

THE ELDER

Autumn Newsletter 2018



Issue
17

What is Norwich Housing Society here for?



One of the duties of the Management Board is to agree a Strategic Plan for the Society. This has recently been completed for the five year period to 2023, setting a vision for the future against which actual performance can be measured.

A ten-page booklet has been printed to promote the Society in its aims. In summary, the Society's -

- **Vision** is to provide decent housing at a social rent
- **Mission** is to provide independent living with support
- **Core values** are being professional, progressive, transparent, caring and fair
- **Objectives** include
 - improving the condition of the housing stock
 - ensuring the tenant services we provide are relevant
 - managing the finances prudently
 - exploring possible development opportunities
 - raising the profile of the society within greater Norwich

The Management Board and staff are all committed to this plan for Norwich Housing Society, so that we can play our part in helping to provide homes to those that need them.

Mike Allen
Chief Executive



Last Year We Updated Our Application Process

I've heard that some of you have enquired as to how and why we allocate properties to applicants, so I thought it would be a good idea to explain the process.

1. When a prospective applicant telephones or visits the office enquiring about housing, we go through a checklist to make sure they meet with the Society's criteria. Examples of questions we ask are; "What is your current situation?" "What are your reasons for wanting to move?" "Do you own your own property?" When the applicant has answered all the questions and they meet the criteria we send out an application form to them.

2. Reasons for not progressing an application could be that the applicant owns a pet, they are under 60 years of age, or their funds are too high.

3. On receipt of the completed application form, a Scheme Manager will carry out a home assessment. If the applicant does not live locally then an office based assessment is arranged instead. The main reason for the assessment is to get a better understanding of the applicant's needs and to ensure we can offer suitable accommodation.

4. A panel consisting of the three Scheme Managers and the Housing Administrator, meet to discuss and score each applicant using a priority based points system, based on their application form and home assessment.

5. Some applicants are refused onto the waiting list, reasons for this could be that the applicant could not provide a full 5-year address history or they have been in rent arrears with a previous landlord, or we feel the applicant is adequately housed. Applicants are scored with a low, moderate or high priority based on housing needs.

6. When a property becomes available we go to our waiting list and select the applicant who has scored the highest and has expressed a preference for the scheme that the empty flat is from. Some properties remain empty for longer than expected due to prospective tenants declining the offer of accommodation.

We hope this is clear and gives you a better understanding of how we allocate properties. If you know anyone who maybe interested in renting a home from the Society they can register their interest at www.norwichhousingociety.org or by telephoning the office on 01603 625078. Homes are allocated in accordance with housing needs and to those over the age of 60.

Lanchester Court has been at it again!

The beautiful summer has been littered with activities that included coach trips to Banham Zoo, Gt Yarmouth Circus, Bressingham Steam Museum, Gorleston Summer Show and Stody Lodge.

We had two wonderfully supported Cream and Strawberry Teas outside in the sunshine. These inspired a Hawaiian evening with those involved really getting into the spirit of the event.



These activities, together with our once monthly social evenings, included a fundraiser for our adopted international "Power Chair" footballer, Rosie Hodgson. This helped towards a very successful year for social activities.

- Roy and Maureen Westgate

#takeasophie



St Barnabas Court held a Sunday Funday event in aid of Sophie Taylor, who earlier this year was diagnosed with Osteosarcoma. Sophie and her parents were told that she had an Osteosarcoma in her knee and another tumour higher up her femur. The cancer has also spread to her lungs in 3 places.

The Funday was well supported by family, friends and also residents from Lanchester Court and Eleanor Road.

There was entertainment from Roy & Maureen of Lanchester Court. A brilliant day was had by all who attended. A total of £270.00 was raised for Sophie and "Stick Your Tongue out to Cancer".

- Pat Stanton, St Barnabas Court



#takeasophie
stick your tongue out at cancer

Sophie's family are raising money to help her fight cancer and support her rehabilitation after surgery. If you would like to donate, you can do so by visiting: www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/superstrongsophie

Tenant From Eleanor Road Recalls Her Days Working as an Assistant Warden Back in The Early 1990's.

"In the early 1990's I was asked by the Housing Manager of the Society's dwellings, Mr Bagshaw , if I would consider being an assistant to the resident permanent Manager, Mrs Ann Lawn, at Westwood House. At the time there were three assistants covering individually each weekend when Ann was off duty, until one had to retire due to ill health. I agreed to replace her.

It involved me packing up a change of clothing, and also main items of food and drink, ready to report to Ann first thing on the Saturday morning when it was my turn, every third weekend. 'The duty' was 24 hours each day with time off allowed for lunch, when I was able to leave the building and cross the road to get provisions at what was then 'Downs Supermarket'.

To begin with I was allocated a one bedroom flat on the top (third) floor of Westwood House in which to sleep overnight. I then rose early to wash, dress and have a quick breakfast before reporting to Ann for the official 'takeover'. After this, I had to visit each flat to check on the occupant(s) and listen to any points they wished to make. I should add that we 'deputies' also had to cover an extra day on each Bank Holiday weekend.

After a while, the Society decided to allocate the flat to a permanent resident, obviously for financial reasons and therefore we assistants were given the use of a very small room on the ground floor at the rear of the building. This gave the impression of being a converted box-room, just having the space to house a bunk bed, wash basin, W.C. and a shower. These facilities sufficed and we all carried on happily with the routine"

- Joan Calver, Eleanor Road



Scam / Cold Callers

The Society aims to keep our residents as safe as possible and, if you remember, I held a number of meetings at your scheme last year telling you about scams, what damage they do and how to prevent being caught out. In recent months doorstep callers (cold callers) have increased and have proved to be a real menace, so here are some tips to help you stay safe.

Cold callers. It can be hard to tell the legitimate sellers from the rogues, so it's best NOT to buy anything at the doorstep, no matter how convincing they seem. All their ID badges are fake; some claiming to represent Help for Heroes and the Air Ambulance. Remember it's **your** doorstep, Say No to Traders. If they do not leave when asked they have committed an offence so you should call 101, or 999 if you feel at risk.

Scams. Dealing with scams is a bigger problem as you can be targeted by post, phone or the computer. The best rules are to not buy or sign up for anything when somebody has contacted you out of the blue, but should you agree to something the law is on your side and gives you 14 days to cancel. Remember if it sounds too good to be true it usually is!

I am hoping to start training as a Scam Marshal (to add to being a Scam Champion) shortly. So you will be able to send any suspicious mail or emails directly to me and I will forward them to Norfolk Trading Standards where they can be dealt with.

If you have any concerns call the Police non-emergency service on 101, Citizens Advice on 034545 04 05 06 or me on 07917 384 835.

Keep safe.

- Sarah Batchelor, Scheme Manager

The CCTV at St Barnabas Court is now live. Any unauthorised vehicles parked on the court will incur a fine. The CCTV can also be used to deter anti-social behaviour as this can also be captured by the cameras. We hope tenants will now feel safer living at St Barnabas Court. If you or any of your visitors have a change in vehicle, or you have a new visitor that is not on the database, you will need to inform NPE direct on 01603 759481 or process@parkingprotection.co.uk

Gluten Free Brownies

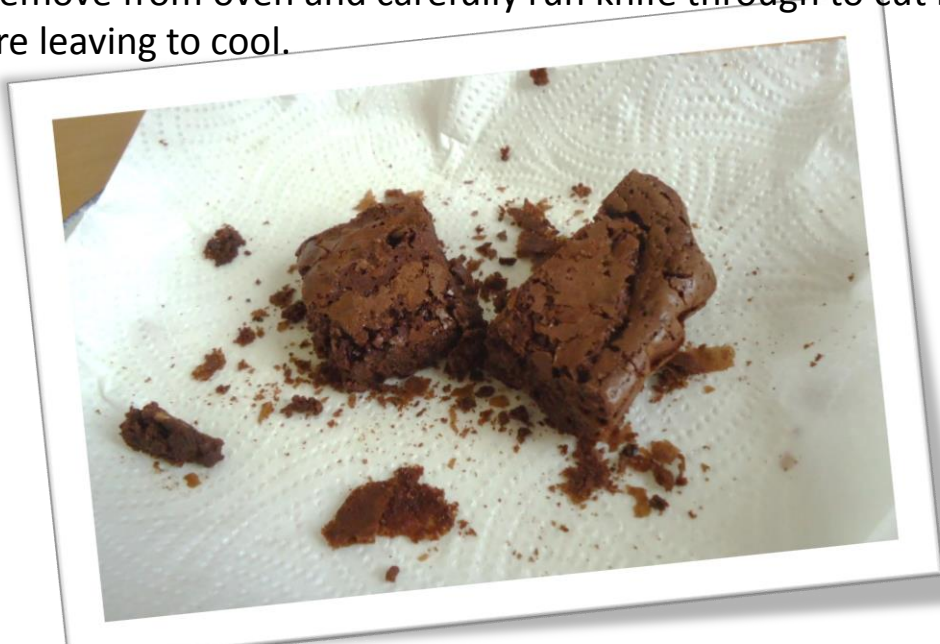
Ingredients:

- 5oz/140g Margarine
- 7oz/200g Plain chocolate
- 7oz/200g Soft brown sugar
- 2 x Medium eggs
- 2-3 drops of Vanilla Essence
- 2oz/55g Cornflour
- Pinch of Salt
- 1 tsp Baking Powder
- 4oz/115g Toasted chopped hazelnuts

Method:

- Preheat oven to 180C
- Melt margarine and chocolate
- Place sugar, eggs and vanilla essence into bowl
- Pour over the melted chocolate mixture
- Sift over the cornflour, salt and baking powder
- Stir together gently until well mixed, fold in the nuts
- Pour into a 200mm (8 inch) lined square tin and bake for around 50mins at 180C/360F.

Once cooked, remove from oven and carefully run knife through to cut into segments before leaving to cool.



This recipe is a family favourite in Andy's household. Andy brought the brownies into the office for us to try, we got so carried away with eating these yummy delights that we forgot to take a photo of them! This is the best we could do.....the crumbs say it all! Shortly after this photo was taken, what was left of the brownies completely disappeared!

It that's time of year again.....lets talk about condensation

"Well here we are again, as the darker nights draw in and things become a lot colder we all need to remember that, despite this, there's still the need to ventilate our properties, particularly while cooking and using the shower!

Condensation arises when the core structure (walls/windows) aren't at an ambient temperature or when warm moist air cannot escape from properties. It is often mistaken for damp and can result in mould appearing on walls. Condensation usually arises from lifestyle routines, rather than a particular defect in the property, and, in most cases, results from the way we live our lives. The simple fact is that most of what we do every day generates air moisture, for example; cooking, bathing and showering.

If you believe that your home (flat) suffers from condensation a few minor adjustments can make a significant difference.

Condensation can be avoided by taking the following measures:

- Ensure that extractor fans (where fitted) are working – make sure you switch the fan on before you start showering or cooking and that you leave it to run, for at least 5 - 10 minutes after. Most fans are fitted with built in time over run settings and will turn off automatically after 5-10 minutes. Some of the newer models have inbuilt humidistats as well, which measure the moisture in the air and should remain switched on permanently, enabling the fan to switch itself on automatically as the moisture in the air rises.
- Opening windows to provide adequate ventilation. It's a good idea to have some background ventilation during the day, to replace the stale air. This is particularly important when you are cooking, running a bath or taking a shower.
- Keeping your home at a reasonably warm temperature during the day and at night.
- Most importantly allowing air to circulate within your home.

If you do have condensation spores on walls, these can be removed by wiping down with appropriate cleaning fluids and water. Please contact the office for a copy of our leaflet on condensation." - **Andy Broom, Property Services Manager**

Staff News



August and September marked two very special birthdays for two members of staff. Mark and Mike hit a very momentous occasion this year when they both celebrated their 60th birthdays. To celebrate this we held a little gathering in the office which included nibbles and cake – of course!

Will you be celebrating a special birthday soon? If so, we'd love to hear from you. Please contact the office on 01603 625078.



Baby news.....

Congratulations to Sarah Tiffen on the safe arrival of her beautiful baby girl, Esme. Mother, Father and baby are doing well and we wish them all the very best.



To all the Society's residents

Opening hours for the Society's Office over the Christmas and New Year period will be as follows:

Monday 17-Dec	Tuesday 18-Dec	Wednesday 19-Dec	Thursday 20-Dec	Friday 21-Dec	Monday 24-Dec	Tuesday 25-Dec	Wednesday 26-Dec	Thursday 27-Dec	Friday 28-Dec	Monday 31-Dec	Tuesday 01-Jan
OPEN	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN	CLOSED	CLOSED	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN	CLOSED
9.00am - 5.00pm	9.00am - 5.00pm	9.00am - 5.00pm	9.00am - 12.00 noon only	9.00am - 5.00pm	9.00am - 12.00 noon only			9.00am - 12.00 noon only	9.00am - 12.00 noon only	9.00am - 12.00 noon only	

If you are in a sheltered flat your Scheme Manager will advise you of when he/she will be on and off duty over this period. The community alarm service will continue to operate 24 hours a day every day and will also be able to deal with emergency repairs.

To access this service please pull your orange cord (red cords at Leander Court).

May we take this opportunity of wishing you an enjoyable Christmas and a healthy and peaceful New Year.

Mike Allen
Chief Executive

Making winter more affordable

Claim the money you're entitled to. Most people born before 6 November 1953 will get a Winter Fuel Payment of between £100 and £300 in November or December 2018. Call the Winter Fuel Payment Centre on 0800 731 0160 or visit www.gov.uk/winter-fuel-payment for more information.

If you get Pension Credit, you should automatically get a Cold Weather Payment of £25 each time the temperature in your area is at 0°C (32°F) or below for seven days in a row between 1 November and 31 March.

You may qualify for a £140 discount on your electricity bill if you receive Guarantee Pension Credit or you're on a low income, even if you use a pre-pay meter. Contact your energy supplier to check if they are part of the scheme, or the Warm Home Discount Scheme to find out more call 0800 731 0214 or visit www.gov.uk/the-warm-home-discount-scheme.

Pension Credit can top up your weekly income if it's below £163 for a single person, or £248.80 for a couple (rates apply until April 2019). These figures may be higher if you're a carer or receive certain disability benefits.

Check you're on the best fuel tariff

Switching supplier can be the best way to save money and may be easier than you think. Citizens Advice has information on how you might be able to save money by switching to a new energy supplier

(www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer/energy/energy-supply/get-a-better-energy-deal/switching-energy-supplier). If you're not online, call one of the Ofgem Accredited energy switching companies for advice – for example, uSwitch on 0800 6888 557 or visit www.uswitch.com.

Get help if you're in debt

If you're struggling to pay your energy bills, contact your supplier to set up a repayment plan. Charis Grants can direct you to sources of financial help with fuel bills (01733 421 021, www.charisgrants.com). Gov.uk also has an energy grant finder (www.gov.uk/energy-grants-calculator). For free, independent advice about debt, contact the debt charities National Debtline on 0808 808 4000 or visit www.nationaldebtline.org or Stepchange on 0800 138 1111, or visit www.stepchange.org.

Competition Time!

Below you have a pair of words. Your goal is to find a third word that is connected or associated with both of these two words.

The answers are what is called a homograph: a word that has more than one meaning but is always spelt the same.

All correct answers will be placed in a hat and one will be picked out at random. The winner will win a £15.00 John Lewis gift voucher. Closing date is 23rd December 2018. Good luck!

- | | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Lock – Piano | 5. Pillow – Court | 9. Tennis – Noise |
| 2. Ship – Card | 6. River – Money | 10. Smoker – Plumber |
| 3. Bell - Diamond | 7. Bed – Paper | 11. Screw – Finger |
| 4. School – Eye | 8. Army - Water | 12. Fish – Weigh |

Eleanor Room Common Room



Tenants at the Norwich Housing Society Eleanor Road scheme were delighted to attend a coffee morning to celebrate the opening of their new Common Room. What was previously two smaller spaces has been refurbished and opened

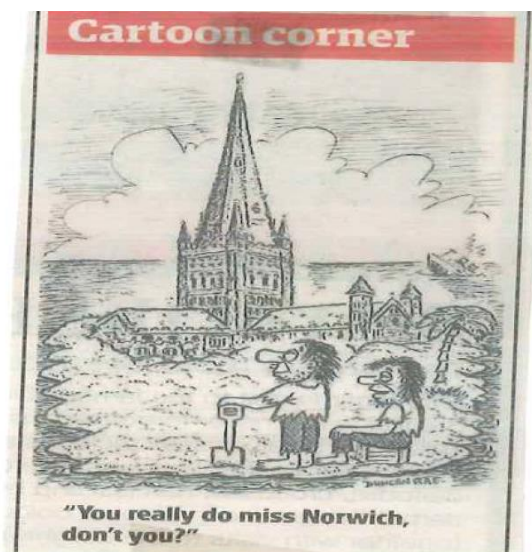
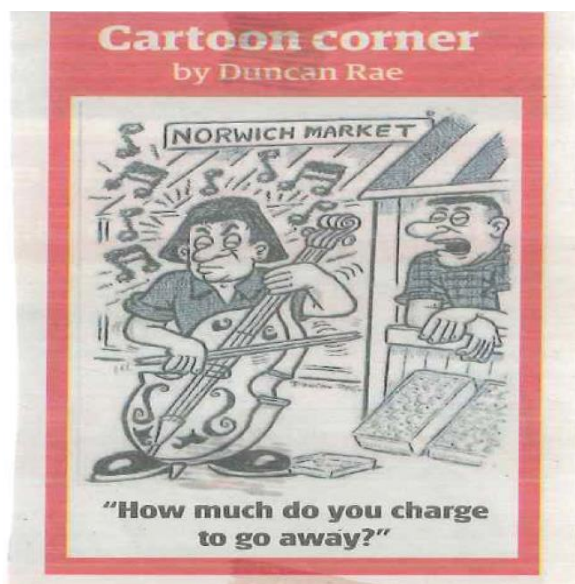
up into a fresh and brighter area, with a new kitchen and easy access to the garden outside. "This fulfils a vision we've had for some time now and it's lovely to see it come to fruition" said Carol Sangster, Chairman of the Society's Board. Everyone attending was in high spirits as Sue James, a former Board Member, officially declared the room open for use.

Summer issue competition answers:

- A. Mary Poppins
- B. The Good, The Bad & The Ugly
- C. The Sound of Music
- D. The Pink Panther
- E. Alfie
- F. Night of the Living Dead
- G. Dr No
- H. Psycho



Well done to those that entered with the correct answers. The winner is Ms Winch of St Barnabas Court, congratulations and we hope you enjoy spending your voucher.



Duncan Rae of Old School Court has kindly given us a selection of his cartoon drawings that have been published in the EDP over the past years.

What would you like to see in the next newsletter?

If you have any stories, poems, jokes, interesting hobbies, recipes, holiday stories or if you would like to see anything else in the newsletter; we would love to hear from you, please get in touch on: 01603 625078 or email: reception@norwichhousingsociety.co.uk

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