

# Northamptonshire Rural Life

The residents' newsletter for  
**Northamptonshire Rural  
Housing Association**

**AUTUMN 2014**

[www.northamptonshirerha.org.uk](http://www.northamptonshirerha.org.uk)



Northamptonshire  
**Rural Housing**  
Association



*Left to right: Matthew, Daisy and Ricky.*

## *Great neighbours*

**Young couple, Daisy and Matthew, are loving life at The Drove in Collyweston.**

"Mathew was born and bred in Collyweston and if we look out of our back bedroom window we can see his parents' house!," says Daisy. "Everything about our house is brilliant and we get on really well with our neighbours, Matthew and Ricky. It's perfect!"

**Read more by visiting [www.northamptonshirerha.org.uk](http://www.northamptonshirerha.org.uk)**

# Stay in credit

Following the recent changes to Housing Benefit and the forthcoming changes to Universal Credit, please remember that your rent account still needs to be in credit at all times. You may remember we wrote to you, when the changes were first announced, recommending that you pay an extra £3 - £5 per week to get ahead.



## First class



Thank you to all residents who returned the telephone satisfaction survey. So, are you happy with how your calls are handled by our Customer Care Team? The answer is definitely 'yes'!

- 98% said your call was answered promptly.
- 98% said the advisor was friendly and helpful.
- 80% said the advisor was able to deal with your enquiry.

You said...

*"Your customer service is 10/10."*

*"The team is very kind and helpful."*

*"I have always received fantastic service."*

## Let us in

We have some properties which were built before 2000 which may contain some asbestos. While residents needn't be concerned, it's important that we carry out an asbestos management survey to ensure everyone's safety.



It is vital that you allow us access to carry out this survey. If you fail to do so, we will take legal action to enter the property. Once the survey has been completed, the results will be shared with you and any health and safety concerns will be dealt with.

## Valuable feedback

All residents who pay a service charge for garden maintenance were sent a survey in August. Thank you for your valuable feedback which highlighted some areas we need to improve.

The survey looked at issues such as how often visits are made, the cost of the service, and the standard of work. Several residents were keen to see more opportunities to get involved.

All your comments are now being used to develop an action plan so we can make changes to the service ready for 2015.

## Keep it smoke free

The Association needs to ensure that our contractors work in a smoke free environment. If you've arranged an appointment for one of our contractors to visit, please don't smoke in your home during their visit or for the hour before the time they are due to arrive.

There must also be someone over the age of 16 at home to let them in.



## Warm front

We've been trialing a new electric heating system which, unlike storage heaters, can give instant heat. As initial feedback has been very good, we're now looking to extend the programme to other selected properties.

## Don't burn it

**While there are no laws against having a bonfire, there are laws for the nuisance they can cause.**

Please think about how the smoke and ash will affect your neighbours, as well as the damage a fire can cause to your own property. Recycle garden rubbish, don't burn it, and never light a bonfire near a garden fence or shed.

Remember that when strong sunlight reflects off glass it can cause a fire, so if you're having a clear out, never leave unwanted mirrors or other glass items in your garden. Also avoid storing flammable liquids, such as petrol, in garden sheds.

## SHARED OWNERS...

### Get insured

If you have a query about your buildings insurance, please contact Sam Brown at Arthur J Gallagher & Co. on **0845 2187871** or email [sam\\_brown@ajg.com](mailto:sam_brown@ajg.com) Remember to arrange your own contents insurance.

### Need a repair?

Shared owners have a full self repairing lease which means you are responsible for your own repairs.

### Be gas safe

Make sure you stay safe by calling Wheldons on **01908 211127** to make an appointment to service your gas appliances each year. It costs £48 to carry out the safety check which is payable to the engineer when he attends.

## What's new with you?

If anything changes – for example you've had a child, your partner has moved in, you've got a new mobile number or a new email address – please let us know! Simply call **01530 278080**.

## Service standards

Personal Information about you or your family will only be kept on file, and/or disclosed to other agencies in line with Data Protection legislation.

## Noticeboard

### Repairs reporting

To report a repair, please call the Customer Care Team **01530 278080** and give us as much information about the repair as possible so we can pass this on to the contractor.

It may seem easier to tell your Housing Officer when you speak to them, but it will be dealt with more quickly if you report it direct to the Customer Care Team.



### Check it out

The Winter months are fast approaching so don't forget to turn your heating on now to check that it's working properly before the cold spell starts.



[www.northamptonshirerha.org.uk](http://www.northamptonshirerha.org.uk)

## Branching out



If you have trees in your garden, please be aware that they are your responsibility to maintain unless they are causing a health and safety issue.

If you want to get them trimmed, just check first with your local authority that there isn't a tree preservation order in place which restricts the cutting of certain trees.

Why not try your local handyman service if you're over 50 or have a disability? Call **0845 677 2220**.

### Need a translation?

If you need a copy of Rural Life newsletter in another language we will happily provide a translation for you. All you have to do is call the office on **01530 278080** with your request.



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