



# THE ELDER



Newsletter Autumn/Winter 2020



Issue  
24

## Retirement

In the Spring of 2021, Mike Allen will be retiring from Norwich Housing Society, having served both charities for ten years. He began as the company accountant, but in March 2014 he took on the extra responsibility of becoming the CEO on the retirement of the previous office holder, while continuing to be responsible for the finances of the company.

It was at the AGM in 2014 that Nick Bagshaw retired, and Mike took over the role. At the board meeting, which followed the AGM, I was appointed Chairman of the Board, having served as a board member since May 2012. Thus that evening marked the beginning of us working in tandem to sustain and move forward the work of both Charities, in a changing environment in affordable housing.



Mike has brought to the role a diligent, hard-working approach, while developing a strong team of staff to ensure our tenants, properties and outreach programme have all been attended to, to the highest possible standards within the constraints of our budgets. He is quiet and unflappable, always keeping a watching brief on what we do, how best the staff can be deployed, the type and quality of the services we provide, in order to improve the tenant experience of those who live in our properties.

Since March of this year, the pandemic has changed all our lives, which may well have impacted adversely on both Charities, but thanks to Mike's swift appraisal of the situation, the staff were provided with laptops and asked to work from home. This continued in most cases until the time was right for the offices to be reformatted, health measures put in place and a staff rota organised, so that some form of normal working routine could begin once more. Mike continues to keep in touch with our benchmarking colleagues to ensure we are doing all we can to ride out this new surge in cases, while ensuring our work continues. Not the easiest final few months of his career but we shall always be grateful to him for dealing with this in such a professional manner.

While I shall be sorry to see Mike go, I believe he is right to leave at this time, so that he can enjoy all the things he and his wife have put on hold for some time, as I for one agree with the statement, 'there is more to life than work', and if you can pursue your dreams while you are still young enough to do so why would you wait. I know from experience life does not cease to have meaning once you retire, it can become a time of fulfilment for very different reasons, and I wish him and Liz many more years of good health and happiness to pursue their dreams.

**Carol Sangster**

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## **Internal Transfers**

We understand that your housing circumstances and needs can change over the years since you first moved into your home. If you are finding living in your home difficult due to access or you need to live nearer family for support then you can apply for an internal transfer. All transfers need to be on health grounds and supported by a letter from your GP. We understand that some of you may be experiencing difficulties in obtaining a letter from your GP, therefore we are looking into other options for you.

Please note that we will not accept a transfer request if the reason is that you do not get on with your neighbour or if there is a current tenant dispute.

Tenants on the internal transfer list are usually considered favourably to the external waiting list however, if an applicant is in a greater housing need e.g. sofa surfing, then they may be considered first.

## Staff Changes

Mark Finch retired as Accountant with the Society in September. He joined us in 2014 on a temporary basis, thinking that he would stay for just a few months, but I am very pleased he decided to stay longer. During this time Mark automated a number of our accounting processes, making the Society more efficient. We wish Mark and his wife Elaine a long and happy retirement.

We are all very pleased to welcome Nataliya Weston as the Society's new Accountant. Nataliya joined the Society in September and is well qualified for the role. Nataliya, like Mark, will be working part-time hours, Monday through to Thursday.

And last, but certainly not least, a further retirement. Sarah Batchelor will be retiring as Senior Scheme Manager in the Spring of 2021. Sarah joined the Society in July 2007 as Scheme Manager at Westwood House, later moving to Rotary Court. As Senior Scheme Manager, Sarah has led and co-ordinated the work of the other Scheme Managers, making these services we provide more structured and organised. As the longest serving employee, Sarah will be missed by us all and again we wish both her and Lindsey a long and happy retirement.

To have three retirements in quick succession is unusual. Mark, Sarah and I will be leaving behind colleagues who have a mean average age of just over 40 years. The next retirement should be some way off.

## Development Programme

In the Spring of 2018, the Society began letting its newest flats at Leander Court, Eaton. Development had not taken place for several years since the completion of Fiddy's Yard, but we need to ensure we have the best properties we possibly can in the right locations, to suit the demands of those seeking a home.

We are nearly there, after almost two years of preliminary work and design, to start on our next development. A house on Bluebell Road, adjacent to Leander Court, has been purchased and will be converted into four flats. A further four flats and a common room will be built on the same site. The Society's property portfolio continues to slowly, but surely, grow to meet increasing demand. The contractor should start work early in 2021 and the development should be completed towards the end of 2021. I use the word "should" deliberately, as experience tells me to expect delays.

- Mike Allen, Chief Executive

It is our own responsibility to stay safe therefore we advise that you keep a supply of antibacterial wipes or a spray to wipe down communal hand rails after use. Thank you and stay safe

## As time goes by things to consider?

As we get older our priorities change and we should be thinking about other things. One of these is end of life provision. It's quite normal for GP's or other medical professionals to give advice about the medical side of things like asking if you would like a `Do Not Resuscitate` certificate when we are really poorly. But are there things we can do even before that?

Power Of Attorney (POA). In my mind this is an essential legal document. It gives you the choice to make another person responsible for you should you be unable to make legal or medical decisions on your own, due to a stroke or dementia etc. It allows you to make known your wishes to others while you can. Because I spent a lot of time on the road and you never know what's going to happen, I gave POA to my children when I was in my thirties! It is possible to download POA paperwork from the internet and it's the cheapest way but, cheap doesn't mean good! Its far better to arrange a qualified person to set this

up, like a solicitor. Age UK can help as well.

Wills. Having an up to date Will can save your family grief and pain, again it allows your wishes to be fulfilled once you are no longer around. Although there are many Will writing kits around, its far better to get a professional to draw up a Will, it can be money well spent.

Funeral/cremation care. There are many options these days and because of rising costs, it's much better to get ahead of the game to arrange your funeral well in advance. This can reduce the grief and stress your loved ones have trying think about what you would have wanted, a religious funeral or not, what type of music to play, if any etc. As funeral costs are rising it is far better to arrange and pay for your funeral before it is needed, this usually fixes the price to safeguard against rising costs but it also allows you to put together the running order of the service.

Have you thought about Humanist ceremonies? If you are not religious this gives you the peace of mind that your funeral will reflect you and your life,

they are quite special. You can get more information at [ceremonies@humanism.org.uk](mailto:ceremonies@humanism.org.uk) or research the web on [humanistceremonies.org.uk/funerals](http://humanistceremonies.org.uk/funerals).

Up until recently we relied on our local funeral directors to look after us when we passed and they continue to care for us in a compassionate and professional way but there are alternatives as well. These are called Direct Cremations. This type of funeral is becoming more popular and there are companies like Simplicity Cremations, [simplicity.co.uk/funeral-plans](http://simplicity.co.uk/funeral-plans), Pure Cremations, [puercremations.co.uk](http://puercremations.co.uk) and the CO-OP are also offering this type of service.

So what are the benefits of Direct Cremation? Well for one thing the cost. Whereas a usual cremation can cost upwards of £3,500, a direct cremation can cost just over £1,200. A direct cremation allows those that do not want a service or have a family, or any beliefs to have a dignified departure. Ashes will be returned to the family so they can be cared for. This type of service is not for everyone, attending a funeral or cremation can be part of a healthy mourning process and some people need that type of closure.

Whether you choose a funeral, cremation, or direct cremation there are many plans available from spreading the cost to one off payments.

Now, there is a more controversial end of life topic, and that's donating to medical research. I have had a few tenants do this. In Norwich there are two ways of doing this, either directly to the hospital or to the UEA, both use different criteria before accepting someone. There are remembrance services built into their system.

This is a difficult subject for most to talk about, but well worth it if you do.

**- Sarah Batchelor, Senior Scheme Manager**

When you report a repair, please ensure you make the necessary access arrangements with the contractor for when they visit. If you are not going to be home, access can be arranged with your Scheme Manager, or you could leave a spare key with a neighbour. Please do not assume the office can give the contractor access as we do not hold a spare key for every flat. Similarly, if you have a prearranged appointment with a contractor, please ensure you are at home at the agreed day and time.

Thank you

## Eating in the UK in the 50s

Pasta had not been invented.

Curry was a surname.

A takeaway was a mathematical problem.

A pizza was something to do with a leaning tower.

Bananas and oranges only appeared at Christmas time.

All crisps were plain. The only choice we had was whether to put salt on or not.

A Chinese chippy was a foreign carpenter.

Rice was a milk pudding and never part of our dinner.

A big mac was what we wore when it was raining.

Brown bread was something poor people ate.

Oil was for lubricating. Fat was for cooking.

Tea was made in a tea pot, using tea leaves – never green.

Coffee was camp and came in a bottle.

Cubed sugar was regarded as posh.

Only Heinz did beans.

Fish didn't have fingers in those days.

Eating raw fish was called poverty not sushi.

None of us had ever heard of yoghurt.

Healthy food consisted of anything edible.

People who didn't peel potatoes were regarded as lazy.

Indian restaurants were only found in India.

Cooking outside was called camping.

Seaweed was not a recognised food.

"Kebab" was not ever a word never mind a food.

Sugar enjoyed a good press in those days and was regarded as being white gold.

Prunes were medicinal.

Surprisingly, muesli was readily available, it was called cattle food.

Pineapples came in chunks in a tin, we only ever saw a picture of a real one.

Water came out of a tap. If someone suggested bottling it and charging more than petrol for it, they would have been a laughing stock.

The one thing we never, ever had on our table in the 50s was.....elbows!

**Thank you Cathy (Eleanor Road) for this nostalgic piece.**

## Lanchester Court Social Group

On Saturday March 14<sup>th</sup> one week before the “Covid 19” Lockdown, LC held a social evening in aid of “Cancer Research UK”.

In just one evening with the help of a few friends from St Barnabas Court we raised a wonderful £224.45.

We have since received a lovely thank you letter from Cancer Research for our efforts.

Thank you all who turned up and contributed to this wonderful and very deserving charity.

**- Roy Westgate, tenant at Lanchester Court**

During Lockdown I took to crocheting and I have produced close to 30 “Front Line Heroes” for people who requested them, plus as many again smaller “key ring” versions of the same thing.

Any money received is once again going to “Front Line Heroes”.

Thank you, Maureen.

**- Maureen Westgate, tenant at Lanchester Court**



**In the last Elder we asked how you passed the time during the lockdown. Miss Wright of Nelson Street was very active with walking in and around Norwich.**

“In the last “Elder” newsletter you requested any lockdown stories. I cannot say I’d made any effort towards this though I can say I went on some long walks, perhaps a little too long!

Due to the Lockdown my summer holidays were cancelled, however, one thing that made up for me not being able to go away was the thrill of seeing an otter swimming close by Millennium Bridge on Marriotts Way. The metal bridge that echoes every time cyclists ride over it.

First I saw some bubbles, then I heard a kind of snorting noise and then I saw the movements. The otter came up by some green weed near some reeds. It was there that I took a photo of it. It swam under the bridge and then came back again. In those 10 or 15 minutes I saw it several times.



When I told my neighbour about the otter, they informed me that they had seen hedgehogs in the street. So, the following night I went out to see if I could see it and as I looked out opposite to where I was standing by the flats, I saw a big daddy hedgehog on the side of the road.



When I returned home from my first swim in 6 months, I went for a short walk down Nelson Street towards the river, sitting on a dead branch on the Mile Cross Bridge was a Kingfisher.



I will continue to look for wildlife on my walks during Lockdown 2 and you may hear more in the next issue of The Elder”.

**- Susan Wright, tenant at Nelson Street**



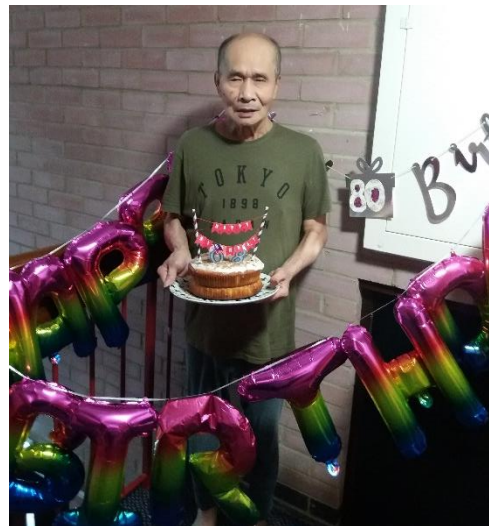
In 1996 my dad passed away with Cancer. He was 64 years old. There were a lot of people at his funeral, one person that still sticks in my mind was a lady called Jenny. Jenny was my dad's Macmillan Nurse. She was lovely and caring.

Dad had requested donations to this cause. Later that year I got invited to a coffee morning, it was fun and I spoke to people that also supported this cause. After attending the coffee mornings each year, I then decided to research about them. They started in 1990 and rely solely on donations to keep them going, they are not government funded.

In 2007 following the loss of my mum, I decided to do my own coffee mornings. I registered with the Macmillan Cancer Support and have done my coffee mornings in August every year since. September 27<sup>th</sup> is the official date but as I was working I found this date not good for me so I do it the month before. My first coffee morning was a small affair and I raised £68.80, last year I raised £190.00 from my flat.

Due to COVID-19, this year I held the coffee morning outside of my flat. I baked everything from sausage rolls, cheese muffins to victoria sponges, fruit cake and lemon drizzle. I had a guess the name of the Teddy game and played the guessing game supplied by Macmillan. Everyone had a great day, socially distanced chatting and hands sanitized. This year I raised and banked £195.60. So, a big thank you to everyone at St Barnabas Court who attended and donated.

**- Louise Sullivan, tenant from St Barnabas Court**



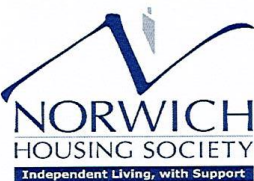
Due to COVID-19 we were unable to have a party for this special occasion, therefore we decorated outside Mr Lau's flat, there was cake and of course presents.

**- Jean Robertson, tenant at Lanchester Court.**



Tenants from St Barnabas Court are hoping all social rooms can open soon so they can enjoy all the activities and events, they have missed during this unfortunate lockdown, especially fish and chip night! Thank you Pat Stanton for the photo.

Please may we remind tenants not to approach contractors on site or contact them directly. Please report any repairs to your Scheme Manager or the office. The Society needs to know where and why contractors are visiting and we need to provide them with a repair order, otherwise they may not get paid and you may be liable for the cost of the work. Please use your pendant/pull cord for emergencies outside of office hours. Thank you.



To all the Society's residents

The office will be closed from 1pm on Weds 16<sup>th</sup> Dec. We will re-open as normal the following day



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

Monday 21-Dec	Tuesday 22-Dec	Wednesday 23-Dec	Thursday 24-Dec	Friday 25-Dec	Monday 28-Dec	Tuesday 29-Dec	Wednesday 30-Dec	Thursday 31-Dec	Friday 01-Jan
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 - 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

Please can you remember to clear out the fluff from the tumble dryers after each use. Thank you.



**NORWICH**  
City Council

## Norwich Big Switch & Save

**iChoosr**  
independent experts  
in group buying

**Save more when you're part of a group**

### Why join today?

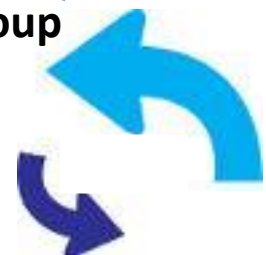
- Taking part is free
- It is simple and quick to do
- There is no obligation to switch

7,1854 have registered for our collective energy switching scheme. Join them today!

Lower your energy costs through collective energy switching. Don't want to miss out? Register at:

[bigswitchandsave.ichoosr.com/norwich/home](http://bigswitchandsave.ichoosr.com/norwich/home)

Or call 0800 098 8994



# Christmas Quiz!

Can you find the 20 hidden Christmas songs in the picture below? If you can find them all you could be in with a chance of winning a £30.00 voucher for a shop or restaurant of your choice! Closing date is Friday 15<sup>th</sup> January 2021. Good luck everyone!



MERRY XMAS 19

MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
25	25	25	25	25	25	25
25	25	25	25	25	25	25
25	25	25	25	25	25	25
25	25	25	25	25	25	25
25	25	25	25	25	25	25
25	25	25	25	25	25	25

IT'S A MESS!

Save your Christmas

MR. S. CLAUSE  
WANTED TO STAY AND  
YES

SILENCE  
8PM-6AM

HALL

CHRISTMAS

WISH LIST  
FOR YOU

SQUASH ZOOH

## Competition answers from the Summer issue

1. Silent
2. Elvis
3. Search
4. East
5. Smile
6. Panel
7. Leading
8. Dusty
9. Pool
10. Resigned

Well done to Wendy from Old School Court who was over the moon with her M&S voucher. "I've never won anything before in my life!" We hope you enjoy spending your voucher, Wendy!



## Answers to the "Just for Fun" Quiz

1. Doncaster
2. Watford
3. Bolton
4. Barnet
5. Harrogate
6. Stockport
7. Southend
8. Motherwell
9. Oldham
10. Swansea
11. Luton
12. Wakefield
13. Poole
14. Bath
15. Maidstone
16. Gravesend
17. Derby
18. Boreham
19. Boston
20. Sevenoaks
21. Rugby

## How did you do?

22. Western-Super-Mare
23. Deal
24. Blackburn
25. Hull
26. Gateshead
27. Mansfield
28. Grays

## Good Neighbour Award

Thank you to those who contacted us to nominate a "Good Neighbour". The tenants below were nominated:

Mr. Earthy from Old School Court for always being a good neighbour and helping out with shopping.

Mrs. Mulligan from Stuart Court for always looking out for all the tenants.

Karen Leonard daughter of tenant Mrs. Hall from Rotary Court for helping the tenants out with shopping during the lockdown.

Thank you all for being a good neighbour!

We couldn't possibly decide on who should win so all of you have won the good neighbor award. A certificate is on it's way to you.

## Travelling over the festive period

You must continue to follow tier 2 social contact rules when you travel to tier 1 and tier 3 areas. You should avoid travel to or overnight stays in tier 3 areas other than where necessary such as for work, education etc. unless you are travelling between 23<sup>rd</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> December to meet people in your Christmas bubble.