

A seasonal message from the Chairman

I would like to take this opportunity to wish all our residents, stakeholders, contractors and staff season's greetings and the very best for you in the New Year.

Over the past twelve months it is encouraging to note that the topic of housing has come to the fore with the government looking to those involved with the provision of housing to provide more homes. Sandbourne welcomes the need for more accommodation and, although we are a small housing association, we continue to explore what we may be able to contribute through our own new-build schemes, acquiring existing built houses or redevelopment of existing schemes.

Later in the newsletter you will read that residents of some of our older persons' schemes in Bournemouth are being given information about how changes in financial support for their accommodation will be affecting them and, through the means of a confidential ballot, how residents can influence a decision on the redevelopment of a communal lounge. We want to hear their views as the Association is always looking to improve its engagement with residents.

Last year was challenging for the Association and next year is likely to prove equally challenging, if not more so, with the implementation expected of a new local authority for the Bournemouth, Poole and Christchurch areas and how that impacts upon housing for those areas. No doubt future editions of *Sandbourne News* will comment on how such matters will be impacting our tenants, leaseholders and shared owners.

I would like take this opportunity to thank members of the Board and all the staff at the Association for their contributions to the efficient running of Sandbourne over the year.



Keith Mallett, Chairman

Contacting the office

The only office telephone number for Sandbourne is:

01202 671222

All correspondence should be addressed to:

Sandbourne Housing Association
Beech House, 28-30 Wimborne Road,
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.

Important - Christmas/New Year office closure

As well as being closed on **Wednesday 13 December**, please note that this year the Sandbourne registered office will close at **12 noon on Friday 22 December 2017** and will re-open at **9am on Tuesday 2 January 2018**.

In an emergency (when the office is closed)

If you have an emergency when the office is closed, please report this as you would during normal out-of-office times, ie use your emergency call system if you are a HOPS resident or call the out-of-hours service for emergency repairs if you are a general needs resident.

Craigeith residents will, of course, still have the Council's contracted care and support team operating on site as normal.



We are also closed on **Wednesday 28 February 2018** between 9am and approximately 2pm for our **Annual General Meeting** (see article on page 11).

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 (Craigeith) 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.

Are you a HOPS resident and planning to go away over the Christmas/New Year period?

If so, please remember to let Careline know if you are going away and advise them of the dates when your property will be left empty (you don't need to let Sandbourne know). You should let them know the date you are going away and then let them know when you are back at your flat.

The reason we ask this is in case there is a problem at your property while you are away, for example a burst pipe, that Sandbourne may have to deal with in your absence. Or, it could be that a neighbour is concerned that they haven't seen you around for a while, in which case Careline can check with your next-of-kin that you're okay. It is also important to update your next-of-kin details with both Careline and us.

Your 2018 Sandbourne Calendar

We hope that you will find your 2018 calendar useful and thought we'd give you a bit of background to this year's edition.

The photos have all been taken by one of our Board Members, David Joicey, and he has given his permission for us to use these, free of charge.

Photography is only a hobby for David and we're sure you'll agree that the photos are amazing. He must have so much patience - he told us that he waited in a hide for 11 hours to capture the picture of the pine marten.

We can't wait to see what photos he might produce for us in the future!



Keeping warm and healthy this winter

There is lots of advice from the government, NHS and other agencies, who generally recommend you:

- Check if you or your family can get your free flu jab, which you're entitled to if you are pregnant, have certain medical conditions or are 65 or over, etc.
- Before Christmas, or if the weather forecast is bad, check that you have enough medicines and food.
- Keep your home warm; TV/radio NHS adverts are suggesting 18°s as a minimum for your lounge.
- If you know your heating isn't working properly, do something about it now and don't wait for it to break down. Heating companies get very busy this time of year.
- If your heating does break down, please ring the registered office to report this (during office hours). However, if you have no other form of heating and the office is closed (over Christmas/New Year), please contact Bournemouth Careline (see page 3).
- Wear lots of layers of clothing to stay warm and wear shoes with a good grip if you go outside.
- Food is a vital source of energy, which helps to keep your body warm, so try to have regular hot meals and hot drinks throughout the day.
- If you can't get out, try to keep active round your home.
- Good hand hygiene can help prevent the spread of germs and viruses.
- Please keep an eye on older and more frail neighbours and relatives.
- Finally, if you're going away and you have a neighbour who you have regular contact with, let them know as they might worry if they don't see you around.

What is the right temperature?

One of the big energy providers wrote to its customers earlier this year about this.

They advised that they considered that there was no right or wrong temperature for our homes as we are all so different and the amount of heat we need or like varies so much.

They did say that by just lowering the thermostat by one degree could save quite a significant amount of money, but it's you and your family that count.

The energy provider then went on to recommend:

Healthy people 64 years or under – entire home 18°

Over 65s or people with medical conditions – a minimum of 18°, although slightly above this may benefit your health

Infants – bedroom between 16° and 20°.

Snow and ice - 'to grit or not to grit?'

This is the question that landlords are faced with each year and so to repeat last year's Winter newsletter article:

As a landlord we are **not** legally obliged to clear snow and/or grit communal footpaths/car parking areas that are in our ownership, even where we may feel that we have a moral responsibility to do as much as we can to ensure the safety of vulnerable residents.

We need to ask ourselves whether we, as a landlord, leave ourselves exposed to greater risk of a claim if we decide to grit an area that we are not responsible for. The answer, according to our insurers, is 'yes' although ultimately it will depend on the facts of any such claim.

In the event of a claim, it would have to be established whether the act of gritting had made the risk worse. For example, if inadequate amounts of grit or salt had been used which then resulted in a partial thaw before subsequently freezing overnight – a particularly treacherous set of conditions if the ice is then covered by a fresh layer of snow.

For these reasons, based on our insurer's updated advice and after some soul searching, we are re-confirming our previous approach. We **will not** grit communal area paths and car parking areas. However, we **will** continue to provide grit bins and do our best to keep them supplied with grit for residents to make use of, should they wish to, but this will be at their own risk.



Surviving Winter – Help Older People in Dorset Stay Warm and Safe This Winter



We have agreed to publish this article on behalf of the Dorset Community Foundation:

“Do you need your winter fuel allowance? If no, you can donate to help save lives – here in Dorset!

Every winter between 300-400 local vulnerable people are dying because they cannot afford to heat their homes. Shockingly, during the winter of 2014/15 920 vulnerable people died from the combined effects of fuel poverty and social isolation.

Every winter, a local charity - Dorset Community Foundation, is running a Surviving Winter Appeal which recycles unwanted winter fuel allowances to help save lives.

Donations from generous Dorset residents are collected and then dispersed in the form of winter fuel grants through the local Citizens Advice Bureaus. Since 2011, the Appeal has raised over £120,000 helping thousands of local older people.

To Donate:

Donate online at www.dorsetcommunityfoundation.org

Send a cheque made out to ‘Dorset Community Foundation’ to: DCF, The Spire, High Street, Poole, BH15 1DF

If you need help

Surviving winter grants of up to £200 are available along with additional help around fuel poverty. Contact your nearest Citizens Advice Bureau or ring 01929 775500.”

Sandbourne’s fire risk assessments

You will have either read, or experienced at first hand, the fact that we have been undertaking our triennial fire risk assessments at all of our properties; something we always carry out and it is not just as a result of the Grenfell Tower fire in June this year.

We are now in the process of completing our action plans on those assessments and, although there is no requirement to do so, we will publish these on our website and also make them available on request once finalised towards the end of January 2018.

If you are interested and forget, don’t worry, we’ll add something to our Spring newsletter.

Do you live in one of Sandbourne’s general needs (18+) rented flats?

If so, you will see that we’ve enclosed a laminated fire notice with this newsletter (see example below).

We currently provide similar notices to all our tenants of other rented flats, where they normally affix them to the inside of their front door as a reminder about what to do in the event of a fire.

Please remember it is not only about your own safety, but also about that of the other tenants living in your block.

Don’t forget that if you are a tenant of one of our over 60s flats, and your fire notice does not have the new Sandbourne logo on it, then you can obtain a new version from the office – just give us a call on 01202 671222.

Thank you.



If you thought we were harsh ... read on

Following Fire and Health & Safety Risk Assessments early this year, our staff were instructed to remove personal items from the communal areas of blocks of flats because of the potential hazards they could cause.

Items, like door mats, were removed and held by us but tenants were advised that they could be returned but could not be placed outside of flat front doors in the communal areas.

However, according to an article in the Sun on 4 October, another landlord, a Council, took this one step further to the amazement of their tenants. The Council not only apparently confiscated their door mat, but then charged the tenants £20 a week for storage costs/to get it back. In addition, if not collected by a set date, they were going to dispose of it.

The Council defended their action due to the number of requests they'd made for the door mat etc to be removed. They said it was a fire safety measure which could pose a potential fire risk, obstruction or trip risk in an emergency evacuation. They gave examples of mats, bikes and pushchairs.

If you think that Sandbourne's approach to dealing with fire safety is strict, please bear in mind that some landlords have even stricter policies to deal with this, including harsh financial penalties. Residents' co-operation with the fire safety of buildings is always appreciated.

Air fresheners or no air fresheners

We get lots of complaints and take them all seriously. This one is responding to comments about the use of plug-in air fresheners in communal areas.

Some people love the many different fragrances you can now buy in air fresheners, which is fine within the confines of your own home. However, other people can find them quite strong and offensive.

Fragrance apart, we would advise that, for blocks of flats, 'plug-in' air fresheners are strictly prohibited in communal areas for health and safety reasons due to the possible potential fire risk they pose.

Please, therefore, **do not** plug in air fresheners in any of Sandbourne's communal areas, which includes corridors, laundries, lounges, kitchens and guest rooms.



Need to dispose of a large item (like a fridge or mattress)?

We often get asked why we can't collect and dispose of large items, particularly things like mattresses that have been dumped on our sites or in/by our bin stores.

Because the number of such requests has increased recently, we carried out some research on-line and there are a lot of organisations out there who can offer you a free or small charge disposal, including some charity shops, and we can provide you with a list if you'd like one. We would add that for us to dispose of large items on your behalf is not an option as it is expensive and we can't compete with people like the local councils.

We do have experience of people using Poole Borough Council's bulky household waste collection service (Poole residents only). They offer a bookable time slot and, provided the item can easily be carried by two people, charge £30 (at the time of this newsletter) for the first item and £6 for each additional item. You can call them on 01202 261700 or check on their website.

Bournemouth Borough Council's website say that the company they use has a minimum charge of £36 (contact 01202 451199). New Forest District Council, however, only charge £22 for the first item and £6 for additional items (contact 023 8028 5000) and some benefit claimants may qualify for a free collection.

Bulky household refuse such as furniture, appliances and mattresses will not normally be collected as part of the normal weekly or bi-weekly refuse collection. A small minority of residents have dumped such items in the communal grounds. The costs to Sandbourne of removing and disposing of these items with commercial tipping charges is high and these costs are charged to residents through service charges. If we can identify the culprit, they will be charged for the costs instead.

Residents should make their own arrangements for disposal of bulky household items and it could be worth paying the Council's reasonable charges to avoid being ripped off by rogue contractors who may dispose of items illegally. If you do use the Council, any feedback you can give Sandbourne will be very welcome.



The Silver Line

helpline for older people

0800 4 70 80 90

Each year we feature this service in *Sandbourne News* and thought it would be useful to include it again, particularly as 62% of our tenants are aged over 60, and life can be difficult and lonely for some people at this time of year.

Silver Line and Saga have now teamed up together to fund raise to provide more volunteers to man their phones, which can take over 10,000 calls a week from the older generation.

The service is like Child Line but for older people and has a free 24-hour helpline, available every day and night of the year. You can ring them to ask about services in your area, talk in confidence if you are being mis-treated/abused, get some friendly advice or quite simply have a chat.

It is recognised that more than half of all 75 year olds in the UK live alone and one in ten suffers intense loneliness but is reluctant to ask for help but a chat on the phone can be the most helpful solution for those older people who can go for days without talking to another person.

If you would like further information please go to The Silver Line website (www.thesilverline.org.uk) or ring the helpline on 0800 4 70 80 90.

As mentioned in previous newsletters, Silver Line has also highlighted their desperate need for donations to keep the service going.



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.

 TV LICENSING

Don't get caught without a TV Licence!

Apart from a few residents with 'preserved rights' (where payment is requested via Sandbourne) everyone under 75 is responsible for purchasing their own TV licence.

All residents turning 75 should inform the TV Licensing Authority so that they can receive their 'free' TV licence, irrespective of whether they usually pay their fee to Sandbourne or direct to the TV Licensing Authority.

Although the communal lounges in our HOPS schemes are covered by communal TV licences, our guest rooms are not and the watching of 'live' TV or catch up on demand services on any devices is prohibited in them.

If you have any queries, you can check on-line at www.tvlicensing.co.uk or call them on 0300 790 6131. Alternatively, you can contact the registered office.

Coming soon ... service charges survey

We are gradually sending out surveys to all of our tenants where services are provided by Sandbourne and then charged back by way of service charges (predominantly blocks of flats).

Enclosed with the **next** edition of *Sandbourne News* will be a survey for our general needs (18+) tenants.

Our aim is to consult with you about what services are important to you and whether or not the frequency of services is right, for example window cleaning.

We need to constantly review the services we provide so that we can keep service charge increases to a minimum. It is therefore really important that you let us have your views when you receive your survey.

Government announcements – latest updates

‘All change next stop?’

Sandbourne has tried to keep residents up-to-date with the changes and uncertainty in the Social Housing world that affects you and Sandbourne, in our efforts to maintain and improve services for you all.

In the last few weeks the government has made a flurry of announcements, many of which reverse housing policies that had been due to come into effect soon.

We have provided a summary of the more significant changes below and can provide more information on request.

Local Housing Allowance Cap

The Local Housing Allowance Cap (LHA Cap) has been scrapped. It was due to come into effect in April 2019. It would have restricted the amount of Housing Benefit and Universal Credit Housing Allowance payable towards rent and eligible service charges.

Service Charges

However, there is always a ‘but’. The government have tightened up what can be paid for through benefits for service charges and will require Social Landlords to publish its service charges so that tenants, other organisations and the Benefit Authorities can compare the ‘Value for Money’ of those services and can set a limit on what they pay if they think the services are excessive (eg too frequent) or too expensive on a like-for-like basis etc.

Rents Settlement from April 2020

You will be aware that a few years ago the government changed the Social Housing ‘Rent settlement’ whereby we could, at that time, raise rents (excluding service charges) by inflation (CPI +1%) each year for the next 10 years. That gave us some certainty about our finances and what we could afford and not afford to do etc.

The government then suddenly announced that we had to reduce our rents by 1% a year for the next four years. That meant that we had to start to be very prudent, careful and stop doing ‘nice to do’ things (such as replace misted windows) etc in favour of doing what we ‘had to do’ to comply with things such as ‘Decent Homes’ regulatory standards.

The government has now announced that a new rent settlement, effective from April 2020, will go back to be inflation (CPI + 1%) a year for the next five years. That is welcome news as it gives us some degree of certainty again. However, we still have two more years of rent -1% decreases to put into effect before then.

Again, there is a ‘but’: the government has stated that having listened to the sector and giving us most of what we’ve been asking for, they now expect the sector to deliver by ‘increasing its ambition’ and providing more affordable homes. This, along with a veiled threat, recently publicly stated by the Regulator, that we will be looked at as a sector and individually held to account if we do not.

Green Paper on Social Housing

The government has announced that it is to undertake a formal consultation (Green Paper) on the future of Social Housing. That will be the first time in over a generation that any government has considered what Social Housing is and what it should be there to do and achieve etc.

Changes in property designation/regulatory description

The government has tightened and clarified its definition of what is called and counted as what in Social Housing. Housing for Older People with some Support facilities (HOPS) will cease to exist as a description (classification) effective from 31 March 2018. Properties will then either be 'General Needs' or 'Sheltered and Supported Housing'. To count as the latter, the properties have to have 'Housing Related Support' provided **and** it be a condition of renting the property that Housing Related Support is needed by the applicant.

Tenants of our existing Bournemouth HOPS properties will be aware that Bournemouth Council stopped its Supporting People funding to provide that support (Support Officer service) in 2015 and at Ringwood that support funding was never provided and so the Support Service (Warden) had to stop. Having a link to a Careline is not sufficient to be classified as 'Sheltered and Supported Housing'.

This means that from April 2018 we will need to change all our literature etc and re-classify how and what we call your homes. It **will not** change who is eligible to move into them. The changes should, however, make it clearer to everyone and will be:

'Rented 18+' from 'General Needs'

'Rented 60+' from 'HOPS'

'Extra Care rented 50+' (Craigleith only) from 'HOPS'

For Craigleith the government has said that it will be looking at long-term funding arrangements for this type of 'Sheltered and Supported Housing'. They have announced a consultation that ends early in the New Year and will change the funding arrangements from April 2020.

Universal Credit

This has started to roll out for all new working age benefit claimants in our area from October this year. Its impact is, therefore, as yet unknown. At Sandbourne we have prepared as best we can.

Local Government review in Dorset

Apologies to our Ringwood tenants who are in New Forest District Council (Hampshire).

The Secretary of State has announced that, subject to a consultation that ends at the beginning of January 2018, he is minded to change the existing set-up of Councils in Dorset from eight plus the County of Dorset into two Councils from April 2019.

That will be the biggest local change since local government re-organisation in the early 1970s when Bournemouth and Christchurch moved out of Hampshire into Dorset.

Assuming the changes go ahead there will be one new Council combining Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole and one new Council for the rest of Dorset.

This change will have a significant impact on us all while the new Councils get to grips with re-organising themselves and combining departments such as Social Services, Planning, etc. They will need to agree their priorities, who will be in charge, hold elections for the new Councils and have about a third less Councillors to oversee the changes and business as normal.

Voluntary Right to Buy

No further news yet as to where the extended pilot scheme will be (expected to be in the West Midlands) and/or how long it will be for.

Finally, we would add that this could, of course, all change again – nothing is set in stone going by past experience. However, our aim is to let you know what is happening at the time of the government making their announcements.

Resident (HOPS) Board Membership Election in January 2018

Theresa Saunders, who was elected to serve on the Board in 2014, has served a three-year term of office and is eligible for re-election as the HOPS (including Craighleith) Resident Board Member.

I have given some summary information below for any other HOPS resident who may be interested in standing for election onto the Board:

- If there is more than one eligible candidate wishing to stand for election, then there will be a secret postal ballot undertaken towards the end of January 2018.
- Resident Board Members have the same rights and duties as all other Board Members.
- Board Members are not paid, though expenses are paid for attending training, Committee and Board meetings.
- There are normally seven Board meetings a year, which are currently held on a Wednesday evening.
- All Board Members are tasked with the legal duty to 'set and ensure compliance with the values, vision, mission and strategic objectives of the Association, ensuring its long term success'.
- Board members are elected at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) and are selected to have a balance of skills required from a wide variety of backgrounds regardless of whether they are residents. It is that mix of skills and knowledge that is used to strategically direct the Association and hold the executive (staff) to account.
- You should note that, as a Resident Board Member, your role is **not** to be used as a conduit for complaints etc. There are policies and procedures in place to deal with all operational matters.
- The Policy: 'Election of Resident Board Members' is available to be viewed and downloaded on the information and download page of our website, or upon request from the registered office.
- In addition to other exclusions from consideration as a Resident Board Member, you cannot be considered if you are in dispute with the Association or are in material or serious breach of your tenancy agreement.
- You will need to be proposed and seconded by two different residents to be considered for election.

If any HOPS residents wish to be considered for election as the HOPS tenant representative on the Board, please contact the registered office for more details.

If there are no other nominations to be considered, then Theresa Saunders will be re-elected, unopposed, in January 2018 for another three-year term.

Change of Sandbourne's Accounting Year

Sandbourne has changed its accounting/financial year to 1 April to 31 March each year (previously 1 October to 30 September).

This doesn't really affect you as one of our tenants, leaseholders or shared owners, but we wanted to let you know why.

The current financial year will run for 18 months instead of 12, as a one-off (1 October 2017 to 31 March 2019).

The new financial year will be in line with most of the other organisations we deal with so makes life easier all round and will also enable us to review and compare our performance with our peers.

We have taken note of what our external auditors think and complied with our Board, the Financial Conduct Authority (Regulator) and our lenders' (Banks) requirements. We will be writing to our Shareholders with this newsletter but neither they, nor you, have to vote on this change. It will mean a change of the 2019 Annual General Meeting date, but not 2018.

As mentioned above, on a day-to-day basis, this does not affect anything to do with your rent, services, repairs etc, which will all continue as normal. We're simply telling you to be open, transparent and honest and to avoid you wondering what's going on if you hear something through the 'grapevine'.

Annual General Meeting 2018

Sandbourne's Annual General Meeting (AGM) will be held on Wednesday 28 February 2018 but the venue has yet to be agreed as the Wessex Hotel (our usual venue) closes on 1 January 2018.

To ensure that we only book, and pay for, a venue of a suitable size, we would ask that any tenants, leaseholders or shared owners who would like to attend write in and let us know by Friday 5 January 2018. We can then extend a formal invite to you when sending out the invites to our Shareholders, including resident Shareholders, in early February.

We don't want to exclude anyone attending but we also don't want to book a venue which is far too large for the numbers on the day. If you think you might be interested in becoming a Resident Board Member/Shareholder, you might find it useful to come along.

As mentioned on page 3, the Sandbourne office will be closed on Wednesday 28 February from approximately 9am to 2pm so that staff can attend the AGM.

Turnover of homes

In the last 12 months the turnover of tenants has been quite high in some areas.

Here are some facts and figures:

Of the 213 general family properties there have been 12 new tenancies and three leasehold resales. All general family rented properties are let through nominations from Dorset Home Choice or to internal transfers of existing Sandbourne residents. Leasehold resales are through estate agents or Help the Buy South West.

Of the 207 Bournemouth HOPS properties there have been 30 new tenancies (including our extra care scheme at Craigleith). We hold a waiting list for these properties (although for Craigleith nominations are via the Supporting People Hub) with 152 applicants currently looking for accommodation. Based on the number of vacancies last year it would take 7½ years to rehouse everyone on this list and the demand continues to grow!

Of the 45 Ringwood HOPS properties there have been 10 new tenancies. All Ringwood properties are let through nominations from New Forest District Council's Home Search scheme or to internal transfers.

Some interesting facts (we hope)

Nearly half of our tenants (42%) at our Bournemouth HOPS and Extra Care schemes have only joined us in the last three years (since we moved to Poole in September 2014).

Those tenants would not have known us by our pre-merger names of Bournemouth Housing Society for the Elderly, Broadway Park Housing Association or Ringwood and District Old People's Housing Society.

In addition, the majority of those tenants would not have experienced having a manned office at Woodlands or life with 'Support Officers' due to the Supporting People contact having been cancelled by the Council in June 2015.

The figures for our tenants in our general family properties are normally much lower with tenants moving less often.

No support services from us ...

Sandbourne wants to remind all tenants, leaseholders and shared owners that we do not now receive any funding to provide care or support services to assist you with maintaining your independence in your home.

We are first and foremost your landlord/freeholder and, as such, are only responsible for re-letting properties, agreeing to sales, managing both yours and your neighbours' tenancy and/or lease obligations and maintaining your home.

We can only point you in the direction of where you might be able to receive care or support with any other issues. We will also report safeguarding concerns (see page 7).

If you consider that your home is no longer suitable for your needs, we can point you in the direction of seeking help with obtaining disabled aids and adaptations. We might even be able to assist you in offering you a transfer into an alternative Sandbourne home, or where you might be able to find yourself alternative accommodation, with another landlord, who can meet your needs.

Smoking

We frequently cover the subject of smoking in our newsletters and have advertised the fact that Sandbourne has a Smoking Policy (available on our website or on request from the office).

This time we want to remind all tenants, leaseholders and shared owners of one particular aspect: the right of our staff and contractors not to work in a smoky atmosphere. Our Policy clearly states:

3. Tenants and their visitors

3.1 Tenants and their visitors have a right to smoke in their own home but our staff and contractors also have a right to require that they do not do so whilst they are present in the tenant's home. You have the right for staff and contractors not to smoke in your home and they should not do so.

3.2 No one is permitted to smoke in our offices or in any enclosed communal area, including guest rooms, within any of our premises.

Reference to 'tenants' also means leaseholders and shared owners. Reference to cigarettes includes e-cigarettes.



SafeWise (formerly StreetWise)

One of our residents has asked us to let you know about an interesting organisation called SafeWise (previously known as StreetWise) who are currently based in Bournemouth and Weymouth.

They provide all sorts of safety opportunities and experiences for all age groups.

In particular, they have workshops on using mobility scooters called 'Scootwise' and 'Dorset Driver Gold' day sessions for older drivers on how to keep safe and what to do if involved in an accident etc.

Their website is www.safewise.org. They, like many charities, are always looking for donations and volunteers.

Real Christmas Trees

Apparently Bournemouth Council is not doing their usual kerb-side collection of real Christmas trees this year. Instead, they will have to be taken to recycling centres to be composted.

We believe local charity 'Diverse Abilities' will collect for a minimum £5 donation but you'll need to check this out.

It does not appear that there are any changes to Poole Council or New Forest District Council's normal arrangements.

Do you live in the BH1 to BH11 Bournemouth area and enjoy going out on trips?



sedcat
your community transport

There is a company called "Sedcat, your community transport" who operate in your area and they offer a variety of trips and services, for a small membership fee and cost, to those people who find public transport a problem.

Sedcat, a local charity, stands for South East Dorset Community Accessible Transport, and they are used to dealing with people who use wheelchairs and mobility scooters.

They run Wednesday trips to places like Haskins Garden Centre, Dorchester Market and even Swanage Railway. In addition, they offer scenic drives through the countryside to cafes and pubs across Dorset.

Some of you may know about the BAT bus service which runs from Bournemouth to Boscombe and Castlepoint and this has now been extended to other venues, day and evening.

They can also cover aspects of hospital transport, community cars and shopmobility.

This is just a snippet of what they offer and you can find out more from the leaflets in the drop-in rooms at Highfield or Woodlands in Bournemouth or our notice boards. Alternatively, you can contact them direct by email at info@sedcat.org.uk, or by ringing them on 01202 399700.

What would you like to see?

We try to make the newsletters as informative and interesting as we can for all of our tenants, owners, leaseholders and shared owners.

We are, however, aware that communities vary between the different types of housing and, as such, the type of information we impart varies in value and/or interest depending upon which community you are part of.

In the last edition of *Sandbourne News* we focused on events that were taking place in Stourwood Avenue in Bournemouth. Stourwood Avenue is made up of 175 flats (in five blocks) for the over 60s. With a community that size, we have plenty to write about or advertise.

However, we would really like to cover stories from other groups of people, particularly 'good news' stories but we need your help.

If you have something we could feature about the community you live in, or you have a service that could benefit other people, please let us know. If you have photos as well, that would be good but we do need the permission of anyone in them before we can publish.

Please email gail@sandbourne.org.uk.

Guests rooms



We have guest rooms within our blocks of flats in Bournemouth and they are available for any residents to book (see below).

However, we would remind you that a booking cannot be deemed to be guaranteed until it has been paid for, in advance.

In addition, we are sorry but refunds are not normally possible in the event of cancellation although this is at our total discretion. We hope you will understand but when there is a heavy demand, for example at Christmas, a provisional booking could be stopping us from letting the room to someone else who needs it.

We have the following guest rooms:

- Craigleith (Derby Road) - third floor twin with level access shower
- Harcourt Grange (Belle Vue) - second floor twin with bath
- Milne Court (Stourwood Avenue) - first floor twin with bath
- Woodlands (Stourwood Avenue) - ground floor twin with level access shower
- Woodlands (Stourwood Avenue) - third floor family (double bed and a bed settee) with level access shower.

£20 per night. Details/bookings via the office.

Communal lounges at St Kilda and Woodlands (Stourwood Avenue, Bournemouth) - 'The results are in'

As promised to tenants at a public meeting earlier this year, Sandbourne arranged for a secret postal ballot to take place during November. This was asking all tenants of Stourwood Avenue and Belle Vue sites in Bournemouth which one of the two communal lounges (St Kilda or Woodlands) at Stourwood Avenue they wished to keep and why.

We agreed that we would then go back to the Planning Department at Bournemouth Council early in the New Year to seek planning permission to convert the lounge with the fewest votes into rented flats for the 60+ age group.

The ballot boxes were opened and the count took place on Monday 4 December in the presence of a Resident Board Member, an officer of Poole Housing Partnership, Sandbourne's Chief Executive and the Administrator, and who satisfied themselves as to the legitimacy of the count and results. The results are:

Number of tenants entitled to vote/ballot papers issued	202
Number of votes received by the closing date	134 (63.33%)
Less number of spoiled votes	4
Total number of eligible votes cast for results purposes	130 (64.35%)

These were made up as follows:

Number who voted to keep St Kilda lounge	27 (20.76%)
Number who voted to keep Woodlands lounge	65 (50.00%)
Number who had 'no strong opinion one way or the other'	38 (29.24%)

Sandbourne can therefore confirm that, based on these results, a revised Planning Application will be made to Bournemouth Council early in the New Year for the St Kilda lounge to be converted into two rented flats for the 60+ age group and also to extend/reconfigure the main bin store in the main car park.

Thank you to all those tenants who took the time to cast their vote and have their say.

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.

Email safety

We often write about keeping safe in your home but this time, prompted by reading an article in the Saga magazine, we thought we would highlight some warnings for email safety. Please consider:

- Do you recognise who the email is from – if it is from Barclays and you bank with HSBC, don't open it out of curiosity, just delete it as it is probably a scam email.
- Don't be fooled by "you are our 1,000th customer – click on this link to win a prize", especially if you've never heard of the company/person before.
- If the email is from your bank, but the logo doesn't look quite right/fuzzy/the wrong shape, be cautious.
- How have you been addressed in the opening to the email – if it isn't what you'd expect the sender to write, then, again, be cautious.
- If you are being told that your account has been suspended and you need to click on a link to re-activate it, don't until you have checked it out – you might want to phone the company first to make sure it's genuine. Remember to use a familiar phone number and not the one given in the email.
- Don't log on to one of your accounts via a website link in an email if they are saying that there has been unusual activity on your account – again, check with the relevant company first. This can be banks, building society, broadband providers, PayPal, etc, etc.
- Look to see if there is terminology etc used that doesn't look write, for example "you will need to **wire** us the payment". There can also be strange letters inside brackets etc.
- If the email asks you to confirm things like your password/bank details/pin number/date of birth - don't.
- If there is an attachment to the email, check that it is what you would expect to see before opening it – read the email carefully first. Banks and retailers don't normally send attachments. Don't open attachments ending in 'exe'.
- If there is a link in the email, you can hover over it to see the actual website it is from – do this before considering opening it. You can get the correct website address off the internet to check if it's right.
- Consider forwarding potentially scam emails to your usual bank/building society's email address so that they can check it out. They may then advise their customers of a potential scam.
- Don't respond to a 'dodgy' email by asking them to take you off their mailing list as this only confirms your details to the sender and could give them access to your computer.

Most important of all, please make sure that you have adequate and up-to-date anti-virus software installed on your computer.

Activities at our Bournemouth HOPS sites?

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 details of the above events, and others, please check the notice boards and the TV displays.

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

Your festive Quiz

1. Famous bear who features in this year's M&S Christmas advert
2. The Queen made her first televised Christmas speech in this year
3. All-time highest grossing 1990 Christmas film based on a boy in America
4. Their lorries are well recognised for their image of Santa with a soft drink
5. 2017 computer-animated children's nativity film
6. Best-selling Christmas song first sung by Bing Crosby
7. On the 6th day of Christmas my true love sent to me, six
8. This Queen song made Christmas number 1 in both 1975 and 1991
9. The Japanese traditionally eat this fast food for Christmas dinner
10. All I want for Christmas is my two



Answers can be found at the top of page 16.

All articles are correct at the time of publishing (December 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:	

Festive quiz answers:

- | | | |
|-------------------|----------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Paddington | 2. 1957 | 3. Home Alone |
| 4. Coca Cola | 5. The Star | 6. White Christmas |
| 7. Geese a laying | 8. Bohemian Rhapsody | 9. KFC (Kentucky Fried Chicken) |
| 10. Front teeth | | |

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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