

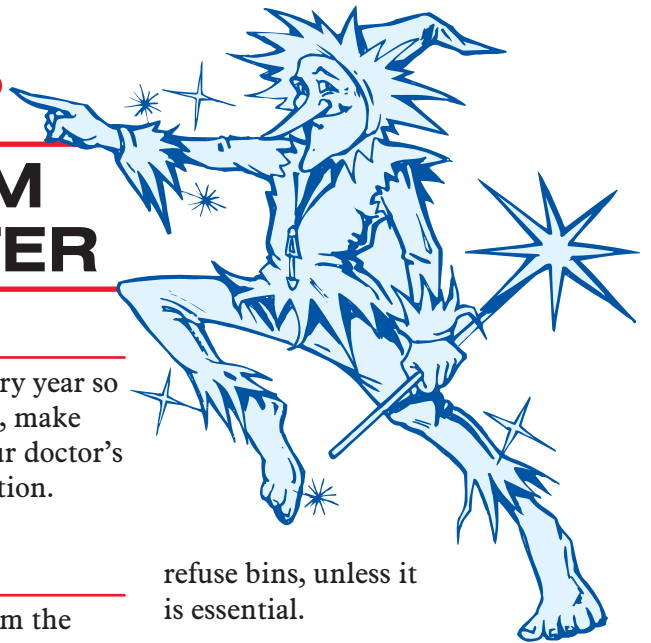
IN TOUCH

The Newsletter from Chislehurst & Sidcup Housing Association • www.csha.org.uk

Issue 29 • Christmas 2011

Top Tips ...

FOR KEEPING WARM AND SAFE THIS WINTER



Here are some simple tips to keep your family and home warm and safe as the days get shorter and colder.

KEEP LONG-LIFE, TINNED FOODS IN YOUR HOME

If you can't get to the shops in very cold weather, at least you will have food in stock.

KEEP MOVING

Any activity, even Hoovering, will improve circulation. Getting regular exercise outdoors, such as walking in the park or cycling, can really boost your immune system.

WRAP UP WARMLY

Indoors and out, ideally with several layers of thin clothing to trap the heat. Make sure you wear plenty of clothing at night too.

KEEP YOUR HOME AT THE RIGHT TEMPERATURE

Place thermometers in the living room and bedroom, and keep temperature between 21°C and 24°C (70°F and 75°F).

EAT HEALTHILY

Regular hot meals and hot drinks will boost your immune system, help fight off colds and make you feel more energetic. Try to eat fruit and vegetables daily as they can make all the difference and help you get over illness more quickly.

GET A FLU JAB

The flu virus changes every year so if you are entitled to a jab, make sure you get it. Ask at your doctor's surgery for more information.

CLAIM BENEFITS AND GRANTS

Everyone over 60 can claim the Winter Fuel Payment, so if you haven't received it before, you may need to claim. There are many other benefits and grants which you may be entitled to. Visit www.benefitsadviser.direct.gov.uk or talk to your Resident Manager for advice.

WHEN IT'S ICY, SPRINKLE TABLE SALT ON PATHS AND DRIVEWAYS

One tablespoon per square metre is all that is needed so that you don't slip. Be careful walking on ice and snow at all times and avoid it unless absolutely necessary. Put off going to the shops or to the communal

refuse bins, unless it is essential.

CHECK YOUR CAR

Make sure your screen wash is topped up and you have a blanket, warm clothing, food, drink, a fully-charged mobile phone and a shovel in your car. If you break down you'll be able to dig yourself out, keep warm and call for help.

GET YOUR BOILER AND GAS APPLIANCES SAFETY CHECKED BEFORE THE COLD WEATHER

If your gas appliances haven't been checked in the past 12 months, please call 0208 467 9146 to make an appointment.

Christmas opening times

19th - 22nd December normal hours
23rd closed 12.30pm
26th and 27th closed Bank Holiday
28th and 29th normal hours
30th closed 12.30pm
2nd January closed Bank Holiday

INSIDE

- Get set for digital television
- News from the schemes
- Brian's going potty
- Low cost contents insurance

DIGITAL TV SWITCHOVER 2012

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

If you have five channels or fewer on any TV in your home, you will need to convert your TVs to digital, or you will be left with a blank screen at switchover in 2012. The communal aerials on each scheme are digital as are Sky satellite dishes.

If you are unsure what to do next year speak to the Resident Manager and she will help you retune your existing digi-box or television.

A help scheme run by the BBC provides everything you need to switch one TV to digital. You can get help and free equipment if you are over 75 years.

If you do not have a digital set up, a standard option is available for an all inclusive cost of £40. This help is free if you are eligible and you get any of the following:

- Pension credit
- Income-related Employment

and Support Allowance (ESA(IR))

- Income support
- Income-based Job Seekers Allowance

The standard option includes:

- Easy-to-use digital equipment
- Installation by a security checked installer (or delivery only if you prefer)
- A 12-month aftercare service, including a free helpline

You can also choose from a range of other options at an

extra cost. Even if you

already have one digital TV the

Help Scheme can still convert another one, for example in your kitchen or bedroom.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

The Help Scheme will send you an information pack in the months leading to switchover in your region. This pack will outline the Help Scheme options available to you. You do not need to do anything until you have received your information pack.

When you receive your information pack, please speak to the Resident Manager or contact the Help Scheme on 0800 40 85 900.



Digital televisions and digi-boxes will need to be retuned when the switch from analogue to digital takes place.

BOARD UPDATE

The Board met in October to discuss these matters:

- The development programme
- On going, future and completed major works
- Performance over the last three months

Various policies and strategies were also discussed and approved.

Keeping in touch with your needs

Most of our tenants meet with their Resident Manager every six months to review their individual support plans. These reviews consider five levels of needs (or Outputs) and what has been achieved (or Outcomes) to make life more fulfilling. The five levels of Outcomes are:

- 1 Economic wellbeing
- 2 Enjoy and achieve
- 3 Be healthy
- 4 Stay safe
- 5 Making a positive contribution.

We use the information from these reviews, and from consulting with tenants at the regular monthly meetings and through the Tenants' Panel, to help us plan services for the future.

News from around the schemes

URSULA LODGES

We've received quotations for the new lift and our consultation with you on these tenders will end in November. It is hoped to start the installation work in the next few months. Once it is completed, new carpets will be laid in all communal areas.

Residents enjoyed a trip to Canterbury on 13 November, followed by a pub lunch. The next outing on the horizon is the Sevenoaks Diners Club on 1 December.

Our Christmas party on 9 December will have a Cockney theme – so don't stay on your Pat Malone (*own*) come along to our Russell Harty (*party*) and enjoy a kick and prance (*dance*)!

Christmas carols at Orchard Road school are also being arranged as well as a New Year's Eve sing-along in the lounge.

STANLEY GLYNN COURT

Scheme tenant representative and Board member, Michael Wyles had his birthday party at the scheme in November – and a



right rave up it was too! (*See above.*) If any tenant would like to do the same, please see Cathy.

Our Grand Raffle will be held on 16 December and our Christmas party on 20 December. Don't forget Keep Fit every Monday in the lounge.

EVELYN ROGERS COURT

Happily Lesley has returned and there are now monthly fish and chip lunches and afternoon teas. There will be a special Xmas afternoon tea on 16 December.

Look out for Lesley's regular newsletter which has interesting

local history articles, quizzes and scheme news.

BERTHA HOLLAMBY COURT

External works are complete and the new communal carpet has been laid throughout the scheme. New pictures for the corridors are being hung in November.

Tenants had an evening outing to Crayford greyhound stadium with a lovely meal, but sadly there were no big winners.

The Christmas party on 20 December will include a three course meal, free bar and entertainment.

USEFUL TIPS TO AVOID CONDENSATION

Condensation occurs when there is not enough air circulating through a property.

- Avoid drying clothes indoors.
- Don't boil kettles and pans for longer than you have to and put lids on saucepans.
- When you are cooking or having a bath/shower, close the kitchen and bathroom doors to prevent steam escaping.
- To reduce steam, part fill your bath with cold water before topping it up with hot water.
- Try not to overfill cupboards or

wardrobes and do not push furniture right up against the wall. Leave enough room for air to circulate.

- Close the curtains at dusk to keep the heat in and ideally, ventilate the room by opening a window slightly.
- In steamy kitchens and bathrooms, open a window or use an extractor fan if you have one. Don't forget to keep the door closed too.
- In really cold weather it is a good idea to leave your heating on a low temperature

throughout the day.

- All our homes are well insulated, have central heating and double glazed windows. However you can still make sure your home is well insulated. You can use draught excluders and heavy curtains at your windows or over your front door as an additional measure.
- Using a dehumidifier will treat the symptoms of condensation but will not cure it. They are also expensive to run and will only work when a house is warm and damp, not cold and damp.

GETTING AROUND

Disability and mobility audit 2011

CSHA wants to make all its schemes easy and safe to get around so that tenants can enjoy life as fully as possible.

In November we carried out the annual audit of tenants to find out what disability and mobility issues tenants have. We do this every year, as people's needs change.

Using this information, we draw up an improvement programme setting out changes to be made to services and the physical layout of our schemes to meet different needs. We also ensure that we comply with the Disability Discrimination Act 1996.

In the past, improvements have included level access in garden areas and at communal doors, bathroom and kitchen upgrades and other health and safety works. Generally our aim is to make all communal areas more accessible to all tenants.

The programme is a regular discussion item at the monthly meetings with tenants and the Housing Manager, and at the Tenants Panel.

BRIAN'S GOING POTTY!

Most people who move into our schemes bring a few treasured knick knacks, but new resident Brian German has taken this to a new level with his vast collection of pottery.

Brian has a great interest in Torquay Pottery and his move to Evelyn Rogers Court involved bringing a great many pots, jugs, plates and so on with him.

Brian started his collection around 20 years ago and now has an impressive collection on display. He belongs to the Torquay Pottery Collectors' Society and attends many of their conventions.



While on his travels, Brian still likes to collect pieces which he then sells at auctions and fairs so that others may enjoy the pieces as well. Neighbours are welcome to pop in to see his collection at any time.

**Welcome to
our new
CSHA tenants**

A warm welcome to our new tenants who have moved in since the last newsletter. Please make them feel at home.

*Ursula Lodges
Mrs Kate Martin
Evelyn Rogers Court
Mr Paul Argent*

Home Contents Insurance

GET SIGNED UP TODAY!

Who pays if your furniture, appliances, clothes and other valuables get damaged or stolen? If you aren't insured, unfortunately you will have to dig into your own pockets.

Don't leave it any longer. We've seen some unfortunate accidents recently where tenants' belongings have been damaged, often due to leaks from other tenants' washing machines or overflowing taps.

CSHA **does not insure** your furniture, belongings or internal decorations against theft, fire, vandalism, burst pipes or other household risks. **It is your responsibility to have insurance for your personal household items.**

Low cost scheme for over 60s

The National Housing Federation Insurance Scheme together with Jardine Lloyd Thompson Tenant Risks and Allianz Cornhill Insurance offer tenants the chance to insure the contents of their homes in an easy, affordable way. This scheme is specially for tenants aged over 60 years.

Don't put your home contents at risk – get signed up today. If you would like more information on insurance, contact your Resident Manager or the Housing Manager.

IF YOU HAVE ANY DIFFICULTY READING THIS NEWSLETTER AND WOULD LIKE IT IN LARGER PRINT OR A DIFFERENT LANGUAGE, PLEASE LET US KNOW.