

My Home

Sheltered housing newsletter

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Issue 1 | December 2020



WELCOME

Another lockdown over, another unknown period of restrictions ahead, perhaps more time apart from family, friends, colleagues, the places and people we love. Thank goodness for the memories of happy times we have spent together and for the joy of looking forward to times we will spend together again.

Meeting you and spending time with you are some of the best memories I have of my job.

Coffee mornings and quizzes, meetings and events, laughter and fun. But this year there have been times when my job means writing to you with the hardest things I've had to say in a decades-long career. Having to tell you that we can't be together in our schemes, our communal rooms and our gardens has been very tough. We miss those together-times and I'm certain that you do too.

We have to do this though, so that we can be together again when the pandemic is over. We have to stay apart to keep each other safe. This is clear and incredibly important.

This newsletter is a new way that we will stay in touch with you while we can't be together. We really hope you'll use it to stay in touch with us and other residents too. How are you staying in touch with people? What stories can you tell that might lift our spirits? Have you struggled with loneliness and if so, how have you overcome that?

We'd love to hear from you. Please send your stories, ideas or photos to housingwithsupport@plymouthcommunityhomes.co.uk.

We'll continue to write to you as and when government guidelines change so you're aware of the latest Covid guidance and how this impacts on our services.

Helen Ryan,
Head of Communities and Housing with Support

Warning of loan shark dangers

We're supporting a national campaign to prevent people from falling victim to loan sharks during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Continued economic uncertainty, with many people struggling to take advantage of people in a vulnerable position.

Loan sharks are unregulated, often give cash loans at high interest rates. They may offer what appears to be a quick solution but the money borrowed will come at a very high price and may be difficult to repay.

Our Housing with Support team are now able to support victims of loan sharks, educating them on the dangers and signposting them to support if needed.

This is thanks to training from the England Illegal Money Lending Team (IMLT) who investigate and prosecutes loan sharks.

Anyone who feels they may have been the victim of a loan shark should contact the support officer or contact the IMLT in confidence. Text, email and callers can remain anonymous.

You can also email reportaloanshark@stoploansharks.co.uk or visit the support at www.stoploansharks.co.uk.

If you're struggling for financial help, the City of Plymouth offers support to turn for advice and support. You can also get help from organisations such as Citizens Advice Plymouth, StepChange and Plymouth Debt Advice.

GARDENING MAKEOVER

Community spirit has been alive and well at Leypark Court during the Covid pandemic.

Residents at the scheme have been helping out all summer in the area's outdoor space – and there are plans for it to be a Christmas to remember too.

Tenants from across the scheme pitched in and helped rejuvenate the garden areas.

Jenette said: "It was full of brambles. My husband Graham started getting rid of them and over time people would pop by and speak to him and they became involved too.

"People would buy bark and earth and plants and bulbs. People have put bulbs in for the spring. It gave people something different to talk about rather than the misery of Covid.

"Now there are plaques and wishing wells and lights up and there's even an angel that glows in the dark. Everyone has been involved. One woman, Heather, has painted gnomes. It's really brought people together."

Jane looks after a separate patch of garden and says it's been her 'sanity' during lockdown.

She said: "I don't know what I would have done without it. I always liked gardening but never had one for years until I came here.

"The only thing is we do get deer, foxes and badgers who eat the flowers. I covered the garden in the summer and everyone would laugh and say, 'you're putting your flowers to bed!' It did work though."

Shirley has her sights set on Christmas now. She's organised a Covid-compliant 'Secret Santa'.

All the residents have paid £3 and she's bought and wrapped presents to hand out (while wearing gloves!).

She added: "I'm also doing a few little surprises for the residents too."

facing redundancy, means loan sharks may look who feel they have nowhere to turn for help.

without any paperwork and charge extortionate quick-fix small loan, but in the long term, any may lead to violence, threats and intimidation.

support residents who may be at risk from loan tting them to services that can help them further

oney Lending Team (IMLT), which investigates

a loan shark is urged to either talk to their hous- ence on 0300 555 2222. Lines are open 24/7

ks.gov.uk or complete an online form to request

mouth Credit Union offers a safe and easy place and discuss your options with organisations the Money Advice Service.

Housing with Support Officer Jackie Day's marathon effort

I enter the ballot for the London Marathon every year because it's nearly impossible to get in and I'm not that lucky – right? Wrong! You can probably imagine my shock and horror when I got the email last October saying 'Congratulations You're In!'

I decided to raise money for Alzheimer's Research UK as it's an important cause for me on a personal and professional level. So I had the motivation, I had a plan and I had a goal.

I stuck to my training plan through Storms Brendan, Ciara and Dennis in January and February getting buffeted and blown around my runs. I even ran 14 miles round the Formula 1 track in Abu Dhabi while I was on holiday.

But then the coronavirus pandemic hit and the race – originally due to be held on 24 April – was postponed until 4 October.

During the first stage of lockdown I kept my motivation high and used my daily exercise to run six miles most lunchtimes as the roads and pavements were quieter than after work.

The marathon organisers eventually decided that the race would be held virtually so I set about planning a fun route.

On 4 October I ran 28 miles on the coastpath, fields and lanes around Bovisand, Heybrook Bay, Wembury and Staddiscombe to earn my medal for the 40th London Marathon. It was a wet, windy, and muddy day and I was accompanied by over 40,000 runners completing their own races around the world.

I raised £516.25 for Alzheimer's Research and ran 1,300 miles in the year leading up to the final race day.

Now I can stop running for a while until I need to start my training for the real race in London in 2022!



CHRISTMAS TRADITIONS FROM AROUND THE WORLD

Housing with Support Officer Emma Harris takes a look at how other nations celebrate the festive season

As you're tucking into your turkey or nut roast on Christmas Day, have you ever wondered how people from around the world are celebrating? Here are a few of the weird and wonderful traditions from across the globe:

In Japan, a white bearded man has become associated with Christmas, but it's not Santa Claus, it's Colonel Sanders! Millions of Japanese families tuck into Kentucky Fried Chicken on Christmas Day. Winner winner chicken dinner, no cooking and no washing up!

On Christmas Eve in Norway, it's traditional to hide all broomsticks. It's said that on the night of the 24th the wicked witches and evil spirits come out looking for broomsticks to steal and fly on.

If you live in the Philippines you can enjoy puto bumbong which is a bamboo tube filled with purple rice, butter, sugar and coconut. Don't worry about the calories, it's Christmas!

Christmas isn't an official holiday in China, however, a much healthier festive treat is enjoyed. "Peace apples" are gifted on Christmas Eve. These are regular apples placed in ornate boxes and wrapped in coloured paper – I think a chocolate orange wins every time. Deep fried crispy caterpillar is a treat enjoyed in South Africa during the festive season. Not sure this tradition will catch on!

In Germany there's a special ornament that always goes on the Christmas tree. It's a pickled shaped ornament (think pickled gherkin). On Christmas morning, whoever finds where it's hidden will have good luck for the following year.

There are hundreds of different festive traditions and these are just a handful, but perhaps it's inspired you to try something new this Christmas.



MERRY CHRISTMAS & Happy new year



BBC Good Food Recipe



EASY MINCE PIES

INGREDIENTS

225g cold butter, diced	280g mincemeat
350g plain flour	1 small egg, beaten
100g golden caster sugar	icing sugar, to dust

METHOD

STEP 1

To make the pastry, rub the butter into the flour, then mix in the golden caster sugar and a pinch of salt.

STEP 2

Combine the pastry into a ball – don't add liquid – and knead it briefly. You can use the dough immediately, or chill for later.

STEP 3

Heat the oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6. Line 18 holes of two 12-hole patty tins, by pressing small walnut-sized balls of pastry into each hole.

STEP 4

Spoon the mincemeat into the pies. Take slightly smaller balls of pastry than before and pat them out between your hands to make round lids to cover the pies.

STEP 5

Top the pies with their lids, pressing the edges gently together to seal – you don't need to seal them with milk or egg as they will stick on their own.

STEP 6

Brush the tops of the pies with the beaten egg. Bake for 20 mins until golden. Leave to cool in the tin for 5 mins, then remove to a wire rack. Lightly dust with the icing sugar.



1

THE MODERN IMAGE OF SANTA CLAUS IN A RED SUIT WAS CREATED BY COCA-COLA.

2

THE 12 DAYS OF CHRISTMAS BEGIN ON DECEMBER 14TH.

3

IN JAPAN, SANTA IS KNOWN AS ANNUAL GIFT MAN AND HE LIVES ON THE MOON.

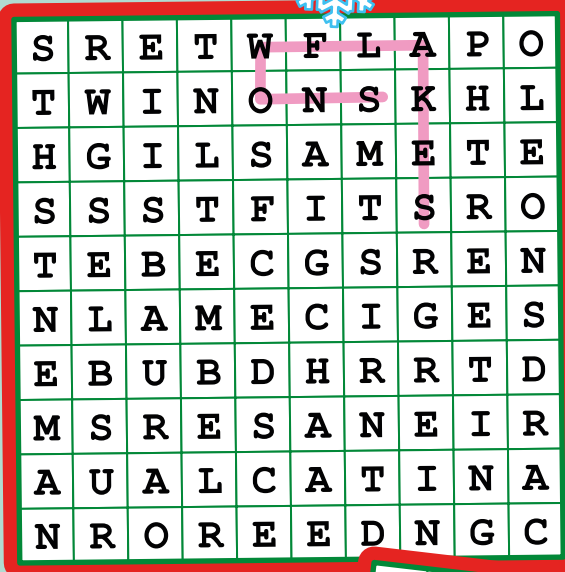
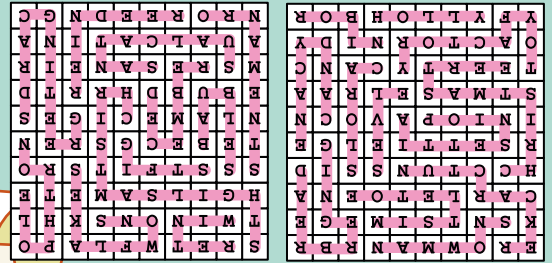
4

A WHITE CHRISTMAS IS STATISTICALLY MORE LIKELY IN NEW YORK CITY THAN IN LONDON.

1. FALSE. EVEN OTHER BEVERAGE COMPANIES USED THE IMAGE PRIOR TO COCA-COLA.
2. FALSE. THE 12 DAYS OF CHRISTMAS BEGIN, NOT END, ON DECEMBER 25TH.
3. FALSE. THIS WAS MADE UP BY 'THE SIMPSONS'. HE IS KNOWN AS サンタクロース (SANTA KURO-SU).
4. TRUE. LONDON IS 11° FURTHER NORTH THAN NEW YORK, THERE IS ONLY A 6% CHANCE OF A WHITE CHRISTMAS, COMPARED TO 22% IN NYC.

WORD SEARCH

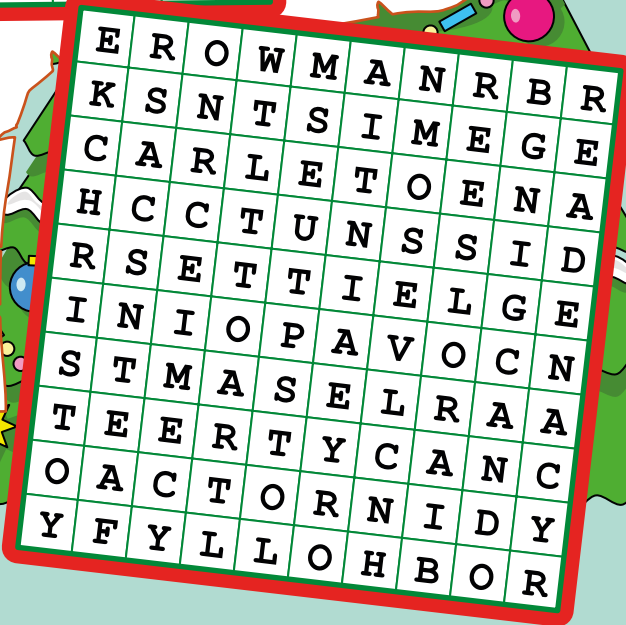
ANSWER:



BAUBLES
CANDY CANE
CAROLS
CHRISTMAS LIGHTS
CHRISTMAS TREE
DECEMBER
ELVES
GIFTS
GINGERBREAD
GREETING CARDS
HOLLY

WHAT TYPE OF
KEY DO
YOU NEED FOR
A NATIVITY PLAY?
A DON-KEY!

MISTLETOE
NORTH POLE
NUTCRACKER
ORNAMENTS
POINSETTIA
REINDEER
ROBIN
SANTA CLAUS
SNOWFLAKES
SNOWMAN
TOY FACTORY
WINTER



Because of the risk of Covid 19 infection, particularly for older and vulnerable people, Government have said that this cannot be a 'normal' Christmas.

Even where it is within the rules, Government are urging us to be mindful of the risks to family and friends, and to ourselves, if meeting up over Christmas. This is particularly important when considering those who are vulnerable.

These are the Government's rules for how we can see family and friends at Christmas.

- Travel restrictions will be lifted to provide a window for households to come together between the 23rd and 27th of December.
- Up to three households can form an exclusive 'bubble' to meet at home during this period. When a bubble is formed it is fixed, and must not be changed or extended further at any point.
- Each Christmas bubble can meet at home, at a place of worship or an outdoor public place.
- Depending on restrictions in this area at Christmas, meeting in other venues, like hospitality venues, may be limited or not allowed.
- Please note, our communal lounges will remain closed until further notice. Any gatherings will have to take place in individual flats.



HAVE YOU HEARD OF PCH CONNECT?

We are currently delivering Community Development, Resident Involvement and Resident Learning activities, using a range of online, telephone and video conferencing activities.



SOCIAL SESSIONS

Tuesdays @ 11am - 12pm - North Prospect Tea & Toast Join us for a chat on Facebook Messenger. To join contact Leigh Ferguson on 0808 230 6500

Tuesdays @ 12pm - 1pm - Janner Men's Shed meet on Facebook every Tuesday at 12 noon. Members only. If you would like more details or to become a member please call the Communities Team on 0808 230 6500.

Tuesdays @ 12pm - 1pm - Craft Social Sessions Social sessions to share crafts and ideas. To join the group contact Hayley Kemp <https://www.facebook.com/hayley.kemp.3910>

Tuesdays @ 1.30pm -2.30pm - Photo Club Social sessions to share photos and ideas. For more information on this drop-in session please email: communitiesteam@plymouthcommunityhomes.co.uk

Wednesday @ 11am - 12pm - Notte St Community Cafe Elevenses To join the group contact Hazel Alexander <https://www.facebook.com/hazel.alexander.507>

Wednesday 12.30pm - 1.30pm - PCH Lunch Bunch (chat and games) Join PCH People Social Group for more information on facebook

FANCY LEARNING SOMETHING NEW?

Learn something new with online courses. Visit <https://www.plymouthcommunityhomes.co.uk> and then go to Our Community - Learn for Free

Update your Digital Skills You can also use the free 'Learn My Way' hub to learn computer skills or basic computer skills like online banking or social media. Log in by going to the website <https://www.learnmyway.com/> and sign up using our centre code – 8000268. Please note this is open to PCH residents only.

You can also book time with us for IT/computer advice over the phone. To book an appointment email communitiesteam@plymouthcommunityhomes.co.uk

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

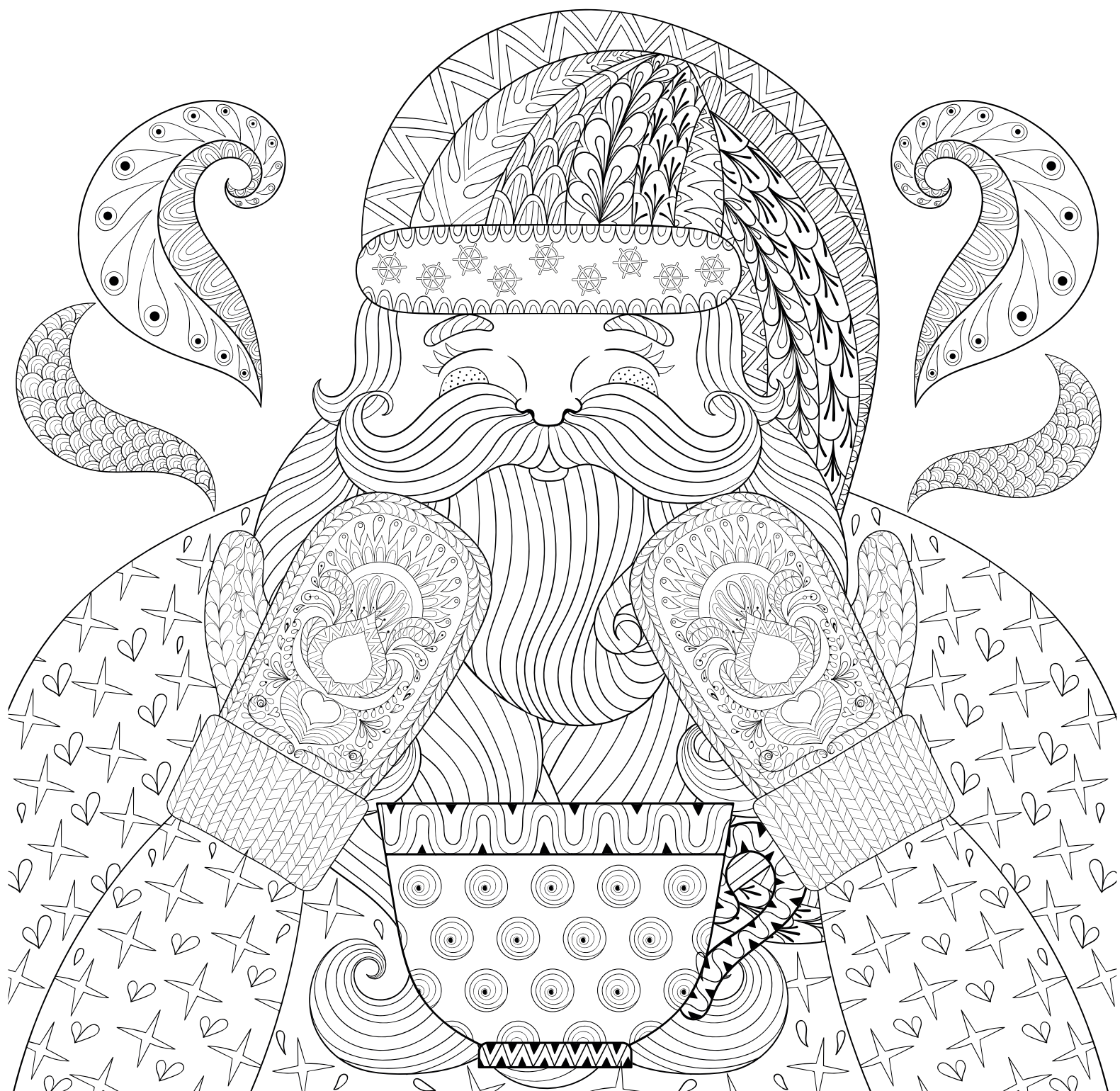
ONLINE EVENTS FOR AUTUMN AND WINTER 2020

Alongside our current PCH Connect programme, we'll be running some special virtual sessions/events including cooking, crafts, storytelling, games, quizzes and Christmas activities. Go to our website and then go to Our Community - PCH Connect.

HOW TO TAKE PART:

You can call us on 0808 230 6500 or by email communitiesteam@plymouthcommunityhomes.co.uk. Let us know what activity interests you, along with your contact details. If you are on Facebook please join our Facebook page and Facebook social group PCH People Social Group (PCH residents only) or our Plymouth Communities Hub Facebook page. We also offer telephone and activities by post. For example, we have a telephone craft group and have been sending activity packs in the post.

COLOUR ME



STOP HATE CRIME
0800 138 1625
24 HOUR HELP LINE



WARM HOME *discount*

**YOU COULD GET £140 OFF YOUR ELECTRICITY
BILL THIS WINTER UNDER THE WARM HOME
DISCOUNT SCHEME**



The money is not paid to you – it's a one-off discount on your electricity bill, between September and March. You may be able to get the discount on your gas bill instead if your supplier provides you with both gas and electricity. Contact your supplier to find out.

The discount will not affect your Cold Weather Payment or Winter Fuel Payment. For more information, call **0330 555 9424**.

Say YES to kindness, SAY NO TO HATE

The Covid 19 pandemic has seen some amazing acts of kindness in our communities – at PCH we're proud of the care and kindness that our tenants have shown for each other. Thank you to all the lovely people who have responded to the challenges of the pandemic and the restrictions it has brought with acts of kindness to neighbours.

Sadly we've also seen a few isolated incidents of hate. At PCH we're clear that hate crimes will not be tolerated and we will always support people who are victims of hate crime. Hate crimes are any crimes that are targeted at a person because of hostility or prejudice towards a person's race or ethnicity, religion or belief, sexual orientation or disability.

Our clear message is that racist abuse is unacceptable, we will always act on reports of racist abuse, and where we know that a PCH tenant is committing racist abuse we will follow up and it could lead to Police action and to putting the tenancy at risk.

At such a time of crisis when the focus is on supporting one another, projecting or speaking hate, which is never right, is more repugnant than ever.

If you are a victim of racist abuse or hate crime don't suffer in silence. Report the abuse to your Housing with Support Officer. If you'd rather not talk to PCH you can report to the Police on 101 (or 999 in an emergency), to Plymouth City Council on 01752 398500 or online at www.plymouth.gov.uk or to Stop Hate UK 24hours telephone 0800 138 1625.

Penny's meals on wheels service

St Elizabeth's Close resident Penny Frost helped ensure that people didn't go hungry while the country was on lockdown this summer.

Penny became a formal volunteer delivering meals to residents in Plympton while following all the lockdown rules after the Brook Inn pub began doing takeaways on Sundays and Wednesdays.

It gave Penny the chance to help others, as well as ensuring she kept herself busy during the pandemic.

Penny said: "When we first went into lockdown, the pub had to close and began offering takeaway meals. They did a Sunday roast for £10 and the money raised would go to a local charity. They then began doing meals on Wednesdays too.

"I delivered to a handful of people and as lockdown progressed another charity got involved and paid for meals for people who were isolating. This meant my round went up to about ten people.

"The free meals and Wednesday meals stopped but the Sunday lunches carried on.

"It's been good for people and for my mental health as I don't have relatives living near here.

"It's a service that provides meals for people who might not otherwise have access to them."

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 the newsletter, we'd love to hear it.

Email housingwithsupport@plymouthcommunityhomes.co.uk.

- T** 0808 230 6500 / 01752 237990
- E** info@plymouthcommunityhomes.co.uk
- W** plymouthcommunityhomes.co.uk
- TW** twitter.com/PlymCommHomes
- F** facebook.com/PlymouthCommunityHomes
- YT** youtube.com/user/plymouthch



Did you know you can recycle me?

