

Our usual warm welcome to you all.

There are some important updates in this edition of *Sandbourne News* so we hope that you will take the time to read the information provided. As previously mentioned, this is believed to be the best way of ensuring that all of our tenants, leaseholders and shared owners get the same information, at the same time, in a cost effective way.

One important change is that Universal Credit is finally being introduced for new working age claimants, effective from 1 October 2017 (see page 5). The government have been saying this was coming for many years but it is now actually happening for some of our tenants.

We would also ask leaseholders to read the articles (pages 7 and 8) about some of their responsibilities which could have potential repercussions if not acted upon.

On a lighter and happier note, we held an event with the residents at one of our Bournemouth sites in September and we believe that it was a good afternoon for all (pages 10 and 11).

Steve Hayes, Chief Executive

Owners, leaseholders and shared owners

Are you complying with your obligations and responsibilities?

Please don't discard this newsletter. Please read the articles on gas safety checks (page 7) and changing fire doors (page 8) to ensure that you aren't breaching the regulations under the Housing Act 2004 and putting others at risk.

Some articles inside this issue:

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Contacting the office

The only office telephone number for Sandbourne is:

01202 671222

All correspondence should be addressed to:

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Poole, BH15 2BU

Email: info@sandbourne.org.uk
www.sandbournehousingassociation.org.uk



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A quick guide to who tenants should contact for what

Housing Services Manager/Housing Officer (Simon/Sharon) – housing related queries, ie:

- Anti-social behaviour
- Arrears – rent/service charges
- Car parking
- Complaints
- Direct Debits
- Estate issues
- Grounds maintenance and gardens
- Guest room bookings (HOPS schemes)
- Housing Benefit
- Leaseholder queries
- Mutual exchanging with another resident
- Pets
- Rent and rent statements
- Service charges
- Terminating your tenancy
- Transferring to another property
- Universal Credit

Chief Executive and Director of Finance (Steve and Fiona)

By appointment only, via the Administrator, if other channels have been exhausted (for example for complaints)

Maintenance Managers (Brian/Chris) – repairs & maintenance related queries, ie:

- Inspecting empty/vacant properties
- Key replacements (HOPS/extra care only)
- Lifts (HOPS/extra care only)
- Planned maintenance and redecorations to communal areas
- Repairs:
 - reporting for your own property
 - reporting for communal areas
 - reporting faulty communal laundry equipment (HOPS/extra care)
 - chasing outstanding repairs
 - minor repairs
- Safety checks:
 - electric, gas, fire and water
 - emergency exits and lighting
 - fire alarms and smoke detectors
 - Tunstall equipment (HOPS/extra care only)

Administrator (Gail)

- General enquiries not covered above
- Newsletter items and articles
- HOPS TV screens

Sandbourne's office hours are from 9am to 4pm, Monday to Friday

(except for English statutory and public holidays and the Christmas/New Year shutdown)

Calls to and from 01202 671222 may be recorded for information and training purposes.

An answer phone service is available outside of office hours or when the lines are busy.

Appointments must be made to guarantee seeing a member of staff at the office.

Sometimes we have to close our office

As most of you will know, we are only a small office of 10 staff (not all work full-time) so we don't have masses of cover available if there is something we need to do as a team.

We have got a couple of staff training sessions coming up soon on topics that will hopefully help us provide you with a better service. However, this does mean that we need to close the office so that we can all attend. We also hold team meetings every six to eight weeks.

During these times, we have to leave the phone unanswered but our voicemail does allow you to leave messages for us and gives emergency contact details. Also, for those of you who have one, you can use your Careline pull cord in an emergency.

The following are dates when you can expect the office phones to go to voicemail for the whole day whilst **we are closed for staff training**:

Thursday 9 November 2017
Wednesday 13 December 2017



Our Apprentice Customer Service Administrator ...

We are pleased to tell you that our apprentice, Molly Rolston, successfully completed her year's apprenticeship in September and, with effect from 1 October, she will take up the new position of Administrative Assistant with us.

Molly is proving herself to be a popular and valuable member of Sandbourne, adding strength to the team, particularly by providing cover for the Administrator when she is away from the office.

We would appreciate your patience while Molly settles into her new role, particularly over the phone.

Emails to our housing management and maintenance teams

We have covered this in previous editions of *Sandbourne News* but want to remind you that emailing a member of staff direct does not mean that it will take priority over any other method or route of communication.

There seems to be an expectation of getting a quicker response by emailing staff direct but that is not the case.

Our housing teams now have messages set on their emails advising you that it is confirmation that your email has been delivered but that they:

"cannot guarantee that it will be read or actioned immediately. The Association's service standard is for emails to normally be acknowledged within 5 working days with a full response given within a further 10 working days, unless the matter is urgent."

Please accept that whilst you may get a quick response on occasions, our staff are under no obligation to do so outside of the above timescales and may, indeed, not be in a position to do so.

Bournemouth Careline

The Careline number for our tenants to use is: **01202 452795**

General family rented - only to be used to report 'emergency' repairs when the office is closed and it is something that cannot wait until the next working day.

HOPS over 60s and extra care (Craigleith) tenants - to be used to summon assistance, for example a fall; an 'emergency' out-of-hours repair; or to notify that you're going away and leaving your flat empty. Remember you can also use your emergency Careline pull cord.

Leaseholders and shared owners - only to be used for communal area 'emergencies', eg a fire that requires our attention or repair that affects the structure of the building.

Making an appointment to see us

Do you need to see us in the office?

If so, please bear in mind that our housing management and housing maintenance staff are out of the office more than they are in it. They could be on routine appointments with tenants/leaseholders or contractors on any of our sites, they could be showing prospective tenants around properties, or they could be in meetings with external agencies.

We've mentioned before that we share the Beech House building with other companies and PHP (Poole Housing Partnership) provide a reception service to all of us.

Because of this, if you call into Beech House without an appointment, not only might you not be able to see the person you want (because they are not in) but, if you are able to see them, there may not be anywhere private to talk.

If you make an appointment, we can book a small room so that you can discuss your tenancy/lease issues with us in private at a time to suit everyone.



'Nabbing' someone on site

You may see our housing management and maintenance staff out and about on site and instinctively think 'Oh, I must report my repair/ask about my rent/book a guest room, etc'.

However, our staff do not have the means to look up your rent, check guest room availability, or take details of your repair when they are on-site. Indeed, you could be catching them between appointments and holding them up from visiting another tenant/leaseholder or applicant who has made an appointment.

Please call the office, instead of 'nabbing them', so that we can take messages for you and, in turn, help the housing teams dedicate more time to sorting out the issues and keeping to appointments.

Finally, please consider if it is appropriate to discuss your issues in a general shared reception, in a communal part of a block of flats, or even in a communal car park. Even if you do, other people might not want to hear what you have to say or may even disagree with you and contact us later to say so. Staff may not be able to say what they have to either in a 'public area'.

Paying your rent

Christmas is now only a couple of months away and, for those people who celebrate it, it can be a very expensive time of year with resources being stretched to the limit.

We don't want to be 'bah humbugs' but want to remind you of the importance of ensuring that your rent and services charges are paid as usual so that you don't fall into arrears.

If you think you are going to experience problems paying your rent and/or service charges, please don't delay – ring the registered office now and ask to speak to one of the housing team so that they can discuss your options.

We aim to send out rent statements to all tenants four times a year but if it would be helpful to you to have these more regularly, or on a one-off basis, we are happy to provide these, free of charge. Please note it may take a few days before a payment you have made is processed and appears on your rent statement. Also, the timing of a Housing Benefit payment may impact on any balance shown on your statement.

If you don't have a rent payment (allpay) card and would like one, please contact the office and you will be sent one, free of charge, normally within 4-5 working days.

Please don't risk losing your home, especially at this time of year – act now!



Interesting, uncertain and challenging times continue for all of us

The Local Housing Allowance Cap (LHA Cap) that restricts the maximum amount of Housing Benefit payable to that of the lowest 30% of average private sector rents in the BH postcode area for that size of property is already in place in the private rented sector. That maximum rate payable has been frozen for three years and will come into force for all housing association rents and eligible service charges from April 2019 onwards. This is the biggest change to impact on rents and service charges since Housing Benefit was first introduced in the early 1980s. This will also be the same for the housing element of Universal Credit (see next item).

Universal Credit (UC) is a major change in how benefits are processed and paid out. UC will create one monthly payment to the claimant by combining a number of many working age benefits (including Housing Benefit). It starts in this area from October this year for **new working age claimants** (those in receipt of working age benefits) who must report any rent changes to their UC online account. It **does not** affect pensioners in receipt of Housing Benefit at this stage.

Experience from elsewhere shows that it can take a while for the changes to be implemented, processed and for claims to be paid out. They can be very difficult to manage for those affected by the change as they are required to be completed by the claimant online. Sandbourne has set up a dedicated email address for the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) to request rent details from us and so help process those claims. Any requests for that information will be urgently returned to ensure that Sandbourne is not part of any delay in UC claims being processed.

Rents and Service Charges - there are still two more years of 1% cuts on all housing association rents (excluding service charges) and then the government announced on 5 October 2017 that it will be CPI + 1% for five years. That means that we have to be very cautious on our spending plans for the next few years as we do not know what our rental income will be after 2020.

Voluntary Right to Buy – we still do not know what will be happening and when with the Voluntary Right to Buy for housing association tenants. We only know that there is due to be another pilot undertaken first and that is likely to be in the West Midlands.

Grenfell Tower disaster – with the recent Grenfell Tower disaster, that claimed around 80 lives (final numbers still not really known), we wait to see what new fire and building regulations will be imposed on us, the timeframe to implement any changes and the outcome and impact of the Public Enquiry. Fortunately, Sandbourne has none of the cladding that has been the subject of so much media speculation, professional discussion and residents' concern.

Merging Councils – Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Councils are still waiting to hear from the Secretary of State (a statement was due before the General Election was called) if there will be a new single Council that combines all three into one from April 2019. If that does happen then there will be lots of change, upheaval and uncertainty while that all comes into effect and settles in. A simple example is that each Council has different colour refuse bins for different things. How will this change from 2019?

Brexit is due to become a reality in 2019 and that will inevitably impact, good and bad, on our business and day-to-day lives.

The future - 2019 and 2020 are shaping up to be a very intensive and challenging couple of years. We are doing what we can to prepare for the impact of those changes though so much is still not known. Fortunately, and thanks to being prudent in the past, we are still in a strong financial position to be able to manage, at least until we know what the future holds for the whole sector and locally in 2019/20.

I have worked in Social Housing for 35 years and have never known a period of so much change and such uncertainty now and moving forward.

We will continue to update you via *Sandbourne News*.

Steve Hayes, Chief Executive

Reported an urgent repair and still waiting?

If you report a repair to us which you feel is urgent and it hasn't been sorted as quickly as you'd like, please consider:

- Have you left us a telephone number that our maintenance manager or contractor can contact you on during the day to arrange to visit?
- Do you check your voicemails or 1471 to see who has left a message or rung? We get so many calls asking if we've rung a tenant but it has been our contractor who has left a message for the tenant to call them back.
- Are you actually available at your property for the repair to be carried out? We often get told "this is urgent because" followed by, for example, "however, I'm only in between 5.30 and 6pm today and I'm out tomorrow but will be in the next day", which doesn't give us or our contractor much of an opportunity to get your "urgent" repair sorted.



Please help us to help you and be prepared to be home for a telephone call or visit.

Don't forget that if you're not in for a pre-arranged appointment, you could be recharged for the call-out.

If we have failed to get your repair sorted, please ring the office so that we can find out why and remedy the situation as quickly as possible.

A reminder ... can residents please ring the office to report faults or repairs needed in communal areas of blocks or communal grounds. If we don't know, we can't sort it.

Preventing damp and condensation

It's now that time of year when the heating goes on, the windows get closed when we're cooking or showering, it's hard to dry washing and the damp and condensation problems start.

The cause of condensation is usually lack of adequate ventilation as moisture and humidity levels increase, which turns into water (condensation).

Here are some tips to help prevent this:

1. Where possible, try to dry clothes outside or, where there are communal laundries use the driers, and avoid drying clothes indoors.
2. If you have your own washing machine/tumble drier, make sure the room is properly ventilated, ie keep doors and windows open when in use.
3. When showering, bathing or cooking, keep the door closed and/or use the extractor fan if you have one or open a window. It could take up to 15-20 minutes for the steam to clear.
4. Covering saucepans with a lid can also help prevent steam and condensation.
5. We always discourage the use of portable gas and paraffin heaters as, not only are they a health and safety hazard, they also cause condensation.
6. Prevent condensation turning into mould by wiping down wet surfaces where water has settled in the bathroom and kitchen.
7. Try to keep a minimum amount of heating on throughout your home to avoid drastic temperature changes.
8. If possible, keep a window slightly open when using a room as even breathing creates condensation!

Did you know that moisture is formed by simple daily living? The following shows how much water vapour is created by these day-to-day activities:

using a tumble drier = 4 litres; cooking = 2 litres;
taking a bath or shower = 1 litre; and two adults breathing = 2 litres!

A copy of our leaflet on Condensation and Damp is available upon request from the office or can be found on our website.



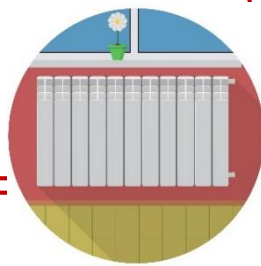
Communal heating in blocks of flats

We have had residents asking when the communal heating will be turned back on. In fact, we were even asked this question in August during the hotter part of the month.

Our policy, where we have to set the heating, is to turn the communal heating on at the beginning of October and turn it off in May, subject to the weather at the time.

We would, however, remind you that our staff will be responsible for setting the radiators to control the temperature. You may think you are helping to save money by turning it off because you personally don't like it too hot, but you are only adding to staff time in dealing with telephone calls and arranging for it to be re-set. In addition, the communal area then has to be brought back up to the correct temperature and this then adds to the cost of heating which forms part of the service charges.

We would add that the heating in communal lounges is usually left on so that the temperature is comfortable for residents to use them and/or drop in, etc, so should **not** be turned off.



Not used your heating yet this autumn! Please check it now so that if it doesn't work properly it can be sorted before it gets too cold. Remember that contractors get busy this time of year.

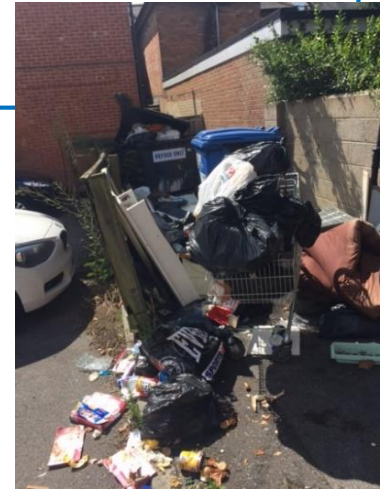
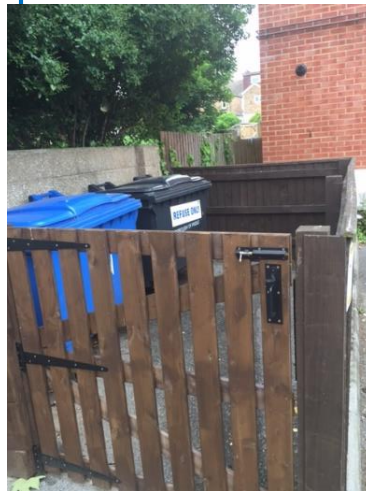
What a difference

Well, we've all got it right this time.

During a recent site visit our maintenance manager couldn't help but take a photo to show the lovely tidy bin store at one of our general family sites in Poole, followed by a photo of a neighbouring bin area owned by a different landlord.

We think you'll agree that our site (on the left) is just as it should be and definitely better than that of the neighbouring site.

Although we are not always perfect, on this occasion we think the residents and Sandbourne have got it right!



Leaseholders, Owners and Shared Owners

Your responsibilities for gas checks

This is a reminder to all our owners and shared owners that it's your responsibility to ensure that all your gas appliances have regular safety checks.

This is not something that Sandbourne carry out for you - we only do this for those people who have tenancy agreements with us.

Safeguarding/Protection from abuse

If you feel that you are being abused or suspect that another resident is being abused (physical, emotional, sexual, sensory deprivation, neglect, imposed isolation, financial/material, discriminatory), you can contact us for more information about what to do or for a leaflet. [Please note that some new types of abuse have now been added to these examples (forced marriage, modern slavery, self-neglect, exploitation or radicalisation, sexual exploitation, internet/cyber bullying)]. Alternatively, you can report this directly by contacting the relevant safeguarding team for your local authority area:

Bournemouth: 01202 454979

Poole: 01202 633902

East or North Dorset: 01305 221016

Ringwood: 0300 555 1386

Please note, if we receive any reports, we are obliged to notify the safeguarding team.

Fire safety updates for tenants and leaseholders

Fire alarms sounding in communal areas

We sometimes have residents tell us that they cannot hear the fire alarms when they are tested in the communal areas and this worries them.

We want to re-assure you that the alarms do meet requirements and that they are not designed to be heard from the inside of an individual flat, only in communal areas. If you were able to hear the communal alarm in your flat, it could encourage you to leave and this would compromise the 'stay put' policy for fires outside of your flat. In turn, this could potentially put both yourselves and the Fire Service (who may attend) at greater risk as a result.



Replacing front doors to flats and/or tampering with the self-closure devices on the door

We have also noticed that some tenants and leaseholders have changed the front doors to their flats and/or may have removed the self-closing restrictors to that door. If that is the case, and if the replacement door and self-closure does not meet the fire safety specification in force at the time of the building being built, you will be committing an offence under building control regulations as you are compromising the fire safety of your home and the building.

Sandbourne will now inform you of this and report any such suspicions to the local statutory housing authority, who are responsible for providing advice and can also take enforcement action against anyone breaching the regulation under the Housing Act 2004. The local statutory housing authority also has the power to enter your home to investigate, which Sandbourne does not.

Fire doors are important and here's why

At the beginning of September our maintenance manager received a phone call from Bournemouth Careline. A leaseholder had reported a fire in a neighbouring property and there was no-one at home. The fire service attended and Sandbourne secured the property.

The point here is that, although an internal door was open, the main front door (which was the original fire door) was securely closed and this prevented the fire from spreading to the communal areas and other flats within the block. This is what the fire door is meant to do and we're sure that everyone concerned was grateful that it did its job.

Don't leave your tumble drier on if you go out

Totally unrelated to the above, the Bournemouth Echo recently reported on a fire that had been caused by a tumble drier that had been running while the house occupant went out. The kitchen was gutted to the point where the Fire Service couldn't identify the make or model of the tumble drier. Apart from the fire damage, they also commented on the dangers of the smoke.

Fire notices for those living in flats

Sandbourne issues all new residents (living in blocks of flats) with a laminated fire notice to put on the back of their door. This gives instructions on what action should be taken in the event of a fire.

We would ask you to check that you have an up-to-date notice on your door. The way you can tell is that it should have the Sandbourne logo on it (examples given on the right). Our staff have recently seen some very old notices on doors and things have changed over the years.

If this applies to you, and you have an old style notice, please ring the office so that we can arrange to have a new notice delivered to you.



Providing new homes for rent – an update

As you will be aware from previous newsletters, the government are requiring housing associations to 'increase their ambition' to provide more affordable homes. It has been suggested that our ability to increase rents may be tied to providing new affordable homes when the next rent settlement due in 2020 is set by the government.

Sandbourne is, therefore, cautiously seeking to increase its supply of new affordable homes to people in need and we wanted to share our current efforts to achieve that with you.

Fernhill Close, Canford Heath. Poole

Sandbourne made a pre-planning enquiry with the Borough of Poole's Planning Department to build three two-bedroom flats to rent on the site. However, this was recommended, by the planners, to be rejected due to its proximity to the heathland.

Site in Poole

We are currently working up proposals to build between 10 and 20 family homes to rent on a site in Poole. This is still in the very early stages of negotiation.

Christy Close, Ringwood

Sandbourne made enquiries with New Forest District Council's Planning Department to demolish the house (that had been converted and used as two flats) to provide six new one-bedroom flats to rent. The planners rejected that proposal and therefore there is now no intention to do anything else there.

Craigleith, Bournemouth

We have withdrawn a planning application to convert the communal kitchen and lounge at Craigleith into two two-bedroom flats to rent at the request of the council as they are looking to have the on-site Care and Support provider there encourage greater use of those facilities.

Stourwood Avenue, Bournemouth

Sandbourne has withdrawn a planning application as the council's Planning Officer stated they would recommend rejecting us building three two-bedroom bungalows to rent at the rear of Gladman House and St Kilda. There is now no intention to do anything else there.

We have also withdrawn a planning application to convert the St Kilda lounge into two one-bedroom flats to rent or the Woodlands lounge into two one-bed and one two-bedroom flats to rent. We now intend to consult with residents about which one of the two lounges they wish to keep and why and we may then re-submit a planning application to convert the other lounge.

Since 2013 we have also:

- Converted the old registered office in Woodlands (Southbourne) into three one-bedroom flats for the over 60s to rent
- Converted the old registered office at Ashley Road, Poole into two two-bedroom flats for families to rent
- Converted an office space in Craigleith (Bournemouth) into a one-bedroom extra care flat to rent
- Converted the communal lounge at Highfield (Belle Vue site) in Southbourne into a two-bedroom flat for the over 60s to rent
- Sold one house in Ringwood
- Purchased two two-bedroom bungalows to rent for the over 60s in Ringwood
- Purchased back three leasehold flats, in blocks of flats that we own in Poole, to rent out and purchased back one shared ownership house to rent
- Built five family properties to rent in Milborne St Andrew (Blandford Forum).

We will continue to consider other options and opportunities provided they represent Value for Money and are in keeping with our Business Plan (published on the website) and our charitable aims and objectives.

How time flies It has now been three years (in September) since Sandbourne moved into its new offices in Poole from the old offices at Ashley Road, Craigleith and Woodlands. For those of you who weren't with us then, you will know that this provided six much needed homes to rent for households in need.

Commemorative Tree Planting Ceremony and 'Cabbage Patch' Revamp Celebration

Hopefully you will have read in previous editions of *Sandbourne News* about an ex-tenant of ours, Anne Chapman, leaving us a small legacy in her Will and also about the work of some of our Bournemouth residents to revamp an area of ground at our Stourwood Avenue site in Southbourne.

Well, on Wednesday 27 September, we finally held an event to mark both of these. Brollies were to hand but, luckily, the rain held off until the speeches had been made.

Anne Chapman was a former resident Board member and we were delighted to find out that she had left Sandbourne a legacy. We wanted to commemorate her life and her legacy in some way and it tied in nicely with the revamping of the 'Cabbage Patch' by the residents at the same site.

Three winter flowering cherry trees were planted in the 'Cabbage Patch' area in Anne's memory and on the day her good friend Roger Mason unveiled a plaque in her name.

Steve Hayes, Chief Executive, spoke about Anne and what a good friend and neighbour she had been to both residents and staff and her contribution to the old Bournemouth Housing Society for the Elderly (BHSE) when on that Board. He told how she always had a cheery word (the glass was always half full, not half empty) and she never let her own disability get in her way - a remarkable lady.

Steve's sentiments were echoed by another close friend, Reverend Kevin Newton, who attended with his wife Ruth and another of Anne's friends, Eileen. He added that she would have loved the trees and was dearly missed by everyone who knew her.



Following the dedication, Steve went on to talk about the 'Cabbage Patch' and congratulate the residents at Stourwood Avenue on what had been achieved by them putting their efforts into something positive in revamping an area of ground that had been nicknamed by them as the 'Cabbage Patch', for the benefit of everyone at that site.



The project was co-ordinated by resident, Marjorie Barrett, on behalf of the Stourwood Avenue residents and with donations and help from residents, their families and friends. She said that it couldn't have been done without all their help and support and she gave a special mention to fellow resident George Dillon, thanking him for all his hard work and efforts, particularly when she was unwell. (see also a note from Marjorie at the top of page 12.)

Marjorie had also sought donations and help from outside companies. Barclays played a major part in the project by not only giving a donation but also providing a team of community volunteers to clear, dig over and lay the lawn to the area and she couldn't thank and praise them enough for their endeavours. (see photo bottom left of page of Tony Fernley and Ian Randall with Marjorie.)

In addition to donations from residents and their families and friends (both time and money) outside agencies also donated, like Edward Thoburn who joined us from Approve Cleaning Ltd to see what had been achieved.



Unfortunately, other sponsors/representatives from Bournemouth Council's Green Goals Project, Southbourne Lions and Stewarts Garden Centre were unable to join us on the day.

Councillor Chris Mayne (West Southbourne Conservative member) was pleased to add his congratulations for what had been achieved by people working together.

In addition to the work on site, large pots had been purchased and, earlier in the day, these were dedicated to longstanding residents who had in some way contributed to the old BHSE, including former Resident Board Member, Brian Tigg.

We know that Marjorie wanted to thank everyone concerned for all their help and support over the last 18 months and said they couldn't have done it without them. She said it was a great example of working together on this "green" project for the benefit of all of the residents at Stourwood Avenue.

With speeches and tributes over, like all good community events, the day was rounded off with refreshments in one of the communal lounges, where members of Sandbourne's Board and staff joined residents and guests. Catering was by CRUMBS (a local company who take on mixed ability trainees and have a pre-employment programme) with, once again, their delicious home cooked bakes.



The work on the 'Cabbage Patch' and the planting of the cherry trees perfectly complemented each other in this tranquil part of the communal gardens.

Everyone agreed that it was a good turn out on the day with a real 'feel good' factor.



A note from Marjorie Barrett ... On 27 September 1976 (some 40 years ago) at their Council meeting, Bournemouth officially adopted the Constitution of Helping Services Council. Helping Services was exactly what the name suggested – when voluntary and statutory agencies worked together for the benefit of the Bournemouth Community. BHSE (as was) and BACE (Bournemouth Association for Care of the Elderly) were part of the Helping Services ethos. Re-vamping the ‘Cabbage Patch’ has proved to me that that ethos still exists. Over the years things change and it’s sometimes difficult for older people to accept change. We are privileged to live in a beautiful area, in purpose-built properties. We are a community and we should “count our blessings”. However, when it mattered, “the troops rallied round” in true old BHSE fashion. So, to everyone involved in any way at all with this project, thank you for all the help and support you have given me over the past 18 months, particularly when my various hospital stays delayed “work in progress”. The “Cabbage Patch” would never have been completed without you. At last we have a garden we can enjoy.

Complaints re neighbours

Helping to manage your expectations of us regarding complaints about your neighbours!

As a landlord, we frequently receive complaints about our residents which we take seriously and will investigate, unless they are anonymous in which case we are normally unable to do anything.



However, you might find it interesting to note that we have to consider the following when deciding what, if any, action to take:

1. When we receive a complaint we often ask ‘what do you want us to do?’ and are told ‘make them stop’ or ‘make them do’. Unfortunately, as your landlord, we cannot **make** anyone stop or do anything. We, as a landlord, can only ask people to stop or to do something and, if they don’t, then consider taking legal action to try to sort it. This could for example, mean an injunction or us seeking repossession of their home for a breach of their lease or tenancy agreement.
 2. The first thing we have to take into account is that any action we undertake has to be both ‘reasonable and proportionate’ (a legal test) in the circumstances. This is because, if we eventually go to court for an injunction or possession action, this is the standard which the Court will apply in making any decisions or court order.
 3. The court will also consider what would the average person in the street think about what is being asked for. For example, an injunction or possession based on what the complaint is about and the quality of the evidence being presented to back it up.
 4. It is quite often the case that if you get us involved in, what to someone outside might seem to be something quite minor, eg normal household noise and activity at normal times, then the person being complained about might think they are being victimised. They might also think the person making the complaint is being unreasonable and make a counter claim and the situation could then escalate.
 5. It is often much better to just have a word to see if that resolves the situation as the person might not have been aware that there was a problem and may apologise.
 6. Retaliation is not an option as two wrongs don’t make a right. We will not normally take sides unless we have witnessed something ourselves and will consider any counter claims as well. We also require your co-operation to provide evidence for the court to consider otherwise we cannot normally take any legal action.
- Q. So why are you telling us this?
- A. We’d like to ask you to think before complaining about your neighbour(s) and consider if it is, say, only a one-off party or is it a frequent occurrence, eg regular noise at 2am which is having a detrimental effect.

If you would like a copy of any of the following leaflets, please contact the office or visit our website:

- Acting Reasonably – A guide to how we deal with unacceptable behaviour
- Your ASB (Anti-Social Behaviour) Complaint – A guide on what to expect
- Complaints – Your guide to considering what is a complaint and how to go about reporting it



Police talk on safety

A local Police Community Services Officer (PCSO) visited our Stourwood Avenue site in Bournemouth in August to discuss safety with our residents, not only in the home but also in more general terms.

The PCSO very much re-enforced the points we put in our newsletter each year and handed out leaflets to those residents who wanted them.

Here are some tips highlighted in the Police leaflets, mixed in with a few of our own recommendations.

Doorstep crime:

- If you don't know who's at your door – don't open it.
- Use your door chain or spy hole, if you have one, before you open the front door to anyone.
- Always check a person's identity if you don't know them.
- Beware of 'cold callers' in case they are bogus.
- Beware of people knocking at the door asking to use your phone, look in your garden for a lost ball, or check your water, etc – don't let them in.
- Keep your front and back doors closed and windows secure – it's easy for a stranger/intruder to enter your home, particularly if you are being distracted by someone else or, for example, you fall asleep.
- Don't keep large sums of cash at home – use a bank or building society.
- Never go to the cashpoint with a tradesperson to get cash out for them.
- If someone is acting suspiciously, report it to the Police.



Scams:

- Never give out your bank details or pin number over the phone.
- Don't click on links in emails where you are asked for your bank details.
- Don't be tempted by bogus junk mail which entices you into sending money.

Living in a block of flats:

- Don't try to be helpful by letting someone into your block unless they are visiting you. If they have a valid reason to be there, they will know how to gain access without your help.
- Watch that no-one is following you into the block (tail gating).
- Never prop open doors or leave them open to your flat or the block – always make sure doors are closed after you to prevent intruders getting in. This applies to houses as well.
- Don't give out door codes or key safe codes to anyone you don't know.
- Don't advertise who you are by putting your name on your door or on laundry rotas or other lists that bogus callers might see and use to their advantage.

Out and about:

- Never leave your bags unattended, particularly in shopping trolleys.
- Keep your handbag closed and carry it close to you or keep your wallet in a pocket away from pickpockets.
- Don't carry large sums of cash.
- Keep your mobile phone inside your bag and don't leave it on the table while out dining/having coffee.
- Don't carry your PIN numbers on you, especially in your purse or wallet.

Vehicle crime:

- Don't leave items and valuables in your car, not even in the boot, glovebox or door wells.
- Take removable stereos and satnav equipment with you.
- Always check that windows and doors are locked before walking away.
- If you can, park in a well-lit area where there are CCTV cameras.
- Never leave your keys in your vehicle, not even for a few seconds.
- Don't leave your car with the engine running when dropping off/picking up.
- Think about installing visible alarm systems or steering type locks.



Contacting the Police:

999 – ring this for an emergency that is happening or just happened, where you need urgent assistance.

101 – ring this to go through to your local Police for non-emergency matters, for example if you need to report something but you don't need immediate assistance.

Home Contents Insurance

Sandbourne does not insure residents' furnishings or belongings. We strongly advise you to take out your own home contents insurance. This should cover you against damage to your personal belongings, floor coverings, furniture and other contents and decorations, including damage from fire, flood, break-in and vandalism, or accidents caused by you to your neighbour's property or Sandbourne communal facilities.

When choosing an insurance policy, you should make sure it covers broken glass and locks in doors and windows, as these are repairs you normally have to pay for. Your insurance should also cover items if they are stolen in a break-in.

Have you had your flu jab?

Most of you will probably have received a text message from your local surgery, or seen advertisements telling you when the flu jab clinics are being held.

The NHS Choices website says that for adults

"People who should have a flu jab are:

The injected flu vaccine is offered free of charge on the NHS to people who are at risk. This is to ensure they are protected against catching flu and developing serious complications.

You are eligible to receive a free flu jab if you:

- are 65 years of age or over
- are pregnant
- have certain medical conditions
- are very overweight
- are living in a long-stay residential care home or other long-stay care facility
- receive a carer's allowance, or you are the main carer for an elderly or disabled person whose welfare may be at risk if you fall ill
- are a front-line health and social care worker. It is your employer's responsibility to arrange vaccination for you."

For some people who are house-bound, district nurses visiting them may be able to give you your flu jab so why not ask your surgery.

Bournemouth Older People's Forum

This is something one of our residents brought to our attention and is supported by Bournemouth Borough Council. The Forum work with various organisations to promote the health and wellbeing of older people in Bournemouth.

They hold regular meetings and entry/membership is free. They welcome all those with an interest in this age group.

Their next meeting is due to be held on Friday 1 December at The Bridge, Littledown Centre site, and they cover a variety of topics and speakers.

LEAP – Local Energy Advice Programme

This is linked to the Older People's Forum and there are items like free light bulbs on offer and information about how to recycle items for charity.

If you live at one of our Bournemouth HOPS schemes, then please see the noticeboards or look in the drop-in rooms for further details.

Stourwood Avenue Residents' Christmas Tea

Please note that, due to ill health, Sandy Dagg won't be able to organise her usual Christmas Tea this year. We're sure all those residents who have attended these teas over the years would wish Sandy well and also like to thank her for doing such a brilliant job in the past.

Do you want to get to know or socialise with your neighbours at our Bournemouth HOPS sites?

If so, here's a taste of some of the events that happen at our three Bournemouth **HOPS sites**:

Bingo, Woodlands Lounge, Tuesdays at 7.30pm

Coffee Morning, Woodlands Lounge, every Tuesday from 10am to 12noon

Library, St Kilda's Lounge, every month on a Thursday

Lunches (CRUMBS), St Kilda Lounge, every Tuesday at 12.30pm onwards

Songs of Praise (FACE), Woodlands Lounge, second Monday of each month

Tea and Topic (FACE), Woodlands Lounge, third Thursday of each month

There are also regular events held at Immanuel Church, Southbourne, including a Thursday beginners' **computer club** from 9.30-11am.

For all of the above events, and others, please check the notice boards and the TV displays regularly for the latest/up-to-date information/details.

If you want to add events or change details on this list, please contact the office.

An 'Autumn' Quiz

1. You'll need to look for this tree to find your conkers
2. Joan Crawford starred in this 1956 film
3. The name given to Autumn by the Americans and Canadians
4. This autumn flower combines both a male and female name
5. An autumnal poem written by the famous poet John Keats
6. Do the clocks go back or forwards one hour in Autumn?
7. What vegetable was traditionally carved before we used pumpkins?
8. The date on which we celebrate Halloween
9. 1993 Bette Midler film about three witches
10. Another name for Halloween



Answers can be found at the top of page 16.

All articles are correct at the time of publishing (September 2017)

Copies of this newsletter are available, on request, in large print, and can also be downloaded from our website: www.sandbournehousingassociation.org.uk

Change of contact details ...

Have you changed your contact details recently and forgotten to let us know? If so, there is a form below that you can fill in and return to us.

Want to give feedback or make suggestions ...

You can use the form on the back page of this newsletter (page 16) to provide us with feedback or to make suggestions. It really doesn't matter if this is positive or negative, as long as it's constructive, as it all helps us shape what we do in the future and the services we provide to you. Alternatively, you can use the feedback page on our website to do this.



CHANGE OF CONTACT DETAILS

Please tear off this slip and return it to the office if you have changed your contact details (or email us at info@sandbourne.org.uk or phone us on 01202 671222).

1 st Line of your address:			
Tenant's details:			
Name: (Mr Mrs Miss Ms)			
Home phone number:			
Mobile number:			
Work's phone number:			
Email address:			
Signed:		Date:	

Autumn quiz answers:

- | | | | |
|---------------------|------------------|----------------|----------------------|
| 1. Horse Chestnut | 2. Autumn Leaves | 3. The 'Fall' | |
| 4. Michaelmas Daisy | 5. Ode to Autumn | 6. Back | |
| 7. The Turnip | 8. 31 October | 9. Hocus Pocus | 10. All Hallow's Eve |

Sandbourne registered office:

Address: Sandbourne Housing Association, Beech House, 28-30 Wimborne Road, Poole, BH15 2BU

Tel: 01202 671222

You will always be able to leave a message on the answer phone outside of office hours (which will be dealt with the next working day).

You will also be able to leave a message on the answer phone, after six rings, if staff are away from their desk, or taking another call, or at lunch (they will get back to you as soon as they are free).

Calls may be recorded by Sandbourne for information and training purposes.

Occasionally we may need to close our office but we will aim to tell you this in advance.

Email: info@sandbourne.org.uk

Website: www.sandbournehousingassociation.org.uk

Office opening times: Normally **9am to 4pm**, Monday to Friday (excluding the Christmas/New Year closure and other English public/statutory holidays).

Note: To ensure that someone is available, appointments should always be made if wanting to see staff in the registered office.



FEEDBACK/SUGGESTIONS FORM

If you would like to give us some feedback on either this newsletter or any other matter relating to your tenancy/lease, or make suggestions, please just return this slip to us.

Name:	
1 st Line of your address:	

Feedback/suggestions:

Signed:		Date:	
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