

# Sandbourne News

Edition 33, Winter 2021



A warm welcome to this Winter edition of the Sandbourne newsletter.

It has been a year of adjustment for us all. In January we started the new year with a national lockdown which impacted us all. Sandbourne has continued to adapt services to the changing environment whilst offering normal services in a safe manner, and please continue to report your repairs in the usual way.

It was exciting news to see the start of a new development of six properties in Poole. Good progress is being made and they will be ready for occupation in the Summer of 2022.

The Board at Sandbourne would like to thank Fiona Ferenczy, Sandbourne's Chief Executive, and her team for continuing to provide services to residents. The past year has been interesting, and everyone has had to cope with a lot of change and adjustment.

We really appreciate feedback from residents throughout the year as this continues to help Sandbourne develop our services.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone season's greetings and a happy and peaceful new year.

*Maria Byrne, new Chair of Sandbourne's Board*



## Contacting Sandbourne

The only office telephone number is:

**01202 671222**

**(9 am to 4 pm, Monday to Friday)**

All correspondence should be addressed to:

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

Email: [info@sandbourne.org.uk](mailto:info@sandbourne.org.uk)

[www.sandbournehousingassociation.org.uk](http://www.sandbournehousingassociation.org.uk)

Repairs: [repairs@sandbourne.org.uk](mailto:repairs@sandbourne.org.uk)

**Out-of-Office Hours Emergencies only:**  
**01202 392322**

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## Careline (Bournemouth)

The Careline number for our residents to use is:

**01202 392322**

**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.

**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.

**Leaseholders and shared owners** - only to be used for communal area 'emergencies', eg a fire/flood or an essential 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 a repair to Careline if it is an 'emergency' and the office is closed.**

For genuine out-of-hours **emergency** repairs, Careline's number is **01202 392322**. 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.

All **non-emergency** repairs should be reported to the office during normal office hours. You can ring us on 01202 671222 (voicemail messages can be left when we are closed), email [repairs@sandbourne.org.uk](mailto:repairs@sandbourne.org.uk), or use the repairs contact form on our website [www.sandbournehousingassociation.org.uk](http://www.sandbournehousingassociation.org.uk).

Please note that 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.

## 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 were 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, Christchurch and Poole: 01202 123654 (new telephone number)**

**Dorset: 01305 221016**

**Ringwood: 0300 555 1386**

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

## The Sandbourne Team:

Fiona Ferenczy, Chief Executive

David Hall, Head of Housing

Simon Raine, Housing Services Manager

Sharon Doran, Housing Officer

Brian Griffiths, Maintenance Manager

Chris Wilce, Maintenance Manager

Annina Cooke, Finance Officer

Vanessa Payne, Finance Officer

Gail Phillips, Administrator

Molly Witherington, Administrative Assistant

Tel: 01202 671222, Email: [info@sandbourne.org.uk](mailto:info@sandbourne.org.uk), or [repairs@sandbourne.org.uk](mailto:repairs@sandbourne.org.uk)

Website: [www.sandbournehousingassociation.org.uk](http://www.sandbournehousingassociation.org.uk)

Beech House, 28-30 Wimborne Road, Poole, BH15 2BU

## IMPORTANT

### BCP CARELINE'S CHANGE OF TELEPHONE NUMBER

We have tried to let as many of you know as possible, via the TV screens and noticeboards (where you have these), and also our out-of-hours telephone message, that BCP changed their Careline telephone number without giving us prior notice.

We are enclosing a new fridge magnet with their new number on it, so please replace the one you currently have.

From now on, the number to ring for emergency out-of-hours repairs is:

**01202 392322**

This is also the number for our 60+ residents to ring for emergencies, although you should still use your pull-cord, if you have one, where you can.

If you have family or friends that call Careline on your behalf, please make sure that you let them know as well.



### Are you a 60+ resident with a Careline service and planning to go away over the Christmas and 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 home.

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 you or your next-of-kin that you're okay. For this reason, it is also important to update your next-of-kin details with both Careline and Sandbourne.

## Christmas and New Year Cover



A reminder that the registered office will be closed from 12 noon on Friday 24 December and will not re-open until Tuesday 4 January at 9 am.

We will also be closed from 12 noon to 4 pm on Wednesday 15 December.

All of our emergency contact details are shown in this newsletter and can also be accessed from our out-of-office hours' voicemail message.

We would, however, remind you to only contact Careline for genuine emergencies as it is obviously a very busy time for them. Anything that can wait until the office is open again, for example routine repairs which can be emailed to [repairs@sandbourne.org.uk](mailto:repairs@sandbourne.org.uk) or rent or housing queries which can be emailed to [info@sandbourne.org.uk](mailto:info@sandbourne.org.uk), should **not** go through to Careline.

As always, those residents with emergency pull cords should use them in the usual way.

Non-urgent messages can also be left on our voicemail over the Christmas and New Year shut down, to be dealt with on our return.

## Allpay flyer

With our last mail-out to residents, we enclosed a flyer about making payments via 'allpay' using a rent payment card.



We want to re-assure all residents who currently make their payments by direct debit or bank transfer that you do not need to change the way you pay your rent and/or service charges to us.

The flyer came about because allpay changed their telephone number, without giving us prior notice, and we needed to let everyone know as quickly as possible in case you used this method of pay. We also used this as an opportunity to remind all residents about the different ways to make 'allpay' payments and include the new telephone number and details of costs etc.

Allpay's new telephone number to make payments is **0330 041 6497**, should you need this. You will need a 'rent' or 're-charge' account payment card though and if you don't have one, we can order this for you, free of charge.



## It's not too late to consider applying to become a Board Member

With our October mail-out to all Sandbourne tenants, leaseholders and shared owners, we sent you a notice inviting interest in becoming a Board Member.

We listed the skills we were currently looking for, namely:

- Treasury management
- Sandbourne tenant, leaseholder or shared owner
- Human resources
- Disability awareness
- Local councillor or other local elected person
- Local representative
- General admin/secretarial



It's not too late if you have been thinking about this and are not sure if you are interested or not.

If you'd like further information, either email [info@sandbourne.org.uk](mailto:info@sandbourne.org.uk) or ring the office on 01202 671222 and we can send you some details.

## Being a Board Member, from a resident's perspective ...

As a Board Member I volunteer my time and play a proactive part in the discussions and strategic decision making of the business, eg all aspects of finance, development of new properties, policies, Health and Safety, etc.

I also serve on sub-committees, which meet outside of the main Board meetings, to consider in detail specific issues and policies leading to recommendations presented to the full Board and contribute to the Business Plan. I participate fully alongside the other Board Members, who are all unpaid volunteers from a variety of professional backgrounds.

In the past I have and continue to:

- help to shape consultation information on issues before it goes out to residents
- attend resident consultation meetings as and when appropriate
- give feedback to the staff and the Board on the outcome of residents' meetings that I or Sandbourne attend to help shape how meetings and information/feedback can be improved in the future
- attend conferences with other small housing providers to see how others do things and what we can all learn from them
- attend training sessions and Board away-days to further develop skills needed for the role
- ask staff to explain why things are the way they are or done the way they are and if there are alternatives that can be considered and explained to residents in newsletters articles, etc
- keep up-to-date with latest issues on an ongoing basis through reading articles and updates provided on matters that affect residents from a housing perspective.

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

As a Board Member and a tenant I cannot deal with any individual enquiries from you about your tenancy, or discuss or report repairs, which you must always do via the office.

I feel very privileged to be in a position where I can help make a difference to ensure our homes are being well managed and maintained now and for future generations.

*Ann Schofield, Tenant and Board Member*

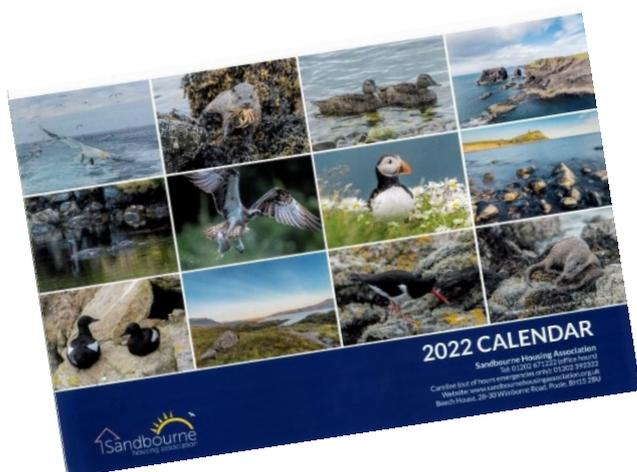
## Season's Greetings from the Chief Executive

Well, it's that time of year again. Everyone is starting to gear up for Christmas, there are decorations and Christmas music in all the shops and adverts on TV trying to sell us lots of things that we probably don't need. What I am really looking forward to this year is the possibility of spending some time with my family. That was cruelly taken away from us last year when Christmas get togethers were banned for many people and reduced to just one day for others due to the rising Covid-19 cases at the time. Hopefully that will not happen this year and we will all be able to celebrate with those we love.

The last year has again been dominated by Covid-19 restrictions, high infection rates and, sadly, many of us may know people who have died with the virus. Sandbourne staff have worked hard all year to try to maintain a normal service to all our residents, whenever possible, while still keeping you and themselves safe. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all Sandbourne residents for your patience and forbearance over the last 12 months when some services had to be suspended and others carried out in different ways. Thank you too to all those residents who thanked us for the service provided and helped to cheer staff up during difficult times, as well as to those of you who offered constructive criticism when things were not so good. It is always good to know when we are getting things right and helpful to look at ways of improving the service when things are less successful. The newsletter always includes a section for feedback, so please feel free to contact us if you have something to say.

I would like to wish a very happy Christmas to those of you who celebrate it, and a peaceful New Year to you all. I look forward to working with you in 2022 and maybe meeting up with some of you as well.

Fiona Ferenczy, Chief Executive



### Your 2022 Sandbourne Calendar

The years are rolling by and the calendars and their beautiful pictures still keep coming.

Once again, thank you to Sandbourne Board Member, David Joicey, for sharing his passion for photography with us.

We hope that you will enjoy looking at the calendar as well as finding it useful.

**This time of year we tend to repeat a lot of articles but this is because we are aware that the Winter and Christmas can be a difficult and lonely time for many people, particularly the elderly, and we want to give you as much advice and information as possible. This is even more relevant this year with the current pandemic.**

We always give a mention to 'The Silver Line' which is a free confidential helpline providing information, friendship and advice to older people, open 24 hours a day, every day of the year. Calls from landlines and mobiles are free and they are there for anyone who needs them aged 55 or over.

You can ring them to ask about services in your area, talk in confidence if you are being mis-treated or abused, get some friendly advice or quite simply have a chat. If you would like further information please go to The Silver Line website ([www.thesilverline.org.uk](http://www.thesilverline.org.uk)) or ring the helpline on 0800 470 80 90.

Previous figures estimated that around 225,000 elderly people go through their day without talking to anyone and they now have a new 'telephone friendship' service so that you can chat to one of their volunteers on a weekly basis and they will try to match you to someone who shares similar interests.





## Various Surveys ... the results are in ...

Over the last couple of months, we have carried out several consultations with residents in relation to services that Sandbourne provides and are now able to let you know the results of these:

### Grounds Maintenance at Stourwood Avenue and Belle Vue sites in Bournemouth

The long standing arrangements with Hogan's came to an end in October and this was a good opportunity to develop a new specification and see what frequency of grounds maintenance visits residents would like to see in the future.

We approached several contractors to obtain alternative costs and two of those provided quotes and were considered. We then asked residents which price they would like us to accept and whether future visits should be either weekly or fortnightly throughout the year.

At both developments there was a clear majority in favour of 'Contractor A', who had the lowest price, and that they should undertake the works every fortnight:

#### Stourwood Avenue

| Options for 136 properties (82 Surveys returned)               | No. of votes |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| Contractor A visits - weekly at a cost of £6.12 per month      | 10           |
| Contractor B visits - weekly at a cost of £7.97 per month      | 4            |
| Contractor A visits - fortnightly at a cost of £3.06 per month | 45           |
| Contractor B visits - fortnightly at a cost of £3.98 per month | 21           |
| No preference                                                  | 2            |

#### Belle Vue

| Options for 41 properties (21 surveys returned)                | No. of votes |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| Contractor A visits - weekly at a cost of £10.15 per month     | 2            |
| Contractor B visits - weekly at a cost of £13.22 per month     | 0            |
| Contractor A visits - fortnightly at a cost of £5.07 per month | 16           |
| Contractor B visits - fortnightly at a cost of £6.61 per month | 3            |

As a result, we have appointed 'Contractor A', who are Warrens Gardening Services, for both sites. Residents can expect to have seen Toby Warren and his team on site for the first time from 2 December. We will monitor how they perform, and are happy to receive comments from residents in the New Year.

[continued ...](#)

## Various Surveys continued/

### Upgrade to Sky Q

A number of our Bournemouth 60+ residents have approached us over the last year asking if they can connect to the Sky Q service. We made enquiries and established that making this option available to all residents in a block would require an upgrade to the existing satellite TV systems. The cost of this would have to be paid for by residents through the service charge.

Having obtained prices for the upgrades we asked residents in each block whether this was a facility that the majority would like and if they were happy to see the costs added to their service charge in the future.

As the majority who responded, in every block or building where this consultation was undertaken, were **not** in favour, we will **not** be pursuing this potential upgrade any further for the time being. An anonymised breakdown of the results for each block is available on request.

Any residents wishing to connect to Sky Q can now do so, without the need for a satellite dish or upgrade to the existing communal systems, via a new service which was launched in October known as Skyglass. Further information is available directly from Sky.

### Cleaning at Mary Mitchell Close, Ringwood

We received a complaint from a resident about the standard of the cleaning in the communal areas recently, so took the opportunity to see what other residents at Mary Mitchell Close thought about it.

This survey indicated that 50% of residents thought that the cleaning could be better and helpfully highlighted a number of specific areas where residents would like to see improvements.

As a result, our Housing Officer, Sharon Doran will be meeting with the contractor, Approved Cleaning, to conduct a joint inspection and focus on the suggested areas for improvement. In the first instance they will look at the tasks currently being undertaken, how long these take and whether the time that the contractor spends on site could be used to better effect.

Sharon will let residents know the outcome of this inspection as well as the action being taken. She will also continue to monitor the standard of cleaning on her visits to Mary Mitchell Close.

### Broadway Mews, Poole – Grounds Maintenance Service

Again, following a complaint about the quality of the grounds maintenance service at Broadway Mews, we asked the nineteen households for their views. Of the ten who responded, the majority did not rate the service very highly and several indicated that they would be prepared to pay more for a better service.

As a result, Simon Raine, our Housing Services Manager, will be obtaining alternative quotes from other contractors based on the specification that has recently been developed for the Bournemouth 60+ blocks. A copy of the specification is available on request from the office.

Once the quotations are available we will contact the residents of Broadway Mews again to obtain their views as to how the majority would like us to proceed.

### Complaints and Anti-Social Behaviour Service Standards

Thank you for everyone who has responded and we will now start to analyse these and let you know the outcome and details of the standards we will adopt as soon as we can.



## Face-to-face meetings

We previously advised you that we had now re-instated face-to-face meetings with our housing team members but wanted to remind you that you will need to book an appointment for this.

When making an appointment we will continue to take Covid-19 government guidelines into account to ensure that everyone remains safe and are comfortable with the arrangements.

Appointments are normally held Monday to Friday, 9 am to 4 pm, but if you have a particular reason why you cannot commit to these timings, please let us know to see if alternative arrangements can be made.

## Site meetings with residents

We recently re-instated site meetings for our general family (18+) residents, on a trial basis, so that you could talk to us when we visited your scheme and we will continue to let you know when our housing team members will be visiting next.

We delayed doing this for our 60+ residents but now plan to re-instate these at those schemes in the New Year and we will let you know nearer the time when our housing staff will be available. This will mean that one or more members of staff will be available to talk to you on an individual basis during a specified time slot on a set day - it is not intended for these to be group meetings.

For our larger group meetings, where we can invite all residents at our 60+ sites to a meeting in the lounge (or other venue), we are also looking to hold these early in 2022. However, before we do this, we would ask that you let us know what sort of things you would like to raise in advance. This is so that we can circulate an agenda and also a 'questions and answers' sheet to all residents, in advance, in case you are unable to attend. Please let us know of any topics/items you would like to raise by the end of December by writing to us at the office or emailing [info@sandbourne.org.uk](mailto:info@sandbourne.org.uk).

## Stock Conditions Survey

During our visits to our general needs sites in August and September we noticed that some of our older blocks of flats in particular are likely to need investment in the years to come to ensure that they continue to provide good quality homes. With this in mind, we have recently commissioned The RUND Partnership, who are professional surveyors, to undertake stock conditions surveys at the following sites:

Broadway Lodge and Broadway Court in Poole and Broadway Gardens in Wimborne

We expect these surveys to be undertaken in December and January and will focus on the communal areas and external building fabric of each block. The surveyors will **not** need access to anyone's home, but if you see them on site we will have provided them with a letter of accreditation so that you will know who they are.

As part of the same programme we have also asked RUND to survey several of our older houses both internally and externally, and they will need access to these homes to complete the surveys. We will write to those residents individually with the time and dates for the appointments once they have been arranged and would thank you in advance for their co-operation in this.



## Customer Services

We asked you to tell us what was most important in terms of the service that you receive from Sandbourne and published the results in our last newsletter. You told us that you wanted us to:

- Answer 95% of telephone calls to the office within 6 rings
- Acknowledge corporate emails (*sent to: [info@sandbourne.org.uk](mailto:info@sandbourne.org.uk)*) or website contact forms within 24 hours or the next working day and normally reply within the next 10 working days
- Contact you within 24 hours or the next working day if you leave us a message
- Make an appointment time that suits you.

We have now put monitoring arrangements in place which will tell us (and you) how we are performing in relation to this. As a small organisation, these arrangements need quite a lot of staff time to manage and we need to make sure that this does not prevent anyone in the team from focusing on the most important job of providing the best service that they can for you, our customers.

With this in mind, in the future we may adopt a sampling approach to some aspects of the monitoring so, for example, selecting a week in each month when we will check with staff that everyone who has left us a message during that time has received a reply.

We expect to be able to let you know how we are performing from the beginning of next year and, when we do, will be clear about how we have monitored this. However, if you have any questions in the meantime, then please let us know.

## How are we doing with repairs?

Earlier in the year we asked residents what service standards they would like us to have for repairs. The options that had the most support, as published in our last newsletter, were:

- You can report repairs to us by telephone, letter, email or via our website
- We will ensure that our contractors keep appointments and notify you of any delays or changes to repairs that are needed
- We will ensure that contractors carry identification, complete works within the agreed timescale and tidy up after completing repairs
- We will let you know when we expect planned maintenance works to start and finish.

We think the best way for us to find out how we are performing against these new standards is by way of a survey. We are currently in discussion with our housing management systems provider so that every time you report a repair to us a short survey with six questions is sent to you in the post, which we would like you to complete and return to us once the repair has been completed. If we have not completed the repair on time, please let us know so that we can find out why.

We are hoping that if we have your email address then we can also let you have the survey in electronic form, which may be more convenient for some people.

We plan to begin sending these surveys to residents for repairs ordered from 4 January 2022 onwards. If you could take a few minutes to complete and return these for us that would be really helpful – thank you.

We will use the completed surveys to monitor how we and our contractors are performing and report this to you in future editions of *Sandbourne News*.

## Repairs being delayed due to shortage of parts

We have all heard in the news about general shortages of goods in the shops and we've also told you in recent editions of the newsletter about problems getting parts for repairs to things like our lifts etc.

Sadly, we now have to report an ever increasing number of difficulties and delays in our contractors being able to complete works on time which is being caused, in the main, by them not being able to source the necessary parts and materials.

We work very closely with our contractors to try and get repairs, particularly emergency ones, completed as quickly as possible. However, we need to ask for your patience and understanding if we are unable to do this if problems are encountered in sourcing the parts needed.

However, please continue to let the office know if you have an outstanding repair and haven't received an update from either our contractors or us within a reasonable timescale.



## Keeping doors closed ...

Although we usually write about not wedging doors open in the summer for security reasons, we need to ask you again about this but this time for the rest of the year.

In line with fire safety, it is really important that fire doors are not wedged open (or left open) or interfered with in any way as this could compromise the safety of the building in the event of a fire. Similarly, lifts should not be wedged or propped open.



In addition, now that the winter is nearly upon us and the nights are drawing in, it is important to keep your flats/house doors closed for security reasons. When living in a block of flats, this is also a good idea to prevent cooking odours wafting around the block (what you may like to cook may not be your neighbour's favourite smell) or smoke drifting around the corridors if you are a smoker.

We would, however, still encourage residents to open their windows and let fresh air in to avoid condensation and in line with current Covid-19 government guidance.

## Keys and Combinations Really Matter

We recently received a call from a resident at one of our 60+ sites who was concerned about the health of a neighbour. They told us that their neighbour's relatives had been to the flat, but could not get in and so had gone away. The resident asked us if they could have the master key so that they could check on their neighbour, which we could not do for the reasons given below.

This was then further complicated by the fact that the neighbour had not given us up-to-date contact information for their relatives/next-of-kin, and we had to call Careline who, fortunately, had an alternative telephone number for us to try and we managed to get through to the relative. The relative was very worried but had not been able to open the key safe as they were not sure about the combination.

One of our team did attend the site with the relative and our contactors and were able to use a master key on this occasion, which meant they were able to enter the flat where they found the resident was unwell and the emergency services attended as a result.

As advised in previous newsletters, although some of the 60+ flats still have locks that operate with a master Sandbourne key, not all do and we will never give residents or their relatives access to the master key under any circumstances without a member of Sandbourne's Team being present. All our 60+ flats now have their own individual key safes. These are fitted by the front door and this is where residents should keep a spare key with the option to change the combination so that only they or someone that they nominate knows this.

We thought it was important to let everyone know what had happened to prevent a similar situation in the future. In this instance, valuable time was lost in getting help to the resident as the information they had provided was out-of-date.

### Please remember:

- that Sandbourne cannot access all flats with a master key
- to give a relative or friend a spare key to your home, or
- that all flats have an individual key safe so please make sure:
  - you have a spare front door key in your key safe
  - you know the combination of the key safe
  - you make sure that you have told a friend or relative, and Careline, the combination
- to provide Sandbourne and Careline (if you receive this service) with contact details for the person(s) to be contacted in the event of an emergency. Also, that you immediately tell us all if these change
- if you are concerned about a neighbour outside of normal office hours, please contact Careline on 01202 392322.



## A bit about Christmas security ...

Please stay safe, especially over the Christmas and New Year break, and remember it's not just about the new age electronic scammers, there are other fraudsters out there as well, so:

- don't leave your windows or doors open or unlocked
- don't let anyone into your home if you are not expecting them or don't know them
- always ask callers to your home for ID
- don't allow anyone to tailgate you into a block of flats
- don't leave presents under your Christmas tree in full sight of passers-by in the street
- don't buy dodgy Christmas decorations - make sure that they are good quality and in good working order, kept away from open flames, and check that your lights have the appropriate safety symbols on them.



Why not take a look at our leaflet on 'Safety in the Home' for more tips and advice! This is available on our website or on request from the office.



## Security in block of flats

Late on a Friday afternoon in November, we received a report from a relative of one of our 60+ residents in Bournemouth who was extremely concerned about a possible rough sleeper having gained access to one of our blocks of flats and setting up home under a rear stairwell and compromising security.

Sandbourne immediately contacted the Police but they were actually reluctant to get involved.

The items in the picture below were removed by one of our contractors and we advised Careline in case there were any problems outside of office hours. We were not contacted further about the belongings or with reports of anyone trying to find the removed items.

This really just strengthens everything that we have asked of our residents:

1. Please always ensure that you close entrance doors behind you when entering or leaving a block.
2. If there is a back entrance to the block that you are using, never leave this unlocked and never leave it open.
3. Don't wedge doors open.
4. Don't let anyone into the block; if someone has a genuine reason to gain access, and they have a right to do this, they will know how to get in.
5. Don't let anyone tailgate into the block behind you. Just politely explain that you are unable to help them and for them to use the door entry system panel to contact the appropriate person.
6. If you do see anything suspicious, contact the Police.



## Keeping warm and healthy this winter

This is advice that we add to our Winter newsletter each year as a reminder and following 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, are 65 or over or are a registered carer, 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 suggest 18° 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 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.
- 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.

Finally, please remember to follow the latest Covid-19 government guidelines, as appropriate.

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

*For the last couple of years, we've published an article on behalf of the Dorset Community Foundation and their campaign continues ...*



They ask that, if you do not need your winter fuel allowance, you consider donating it to help save lives in Dorset.

Dorset Community Foundation is a local charity who work with people like the local Citizens Advice Bureau to recycle unwanted winter fuel allowances and disperse them in the form of winter fuel grants to local Dorset people in need.

**To Donate:** Online at [www.dorsetcommunityfoundation.org](http://www.dorsetcommunityfoundation.org) or send a cheque made out to 'Dorset Community Foundation' to: DCF, The Spire, High Street, Poole, BH15 1DF, or ring 01202 670815.

### If you need help

Surviving Winter grants are available along with additional help around fuel poverty. Contact Citizens Advice on 01929 775500 or ring the Dorset Community Foundation on 01202 670815.

## Power gone off?

**Before ringing the office, have you checked with your neighbours to see if they have power or not? We won't know about power cuts to any of our properties until someone has reported it to us.**

You could also check with your energy provider, for example, the [www.sse.co.uk](http://www.sse.co.uk) website to see if it is an area fault. Their website gives regular updates if you ring 105. For electric emergencies they say to ring 0800 072 7282 and for gas to ring 0800 111 999. There are lots of energy suppliers who provide this information on their website.

Remember landlines may not work during power cuts.

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

**We keep hearing about arctic weather coming our way and this is the question that landlords are faced with each year and so we will repeat previous years' Winter newsletter articles:**

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 – this could cause 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 advice, 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.



## Christmas Treecycling returns!

**Diverse Abilities website says that, in exchange for collecting your tree, they ask for a £10 donation.**

They and their volunteers will come and collect your Christmas tree and dispose of it responsibly over the 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> January 2022 but, due to popular demand, they advise you book early to avoid disappointment. You can do this on-line at [treecycling@diverseabilities.org.uk](mailto:treecycling@diverseabilities.org.uk) or by ringing 01202 711507.

## 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.

### Activities Committee

**Many residents at Stourwood Avenue, Bournemouth, will be aware that earlier in the year a number of residents decided to set up an Activities Committee to organise and run events in the Woodlands lounge for the benefit of everyone living at that scheme and those residents at our Belle Vue site.**

We thought this was commendable and were keen initially to support it. However, we know, from many years of experience, that to be successful such groups must first have the support of the majority of residents. It is essential everyone should be very clear about both the remit of any committee, and the role that they have in using the communal facilities that everyone pays for through their service charge.

We offered to work with what effectively became a self-appointed unelected group to develop terms of reference and would have been happy to co-ordinate the wider consultation with residents at Stourwood Avenue and Belle Vue, to see if the majority were in support. However, this offer was not accepted and the committee subsequently disbanded following opposition from other residents.

This was a sad but inevitable conclusion, and one that we would like very much to give everyone the opportunity to move on from. With this in mind we are enclosing a short questionnaire for both our Stourwood Avenue and Belle Vue residents to complete and return.

Once we receive those responses, we will be able to establish if there is an appetite for an Activities Committee; how we can work with residents to set this up so that it is formally recognised by all; and who would be interested in being part of any such Committee.

We hope you will take the time to complete the questionnaire and look forward to working with residents, hopefully early next year, to achieve what the majority want.

### Use of communal lounges in Bournemouth

**We currently have communal lounges that residents are able to book out for events, at no charge. These are located at Craigleith in Derby Road, and Woodlands in Stourwood Avenue, both in Bournemouth.**

All bookings have to come through the Poole office to ensure that we don't have more than one group of people expecting to use them at the same time.

However, there are a few conditions:

- Only Sandbourne residents can make a booking.
- Use cannot be exclusive as all residents have the right to use the lounges.
- If you are serving food or refreshments, you have to comply with our food safety and hygiene policies and procedures, copies which will be sent to you when we confirm your booking.
- There is no parking available for any family or friends attending events.

In addition, if you wish to hold an event, we are happy for you to display notices within the blocks on the noticeboards and we can advertise them on the TV screens. However, you should **not** advertise the event externally, ie in a shop window etc, as events are only for our residents and their families and friends to attend.

For further information and other conditions, please see our leaflet on 'Guest Rooms and Communal Lounge Bookings', obtainable from the office, our website or from our lounges.



### Milne Court Guest Room

We are aware that this guest room needs to be refurbished, in line with the guest room at Woodlands. However, at the moment, it is felt that it is more important to utilise funds on essential works to flats and communal areas. As soon as adequate funds are available, we will look at this again but still feel the room offers good value for money.

## Your top five grievances

**Living together and sharing communal areas/space can be difficult irrespective of whether you live on a private road, housing estate, a housing association property or block of flats. We all share some form of space or services with other people and have our frustrations to deal with wherever we live.**

It is interesting, that five years ago we wrote about this in a newsletter and the top frustrations haven't changed in that time.

### 1. Car parking

We would continue to remind residents that car parking, particularly where provided at our 60+ blocks of flats, is for the use of residents and **not** for their families, friends or carers, etc, and is not a right or guaranteed. It is also **not** provided for visitors using the guest rooms or attending events in the lounges. A few 18+ blocks of flats do have limited allocated and visitor spaces.

Contractors can enter the car parks to unload their vans, and families/friends can drop off residents, but they must then park on the road.

If you have a vehicle which you no longer drive, please do not abandon it on site and arrange for its removal to free up space for other residents and avoid parking more than one car on site.

Please also see our leaflet on 'Parking'.



### 2. Rubbish

- **Bins not being emptied or bins** - Where there are communal bins and they have not been emptied, Sandbourne can report it to the council if we've been advised. This cannot be done until the day after the missed collection but must be reported within 48 hours. The council's response is usually that they will return within five working days to empty them.
- **Broken bins** - If you have communal wheelie bins and one, for example, has a broken wheel or lid, we can report this to the council but we know, from experience, that this can take a month or more for them to replace or repair it.
- **Dumping of unwanted items** - Household items continue to be 'dumped' by the bins. The council will not take these away and if we can't find out who they belong to, we have to arrange for their disposal and the costs get added to the service charges for that block.

It is always worth contacting the local authority to see how much they will charge for collecting bulky household items as they are always cheaper than if we have to arrange for our contractors to do this.



### 3. Dogs fouling

It's nowhere near as bad as it used to be in "the old days" when dog owners didn't have to pick up dog mess and it was left on the pavements to be trodden into our homes. However, in a way, when dogs do mess and it isn't picked up, it is all the more annoying.

Dog owners are advised that they must not to let their dogs foul in our grounds and to take them off site to toilet them and hopefully the majority of owners do this. However, we still get complaints and it is not always possible to establish if it was actually a resident's dog that has fouled in the grounds.

We even get complaints of dogs fouling in the communal areas of blocks of flats and lifts. This is obviously unacceptable and we will do our best to track down the dog's owner as they must immediately clear this up. If you let us know we will ask our cleaners to check and disinfect the area as soon as they can, but this cost will be added to the cleaning costs for that block if the dog's owner can't be identified.

Please also see our leaflet on 'Pets (Living with Pets in a Sandbourne Property)'.

### 4. Residents feeding the wildlife and birds

Despite reminding residents not to feed the birds and other wildlife, and writing to known offenders because of it encouraging vermin, it still continues. Food should **not** be put down in the communal grounds for birds etc.



### 5. Inconsiderate or noisy neighbours

If noise is a one-off, for example, a birthday celebration, that would be deemed acceptable. However, if you have neighbours who regularly make noise and disturb you at all hours of the night or day, please contact us. We will need you to complete a log of when this happens so that we can investigate matters and write to the person(s) concerned, if necessary.

Please also see our leaflets on 'Acting Reasonably' and 'Anti-Social Behaviour'.



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**Just for fun -  
your Word Search**

**Your words to find:**

- Winter
- Snow
- Icicles
- Christmas
- Star
- Trees
- Turkey
- Sprouts
- Chocolates
- Celebrations
- Family
- Children
- Hope
- Peace
- Joy



**Don't forget that you can use the form below to:**

- Give us feedback on or suggestions for this newsletter. Perhaps there's something you'd like to see that we're not currently covering.
- Give us feedback on or suggestions for any other issues relating to Sandbourne and/or its services.
- Tell us if you've changed your contact details, eg your mobile phone number, email address or if you've no longer got a landline.
- Tell us that we keep spelling your name wrong.



**FEEDBACK/SUGGESTIONS/CONTACT DETAILS FORM**

If you would like to give us some feedback on either this newsletter or any other matter relating to your tenancy/lease, make a suggestion, or let us know your new telephone number, please just return this slip to us.

|                                       |  |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Name:                                 |  |
| 1 <sup>st</sup> Line of your address: |  |

Feedback/suggestions/change of contact details (eg telephone number):

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| Signed: |  | Date: |  |
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## Sandbourne News ...

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

### Sandbourne registered office:

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

**Telephone:** 01202 671222

When calling you will:

- hear a short pre-recorded message before being connected to one of the team (when ringing during office hours) advising that calls may be recorded for information and training purposes
- be able to leave a message on the answer phone, 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)
- be able to leave a message on the answer phone outside of office hours (which will be dealt with the next working day).

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

**Email:** [info@sandbourne.org.uk](mailto:info@sandbourne.org.uk)

**Repairs:** [repairs@sandbourne.org.uk](mailto:repairs@sandbourne.org.uk)

**Website:** [www.sandbournehousingassociation.org.uk](http://www.sandbournehousingassociation.org.uk)

**Office opening times:** Normally **9 am to 4 pm**, 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.

**(Face-to-face meetings are only available by appointment)**

### Out-of-hours emergency repairs

For genuine out-of-hours emergency repairs, Careline's number is: **01202 392322**.

All non-emergency repairs should be reported to the office during normal office hours by:

- ringing 01202 671222 (messages can be left on the answerphone when we're closed);
- emailing [repairs@sandbourne.org.uk](mailto:repairs@sandbourne.org.uk); or
- using the contact form on our website: [www.sandbournehousingassociation.org.uk](http://www.sandbournehousingassociation.org.uk)).

**All articles are correct at the time of publishing (December 2021)**

**Copies of this newsletter are available, on request, in large print, and can also be downloaded from our website: [www.sandbournehousingassociation.org.uk](http://www.sandbournehousingassociation.org.uk)**

**or by scanning this QR code opposite to take you to our Information & Downloads page.**

