

HOUSING MATTERS



The magazine for
East Devon District Council
tenants and leaseholders

YOUR WINTER 2020 EDITION

By post, email, online or audio cd
eastdevon.gov.uk/housingmatters



P15



P12&13



P23&24



P18

CONTRIBUTE: WE NEED TENANTS AND LEASEHOLDERS

Housing Matters is your magazine and keeping it relevant is only made possible with your help. We'd love to hear from you with your suggestions for articles. Give us a letter, article, photo, or household tip. Contact the Tenant Participation team (details below).

DO YOU NEED LARGE PRINT OR AN AUDIO OR EMAIL FORMAT?

Is this format best for you? We'd like you to get *Housing Matters* in a way that suits you. This magazine is available by post, audio and email.

If you'd prefer to receive the magazine digitally to your email address or in an audio format through the post, please contact Tenant Participation (details below). *Housing Matters* is also available online at eastdevon.gov.uk/housing-matters.

ABOUT THIS MAGAZINE

Housing Matters is produced by East Devon District Council for tenants and leaseholders and is edited by tenants and council staff.

Editorial Group

Ted Payne from Honiton who is a retired serviceman and the chairperson of the Editorial Group.

→ See **Ted's intro on page 4**

Sue Saunders is an Exmouth tenant who loves reading and writing poems.

Alan Thorpe has lived in Exmouth for six years. He served in the Royal Navy for ten years and 25 years in the baking industry. Being involved in this group has given him a new lease of life and an insight on how the magazine is produced.

Sue Williams is an Exmouth tenant and former paralegal, soldier and nurse who loves photography, gardening, DIY and playing music. She has undertaken several council training sessions on housing and social studies.

Yvonne White lives in Sidmouth and is on the Lymebourne and Arcot Park Resident Association committee.

Bev Anderson is Tenant Participation Assistant at East Devon District Council.

CONTACT US

Tenant Participation

Phone: 01395 517453

Email: tenantparticipation@eastdevon.gov.uk

Write: East Devon District Council,
Blackdown House, Border Road,
Heathpark Industrial Estate, EX14 1EJ

SWITCH youth group

Phone: 01395 516551 ext. 1691

Email: switch@eastdevon.gov.uk

Twitter: @SWITCHeastdevon

Facebook: SWITCHeastdevon

Keep up to date

Online: eastdevon.gov.uk/news

Twitter: @eddchome_people

Facebook: eddchome&people

Instagram: @eddchome_people

Do you have a comment, compliment or complaint?

If you'd like to tell us something about the housing service, contact Tenant Participation who will be happy to help you (contact details left).

⚠️ Coronavirus (Covid-19): our offices aren't open to the public at this time

Blackdown House in Honiton and Exmouth Town Hall aren't open to the public. Please refer to eastdevon.gov.uk.

To request this information in an alternative format or language please phone 01395 517453 or email tenantparticipation@eastdevon.gov.uk (we consider requests on an individual basis)



Join other East Devon residents and download the free East Devon App from eastdevon.gov.uk/app

Access council services on your smartphone, get councillor contact details, a recycling and waste collection reminder, and check local food hygiene ratings

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HELLO



TED PAYNE
Editorial Group
Chairperson

Welcome to the winter edition of the Housing Matters magazine, it has been a difficult time for everyone during lockdown and I am sure we are all hoping for a better time in 2021.

After much thought, I have made the decision to stand down as Chairperson of the Editorial Group. It has been an honour and exciting to be working on your magazine, also to work with such dedicated people and I thank you for all your support over the years.

With me leaving the Editorial Group, we will now have a vacancy on the group, which you could fill. If

you like reading, have good English skills, have a computer and a few hours to spare in the evening (face to face meetings during the day have been stopped during Covid-19 and will hopefully continue next year), then you would be great for this group. It doesn't matter whether you have ever had any publishing or journalism experience before; or whether you're 18 years old or 90, we need your skills so don't hold back, call Tenant Participation today. The Editorial Group would welcome new members.

Wishing you all a merry Christmas and New Year.

COUNCIL PROMOTION

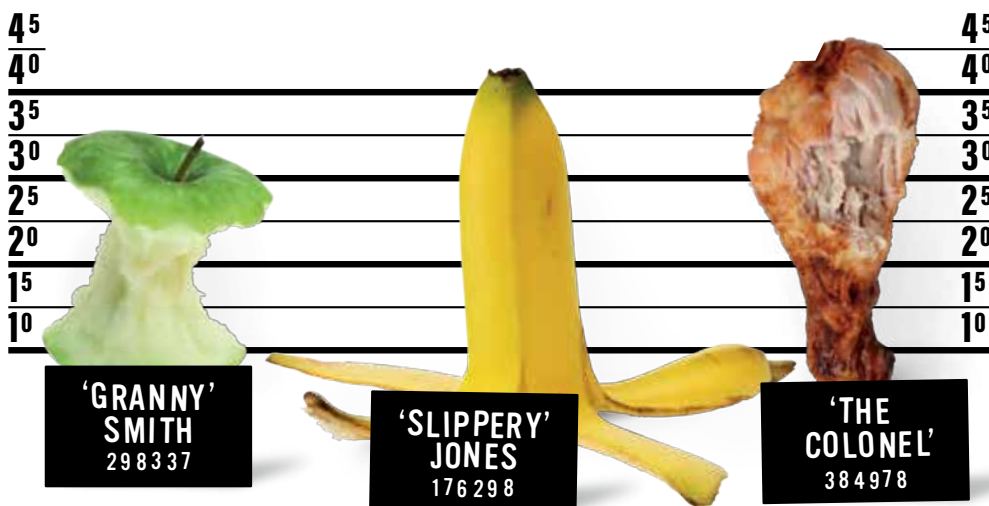
ARE YOU HARBOURING EAST DEVON'S MOST WANTED IN YOUR BIN?

LOCK 'EM UP IN YOUR FOOD CADDY



Don't forget to recycle your food waste, collected every week.

- Easy ■ Clean
- Good for the environment



YOUR COUNCIL

INFORMATION FOR YOU
FROM EAST DEVON
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Coronavirus How We Are Keeping Things Going Through the Restrictions

At the time of writing, we have just entered the second lockdown. Hopefully, by the time you a reading this, some of the more severe restrictions will have been removed, but we want to reassure all our tenants that, thanks to the recovery plan we have in place, we are well positioned to react to this ever-changing situation to keep the bulk of our services operating over the winter and beyond.

TIM LAURENCE-OTHEN Housing Projects Officer

At the time of writing, we are just emerging from the second lockdown and entering Tier 2 restrictions. We want to reassure all our tenants that, thanks to the recovery plan we have in place, we are well positioned to react to this ever-changing situation to keep the bulk of our services operating over the winter and beyond.

Here is a summary of how each of our Housing teams are operating from the start of the second lockdown.

Property and Assets

We are committed to providing our full repairs and maintenance service to our tenants, whilst keeping you and our employees as safe as possible. Across the

whole team, both our staff and operatives from our various contractors will be working in line with the government advice on working in occupied homes.

This means:

- Staff will be wearing Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- They will ask a few screening questions before starting work
- They may ask you to move to another room whilst the work is taking place in line with social distancing. If you are unable to, you may need to wear a face covering whilst operatives are working
- Staff will wipe down surfaces and clean thoroughly before and after doing any work.

If you or your household are self-isolating due to Covid-19 symptoms or have been contacted by Track and Trace, you should inform the Housing Repairs team on 01395 517458 who will rearrange for any works to take place after your isolation period has ended.

Reactive Repairs

We are continuing to offer a full repairs service at this time. Please report any repairs by phone or email in the usual way on 01395 517458 or repairs@eastdevon.gov.uk

Continued on next page →

Our team will be able to discuss with you your options with regards to your rent payments

Gas Safety Checks

We have a legal duty to carry out the gas servicing in your home to ensure your gas appliances are safe and our Gas Servicing Contractor, Liberty Gas has put a number of measures in place to ensure tenant's and their safety to allow these vital visits continue throughout the pandemic.

If you have concerns regarding their gas service please call our Housing Repairs Team on 01395 517458 to discuss further.

If you smell gas, or if you have concerns about the safety of your appliances, you should call the gas emergency service provider on 0800 111 999 and switch off appliances until the gas emergency supplier, or a registered gas engineer, has attended and advised that the appliances are safe to use.

Planned/Programme Works

All of our Planned Works Contracts (these are things like heating upgrades, external refurbishment/decoration, re-roofing, fire safety work and electric work) are still going ahead.

Cyclical Servicing/Compliance Works

We are continuing with our cyclical servicing and compliance works programmes as normal. These are things like electrical testing, legionella checks, overhead track hoist servicing, lift and stair-lift servicing, and asbestos surveys to ensure your homes remain safe.

Housing Services

Paying your rent

At this time it is more important than ever for us to have open, honest communication with you in order for us to support you the best we can. If you are in a position where you are struggling to make payments to your rent account due to a reduced income following

the Covid-19 outbreak, please contact us as soon as possible on 01395 517444 or email rental@eastdevon.gov.uk

Our team will be able to discuss with you your options with regards to your rent payments.

An arrangement can be made for payment of your rent during these difficult times, but we are unable to do this without speaking to our tenants directly. If you have a valid email address, it will be useful to have this on hand so that one of our advisors can forward you any relevant information.

Sheltered Housing

We understand many of our sheltered residents will be concerned about Coronavirus (Covid-19).

Our Housing team are focused on minimising risk whilst delivering services to our tenants. This means that for the time being we will be restricted to calling our residents by phone instead of carrying out the doorstep visits we began a few weeks ago. The community centre appointments will also be unavailable until further notice. This means that face-to-face visits can now only take place in exceptional circumstances.

Once the government restrictions relax we will start to phase in both door step and face-to-face visits. Although our offices are closed to the public, your mobile support officers (MSO) are still working and are contactable in the usual ways. If you do not know which MSO team supports you, please call 01395 578237 or email housingsupport@eastdevon.gov.uk.

Home Safeguard will be operating as normal for emergencies out of hours through your alarm system in the property.

Estate Management Team

The East Devon Estate Management team will continue to carry out fire risk

Devon Home Choice is now operating again

assessments of blocks of flats during the Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic. These will occur on a monthly basis. Please remember that fire escapes must remain clear of any obstructions at all times. This is for the safety of all tenants.

The duty officer line 01395 571755 is open Monday to Friday from 8.30am to 5pm to offer advice on any estate management issues you may have such as tenancy issues or anti-social behaviour. Visits to tenants' homes will only take place in exceptional circumstances and our officers will phone and email before carrying out any home visits.

The government has issued guidance which asks landlords to show compassion and to allow tenants who are affected by the pandemic to remain in their homes wherever possible.

The National Housing Federation and Local Government Association have welcomed this support for social renters and made clear that no one should be evicted as a result of the impact of coronavirus.

Housing Allocations

Home visits

Although most work is continuing as usual during the Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic, we are significantly reducing the amount of home visits we are carrying out.

We have found that most people prefer to physically visit a property before signing up to a tenancy, and we are pleased to be able to still carry out viewings in a covid-secure way. However, alternative options can be arranged in discussion with housing officers as part of the allocation process.. Examples of these options include virtual WhatsApp tours, and sending photos of the properties via email.

Mutual Exchanges

We are currently only processing mutual exchanges within East Devon due to the uncertainty surrounding the current pandemic. We apologise for any inconvenience this may cause.

Devon Home Choice

Devon Home Choice is now operating again. Whilst properties are now being advertised, there may be delays in landlords being able to let properties which are currently being advertised or in the shortlisting process. Some properties may be withdrawn from advertising where they are required for emergency accommodation.

As we are experiencing an increase in demand there are a few steps that you can take to help us process applications and changes.

- Please apply online if possible, rather than by paper application. We are continuing to accept paper applications, but there may be a delay in these being processed.
- If your communications preference is currently by letter, please consider changing it from letter to email and ensure that your email address is up-to-date; and
- If you are able to, please either screenshot, photograph or scan then email to us your completed application forms and/ or proofs of evidence for example, Health and Wellbeing forms, Supporting Evidence forms and letters.

Homelessness services

Our staff are continuing to carry out their roles as normal, including working in the community with rough sleepers and helping those people who are either homeless or at risk of becoming homeless into safe and secure homes.

Asbestos Inspections



Articles on this page by
MICHELLE DAVIDSON
Senior Compliance Surveyor

The risk to the tenants from asbestos in their home is low unless asbestos is disturbed.

Asbestos is a naturally occurring toxic material known for its remarkable strength and resistance to heat. Manufacturers added asbestos to thousands of products to help with insulation and fireproofing. It was widely used from 1930 to the mid 1980s. It is commonly found in construction materials used to build many older homes and public buildings although banned now, such as cement, textured paint, spray on insulation and ceiling and floor tiles. Any houses built before the year 2000 may contain asbestos. However identical properties may not contain the same materials.

What should you do if you think you have asbestos in your home?

Do not touch it. If the material is in good condition and is not disturbed the best option is usually to leave it in place. If you have any concerns or you think a material containing asbestos has been damaged or has been disturbed please report it to the Compliance Team immediately on 01395 517458 or email compliance@eastdevon.gov.uk

How do we manage asbestos in tenanted properties or blocks of flats?

We are continuously obtaining in depth information about the presence and condition of asbestos within our properties. We have an asbestos management plan which can be found on our website www.eastdevon.gov.uk which outlines how we deal with asbestos. You can also contact the Compliance Team.

Asbestos surveys and inspections involve a visual inspection (of the property or block) and sampling of the suspect materials. Before we carry out any refurbishment work in your home or block we have to by law, arrange for an additional detailed survey before work can commence. These type of intrusive surveys can entail sampling material by opening an area up, for example, removing a bath panel to inspect for any hidden materials. Once the results are received we will determine what action if any is needed. Asbestos only becomes dangerous if damaged or disturbed.

Above: contractors removing asbestos

Tenant Responsibilities

If you wish to carry out any improvement works to your home you must apply for written approval from East Devon District Council before the works commence. You will be advised if an asbestos report is needed.

If you personally carry out the works, or enable and permit others to carry out work without our prior written approval you will be fully liable for any costs dealing with any incidents.

For more information

- Health and Safety Executive:
Visit hse.gov.uk
- East Devon District Council:
 - *Compliance Team or Repairs:*
Phone 01395 517458
Email repairs@eastdevon.gov.uk or compliance@eastdevon.gov.uk
Visit eastdevon.gov.uk
8.30am to 5pm, Monday to Friday
 - *Emergency Repairs (Out of Hours):*
Phone 01395 516854



What is Legionella?

Legionella is the name given to a group of bacteria that is found in almost all water sources including rivers and lakes. It can also be found in soil, compost and mains water and can potentially thrive in domestic water systems.

Is Legionella harmful?

Legionella can be harmful if the conditions are right for the bacteria to multiply and if you inhale water droplets from a contaminated water system. Generally legionella bacteria exists naturally in low numbers in all water supplied to the home. With normal regular use this causes no problems. The risk occurs where bacteria can increase and multiply to dangerous levels.

Main risk areas in the home are shower heads, taps and even washing machine or dishwasher pipes. Legionella bacteria is more likely to grow between 20°C and 45°C and where there is sludge, scale and rust for the bacteria to feed on.

What can I do?

Ensure all taps and showers are used at least once a week. If they are not used regularly or if you have been on holiday run all your taps for a few minutes before using the water. You'll also need to run the water in your shower. Make sure the water doesn't spray or splash too much as this can create water droplets.

Keep taps and shower heads clean and free from lime scale, mould or algae growth. Brush the scale off with a nylon brush and wipe with a diluted bleach solution. You can also buy de-scaling solution from hardware shops.

Keep hot water on your boiler or hot water cylinders set to 60°C or greater.

Report any rust or unusual deposits flowing from water outlets to us on 01395 517458 or email repairs@eastdevon.gov.uk

Correct Use of Solid Fuel Appliances

GRAHAM BAKER
Housing Property
and Asset Manager

It has been brought to our attention that there have been cases of the wrong type of fuel being burned in solid fuel burning appliances. This can cause issues with excessive tar build up in chimney flues which can result in chimney blockages. In order to reduce the likelihood of blockages occurring, please ensure the correct types of fuel are burned. Examples of the correct and incorrect types of fuel to burn are shown in the box opposite.

Please refer to the operating instructions for the appliance in your home for more information on the correct/incorrect types of fuel to burn.

If you do not have operating instructions for the appliance in your home, please telephone or email Repairs on 01395 517458 or email repairs@eastdevon.gov.uk and we will arrange for operating instructions to be sent to you.

Thank you for your co-operation.



Correct fuel types

- ✓ Thoroughly dried seasoned wood
- ✓ Kiln dried logs
- ✓ Wood briquettes
- ✓ Heat logs
- ✓ Smokeless coal (if a multi-fuel burner)

Incorrect fuel types

- ✗ Damp unseasoned wood
- ✗ Damp coal

Gas Leak or Emergency

MICHELLE DAVIDSON
Senior Compliance
Surveyor

If you smell gas within your home or your carbon monoxide detector activates, you should follow the following steps:

- ✓ Open all windows and doors
- ✓ Turn off all fuel burning appliances and leave the house
- ✓ Don't switch on any electrics or lights
- ✓ If you are able to isolate the gas safely please do so by turning it off at the emergency control valve
- ✓ Once outside call Wales and West Gas Emergency Service on 0800 111 999 and do not re-enter the property
- ✓ If you feel ill or exhibit any of the following symptoms, headaches, dizziness, breathlessness, nausea please seek urgent medical attention

If you have any concerns regarding your gas appliances within your home, please contact our Repairs team on 01395 517458.

GET INVOLVED

Budding Artist or Keen Photographer Winners

TIM FAIRHEAD
Mobile Support Officer

In our winter 2019 edition of Housing Matters we held a 'budding artist' competition where we were looking to support local artists to send us their artwork to go on the walls and liven up the guest bedrooms at Ratcliffe House (Burnside) in Exmouth and Park Close, Woodbury. The Mobile Support Officer teams have chosen the winners as follows:

- Burnside community centre winning entry – hanging baskets by Samantha Wakefield.
- Woodbury community centre – Jacobs Ladder by Samantha Wakefield

The standard of entries were all excellent and we would like to thank all of those who submitted their work.

As an addition, the Woodbury team were so impressed by Daniel Wakefield's (aged 11) picture of the jetty and boardwalk, they would like to hang it in the community centre at Churchill Court, Lympstone for all of the visitors there to admire.



Winning entries: Jacobs Ladder, Sidmouth by Samantha Wakefield (main picture); Daniel Wakefield's picture of the jetty and boardwalk and hanging baskets by Samantha Wakefield



GET INVOLVED



EDDC Tenants' Garden Competition 2020

BEV ANDERSON
Tenant Participation Assistant

Once again, the tenants of East Devon District Council have excelled themselves during this difficult year with a beautiful display of gardens. There were 22 entries this year, not as many as usual due to it being digital entries only. Kieron Bewes (Horticultural Consultant) was the judge and using the Royal Horticultural Society judging method. There were 11 gold prizes, six Silver and five Bronze.

The Tenants' Garden Competition is an annual event organised by Bev Anderson, Tenant Participation Assistant within the Housing Service at East Devon District Council.

The winners received their prizes and certificates through the post due to Covid-19 as we were unable to provide a prize giving event this year.

Commenting on this year's tenants' gardening competition Cllr Megan Armstrong, East Devon District Council's portfolio holder for Sustainable Homes and Communities, said: "It's wonderful that the Tenants' Garden Competition has gone ahead again this year, despite the difficulties we have all faced with the Covid-19 situation. Although there were fewer entries than usual, which is quite understandable, I would like to congratulate everyone who entered and won a prize. I hope that next year we will be able to have the usual garden competition with many more participants when I will once again be able to meet everyone in person at the prize giving day.

Meanwhile well done to all concerned!



COMPETITION WINNERS

Name	Location	Award	Category
Miss B Davey	Axminster	Gold	Youth Garden
Miss R Davey	Axminster	Gold	Youth Garden
Mr Rhodes	Honiton	Gold	Seated Garden
Mr Taylor	Broadhembury,	Gold	Overall Garden
Mrs Corrick	Seaton	Gold	Balcony Garden
Mrs Kimber	Newton Poppleford	Gold	Border Garden
Mrs Leaman	Exmouth	Gold	Seated Garden
Mrs Wakely	Whitford	Gold	Overall Garden
Mrs Ward	Kilmington	Gold	Border Garden
Mr Woodman	Seaton	Gold	Seated Garden
Mrs Dale	Honiton	Gold	Seated Garden
Harepath Communal	Seaton	Silver	Communal Overall Garden
Miss Davey	Axminster	Silver	Overall Garden
Mr Ferreday	Exmouth	Silver	Seated Garden
Mrs Lodge	Broadclyst	Silver	Overall Garden
Mrs Sullivan	Sidmouth	Silver	Seated Garden
Mrs Beer	Broadclyst	Silver	Border Garden
Mrs Sandford	Broadclyst	Bronze	Border Garden
Arcot Park Communal	Sidmouth	Bronze	Communal Seated Garden
Mr Kellow	Honiton	Bronze	Border Garden
Mrs Polkey	Honiton	Bronze	Seated Garden
Mrs Wood	Exmouth	Bronze	Border Garden

The sponsors this year were:
 Ian Williams Ltd
 Liberty Gas
 Kieron Bewes - Horticultural Consultant
 Bradfords

Images clockwise from top left:
 Mrs Dale's garden in Honiton, winning entry
 by Mrs Kimber of Newton Poppleford,
 winning entry from Harepath Residents
 Association, Seaton, Mrs Sullivan's garden
 in Sidmouth, entry in the 'Youth Garden'
 category by Bella of Axminster



Food Support for Tenants in East Devon

VICTORIA ROBINSON
Community Development Worker

For two years we have been running a food support scheme in Axminster, in collaboration with Fareshare, a national charity. Local professionals such as schools, police, councillors and housing officers refer tenants to Fareshare for support.

'Waste' food from several supermarkets is collected at the end of the day and distributed to tenants who have been identified as needing support. 'Waste' food

is where it has reached its sell by date or which doesn't have a bar code or date and so can't be sold. At its peak we have supported 30 people in 11 tenant addresses.

Since September 2019 we have been working with Shelley Wright of Fareshare to try to increase the number of people supported across the district by setting up an East Devon Food Hub in Honiton, chosen for its central location.

This scheme allows community groups to collect food to distribute to their networks

because we recognise that local groups are best placed to know the people needing support.

The Covid-19 lockdown bought plans forward and several emergency deliveries were made.

The District Council funded Trip (Honiton community transport) to collect food from Bristol with the first delivery of food having arrived on 18 June also made collections.

Honiton Community College joined this partnership and used their share to add to food parcels for their pupils who qualify for free school meals.

An EDDC tenant and founder of Open Arms (mental health charity based at Dunning Court, Honiton) Garry Wakeham is using the food to support people who would normally come to his sessions, the Honiton Homeless shelter and some of our supported tenants.

The Pippins Community Centre in Axminster are part of the project with food parcels here assisting people who attend the Together Hub and the Job Club (a number of whom are EDDC tenants) which run from Pippins.

Ottery Community Volunteers have taken food to support households in their town.

The Hub has supported over 100 households and we hope to have the scheme running permanently across the whole district by Christmas when we realise that people may still be feeling the effects of lockdown and the difficulties it has created.

If you would like to volunteer to help the scheme in Axminster or Honiton please contact Victoria Robinson on 07870 836752 or email vrobinson@eastdevon.gov.uk



Left: in the food freezer
Below: at FareShare's Central Street cookery school



GUEST CONTRIBUTION

FareShare South West – Move Into Devon

SHELLEY WRIGHT
Development Manager,
FareShare Services

A FareShare service will soon be available in the region for local charities, schools and small initiatives to benefit from.

About FareShare South West

FareShare South West forms part of the UK's largest food charity called FareShare. They are one of a network of 21 centres located across the country and are a community of independent franchised charities, all fighting the same issues regarding food waste and hunger. Over 270,000 tonnes of perfectly edible surplus food is thrown away each year and FareShare want to see that food put to good use. FareShare South West help tackle food poverty by redistributing surplus food across the region, using quality, in-date surplus food which would otherwise have gone to waste.

FareShare and Exeter Food Action – A local partnership

In October 2020, FareShare South West brought the service to Exeter and will soon be extending their support across Devon including East Devon, Mid Devon, Torbay and Teignbridge in partnership with Exeter Food Action.

The partnership will offer not-for-profit initiatives and a membership service, where food will be delivered on a weekly basis with a regular supply of vegetables, fruit, meat, dairy, tinned, and all food categories. The warehouse team work with each initiative to create an individual food profile based on their food needs. FareShare fundraise to cover the majority of the costs, however they do ask for a small contribution towards the service to help cover the storage and transport.

Community Food Membership

FareShare South West is currently building a waiting list for East Devon, ready for the project to extend into the region launching within the next few months. If you are a not-for-profit project, charity or school using food to support your community, please register your interest here: www.faresharesouthwest.org.uk/get-food/joining-fareshare

VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITY Driver and Driver's Assistant Exeter

FareShare and Exeter Food Action will soon be looking for vital volunteers to support with the delivery of food supplies to their network across Exeter, East Devon, Mid Devon, Torbay and Teignbridge.

You must be over 18, have a full, clean licence and be confident driving a 3.5 tonne van.

Location: Marsh Barton, Exeter
Hours: 1 Shift PW (up to 6 hours)

To express your interest or for more information, please contact the Development Manager at: shelley.wright@fareshare.org.uk

GET INVOLVED

EMAIL
ENTRIES
BY 23 DEC



COMPETITIONS



FOR EVERYONE BEST DRESSED CHRISTMAS TREE COMPETITION

Show off your Christmas tree decorating skills

To enter our competition all you have to do is to send us one digital picture of your decorated Christmas tree on the 23 December, to tenantparticipation@eastdevon.gov.uk along with your name, age and address. All ages welcome. Our team of judges will review all the entries in January 2021 and the person who sends in the photograph of the best-decorated tree will win a food hamper, which has been donated by contractors Ian Williams and three runner ups will win £20 each.

The photographs of the winning Christmas tree and the runners up will appear in our spring 2021 edition of Housing Matters.

When you send us your picture of your amazing Christmas tree, please let us know whether you are happy for them to be put on our social media sites, as we would love to be able to share them with others, without releasing your identity or address of course.



FOR YOUNG PEOPLE CHRISTMAS CARD COMPETITION

Are you 17 or under and creative?

Why not make a Christmas card for a family member and send us a digital picture of your card on the 23 December to tenantparticipation@eastdevon.gov.uk along with your name, age and address.

Our team of judges will review all the entries in January 2021 and the person who sends in the photograph of the best-decorated card will win £30 and three runner ups will win £15 each. The photographs of the winning card and the runners up will appear in our spring 2021 edition of Housing Matters.

When you send us your picture of your amazing Christmas card, please let us know whether you are happy for them to be put on our social media sites, as we would love to be able to share them with others, without releasing your identity or address of course.

AT HOME



NICKY BOWMAN Waste Management Officer

Can you safely reheat rice? Fed up with throwing away mouldy bread?

If this sounds familiar, you're not alone. In the UK, we throw away 6.7 million tonnes of food a year, that's a third of the food we buy. Nearly half of that is fresh fruit and vegetables, bread, dairy, rice and pasta. If you are a family of four, a few tweaks and changes could save you as much as £800 a year!

For tips and recipes, download your FREE copy of 'Have Your Food and Eat It' to help make your food and money go further. Whether you're a culinary novice, kitchen whizz or just need some inspiration, there are a range of recipes guaranteed to tempt your taste buds. Research shows that we throw away more food than we think we do. Some of the common reasons are buying too much in the first place, improper storage, not eating

things in time and cooking too much, especially pasta and rice. If this sounds familiar, following these top tips can help you waste less and save money.

Shop smart by writing a shopping list, look for food with the longest use by date and buy local, seasonal food.

Meal planning will save you time and money and help you make the most out of the food you buy.

Be a freezer hero! You can freeze pretty much everything, milk, hard cheese, bread and much more. Some items change texture once defrosted so they may be better suited for cooking with instead. Know your dates, it's best to plan your meals around 'use by' dates and freeze any food that won't be used in time.

'Best before' dates refer to quality, for example, flavour or texture.

Portion size planning will make sure you only cook what you need. 'Have Your Food and

Eat It' has all the answers and more. Packed with facts, tips and advice, it's the ideal go-to for making your food go further and money last longer. Whatever food you love, this book can help you waste less and save you money and it's a lot easier than you might think. There is a delicious cheese sauce recipe in the pack for you to try. For more food saving ideas and recipes, visit www.recycledevon.org.



DID YOU KNOW?

EDDC collects about 300 tonnes of dog waste a year and for some time now the waste goes to the Energy from Waste plant at Exeter along with our refuse. So it is used to generate electricity.

GUEST CONTRIBUTION

Loan Shark Victim Receives Hero Award for Bravery

**National Trading Standards
Illegal Money Lending Team**

Don't be intimidated or bitten by loan sharks, speak out and get help today!

A loan shark victim who was driven to the brink of suicide has been awarded the CTSI Brian Smith Hero Award by the Chartered Trading Standards Institute (CTSI) for his courage and bravery throughout his harrowing ordeal. Matthew, whose name has been changed to protect his identity, initially took out a small loan in desperation after giving up work to care for his sick wife. The debts quickly rose as he struggled to make extortionate repayments, and he soon found himself in thousands of pounds worth of debt to unscrupulous illegal money lenders. Besieged and intimidated by loan sharks in his own home and under constant threat of violence, Matthew spiralled into depression and almost took his own life. Instead, Matthew contacted the England Illegal Money Lending Team, and his evidence and support led to a successful prosecution.

Having since moved on Matthew has spoken out about his experience, undertaking media appearances to raise awareness of the risks of loan sharks. His story has been shared across the UK prison network to help prisoners and families avoid illegal lenders.

The CTSI Hero Awards celebrate those who make outstanding contributions towards consumer protection in our communities. Matthew received his award at the CTSI Hero Awards 2019 ceremony. The CTSI Brian Smith Hero Award is named in honour of the late Brian Smith, a CTSI Lead Officer who sadly



passed away in 2017. Tony Quigley, Head of the England Illegal Money Lending Team, said: "We are grateful to all the brave victims who have shared their stories to raise awareness and help others. Matthew has shown tremendous courage throughout this terrifying ordeal. His bravery and actions during the investigation led to the arrest and conviction of the unscrupulous loan sharks. We appreciate his continued support of the team and congratulate him on this fantastic achievement". Loan sharks are using social media platforms to advertise their illegal loans and target potential victims. If you've been affected by aof loan sharks operating in your area, contact the Stop Loan Sharks 24-hour confidential hotline on 0300 555 2222. You can also text a report to 078600 22116 or visit www.stoploansharks.co.uk

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You can also text a report to 078600 22116 or visit www.stoploansharks.co.uk For further information on loan sharks visit our website www.stoploansharks.uk



Free Advice for Energy Efficiency

DEIRDRE RYAN
Community Development Officer

Did you know that there is a local organisation that will help you make your home more energy efficient at no cost to you?

When Exeter Community Energy (ECO) was established by local people in 2014 to bring about practical change in the community by addressing energy related challenges, one of their aims was to promote practical, local, low-carbon solutions that address the climate impact of our reliance on fossil fuels.

Healthy Homes for Wellbeing, an ECOE project, provides free energy advice and Local

Energy Advice Partnership (LEAP) home visits for those who are eligible in a number of areas including East Devon. Their Home Energy Advisers give practical energy advice and support to the vulnerable and those in fuel poverty.

LEAP is a free service which provides important advice, support and energy saving measures to eligible households.

ECO are not running drop-in clinics at the moment due to Covid-19 restrictions, however these may start up if more community centres and venues return to some normality. Currently they are offering LEAP telephone advice and short follow

up visits. The follow up visit will only happen if it is Covid-19 safe for the visit to take place.

The service includes:

- Energy saving advice
- Installing free energy saving measures
- Energy supplier support with billing, meters, debt, switching and applying for discounts
- Referral for help with benefits and debt
- Signing up for priority services register and South West Water social tariffs.

The criteria for eligibility are deliberately broad to cater for the wide range of issues that contribute to vulnerability and fuel poverty. To be eligible for support, only one criteria needs to be met including having a low income, receiving tax credits, housing benefits, income and disability related benefits, have a long term illness (physical or mental), disability or recent bereavement.

You can refer direct to us via our online referral form at www.ecoe.org.uk/healthy-homes-wellbeing/referral-form or via LEAP's online referral form www.applyforleap.org.uk/apply or ring 01395 276734, or email: gill@ecoe.org.uk
www.ecoe.org.uk/healthy-homes-wellbeing/referral-form

Exeter Community Energy
Healthy Homes for Wellbeing

Do you want lower energy bills?
Do you struggle to heat your home?

Free telephone energy advice
Arrange a free home visit if you're eligible

healthyhomes@ecoe.org.uk 0800 772 3617
www.ecoe.org.uk/healthy-homes-wellbeing

LEAP
LOCAL ENERGY ADVICE PARTNERSHIP

GUEST CONTRIBUTION

Insurance Makes Sense

WILL MORRISON
Account Executive,
Thistle Insurance
Services Limited

Your landlord does not cover your home contents and personal belongings. So, it's a good idea to consider what a home contents insurance policy would cover you for. When you move into your property, you should think about protecting your personal possessions and home contents. These include your furniture, carpets, curtains, clothes, bedding, and electrical items. And don't forget your jewellery, pictures and ornaments. All tenants and leaseholders are eligible to apply for the Crystal Insurance Scheme, which can cover your home contents and belongings against, fire, theft, water damage and flood. Reasons to choose the Crystal Insurance Scheme: Apply over the telephone or complete an application form. Covers theft, water damage, fire and many more household risks. Covers tenants improve-

ments (up to £2,000 or 20% of the sum insured). Covers theft or attempted theft of contents in sheds, outbuildings and garages (up to £3,000). Covers damage to external glazing for which you are responsible for. Covers replacement and installation of locks for outside doors or windows and alarms, if keys are lost or stolen. You don't need to have special door or window locks (just a lockable front door). All postcodes are included. Flexible regular Pay-As-You-Go payment options (fortnightly and monthly premiums include

a transaction charge). Limits and exclusions apply, a full policy wording is available on request. If you would like a member of the Crystal Insurance team to call you back at a convenient time to discuss cover, optional covers available and premiums. Visit www.crystal-insurance.co.uk and request a call back today. Protect your belongings against fire, theft, flood and much more. For further information or to apply for cover call Crystal Insurance on 0345 450 7286 or email crystal@thistleinsurance.co.uk.

The Crystal Insurance Scheme is a product name arranged and administered by Thistle Tenant Risks a trading style of Thistle Insurance Services Limited. Thistle Insurance Services Limited is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority FRN 310419. Registered in England under No. 00338645. Registered office: Rossington's Business Park, West Carr Road, Retford, Nottinghamshire, DN22 7SW. Thistle Insurance Services Limited is part of the PIB Group. For information about what we do with personal data please see our Privacy Policy at www.crystal-insurance.co.uk/Privacy-Policy



IN YOUR COMMUNITY

TENANT CONTRIBUTION

Broadclyst Fundraising Attempt for Clyst Caring Friends

JULIE KELLEHER
Broadclyst Tenant

I have been inspired by recent fundraising events around the country and I wanted to raise money to aid Clyst Caring Friends.

Clyst Caring Friends was founded in 1986 by Dr Walker at Pinhoe surgery, who realised there was a need for a transport service to help patients attend medical appointments. With local help the charity was formed and have been going strong ever since, providing patient transport service,

social activities and running a day centre for local elderly, infirm, disabled or isolated residents.

One of Clyst Caring Friends sources of income is its popular charity shop behind the post office in Broadclyst. Staffed entirely by volunteers, it relies on people donating and buying a wide range of items, however, due to closures during the Covid-19 pandemic, this was not possible and the charity was losing vital income.

I started a fundraising page on Go Fund Me as I wanted to complete 100 laps (over six miles) around where I live to try and raise £500. I suffer from Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) and have mobility issues, so this was very important to my health too. Whilst adhering to self-distancing regulations, I achieved this in April 2020 with the help of my walker and by completing a minimum of five laps a day.

Thank you to everyone who has sponsored me. This challenge gave me a purpose every day. My goal was to raise £500 and I exceed all my expectations and raised approximately £640.

Stay safe and many thanks to you all.

Julie Kelleher who completed 100 laps of the area where she lives in Broadclyst



TENANT CONTRIBUTION

Courage and Determination

Next step: Invictus Paralympic Games



SALLY CRANMER Exmouth Tenant

After qualifying to be a nurse, my ambition was to go on to become a surgeon in the army. Unfortunately I sustained an injury whilst on exercise. My leg had to be amputated below the knee. This put paid to my career.

I developed severe depression and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Anorexia nervosa followed initially with the grief due to loss of both of my parents who were my carers. This became calorific, the more weight I lost the better I felt. Leading to almost losing my life and a spell in a coma. I was in an eating disorder unit for three years.

I survived on nutrition drinks for over ten years. Because of past events, I have not had and will never have a normal diet.

After leaving the 'unit life', I was given a home with independent living with support.

I have a mobile support officer from the council who contacts me weekly which is helpful. Also support from the community mental health team, along with various enablers and carers.

I need assistance with daily activities to enable me to live some sort of quality life. Simple things like

Sally Cranmer with her many awards

household chores, changing my bed, ironing, putting the bins out etc.

Getting out for necessities (doctors' appointments etc.) are all impossible for me on my own.

I have had various hobbies over the years, art, music etc. but in May 2019, my main enabler who has been with me for two years, has helped me so much and turned my life around who suggested I try swimming. On 10 May for the first time, I got into the water and I was like a ball rolling over, I couldn't even float because of the loss of limb affecting my buoyancy. Within weeks I was swimming faster and faster. I had a 'lecture' (one of many) about nutrition. If I wanted to swim properly I needed to give my body what it needed.

I joined the gym to build my strength and get fit enough to swim, it was suggested I have protein and have fruit smoothies (as I won't eat). I have done this because it's a necessity for my swimming, but my weight is a battle obviously, I feel a fatty although I'm told I'm not. That's anorexia for you. I have regular fruit smoothies (even bought a freezer to keep them in) and protein drinks. I have put on muscle weight, which is a struggle for me but swimming is also important to me.

I have had lessons from swimming coaches including a Paralympic swimmer. The support from everyone at the pool, the gym, my enablers, carers, Mobile Support Officers (Scott, Tim, Margaret) and coaches has been overwhelming at times.

I entered my first competition four months later and won four medals and a trophy. How proud am I? Next step Invictus Paralympic Games.

In August last year I received my much awaited new leg, thanks to Blesma who provide support to limbless and injured veterans, as this has made such a difference to my walking, although I do still need my crutches due to my back problems but it is so much less painful to walk on it now. I still need my wheelchair indoors and for lengthy trips outside.



TENANT CONTRIBUTION

Art Strokes of Perseverance

If you can't do something,
just persevere

CHRIS STATON
Exmouth Tenant

I am 64 years young a retired Control and Instrumentation Engineer. For over 30 years I worked as a contractor travelling the world going where the work was. From the Shetland Isles to Saudi Arabia and nearly everywhere in England, Scotland and Wales.

When I was a young lad, I went to visit my cousin in Oldham and he told me that to get on in life you need neat handwriting. So, I practiced my handwriting non-stop for years. This led to me becoming proficient in calligraphy. As a calligraphy piece starts with a picture, this got me interested in art. Over the years the art just took over.

Whilst working away from home for months at a time, in my downtime I would draw pictures using a multitude of mediums, although I preferred pen and ink.

Then in 2013 I suffered two strokes,

Continued on next page →

IN YOUR COMMUNITY

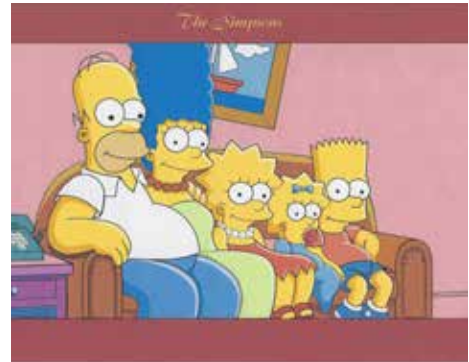
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one on the left side followed a few months later with a big one on my right side.

I had never owned a computer because I was working with industrial computers every day, but after the strokes, my left side was weak and my right side wouldn't work at all, so I bought a laptop.

That was it, I didn't know how I had ever managed without one. This in turn led me to purchasing an all in one computer and in time I purchased a drawing programme.

I try to keep busy doing things around the house as I am not the type to sit in a chair and feel sorry for myself. But come the evening I relax by knocking out some pictures. It was difficult in the beginning as I used to be right-handed, so manipulating the mouse with my left hand was totally alien to me. But as in life if you can't do something, just persevere and in time you hope to improve day by day. Here are just a few of my drawings.



Just a few examples of artwork done by Chris Staton





TENANT CONTRIBUTION

A Eulogy to Vida Phillips

SUE SAUNDERS
Exmouth Tenant

It is always a sad time when we lose a loved one or a good friend but the loss of Vida on the 11 May 2020 will be deeply felt by many who came to rely on her unwavering generosity.

She was not only a tenant of East Devon, she was at the heart of the entire Littleham community for a great many years, giving her precious time not only to the older residents but also to the youngsters.

Vida was an active member of the Trefoil Guild, a branch of the Girl Guides, made up of ex- guide officers. Members work to support the organisation by sharing their experience and by raising funds. Vida was both a Guiding, District and Divisional Commissioner.

Littleham Primary School also benefitted from her sense of duty, Vida helped teach many children to read.

As Chair of the Bidmead Social Club, she was responsible for arranging all kinds of activities and outings. She was always there, totally reliable and loved by all.

In 2010, the residents of Littleham voted her Littleham's Unsung Hero and we couldn't have chosen a more worthy recipient.



Obituary to David Scott

BEV ANDERSON
Tenant Participation
Assistant

It was with great sadness that I have learned a long standing tenant volunteer with East Devon District Council had passed away on Wednesday 20 May 2020.

David Scott was a life-long champion of Exmouth, who was chairman of Exmouth's town committee from 1981 until 1984 and served on East Devon District Council from 1974 until 1999, who later became an Honorary Alderman of council. Alderman Scott, of Dray Court, had lived in Exmouth since 1963, who was a member of many tenant involvement groups over years and enjoyed challenging the council on their 'communication and action'.

Last year when he was a sprightly 88 year old, he decided to take on a

challenge and lead a protest march if Exmouth town's full time fire and rescue service was cut. He would not shy away in trying to help others.

Peter Sullivan, Vice Chairman, Housing Review Board said "Having known David for many years as a Councillor and a member of Tenant Participation, who always fought his corner in his own inimitable way, it is with personal sadness of hearing of his passing, no doubt he will carry on upstairs telling them how to communicate with action as he always did".

Sue Bewes, Housing Landlord Services Manager said "Such a lovely man and a great advocate for us as officers and the services we provide. When I first came to EDDC in 1994 he was chairman of the Housing Committee, and a passionate advocate on our behalf even then.

After he retired from council life, he continued to be very involved as a tenant of ours at Dray Court, contributing through many different residents associations and tenant panels over the years.

He will be sorely missed, and a lot of folk will be saddened by his passing. The end of an era. It is particularly sad that we could not attend his funeral, especially as he was always the first to attend those of fellow involved tenants. I had my own few minutes contemplation for him while sitting quietly under the trees to show my respect in some small way".

We shall miss David at our meetings and we send our thoughts and condolences to his family.



Tributes Paid to ‘Mr. Axminster’ Alderman Douglas Hull

ALISON STONEHAM
Communications and
Public Affairs Manager

Alderman Hull was one of East Devon’s longest serving local councillors holding a series of elected offices over a period of more than 50 years.

East Devon District Council Alderman Douglas Hull, who died earlier this year, was Mr. Axminster, a much loved Councillor who sincerely held his constituents close to his heart, writes Cllr Eileen Wragg, Deputy Leader of the Council.

Cllr Wragg said that Alderman Hull could be seen as flamboyant, even eccentric at times, but what was not in doubt was the compassion and empathy that he had for others. The changes

which he helped to bring about in Axminster and beyond are testament to that. His speeches at all levels of Local Government made others listen, and were passionate and heartfelt.

His colleagues are already missing Douglas, but the people who will feel the loss of his presence most are his beloved residents of Axminster. Douglas and his cherished wife, Joy, had no children, and they considered the Axminster community as their family. What a fitting tribute it would be to honour them both, perhaps by naming one of their achievements as a permanent memorial.

A former Axminster mayor who served three times in the role, Alderman Hull was one of East Devon’s longest serving

local councillors holding a series of elected offices over a period of more than 50 years.

Cllr Andrew Moulding, who represents Axminster, said that Alderman Hull served at different times on Hawkchurch Parish Council, Axminster Rural District Council, Axminster Town Council, and East Devon District Council where he was made an Honorary Alderman in December 2019, and Devon County Council, where he was also an Honorary Alderman, and a former vice-chairman.

Cllr Moulding said of all the things he achieved, the one of which he was most proud was the establishment of the Millwey Industrial Estate, without which Axminster would be a much less prosperous and viable community. Axminster has lost one of its longest-serving supporters.

He worked tremendously hard for local charities and some of the money he raised he used to set up a group to help children who suffered from dyslexia, as he did himself.

His funeral took place on Friday 12 June 2020.

KEEPING YOUR PERSONAL DATA SAFE | AN EXPLANATION FROM THE COUNCIL

Any personal information which you provide will be held and used by East Devon District Council for the purpose of resident involvement.

Your information may be provided to a third party acting on our behalf. Your information may also be shared within East Devon

District Council for the purposes of carrying out our lawful functions. Otherwise your personal information will not be disclosed to anybody outside East Devon District Council without your permission, unless there is a lawful reason to do so for example, disclosure is necessary

for crime prevention or detection purposes.

Your information will be held securely and will not be retained for any longer than is necessary. There are a number of rights available to you in relation to our use of your personal information depending on the reason for processing.

Further details about our use of your personal information can be found in the relevant Privacy Notice which can be accessed at eastdevon.gov.uk/media/2505620/landlord-services-administering-a-tenant-participation-and-involvement-scheme.pdf.

TENANTS' VIEWS



SEND US YOUR PHOTOS

THIS IS OUR REGULAR PHOTO FEATURE, A GREAT AND QUICK WAY FOR YOU TO GET INVOLVED.

Our photo this time is an aerial view of Budleigh Salterton by Mr D Ebborn

HOW DO I SEND YOU MY PICTURES?

Please don't send images of people, as it makes getting their permission difficult. **Send us a digital photo:** email high resolution JPG images to tenantparticipation@eastdevon.gov.uk.

