

SHELTERED HOUSING NEWS

OUR SHELTERED HOUSING SCHEMES ARE BLOOMING MARVELLOUS!

Congratulations to all of the tenants who were shortlisted in last year's gardening contest. Maesteg scheme in Pentwynmawr were awarded first prize in the Best Sheltered Housing Communal Garden category. Judges were impressed by the sense of community at the winning scheme, with a number of tenants actively involved in the gardening, along with its good use of space and colour. Alexandra

Court, Ynysddu won second place and third place was won by Castle Court in Pontywaun.

Winners were announced on 14th September over afternoon tea in the conservatory at Llancaich Fawr, Nelson. Awards were presented by Cllr Lisa Phipps, the council's Cabinet Member for Homes and Places, and Fiona Wilkins, Caerphilly Homes' Public Sector Housing Manager.

Our Older Person's Housing Team has a new contact telephone number. You can now reach them on **01443 811431**.



The winning garden at Maesteg.



Pat Perry from Castle Court.



Mona Whittaker from Alexandra Court.



Fiona Wilkins presenting award to Maesteg tenants.

WELSH HOUSING QUALITY STANDARD (WHQS) UPDATE

The WHQS sheltered housing improvement programme is progressing well and on target for our completion date of 2020.

St Clare's in Rhymney was the first scheme to receive all internal and external WHQS improvements. External works were carried out last at the scheme and were completed in October last year. Mr Bill Grandin, a tenant at St Clare's, told us about his experience of the works; which included new roofs and painting around windows. Bill said "I was very pleased with the work and couldn't fault it. The boys who worked here were as good as gold and Liz, the Tenant Liaison Officer, was fantastic."

In December 2017, all works were also completed at Gibbs Close and Palmer Place in Blackwood. Works

included new roofs, kitchens, bathrooms and external paths.

Work is currently ongoing at Ty Bedwellty, Cefn Fforest; improvements to this 'under one roof' scheme began in May 2017 and will see new kitchens and bathrooms fitted in each flat, along with a new heating system and the installation of a lift. Works are on target to be completed in March this year.

Works are also ongoing at Horeb Court, Trinant where pathways at the scheme were recently renewed.

Internal improvements have been completed at Y Glyn, Maesycwmmmer and roof renewal is currently taking place at the scheme. We're also currently working at Waun Rhydd, Gelligaer

and The Willows, Bedwas; both schemes are expected to be completed in March this year. Works also started recently at Glynsyfi, New Tredegar and Glynderw, Churchill Park.

Schemes due to start during 2018 are Gwyddon Court and The Ranks in Abercarn, Woodland View in Cwmfelinfach, Ty Mynyddislwyn in Pontllanfraith, Maesteg in Pentwynmawr, Oaklands and St Gwladys Court in Bargoed.

We are also continuing with coffee mornings and afternoon tea events in schemes where surveys are about to begin. These events offer you the opportunity to meet the team responsible for delivering the WHQS programme in sheltered housing and to ask any questions you may have about the work.



St Clare's, Rhymney.



Mr Grandin at home.



FIRE SAFETY

Safety when cooking

- Take pans off the heat or turn gas / electricity off when unattended.
- Avoid cooking if you've been consuming alcohol or certain medication.
- Turn off cooker when you've finished.
- Turn off sockets.
- Close kitchen door.

Chip pans

- Never fill a chip pan more than a third full of oil.
- Consider using a thermostatically controlled deep fat fryer.
- Never leave your cooking unattended. Even if the phone or doorbell rings. Remember - fires start when your attention stops.

If you do have a chip pan fire:

- Call the fire and rescue service on 999 immediately.
- Don't take risks.
- Have a clear escape route.
- Never move the pan.
- Turn off the heat (if it's safe to do so).
- Never use water on chip pan fires, as this will cause a fireball.

Electrical safety

- Never repair or rejoin cables.
- Do not run cables under the carpet.
- Keep cables away from the cooker.
- Never use more than one adaptor per socket.
- Make sure toasters, microwaves, hairdryers and kettles are plugged into their own socket and not used with an adaptor.

Oxygen cylinders

- Keep oxygen cylinders stored in an upright position.
- Do not store near a heat source; store in an area with good air flow.
- Do not use oil or lubricants near oxygen equipment.
- Make sure the oxygen supply company inspects equipment regularly.
- Do not use any electrical appliance that has a motor (e.g. electric razor, hairdryer) near an oxygen cylinder.
- Do not use anything flammable whilst using oxygen.
- Never smoke or allow others to smoke near oxygen.

2018 Trips

- 14/03/18 - Labels Shopping, Ross-on-Wye
- 21/03/18 - Brecon
- 05/04/18 - Caerphilly Garden Centre & The Red Kite
- 11/04/18 - Weston
- 18/04/18 - Symonds Yat (East)
- 03/05/18 - Roath Park & The Nine Giants
- 09/05/18 - Cardiff Bay
- 23/05/18 - Porthcawl
- 07/06/18 - Caldicot Castle & The Castle Inn
- 13/06/18 - Tenby
- 20/06/18 - St Fagan's
- 05/07/18 - Friars Walk, Newport
- 11/07/18 - Barry Island
- 18/07/18 - Mumbles, Swansea
- 02/08/18 - Caerleon Roman Fortress and Baths & The Ship Inn
- 08/08/18 - Weston
- 22/08/18 - Bath
- 06/09/18 - Cwmbran Shopping Centre & The Harvester
- 11/09/18 - Bourton-on-the-Water
- 04/10/18 - Ebbw Vale Festival Park & Brewers Fayre
- 09/10/18 - Abergavenny Market
- 14/11/18 - McArthur Glen Designer Outlet, Bridgend
- 05/12/18 - Gloucester Christmas Market

If there any additional trips you would like to go on please contact Liam Bouse Activities Co-ordinator, and he will help you organise it

Service charges for sheltered housing

Frequently Asked Questions

Why are we paying so much for ground maintenance? What does it cover?

This charge is for the grounds maintenance work on the land within the boundaries of your scheme. It includes a weekly grass cut from the first Monday in April and additional 'pre-cut' in March, yearly pruning of shrubs and a twice yearly cut of hedges for all schemes. Other specific work will depend on what is present at any particular scheme, for example flower beds. We are currently reviewing the breakdown of charges, specification and frequency of grounds maintenance for all sheltered housing schemes and we will update you further once this information is available. Further consultation may be required if any changes are needed or requested.

The Sheltered Housing Officer is not always on site so what exactly are we paying for?

This charge covers all associated costs for the Sheltered Housing Service. Each scheme will have a staff member on site each day. Sheltered Housing Officers provide floating support cover for a minimum of 2 schemes in a day. The hours covered at each scheme will vary depending on the staff cover at any given time. The Sheltered Housing Officer rota is displayed at each scheme to advise tenants of the staff cover for each week. In emergencies during working hours, a Sheltered Housing Officer can be called upon to attend a scheme if required. The 24 hour Careline service is also part

of the sheltered housing service and in the absence of a Sheltered Housing Officer on site, all tenants have access to the Careline monitoring response centre for assistance and support.

What do 'I.T. communications' cover?

This is a charge for the telephone and computer provisions at the scheme to enable and support the Sheltered Housing Officers to undertake their daily duties.

What is the 10% admin charge? What is it for and what does it cover?

This covers the cost of managing and delivering the service charge process for tenants.

Why is there a charge for the TV licence when tenants already pay their own? If I'm over 75 why do I have to pay as law states over 75s do not have to pay?

The TV licence charge is for the TV in the communal lounge at your scheme. Your own licence and the over 75 arrangement for your individual property does not apply to the communal TV facility.

Will the service charge increase next year?

The charges will vary from year to year depending on the expenditure at each specific scheme and may increase or decrease in any future year. The charges are calculated based on actual expenditure from the previous year. The Council does not make a profit and the charges only recover the cost of the service. Officers carefully examine

the expenditure throughout the year to closely monitor for any excessive costs. Charges for items which attract a higher cost will be spread over a number of 'life years' to keep the yearly charges lower for tenants.

I do not use the communal lounge, so why do I have to pay towards it?

Tenants are charged for the services provided at the scheme they live in. You are not able to opt out of a service charge for a service which is available at your scheme just because you do not use it.

Why is the cleaning charge so high?

The schemes have been individually assessed for the number of hours required to provide an adequate cleaning service according to the size and design of the scheme. The cleaning charges are calculated per number of days and hours the cleaner is employed at your scheme. The charges include all associated cleaning materials and any special cleaning requirements.

Why are charges capped for two years?

Whilst some tenants saw a reduction in charges, it also resulted in increased costs to tenants of some schemes. It was therefore proposed that transitional arrangements would be put in place for the first two years following introduction of the changes, to assist and support existing tenants in the schemes with the highest charges in adjusting to the changes.

A message from Liam Bouse, Activities Co-ordinator

I'm pleased to say that 2017 was a very busy year for sheltered housing tenants, with a variety of different activities and events taking place at schemes throughout the county borough. This included:

- £3,518 raised for 8 different charities, including Macmillan, Stoke Association and Alzheimer's Society.
- 46 trips arranged including visits to Bourton-on-the-Water, Cardiff Bay and Barry Island (this was 18 more trips than the previous year).
- The launch of the 'Sheltered Housing Quiz'. Congratulations to Mrs Williams from The Willows in Bedwas who was the highest scorer with 45 out of 50

answers correct! There was also a prize draw for everyone who took part; there were 12 prizes up for grabs including a tour of Llancaich Fawr.

- A number of schemes hosted talks on a range of topics, including doorstep crime and home safety from the Police, advice on preventing fires from the Fire Service and information on dementia from the Alzheimer's Society.
- Charity Mind Cymru delivered a 6 week mental health and well-being course.
- Easter and Christmas school choir performances.
- Pamper sessions held at Castle Court and St Mary's Court.



Crackers & Crime event at Pleasant Place, Penyrheol.

A list of trips for 2018 can be found over the page and also on your scheme's communal noticeboard. If you'd like to visit somewhere that isn't on the list please let me know and I will try, wherever possible, to run additional trips.

I'm always open to ideas for new activities or events so please give me a call on 01443 866449 or email me bousel@caerphilly.gov.uk

Tenants helped by our Floating Support team

During 2017 our Floating Support team opened 103 new cases and closed 92 completed cases where tenants' support needs had been met, they'd moved to a more suitable property or no longer engaged with the service. The team consistently worked with around 250 clients.

The Floating Support team provide a range of assistance to tenants including helping to complete online housing transfer applications, applying for adaptations, benefits claims and applications for grants.

In one case the team were asked to visit a lady whose partner had been claiming benefits on her behalf and when he left the property she was left without any money. The Floating Support team firstly provided the tenant with an emergency food parcel as there was no food in the property. They then supported her through a claim for Employment Support Allowance (ESA) and accompanied her at the work capability assessment. When this was completed the team were then able to claim housing benefit, discretionary housing payment and HelpU for a reduction in water rates. The tenant was also supported to claim Personal Independence Payments (PIP) along with severe disability benefit. In total since working with this tenant, the Floating Support team was able to increase her benefits from zero to £274 per week. She is now able to pay her rent and a payment plan has been set up in order for her to pay long standing debts.

For more information on the services provided by our Floating Support Team call 01443 811425 or email floatingsupport@caerphilly.gov.uk

A new lease of life for Colin

Colin Hill, a tenant at Ty Bedwellty in Cefn Fforest, has been given a new lease of life since moving into sheltered housing.

Before moving to Ty Bedwellty, in November 2015, Colin lived with his parents in Pengam. Living independently was a challenge for Colin at first but Mair Jones, his Sheltered Housing Officer, told us how much his confidence and skills have grown over this time.

Colin is now a Learning Disability Community Champion for the Welsh Ambulance Service and a keen photographer. He recently had internal WHQS improvements completed in his flat and really enjoyed spending time with our workforce!

If you have any photos or memories you'd like to share in this newsletter please contact Kelsey Watkins, Communications & Tenant Engagement Officer, on 01443 864262 or by emailing watkik1@caerphilly.gov.uk



Word search

W	M	L	P	G	R	T	A	T	U	Y
A	N	A	T	R	G	Y	P	Y	N	S
U	W	A	O	O	R	M	E	I	D	G
N	R	Z	A	V	E	E	N	S	Y	W
R	L	W	K	E	E	L	C	A	G	Y
H	T	P	A	B	N	I	E	F	L	D
Y	O	A	K	L	A	N	D	S	Y	D
D	N	Q	R	E	C	T	R	U	N	G
D	I	Y	B	D	R	S	A	P	A	W
O	B	N	S	O	E	G	O	O	I	Y
P	E	T	E	W	S	I	L	L	T	N
A	G	Y	O	P	E	G	L	Y	A	O
D	G	O	O	D	I	N	U	R	N	D

We've hidden the names of 8 sheltered housing schemes in the wordsearch. See if you can find the Schemes listed below.

Words to find:

Greenacres
Oaklands
Ty Isaf
Ty Melin
Waurhydd
Y Glyn
Ynyswen
Ysgwyddgwyn