol out of hours.

Plants:

Please ensure that your pots are fitted with water retaining bases to avoid nuisance to neighbours below when watering your plant.

Residents database

Leaseholders who are subletting their property carry the responsibility of informing their tenants about the Co-ops rules and to show them all the amenities and facilities available.

Leaseholders or tenants should contact the Cooperative's Office to get their details registered in the residents database.

SECTION 3

SAFETY AND WHAT TO DO IN AN



Fire

What can I do to protect my home against fire?

There are lots of simple safety precautions you can take to help reduce the risk of fire in your home.

- Do not store flammable liquids, bottled gas or paraffin in your home.
- Always keep fire doors shut, and keep exit routes clear.
- Bicycles should not be chained to handrails on the stairways or balconies or left in the corridors.
- Residents should not leave any obstructions in the corridors or stairwells.
- Do not overload sockets.
- Install Battery Fire/Smoke Alarms in all of your rooms

In the event of a fire or a suspected fire, please call the Fire brigade - 999

Gas

Make sure you know where your gas meter and the main gas supply tap is. If in doubt, ask at the office.

What to do if there is a gas leak in my home?

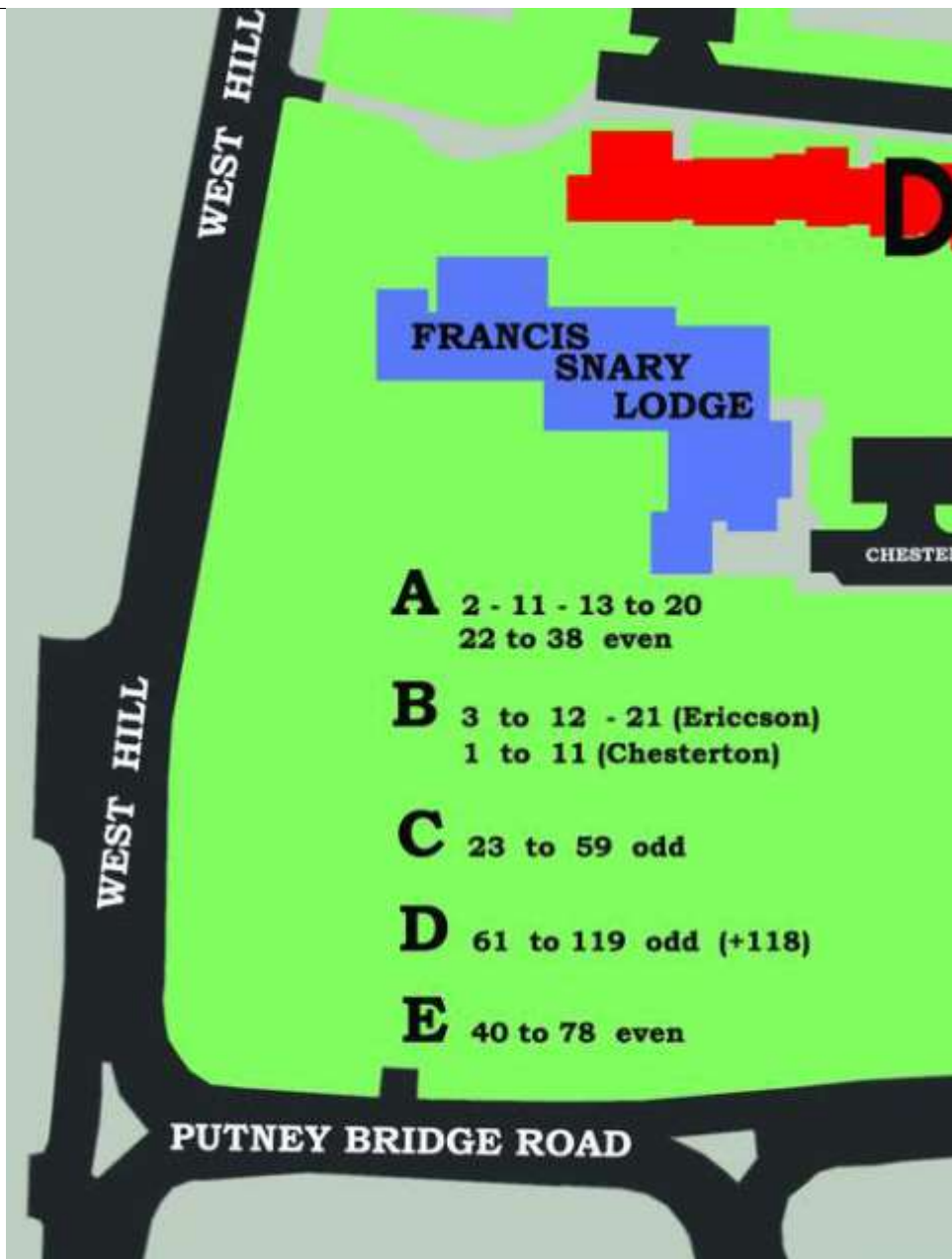
If you think you may have a gas leak or can smell gas you should follow these simple steps:

- Open the doors and windows for ventilation.
- Ensure that all gas appliances are switched off.
- If you can still smell gas, turn the gas supply off at the meter and phone the gas emergency service:

TRANSCO Tel No: 0800 111 999

If there is a strong smell of gas when you enter the front door, do not go inside. Gently close the door and telephone the gas company.

- Do not use matches or naked flames or smoke.
- Do not turn any electrical switches on or off.





SECTION 3 continued



Electrics

What to do if my electricity goes off?

- Check to see whether other properties are also affected, if they are, call the electricity board, 0845 6000102 (emergencies or loss of supply).
- If only your home is affected, check the main fuse box to see whether the trip switch has turned your supply off. Modern fuse boxes have a tripping mechanism instead of 'blowing' a fuse, it automatically switches off.
- If you cannot find the cause of the problem call the Convent office.

Water

Check where your main stop cock is for turning water off in an emergency, it is usually in the bathroom, or in the kitchen as this should be the first thing you do in the event of a flood. Please contact Convent office if you are unsure where this is.

Condensation

What is condensation and how can I prevent it?

Condensation is caused by too much moisture and not enough ventilation.

Here are a few simple steps that you can take to reduce condensation.

- Leave the windows open when you are cooking or taking a bath.
- Do not block air vents or extractor fans.
- Make sure tumble dryers are properly installed and have ventilation.
- Keep a constant temperature during winter months.
- Avoid drying your cloths on radiator without adequate ventilation.

SECTION 4

CONCIL TENANT REPAIRS AND MAINTNANCE



Please, note Convent is not responsible for replacing any units, worktops, basins or other furnishings that have been destroyed or damaged by the tenant. Any windows that are broken due to the fault of the tenant will be boarded up and made safe but will not be replaced. Convent is not responsible for repairing anything that derives from tenants own improvements.

How do I report a repair?

Repairs can be reported either by telephoning the office between working hours of 10am - 5pm; or alternatively, visiting the office located at 15 Chesterton Close open to personal callers between the hours of 10am-5pm. These hours may change from time to time. .

Tenants who have any problems with their hot water or heating system should call T.Brown directly on 0800 977 8472 or 020 8394 1166

Our telephone answering service is available 24hours daily. All repair requests will be logged and a receipt with job number will be given which will acknowledge the repair, state its priority and confirm mutually convenient access. An initial inspection may take place to determine the nature of work, likely cost and responsibility, i.e.: It is rechargeable to Tenant/ leaseholder or Council.

Wandsworth Council's repair time scales will provide a minimum standard for Convent Repair requests which will be logged and dealt with as follows:

See next page



SECTION 4
continued



Emergency Out of Hours Repairs

If you have an emergency repair such as a major pipe burst or any repair that presents a danger to persons, you can contact Wandsworth Housing Patrol service on 020 8871 7490. Housing Patrol will arrange for a contractor to 'make safe' the problem until the Convent office is open when staff will carry out the repair during normal working hours.

Please note this service is for emergencies ONLY. Convent will be charged by Wandsworth Council for this service. If you repeatedly call Housing Patrol for what is not an emergency, you will be charged for this service.

**Emergency repairs
Target action time**

Code	Target date in	Examples of type of repairs
A	1 Day	Emergencies, burst pipes, loss of power
B	7 Days	Repairs to water supply installations, services to elderly or disabled residents
C	10 Days	Work to vacant properties or re-letting
D	28 Days +	Repairs to windows, doors and minor leaks Routine, e.g. brickwork, re-pointing, fence repairs

SECTION 4 continued



What is not an emergency?

A blocked sink, a toilet that will not flush or a leak of some sort. Please do not call the emergency number for repairs of this sort. This is not an emergency and will be attended to the next working day by Convent staff.

Please note, unfortunately we do not receive any allowance for the re-decoration of any homes. However the Council may have a redecoration policy if you meet, certain criteria i.e.; Have a disability or are elderly. Please contact the Convent office or the Council for more information.

. Occasionally we are required to use outside contractors. If you are unsure that someone is genuine please ask to see their ID or telephone the Convent Office.

Council Tenants Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of tenants to report to the Convent office any defects as soon as possible. It is also the responsibility of the tenants to take care of their home and not allow negligence or abuse, either by members of the household or by their visitors. Any alterations or additions to the property or its fixtures must have the written permission from the Convent or the Council.

If any defect arises out of such negligence or abuse, the tenant will be liable to be charged the full cost of any materials and labour used to remedy any defect or damage caused. This would include any damage to the property of third parties.

Leaseholders

If you are a leaseholder or a tenant of a leaseholder and you ask Convent to do repairs for you within your property, the manager will consider whether Convent has the resources to do the work. If the Convent does carry out work on your behalf, you will be charged in the same way as if you were using an outside contractor. The service charges you pay for cleaning, caretaking and grounds maintenance are calculated by the Co-op who will send the service charge bill to you in September.

SECTION 4
continued**Convent Repair Responsibilities for Council Tenants**

- The plumbing including cold water systems beyond the main stopcock in each dwelling including pipes, valves, stopcocks, cisterns, overflows.
- The Council's plumbed fittings including baths, sinks, basins, WC suites, taps and waste fittings but excluding plumbing installed for washing machines, dishwashers etc.
- The electrical services from the Electricity Board's meter including internal wiring.
- The Council's internal fixtures and fittings.
- Re-glazing of broken windows to dwellings where break has known cause and Council is liable but excluding metal and UPVC windows.
- The rainwater system including gutters and fixings.
- The common parts of the Property.
- Electrical services for the supply to the common parts including wiring, conduits, socket outlets, switches and bulkhead light fittings.
- Fences, enclosure walls and gates that belong to the Council.
- Roads, footpaths, and courtyards not adopted for maintenance by the Council under its statutory powers as Highway Authority.

SECTION 4
continued**CONVENT Services**

The list below outlines the range of cleaning and caretaking services, which Convent provides:

- Cleaning of staircases, handrails, banisters, landings and walls. Removing graffiti in all common parts.
- Cleaning of windows (all internal stair and landing windows). Doors, floors, lobbies, lights and light fittings.
- Clearing litter from all common parts of the estate.
- The replacement of light bulbs in communal areas excluding pole fittings.
- General upkeep of the common grounds and gardens of the estate including clearing litter from the estate. Cutting communal grassed areas and maintaining flower beds and shrubs.
- Weed control, sweeping, leaf clearing and the supply of salt.
- Entry-phone systems including all associated doors, cables, door fittings, and any other items associated with the Entryphone system.

The successful care and upkeep of the estate is dependent on an effective partnership between the residents and Convent. It is the responsibility of residents to keep the front of their own homes clean and tidy. All shared areas i.e.: corridors and stairwells are cleaned by the Convent, but it is the responsibility of all tenants to ensure that members/visitors of their household do not discard litter or damage any part of the property.

SECTION 4
continued

Councils Responsibilities

Some repairs and services remain the responsibility of Wandsworth Council but you can still report these by contacting the Convent office.

Council Services

- The supply of water to all blocks including the installation and maintenance of pumps.
- Annual Gas Checks and testing (Council Tenants only)
- Servicing of any fire prevention equipment
- Supply of electricity to pole lighting

Council Repairs

- The external structures of buildings, including brickwork, lintels, the external walls and their openings and all load bearing, party and structural walls.
- The roof structures and roofs covering.
- The surface water and foul drains including gullies, access chambers and their covers.
- The water mains from the water board's supply pipe or stopcock to the mains stopcock in each dwelling.
- The gas mains from the gas board's main supply pipe to the meter in each dwelling.
- All underground services.
- Down pipes and repairs resulting from leaks and overflows.

SECTION 4
continued**Parking**

Please be aware that a parking ticket scheme is in operation on the estate. If you do have a vehicle and need to apply for an estate parking permit, please contact the Convent office or if you want to apply for a controlled parking permit for areas covered by the A2 scheme please contact the council on 0208 8718871

Please note that if you park your vehicle anywhere in the estate car parks or in a controlled parking bay, without displaying an appropriate parking permit you will receive a penalty notice. Please contact the office if you are unsure where to park

Anti-social Behaviour, Nuisance, Racial or other form of Harassment

Convent will not accept any anti-social behaviour on the estate. You as the tenant or leaseholder are responsible for the behaviour of every person (including children) living in or visiting the property. Examples of anti-social behaviour include but are not limited to:

- Using abusive or insulting words or behaviour.
- Using or threatening to use violence.
- Vandalism of council property.
- Offensive drunkenness.
- Persistent arguing and door slamming.
- Noise or fouling from pets.
- Loud music.
- Rubbish Dumping.
- Speeding and dangerous riding of scooters/ mopeds.

Wherever possible, any disputes between neighbours should be resolved amicably. Convent aims to provide a supportive and efficient service to help residents to settle disputes. Ultimately Convent can refer the matter to the Council for further action.

You must not use or allow the property or any communal area to be used for any illegal or immoral activity such as drug dealing or prostitution.

SECTION 4 continued



Grassed Areas & Communal Areas

Please do not allow your dogs to foul grassed areas. We do our best to keep these areas looking good, you can help by not littering these areas and avoiding playing football on the grass.

Pest Control

If you find any of the following pests in or near your home please report this immediately to the Convent office.

- Cockroaches
- Mice/Rats
- Wasp nests

It is very important that pests are eliminated. Please ensure that when an appointment is made, the contractor is allowed access.

Exchanges/Transfers

This remains the responsibility of the Council. If you are interested in putting your names forward, please contact the Council's housing transfer department on **020 8871 6805** or you can collect a transfer form from the Convent office.



CONVENT CO-OP
Estate Office, 15 Chesterton
Close SW18 1SD

Telephone: 020 8874 6856
Fax: 020 8874 6856
E-mail: convent25@aol.com

SECTION 5

YOUR RIGHTS IF WE GET IT WRONG



Who is eligible to complain?

Any resident who has a complaint against Convent Co-operative or those acting on its behalf may use the Complaints Procedure. A copy is displayed in the Convent office. Any resident who has a complaint against the Council or those acting on its behalf should use the Council's Complaints Procedure.

The type of complaint covered under this policy

- Complaints about the behaviour or performance of an employee of Convent.
- Complaints about the standard of caretaking and cleaning.
- Complaints about the speed or standard of repairs carried out by Convent.
- Complaints about the behaviour or performance of a member of the Management Board.
- Complaints about nuisance from neighbour.
- Complaints about racial or other forms of Harassment.

The Complainants Rights

All complaints made about Convent services or those acting on their behalf will be treated in the strictest confidence. The full report will only be available to the Manager or the Chair of Convent unless the complaint has been made to the Board.

Any complaints not covered by the Convent Complaints Procedure, should be dealt with at the Council office in Garratt Lane.

Thank you for taking the time to read this. If there are any queries that are not covered in this Handbook, please do not hesitate to contact the Convent office.

USEFUL NUMBERS

Convent Co-operative Ltd

IN AN EMERGENCY.



After Hours Service	020 8871 7490
British Gas	0845 609 1122
Transco (Gas emergencies)	0800 111 999
London Electricity	0800 096 9000
Thames Water	0845 920 0800
Emergency Service	999

The Council

Council's Central Area Team	(020) 8871 7482
Wandsworth Emergency Patrol	(020) 8871 7490
Benefit Payment Enquires	(020) 8871 8769
Housing Benefits/Council Tax	(020) 8871 8080
Housing Advice Service	(020) 8871 6840
Noise Complaints	(020) 8871 7490
Wandsworth Alarm	
Care Helpline (WATCH)	(020) 8871 8198
Wandsworth Trading Standards	(020) 8871 7720
Resident's Parking & Permits	(020) 887 8871
Disabled Parking	(020) 8871 7709
Registrar of Births,	
Deaths and Marriages	(020) 8871 6121
Pest Control	(020) 8871 6143
Refuse Collection	(020) 8871 8558
Recycling	020) 8871

Your health

NHS Direct	0845 4647
Wandsworth Primary Care Agency ..	(020) 8335 1400
Homeopathic Hospital	(020) 7391 8833
Moorfields Eye Hospital	(020) 7253 3411
Royal National Orthopaedic	(020) 7387 5070
St Georges Hospital, Tooting	(020) 8672 1255
Chelsea and Westminster Hospital .	(020) 8746 8000

Others

Local Police Station	(020) 8672 9922
Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)	(020) 8333 6960
Wandsworth Age Concern	(020) 8870 2020
Pensions Service	0845 6060265
Victim Support Scheme	(020) 7223 1234
Wandsworth Community	
Transport (disabled)	(020) 8675 7460
Volunteers Bureau	(020) 8870 4319
Adult Education	(020) 8918 7555
Taxi -card	(020) 8871 7709

Learning and Leisure

Wandsworth Libraries	(020) 8871 7466
Latchmere Leisure Centre	(020) 7207 8004
Community Learning Centres	(020) 8871 8493