

InTouch

Issue 45 Winter 2021

Safety checks - page 3

End of an Era for North Prospect - page 10

Tenancy fraud, who could be missing out? - page 18

Happy
New Year



Last year presented the world with some tough challenges so let's hope this year treats us all much better.

January is the traditional time to think about how to improve our lifestyle. Whether it's our health or our finances, this issue gives you plenty to think about.

Read how we can support you to give up smoking with the Swap to Stop programme.

If you need help managing your money, there are some wise words from our friends at the City of Plymouth Credit Union who have useful tips to move from the red into the black.

We reveal the winners of our I Love Food photo competition and there is some fantastic drone footage of the final demolition of North Prospect.

We're always keen to use the latest innovations if it means helping tenants. This issue features news on how we're using mobile phones to sort out repairs in your home and making the most of You Tube to help you find a home.

Nick Lewis



We've always tried to listen to our tenants – and now we're making it more official.

We've signed up to the National Housing Federation's Together with Tenants charter, which sets out our commitment to create stronger relationships with you, our tenants.

This follows on from consultation we did with you last year, when you told us your priorities and what you'd like to see us do.

We'll be continuing to work with residents, staff and our Board to define exactly what we want these charter commitments to focus on.

We'll be looking to adopt the Together with Tenants charter by the end of March.

In the meantime, you can read more about Together with Tenants at the NHF website www.housing.org.uk, or contact the Communities Team on 0808 230 6500 or email communitesteam@plymouthcommunityhomes.co.uk.

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UPDATED CUSTOMER COMPLAINTS AND COMMENTS POLICY

We want to offer the best service we can to our customers and that includes making sure we listen to and act on your complaints.

We've reviewed our Customer Complaints and Comments Policy – thank you to everyone who fed back your opinions.

The policy explains how we deal with complaints and, ultimately, improve the way we deliver our services. It sets out who can complain, the ways you can complain and the different stages of the complaints process.

The policy also explains how we handle your compliments, comments and suggestions.

You can read the policy on our website.

We comply with the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code.

SAFETY CHECKS

We carry out a number of household safety checks in our homes every year to ensure tenants are kept safe.

Depending on your property, we carry out gas, electrical, fire safety, asbestos and legionella checks.

As well as keeping you safe, these checks are a legal requirement.

No Access Officer Tania Cuxton said: “We want to make sure that all residents and visitors to their homes are kept safe and that our own staff who carry out work in these properties are safe.

“We’ve noticed recently that, because of Coronavirus, some tenants are worried about letting us into their homes.

“This is understandable but we’d like to assure residents that we follow all necessary government guidance at all times. Our staff also want to stay safe!

“If you think you may be Covid positive we can postpone a visit but we will need to make an appointment at a later date.”

If we aren’t able to gain access to your home, we will have to take court action which could lead to you paying court costs and ultimately, end up in prison.

Tania added: “We’re here to help. If you need assistance or want to chat to sort out any barriers to keeping an appointment, please call us or your Housing Officer.

“We’re not there to judge but to help and get the checks completed in the least disruptive manner and in good time.”

Call us on 0808 230 6500 today.

HELP YOURSELF THIS WINTER

We want you to be safe this winter, but sometimes boilers may stop working in cold weather and it's mostly because the condensate pipe has frozen.

Here are some things you can do to help before calling repairs. You can also view our video repair guides on our website.

Before you try these self-help suggestions, please make sure your footing is good and beware of ice, especially in the dark.

Take a key with you if you go outside in case you lock yourself out. This is particularly important if you live alone or have young children.

It's also worth taking your mobile. It may have a torch on it and you can contact someone if you need help.

- Get yourself some hot water – not boiling – heated by a kettle or a microwave, and pour over the end of the pipe where it may be frozen but be very careful not to scald yourself.
- This water may freeze if it goes on a path or walkway so take care.
- Hold a hot water bottle or heat wrap around the pipe to thaw it.
- Once the pipe has thawed you should then re-set your boiler by holding the reset button for 10 seconds and wait for the boiler to re-fire.
- If you have an elderly or vulnerable neighbour or relative you may be able to help them do this if necessary, but remember to observe social distancing.
- If you think your pipes have frozen, make sure you know where and how to turn your water off – this will be at your stopcock. Now is a good time to find it if you aren't sure. If it is in a locked cupboard or communal area, make sure you know where the key is.
- When pipes freeze, they can sometimes split, which will cause a flood once they thaw so that's another reason to find out where your stopcock is now, don't wait until after a thaw.

In case of power outages or problems, below are some tips you may find useful from various sources including power companies:

- Fill a flask with hot water
- Keep a torch handy and make sure it has working batteries in
- Prepare a meal that can be eaten cold
- Avoid using candles and paraffin heaters.
- Keep a wind-up/battery/solar radio ready so you can listen to radio updates.
- Many modern telephones, especially digital or cordless ones, don't work in a power cut. Keep an ordinary analogue one handy.



If you need
a repair, you
do it through
MyPCH access
hours a day
days a week

mypch.plymouthcommunityheating.com

ELECTRICAL CHECKS BY VIDEO



OUR NEW WAY OF CARRYING OUT VISITS TO YOUR HOME IS BEING USED BY MORE TEAMS ACROSS PCH.

A few issues back, we told you about Remote Assistance, a new tool that lets us view potential repairs problems in your home via video link.

When you contact us with your query, our staff decide whether to attend in person or contact you via a video call.

It means staff can offer remote support if possible and visits will only be made when required.

The trial initially focused on property inspections and has now been extended to our electrical team, who use it to check smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors as well as fire doors.

Of course, we understand if you don't have a mobile phone or feel uncomfortable using the video option – we'll see you in person as we normally would.

Electrician Richard Granville has used Remote Assist when carrying out the checks and says it's also had some unforeseen benefits.

He said: "You do have some instances where tenants don't have smartphones or Internet access and that's fine. They're often the people I've most enjoyed talking to. A lot of them haven't spoken to someone for a long time so it's almost like a welfare check."

HELPING YOU STAY IN YOUR HOME FOR LONGER

As your needs change, you may find that your home needs to have adjustments made to help you remain independent.

If you have a disability, long-term illness or are getting older, you may be able to receive equipment or adaptations to help.

For very minor adaptations – like grab rails and shower seats – you can use our on-demand service without an assessment from an Occupational Therapist.

You can contact Millbrook Healthcare on 0845 223 2454 to place an order and they will deliver the items within four weeks.

If you need a more in-depth adaptation, you'll need to contact Plymouth City Council who work with Livewell Southwest. Call 01752 668000 and ask for Adult Social Care for more details and to arrange an Occupational Therapist assessment.



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week.

munityhomes.co.uk

PCH CONNECT

Our new way of delivering community activities,
resident involvement and resident learning!



SOCIAL SESSIONS

Tuesdays 11am - 12pm - North Prospect Tea & Toast

You will need access to Facebook Messenger for this. To join us for a chat contact Leigh Ferguson
<https://www.facebook.com/leigh.cdworker.9>

Tuesdays 12pm - 1pm - Janner Men's Shed

Janner Men's Shed meet on Facebook every Tuesday at 12 noon. Members only.

Tuesdays 12pm - 1pm - Craft Social Sessions

For anyone who loves all things crafty. To join the group contact Hayley Kemp <https://www.facebook.com/hayley.kemp.3910>

Wednesdays 11am - 12pm - Notte St Community Cafe Elevenses

Everyone welcome to join in and have a chat and you're welcome to join with audio only. To join the group contact Hazel Alexander <https://www.facebook.com/hazel.alexander.507>

Wednesdays 12:30pm - 1:30pm - PCH Lunch Bunch (incl Food & Craft)

All welcome to join in and have a chat and you're welcome to join with audio only.



ONLINE GROUPS

Some of the community groups we support can also be found online:

Efford Forum/Friends of Efford Marsh:

Updates to residents of Efford are posted on 'The Laira and Efford Notice Board' Facebook page Link can be found at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/359649111163393/>

North Prospect Community

Updates to residents of North Prospect regarding groups including North Prospect Tea & Toast are posted on Leigh Ferguson's Facebook page. Link can be found at <https://www.facebook.com/leigh.cdworker.9>

Photo Club - When: Tuesdays 1:30pm-2:30pm

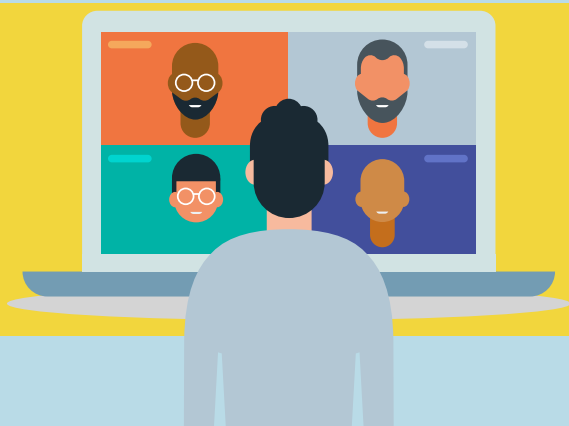
Video conferencing social sessions to share photos and ideas. For more information on this drop-in session please email: communitiesteam@plymouthcommunityhomes.co.uk

History Club - When: Thursdays 1:30pm-2:30pm

Each week the group will pick an interesting subject to research and share. We will use video conferencing to share our ideas. For more information on this drop-in session please email: communitiesteam@plymouthcommunityhomes.co.uk

Plymouth Communities Hub Facebook Page

<https://www.facebook.com/Plymouth-Communities-Hub-107598050877461/>



Join the PCH People Social Group for more information
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/2660427387399028/>
(please note we ask you some simple questions before you join).

We look forward to welcoming you to our activities – so please join us.



Tell us what you think

We would like to hear your views on our services. For more information: www.plymouthcommunityhomes.co.uk/our-community/get-involved/
Please note this is open to PCH residents only




Computer Skills

Monday - Friday, 9am - 5pm at a time to suit you. 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



Job Search Support*

Monday - Friday, 9am - 5pm at a time to suit you. Book some time with us to help guide you through job searches, writing a CV and recommended online learning courses. To book an appointment email communitiesteam@plymouthcommunityhomes.co.uk



Something interesting?

Visit our 'Give it a go channel' We will be regularly adding new activities; things you may not have thought about trying before and we hope you'll really enjoy. You may find a new hobby and will definitely have fun. Search for 'Hazel Alexander Community Worker' on YouTube

PCH CONNECT PLUS

Alongside our current PCH Connect programme, we'll be running some special sessions including cooking, crafts, storytelling and quizzes.

If you have any ideas for online sessions please get in touch with the Communities Team. We're always keen to hear about new activities we can try out so do get in touch. We'll be promoting these activities on our Facebook page and on the PCH website – search for PCH Connect.

For more information or to share ideas, contact us on 0808 230 6500, by emailing communitiesteam@plymouthcommunityhomes.co.uk or via post to: Online ideas for Spring, Communities Team, Plumer House, Tailour Road, Plymouth, PL6 5DH.



HOW TO TAKE PART:

Let us know if you'd like to take part by contacting communitiesteam@plymouthcommunityhomes.co.uk with the name of the activity you'd like to join along with your contact details (full name, mobile number, email address). You can also telephone our Communities Team on 0808 230 6500.



PUTTING CUSTOMERS AT THE HEART

WOULD YOU LIKE TO HAVE A SAY IN HOW WE OFFER SERVICES TO OUR RESIDENTS?

Our Customer Focus Committee (CFC) monitors how we perform, agrees policies and makes sure we're doing what we say we're going to do.

Some of the subjects the group has discussed recently include our new customer complaints policy and guidance, our neighbourhood plans and the work we do to help tenants deal with welfare reform.

We want more residents to get involved with this committee, which meets four times a year.

Board member Lavinia Porfir is Chair of the CFC and urges any of our residents to consider joining.

Lavinia said: "I call Customer Focus Committee the heart of PCH as we do our best to listen and understand customer needs. The voice of the customer is vital for PCH in order to shape its services.

"We don't just provide houses, but homes. We want to make sure these homes meet customer expectations and support a good quality of life.

"Joining the committee is a great opportunity for more people with direct lived experience to say what they want, to get involved and to express their concerns or wishes. "

We'll be recruiting residents soon so watch this space. If you'd like more information about CFC, contact Laura Moss on 0808 230 6500 or email governance@plymouthcommunityhomes.co.uk.

Want to 'Make' a difference?
Volunteer for Mayflower 400 and
spread the word about Plymouth's
amazing events in 2021!

Become a Mayflower Maker and be part of
the commemorative year in Plymouth, now
extending into 2021, with a packed spring and
summer calendar of events and activity across
the city including the **Mayflower International
Festival 8-11 July, Mayflower Muster 10 July**
and **Mayflower 400 Four Nations Ceremony on
Plymouth Hoe 11 July 2021**. There's also the
impressive **SailGP** on **17 and 18 July**.

As ambassadors of Mayflower 400, Mayflower
Makers are raising awareness of the
commemorations while helping the people of
Plymouth and beyond to participate in the cultural
events programme. Volunteers also provide
support for a whole host of community activities
within the areas of Sport & Wellbeing and Arts &
Culture as well as the Mayflower Trails and the
Elizabethan House.

This is your chance to do something for your city
and your community to help make sure everyone
has a great experience of Mayflower 400.

To sign up to be a Mayflower Maker today, visit:
mayflower400uk.org/volunteering

Contact: neil.minion@plymouth.gov.uk

1620—2020
Mayflower
400™

Steering our future,
informed by the past.



Mayflower 400 National Supporters and Sponsors



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**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**



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END OF AN ERA AS LAST OF THE OLD HOMES DEMOLISHED IN NORTH PROSPECT



BUTCHER'S PARK

The final two homes at our Tavistock scheme, also known as Butcher's Park, were completed last month and are ready to move into.

We've got 38 homes in the Barratt David Wilson Homes development – 29 for affordable rent and nine for shared ownership sale through SO Living. There are three remaining homes left for shared ownership sale and 11 homes available for rent.

Our homes at the site are a mix of one and two bed flats and two and three bed houses. The rented homes are available to people with a connection to the West Devon area.

Tenant Nikki Waters moved in to her home during the summer – just weeks before she was due to give birth.

The move was stressful for Nikki, who had been sleeping on her mum's sofa and sofa surfing with friends before finding a house.

She had to contend with house hunting while heavily pregnant and viewing properties online only as face-to-face viewings were cancelled during lockdown. She's now the proud mum to four-month-old daughter Parker and is looking forward to the future in their new home.

She said: "I love the house. It's close enough to town here but out of the way enough for it to be quiet. They have also finished the play park now and it looks really nice. By the summer my daughter will be able to take advantage of it."



The end of last year saw a landmark in the regeneration of North Prospect, as our contractor Vistry Partnerships finished pulling down the old homes in Phase 4, the last phase to be rejuvenated.

The momentous footage was captured by local firm Red Air Drones, and as you can see from these images, the site is now completely clear.

Construction of this new phase has already begun and the final homes are due to be completed in 2024.

Former local residents have been reminiscing about their time in the area – and looking ahead to the future.

Marion Cole lived in Myrtleville for 33 years where she brought up her twin daughters. She also has two sons from her first marriage. She moved out of Phase 4 and into a bungalow near Weston Mill.

Marion said: “I felt sad to leave. I loved it there.

“I love where I am now though. It’s a two-bed bungalow so it’s much easier for me as I have COPD and I wasn’t able to get up the stairs. It’s made a lot of difference to me.

“I didn’t want a new build. I don’t like the outside appearance of them but the area is looking better than it used to. The regeneration is all for the good. It will be interesting to see what it’s like when it’s all finished.

“North Prospect is such a close-knit community. People look out for each other.”

Marion’s former neighbour, Elaine Braddon, lived in Myrtleville for a similar amount of time before moving to her current home in Pennycross.

She said: “I was a bit gutted to leave but to be honest the houses did need a lot of work doing to them so they really needed to come down. I had mildew in the bathroom and I was wiping it down all the time.

“I love my new house. It’s smaller but I have a dining room. The garden is better. It’s lovely and quiet and I’ve got good neighbours. My eldest daughter also lives close by.

“When the regen is finished it will hopefully all look really good.”

This final phase will be named Mayflower Leat and will provide 196 new homes.

There will be 125 affordable homes – 87 will be for rent and 38 shared ownership homes will be marketed through SO Living.

There will be 71 homes for open market sale which will be sold by Vistry Partnerships through their Linden Homes brand with a range of two and three bedroom homes available.

As well as our own contribution to the regeneration, we’re extremely grateful to have received £2.8m from Homes England to get the regeneration to where it is today and we continue to seek grants to complete the work.

We have also received £2.55m of government cash via Plymouth City Council as part of infrastructure funding.

Our contractor Kier Living is continuing work at Briarwood (Phase 5), where they’re building 143 homes – 77 for affordable housing and shared ownership and 66 for open market sale.



Alterations in your home – what you need to know

We know lockdown has meant people are spending more time at home than ever before.

For some, that has given you a chance to think about how you could improve your homes.

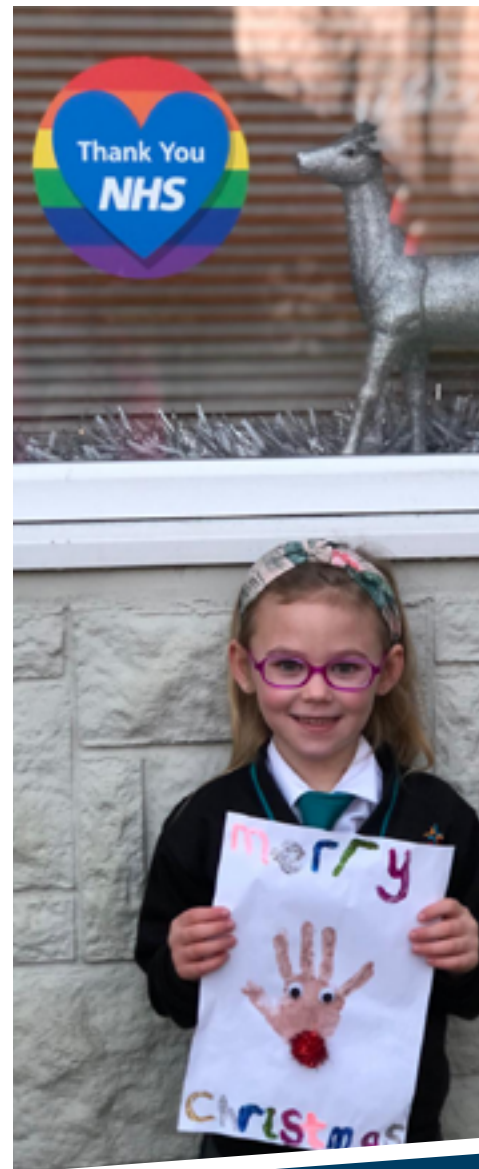
We'd just like to remind tenants that if you're thinking of doing any work to your property, you need to get permission in writing before you carry out any renovations.

In some cases, we've come across people building extensions and loft conversions – works we would not give permission for.

We're currently taking legal action against a number of residents who've carried out works like these without our knowledge and consent.

You can read more information in our Alterations to Homes policy on the Publications page of our website.

For permission for any renovations, please write to: Repairs, Plymouth Community Homes, Plumer House, Tailour Road, Plymouth, PL6 5DH.



Christmas card competition winners

Congratulations to Molly and Maddison who were the lucky winners of our design a Christmas card competition.

Molly, 11, from West Park and Madison, from Crownhill, six, were two of dozens of youngsters who sent in entries.

We wanted to spread a little festive cheer after a difficult year so we asked our residents' children to design us some Christmas cards.

Molly and Maddison each got a £50 Smyths toy store voucher and saw their design turned into a real-life Christmas card which we sent out to partners around the city.

COVID-19 isolation may cause tensions to rise and domestic abuse to increase. Help is available.



Domestic Abuse – you are not alone

Domestic abuse can affect anyone. Devon and Cornwall Police work together with numerous partner organisations to raise awareness.

This is especially important during the current pandemic and restrictions in place. Times of stress and uncertainty can make an abusive relationship worse. If you need support, help is always available.

What is domestic abuse?

Domestic abuse is the misuse of power and control by one person over another. This controlling behaviour may be exerted in various ways, such as through physical violence, emotional and / or psychological manipulation, forcing sexual acts or taking over your finances.

It can begin at any time, can be obvious or subtle and can happen suddenly or gradually. It can happen to anyone regardless of age, race, religion, culture, disability, sexual orientation or lifestyle. Abuse of any kind is never acceptable.

If you need help, www.domesticabusehelp.co.uk is the police web page with details of sources of help and support.

If you want to talk to someone about a situation you're unsure about, we have dedicated domestic abuse officers who will help and advise you. Call 101 for help and guidance. In an emergency call 999. You can also use our 101 contact form if you prefer to email. <https://www.devon-cornwall.police.uk/contact/contact-form/101-non-emergency/>





Do you know a Lockdown Legend?



Westeria Terrace

Tell us about a PCH resident or residents who supported you or your community throughout 2020.

By sharing your story and thanks, you will give your PCH Lockdown Legend a chance to win one of 5 top prizes of £50, or a runner's up prize of £20.

What a brilliant way to say thanks for all their efforts and hard work.

Tell us who supported you or your community in 2020 by sending us the details below:

Your name and contact details
Their name and contact details
Why are you nominating the above person(s)?

The winners will be chosen by our management team.

The deadline for entries is Friday 5 March.

Please email your nominations to: communititesteam@plymouthcommunityhomes.co.uk.





Residents at one of our blocks are looking forward to the arrival of warmer weather – so they can use their upgraded outdoor space.

Rangers from our Environmental Services team are laying turf at the rear of Westeria Terrace in Beacon Park.

By the time you read this, it should all have been laid.

Housing Officer Heidi Bavin said: “They are doing a fab job! The team is looking to plant a couple of trees in the spring and get some benches for the tenants.”

Watch this space – we’ll show you pictures of the garden when the work is complete.

Splurged a Bit Too Much This Christmas?



Honestly, we get it. Even the staff here at the City of Plymouth Credit Union (CPCU) spend a little more than we should during the holidays!

We've put our heads together and come up with a few ideas to help ourselves, and we'll let you in on them too. Here are some ways you can recover from those well-spent funds and give yourself a little peace of mind for next year's festivities. It's never too soon to act, and you'll be thanking yourself that you started now, when December rolls around again.

Get Back to Black

Take control of your finances in 2021. Look at your account statements, add up how much you spent during the holidays, and find out how much money you need to pay off any debts to get back in the black.

Plan how you'll pay your debts. Make it simple, realistic and stay on it. Keep to regular, manageable payments. To avoid fees, make sure you always pay the minimum on your credit cards, but pay more when you have the extra money. If you received money gifts, use some of them to pay your debts!

Cut back on treats for a while and consider switching or negotiating with your utility providers.

Groceries are a major expense, so small but frequent changes here go a long way. Simple changes such as sticking to your shopping list, avoiding impulse-buying and going meatless (even if it's only occasionally each week), will be easier on your pockets, your health, and the planet.

CPCU Can Help

Consider getting a pre-paid debit card.

You can prevent debt build-up simply by loading up your card and going about your daily business. Unlike credit cards, where you spend money first and repay later, the pre-paid debit card flips this around so that you will be safely spending your own money. As the card won't allow an overdraft, there is no risk of accumulating overdraft interest fees either. To learn more about this card, provided by the City of Plymouth Credit Union, visit <https://cpcu.co.uk/products/prepaid-debit-card/>.

Wishing you a Happy New Year,

City of Plymouth Credit Union (CPCU)



Want To Give Up Smoking in 2021?

We continue to offer support for residents to kick the habit through Swap to Stop, a programme delivered by Livewell Southwest.

Our tenants (or a member of their household) who are smokers and are interested in taking part are offered a free rechargeable e-cigarette, four weeks supply of liquid, visits to free community clinics and dedicated support from the One You Plymouth practitioners including behavioural support.

Research from Public Health England has shown that if you can stop smoking for 28 days, you're five times more likely to be able to stay off cigarettes for good.

Why not make a change this year to save money and improve your health?! If you want to access this offer you can speak to your Housing Team or phone Livewell Southwest on 01752 437177.



Don't forget your local childcare provider is

OPEN

Me2 and Early Years Funded places are available



If your child is aged between three and four years old you are entitled to 15 hours of free childcare a week with an Ofsted registered provider.

Families earning less than £16,190, with a two year old, could get up to 15 hours of free childcare per week.

If your children normally access childcare it's really important they continue to attend so that they can gain the learning and wellbeing benefits of early education.

Find out more
[plymouth.gov.uk/
childcarefamilyinformation](http://plymouth.gov.uk/childcarefamilyinformation)

Supporting
childcare providers,
working together to
provide a range of
childcare options.



Looking to move
house this year?

Finding your next home has never been more convenient thanks to a new way we're conducting viewings of our empty homes.

You can view potential properties from the comfort of your existing home by watching a YouTube video of the house or flat.

Our Viewings Officer, Mike Kewish, films the homes inside and out. He provides commentary, explaining key information about the property as he goes around.

We've now filmed around 200 homes since June.

Georgia Spinks, Housing Choices Manager, said: "It's something we started during lockdown because we can't have more than one person in a property at any one time.

"The virtual viewings have gone down really well with people. A lot of people prefer them. Some people are self-isolating, living out of the area or may be disabled and can't get to a viewing easily.

"It's also more convenient for people who work full-time and who can't get time off. If people do want to see a property in person it is possible.

"We're going to carry on doing this. It does save a lot of time for applicants and our staff."

TENANCY FRAUD – WHO COULD BE MISSING OUT ON A HOME?

Between July and September last year, more than 5,000 families were on the Devon Home Choice register.

That's 5,000 families being deprived of a home – because of cheats.

Social housing fraud in Plymouth and other areas of Devon is investigated at a criminal level by the Devon Audit Partnership (DAP) on behalf of us.

Subletting is the most common type of tenancy fraud and those found guilty can face a prison sentence and / or a £5,000 fine.

But what about the victims?

Rachel (not her real name) was forced to look for a home for more than four years due to one of our homes being used fraudulently.

Rachel lived in a two-bedroom flat with her teenage son and daughter who were forced to share a room.

She spent lots of time bidding on homes through Devon Home Choice trying to find somewhere bigger.

She was eventually offered a home that had just become available following a criminal investigation by us and the DAP.

Rachel's search for a home could have taken weeks instead of years if no fraud had taken place.

Rachel said: "I'd been in my last home about five years and we only had the two bedrooms which meant that my 13-year-old son and 15-year-old daughter had to share a room.

"It's frustrating because there are so many people in my position – you're taking away a property from someone who needs it. If I knew someone that was doing it I would report it anonymously as it's the right thing to do."

Rachel has noticed an improvement in family life since the move.

She added: "Sometimes I feel like I'm living on my own as the kids just keep themselves to themselves in their rooms!

"They're both a lot happier now that they have their own space. There's a lot less tension, even though it's been a difficult year with Covid-19.



We love getting feedback from you – whether it's your kind words or your cute pics.

Malcolm Snowden, 59, of Plymstock, rang in to tell us how happy he is with the service he receives from PCH. He has dyslexia and struggles to read letters we send him.

But he knows help is just a phone call away.

Malcolm said: "I just want to say thank to all the PCH team for the support that I get when I have a problem. I can ring up and they sort it out. For example, the other day I noticed my rent had not gone out and I rang up to ask someone about it.

"The team was so fantastic and put me at ease. But it's everyone really – reception, the maintenance teams. You don't get that everywhere.

"I just want to let others know that support is there.

"Just knowing that if a letter comes through the door and I don't understand it, all I have to do is pick up the phone and they will explain it to me.

"It allows people who may hide away because of the stigma to know that help is out there. People don't like to talk about dyslexia."

We're happy to help Malcolm. If you need something explaining or sorting, just pick up the phone and call us on 0808 230 6500 or if you prefer, log on to your MyPCH account.



Jane from Mount Wise wanted to share this adorable picture of the family's ginger cat Phillip. Thanks Jane, that's brightened up our day!



We asked readers to send us pictures of your cooking creations for our latest photo competition and, like a well-baked cake, you really rose to the occasion!

Our judges' mouths were watering as they viewed the images of your tempting teas and delicious desserts.

Kerry Winston's cous cous with lemon chilli chicken was judged the winner of the £30 shopping voucher.

Kerry, of Cecil Street, said: "This is one of my regular meals. It's a healthy option meal from Slimming World, which I was on. I try and eat as healthily as I can."



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

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 In Touch, we'd love to hear it.

Email news@plymouthcommunityhomes.co.uk

-  0808 230 6500 / 01752 237990
-  info@plymouthcommunityhomes.co.uk
-  plymouthcommunityhomes.co.uk
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