



Welcome to the fifth issue of My Home newsletter for all our sheltered housing residents.

We hope you've had a great Christmas and that you've been able to see family and friends in the last few weeks as Covid-19 restrictions have eased. We all hope that this year we'll be able to see a lot more gatherings happening at our schemes.

A particularly lovely gathering happened at Camels Head scheme in Weston Mill this month – Bobbie and Bernie got married! Our very first wedding in a sheltered scheme. Their lovely wedding photo features on our front page and you can read more on page 3 opposite. We wish Bobbie and Bernie lots of happiness and many congratulations.

Covid-19 isn't in the news as much as it used to be, but it's still very much with us and it's important that we're still taking precautions to reduce transmission. Find out more about what's changed – and what hasn't changed. This can be found on page 12.

We hope you enjoy the other features in the newsletter. You'll see a lovely feature by Housing with Support officer Emma, telling us all about her volunteer work for the Cinnamon Trust. And on page 7 you can read about the Men's Shed project and how the group, chaired by Erik from Brock House, has been keeping very busy making lovely wooden items. The lovely photo shows them meeting Director of Homes and Neighborhoods Carl Brazier, who was really impressed by the strength of the group and the quality of the items they make.

Thank you for reading My Home, and remember that we love to hear from you. Send your stories, poems, ideas and photos to: housingwithsupport@plymouthcommunityhomes.co.uk

Helen Ryan Head of Communities & Housing with Support



A match made in Devon Sheltered residents tie the knot

Camel's Head Sheltered Housing residents Bobbie Cann and Bernard Boasden cemented their relationship by getting married last month.

The wedding was attended by friends and family who were all thrilled to see the couple get hitched after many happy years together.

Both Bobbie and Bernard were married to other partners when they first met, over 20 years-ago.

Both couples became close friends who "went everywhere together", travelling on couples' holidays and trips at home with their respective partners Roger and Peggy.

Sadly, Peggy died in 2006 and Roger in 2012. Both couples were there for each other in difficult times. Helping to care for one another. After losing their partners, Bobbie and Bernard remained close friends.

Bernard would help out with Bobbie's garden and over time they became ever closer. Bernard moved into Bobbie's bungalow seven years ago where they have happily lived together ever since.

"The more time we spent together the more we bickered like an old married couple ourselves", said Bobbie. Eventually, friends suggested they may as well tie the knot, seeing as they were inseparable and could be heard constantly nattering by their fellow residents.

Their wedding was able to take place in their own home after obtaining the necessary permissions due to their health issues, and the risks posed by the pandemic.

The ceremony was followed by a celebration at the communal hall attended by many of their friends and fellow residents at Camel's Head.

"She caught me at a last", joked Bernard. "The wedding went very well. It was a great turnout and once it's safe enough to do so, we'll go on a trip somewhere nice to celebrate."

Bobbie and Bernard would like to thank Registration Officer Susan Joyce, who officiated, caterers Sapphires, for a fabulous spread, and Pat's granddaughter, Emma, for the wonderful cake.

We at Plymouth Community Homes would like to wish them every happiness together as a married couple.



"Why I volunteer for a wonderful local charity"

Housing with Support Officer, Emma Harris, tells us why she gives up some of her free time for a charity that often need help walking people's dogs.

I have thought long and hard about getting a dog but decided that now isn't the right time for me. Instead, I became a volunteer for the Cinnamon Trust in May last year.

Once a week I take the ferry to Torpoint and walk two retrievers, Jack and Patch. They are both 10-years-old but have the energy of a dog half their age and are very strong, so it often feels as though they are walking me.

It can be interesting at times, if each want to go in the opposite direction, or I see a husky approaching, as Patch had a bad experience with one and really does not like them! Their owner has health problems so cannot walk the dogs herself, but the volunteers ensure that Jack and Patch have several walks a week.

I really look forward to the weekly walk and always have a little treat for Jack and Patch when I see them.

The Cinnamon Trust's primary objective is to respect and preserve the treasured relationship between owners and their pets. It has a national network of over 18,000 community service volunteers who can provide practical help when any aspect of day-to-day care poses a problem.

There is also a fostering service for pets whose owners face a spell in hospital. Volunteers take pets into their own homes and care for them until the owner and pet can be reunited.

The Cinnamon Trust provides long term care for pets whose owners have died or moved to residential accommodation which will not accept pets. Arrangements are made between owners and the Trust well in advance, so owners have peace of mind in the knowledge that their beloved companion will have a safe and happy future.

For more information contact: 01736 757 900 or visit the charity's website: www.cinnamon.org.uk







Positive People Confidence and Motivational Courses in the Plymouth / Devon Area 2022.

Feb - March: Live Delivery at Engage Hall.

Dates: Tuesday's ; 15th Feb, 22nd, 01st, 08th, 15th & 22nd March.

Time: 9:30 - 12:00

April – May: Live Delivery at Engage Hall.

Dates: Tuesday's: 26th April, 03rd, 10th, 17th, 24th & 31st May.

Time: 9.30 - 1200

June - July: Live Delivery at Engage Hall.

Dates: Tuesday's: 21st, 28th June, 05th, 12th, 19th, & 26th July.

Time: 9:30 – 12:00

Sept – Oct: Live Delivery at Engage Hall.

Dates: Tuesday's: 13th, 20th 27th Sept, 04th, 11th, & 18th Oct.

Time: 9:30 - 12:00

Nov - Dec: Live Delivery at Engage Hall.

Dates: Tuesday's: 08th, 15th, 22nd, 29th Nov, 06th, & 13th Dec.

Time: 9:30 – 12:00

For more information on how Positive People can help you live the life you want, contact Dave Street for more details:

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✓ dave@activeplus.org.uk

www.activeplus.org.uk/building-better-opportunities



Participants must be 25+ and not in any paid work

Positive People offers a lifeline to build hope, confidence and skills for people who are not in work. It is funded by the European Social Fund and the National Lottery Community Fund.

Celebrating the Queen's Jubilee

This year marks the Platinum Jubilee of the Queen.

Queen Elizabeth will be the first monarch to ever reach this milestone, marking 70 years of being on

In celebration of the historic event, the extra bank holiday on 2nd and 3rd June gives us a wonderful opportunity to spend time with friends and family, while thanking Her Majesty for a lifetime of service.

If you're thinking of organising an afternoon tea. bingo or trip out to somewhere special, PCH can help make this possible through our Community Grants. Groups of residents can apply for up to £300 to put on an activity for residents in their community.

Please speak to our Communities team on 0808 230 6500, or email: communitiesteam@plymouthcommunityhomes.

We can also offer advice on how to make sure your activity is run in a covid-safe way.







A duo of hand-made benches built by the Men's Shed group have been sold to eager buyers. One of which was sold before it was even finished.

A small bench was snapped up for £50 while a full-sized one, which took around two weeks to make, sold for £120.00.

The Janner Men's Shed is a project that was started a couple of years ago. The purpose of the scheme is to tackle loneliness and isolation in older men by bringing them together in a 'shed' venue to "get crafty" with woodwork.

The men also talk, eat and learn together, selling their finished items to raise funds to buy tools and supplies.

The larger of the two benches made by the group wasn't even finished when the buyer made the offer, having been shown around the Men's Shed as a behind the scenes tour of how the group operate. The buyer was a member of the Plymouth Wood Turners, a group which also uses the space.

The benches took the group a few weeks to complete, given that they only meet for a limited number of hours per week.

The money from the sales will now go towards materials and equipment for the group. And, as it happens, their work is attracting some interest.

Men's Shed recently welcomed Carl Brazier, Director of Homes and Neighbourhoods. The group enjoyed showing Carl their work. They even made a beautiful wooden pen for Carl to take away.

Carl said: "I was thrilled to see what people do at the Men's Shed. It's a great scheme and I would encourage any residents to get involved if they're interested in woodwork or crafts."

He added: "The group made my day, even gifting me a hand-crafted pen to take

PCH resident and Vice-Chairman of the Men's Shed, Erik, was thrilled with the sales. He said: "We save up to buy tools and materials, this extra bit of money will go a long way towards getting some equipment that will really help the group.

"I delivered the blue bench which was sold privately. The person who bought it was thrilled when they received it."

Erik explained that they've also attracted some new fans, some of whom have approached the group to say they have benches in need of refurbishing, something that he says they are "more than happy to do."

The group could soon be inundated however, as they have already had a request to build a fire surround, which they are currently pricing up.

Erik added: "We charge for our time but it's a fixed rate and it's very reasonable."

The Men's Shed welcome new members and it's free to join and take part. You don't need any experience in woodwork or tools as learning is all part of the fun.

If you'd like to know more about Men's Shed contact Ryan Huws, PCH Community Worker via email: rheinallt.huws@plymouthcommunityhomes.co.uk Or telephone 01752 388361.



There was a fantastic turnout at the first open-door creative writing session last month.

The class was organised by PCH and was held in the Unitarian Church on Vauxhall Street, in the city centre. The sessions will now be held every month and there's plenty of room for more attendees.

The group was organised by Hazel Alexander and Ashleigh Knowles, who have helped budding writers through a number of fun methods. The most recent group were given photos and paintings of different landscapes to offer some inspiration.

Ashleigh Knowles, Resident Learning Coordinator explained what the group got up to next, she said: "Residents were introduced to different types of creative writing to begin with. Planning a story with the beginning, middle and end was next. The group were then shown how to set the scene and use different descriptive words.

"After describing our characters, we then finished with a challenge of writing a short story as a group by taking it in turns to write a few lines."

She added: "The tricky bit was that only the last line was shown to the next person so we ended up with a story that started at the beach and ended with an avalanche and cheese fondue, which was good fun."

The group has a relaxed atmosphere with hot drinks and snacks served to attendees, all on the house of course.

This however, was not the PEN-ultimate session. The creative writing classes will continue to be held on the third Tuesday of every month, for at least the next six months.

Ashleigh added: "The session was really relaxed and as it was the first one, it was great to see people talking, meeting new people and having a go at something new.

"Some people had been to a creative writing class before lockdown so they shared their knowledge. Over the next few sessions, we are going to expand on our stories, or try a new story and also have a go at poetry."

The next session is set for 19 April and all PCH residents are welcome to join.

The location is easily accessible via public transport. If you need help with transport information, please speak to your Housing with Support Officer or contact Ashleigh Knowles, Resident Learning Coordinator.

Ashleigh can be reached by email: Ashleigh.knowles@plymouthcommunityhomes.co.uk or by phone: 01752 388051.



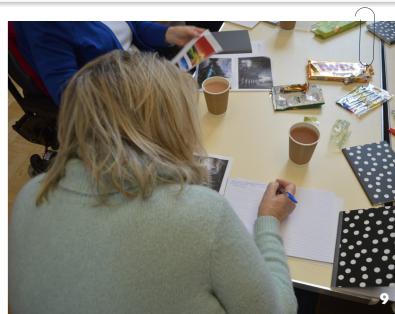


This is the story of the dog who ran away. His name is Shadow. Shadow only ran away because of what he saw and heard, which frightened him. But his master didn't hear or see anything. Don't forget dogs and cats have a lot better hearing than we do.

So Shadow just wanted to get away so he just kept running. He didn't know where he was after running what seemed like a long time. Then one day he saw a shed so he went into it. It was warm and dry so he just laid down and went to sleep and slept for weeks. When he woke up he was cold, hungry and thirsty. But there was someone who had been looking in the shed each day. This old man took Shadow into the man's house where it was warm. He fed him and gave him some water. But all Shadow wanted to do was go home.

So the old man started putting things into the papers about Shadow. One day, someone who knew about Shadow got in touch with the old man and they were able to reunite the dog with his master again. They do not live anywhere near that house so it is a happy ending for the dog and the man.

By Margaret Nubbert



HOW WELL IS PCH PERFORMING?



Is your Service Charge good value for money?

Wery or Fairly SatisfiedNeutral or not satisfied

At this time of year, we all face potential price rises. Money and budgets are on many people's minds as we approach the new financial year. So in this issue we're talking about rents and service charges.

Many people have faced a squeeze on their household budgets due to increasing energy, fuel and food costs. This is why it's so important to make sure that PCH's rent and service charge rates are affordable for everyone.

We regularly ask our tenants' opinion on how we're doing. The charts you can see show you the results when we most recently asked about rents and service charges. As you can see, the majority of residents are satisfied that our rent and service charges are reasonable.

Helen Ryan, Head of Communities and Supported Housing, said: "We understand that people may be facing challenges due to rising costs this year. If you'd like to talk about your money and bills, just call your Housing with Support Officer."

Service charges tend to be higher in sheltered homes because there are more facilities than in general needs. For example, sheltered schemes have communal rooms, laundries, many have lifts, and some have other facilities like scooter storage.

If you'd like to know more about service charges in your home look at your annual statement from PCH, or speak with your Housing with Support Officer.

HELP AND ADVICE FOR RENT AND BILLS

You may have noticed that the cost of everyday items has gone up lately. Unfortunately, the cost of food, transport, and bills, have all been on the rise.

We want to remind you that it's very important to talk to your Housing with Support Officer, if you're having issues with money or you need advice about your rent.

Staff at PCH are always on hand to help you if you're worried about covering your bills, and if this sounds familiar, you're certainly not alone. Lots of people are feeling the squeeze at the moment, as the cost of living has increased.

Energy bills and everyday items have all gone up and lots of us are being impacted by this.

Helen Ryan, Head of Communities and Supported Housing, explained: "We understand that people may be facing challenges due to rising costs this year.

"If you'd like to talk about your money and bills, just call your Housing with Support Officer.

"We can help by making sure you're receiving all the benefits you're entitled to, accessing help from specialists including our own teams at PCH, or simply helping you to make sense of your finances."

She added: "We also work with utility companies and charities to get help for our residents who face extreme hardship."

PCH has helped lots of tenants get out of rent arrears in an affordable way that suits both parties.

To speak to someone in our Housing with Support team, contact us at:housing. withsupport@plymouthcommunityhomes.co.uk or by calling us on 0808 230 6500.

Zero tolerance to domestic abuse

You never have to suffer in silence when it comes to domestic abuse. Violence against women and girls, sadly, has been especially in the spotlight after the tragic murder of young Bobbi-Anne McLeod.

Unfortunately, violence against women and domestic abuse remain serious problems. People often think that domestic abuse only refers to physical violence, especially abuse committed by men towards women. But there are lots of behaviours that should concern you if they sound familiar.

Behaviour is 'abusive' if it consists of any of the following:

- Physical or sexual abuse
- Violent or threatening behaviour
- Controlling or coercive behaviour
- Economic abuse
- Psychological or emotional

At PCH, we are committed to providing homes where residents want to live and that are safe and secure. We urge you to contact one of the following charities if you need help or advice or call 999 in an emergency situation.

The National Domestic Violence Helpline - 0808 2000 247

Women's Aid - 0808 2000 247

National LGBT Domestic Violence Helpline - 0800 999 5428

Men's Advice Line - 0808 801 0327

Victim Support - 0808 168 9111

Alternatively, advice can be found online by visiting our website: www. plymouthcommunityhomes.co.uk and searching for: "domestic abuse."

COVID-19 update

The Government recently announced that some Covid 19 safety measures are being lifted, and at the time of writing we're expecting more announcements.

Our local Public Health and city council teams tell us that cases of Covid 19 are still high in Plymouth, and are encouraging us all to stay safe from infection and help reduce transmission.

Two sets of rules?

While some legal requirements, including wearing face coverings in most indoor spaces have been removed from law, others have stayed the same. Public Health have told us that the measures we take when sheltered schemes have Covid 19 outbreaks have not changed.

This means we are getting used to having two different sets of rules.

Outside of your sheltered scheme you can choose not to wear face coverings. But Plymouth Community Homes are still required to take steps when residents of sheltered schemes have Covid 19. So you will still see us occasionally doing deep cleans in communal areas, closing communal facilities, advising you and your visitors to wear face coverings, and asking our Housing with Support staff to work differently.

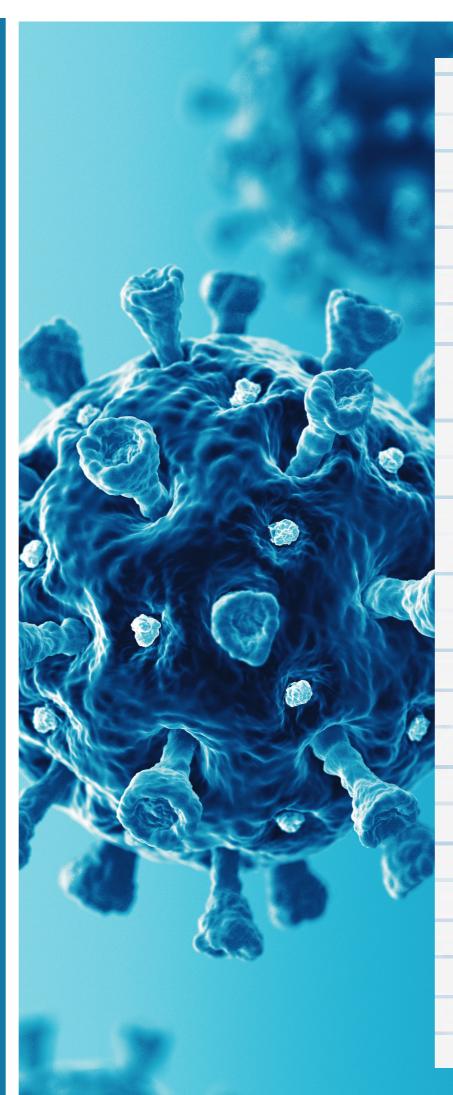
Government guidance for clinically vulnerable people continues to strongly advise extra precautions to avoid catching and spreading Covid 19.

How to stay safe from Covid 19 and Flu infection

The best way to stay safe from infection is vaccination. If you haven't had your flu jab or Covid 19 jab including the booster, please speak to your Housing with Support Officer. They can help you find out where to get information about vaccination.

Other advice for staying safe from infection:

- Wash your hands regularly and for longer
- Let air in if you're meeting someone indoors, meeting outdoors is safer
- Wear a face covering indoors and in crowded places
- Limit your contact with other people
- •Cover coughs and sneezes and throw used tissues in the bin
- Get tested and self isolate, if you have symptoms, if someone in your household has Covid 19, or if you have been in close contact with someone who has Covid 19.



Communal lounges

Communal rooms are open to residents/groups as usual with face coverings and social distancing encouraged. We may be asked to close communal rooms during Covid outbreaks.

Activities in communal rooms can restart. We'll help organisers to do a risk assessment and to follow the communal room user guide.

Your support service

We make careful choices about Housing with Support Officers' time on site at sheltered schemes, to balance the risk of spreading infection with the need to deliver a good support service to tenants.

To speak to your Housing with Support Officer you should continue to phone them.

Staff will attend site routinely but it's important that you do not approach or crowd our staff when they are on site and in the office. Staff are in contact with vulnerable residents and its important we protect them from the spread of infection.

Scheme offices are enclosed spaces. We are aiming to use them by appointment so we can avoid overcrowding, and you should check with your Housing with Support Officer before entering.

When our staff visit you they'll be social distancing, wearing PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) and following other Government guidance to reduce the spread of coronavirus.

Covid 19 booster vaccination, and flu vaccination

If you've received an invitation for the Covid 19 booster but haven't been able to take up your appointment yet you can book by calling 119, or book online. Got to www.nhs.uk and click on 'find out about Covid 19 vaccination'. If you need support with getting your vaccination please do speak to you Housing with Support Officer.

Flu vaccinations are available from pharmacies as well as some GPs. If you need support with getting your flu vaccination please speak with your Housing with Support Officer.

Covid 19 outbreaks.

When we have more than two cases of Covid 19 at a time in sheltered schemes we are required by Public Health to take some extra precautions. If your scheme is affected we'll write to you and tell you what we're doing to keep you and others safe. Please speak to your Housing with Support Officer if you have any questions or concerns about Covid 19 outbreaks in your scheme.





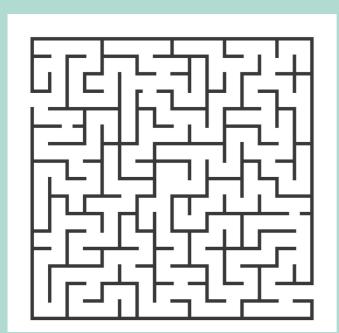
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BLOSSOM	APRIL
BUTTERFLY	TULIP
EASTER	BUNNY
THAW	ROBIN

PRIL NEST ULIP BREEZE UNNY RAIN

NEST GREEN
BREEZE UMBRELLA
RAIN GRASS
RAINBOW BUD



Answer to the puzzle on the back page

WELCOME TO PCH CONNECT

Community Development, Resident Involvement and Learning Activities.

As the Coronavirus continues to impact on us all, we aim to keep you up to date with government guidance and make sure that there is plenty for you to get involved with, whether it's in person or not!



FANCY LEARNING SOMETHING NEW?

Learn something new with online courses. To see our range of courses visit www.plymouthcommunityhomes.co.uk/our-community/learn-for-free/

Current courses: Equality and Diversity, Food Safety, Cooking ideas and Craft Group.

NEW: Creative writing workshops. Tenancy Skills

Update your Digital Skills You can use the free 'Learn My Way' hub to learn computer skills such as online banking and social media. Sign-up by visiting the website www.learnmyway.com/, using our centre code 8000268.

Please note this is open to PCH residents only.



GET INVOLVED WITH PCH

We would like to hear your views on our services. Take part in regular consultations at: https://www.plymouthcommunityhomes.co.uk/our-community/consultations/

There are different ways you can get involved and you can also join our involvement list to get regular updates https://www.plymouthcommunityhomes.co.uk/our-community/get-involved/

Please note this is open to PCH residents only



ONLINE GROUPS

If you are on Facebook, you can join our PCH People Social Group for regular updates https://www.facebook.com/groups/2660427387399028/

Photo Club - Tuesdays 1.30-2.30pm Social sessions to share photos and ideas. We will use video conferencing to share our work and sometimes we show finished projects.

For more information please email: communitiesteam@plymouthcommunityhomes.co.uk



NEED A BIT OF EXTRA SUPPORT

Computer Skills Want to learn new computer skills or learn how to use social media to keep in touch? Book some time with one of our staff to help you. To book an appointment email communitiesteam@plymouthcommunityhomes.co.uk



SOCIAL SESSIONS

You are more than welcome to join our activities! Depending on government guidance, these sessions can happen online or in person. -

Tuesdays @ 12pm - 1pm - Janner Men's Shed Janner Men's Shed members meet every Tuesday at 12 noon. If you are interested, please call Ryan Huws on 0808 230 6500.

Fridays @ 11am - 1pm - History Group A mixture of online and face to face. Anyone with an interest in history or learning more about where we live, with an emphasis on social history and local history. To join, please contact Hayley Kemp at: www.facebook.com/hayley.kemp.3910 Hayley.kemp@plymouthcommunityhomes.co.uk or 07557009229.

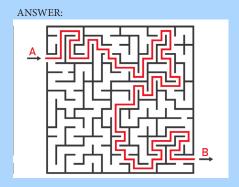
Monday 10.30pm - 12.30pm - PCH Craft Club (Once a month in person, phone calls weekly.) All welcome at The Beacon or over the phone to join in for crafts and chat with others. To join contact Ashleigh Knowles at 01752 388051 or https://www.facebook.com/ashleigh.knowles.35

Sign up to My PCH today!



Check and pay your rent, report a repair and update your details online from the comfort of your PCH home

mypch.plymouthcommunityhomes.co.uk



0808 230 6500 / 01752 237990

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youtube.com/user/plymouthch

We're always keen to hear what you're up to, so if you'd like to tell us about something we can include in the newsletter, we'd love to hear it.

Email housingwithsupport@ plymouthcommunityhomes. co.uk.



Did you know you can recycle me?

