

CHIEF EXECUTIVE INTRODUCTION

I have to confess that this period from September through to Christmas is my favourite time of year. I love the colours of the autumn leaves, the tendency to gather more indoors as the days shorten and it gets colder, the busyness of preparation for family celebrations and the rising excitement as we approach Christmas itself.

I am one of those annoying people (in my husband's opinion) who like to prepare early for the Christmas festivities. So, maybe I should not feel so odd writing this Introduction to the Winter Newsletter in October, despite the fact that we have not made it to Halloween yet!

I hope that you are starting (or maybe finishing) to prepare for the Christmas season and the new year. Our contribution to your preparations is the gift of the Sandbourne calendar for 2026. Once again the photographs have been contributed by a former Board member and we are very impressed with his skills. We hope that you like it and enjoy the beautiful pictures for the whole year.

Thank you to all those who returned the recent Tenant Satisfaction Measures questionnaire. It is really useful to us to know what you think of the services that we provide and to identify those areas where we need to improve. However, it was especially good to know that so many of you are satisfied with that service. The staff (and Board members) at Sandbourne work hard to provide the best service that we can, so thank you to those who recognised that. There is a feedback form at the end of this Newsletter, so please continue to let us have any comments that you think are important or relevant.

We hope that you enjoy this Newsletter and find it useful. We try to include information and articles that are interesting and useful to as many of our residents as possible. Please let us know if there is anything that you would like to see in future Newsletters.

Now it just remains for me to wish you
a very Happy Christmas
and a peaceful New Year.

The Sandbourne Team

Fiona Ferenczy - Chief Executive

David Hall - Head of Housing

Colette Robson - Housing Officer

Alex Spence - Housing Officer

Brian Griffiths - Maintenance Manager

Chris Wilce - Maintenance Manager

Harry Corns - Finance 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.

Craigleith 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 (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 always 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 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**. 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 627 222** (voicemail messages can be left when we are closed), email repairs@sandbourne.org, 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 day, you could be preventing them from dealing with someone who needs their help immediately.



CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY CLOSURE



The Sandbourne office will be closed from 12pm on Wednesday 24 December 2025 and will reopen at 9.00am on Friday 2 January 2026.

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

We would, however, remind you to only contact Careline for genuine emergencies as it could be a very busy time for them. Anything that can wait until the office is open again, for example routine repairs can be emailed to repairs@sandbourne.org.uk, or rent/ management queries that should be sent to info@sandbourne.org.uk should not go through to Careline.

As always, those residents who receive the Careline service can use this in the usual way throughout this period.

Non- urgent messages can also be left on our voicemail to be dealt with on our return.

GOODBYE & HELLO (AGAIN)

In the last edition of Sandbourne News we told you about the mini baby boom that we are experiencing with Molly Witherington one of our housing officers welcoming Hugo into the world, and Katy Ferenczy-Dakin our Finance and Admin Officer leaving us temporarily on maternity leave. We are pleased to say that her son Oslo was safely delivered on 8 September.

Whilst Katy is on maternity leave her position has been ably filled by Harry Corns, who joins us from the Reed agency with a wealth of finance experience.

Harry started with us only shortly before Katy went on maternity leave, so had a steep learning curve, but we are pleased to say that he is now well settled in his role with the team and will be with us until the end of March.



IN THE EVENT OF A FIRE

On discovering a fire in your flat:

If the fire **is** in your flat:

- Leave your flat immediately, closing the door behind you, and make your way out of the building - do not stop to collect personal belongings.
- Follow the 'fire escape' signs.
- Break the nearest 'break glass' point on your way out of the building.
- Once you are safe, dial 999 and ask for the Fire Service.
- Do not re-enter the building.



If the fire is **not** in your flat:

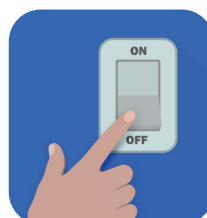
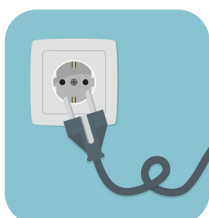
- It is safe to remain in your home, but if you wish to evacuate the building and can safely do so, please follow the 'fire escape' signs and go to the designated fire assembly point.
- Keep all doors and windows closed.

All rented flats are fitted with smoke and heat detectors and have fire alarms in communal areas. In the event of a minor smoke incident occurring in your flat, where smoke can safely be dispersed and there is no risk of fire, please allow the smoke to escape via an open window and not by opening your door into the main corridor.



To reduce the risk of fire in your flat:

- Do not overload the electrical sockets.
- Make sure appliances are switched off at night and the television is unplugged.
- Do not place clothes, towels, etc, on heaters and cookers.
- Do not prop doors open, which are specifically designed to stop fire spreading, ie the front door to your flat (or guest room) and fire doors in the corridors.
- Always use an ashtray when smoking in your flat and make sure you put cigarettes out properly.
- Never smoke in bed or within the enclosed communal areas of the blocks of flats.



A VERY BIG THANK YOU!

We tell you a lot more about the results of our recent Tenant Satisfaction Measures Survey in another article and in our Annual Report.

However, we just want to say a really big **THANK YOU** to everyone who took the time and trouble to let us know what they think about Sandbourne and the services that we provide. In all 160 tenants and shared owners responded which is 38% of the people that were surveyed.

We are very aware of how challenging the world around us is at the moment. So, to know that despite this the **overall satisfaction with Sandbourne has increased from 83% in 2023 to 91%**, which we are delighted to have achieved. We hope that this reflects your experience of the organisation.

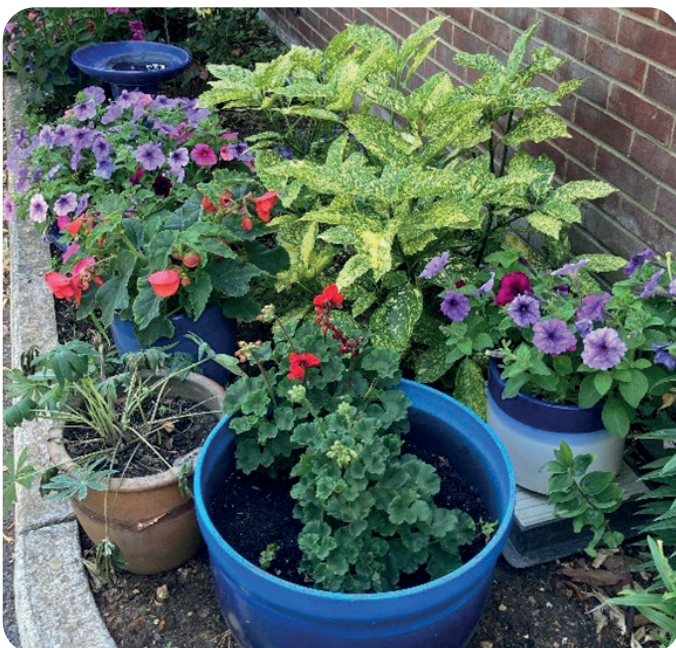
This is a great result and motivates us to think hard about what other changes we can make to the service to maintain and hopefully improve on.

Please take a few minutes to read the Annual Report for more details of how we did in each of the different elements of the Tenant Satisfaction Measures Survey.

SUMMER REMEMBERED...

During the summer we received these photos of one of the flowerbeds at Stourwood Avenue, planted and maintained by residents, with the help of a small grant from the Sandbourne Community Fund. Unfortunately, until now there has not been enough space in the newsletter to share them with you.

We know that summer feels like a lifetime ago but thought it was still worth sharing these photos to remind us all how lovely it was. Roll on summer 2026.



SO, HOW DID SANDBOURNE PERFORM?

Every 2 years, small housing associations are required by the Regulator of Social Housing to undertake a Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) survey and publish the results.

Social landlords are required to ask residents exactly the same questions and provide the same response options. We undertook our most recent TSM survey between September and October this year. The full results are included in our annual report to residents but we thought it was worth including a summary in this article. The 'other landlord' comparison is based on the top quartile performance of 59 other housing associations who have undertaken TSM surveys this year.

| Question | % of residents very or fairly satisfied | |
|--|---|-----------------|
| | Sandbourne | Other landlords |
| Taking everything into account how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the service provided by your landlord? | 91 | 79 |
| If your landlord has carried out a repair to your home in the last 12 months, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the overall repairs service from your landlord? | 94 | 82 |
| If your landlord has carried out a repair to your home in the last 12 months, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the time taken to complete your most recent repair? | 90 | 82 |
| How satisfied are you that your landlord provides a home that is well maintained? | 84 | 81 |
| Thinking about the condition of the property or building that that you live in, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you that your landlord provides a home that is safe? | 88 | 84 |
| How satisfied are you that your landlord listens to your views and acts upon them? | 72 | 69 |
| How satisfied are you that your landlord keeps you informed about things that matter to you? | 81 | 80 |
| To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following "Sandbourne treats me fairly and with respect". | 84 | 85 |
| How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the landlord's approach to complaint handling? | 65 | 65 |
| How satisfied are you that your landlord keeps any communal areas clean and well maintained? | 84 | 77 |
| How satisfied are you that your landlord makes a positive contribution to your neighbourhood? | 68 | 75 |
| How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your landlord's approach to handling anti-social behaviour? | 51 | 65 |

Whilst we will never be complacent, and are always are looking to improve, it is reassuring to see that that our satisfaction levels are above average for the majority of indicators.

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 sites (those specifically for people aged 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 of this if it applies in their homes.

However, if you live in one of our 'general needs' blocks, or at the 60+ site without such a connection, there are some 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 the Fire Safety Regulations (2022), Sandbourne will continue to inspect fire doors in communal areas every 6 months and will need access to homes of those living in flats once a year to undertake an inspection of the fire door(s).

If you live in a flat, many of you will have received a visit from Brian Griffiths, one of our Maintenance Managers, in the last couple of months, who is a qualified fire door inspector, to undertake the inspection of your front door. There are a small number of properties that Brian has been unable to arrange access to, so if we contact you about this, please arrange a convenient time for the inspection.

Sadly, we continue to receive reports of fire doors being wedged open in common areas. If you see a door like this, please remove any wedge 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.

SKY AND SATELLITE SERVICES – A REMINDER

We have featured occasional articles in previous editions about Sky TV services, but thought a short reminder was in order.

Whilst we have TV satellite equipment at both the Stourwood Avenue and Belle Vue sites, this was installed a number of years ago and will become obsolete within the foreseeable future.

The cost of maintaining and eventually replacing the equipment would be recharged to all residents equally through the service charge, whether they wish to be connected to satellite TV or not.

You may recall that we undertook a consultation with the residents of these sites a couple of years ago and the majority were not in favour of upgrading the equipment at the time to give access to Sky Q. Therefore, as and when the current equipment either becomes obsolete or too expensive to maintain we will not be replacing it.

Fortunately, the available technology has moved on considerably since the existing equipment was installed, and existing Sky customers, together with any new residents wishing to connect to their services can do so via their own broadband connections.

The article on the following page provides further details of these services.

SKY STREAM

Sky Stream is a TV streaming service from Sky. It's designed to give users access to Sky's content without needing a satellite dish or traditional Sky box. Instead, it streams TV over your broadband internet connection.

Key Features of Sky Stream:

1. No Dish Required

- Unlike traditional Sky Q, Sky Stream doesn't need a satellite dish.
- It works via your home Wi-Fi or Ethernet connection.

2. Sky Stream Puck

- Content is delivered through a small device called the Sky Stream puck.
- This plugs into your TV via HDMI and connects to the internet.
- It includes access to live TV, on-demand shows, apps like Netflix, Disney+, and more.

3. Content

- Includes Sky channels, BBC, ITV, Channel 4, and more.
- Also integrates streaming apps like Netflix, Apple TV+, Disney+, etc.
- You can choose packages like Sky Cinema, Sky Sports, etc.

4. No Long-Term Contract Required

- Offers monthly rolling contracts or 24-month deals, depending on what you choose.



Breakdown of costs

| Plan Type | Monthly Cost | Setup Fee | Contract Length |
|--|--------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| 18 month contract (Ultimate TV + Netflix Basic) | £26/month | £20 upfront | 18 months |
| 31 day rolling contract (Ultimate TV + Netflix Basic) | £29/month | £39.95 upfront | Rolling (cancel any time) |

Extras/Add-ons

- Sky Cinema add on
- Sky Sports add on
- UHD & Dolby Atmos upgrade (~£6/month)
- Whole Home (extra puck to use Sky Stream on other TVs) costs about £12/month

If you add Sports + Movies (Sky Sports + Sky Cinema) to a Sky Stream package, here's roughly what the extra costs are — plus what the total might come to. These are for UK (so same around Bournemouth). Prices vary depending on whether you do an 18 month contract or a rolling monthly one.

Extra Costs for Sports + Movies

| Add on | Approx Cost per Month (18 month contract) | Rolling contract cost |
|------------|---|-----------------------|
| Sky Sports | £25/month | £27/month |
| Sky Cinema | £11/month | £13/month |

For more information, please go to <https://www.sky.com/help>

WILL I GET A WINTER FUEL ALLOWANCE IN 2025?

You will likely receive a Winter Fuel Payment in 2025 if you are of State Pension age and lived in England or Wales during the qualifying week of 15-21 September 2025. The amount depends on your age, with payments typically between £200 and £300, though a taxable income of over £35,000 means the payment will be recovered through the tax system.

Eligibility for 2025-26

To qualify, you must meet the following criteria:

- **Age:** You must have reached State Pension age by 21 September 2025.
- **Location:** You must have lived in England or Wales for the qualifying week of 15 to 21 September 2025.
- **Taxable Income:** If your taxable income is over £35,000, your Winter Fuel Payment will be recovered through the tax system (PAYE or self-assessment).



How much you could receive

The amount you get depends on your circumstances and those of anyone you live with:

- **£200:** If you or your partner are over State Pension age.
- **£300:** If you or your partner are over 80.
- **Shared Payment:** If you and your partner do not receive an income-related benefit like Pension Credit, the payment may be split between qualifying members of the household.

When to expect it

- **October/November 2025:** You should receive a letter confirming your payment amount.
- **November/December 2025:** Most eligible people will receive their payment during these months.

How to check your eligibility or claim

Most eligible people receive the payment automatically. If you don't get a payment by 29 January 2025, you should contact the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) or visit the GOV.UK website for Winter Fuel Payment.

PLEASE KEEP APPOINTMENTS

We have previously featured articles about the outcome from the stock condition survey that Ridge and Partners completed for us earlier this year. We would like to again thank everyone who allowed their surveyors access to their homes. However, there were 66 properties in total where residents failed to make appointments with Ridge, and we are still keen to see as many of these homes as we can.

Susan our Admin Assistant has put a huge amount of effort into arranging appointments on behalf of our Maintenance Managers to complete the surveys, only to find that on the day agreed for the survey with the resident, they are then not at home. Whilst there have been some successes, with 16 surveys completed, there are still a lot of homes for us to see.

So, if you receive a call from Susan and make an appointment with her for a stock condition survey, please be available on the day that you agree with her – **it will make her Christmas and New Year if you are!!**

POLICY UPDATES AND CONSULTATIONS

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

- Lone Working (reviewed)
- Gas Safety (reviewed)
- Working Out of the Registered Office (reviewed)
- Complaints and Compliments (minor amendment specifying timescales within which complaints will be closed)

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

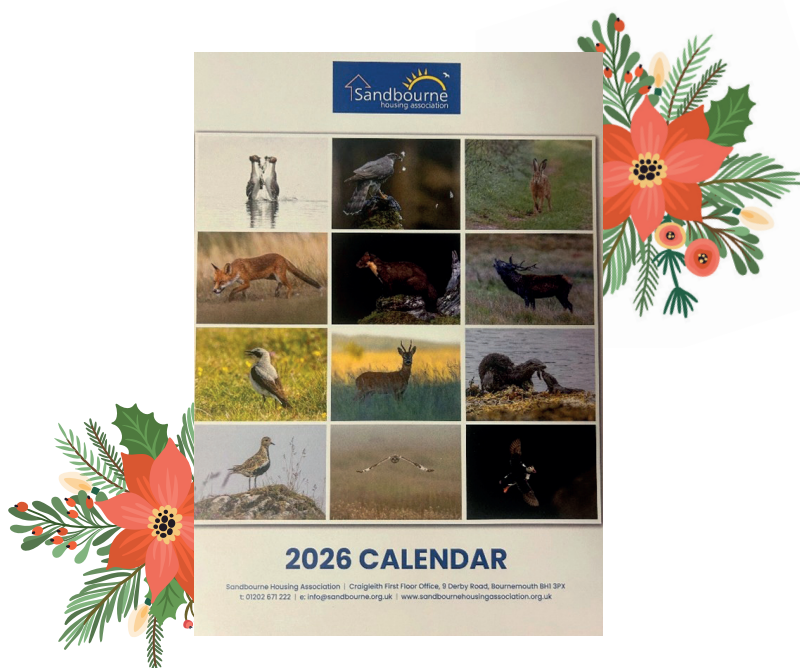
Previously, when the Board met in September they considered the following draft reviewed policies:

- Safeguarding
- Food Safety & Hygiene

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



SANDBOURNE CHRISTMAS CALENDAR



We would like to thank David Joicey, Sandbourne Shareholder for once again sharing his passion for photography with us and allowing us to use his spectacular photographs to create yet another beautiful calendar.

Whether you usually receive Sandbourne News by hard copy or email, a calendar will be delivered or sent to you shortly. We hope that you will enjoy looking at the photographs as well as finding the calendar useful.

KEEPING WARM & HEALTHY THIS WINTER

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

- Check if you or your family can get your free flu jab. You are entitled to this 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 you have enough medicines, and food.
- Keep your home warm. The NHS suggest 18 degrees 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 office to report this (during office hours). If you have no other form of heating and the office is closed (over Christmas/New Year), please contact Careline (see Page 2 for number).
- Wear lots of layers of clothing to stay warm and wear shoes with 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're going away and you have a neighbour who you have regular contact with, let them know as they may worry if they don't see you around.
- If you can't get out, try to keep active around 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.

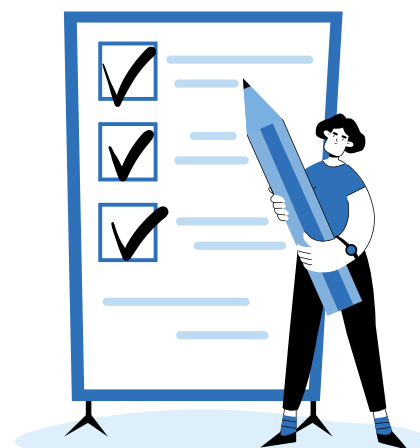


IS YOUR HOME CHRISTMAS READY?

Before the Christmas period we recommend you do the following:

- Check that your heating is in good order and tell us if it's not
- Report any faulty window or door locks to us to keep your home secure
- Make sure your contents insurance is in place and up to date
- Contact the housing team if you think you will have any trouble paying your rent or service charges
- Check that you have a valid TV licence
- Know where you can find a torch (that works) if there is a power cut

Remember that many trades close over the Christmas/New Year break, as we do, so please don't leave reporting things like repairs until the last minute.



TREE MAINTENANCE



We take the on-going care and maintenance of the trees that we own on all our sites very seriously and have done so for many years.

We employ an independent company, who survey all our trees every year and then give us a series of recommendations as to the action that we should take both to protect the safety of residents and ensure that the trees remain healthy and well maintained.

We pass these recommendations to our tree surgeon, who will undertake the work as required, applying for permission from the local authority where appropriate if any of the trees are subject to Tree Preservation Orders.

We know that trees can be an emotive subject, and that the removal of two well established trees at Stourwood Avenue earlier this year raised a lot of debate both positive and negative amongst residents.

Sadly the independent company had informed us that both trees, whilst appearing healthy were actually in a poor condition, and not removing them would have potentially created a risk for residents and visitors, which we were keen to avoid.

MANAGING RUBBISH RESPONSIBLY.

We were recently contacted by BCP with these photos of the communal bin store at one of our blocks in Poole, making the point that bin store was so overloaded that they were unable to collect and remove the rubbish.

We had to employ our own contractors to clear the store, recovering the cost of this via the service charge collected from residents of the block. If you see anyone misusing the bin area where you live or suspect that fly tipping is taking place, then please contact the local authority where you live. Doing so will help avoid situations like this happening again and avoid unnecessary increases in your service charge.

We thank you in advance for your co-operation.



CHANGE OF ADAPTATION EQUIPMENT SUPPLIER

As of Friday 1 August 2025, Medequip became the new provider of the Community Equipment Loan Service across Dorset, taking over from NRS Healthcare.

Please note that only a critical and urgent service is available during the initial phase of the transition.

Medequip say that they are working closely with council and NHS partners to minimize disruption and work towards a full service, as quickly as possible.

We understand that you may have questions about this change. Below, we have answered some of the most common queries to help reassure and guide you during this transition.



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Do I need to return my equipment from NRS Healthcare?

No, you do not need to return equipment that has been prescribed to you on loan because of the change in provider. Please continue to use it as normal. Please remember that if you no longer need the equipment or end your tenancy this must be removed from your home. We will recharge for any items left in the property that we have to dispose of.

I am waiting for daily living equipment. Will I still receive it?

Yes. Medequip will be fulfilling only critical and urgent orders during the initial phase. There may be some delays, but we are working hard to minimize disruption. If you have concerns, please contact the prescriber who ordered the equipment for you.

What should I do if my equipment needs repairing?

Medequip will provide a repair and replacement service for critical equipment. Please contact them directly to arrange repairs:

- **Email: PanDorset@medequip-uk.com**
- **Telephone: 01305 235499**

PLEASE CLEAN YOUR EXTRACTOR FANS

In recent months we have received an increasing number of reports of extractor fans not working and have asked our contractors to attend.

The feedback we have received from our contractors is that in quite a number of cases the fans have not been cleaned for a long time and as a result, those located in kitchens in particular have become 'gummed up' with grease and dirt.

Please remember that cleaning the extractor fans in your property is your responsibility. It is worth cleaning the external cover of the fan a couple of times a year to prevent them becoming blocked.

We understand that for older residents in particular this can be difficult, so if you are in any doubt, please ask a friend, or relative to help you. Ensuring that the extractor fans remain clean prolongs their life and avoids unnecessary expenditure, so your help with this is appreciated.

INCREASES TO BENEFITS

Increases in benefits 2025/26

The September inflation figure reflects what has been happening to prices over the past year, and will affect how far your money goes and how much benefits will go up next year

Universal credit and other benefits

Typically, September's Consumer Prices Index (CPI) measure of inflation, which this time is 3.8%, is the benchmark for raising benefits the following April.

Some benefits, including all the main disability benefits, such as personal independence payment, attendance allowance and disability living allowance, as well as carer's allowance, will rise by at least as much as prices have been rising. That is a legal requirement.

Universal credit (UC) - which is the most common benefit, claimed by seven and a half million people - is expected to rise by more than inflation next year. But ministers have the final say.

Currently UC is expected to rise by about 6.2%, reflecting the 3.8% September inflation figure, plus an additional 2.3% uplift already outlined in government legislation.

That would mean the standard UC allowance would rise from £92 to £98 per week for single claimants, and from £145 to £154 per week for couples, the Joseph Rowntree Foundation calculates.



Bigger increase for the state pension

The state pension rise is set using different criteria: what is known as the triple lock.

Under that arrangement, the state pension goes up each year by either 2.5%, or by inflation, or by earnings growth - whichever is the highest figure. This time around, we now know, that average earnings growth is the highest of these, at 4.8%.

This means:

- The full, new flat-rate state pension (for those who reached state pension age after April 2016) is expected to increase from its current £230.30 a week to £241.30 a week. That will take it to £12,547 a year.
- The full, old basic state pension (for those who reached state pension age before April 2016) is expected to go up from £176.45 a week to £184.90. That will take it to £9,615 a year.

Not all pensioners receive the full state pension, and some rely on other benefit income.

4 WAYS TO KEEP YOUR ENERGY BILLS DOWN

Energy prices went up again in October, by about £35 a year for a typical household.

It is the cap on a standard variable bill that is going up. That includes the daily standing charge plus the price per unit of energy, so if you use a lot of gas and electricity, your annual bill could go up by more than that.

So, what can you do to keep a check on rising bills?

1. Consider switching to a fixed rate

The energy regulator Ofgem is advising people to look at fixing - so that the price you are charged per unit of gas or electricity does not change every three months, although the total bill will still vary of course, depending on how much energy you use. There are fixed deals currently available that are around 15% cheaper than the current variable rate that you will be paying if you have not fixed. Consumer group Which? recommends keeping an eye on any exit fees when picking a fixed deal. If variable prices fall below your fixed rate and you want to get out of it before the end of your agreement period, you may have to pay a hefty sum.

2. Pay by direct debit

The regulator Ofgem says around eight million people still pay their bill as it comes in each month. For some that's because they do not want their supplier to estimate their usage in case they are overcharged. But if you have a smart meter or submit a meter reading regularly that will not be a problem. And you will usually - although not always - need to switch to direct debit if you want to take advantage of the fixed deals on offer. Customers on prepayment schemes used to pay a higher rate than others, but now they pay 3% less than the capped variable rate. Changing habits when using household appliances can also help, for example reducing washing machine temperatures.

3. Check what financial support you can get

There are a range of ways people on low incomes can access support. This winter anyone on means-tested benefits will get £150 off their electricity bill. Your supplier will apply the discount automatically where you will need to contact your energy company to ask for the help.

Some people will also be eligible for a cold weather payment, and most pensioners will receive the winter fuel payment this winter, after political pressure forced the government to U-turn on its plan to restrict it to the poorest pensioners.

4. Take another look at your energy use

Once the temperature outside starts to fall again, it is important to stay warm, especially for the very young, old, and those with health conditions or reduced mobility.

But there are plenty of ways you can keep bills lower without letting the temperature in your home fall below the recommended 18C minimum.

You may already have hung thicker curtains and blocked the draughts over the last couple of winters, but do not forget to switch off radiators in rooms you are not using and wrap up.

Money Saving Expert advises to "heat the human not the home".

Turning down the flow rate on a combi boiler can save you money as often the water is being heated higher than it needs to be.

Batch cooking and using an air fryer or microwave rather than heating up the oven for a small item can save energy.

Take shorter showers and wash clothes at 30C rather than 40C. Dry clothes outdoors if you can, rather than using a tumble dryer, or hang clothes indoors but ventilate well or use a dehumidifier to avoid damp.

If you are thinking about moving home, or undertaking renovations, it is worth thinking through how to reduce bills. When it comes to white goods, look for energy-efficient appliances.

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 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 555 1386

Dorset: 01305 221016

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

DON'T FORGET 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 your feedback on/or suggestions for any other issues relating to Sandbourne and/or its 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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All articles are correct at time of publishing.

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