

Sandbourne News

Edition 24, Autumn 2019



A warm welcome to any new tenants, leaseholders and shared owners receiving this newsletter for the first time.

With my retirement fast approaching, this will be my last contribution to *Sandbourne News*.

It has been a busy time for us all at Sandbourne as we try to make sure that everything is in place ready for handing over the reins to Fiona Ferenczy at the end of September. I am confident though that the transition will be a smooth one, with no impact for our tenants, leaseholders and shared owners. This is because we are a small team who work very closely together.

There has been much to think about but my retirement has presented a good opportunity to review our policies, procedures, handbooks and leaflets (see pages 8 and 9), as well as our website.

We held our Annual General Meeting (AGM) in September, to which you were all invited and was, sadly, my last official event. At that meeting our Vice-Chair, Keith Mallett, retired from the Board after serving his maximum nine-year term of office. For details of that and our new Vice-Chair, please see pages 10 and 11.

I know that there will continue to be many challenges ahead for both Sandbourne as an organisation and us all as individuals, particularly where the government and Brexit are concerned, but I wish you all, and the Sandbourne team, well for the future whatever it may bring.

Sandbourne News ...

Our primary means of communicating and engaging with all our tenants, leaseholders and shared owners and keeping you

Steve Hayes
Retiring Chief Executive



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

Out of Office Hours Emergencies only:
01202 452795

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Sandbourne Staff and Contacts from 1.10.19

Chief Executive

Fiona Ferenczy

(fiona@sandbourne.org.uk)



On special projects

Steve Hayes

(1.10.19 to 31.12.19)



Housing Services Manager

Simon Raine

(simon@sandbourne.org.uk)



Housing Officer

Sharon Doran

(sharon@sandbourne.org.uk)



Maintenance Manager

Brian Griffiths

(brian@sandbourne.org.uk)



Maintenance Manager

Chris Wilce

(chris@sandbourne.org.uk)



Finance Officer

Annina Cooke

(annina@sandbourne.org.uk)



Finance Officer

Vanessa Payne

(vanessa@sandbourne.org.uk)



Administrator

Gail Phillips

(gail@sandbourne.org.uk)



Administrative Assistant

Molly Rolston

(molly@sandbourne.org.uk)



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 (60+ Bournemouth)
- 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 Head of Housing (Fiona from 1.10.19 and 'to be appointed')

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 (60+/extra care only)
- Lifts (60+ Bournemouth/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 (60+/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 (60+/extra care only)

Administrator (Gail)

- General enquiries not covered above
- Newsletter items and articles
- TV screens (60+ Bournemouth/extra care)

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.

Careline (Bournemouth)

The Careline number for our residents to use is:

01202 452795

Rented 18+ and 60+ without a Sandbourne provided Careline service - only to be used to report 'emergency' repairs when the office is closed and it is something that cannot wait to be dealt with until the next working day.

Rented 60+ and extra care (Craigleith) tenants with a Sandbourne provided Careline service - 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 attention or a repair affecting the communal areas or the structure of the building.

Out-of-hours emergency repairs

This is to remind you that you should only report emergency repairs to Careline if it is an 'emergency' and the office is closed.

All non-emergency repairs should be reported to the office during normal office hours by ringing us on 01202 671222 (messages can be left on the answerphone when we're closed), or by emailing the repairs@sandbourne.org.uk email address, or by using the contact form on our website: www.sandbournehousingassociation.org.uk.

For genuine out-of-hours emergency repairs, Careline's number is **01202 452795**. If you can't lay your hands on this number when we are closed, you can always ring the office and listen to our pre-recorded message which gives you the number to call.

By ringing Careline during normal office hours, or at other times when it could wait until the next working day, you could be preventing them from dealing with someone who needs their immediate help.

Our telephone number

It is surprising how many times we are told on the phone that someone has rung one of our old phone numbers (and tried to leave a message) or asked 'is that?' and given one of our former company names. We also get "I've left lots of messages but no-one has got back to me" and when asked what number they called, they quote an old, out of use, number.

Would you believe it was five years ago that we changed our name to Sandbourne Housing Association and moved into our office in Poole. It was at that point we changed and had just the one telephone number.

We advised all of our old tenants, leaseholders and shared owners that there was a new telephone number to replace all other office telephone numbers and everyone was given a fridge magnet with our new contact details. In addition, we clearly state on the front and back covers of every newsletter and leaflets etc (and in other places throughout) that there is only one telephone number to contact us on.

Therefore, if you have an old number saved anywhere on your phone(s) or address book(s), particularly if the number is 01202 438***, please change it to **01202 671222**. You might also want to check with any friends and/or relatives that you have given our number to and make sure that they have the correct one. If you'd like another fridge magnet, please ring the office and ask us for one, which we can provide you with free of charge.



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 other types of abuse have 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.

Text Messaging Repairs Consent Form

If you haven't already signed up for our text messaging service (to notify you when you have had a repair ordered for your home) it's not too late and you can opt in and out at any time.

By opting in, you will receive a text message confirming that an order has been placed for your repair, who will be carrying out that work and who will be telephoning you to make an appointment.

To help, we have now made the consent form available on our website so that you can download it at any time. If you go to www.sandbournehousingassociation.org.uk, you can find a link to this form under the Repairs tab or on the Information & Downloads page under the Data Protection section.

As always, if you would like a hard copy of this form and don't have access to the internet, simply ring the office and we'll send you a copy (01202 671222).

Under Data Protection, you now have to sign up to opt in to receive this service - we cannot do it by phone.



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, so here's our usual reminder:

The cause of condensation is usually lack of adequate heat and 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 dryers, and avoid drying clothes indoors.
2. If you have your own washing machine/tumble dryer, 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 extra 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 moderate amount of heating on throughout your home to avoid drastic temperature changes between rooms.
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 dryer = 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 on our website, upon request from the office, or in our Bournemouth drop-in rooms.



Not used your heating yet this autumn!

Most of us won't have given our heating much thought during the good weather we were experiencing.

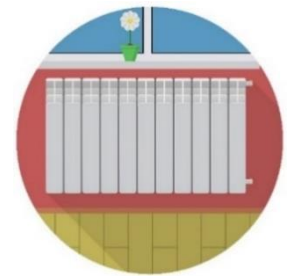
However, please check it now so that if it doesn't work properly it can be sorted before it gets too cold. Remember that contractors get busy this time of year as everyone starts turning their heating on only to find out that, in some cases, it isn't working.

Communal heating in blocks of flats

When will the communal heating go on? Our policy, where Sandbourne has to set it, 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 the heating 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 ultimately forms part of the service charges for that block.

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. Some tenants need adequate heating for health reasons.



Raising awareness of gas safety ...

Irrespective of whether you are a tenant of Sandbourne (where we are responsible for your gas safety and checks), or are a leaseholder or shared owner (where you are responsible for your own gas safety and checks), we want to raise gas safety awareness with you.

We have articles on pages 8 and 9 about our new Policy on Gas Safety and also on our new Gas Safety leaflet, but a timely article in one of the leading housing magazines has just highlighted a survey carried out by the organisation called 'Gas Safe Register' which showed that people are not aware of the tell-tell signs of when there is a gas problem.

We don't want to frighten anyone; we simply want to make you aware of some of the warning signs of gas problems and unsafe gas appliances highlighted by 'Gas Safe Register':

- floppy yellow or orange flames on gas appliances, such as cookers, instead of a bright blue one
- increased condensation inside windows
- the pilot light repeatedly going out or the boiler fails to light
- black or sooty marks on or around your gas appliances
- feeling unwell – the main symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning are: headaches, dizziness, nausea, breathlessness, collapse and loss of consciousness.



During a recent Gas Safety Week, 'Gas Safe Register' was urging people to protect themselves and their loved ones by familiarising themselves with the signs and symptoms above. They have also partnered with children's author, Sophy Henn, to create a short story to help raise awareness.

On a final note, please make sure that, if we are responsible for your gas safety, you allow us access to carry out our checks and, if you are responsible for your own gas safety, that you make sure you get your regular checks carried out. Please remember that you may be re-charged for missed appointments.

If you are unsure about who's responsible for what, you can always ring the office and speak to one of our maintenance managers.

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's 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 during a break-in.

When your communal bins don't get emptied ...

We have had an increased number of reports recently to say that either the communal household waste or recycling bins haven't been emptied.

When this is reported to us, we ring the local council. However, they won't usually want to know if the bin was due to be emptied that day and the recorded message tells us to ring the next working day.

Once reported, the council will tell us when they intend to visit the scheme to empty the bins and we have no control over this so, at that point, the matter is out of our hands and it is down to the council.

What we would ask though, when this happens, is that residents do not then simply fill whichever bin is empty irrespective of whether it is recycling or household waste. When this happens and the bins are classed as having 'contaminated' waste, we are then in danger of the council refusing to empty the bins until the offending items have been removed.

It also doesn't help when people fill the bins with carpet and electrical items, etc, which should be taken to the council tip or otherwise responsibly disposed of by the resident.

Please help us to help you and think before disposing of your rubbish, especially if a bin collection has been missed.



Using communal laundries

Communal laundries are provided in some of our blocks of flats for the benefit of all residents at that particular site. However, there are some guidelines that we would ask you to observe.

- Laundries are for 'residents' and not for their families or friends to use, although there will be occasions when a family member or friend may undertake washing for a resident who is unable to get to the communal laundry themselves.
- Residents should consider the time of day that they are using the machines. These can be noisy and could disturb those residents living directly around the laundry. Please be considerate and don't use them very early in the morning or very late at night if this can be avoided.
- Washing should not be left in the machines for long periods of time after the washing/drying cycle has finished. Other people may want to use the machines and you could be preventing them from doing so.
- Don't leave washing in the laundry once taken out of the machines, or washing products, in case items go missing. Sandbourne cannot accept any liability should this happen.
- You should not use the machines to wash bedding that your pet has been sleeping on as their hair could transfer onto other peoples' laundry. It is accepted that casual clothing or bedding that your pet has been in contact with may form part of your washing load.
- Check the filter and, if necessary, clean it after use.
- Wipe the seal of the washing machine in case, for example, there is hair or other debris left behind.
- Report breakdowns on the number given on the machine or, if you'd prefer, ring the office or email repairs@sandbourne.org.uk.
- Normally avoid setting-up rotas for use of the machines. We cannot monitor or enforce any such systems set up by residents.



What's going on with lifts?

Our residents in Bournemouth, in particular those at Stourwood Avenue, know only too well what it's like when the lift is out of order and they are told "sorry the contractor is waiting for parts". The frustration and inconvenience can be unbearable for many. Something like going to the doctors or getting a carton of milk becomes a real challenge.

For those living in or visiting Poole, for example, it is really annoying when the lifts are out of order in the shopping centre – a frequent occurrence these days, and also frustrating and inconvenient whether you are elderly, frail, have mobility issues, or have young ones and a pushchair to contend with. Just meeting a friend for coffee can be impossible if the lift is out of order, the coffee shop is upstairs, and you can't manage stairs – some shops can't let the general public use staff lifts, particularly if they are used to move food between floors.

However, at the registered office we recently experienced, at first hand, just what having a lift out of order for a long period of time means. We were told by our landlords "sorry, the contractor is waiting for parts", followed by "sorry, we are still waiting for parts so there's been a further delay". Our offices are on the 3rd floor at Beech House and our lift was out of order for exactly four weeks. We have all struggled, in varying degrees, walking up the 54 stairs to get up to the office each morning and questioned if we really needed to go out during the day. We also appreciate what it's like carrying heavy or bulky items up stairs and just how much not having a working lift affects most of what we do.

So, *what's the point of this article?* We take so much for granted these days and when something goes wrong it affects us all in different ways. However, at the moment, we really don't know what's going on with companies not being able to supply parts and it certainly seems more of an issue than before with longer delays than ever. Perhaps we could blame it on stock piling and Brexit – only time will tell! In the meantime, please accept that we will do our very best to resolve faults, but it is often out of our control.



Finally, the old building is down!

We've been reporting on the difficulties in demolishing an old unsafe building adjoining one of our properties and can finally say that the building is down.

Another adjoining owner, not one of our tenants, made it quite difficult for us to demolish this old building and make our property safe, so it was a relief that we eventually managed to do this without needing their permission.

We can now decide how we are going to proceed on this small site and what will be most beneficial to our tenants and to Sandbourne.

It will be nice when we can publish a photo of what we've done on the site.



Update of various planning permissions – Stourwood Avenue, Bournemouth

We have been reporting in *Sandbourne News* about the surveys we sent to all residents at our Stourwood Avenue site in Bournemouth. This was to establish demand for both extra car parking spaces and more electric buggy storage provision for now and in the future.

The residents at that site were notified of a meeting, which took place on 26 September, when future plans and options, resulting from the outcome of two planning applications, were discussed.

Notes of that meeting are to be circulated to all residents at the Stourwood Avenue site as we know many residents were unable to attend. For anyone else interested in what we are planning to do at that site, we will hopefully provide an update in our next newsletter.

New Sandbourne Policies

We are currently undertaking a major review of all our policies. This is something that we carry out at least every three years, unless a change in regulation, etc, prompts an earlier review.

Not all policies are published on our website, or are available to you or the general public. Some, like those which relate to staff and internal processes, are only retained for our office use. An example is the Policy on Maternity and Paternity, where we follow government guidelines but this doesn't directly involve or affect you. Our latest Policy like this is an updated one on Staff Recruitment, where we consult with staff and the Board then approves its use.

Policy on Gas Safety

For many of our policies, we need to consult with you, and the latest one is a Policy on Gas Safety which covers things like Gas Safety Checks and Certificates and gaining access to carry these out. If you would like to see and comment on this Policy, please contact the office and we will send you a copy. This is also published on our website on our Downloads & Information page. All comments and feedback must be received by Friday 1 November 2019.

Hopefully you read our article on Gas Safety and Servicing on page 5. If not, please take a look.



Your Tenancy Handbook -v- Leaflets

We have recently been considering what to do about the 'Your Tenancy Handbook', which was last reviewed and re-printed in January 2016. This was re-issued to all existing tenants at that time, forms part of the new tenants' pack, and is available on our website.

Unfortunately, as with all handbooks, ours was pretty much out-of-date the moment it was issued. The reasons are often out of our control, for example, when the government decided to rename 'HOPS' (Housing for Older People with some Support services) to '60+' and withdrew the support services, and also changed 'General Needs' to '18+' accommodation.

Our dilemma is whether or not to go to the huge expense of reviewing and having the handbook re-issued to everyone, to reflect how things stand at that point in time, or whether we now expand our range of leaflets to ensure that everything is covered in those. We feel that the latter is far more cost effective and efficient. If something changes, we can update a single leaflet (rather than a whole handbook) and have it on our website and available (normally) within 24-48 hours.

We would also propose to no longer issue the Repairs Handbook (also on our website), unless there is strong feedback from you that you want to keep this.

As always, your views are important to us, so if you do not agree with what we are proposing above, could you please let us know by Friday 1 November 2019. If we do not hear from anyone on this subject, we will continue to produce more specialised leaflets on specific topics and cease providing these handbooks.

(Please see separate article on page 9 regarding some of our latest leaflets.)



New Sandbourne Leaflets

We hope you will have read the article on **Your Tenancy Handbook -v- Leaflets (page 8)**, which talks about us replacing our handbooks with more specialised and topic specific leaflets, expanding those we currently have.

Our current list of leaflets, including the recently distributed one on Legionella, are available to download on our website or upon request from the office and includes:

Information Leaflets

- Acting Reasonably
- Anti-Social Behaviour
- Asbestos in Your Home
- Booking a Guest Room or Lounge
- CCTV & Drones
- Complaints
- Condensation & Damp
- Customer Service Standards
- Data Protection
- Gas Safety & Servicing
- Housing for People Over 60 in Ringwood
- Housing for People Over 60 in Southbourne
- Legionella
- Living with Pets
- Moving On (Ending a Tenancy)
- Night Storage Heaters
- Parking
- Recharge Guidelines
- Repair Guidelines
- Ways to Pay
- Your Garden



We have also been working on new leaflets covering the use of CCTV and Drones, Gas Safety and Servicing, and Parking, which are now available on our website or upon request from our office (01202 671222).

By producing more leaflets to replace our handbooks, it means that you can access the latest version of our various guidelines on the specific topics you are interested in when you need them. We won't then have the problem of you holding documents that are out-of-date and possibly conflicting with current procedures. If there is a leaflet that you think we should have, why not let us know so that we can consider producing one.

We hate to say it, but we are only the landlord not a support provider!

The vast majority of our 18+ tenants, leaseholders and shared owners know that our role is that of a landlord only. However, you'd be surprised how many calls we still receive from people expecting us to help on matters that are no longer within our remit, particularly for our 60+ properties/tenants.

There is nothing worse than us having to say to someone "sorry, we are only the landlord and cannot help you". It sounds so heartless, but all of our properties, perhaps with the exception of Craighleith in Bournemouth where there is a care team in place, are designed and intended for independent living.

When Supporting People funding was withdrawn in June 2015 for our Bournemouth 60+ residents (2016 for our Ringwood 60+ residents), we ceased to be able to provide support services and we no longer had support officers to provide this.

Therefore, if friends or family, or Careline, ring us expecting us to check on a resident we cannot usually do this as we don't have staff available on site. With Careline, in particular, we normally have to instruct them to contact the next-of-kin.

We have been known to check on someone if there happens to be a member of staff available on that site on that particular occasion, but this certainly isn't something we can promise to do and we hope that residents and their families and friends can accept that we are not being difficult, or uncaring, we are simply no longer responsible for that aspect of support and don't have the staff resources to do it.

Finally, if you're going away, or have changed your telephone number, please let your next-of-kin know to avoid them worrying if they cannot contact you. You should also tell Careline if you have that service.

A sad day for Sandbourne

It was a sad day for many of us at Sandbourne as we said goodbye to Keith Mallett, Vice-Chair of our Board, at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) in September (see article on Changes to the Board Membership on page 11).

However, the AGM also marked the last official engagement for Steve Hayes, Chief Executive of Sandbourne, who retires from his role on 30 September.

As mentioned in our Special Edition newsletter, Steve is retiring after 10 years with Sandbourne, being both the former Chief Executive and Secretary of the then BHSE (Bournemouth Housing Society for the Elderly) and current Chief Executive and Secretary of Sandbourne.

The Association is grateful for the contribution made by Steve, making us the Association we are today. He has faced many challenges during those 10 years, many of which would not be obvious to our tenants, leaseholders and shared owners. These include getting us up-to-date with modern IT and rent type systems and implementing the new text messaging service; updating policies and procedures, the website, working practices and topic based information leaflets; and, not least, ensuring that we comply with new legislation, regulation and data protection requirements, along with the many resident-focussed surveys sent out to help to shape the future of Sandbourne.

In addition, Steve has steered the Association through the mergers/transfer of engagements with Broadway Park Housing Association (BPHA), Ringwood and District Old People's Housing Society (RDOPHS) and Bournemouth Ace Housing Association (Ace). His skills and expertise have been invaluable in the smooth running of these changes, ensuring as little disruption as possible to you, our residents, whilst still keeping us as a 'small' housing association. Steve acknowledges, however, that he could not have done this without the help and support of the Board and his team in Poole, who will miss him but know that there are new challenges out there for him to conquer.

Steve said "I will now take some time before deciding what I might want to do in the future. A voluntary Board member somewhere maybe? I don't want to get bored! I am confident that I will be leaving you and Sandbourne in very capable hands to move forward and deal with whatever challenges the future might bring."

We mentioned about our new Vice-Chair in the article on page 11, but we should not forget Fiona Ferenczy, currently Director of Finance and Acting Chief Executive and Secretary, who will formally take over as Sandbourne's new Chief Executive and Secretary from 1 October 2019. Fiona started at BPHA in 1998 and was their Chief Executive from January 2007 and then Director of Finance with Sandbourne for the last five years. Her wealth of experience and knowledge means that Sandbourne will remain in a safe pair of hands.

Out with the old and in with the new ...

As mentioned, we're now saying goodbye to our Chief Executive and also the Vice-Chair of our Board.

From left to right:

Fiona Ferenczy, current Director of Finance and new Chief Executive and Secretary from 1 October 2019

Keith Mallett, retiring former Chair and current Vice-Chair of the Board, who retired at the 18 September Annual General Meeting

Steve Hayes, current Chief Executive and Secretary who retires on 30 September 2019

Liz Lees, current Chair of the Board



Annual General Meeting – residents invited

As a way of offering another route to engage with residents, leaseholders and shared owners, the Board decided to invite everyone to attend our Annual General Meeting (AGM) which took place on 18 September.

Invites were extended to you all in our Special Edition newsletter in July and we can only apologise that the morning timing of the meeting precluded many working people from attending. We also appreciate that you might also have had other commitments such as medical or other prior appointments.

We only had three residents (from our 60+ properties) take up our offer and attend on the day, along with some of our resident shareholders. It was, however, good to see those residents and we are grateful to them for taking the time to join us.

Thank you also to the 50 people who returned their slips to let us know whether or not they could attend.

Despite the low take-up of attendance, the Board still feels that this is a good opportunity for you to come along and engage with members of our Board and the Sandbourne staff.

Changes to the Sandbourne's Board Membership

Since our Special Edition newsletter, we've had a few more changes, but this time to our Board.

Firstly, in August, Henry Taylor, former Chair of Bournemouth Ace Housing Association, resigned from the Board. It was re-assuring to us that when Henry tendered his resignation he said that "my colleagues and I are very satisfied with the running of Ace Court. We know that they are all in safe hands". We, in turn, are grateful to him for the help and assistance he gave us when the Ace Court properties were transferred to us this year and we thank him and wish him well for the future.

Next, at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) in September, Jan Lewis and Yogesh Vadgama were formally elected as Board Members (co-opted last November and December respectively onto the Board but had to be formally elected at the AGM). Jan has a wealth of IT and housing association experience and Yogesh is currently Head of Asset Management for another housing association.

Finally, also at our September AGM, Keith Mallett, former Board Member with BPHA, Chair of Sandbourne and then, for the last year, Vice-Chair of Sandbourne, had to stand down from the Board having served the maximum term allowed under the rules of nine years. Keith has made an enormous contribution to the success of Sandbourne, seeing the association through the various mergers over the last five years and supporting both the Board and Sandbourne's senior management. Our thanks go to him and we also wish him well for the future.

Keith said "I have enjoyed my time with the Association, being there from its formation to seeing it grow into a well-run, efficient and 'residents first' organisation. I am happy to be leaving the Association, after my term of office, in good hands with a strong financial base and excellent workforce".

Both Henry Taylor and Keith Mallett will remain as Shareholders of Sandbourne and will therefore be able to attend future AGMs.

A new Vice-Chair of the Board was appointed following the AGM and this was Joe Waters who currently sits on the Board and is a Chief Executive of a small locally based housing association.

New Head of Housing – update

Interviews are currently taking place for the recruitment of the new post of Head of Housing for Sandbourne.

As mentioned in our special edition Newsletter, this will be to assist Fiona Ferenczy, our new Chief Executive (from 1 October), on the housing side of the Association's work to make up for the loss of skills resulting from the retirement of Steve Hayes.

Once a suitable candidate has been appointed, we will either send a notification to all of our tenants, leaseholders and shared owners or, subject to timing, let you know about this in the next available edition of *Sandbourne News*.

We would like to re-assure you all that service delivery to you won't be affected during any transitional period, with our housing teams operating as normal.

Some interesting facts on our Financial Statements

Our Financial Statements (used to be called Audited Accounts) were presented for adoption at our Annual General Meeting on 18 September.

At the meeting, our External Auditor explained that his company had audited our accounts, the main purpose and benefit being to look at financial controls and the likelihood of fraud in the Financial Statements and that income was accurately reported and was not being diverted elsewhere. It was re-assuring that he was able to confirm that the Association's management and governance were very good and there had been no items requiring to be brought to the attention of our Board's or anyone else - he was very pleased with the Association's financial strength and diligence.

Our Director of Finance, Fiona Ferenczy, then went on to explain that, although accurate in every sense, to the average person looking at our accounts they were probably quite misleading as it looked as if we had far more money than we actually have.

Our accounts show a surplus for the last 18-month period of £1,265,662 but, in real terms, this is not the case. We had £629,038 come in to the Association through selling two properties, a 50% shared ownership sale, and the transfer of the Bournemouth Ace Housing Association properties.

However, we then purchased two properties, a 50% shared ownership purchase, and carried out major improvement works at one of our Bournemouth sites. In addition, we replaced the windows at a block of flats in Bournemouth and replaced a communal boiler serving two blocks of flats. We also replaced 15 kitchens, 5 bathrooms, 6 boilers, 48 front doors and electrical upgrades to 16 flats. All of this came to £1,106,203.

Fiona added that we had also carried out fire risk assessments in all communal blocks of flats and had re-let 44 properties during the 18-month period, with many of those needing works (some major) to them before new tenants could move in.

Finally, it was highlighted that we had also recently drawn-down part of a large loan of £999,980 for properties we are hoping to build in the coming year to meet the government's requirement to continue to provide more homes for people in need.

A copy of our Financial Statements for the 18-month period to the end of March 2019 is available on our website: www.sandbournehousingassociation.org.uk, or is available upon request from the office.

The telephone scams continue ...

We are aware that there is still a host of different telephone scams doing the rounds, from HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) threatening court action, to BT wanting to disconnect your broadband when you may not even have it. There is also one about your recent accident and we've just been told of a new one which is advising people that their washing machine is about to go out of warranty.

We simply want to remind you all to be cautious as it is easy to be taken in by some of these scams, especially if, for example, calls like the HMRC are upsetting and threatening.

As previously advised in our newsletters, HMRC will never email or ring you, they will always write a letter to you, so you shouldn't try ringing the number back, even if the pre-recorded message sounds genuine or you are concerned.

If it appears to be someone like BT threatening to cut you off when you don't have their services, or telling you that your washing machine warranty is about to expire (particularly if you don't own one) try to ignore it.

However, if you are concerned about any calls you receive, don't try ringing the number back (that could be part of the scam and you could be charged for the call). Instead, find a number for them on the internet and speak to someone in their customer services or fraud department. It could be useful to jot down the telephone number the call came from and give that to the company so that they can look into it.

Many companies genuinely seem keen to track down callers who purport to be ringing on behalf of their business. And, as mentioned in a previous newsletter, there is always the Action Fraud team that you can report such matters to by calling 0300 123 2040 or via their website: www.actionfraud.police.uk.

Finally, if someone calls and asks for your bank details over the phone, don't ever give these out. Ring the company back on a number that you know is safe (from your own files or from the internet) and check with them if it was a genuine call. If you think you have been scammed and you have given your bank details out, contact your bank and let them know as soon as possible. Please don't be too frightened to do this.

Paying your rent and/or service charges

We don't like reminding you but Christmas, for those who celebrate it, is only a couple of months away and many of us are heading for an expensive time when we stretch our resources to the limit.



During the coming months, please remember that you will still be expected to pay your rent and/or service charges on time. However, if you think that you are going to have problems doing this, please make sure that you contact us now to speak to one of the housing team who can discuss your options with you.

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

TV Licences for the over 75s

Sandbourne ran an article in the summer edition of *Sandbourne News* about the free TV licences for the over 75s.

It was frustrating for us, and very annoying for the over 75s reading the article, for it to be announced the same week that the government planned to abolish the free TV licences or to have them means tested.

At the moment, we are as much in the dark about the outcome from the various protests and debates about losing this very valuable free concession.

We are sure that it will be on the news and in the papers if the decision is successfully challenged and reversed. If not, then we will aim to remind residents of what they need to do next year. We would, however, hope that anyone in receipt of a free TV licence will be written to by the TV Licensing Authority and anyone new applying will be advised at the point of application, if this isn't already happening.

If you have any questions about your TV licence, please contact the TV Licensing Authority directly on 0300 790 6117.

Viewing our TV screens in our Bournemouth flats

At our some sites in Bournemouth (Derby Road, Belle Vue Crescent and Stourwood Avenue), we were lucky enough to have received grant funding which enabled us to have TV screens in the entrances to our blocks of 60+ flats. This makes it possible for us to update residents on, for example, issues affecting their site, events and contact information.

We appreciate that on occasions, for example when a lift breaks down, not everyone will be able to view the screens. For this reason, we made the slides shown on the TVs available to any residents wanting to view them on their phone, tablet or other mobile device. This was by requesting a password from the office and logging onto our website.

However, it recently came to light that there were residents who, for whatever reason, could not view these slides by either of the above methods. This firstly reminded us that not everyone uses the internet and secondly that there are occasions when we still need to use paper notifications to residents (a lift breakdown again being a good example).

We will do our best to strike a happy balance in how we keep residents informed and would remind any resident at the above sites that they can request access to the TV slides if they wish by contacting us on 01202 671222.

Switch around in the Housing Team for our Ringwood residents ...

We wrote to our Ringwood residents this month to tell them that, as from 1 September 2019, Sharon Doran, Housing Officer, would be taking over the day-to-day management of their homes from Simon Raine, Housing Services Manager.

Sharon is currently the housing officer who manages the majority of our 60+ properties in Bournemouth (not Ace Court, which is still Simon), and is contactable via the registered office to assist residents in all of their non-maintenance housing enquiries.

The maintenance manager for Ringwood is still Brian Griffiths.

Nothing else has changed recently in the way our housing team operates and telephone calls should be made to the office on 01202 671222 in the normal way.



A visit to Lifeline at Poole

Four of our staff were recently lucky enough to be able to visit Lifeline at Poole, following a meeting with two of their representatives earlier in the year. This was because they wanted a better understanding of how they work.

We, of course, currently use Careline at Bournemouth but the services are now combined with the recent merging of the local councils who form the BCP Council. It's going to take them a while, however, to come together properly and set up a new identity and standardise their services and procedures etc.

So, why are we telling you this? Because it might be of interest to you and it's not just about the services they provide to the over 60s who pay for their Careline through their rent and service charges.

Once they have them available, they are going to let us have leaflets and information about a whole range of services for all age groups, which you can pay for directly with them. As well as pendants and personal alarm systems, smoke detectors and fire alarms, they have a call-out service and now have a brilliant chair which they can take to a property to lift someone when they've had a fall. They can also provide a monitoring service for vulnerable children and adults and those people suffering domestic abuse. We'll let you have further details when we have them.

It is interesting that the Poole team is a small one but they cover a large area. They also have a colour coding system so that when calls come in they can deal with those in urgent need first. For this reason, they might ask to call you back on occasions if someone, for example, has a priority vulnerability or needs an ambulance urgently.

So, if you're not one of our residents who currently has a Careline/Lifeline service provided to them via Sandbourne, why not consider contacting them to find out what services you can pay for directly with them. Alternatively, watch this space. As mentioned above, they will be producing leaflets for their combined services and we, in turn, will provide you with fuller details when that happens and keep you up-to-date. They have also offered to give talks and demonstrations to our residents in the future.

Bournemouth: Careline's contact number is: 01202 452795

Poole: Lifeline's contact number is: 01202 733255

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.

Letting your friends and family know what's going on

We recently received feedback from a relative of one of our residents who lived abroad saying that they regularly read *Sandbourne News* on-line and it helped them know what was going on when talking to their family member.

If you have a relative or friend who likes to read this newsletter, or might find it useful to read it in the future, why not ask them to contact us so that we can send them a copy by email. Alternatively, you could let them know that they can access it on our 'Information & Downloads' page of our website: www.sandbournehousingassociation.org.uk - you'll find all our back issues there as well.

Finally, if you need a large print version of *Sandbourne News*, just ring or email us to let us know but please bear in mind that to provide this it will have to be produced on paper twice the size of this page.

H	A	B	A	C	O	R	N	V	O	P	I
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**Just for fun -
your Autumn
Word Search**

Your words to find:

- Autumn
- Leaves
- Golden
- Conkers
- Rain
- Heating
- Spiders
- Honeysuckle
- Ivy
- Chestnuts
- Harvest
- Acorn
- Cobweb
- Chill

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 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 'Contact Sandbourne' tab/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, for us to use. Alternatively, email us at info@sandbourne.org.uk or phone 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:	

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.

All articles are correct at the time of publishing (September 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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