

All changes at the top!

I am aware of rumours following my recent absence, due to illness, but have not been in a position to update you until I had put my proposals to the Board for them to consider.

Following the meeting of the Board on 24 July, I am now in a position to tell you that, after 10 years as the Chief Executive of Sandbourne, I am about to retire.

I have agreed with the Board that my last day as Chief Executive will be the Friday 30 September. At that point, Fiona Ferenczy, our current Director of Finance, will take over the role of Chief Executive.

Fiona has recently been Acting Chief Executive of Sandbourne during my absence, a role she will continue in until I leave. Some of you may recall that Fiona was formerly the Chief Executive of Broadway Park Housing Association (pre-merger with Sandbourne). The Board interviewed and appointed Fiona to the post of Chief Executive from 1 October 2019, confident in her skills and experience. I personally have every confidence that Fiona is a safe pair of hands and will continue to take Sandbourne forward into a bright future.

Although I will no longer be Chief Executive after 30 September, I will be working three days a week for Sandbourne, undertaking special projects, and this will take me up to 31 December when I formally retire and cease working for Sandbourne.

After 36 years working in Social Housing, starting on the council's reception desk on the council estate I was brought up on, and before then a Police Officer, I feel that I have had a good understanding of life and housing. During the 10 years I have been with Sandbourne I have witnessed the biggest number of changes for the organisation, many through government imposed changes in legislation etc, than I have seen throughout my whole career.

Sandbourne has navigated its way through those choppy and uncertain waters and are now stronger than we have ever been.

For other changes, please see page 2.

Steve Hayes
Retiring Chief Executive



Contacting the office

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Fiona Ferenczy,
Director of Finance and
Acting Chief Executive
... to be the new Chief
Executive of Sandbourne
from 1 October 2019.

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So what other changes are there?

With the loss Steve's extensive housing knowledge and experience, we will be seeking to recruit a 'Head of Housing' to ensure that the services that you receive will continue without interruption.

The recruitment process will now commence with the hope that the new post holder will be in place as soon as possible. We will introduce the new person to you in the newsletter, once appointed.

As far as Sandbourne's tenants, leaseholders and shared owners are concerned, it will be business as normal as all our front-line housing and office-based staff will continue to work in their existing roles and there will be no changes to who you deal with on a day-to-day basis.

As always, if there are any significant changes to how Sandbourne operates, where it affects you, we will let you know but this will usually be through our normal quarterly newsletter, where appropriate.

So, why aren't you always told what's going on ... staff right to privacy

Linked in with the article on the front page, and to address some issues raised with us recently, we wanted to clarify our position about the use of your sensitive personal data, as staff also have a right, under data protection, not to have their sensitive personal information disclosed.

If a member of staff is off sick, for example, and a resident rings the office to ask how they are, we will never disclose what is wrong with them as we would be in breach of data protection (GDPR) and could have a complaint made against us by that member of staff and be found in breach of the regulations and be subsequently fined.

We will also not let residents know in writing when a member of staff is off sick, even for a long period of time. Although we are a small team at Sandbourne, we normally have enough staff to cover for absences and will always offer an alternative member of staff to deal with your enquiries. Indeed, for example, the use of the repairs email mailbox ensures that repairs are always covered.

However, if alternative arrangements do have to be made if there is likely to be a serious breakdown in service by Sandbourne, we will let you know in writing, as we would any major changes in our staff structure. We will not consult/advise residents on normal/routine/operational matters affecting Sandbourne's staff.

Staff are discouraged from disclosing their personal sensitive data to anyone unless it is a legal or contractual requirement to do so.

If we sound unhelpful or unfriendly, it is not because that is how we want to be but because we have a legal duty of care to protect our staff and ensure that their sensitive personal data and lives are kept private.

And, Resident Board Members ...

As previously advised in *Sandbourne News*, we have two Resident Board Members serving on the Sandbourne Board.

In their role, they are privy to both confidential information about our sites and sometimes sensitive personal data and information about our staff or staff structure etc. As this is 'privileged' information they are bound by a whole host of rules and regulations. They are not being awkward or unhelpful if they can't tell you something or answer a particular question, it is simply that they must not normally divulge such information to anyone.

Therefore, if you ask a Resident Board Member something which they are unable to answer, please respect their position. Please also remember that they are there to give a 'resident perspective' on strategic matters relating to running the business and not to take on individual queries or complaints.

And finally - data protection and residents' special occasions ...

We were recently made aware that we had missed the 100th birthdays of two of our residents and in days gone by we would have sent a card and some flowers. However, unless you officially tell us, we won't officially know.

Under data protection (GDPR) we cannot normally use any information we hold about you, such as your date of birth, without your consent. (We collect dates of birth initially to help prove your identity and eligibility to be housed by us and for us to be able to prove who we might be talking to. We cannot use it unless it is for a legitimate business reason.) For this reason, we should not be searching our records to see if anyone has a special celebration coming up, and we can't actually do anything about it either as it would be a mis-use of sensitive personal data/information. It can be a sad world that we live in, but we can't risk breaching data protection.

Therefore, a bit like now having to request a card from the queen for a special birthday or anniversary, we would happily help to mark something like a 100th birthday but only if we were asked to by the individual or they agreed to that through their next of kin/family, etc.

We would welcome stories and photos of anyone concerned (with their permission) for future editions of the newsletter, but wanted to make sure that you know that we take your data protection seriously. Because of this, we can't always do what we may, or you, want us to do.

How times have changed ...

It is difficult sometimes to accept the changes that have come into play over recent years, but in most cases we have no choice.

For example, it is not that many years ago that we posted resident, staff and board members' details on our notice boards in our blocks of flats. We would even provide a list of all new residents and those who'd left, including why. This would also go in the old 60+ newsletters.

Most of our residents at that time liked knowing the names of the 'new people' and why someone had left and complained when the lists were removed. However, many did not want everyone knowing who they were and where they lived. Consider, for example, if someone wanted to remain anonymous or had fled from an abusive relationship and the implications if we divulged their whereabouts! None of us normally know everyone's personal circumstances and shouldn't assume that they want us to know.

Now we not only have to comply with increased data protection requirements and a person's right to keep their own sensitive personal information private, but also need to be more mindful of your security. Can you imagine someone gaining access to a block of flats and photographing a list of names on their mobile ready to scam those residents. For the same reason we now say that residents should not display their names by their front doors in case a 'chancer' gains access and knocks on the door saying "hello, Mrs Anon, etc, etc".

Like we've said, times have, and will continue to change and we will always do all we can to protect the information regarding our residents, staff and board members.

Data Protection (GDPR)

For more information about Data Protection and the General Date Protection Regulations (GDPR), please either look on our website (www.sandbournehousingassociation.org.uk) under our 'Information & Downloads' section, or contact the office to request one of our leaflets.

Sandbourne's AGM in September

In previous years we have invited all tenants, leaseholders and shared owners to attend Sandbourne's Annual General Meeting (AGM).

This year it will be held on **Wednesday 18 September 2019** at the Cumberland Hotel in Bournemouth. Sandbourne's Board has decided that this will again be an open meeting and you are invited to attend. However, we need to stress that we will be unable to take questions relating to your own individual tenancy/lease, etc, which could be better answered via our housing and maintenance teams.

Please note that during the formal business of the AGM, only Sandbourne Shareholders will be able to vote on the formal business, for example to approve the Association's Financial Statements.

We hope residents will use this as an opportunity to not only come along to observe the formal business of the meeting but also to meet the Sandbourne Board Members and staff after the formal business has closed.

If you would like to attend, please complete and return the form enclosed in the envelope provided with this newsletter. Please keep the top section of that form to put in your diary.

The registered office will be closed until 2pm on 18 September so that staff can attend this meeting

All articles are correct at the time of publishing (July 2019)

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



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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