

Welcome to the Spring 2025 Newsletter

We hope that you enjoy this new Newsletter which is full of information and advice we think you will find useful. From what to do if your mobile phone is lost or stolen (I learnt something new here) to a warning about air fryers, and why contents insurance for your home is important, we have covered a vast range of subjects in this edition of the Newsletter, so there should be something for everyone.

Please take particular time to read the articles on health and safety, which are very important. We take your safety and the safety of your property very seriously and it makes our task much easier when we are able to work with you to carry out all the safety checks that are required. Thank you for your co-operation.

Thank you too to all those who have already allowed Ridge and Partners access to their home to carry out a stock condition survey. The information gathered from these surveys will help us to understand the current state of all of Sandbourne's properties and plan works for the next few years. If you have not yet had a visit from Ridge, then please look out for text messages from them and book an appointment in the near future if you can. The more information we have, the better we can plan for the future.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to welcome Susan and Alex to Sandbourne's team and hope that they enjoy working with us. I would also like to wish Molly all the best as she prepares to become a mother in the next few weeks and we look forward to welcoming her back into the Sandbourne fold in 2026.

As usual, if you have any questions or comments about this Newsletter, then please contact us in the office. We love to hear from you.

Best wishes
Fiona Ferenczy
Chief Executive



The Sandbourne Team

Fiona Ferenczy - Chief Executive

David Hall - Head of Housing

Colette Robson - Housing Officer

Molly Witherington - Housing Officer

Alex Spence - Housing Officer

Brian Griffiths - Maintenance Manager

Chris Wilce - Maintenance Manager

Katy Ferenczy-Dakin - Finance & Admin Officer

Sharon Doran - Housing Admin Assistant

Susan Poulton - Admin Assistant

Contacting Sandbourne

The only office telephone number is:

01202 671 222

(9am to 4pm, Monday to Friday)

All correspondence should be addressed to:

Sandbourne Housing Association,

Craikleith First Floor Office, 9 Derby Road, Bournemouth, BH1 3PX

Email: info@sandbourne.org.uk

Repairs: repairs@sandbourne.org.uk

Website: www.sandbournehousingassociation.org.uk

Out-of-Office hours emergencies only:

01202 392 322

Careline (Bournemouth)

The Careline number for our residents to use is:

01202 392 322

Rented 60+ and extra care (Craikleith) 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-chord.

Rented 18+ and 60+ without 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' e.g. a fire/flood or an essential repair affecting the communal areas or the structure of the building.

Out-of-Office Emergency Repairs

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 392 322](tel:01202392322). If you can't lay your hands on this number when we are closed, you can always ring the office number 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 working hours. You can ring us on 01202 671 222 (voicemail messages can be left when we are closed), email repairs@sandbourne.org.uk, or use the repairs contact form on our website www.sandbournehousingassociation.org.uk.

Please note that by ringing Careline during normal 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.

Office Holiday Closures

The Sandbourne office will be closed on the following dates:

Friday 18th April

Good Friday

Monday 21st April

Easter Monday

Monday 5th May

May Day Bank Holiday

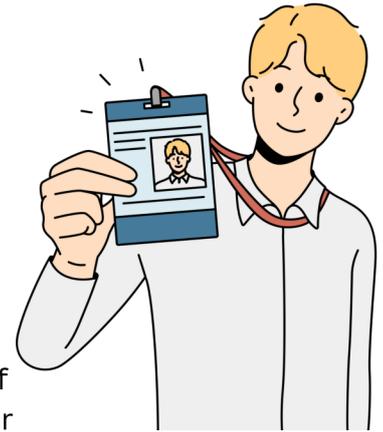
Monday 26th May

Spring Bank Holiday



Asking for ID

Whether we are undertaking repairs that you have reported to us or carrying out surveys to your home, block of flats or estate, we would remind you of the importance of always asking for ID if someone calls at your



door and says that they are from Sandbourne or that they are one of our contractors calling on Sandbourne's behalf.

All of our staff have ID that they will be happy to show you when attending or inspecting your property. It is also common practice for tradespeople to carry ID, so any contractors calling on you should not be surprised that you are asking to see it.

Please keep safe and apply this to anyone who calls at your home if you do not know them.

Complaints and Service Development 2023/24

As we have explained previously, last year the Housing Ombudsman Service reviewed their 'Complaint Handling Code' which applies to all registered housing associations and local authorities setting out what is expected of landlords in their handling and management of complaints.

This led directly to revisions of our Complaints and Compliments Policy together with several related changes to the way in which we manage and report on complaints.

One of the requirements of the revised Code is that housing providers are now required to publish an annual Complaints and Service Development Report setting out the number and nature of the complaints received, how quickly these have been responded to and any changes that the landlord has made to the way they work because of managing these.

We published our first Complaints and Service Development Report in November last year covering the period 1st October 2023 - 31st September 2024, which is available on our website at <https://sandbournehousingassociation.org.uk/pub/annual-complaints-performance-and-service-improvement-2023-24.pdf?=&1739366189>.

Should you not have access to the internet, but would like a copy of the report, please contact us in the usual way.

Welcome and Goodbye (for now!)

The sharp-eyed amongst you may have noticed in the Winter 2024 edition of Sandbourne News, we mentioned that Susan Poulton joined us at the end of last year as our part time Administrative Assistant.

Susan works weekday mornings between 9.00am and 1.00pm, and by now we are sure that many of you will have spoken to Susan, who we think is always cheerful and helpful to everyone that she speaks to. It is always good to be able to put a name to a face, so we would like to introduce Susan to you now.



In addition to Susan joining us, many of our general needs residents and those living in Ringwood will have noticed in the last few months, our Housing Officer Molly Witherington is pregnant and will shortly be going on maternity leave.

We have recently appointed Alex Spence to a maternity cover role, and hope that Alex will be able to spend some time with Molly to become familiar with the role and the homes that she will be looking after in Molly's absence.

We wish Molly all the best as she becomes a Mum for the first time, and Alex as she joins us and steps into Molly's shoes. We are sure that many of you will meet Alex over the next few months but if you would like to speak to her please phone the office on the usual number or drop her an email at info@sandbourne.org.uk.

Fire Doors - there for your safety!

Fire doors are a legal requirement in flats, and communal areas, and are provided for your safety.

At some of our site (those specifically for people ages 60+) fire doors in the communal areas can remain open, as they are connected directly to the fire alarm and will close automatically if the fire alarm is activated. Residents at these sites have been made aware if this applies to their homes.

However, if you live in one of our 'general needs' blocks or at a 60+ site without such a connection there are some simple but important rules to follow:

- Fire doors must be kept **closed at all times**, and **never** wedged open.
- Fire doors and the self-closing devices that are attached to them must never be tampered with
- If you see a problem or defect with a fire door, please report this to us immediately.

To comply with Fire Safety Regulations (2022), Sandbourne will continue to inspect fire doors in communal areas every 3 months and will need access to the homes of those living in flats once a year to undertake an inspection of the fire door(s).

Sadly, we continue to receive reports of fire doors being wedged open in common areas. If you see a door that is like this, please remove any wedge that is there - for your own safety and that of your neighbours.



Fire safety is everyone's responsibility, please follow these simple rules to help keep everyone safe.

Beware of Disrepair

You may recall last year we featured an article in Sandbourne News where a resident had called us and said that she had been contacted by the “Social Housing Disrepair Team” and asking if this was connected to or part of Sandbourne in any way.

We explained they are not linked to us in any way.

Sadly, since then we have had a number of calls and emails from residents telling us they have also had contact from individuals either claiming to represent us or encouraging them to make a disrepair claim.

There continues to be widespread coverage of the failure of a minority of housing associations and local authorities to undertake repairs to their homes. Some disreputable companies have seen this as an opportunity to make money for themselves, by encouraging residents, with their help to make a claim for disrepair, and then keeping the majority of any compensation that is awarded to the tenant for themselves.

Whilst we know that we are not perfect, we also know, because they tell us that the vast majority of our residents are very satisfied with our repairs service. Sadly, this does not stop these disreputable companies making speculative calls.

Please remember that if you want to report a repair, or want to know how a repair that you have previously reported to us is progressing, then just give the office a call or email us at repairs@sandbourne.org.uk

Stock Condition Survey - Progress report

You may remember that last year we commissioned Ridge and Partners to undertake a 100% condition survey of each of our 426 rented homes. The purpose of the survey is to establish how well our homes are maintained and when complete to help us decide on our future investment priorities.

Ridge began the surveys on 16th December and have until the end of March to complete the project. Progress so far has been good, and at the time of preparing this article 313 or 73% of the surveys have been completed.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their assistance and co-operation in allowing the Ridge surveyors access to their homes, which we appreciate very much.

Whilst the full results will not be available until all the surveys have been completed the early indications are generally positive, with only one serious risk identified, which was rectified immediately that it was brought to our attention.

For those who have not yet received a visit from Ridge and Partners, when you receive their appointment, text or calling card, if you can contact them and arrange a mutually convenient appointment for their visit, that would be very helpful.

We will let you have more information when the full results of the surveys are available.



Fraud - What to Look out For

Recently a representative of HSBC Bank visited Craighleith and passed on some useful tips to residents about how to protect themselves from fraud and scams. We thought it was worth sharing this advice with everyone, so here is a summary of the tricks and tips that they suggested that are worth following:

Stop

If someone contacts you unexpectedly and claims to be from a trusted organisation, be suspicious. Take a moment to stop and think before sharing personal or financial information.

Challenge

Could it be fake? It is OK to reject, refuse, or ignore any requests or simply say no. Only fraudsters will put you under pressure to act urgently.

Protect

Don't click on unfamiliar links or call numbers from text messages or emails. Instead, check they are genuine by going to the official website. Fraudsters may appear genuine, but their actions and requests are not.

It is important to remember that financial organisations will never ask you:

- For your PIN or full password, even by tapping these into your phone keypad.
- For any codes that you generate, or the organisation send you by any method for the access to or operation of your account including your secure key, card reader or sent to you by text or email.
- To move money to any other account.
- To withdraw money to hand over for safekeeping, checking or investigation of crime.
- To hand over cash, your PIN, cards, or cheque book to a courier at your home, even if you are a victim of fraud.
- To pay for goods or gift cards using your card and then hand them over for safekeeping.

Fraud - How can I protect myself

Always question uninvited approaches

Instead, contact the company directly using an email or phone number that you can check is genuine.

Don't share personal information

Never reveal your password or share your card details over email. Be careful with the level of detail shared on social media sites and check your privacy settings.

Never mislead a bank about the purpose of a payment

Criminals will often try to persuade you to tell the bank that the payment is for something different to what they have told you it is for. They may say that it will go through smoother, or that the bank may stop the payment otherwise. This is a clear sign of fraud.



Stay safe online

Always update your computer, tablet, and smartphone operating systems as soon as they become available and install anti-virus software.

Shop safe online

If you are buying something online and don't know the seller, never pay by bank transfer. Always use a credit card, debit card, or PayPal - or a payment option that offers some protection against fraud.

Register for voice ID

Most banks and financial institutions now offer voice recognition as part of their telephone banking service. This makes it easier to access your account through telephone banking and there is no need to use a security number.

Update your passwords

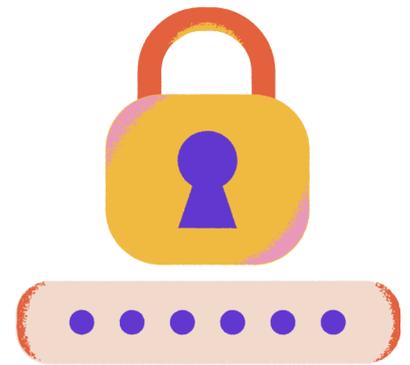
Try to change your passwords at least twice a year. Do not use a password that can be easily guessed and make sure that your Online Banking password is not the same one that you use for other websites.

Check bank statements regularly

If there are any transactions that you do not recognise, always contact your bank.

Shred important documents

Shred any paperwork that reveals personal information, such as bank statements, card details, and other sensitive data.



Sorry you are leaving...but please let us know promptly if you are

This is a quick reminder that the terms of our tenancy agreement require that if you are leaving a Sandbourne home, you need to give us four clear weeks (or a month's notice) of your intention to do so.



Sadly, on occasion some of our older residents in particular decide that they may need more personal help or support than we can provide, or pass away, so if you have a family member or friend who is helping you to find more suitable accommodation or is looking after your affairs, please remind them of this.

We have a termination of tenancy form that needs to be completed and returned to us promptly, to avoid being charged rent after you have left your Sandbourne home. This is available by phoning the office, dropping an email to info@sandbourne.org.uk or can be downloaded from our website at <https://sandbournehousingassociation.org.uk/pub/moving-on-ending-a-tenancy.pdf> =179366189.

Policy updates and consultations



In the last edition of Sandbourne News, we invited comments and observations on the following new or reviewed policies:

- Good Neighbourhood Management (new)
- Damp and Mould (new)
- Hate Crime (new)
- Asbestos Management (reviewed)

These were all subsequently approved by the Board when they met in January and are now available either on request or on our website.

Also in January, the Board considered the following draft policies:

- Anti-Social Behaviour (reviewed)
- CCTV and Drones (new)
- Compensation (reviewed)
- Planned/Cyclical Maintenance and service contracts (reviewed)
- Smoking and Vaping (reviewed)

The Board has requested that we consult with residents on these draft policies, so if you would like a copy of one or all of these, please contact us in the usual way.

Nuisance birds and their protection

Our usual reminder that the birds will soon be nesting and may become a nuisance, but they are protected, so we are limited with what we can do.

For this reason, we would again ask that you don't encourage the birds by feeding them, particularly near to our blocks of flats. They can make a significant mess, which can damage cars etc, and the food can also encourage vermin.

The government website says that "All wild bird species, their eggs and nests are protected by law. You must always try to avoid harming birds or use measures which do not kill or injure them, before considering taking harmful action".

We cannot therefore remove nests that are being built, and need to avoid trimming or cutting trees, bushes, hedges, and rough vegetation during the nesting season.



Sandbourne will always take seriously your concerns about nuisance birds, but any action taken will have to be in line with the current lengthy government legislation.

Safeguarding/Protection from abuse

If you feel that you are being abused or suspect that another resident is being abused (physical, emotional, sexual, sensory deprivation, neglect, imposed isolation, financial/material, discriminatory), you can contact us for more information about what to do or for a leaflet.

Please note that some new types of abuse have now been added to these examples - forced marriage, modern slavery, self-neglect, exploitation or radicalisation, sexual exploitation, internet/cyber-bullying.

Alternatively, you can contact the relevant safeguarding team for your local authority area:

Bournemouth or Poole : 01202 123456

Ringwood: 0300 5551386

Dorset: 01305 221016

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

We take safety seriously - do you?

We hope that you know from previous Sandbourne News articles that we take your safety very seriously. This can be seen when you have contact with us and our contractors and what you should see where you live.

As well as the checks that we are required to do by law, such as the annual servicing of gas boilers, there are a range of other things where regulation or good practice mean that we may need access to your home to complete these. These include, for example, unvented hot water cylinders, Careline call equipment, and 5-yearly electrical safety inspections.

We will write to you in advance to let you know that our contractors will be contacting you to make an appointment, and they will always do their best to make a time and a date that is convenient to you.

Most residents understand the importance of these checks and are happy to make and keep the appointments with our contractors. However, a minority fail to respond, and in doing so potentially put their safety and others at risk.

If you receive contact from us or one of our contractors, it is really important that you respond, make an appointment that suits you and allow the contractor access to your home when they call.

Because we take safety seriously, if you repeatedly fail to respond, we will consider legal action under the tenancy by way of an injunction from the County Court to require access to your home. This means we will incur legal costs that will then be recharged to you.

Please help us keep you and your neighbours safe and ensure that you contact us, or our contractors, if asked to make an appointment for a safety check or inspection.



Air fryers - A word of warning



Air fryers have become increasingly popular in recent years as a quicker and cheaper alternative to conventional cookers, and many of us now have them in our homes. However, we recently came across a warning from Dorset Fire and Rescue that we thought was worth making you aware of.

Multiple fire appliances attended a fire in a block of flats where a resident had followed a 'tip' that they had seen on the internet by filling it with soap and water and setting it to steam. This resulted in a fire that led to severe damage to the flat and the evacuation of 50 people from their homes.

So, the simple lesson, is to not believe everything you read on the internet, and if you own an air fryer, always clean it in accordance with the manufacturer's instruction, to always keep yourself and your neighbours safe.

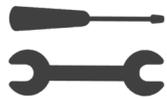
What are you entitled to?

The UK's benefits system can be very complicated, and we know it can feel overwhelming for people using it for the first time or needing to understand the implications of a change.

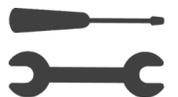


The EntitledTo website (www.entitledto.co.uk) has a reliable, independent online benefits calculator which can help you check what benefits you are entitled to.

To find out what you might be able to claim, enter your details and you will receive an estimate of your entitlement to benefits. You will need information about your income, savings, pension, and existing benefits to hand. If you have a partner, you will need the information about their financial situation too.



Repairs Satisfaction Surveys - the return



At our annual Resident's Day last November, a couple of our particularly observant residents pointed out that for some time they had not been receiving the usual Repairs Satisfaction Survey when a job that they had reported had been completed.

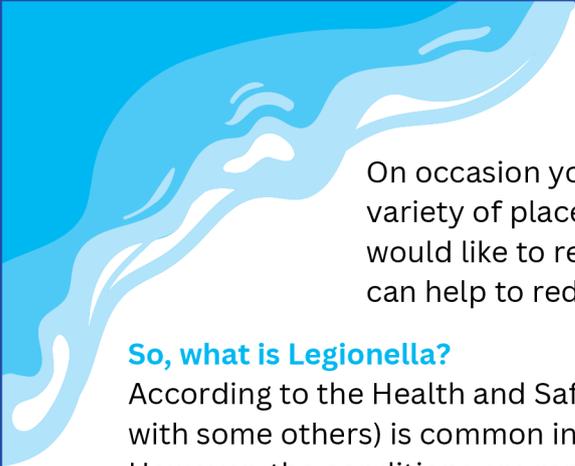
As you know, we were particularly busy towards the end of last year with our office move and a number of staff changes, and being honest, unfortunately the Repairs Satisfaction surveys had rather 'fallen off our radar'.

We put that right in December and have been collecting the information again since then. Our apologies for the temporary 'blip' and continuing thanks to everyone who takes the time to complete and return the surveys, which are very helpful to us.

We are now able to give an update as to how we and our contractors have performed over the last 3 months. In the period 241 surveys were sent out and 82 (34%) returned. Outcomes from the returned surveys were:

Standard	Yes	No	%
Were you contacted by our contractor within three working days of you reporting the repair to arrange an appointment?	76	6	93
Did the contractor keep the appointment?	78	4	95
Was it necessary to change either the date or time of the appointment?	2	80	2.5
Did the contractor provide identification when they visited?	52	30	63
Did the contractor tidy up when they had finished the job?	82	1	99

We are keen to know your experience of our repairs service, so when you receive one of our surveys when a job has been completed, please take a few minutes to complete it and post it back to us in the pre-paid envelope provided. Our thanks for your help with this.



Legionella - Being water safe

On occasion you will have seen press reports of Legionella outbreaks in a variety of places such as offices, factories and sometimes in homes. We would like to remind everyone of both what Sandbourne does and how you can help to reduce the possibility of this happening in your home.

So, what is Legionella?

According to the Health and Safety Executive's (HSE) website, the Legionella bacteria (along with some others) is common in natural water sources such as rivers, lakes and reservoirs. However, the conditions are rarely right for people to catch the bacteria from these sources.

The bacteria may also be found in purpose-built water systems, including hot and cold water systems and spa pools etc. In this environment, where water may not be stored at the correct temperature, the risks of this bacteria growing are higher. This is normally in places where the bacteria can grow, for example where there is rust, sludge, scale, or stagnant water, and where water is being stored in parts of a system between 20-45 degrees Celcius.

The Legionella bacteria can develop into Legionnaires disease, which can, in severe cases, result in a fatal form of pneumonia.

How do you catch it?

Legionnaires disease is contracted by inhaling small droplets of water (aerosols), suspended in the air, containing the bacteria.

What can you do to prevent this?

You need to reduce the risk, which is quite small, of the Legionella bacteria being able to grow in your home and the following are some examples of what is advised:

- If you move into a new home which hasn't been occupied for a while, it is always a good idea to run bath and sink taps (hot and cold) for five minutes to flush the water (and possible bacteria) through. You should do this for your shower as well.
- If you've been away on holiday for a week or more, it's a good idea to flush your water system through, starting at the top of the house (where applicable): flush and sink taps (kitchen taps as well) for a couple of minutes. You should also do this for your shower.
- It's a good idea to remove the shower head and clean/disinfect/descalc your shower head every three to four months. Please note that shower heads are your responsibility and we will not clean or replace these for you.

What else might be affected?

Whirlpool baths, garden hoses, humidifiers, and any other water where it is allowed to rest and become stagnant.

What if I live in a block of flats?

Sandbourne has risk assessments and procedures in place to test all communal water supplies on a regular basis. This includes communal kitchens, communal toilets/sinks, and guest room showers etc. We will also pre-set water temperatures, and these are checked every month. We also test flats that are at the end of a water supply run. In addition, at developments that have communal water tanks, these are cleaned and disinfected each year.

Want to know more?

You can find a copy of our leaflet on Legionella on our website or can contact us for a copy or if you have any queries.

Free grants to boost your income

If you are struggling on a low income, there's more help available than you may think. Charities, the Government, and even companies often have funds which are available to help, especially if you have children.

What is a grant?

A grant is money, or a voucher, which contributes towards the cost of you buying something. Although it may not cover the full cost, it's almost always completely free. Hundreds of small charities give grants to individuals, from one-off sums to help with things such as furniture, decorating, clothing, or ways to improve quality of life (such as holidays or training) to regular amounts to help cover bills and household expenses.

The grants usually depend on an individual's circumstances, possibly any illnesses they have or their nationality, occupation, age, or income.

Places you can quickly search what you might be eligible for:

- Charity-run website <https://www.turn2us.org.uk/> has an easy-to-use grant search which tells you how to contact any suitable charities directly, or you can register for a free account to send online enquiries and applications to charities through the site.
- Newer platform <https://www.lightningreach.org/> lets you know what grants you might be eligible for, and helps you apply. It will also point you in the direction of other financial support, such as benefits, you might qualify for too.
- If you prefer to search offline, your local library is another great place to start. Ask whether it has a copy of the 'Directory of Grant Making Trusts', which lists charities offering grants, along with the criteria to apply, and their contact information.

Both Government and hundreds of small charities offer grants for all kinds of help for individuals on a low income. Some are open to all, while others are only available to certain groups of people.

Local authority support

Each local authority is responsible for providing help to its residents struggling with an emergency, such as you or your families' health being at risk, not being able to afford to buy food, needing help to stay in your own home and coming out of care, hospital, or prison.

Each authority can choose whether to offer financial help or not and who is eligible. For example, some may give furniture or food grants while others may give cash. Contact your local council to find out its procedure.

Budgeting loans and advantages for those on benefits

This is a government scheme providing interest-free loans to those on certain income-based benefits if you need essential items for your home or other things that you cannot pay for in a lump sum, such as clothes and furnishings.

Apply for one at the Jobcentre or via the form on Gov.uk. If you have means to get money any other way (using savings, for examples), you will not qualify.



Water

Water UK's website has information on all the water company schemes. Help from all providers includes WaterSure (see below), referrals to hardship funds and help in applying for direct payments from benefits (Water Direct).

If you're on a meter and a means-tested benefit, and either have three or more children under 19, or someone with a medical condition needing lots of water living with you, you could get help from the WaterSure scheme which caps your bills at the average for your area. More information on this is available from your local Citizens Advice Service.

Energy

We featured an article about the British Gas Trust in the last edition of Sandbourne News, but all the main energy suppliers help those in debt or struggling with their bills. Contact us if you would like further information.

Help buying white goods

Some charities give grants for white goods - large household items such as cookers and fridges - to families in financial hardship, though you may need to meet other eligibility criteria, too.

Turn2Us' have a grants checker which can help you find local charities and grants, while <https://reuse-network.org.uk/> can locate your nearest charity or furniture project that offers second hand white goods.

You can also find free white goods on sites like Freecycle and Freegle, but bear in mind you'll often need to collect them yourself.



Living with a disability

Small charity The 3H Foundation has a grant scheme to help people with disabilities and carers to have holidays and short respite breaks. Carers can apply for a carer grant enabling them to have a period of respite away from the individual they care for.

Families with disabled children

If you have a child with a disability (17 or under) who lives at home and you receive certain benefits (such as, income support or universal credit), the Family Fund has grants to help make life easier. These can be used on things such as washing machines, computers, and holidays.

Why Contents Insurance matters



Please remember whilst Sandbourne insures the structure of your home, we do not insure the contents or your personal belongings.

Sadly, sometimes events such as floods, fire, theft, or accidents occur, and Sandbourne is not responsible for replacing any of your personal belongings that may be damaged, destroyed or stolen if the worst happens. Whilst we all think that these sorts of problems only happen to other people, the reality is that they can happen to any of us and at any time. Whilst having contents insurance does not stop them happening, it certainly makes getting life 'back to normal' a lot easier that if you do not have it.

Although we do not usually advertise private companies in Sandbourne News "My Home Contents Insurance" is provided through Thistle Tenant Risks, who are the Preferred supplier to the National Housing Federation, our trade body, and we think therefore it is appropriate to make an exception in this case.

What is included in the insurance?

The My Home Scheme covers most household goods and contents in your home, including furniture, TVs, clothing, carpets, electrical items, and general household goods. It does not cover items used or held for business or professional purposes.

The policy includes coverage of up to £500 for the replacement and installation of locks for external doors and windows if your keys are lost or stolen. The policy protects the contents of your fridge and freezer. However, damage caused by the deliberate disconnection of your electricity supply is not covered.

Additional cover options can be added to the standard policy for an extra premium.

How you can get a quote

Getting a quote is very easy. Just go to <https://www.thistlemyhome.co.uk/> and press the "Get a Quote" button or give the team at Thistle a call on 0345 450 7288.

Please be patient with us

When Sandbourne was first created in 2016 we adopted a Housing management and Maintenance system, provide by a company called SASSHA who specialise in providing software services to small housing providers like us.

The system that they provided is called HMS, and whilst not perfect, it has served us very well for the last 9 years. However, 9 years is a lifetime in technology terms, and we are going live with a new system called SASSHA 360 at the beginning of April.

There has been a lot of work going on in the background to prepare for this, and the team are undergoing training and familiarisation with 360 at the moment. The early impressions are positive in that the new system clearly has a lot more potential for future development and further improvement to the way that we deliver services to you, but this will inevitably take some time to happen.

When we 'go live' with 360 we expect to be able to do all the things that we currently do with the HMS system - but it might at least initially take us a bit longer than it does at the moment, so please be patient with us whilst we get to grips with it. Thank you for your patience and understanding.

Mobile phone theft: What to do if your device is stolen



Some 78,000 people reported having their phones or bags grabbed in the year to March 2024, according to government figures. Hotspot areas are often train and bus stations. Here's what to do if your phone is stolen and how you can reduce the risk.

The best insurance is preparation and prevention

Use your phone for the shortest possible time on the street and avoid texting while walking. Criminals often use bikes or mopeds when snatching devices, so watch out for any nearby when using your phone and stand away from the roadside.

Use robust phone security and know your IMEI number

Use a keypad lock or biometrics like fingerprint or facial recognition so thieves cannot immediately access your phone. You can set up a PIN for your SIM card too. This stops criminals from using the SIM in another phone.

Make sure you know your International Mobile Equipment Identity (IMEI) number - the unique 15-digit number used to identify your phone. This is much easier to get if you still have your phone. Type `*#06#` into your keypad and the number will appear, or go into the settings app.

If your device is stolen, try to access your phone remotely

You can try to access, lock, and even shut down your device remotely on a laptop, table, or using another phone. Different manufacturers use different systems, but they all operate in a similar way.

- **iPhone** - visit icloud.com/find or open the Find My app on another one of your Apple devices
- **Android** - visit android.com/find or open the Find My Device app on another one of your devices
- **Samsung** - visit findmymobile.samsung.com and sign in with your Samsung account.

You can also use these services to track your device remotely. Its location can then be shared with the police to help them recover the phone.

Alert your network provider so they can block the phone

These are the people who you pay your phone bills to. Tell them your phone was stolen and ideally, give them the IMEI number. If you don't already know this, you can sometimes find the number on the box the phone came in, or by using online services like Find My Device. UK network operators can stop a stolen phone from working across their networks with its IMEI.

Remember, if your phone is stolen you may have to pay the cost of any unauthorised calls or texts. Some providers cap these costs at £100 outside of your phone allowance - but only if you report your phone as missing within 24 hours, according to advice from Ofcom.

Let your bank know

They can disable payments like Apple Pay or Google Wallet and suspend banking apps. In some cases, victims who went to the police but didn't alert their bank have lost thousands of pounds after their phone was stolen.

Report the incident to police

You can do this by calling 101 or going in person to a local police station. You can also report the crime anonymously via Crimestoppers. Give the police your IMEI number as it can help them track down the device.

It's worth reporting the incident even if you think it's unlikely the phone will be recovered, as you'll need a crime reference number if you want to claim insurance and it helps build a picture of where crime hotspots are located.

Change the passwords to your accounts and apps

This is particularly important when it comes to online banking and accounts containing sensitive information, like your emails. It's also worth changing the passwords for your social media, shopping apps and subscription services like Netflix or Spotify.

Contact your insurance company

If you have mobile phone insurance, call their claims line when you have your crime reference number. If you don't have separate mobile phone insurance, Money Saving Expert recommends you check whether the phone is covered under any home insurance policy.

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

- Give us 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 it's services.
- Tell us if you've changed your contact details, e.g. your mobile number, email address or if you no longer have a landline.
- Tell us that we keep spelling your name wrong.
- Update your next-of-kin details, where we hold these.



FEEDBACK/SUGGESTIONS/CONTACT DETAILS FORM

If you would like to give us some feedback on either the 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:	
1st line of your address:	

Feedback/suggestions/change of contact details (e.g. email address/telephone number)

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