

Northamptonshire

Rural Life

The residents' newsletter for
**Northamptonshire Rural Housing
Association**
SPRING 2020

www.northamptonshirerha.org.uk



Northamptonshire
Rural Housing
Association



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Remember to like
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and see all our
latest news.

Recycled Garden!

CORONAVIRUS LATEST

We now have a page on our website www.northamptonshirerha.org.uk dedicated to coronavirus. Find out whether we are having to make any changes to the services we provide and where to go for more information.

Dawn and Roger Symons are giving unwanted items a whole new lease of life in their fabulous garden.

The couple, who live with their 22-year-old daughter, Stacey, in Ellen Close, Crick, have created innovative garden features out of vintage and recycled goods which others have thrown away.

"We've made a secret garden with a dining table, mock fireplace and scrap art, says Dawn. "We also have three urinals with pots in, a bath planted with grasses and a hairdressers' sink full of plants!"

"People call it quirky and we all love enjoy spending time in the garden."

Read more at www.northamptonshirerha.org.uk

FOR YOUR BENEFIT

TV LICENCE CHARGES

From 1st June people aged 75 and over will only be able to claim a free TV licence if they claim Pension Credit. Everyone else will have to pay £154.50 a year.

PENSION INCREASE

People who receive a state pension will find their income increases by the highest amount since 2012 in April. The weekly pension for people who reached state pension age after 6th April 2016 will rise to £175.20. Those who reached pension age before this will receive £134.25 a week.

JACK'S LAW

In April, the Parental Bereavement Leave and Pay Act (Jack's Law) will come into force. All employed parents who lose a child under the age of 18, including stillbirths from 24 weeks, will be entitled to two weeks' leave.

LIVING WAGE INCREASE

The National Living Wage (for workers aged 25 and over) will increase to £8.72 per hour in April. The National Minimum Wage will increase to £8.20 per hour for 21-24 year olds, to £6.45 per hour for 18-20 year olds and to £4.55 per hour for under 18s.



BENEFITS FREEZE ENDS

The benefits freeze will end in April which means payments for working-age benefits such as Universal Credit and Job Seeker's Allowance could increase by 1.7%.

CHEAP FOOD

Download the Toogoodtogo app and order a magic bag full of perfectly edible food that shops and restaurants have to throw out at the end of the day if it's not been sold. Shops in the scheme include Morrisons, Nisa Local, bakeries, pubs and hotels.

FREE DENTAL CARE

Women who are pregnant or who have had a baby in the past 12 months get free NHS dental treatment and prescriptions. Make the most of it by booking a dental check-up just before the end of your first year as a new mum!



ON THE MOVE

There have been a few changes to our team recently:

Maintenance Surveyor, Robyn Jarvis has headed off on maternity leave and we can't wait to hear news of her new arrival.

Lauren Turner has moved from the Customer Care Team to become Maintenance Surveyor for Warwickshire and Leicestershire.

“ I'm looking forward to solving residents' queries and issues using the knowledge and expertise I've gained during the last 15 years I've worked here ”

Beth Willars, Development & Maintenance Assistant, is getting married and moving away from the area and we wish her lots of luck. We will be recruiting a replacement soon.

Having completed a Business Administration apprenticeship with the Customer Care Team, Leonie Aldridge has now been taken on as a Customer Care Co-ordinator.

“ I'm looking forward to continuing my training and speaking to residents. I feel very lucky to be able to continue working with so many great colleagues. ”

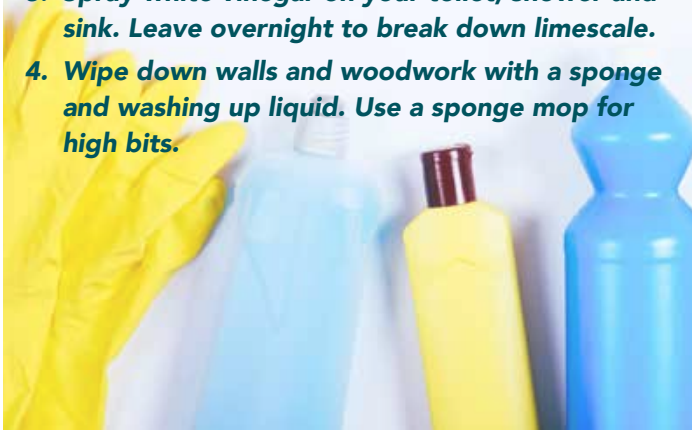
Directorate & RHA Board Secretary, Sandra Smith, is retiring at the end of April after 15 years. She's enjoyed ensuring the Board members have everything they need, and is now looking forward to a relaxing retirement!

Theresa Chamberlain, Housing Services Assistant, is going off on maternity leave soon and we'll keep you posted of plans to cover her post.

SPRING CLEAN

There's no better time than Spring to give your home a good clean! Here's our top Spring cleaning tips.

1. **Declutter your home. Separate items into 'keep', 'donate' and 'throw away'.**
2. **Wear rubber gloves to clean pet hair off sofas, carpets, curtains, bedding. The hairs will stick to the gloves.**
3. **Spray white vinegar on your toilet, shower and sink. Leave overnight to break down limescale.**
4. **Wipe down walls and woodwork with a sponge and washing up liquid. Use a sponge mop for high bits.**



EMERGENCY CHANGES

From 1st April until 31st October, if you experience a total loss of heating, this will not be classed as an emergency repair.

ENSURE YOU'RE INSURED!

Many residents still don't have contents insurance and it's so important to get it sorted.

It covers the cost of repairing or replacing your furniture and possessions such as clothing, jewellery, electronic goods and carpets, if they get damaged, destroyed or stolen. If you don't have insurance you'll face a hefty bill. You can usually pay for insurance in weekly or monthly instalments so find the best deal for you.



WEB ANSWERS

If you've a question about our services, take a look at our website first and you're likely to find the answer!

In the 'Living in your Home' section you'll find a host of information including details of reporting repairs, garden services, making home improvements and keeping a pet. If you can't find the answer, please complete the 'contact us' form on the website.



RENT REMINDER

Now that you've received your rent increase letter, please check you have:

- increased your standing order (we'll increase your direct debit)
- informed your Housing Benefit department about the increase
- updated your Universal Credit journal

BANK HOLIDAY CLOSURES

The early May Bank Holiday has moved to **Friday 8th May** this year to commemorate VE Day, and so the office will be closed on this day.

We'll also be closed for Easter on **Friday 10th** and **Monday 13th April**.

Other Bank Holidays are:
Monday 25th May **Monday 31st August**

HOW TO ... HANG WALLPAPER

Here's the latest guide in our 'How to...' feature to help you keep your home looking great! Hanging wallpaper is quite a skill but with these simple steps, you'll soon get the 'hang' of it!

1. Use a spirit level to draw a vertical line 50cm from the corner of the wall (if your roll is 53cm wide.)
2. Apply wallpaper paste to the wall from the line, across the width of a roll.
3. Place the wallpaper roll on the floor, place it against the line and unroll it to the top of the wall.
4. Cut it about 3cm above the top of the wall.
5. Smooth it from the centre to the edges to smooth out any air bubbles.
6. Trim any excess paper from the top and bottom with a ruler and knife.



NEW HOMES

- A planning application is being submitted for 8 homes for affordable rent in Norton plus two self-build plots and two local market homes.
- Work is due to start on nine affordable homes in Nassington.

To register your interest in any property, please visit our website: [find a home to rent](#).

IN YOUR OWN WORDS ...

We asked you what you think of your housing association?

"You are a peace of mind. We know help, advice and support is available if needed."

Northamptonshire
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Life

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Association,
Whitwick Business Centre,
Stenson Road, Coalville,
Leicestershire LE67 4JP.
Tel: 0300 1234 009

E-mail: enquiries@midlandsrural.org.uk

Website: www.northamptonshirerha.org.uk

