

RESIDENT NEWSLETTER

Creating places that people love to come home to
July 2024 Issue



Great Places, Great Service, Great Business and Great People

Cornerstone Gardening Competition 2024

Enter by
3rd August

Calling all green fingered residents!

Whether you have a full lawn with flowerbeds or a selection of hanging baskets and pots at your home - everyone can enter!

- Best overall garden – £100
- Most creative use of space - £25
- Best young gardener - £25
- Tallest sunflower - £25

To enter, please email 3 photos of your garden to **mail@cornerstonehousing.net**, include your name, address.

Closing date for entries is August 3rd. Our resident engagement panel will judge all the entries the first week of August.



NEWSLETTER
FREQUENCY



SPONSORSHIP



SHOWERHEADS



OUT OF HOURS
REMINDER

CONTACT US



Postal

Cornerstone House
Western Way
Exeter
EX1 1AL

Please note our office is
appointment only



Customer Service

01392 273462
(Option 3)

mail@cornerstonehousing.net



Repairs

01392 273462
(Option 1)

repairs@cornerstonehousing.net

We are open Monday to Friday
from 9.00am – 5.00pm.

What you can do on our website

- Report an ASB Incident
- Report a repair
- View your tenant handbook
- Apply for a mutual exchange
- Make a complaint, give feedback or a compliment

Out of hours

If you have an emergency with your home outside of our normal opening hours, you can call **01392 273462** (option 1) and your call will be diverted to our out-of-hours team.

WELCOME FROM JANET

Hello Everyone,

Another bumper-packed Newsletter for you this month.

Who won the Spring photo competition? The winner's name is announced.

Downsizing Policy reminder. The staff and Residents Engagement Panel worked hard and long on this policy to get it right for you.

Complaints - Myths. There are several myths surrounding complaints, these are now BUSTED! It is a good read.

Western Way Drop-in - Please come and join the staff, the Residents Engagement Panel and special guests, a day filled with information and help.

News on the frequency of the Tenants Newsletter, so a must-read.

These are just a few items of interest to you.

We are still looking for more residents to join the Residents Engagement Panel. So, please come forward and help, it is not all hard work, and certainly not boring. We also want Residents to become email eagles, this is to read through our policies.

Summer holidays are about to start, so, let's hope for better weather.

Janet Gale
Chair, Residents Engagement Panel



WESTERN WAY RECEPTION OPENING

Starting on Wednesday 24th July 2024 we will be opening our reception for residents to drop by and speak with Housing Officers, customer services and other support services from around Exeter. The office will be open from 12 noon till 3 pm each Wednesday.

Some of the support services we will have attending over the next couple of months are South West Water and ECoE (Exeter Community Energy)

**Starting on Wednesday 24th July 2024
12 noon until 3pm**

TREE SURVEY

Throughout August, Advanced Arboriculture will be completing necessary tree surveys across all of our properties. The vast majority of the work can be done without any disruption or inconvenience to you, however, should they need access to your home to gain better access to a tree they will make an appointment with you directly by putting a card through your door. We ask for your cooperation should you be contacted by Advanced Arboriculture so that we can ensure the safety of any trees within your garden.



If you have any questions regarding tree surveys please email **compliance@cornerstonehousing.net** or call us on **01392 273462**





CORNERSTONE COMPLAINTS – IMPROVING OUR SERVICE TO YOU

We think of complaints as a way for us to improve how happy people are with their homes and the neighbourhoods we help manage.

- We will never judge anyone for reporting something they are not happy about. You can report issues to us knowing we will take them seriously and help if possible.
- We cannot evict you from your home for raising a complaint or reporting anti-social behaviour.
- We take all complaints seriously and will respond using your preferred method of communication within the timelines set out by the Housing Ombudsman

Our Tenant Satisfaction survey responses told us that last year (April 2023 to March 2024) 53% of our residents are happy with how we respond to complaints.

Because of this feedback and because we want to provide the best possible service to residents we have been:

- reviewing our internal process and procedures
- implementing a better system to help us track and manage complaints, which is easy for our staff to use
- providing complaints training to our staff

Remember, if you are unhappy with your home, Cornerstone staff performance or how we provide services you can raise a complaint by visiting our website, emailing mail@cornerstonehousing.net or calling us on 01392 273462.

You can find more information about the Housing Ombudsman at www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk or calling 0300 111 3000

ESTATE INSPECTIONS

Our housing officers have been out and about recently looking at different estates. Most estates are looking great and it's nice to see gardens in bloom (don't forget our gardening competition) A small reminder to all residents about dog mess please do not let dogs foul in communal areas. Please remember to pick up and dispose of it in a suitable bin.

If you see poo left in public places you can report it to Environmental Health who can issue fines and you can report it here: www.exeter.gov.uk/clean-safe-city/environment/dogs-information-and-advice/report-dog-fouling/



NEWSLETTER FREQUENCY

Following on from the survey in the last two issues of the newsletter, the results were taken to the Resident Engagement Panel meeting on 3rd July where it was decided we will be moving the newsletter to a quarterly publication.

We will now be issuing the newsletter in the following months

- April
- July
- October
- January

Please follow us on Instagram and Facebook for updates in between newsletters.



LOVE FOOD CIC SPONSORSHIP

In 2023 we opened our yearly sponsorship fund. The winner this year was Love Food CIC who have just opened a new food hub in St Thomas. As part of the sponsorship, they have had brand-new aprons and canvas bags made.

The St Thomas Community Food Hub is run by Love Food CIC is now open at 95 Cowick St, EX4 1JF. The hub will host many different food activities, including a pay-what-you-can lunch club on Thursdays. The community fridge will be moving here in September with free food for all, they also offer free and low-cost plant-based cooking sessions which include energy-saving cooking, as well as other food and community activities. For more information on the workshop available visit www.facebook.com/lovefoodcic.

Love Food CIC is always looking for more volunteers to help out, if you are interested email lovefoodcic@gmail.com



Live & Move



**SPORT
ENGLAND**

FREE SUMMER FOOTBALL SESSIONS IN MERRIVALE PARK ARE BACK!



**SATURDAYS STARTING 29TH JUNE:
- 10-11AM (3-12 YEARS)**

**BOOKING ESSENTIAL - CONTACT
JON@THEFOOTBALLFUNFACTORY.CO.UK**

MONDAYS STARTING 1ST JULY:

- 5-6PM - PRIMARY SCHOOL CHILDREN**
- 6-7PM - SECONDARY SCHOOL CHILDREN**

**BOOKING ESSENTIAL - USE QR CODE OR CONTACT
PARTICIPATION@ECCT.CO.UK**



HOUSEHOLD SUPPORT FUND



Exeter
City Council

If you are an Exeter resident on a low income and you are struggling with the increasing cost of living, you may be able to receive help towards the cost of:

- Food
- Heating and Water
- Other essentials

Awards are made through a voucher posted to your address, which can be exchanged for cash at any Post Office branch.

To apply complete the application form at
www.exeter.gov.uk/benefits-and-welfare/help-managing-your-money/household-support-fund/

Eligibility Eligible households must:

- contain at least one member who is over the age of 16;
- be responsible for household bills (rent or mortgage, utilities etc);
- Live in the Exeter City Council area (as their main residence);
- Be without sufficient resources to meet the immediate short-term needs of themselves or dependents.

The Council will try, where possible, to use the funding to provide support that has a long-term sustainable impact, for example, household items which would reduce bills in the long term.

If you need any help with this please get in touch with us.



ST GABRIELS SCHOOL FETE

We attended St Gabriels School fete on Friday 28th June. We enjoyed speaking to all our residents and getting people to play our open-the-front-door game. Bob and Janet from our Resident engagement panel hosted the name the dog games.

If you would like Cornerstone to attend any community events please email us at **mail@cornerstonehousing.net**



SAFETY WARNING

START STOP SHOWER HEADS

We have started to see a trend in people changing their showerheads to a new start stop shower head with a button. This allows the water to stop while the shower is running. Start/stop-button showerheads are a problem because they stop the water flow at the outlet without deactivating the heating elements. This causes the water within the appliance to overheat rapidly, potentially reaching temperatures as high as 80°C.

Please do not install them in your home as they can lead to scolding.



Facebook Group

The members of REP have created a residents only Facebook group. Anyone can join to ask the panel questions or give feedback to a policy currently being reviewed.



Search **Cornerstone Housing residents engagement panel** to join

HOW WE DEAL WITH EMERGENCIES OUT OF HOURS

If you have an emergency with your home outside of our normal opening hours, you can call **01392 273462** (option 1) and your call will be diverted to our out-of-hours team.

An emergency is something which has the potential to:

- cause danger to someone's health and safety or
- cause immediate serious damage and destruction to a property, home or building.

Examples include:

- No heating or hot water during winter months (usually between 31st October – 1st May)
- Total or partial loss of electrics to the whole property (multiple lights or power outlets not working)
- Unsafe power – e.g. sparks from electrics
- Total or partial loss of mains water supply (such as no water to entire bathroom, but water in your kitchen)
- An uncontrollable leak – e.g. burst pipe, water tank or any leak that is affecting electrics or could cause damage to the property

Where possible we will complete emergency repairs the same day, but if not possible, within 24 hours of being reported.

If you wake up to an emergency with your home on a working day, please think before calling out of hours – this is an external company. Could the problem be reported at 9am when our office opens, where we could get one of our own operatives to you.

In some cases, we will make the situation safe until such time as a routine repair is safe and practical to complete (for example when a window has been broken, we may board it up and make it safe, but the glass requires ordering to complete the repair).



DOWNSIZING

We recognize that some of you have lived in your homes and communities for many years and have strong connections to both, but perhaps your home is now larger than you need.

We don't want you to feel forced out of your home, instead, we want to help you understand the potential benefits of downsizing to a smaller home and help you to overcome any worries you may have about this.

The benefits of downsizing

- A home that is more suitable to your needs; such as level access with adaptations
- A more manageable home with less to keep clean and a smaller garden
- More affordable bills as a smaller home can be cheaper to heat
- Moving closer to friends or family for support
- Your home is made available for a family in housing need

How we can help

If you are interested in considering a downsize move we will:

- Visit you to discuss your individual situation
- Listen to any concerns you have and any support you may need
- Get a good understanding of what you would like from a downsize move
- Explain your housing options and help you to find a new home
- Be honest with you about the process and realistic about your choice of home
- Talk to you about the financial help available
- We will NOT pressurise you to move, if after talking to us you decide you don't want to downsize, that is fine – it is your choice.



Eligibility to downsize

You are eligible if you are:

- A Cornerstone tenant living in a property with three or more bedrooms with no minimum age restrictions
- Willing to move to a home that is smaller than your current home and suitable for your needs

Due to the demand for one bedroom homes and the high number of two bed flats we have, we may allow you to downsize to a two bedroom home.

The cost of moving

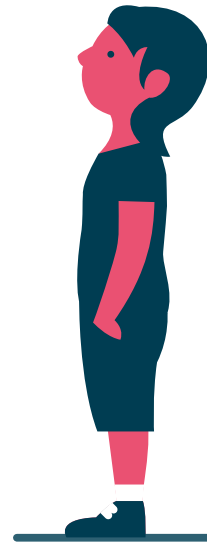
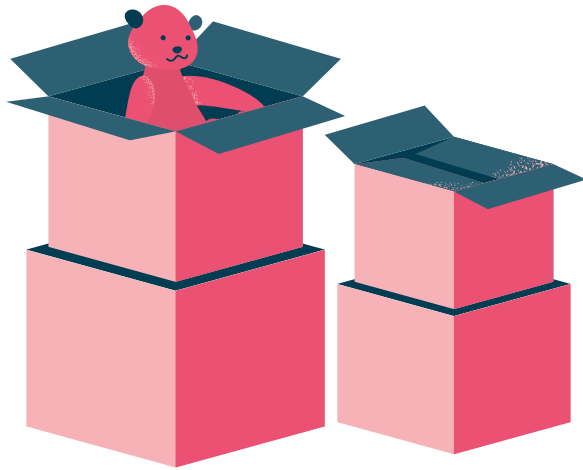
We know that the cost of moving can be a worry so we have an assistance scheme to help take some of that worry away. We can offer you up to £1300 towards the cost of moving to a smaller home and this flexible payment can be used for the following:

- Removal costs (including packing, services of removal company or van hire)
- Carpets or other flooring for the new home
- Curtains or blinds
- Re-direction of post
- Furniture (such as sofas, beds, or white goods to fit in a smaller home)
- Payment of rent arrears or other debts with us
- Payment of rent in advance on a new home
- Disconnection and reconnection of appliances such as cookers and washing machines
- One-off re-connection of services such as telephone, broadband, television





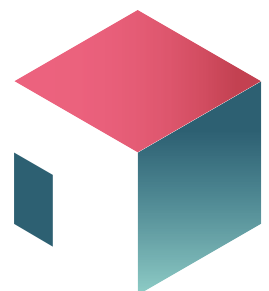
Room going to waste or need more space? **Moving is easy with House Exchange**



There are plenty of reasons you may want to move home. Let House Exchange help you find your ideal swap.

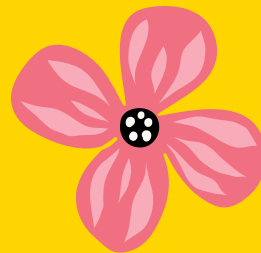
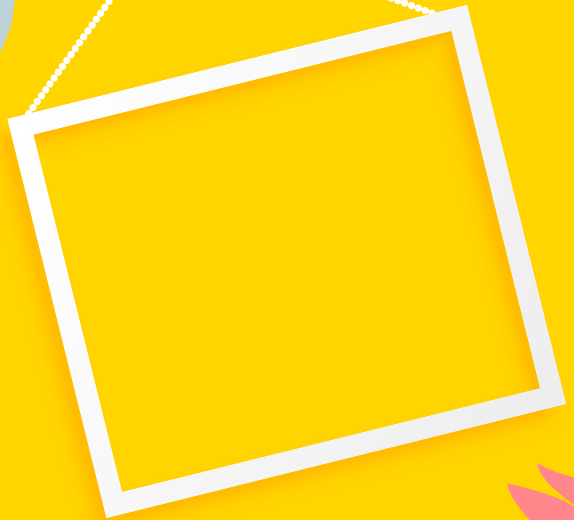
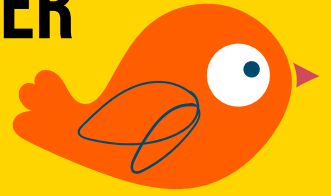
House Exchange is a national website with thousands of opportunities for you to find your ideal home swap. It is also completely free to register because your landlord is a partner.

Why wait? Get started today, visit
www.houseexchange.org.uk



**House
Exchange**

WILDLIFE IN YOUR COMMUNITY, SPRING PHOTO COMPETITION WINNER



The winner of our spring photography competition is Miss King. The winning entry is below of a double rainbow over our properties in Exwick.





www.cornerstonehousing.net/rep

Get involved in your neighbourhood!

Our resident engagement panel is looking for new members. REP is open to all and we would love to have more residents from a diverse range of backgrounds involved. If you would like to engage with the REP but don't want to come to meetings, get in touch, we'd still love to hear from you.

If you are interested contact mail@cornerstonehousing.net

