



THE ELDER



Issue
21

Autumn/Winter Newsletter 2019

News from the “Bracondale Office” Tenant Satisfaction Survey

Firstly a big “Thank you” to all of you who completed the recent Tenant Satisfaction Survey.

To quote from the Executive Summary of the report which was written for the Board:

“Norwich Housing Society commissioned Acuity to carry out a tenant satisfaction survey. All tenants were included in the postal survey, which took place during June and July 2019. The results from the survey are very positive and generally compare favourably with previous surveys and those of other landlords. The survey recorded many high ratings including satisfaction with friendly and approachable staff (99%), the repairs service (98%), the quality of the home (96%) and the effective and efficient service (96%) – all of which are reflected in the finding that 96% of tenants are satisfied with the services provided by Norwich Housing Society”.

Staff Changes

Michelle Lambert joined the Society at the beginning of September as Office Manager/Personal Assistant. Michelle has many years’ experience of working with social housing so knows the industry well. Some of Michelle’s responsibilities were previously carried out by Fiona Steggall, who left the Society in the summer.

Lee Watkins will be joining the Society in January 2020 as Assistant to the Property Services Manager. Andy, Kelly and Lee are the Society’s “Property Team” working to maintain the Society’s 300+ properties in good condition.

Property Development

To compliment the Society’s scheme in Eaton at Leander Court, an adjacent house on Bluebell Road has been purchased and will be converted and extended to provide an additional eight flats and a common room. Planning permission has been granted and it is anticipated that building works will start in Spring 2020.

- Mike Allen, Chief Executive

The Society has introduced a Handyman service. Johnny from D&R Construction has offered to carry out those little jobs that we would normally pass onto Andy Broom. Please can you refrain from approaching Andy at your schemes for any type of repair and telephone the office on 01603 625078 instead.

Thank you for your co-operation.

Norwich Housing Society and all its employees strive to ensure our tenants live as peacefully as possible, but it is only human nature that during the course of our everyday lives, we encounter differences in personalities. However, the tenant satisfaction survey shows most tenants are pleased with where they live.

Whilst we are happy to provide a listening ear for any disagreements, as your Landlord, there is usually nothing more we can do to help. However, if the problem escalates to Anti-social Behavior or Hate Crime, then you should report the matter to the Police. The Police will inform Norwich Housing Society of anything they consider to be a serious offence and this may affect a tenant's Tenancy Agreement.

We all have a duty of care to be kind to our neighbours and would encourage tenants to try and resolve any issues that may exist between themselves as quickly as possible.



Please note the office will be closing from midday on Thursday 19th Dec. Normal hours will resume the following day.



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 23-Dec	Tuesday 24-Dec	Wednesday 25-Dec	Thursday 26-Dec	Friday 27-Dec	Monday 30-Dec	Tuesday 31-Dec	Wednesday 01-Jan	Thursday 02-Jan	Friday 03-Jan
OPEN	OPEN	CLOSED	CLOSED	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN	CLOSED	OPEN	OPEN
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		9.00am - 5.00pm	9.00am - 5.00pm

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

Ventilation is Key!!

“For those new tenants and for those that have possibly forgotten, here’s a reminder of the importance of ventilating your home:

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

Lanchester Court Social Group

Lanchester Court has had a wonderful year of activities, which included coach trips to Ely, Gorleston, Sudbury and Bury St Edmunds (twice) and on a number of occasions recently we've welcomed a few people from St Barnabas Court. They're always very welcome.

Photos show the great response we had for our 'fright nite' which included Maureens very popular pumpkin pie.

- Roy Westgate



During the cold winter months our winged friends sometimes require a little extra hand with food. Whilst the Society is happy for tenants to have bird feeders, please be reminded that putting food outside also encourages vermin.

Please ensure that bird feeders are used at all times and food is not placed on the ground or on plates/bowls.

This story has a moral for everyone to work out for themselves. It goes like this:

Norwich City was once protected on three sides by a city wall. The fourth side protected by a river.

One day a very weary, sad looking traveller arrived at one of the city gates. The gate keeper asked, "what do you want and where do you come from?"

The traveller replied, "I just need somewhere to rest for awhile, I come from a very unfriendly place where people are always miserable and I could not wait to get away."

"Come in" said the gatekeeper, "you may stay for one night only, for you will find everyone here the same."

Just a few minutes later another traveller arrived at the same gate. This one had a smile on his face and was singing merrily to himself. The gatekeeper again asked "what do you want and where do you come from?"

The traveller replied "I just need to rest for awhile and I come from a place where everyone is friendly and helpful and I am looking forward to my return."

"Come in" said the gatekeeper, "you may stay as long as you wish, for you will find everyone here exactly the same".

Make of this what you will!

In preparation of any bad weather that might be descending upon us this winter, Shearwoods will soon be gritting all the scheme grounds. Please note that their arrival times may vary day to day. If you see them at 9am one day, you may not see them at the same time the following day.



It is always nice to receive positive feedback from our tenants. Below is a thank you note from some tenants at Lanchester Court.

*Dear *****

*“Just a short note to thank you for the various jobs you have carried out at Lanchester Court especially those affecting Flat No. ** directly or indirectly.*

The clearing of the downpipes along the Southern walkway. This action appears to have resolved the overflow of the gutters during heavy rain and we have not experienced any further flooding of the kitchen.

*On behalf of all the residents on the Southern Block of Lanchester Court (Flat Nos. ** - **); we extend our grateful thanks and appreciation for the installation of the Water Butt. When summer comes along it will be of great benefit to all the keen gardeners.*

****** and * want to personally thank you for sending ***** along today to re-seal our kitchen sink that had lifted away from the worktop. This should stop the ingress of water into the kitchen cupboard that could possibly cause water-rot and swelling of the wood, that ultimately could lead to the destruction of the cupboards.*

After residing here in Lanchester Court for almost two years, we have found your assistance and help of immeasurable worth and it is with gratitude that we thank you for your help and always with a pleasant attitude.”

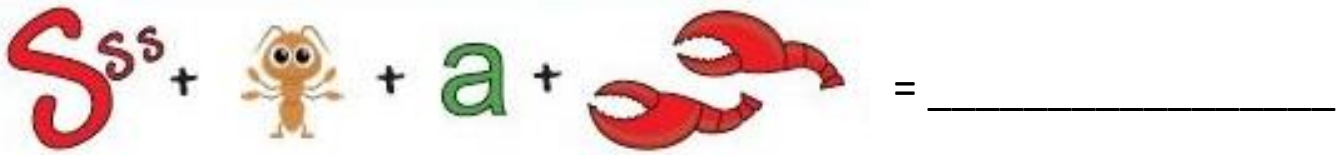
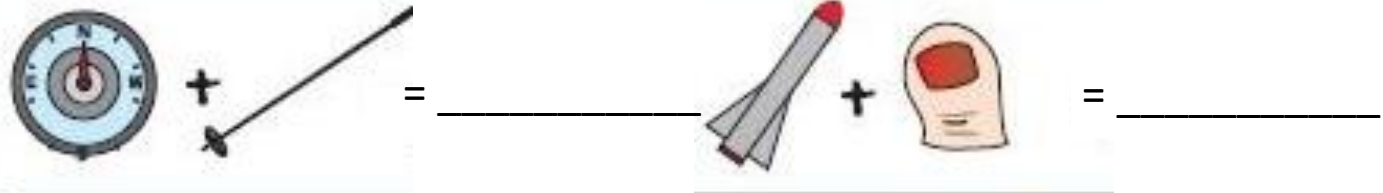
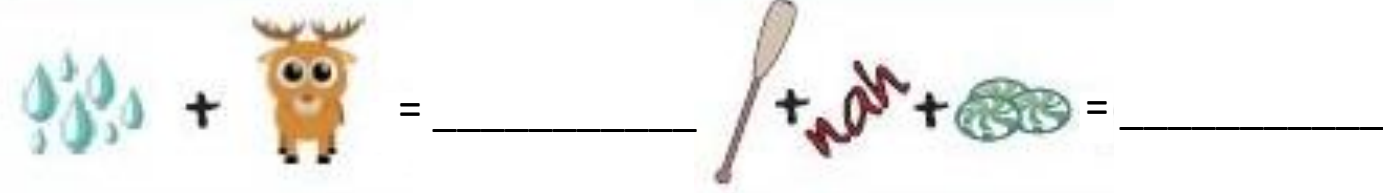
Kind regards

“Be mindful. Be grateful. Be positive. Be true. Be kind.”

If you receive a call from your utility supplier regarding the installation of a Smart Meter, as you are the bill payer, you can make the decision whether you have this in your home or not. You do not need to consult the office.

Christmas Picture Puzzle Competition

Rebus puzzles or picture puzzle games show a group of pictures that represent words or phrases. E.g. the letter H in front of a picture of an ear would become H + EAR which could mean HEAR or HERE. Can you decipher the 12 rebus puzzles below to find words or phrases associated with Christmas? If you're up to the challenge please send in your entries by Friday 17th January 2020 and you could be in with the chance of winning a Marks and Spencer Voucher worth £20.00.



With Christmas just around the corner, it is easy to get wrapped up in the moment and forget all about the important things like keeping your heating on a low setting if you're away from your home or overindulging on food and drink! Here are some useful tips to get you through Christmas....

If you are going to be away from your home we would advise you to keep your heating on a low temperature, around 10-15 degrees. Also, to switch off electrical items such as kettle, TV etc. But not your fridge if you have food in it!

If you are cooking over the festive period, please DO NOT pour cooking fats or food down your sink. Blockages will be recharged.

You can recycle a good deal of your wrapping paper, just as long as it's pure paper. How do you check? Try to scrunch up the paper into a ball. If it scrunches and stays scrunched, it can most likely be recycled. Remember to remove any tags, bows and sticky tape.

For some of you, the holidays are a time to travel long distances to visit family and friends. Whether you travel by car, rail or plane, keep in mind that you might want to rest upon arrival. Maybe watch television or take a nap instead of planning a day of shopping and visiting.

Drinking too much can impair functions, and for some people, drinking alcohol with certain medications can have adverse side effects. There are lots of alcohol-free drinks available from supermarkets so you still enjoy the taste.

If you think a neighbour is lonely over Christmas, why not invite them to join in with your family. Christmas is all about caring and sharing. Similarly, if you're spending Christmas alone and so is a neighbour, why not suggest you spend the day together?

Tenant Celebrates the Big 70!



During a recent Old School Court coffee morning, tenants gathered to celebrate Melvyn's 70th birthday. Tea and cake all round made for a lovely afternoon. Happy Birthday Melvyn!

Have you checked if you are eligible for the winter fuel payment?

If you were born on or before 5 April 1954 you could get between £100 and £300 to help you pay your heating bills. This is known as a 'Winter Fuel Payment'. You usually get a Winter Fuel Payment automatically if you are eligible and you receive the State Pension or another social security benefit (not Housing Benefit, Council Tax Reduction, Child Benefit or Universal Credit). If you're eligible but do not get paid automatically, you will need to make a claim.

Visit <https://www.gov.uk/winter-fuel-payment> for more information.

Do you have carers or sometimes struggle to answer to your front door when visitors arrive? Fitting a key safe would be a great idea to help carers, friends and family gain access to your home without too much disturbance. To supply and fit a keysafe costs £45 and to just fit the keysafe costs £25.00. We can arrange this and recharge you, just get in touch if you feel a keysafe would be useful.

Fire Safety is Vital

We recently asked AFS Fire Safety to assess each of our schemes and notify us of any necessary improvements. Following on from those assessments we arranged for Andy Forth from AFS to attend a coffee morning at each scheme to offer advice and engage with tenants. Andy used to work for the local fire service based at Bethel Street and was there during the Norwich Central Library fire in 1994, so he's well qualified to offer his knowledge and support. The conversations were very friendly and constructive, covering topics from fire blankets to phone chargers, ensuring walkways are clear and keeping close to the floor in the event of smoke filling the room. Always call the Fire Service immediately if you believe a fire has started nearby as they will attend very quickly. The smoke detectors in your home will detect any fire and the control centre will alert the Fire Service.

We thank all tenants involved so far for helping make these morning visits successful and hope they share what they've learned with their neighbours and friends, it's always important to be prepared just in case. So far Andy has spoken to tenants at St Barnabas Court, Lanchester Court, Eleanor Road and Rotary Court, and we look forward to seeing him again in the New Year at our remaining schemes.



Tenants at Lanchester Court



Tenants at Rotary Court

Rich Tomato Soup with Pesto

This winter warming soup is so easy to make and tastes delicious. I have made it a few times and I thought I should share it with you because it's too good to miss!

Ingredients:

- 1 tbsp butter or olive oil
- 2 garlic cloves, crushed
- 5 soft sun-dried or sun blushed tomatoes in oil, roughly chopped
- 3 x 400g cans plum tomatoes
- 500ml turkey or vegetable stock
- 1 tsp sugar, any type, or more to taste
- 142ml pot soured cream
- 125g pot fresh basil pesto
- basil leaves, to serve

Method:

- Heat the butter or oil in a large pan, then add the garlic and soften for a few mins over a low heat. Add the sun-dried or sun blushed tomatoes, canned tomatoes, stock, sugar and seasoning, then bring to a simmer. Let the soup bubble for 10 mins until the tomatoes have broken down a little.
- Whizz with a stick blender, adding half the pot of soured cream as you go. Taste and adjust the seasoning – add more sugar if you need to. Serve in bowls with 1 tbsp. or so of the pesto swirled on top, a little more soured cream and scatter with basil leaves.
- Serve with crusty bread



Recipe and photo courtesy of BBC Good Food

Summer Newsletter Competition Answers:

- a) Domino Pizza
- b) Shell Garage
- c) McDonalds
- d) WWF
- e) Lidl
- f) Pepsi
- g) Fosters
- h) Walkers/Lays Crisps
- i) Barcardi
- j) Audi
- k) Kodak
- L) Nike

Well done to Jean Robertson of Lanchester Court. We hope you enjoy spending your voucher.

Christmas Food Assistance Available in Norwich

This list is compiled and supplied by The Feed. Please note that we do not endorse any service included on this list. Use of these services is your own discretion, we do not in any way verify the quality or availability of the services listed.

Tuesday 24th December (Christmas Eve)

Salvation Army, Pottergate Arc Hot breakfast £1.20/free toast (8-10.45am)

Salvation Army, Pottergate Arc, Free Xmas buffet and carol service 11am- 1pm, all over 16's welcome

St Stephen's Church Café Pay what you can, minimum £1. (10am to 2pm)

Wednesday 25th December (Christmas Day)

St Augustines Church Hall - Christmas day breakfast and buffet, all welcome

10 -12.30. Games, small gifts and buffet food

Salvation Army, 34 St Giles Street, Norwich NR2 1LL, Christmas day lunch, (10.30am to 3.30pm, lunch at 12.30pm) Free of charge. Call Andrew 01603 620747

Open Christmas Norwich - The Halls, St Andrew's Plain, Norwich, NR3 1AU, Free meal and entertainment, all welcome, (11am -5pm)

enquiries@openchristmas.org.uk Call 01603 510751 & 07500260924 for free transport

The Garden House- Christmas day lunch 1 Pembroke Road, Norwich, NR2 3HD (2pm-4pm) everyone welcome, Call Jonathon Childs 07557 355564

St Cuthberts Church Centre, Sprowston Christmas meal served at 12.30pm

Thursday 26th December (Boxing Day)

Salvation Army Soup Run, Haymarket, (8.30pm)

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