



PRIME TIME NEWS

Issue 5, November 2011



Your new banding system

See next page to find out more.

Birthday boy reaches 102

Fred Smith of Pine Court in Radstock celebrated his 102nd birthday in style with a surprise party. Other residents arranged the party to give Fred a treat on his special day.



Fred, who always thinks about others, had previously organised a party for children from Barnados because he wanted to make sure that the children had a really nice day. This involved party games, arts and crafts and party food. About 20 children attended.

We all wish Fred the very best.

Keep safe this winter

With the possibility of another cold snap on its way please take care when walking in icy or snowy conditions and use any hand rails provided. We will do our best to grit the communal areas, however there may be times when we cannot reach some areas. We are unable to be responsible for gritting residents' own footpaths.

If you have any questions or concerns please call 01225 366201.

Don't slip up this winter

- Take short, flat steps and slow down. If there are handrails, use them.
- Be very careful when you first step out of your front door in the morning.
- Even if a pathway looks clear, there may still be some invisible black ice.
- Wear sensible footwear.
- Be a good neighbour. If you are able to help keep pathways clear this winter, please do lend a hand.
- Don't use hot water to clear ice: you might create your own black ice.

For more information on gritting you can also visit www.somer.org.uk/winter

Greater choice for sheltered

For some time, you have told us that you would like to have a greater choice with the level of service that you get from your sheltered housing officer.

At the moment, you are charged the same flat rate (£12.29) for your support that you receive from your sheltered housing officer.

However, in a survey in 2010, the majority of you told us that you would prefer to pay only for the level of service that you need. As a result, from April 2012, we are planning to bring in the following new bands where each resident can choose the band that is most appropriate for their needs.

Bronze:	24 hour alarm service. (£3.60 per week)
Silver:	Alarm with support visit at six weeks and then every six months to review your situation. (£6 per week)
Gold:	Alarm and weekly contact face-to-face and phone calls – this is the same service that many of you receive now. (£11.95 per week)
Platinum:	Alarm and up to three visits per week and phone calls – ideal if you are experiencing health concerns or periods of stress. (£19 per week)

We wanted to hear your views on this greater choice and on the bands so we have just completed a series of 38 'Choosing Your Sheltered Service' workshops where you were able to give your views to us face-to-face. We also circulated a 'Frequently Asked Questions' leaflet to you which explained the new service in greater detail. If you would like more copies of these in a different format, or you have further questions or comments, then please call our hotline on 01225 366380.

Well trained staff

All of the sheltered housing officers receive extensive training to make sure that they provide the best quality support to you.

Recent training has covered issues like professional boundaries, welfare benefits (and how to help residents get what they are entitled to), how to support residents

who have lost loved ones, how to support people with memory loss, and how to involve and empower residents.

We are always seeking to make sure that our staff are able to help you with whatever you need. If you need help with anything, please ask your sheltered housing officer.

housing residents

With the workshops now completed we have collated the views and this will be fed back to you through meetings and visits from staff. You can also read a few of the comments made at these sessions in the box on the right.

We were planning to give you some time to think about which band you wanted and so we planned to come and visit all of you in January. However, a large number of you have said that you would like to tell us which band you want sooner, rather than later. We have listened to this and your sheltered housing officer will start visiting you now to talk about which band of service you would like. The new service will start from April 2012.

Some VERY important points about moving from a flat charge to charges in bands:

- Those of you who currently receive Housing Benefit or Supporting People Grant will continue to receive the level of support you choose without charge. So if you do not pay now, you will not have to pay after April 2012.
- Also, the new service gives you greater flexibility. You can change the level or band of service if your needs change. So if you need a bit more support for a short period or you feel that you would like more support over the longer term, you can change your level of support at any time.
- Your sheltered housing officer will help you if you need any advice about which band you want.

If you have any questions you can speak to your sheltered housing officer or call our telephone hotline on 01225 366380.

Feedback from information meetings

393 residents attended the meetings. 196 comments were made by residents during these.

The general feedback was good with residents saying:

I think it is much fairer. The prices are not much different so really good. You have given us plenty of time to think.

I think it is a very good new service and delivers a service that suits everyone.

I think it is a brilliant idea to have different levels of service.

The bands look very sensible and will suit the needs of everyone as individuals.



Events

Pinechester Community Centre would like to invite you to an evening of 'Christmas cheer' and carols with St Nicolas Church Choir.

Venue: Pinechester Community Centre

Date: Tuesday 20th December

Time: 6.30pm

Tea, coffee and mince pies will be served.



Greenacres Court would like to invite you to the pantomime Aladdin by Moonstruck Theatre Company.

Venue: Greenacres Court

Date: Friday 16th December

Time: Starts at 6pm

The cost is £1 to sheltered residents and £2 for others.

Refreshments will be available.



Knit and natter

Our lively group of ladies here at St Johns Court in Bath enjoy their knit and natter session every Friday afternoon.



Collectively they have knitted squares, sewn them all together and have decided to donate the finished blanket to Save the Children.

The regular session is hugely popular and growing all of the time, so if you fancy coming along and joining us you can be assured you will be made very welcome.

Calling all gardeners

We have a number of sheltered schemes where residents have created beautiful communal gardens for all residents.

An example is the one at Manor Close in Wellow (see picture right). The garden has been created and is looked after by the residents at Manor Close. Residents give their time, effort and money to create and maintain these beautiful spaces where all can go for a bit of peace and relaxation.

We are always looking for more people to help maintain these garden areas. So, if you are interested in gardening, please contact your sheltered housing officer who will be pleased to hear from you.



A winter warmer recipe

Liver and Bacon Casserole

Time

2 hours, check after 1.5 hours.

You need a heavy casserole dish or a slow cooker.



Ingredients

- 250g/8oz sliced liver
- 125g/4oz streaky bacon (smoked or green – please note – the high street butcher will often sell pieces of bacon very cheaply)
- Black pepper from the mill
- 1 bay leaf, a few sage leaves, thyme, a grating of nutmeg (or herbs to taste)
- Double cream

Method

- Fill the casserole or slow cooker with liver and bacon in alternate layers.
- Sprinkle herbs and spices between the layers.
- Pour boiling water over to cover, bring back to the boil, reduce immediately to simmer with the lid firmly in place. If you use a casserole it is best to transfer it to your oven.
- When done, strain the liquor into a saucepan, beat with a small whisk, and dust with flour (in this case about a rounded teaspoon full).
- Return to heat and boil rapidly.
- Remove from the heat and add 2–3 tablespoons of double cream. Stir and pour over liver.

Serve with a green leafy vegetable (e.g. cabbage) and mashed potatoes.

This meal provides iron, vitamin A, vitamin D, vitamin B complex.

Living together!

So many different people with different backgrounds, beliefs and values live in our sheltered homes.

It is great to know that everyone is welcome and can participate and join in all that is offered.

Our community rooms, events and activities are open to all, so that we can have as much fun together as possible. Sometimes you might need or want extra support to join in, so things we do to help include:

- supporting you to attend social and community meetings and events for the first time;
- translating letters and documents into the maternal language of residents;
- producing letters in large print; and producing documents on audio tapes or CD.



We always want to ensure that you can live as full a life as possible. So, if you need any help, please speak to your sheltered housing officer.



Stay warm and dry this winter (and don't break the bank)

With winter on its way and the costs of energy rising, here are some tips on how to stay warm without racking up huge fuel bills.

1. Use your central heating system to best advantage

Make sure that your room thermostat is set to the correct temperature – usually between 18–21c. Reducing your room temperature by just 1c can save up to 10 per cent on heating costs. So set the thermostat to the lowest temperature at which you feel warm and comfortable.

2. Get the best results from your night storage heaters

If you have a night storage heater make sure that you are on a tariff that offers a cheaper rate for electricity overnight e.g. Economy 7 (contact your fuel supplier to check). Make sure that you use the heater correctly so that you have enough heat stored to last you through the day.

Your control panel has two dials. They are input and output. At night the input dial



must be turned up to store electricity for use the next day. The output dial **MUST BE TURNED DOWN** to a low setting or else all the heat that you are storing will escape and you will not have enough to last you during the following day.

During the day you can adjust the output dial to get the temperature that you want. But remember: the higher you set it, the quicker the stored heat will be used up. If you leave your output dial on

high all day, you are likely to run out of stored heat before the end of the day. So when you go out, it is a good idea to turn down the output dial.

3. Get the cheapest electricity supplier and the best tariff deal for you

You could save up to £250 a year by switching suppliers. You can do this by using the internet or just by making a phone call. For help, you can contact www.myhomeenergyswitch.org.uk or call 0800 051 5346 (free from a landline) who will give you advice about how to switch.

4. You can get more help and advice

The Energy Advice Project offers a range of free services, including home visits and one-to-one advice on payment options and budgeting, and help if you are in debt with an energy supplier. You can call them on 0117 954 3544 or visit www.bdac.org.uk. The project offers over-the-phone advice and home visits to help with a number of things including:

- Setting heating controllers
- Bill queries
- Saving energy and money
- Dealing with fuel debt
- Finding the cheapest energy suppliers

The Energy Saving Trust also gives expert advice on 0800 512012 (free phone).

If you think any part of your heating is faulty, please contact the Trust's Repairs Line on 01225 366111.

Please speak to your sheltered housing officer if you need any help in contacting these agencies.

Double ton for Independent Living Service

The Independent Living Service was recently celebrating the fact that we have now signed up our **200th** customer. The service, which provides the same support that sheltered residents currently receive to the wider community, started in January 2011. It is a service for people who want to stay in their own homes with support from our high quality and experienced staff team.

The service is for people living anywhere in the Bath & North East Somerset area who are not currently in sheltered accommodation and provides a range of services including:

- A 24-hour alarm with help at hand, at the push of a button, 24-hours a day
- Daily well-being calls over the phone
- Home-from-hospital support
- Visiting you at home when you choose
- Help arranging minor repairs and adaptations to your home
- Advice and guidance to maximise your income
- Opportunities to join in social activities
- Rapid response, key-holding service, and much more...

David Ford, manager of the service, said

'The success of the service has shown that there are many people in the community who benefit from having this support'.

If you know of anyone who might benefit from the service please contact us on 01225 366196.

A grand day out

Over 22 people went on a day out to Weymouth on 28th September. The group was made up of residents of the Greenacres Court extra care scheme and their friends.



The weather was very good (short sleeves) and everyone enjoyed visiting the beach (with a display of sand sculptures from Alice in Wonderland) and the harbour with its flotilla of boats.

Everyone said how much they enjoyed the day.

We are always looking at ways of increasing activities and a number of our sheltered schemes run outings for residents. We don't just go to the seaside. There are trips to the shops like Clarks Village (very good for Christmas presents) or to other locations (including a mystery tour) and to Christmas meals.

If you would be interested in joining in or starting up a group to arrange visits, or to hold a regular social event, please speak to your sheltered housing officer.

Knights and damsels at the court of King Peter and Queen Ann

Residents on the Chandler Close schemes went back in time and turned their communal hall into a castle for the evening and enjoyed a real medieval banquet.

King Peter and Queen Ann presided over the revels and invited lords, knights, ladies and peasants from all parts of their kingdom.

Pictured opposite (left to right) – Wayne Elliote, Maisie Powell, Sandra Richardson, Peter Martin, Ann Laister, Jean Hinge, Joyce Reynolds, and Anita Hibbert.

If any of our schemes would like to arrange a similar event please speak to your sheltered housing officer.



Winter wordsearch

A	M	C	H	A	R	L	O	T	T	E	D	H	O	U
B	V	C	G	F	M	X	V	C	M	D	F	E	C	L
W	I	L	L	I	A	M	X	C	J	O	H	N	A	Z
O	C	Q	W	S	T	E	P	H	E	N	P	R	T	M
X	T	E	J	D	I	E	D	W	A	R	D	Y	H	R
D	O	L	M	W	L	L	X	C	B	O	D	L	E	M
R	R	E	V	B	D	I	M	M	A	R	Y	O	R	T
V	I	A	M	D	A	Z	X	C	X	S	M	U	I	G
N	A	N	M	L	L	A	C	A	R	O	L	I	N	E
B	V	O	M	J	J	B	N	M	I	P	L	S	E	O
M	A	R	G	A	R	E	T	X	C	H	V	W	Y	R
Y	N	Z	V	M	L	T	O	O	H	I	I	I	M	G
T	N	V	D	E	M	H	U	U	R	E	J	A	N	E
Y	E	T	M	S	X	C	H	A	R	L	E	S	L	L
A	D	E	L	A	I	D	E	S	D	K	K	O	P	N

This time, you are looking for the names of Kings and Queens of England. See how many you can identify. 10 = good, 15 = excellent

Good luck.



01225 366000

If you would like this leaflet in large print or on audio tape or CD, or if English is not your first language and you need a translation, we can get one for you.

Somer Community Housing Trust

The Maltings, River Place, Lower Bristol Road, Bath, BA2 1EP.

Tel: 01225 366000

Email: enquiries@somer.org.uk

Website: www.somer.org.uk