



# CBHnews

WINTER 2019/20



**All systems go at Monkscroft Villas**

**\*\*\*Gardening Competition  
Winners announced\*\*\***

**Help2 brings Christmas  
cheer to residents!**

**FREEPHONE 0800 408 0000 VISIT [www.cbh.org](http://www.cbh.org)**





# Strive-ers enter the Dragons' Den!



In our last edition we told you that our successful STRIVE course was back!

Since then 11 local residents have completed the FREE six-week business training course to help them achieve their dream of working for themselves.



The STRIVE course was run by Enterprise CUBE, an organisation that is renowned for its success in helping people to set up their own business. During the programme our budding entrepreneurs received a bespoke package of training and advice to provide the support that they needed to set up a viable business plan.

At the end of the six weeks, our new strivers were invited along to our very own version



of the Dragons' Den event to present their pitches. Advice was then provided by our 'Dragons' with the best ideas offered loans to help them get their business off the ground.

It was a fantastic day and we're proud of all our entrepreneurs! Congratulations to them on completing the course, and we look forward to catching up on their amazing business plans later in the year.



## Reading CBHnews

If you would like a translation or would prefer this information in Braille, large print or audio tape, please contact us on **0800 408 0000** or **communityinvolvement@cbh.org**

**COVER PHOTO:** L-R Chief Executive Paul Stephenson, Head of Development Alison Salter, and former Executive Director, Peter Hatch on site at the demolition of Monkscroft Villas. (see page 3) Photo credit: Mikal Ludlow [www.mikalludlow.com](http://www.mikalludlow.com)

# CBH on the national stage



**Cheltenham Borough Homes (CBH) was nominated for three high profile awards back in October.**

Our Employment Initiatives Service was up for Inside Housing's 'Women In Housing' Awards - shortlisted for Team of the year: **Frontline (small organisation) in recognition of the fantastic work that Gayna and Caroline do helping tenants into work and training, as well as the brilliant Thrive scheme.**

At the same time, our **Benefit and Money Advice team** was shortlisted in the Welfare

Wise category at the 24housing Awards, recognising the work that the team does to support tenants and local residents with their financial situations.

CBH's employee referral scheme, Help2, was also shortlisted for Innovation of the Year - recognising the scheme's drive to help those who have nowhere else to turn and are experiencing severe hardship.

Alas, both awards went elsewhere, but the teams can be proud to have been shortlisted and for representing CBH on the national platform of the award ceremony.

# Going, going, gone!

**In November, demolition work started on the exciting new £4.3million development at Monkscroft Villas in Cheltenham.**

Following weeks of clearance work, including gutting of the existing properties, the first part of the demolition work started with a bang in front of representatives from Cheltenham Borough Homes, Cheltenham Borough Council and developer E G Carter & Co Ltd.

In two days the three properties were knocked down ahead of the redevelopment of the site on Princess Elizabeth Way which will bring 27 new homes to the West of Cheltenham.

A groundbreaking ceremony is taking place this month, which will kick start the construction phase of the project.

For more information on the project, and to keep up to date with progress, follow our social media channels @CheltBoroHomes or visit [www.cbh.org](http://www.cbh.org).





# Help2 Christmas Appeal helps bring cheer to families in Cheltenham



During the festive period and for the first time ever in the history of CBH, we launched our very own Help2 Christmas appeal.

The scheme was set up to meet the needs of our tenants and their families who were identified as struggling financially and experiencing tough circumstances during Christmas.

## **This year we delivered:**

131 gifts and 59 hampers of food for our vulnerable tenants and their families.

Two Christmas fayres offering support and advice from local organisations including food

and Christmas gifts that were kindly donated by our colleagues, tenants and partners.

The support didn't end there as we teamed with up John Lewis and other local businesses to deliver a #keepcheltwarm campaign to help keep vulnerable adults and children warm this winter through the donation of 772 coats.

A massive thank you to our colleagues, local businesses and to everyone who supported and donated to our Help2 Christmas appeal and the #keepcheltwarm campaign.





# Building bridges to employment

**CBH's Employment Initiatives Service recently ran two new programmes to help Work Club attendees who were struggling to progress their career in construction and hospitality.**

Our employment experts ran our first ever Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) card training course to help them prepare for their CITB exam at a local test centre.

Following completion of the programme, attendees were enrolled onto the books of HAYS recruitment to help fill local vacancies.

Using our ASDAN Training Centre status, the team also developed a course for



those in need of a qualification in hospitality and offered attendees an ASDAN Hospitality Vocational Course and their Level 1 Food Safety Certificate.

Congratulations to everyone who took part in the two courses! We'll be releasing our 2020 Training Calendar later in the New Year – so keep an eye on our website at [www.cbh.org](http://www.cbh.org).

# Employment Initiatives crowned!

**Our Employment Initiatives Service (EIS) was crowned champions at the My Community Awards on 26 September.**

The team's innovative alternative provision programme, Thrive, was recognised in the Employment and Community Skills Award category for the amazing work it does with young people in our town.

Working closely with local schools and contractors, the EIS team developed the programme to deliver six months of alternative



provision to young people who are at risk of exclusion from mainstream education.

CBH has helped 12 young people over the last two years to stay on in school while working for their ASDAN certificates in careers and experiencing work.

Congratulations to the team for the well-deserved success, and also to the young people who took part in the course. A huge thank you to our contractors who helped us to deliver this brilliant programme.

The scheme has helped us support Cheltenham Borough Council's No Child Left Behind campaign by giving young people, especially those living in poverty or facing other disadvantages, a chance to thrive.





**We asked**

**you said**

**and we did!**

The quarterly telephone survey that we began this year has been very successful, with over 750 tenants responding so far and over a thousand expected by the end of the financial year. The survey is carried out on our behalf by Acuity and if you took the time to answer we are very grateful to you!

We adopted this new approach to understand not just how happy you are with our services but, most importantly, where you are less than satisfied and why. If we know that we can adapt what we do to respond to your needs and although satisfaction levels are really high we have had some really brilliant feedback that has helped us to make some changes.

If you have responded to say that we can get back in touch with you about your feedback then you may have received a call from us, or you may still yet! We do this so that we can pick up any issues we think we can fix straight away or to better understand your feedback.

So, what are you saying about our services?

Here are some of the results:



of people said that overall they are happy with CBH



of people feel safe in their home



of people are happy with the quality of their home



of people found it easy to get hold of the right person



of people thought that their rent was value for money

The surveys are still going on and we will put the full list of your opinions in the annual report that is part of your Summer CBHNews.



## So, what have we done as a consequence of your feedback?

### Housing Support Service

Sheltered residents told us that they weren't happy not having a dedicated Housing Support Officer (HSO) for their blocks and that there was not enough CBH presence 'on site'. We are now changing our housing support service to do exactly that.

The service was designed to allow any HSO to support any site across the town, we are changing this so that each HSO has a designated scheme to be based from Mon-Fri 9am to 5pm and there is also our 'Lifeline' alarm service available 24/7. We are rolling out information about this at sheltered sites, so keep your eyes peeled!

### Out of Hours Contact

We also received some feedback about our out of hours telephone service and the length of time people were waiting for their call to be answered. We investigated and this helped us to make up our minds to change our provider. Since mid-November we have been supported by NPA24:7 who are better equipped to handle your contact and who are quicker to answer calls.

We are continuing to use your feedback, specifically working with teams to help improve some of the communication around repairs and maintenance to your home, also an area which people fed back on.

**I feel quite happy and quite comfortable. They were very good to me in the past when I had a fall, ensuring I was put into sheltered accommodation and that everything was ok in my flat. They've always been there to there to help.**

**I feel safe in the environment I'm in and made to feel part of the community.**

**I have downsized gradually from a 3 bed to a 2 bed and now I have a lovely flat. CBH have been wonderful with the support they have provided for me. My flat is in a pleasant area and my neighbours are all very nice.**

**I have always been so well treated. I moved up from a two bed maisonette a few years ago to a lovely property with a dining room. I'm so happy with it.**

**I have recommended them to my family and always speak highly of them as they have always been so supportive.**

**I have health issues and CBH really really listen to me. They carry out my repairs quickly and they are the best landlord I've ever had.**

**Hopefully you can see the importance of talking to us – we really do listen, and we do change as a result!**



# New Year, New You?

2020 has arrived and many of us will have made resolutions for the coming year. If you want to lose weight, be more active, stop smoking or just to improve your overall health, why not look at the FREE help available from Healthy Lifestyles Gloucestershire?

With help from Healthy Lifestyles Gloucestershire...

- Wendy quit smoking after 55 years and has been smoke-free ever since. She is now saving £250 a month through not smoking - that's £3,000 a year!
- Peter got more active, cut down on his drinking and lost over a stone in just six weeks. He puts his success down to setting goals, keeping a food diary, along with the support and encouragement of his coach.

Read more success stories at [www.hlsglos.org](http://www.hlsglos.org) 'News and Case Studies'. To start your journey, call Healthy Lifestyles Gloucestershire FREE on 0800 122 3788 today or pop into one of their support sessions every Monday 10am -1pm.

Healthy  
lifestyles  
Gloucestershire



# A walk, jog, or run in the park with ParkRun!

**Our Community Investment Team has recently supported the set up of a brand new ParkRun on King George V Playing Fields through our community investment fund.**

ParkRun is a FREE, weekly, 5km timed run that takes place all around the world. They are open to everyone, free, and are safe and easy to take part in.

KGV Playing Fields is the latest addition to Cheltenham, following the Pittville ParkRun,

and brings this fun event to the west of the town.

So, if you're interested in joining in, head down to Cheltenham Saracens RFC for 9am on Saturday morning and join in the fun!

**Visit [www.parkrun.org.uk/kinggeorgevplayingfield](http://www.parkrun.org.uk/kinggeorgevplayingfield) for more information.**

Check out pages 12 and 13 for more information on how you can look after your physical and mental health in 2020.

Vitality  
partners  
parkrun





# Loan Shark arrested following local campaign

**A man has been arrested on suspicion of illegal money lending and money laundering, following an operation in Gloucester.**

A 66-year-old man was taken into custody as part of the operation by the England Illegal Money Lending Team (IMLT) in partnership with Trading Standards and the police.

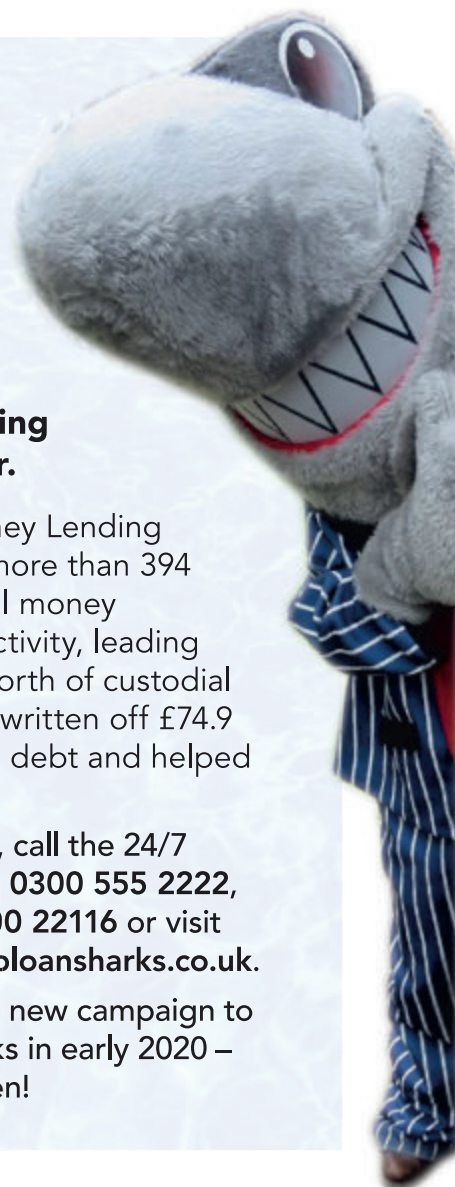
The intelligence gathered by the Stop Loan Sharks team came as a direct result of our Benefit and Money Advice team flyering in Cheltenham and shows how important it is to get the word out about the risks of using exploitative Loan Sharks for quick, easy loans.

**STOP LOAN SHARKS**  
Intervention . Support . Education

Nationally, Illegal Money Lending Teams have secured more than 394 prosecutions for illegal money lending and related activity, leading to nearly 480 years' worth of custodial sentences. They have written off £74.9 million worth of illegal debt and helped over 29,000 people.

To report a loan shark, call the 24/7 confidential hotline on **0300 555 2222**, text a report to **078600 22116** or visit the website **www.stoploansharks.co.uk**.

We'll be launching our new campaign to help tackle Loan Sharks in early 2020 – so keep your eyes open!



## New Digi Den goes live!

**At the end of October we celebrated the launch of our brand new Digi Den based over at Oakley Community Resource Centre.**

To mark this special occasion, Councillor Rowena Hay joined us to cut the ribbon and officially open the doors to this stylish new training room.

The new Digi Den boasts a modern décor, complimented by plants and motivational wall art to provide people with a relaxing environment to study in.

As well as our regular weekly job club meetings, we've teamed up with Adult Education Gloucestershire to offer some exciting new computer and tablet training courses.

**So, if you got a brand new tablet over Christmas, or you're just looking to develop your computer skills, call us on 0800 408 0000**



# Push the button, not your luck... test your smoke alarm!

**In January, the National Fire Chief's Council is promoting the use of smoke alarms to keep people safe in the event of a fire in the home.**

Fire prevention in your home is the highest priority for CBH and we regularly monitor this through visits from our service engineers and repair teams.

Your home should have a smoke alarm fitted. If it hasn't, tell us straight away by calling 0800 408 0000 and we will fit one for you.

To make sure your smoke alarm is working properly, it is important that you:

**Test your smoke alarms every week by pressing the test button until the alarm sounds**

**Clean your smoke alarms every six months to remove any dust and fluff from the detector**

**Never paint over or remove an alarm**

**Never remove a working battery from a smoke alarm**

If fire breaks out in your home, leave the building as quickly as possible, close all doors (if possible) as you go and phone 999 for the fire service.

**Do not re-enter the building in any circumstance until the fire service advise you that it is safe to do so.**

If there is a fire within the communal area or another flat in your block and there is no immediate danger, unless otherwise instructed, you are encouraged to stay in your flat, keep your fire door closed and call the fire service on 999. You will need to wait until they advise you it is safe to evacuate your property.



**Please familiarise yourself with the Fire Action notice within your block, usually located on the noticeboard in your particular scheme.**



# Green fingered gurus get gongs!

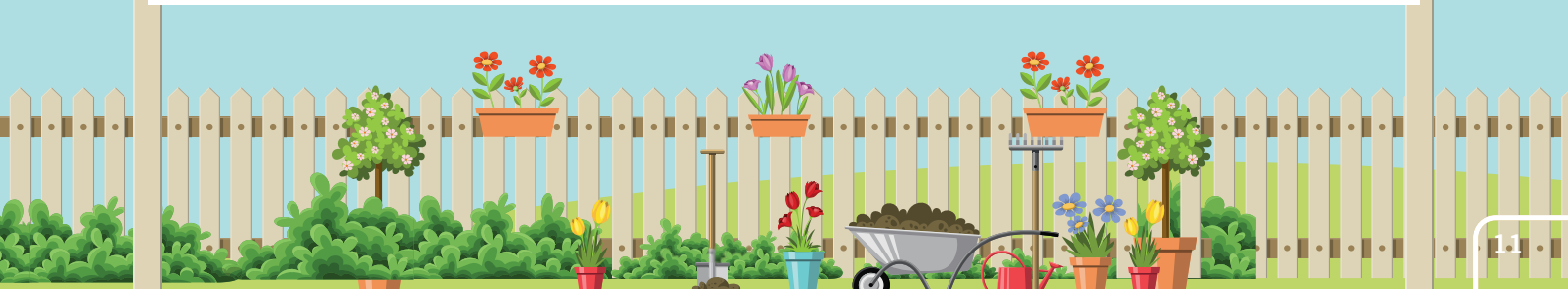
Back in July last year, our expert judges visited a stunning selection of beautiful gardens to begin their search for Cheltenham's top floral masterpieces.

2019 saw an all-time high with the both the number and quality of entries which were outstanding. After much deliberation, the following worthy winners were crowned at a prestigious awards ceremony:

<b>FRONT GARDEN BROMFORD</b> 1st place <b>Roger Merrick</b>	<b>BACK GARDEN AON</b> 1st place <b>Roger Merrick</b>	<b>PATIO</b> <b>Carole Sayle</b>	<b>BORDER</b> 1st place <b>Doug Sweet</b>
<b>BALCONY CBC</b> 1st place <b>Doug Sweet</b>	<b>CONTAINER AON</b> 1st place <b>John Boyce</b>	<b>HANGING BASKET</b> 1st place <b>Cath &amp; Bernie Bond</b>	<b>CHILDREN'S CONTAINER - CBH</b> 1st place <b>Ryan Oliver</b>
<b>BEST NEW ENTRY</b> <b>Karen Turner</b>	<b>MOST IMPROVED ENTRY</b> <b>Roger Merrick</b>	<b>OVERALL WINNER</b> <b>Doug Sweet</b>	

Huge congratulations to our garden competition winners and many thanks to our supporting partners Bromford, Aon and Cheltenham Borough Council (CBC) for their generous sponsorship of this event. MASSIVE thanks must go to our tenants Paul Bond, Mike Euston and the judges too for their hard and tireless work in organising and judging this successful competition.

Kindly sponsored by:



# Looking after your mental health in 2020



Earlier in this issue we talked about the benefits of looking after your physical health, and how Healthy Lifestyles Gloucestershire can support you to improve your physical wellbeing.

**But what about your mental health? Here are some useful contacts that may help you – or someone you care about, with mental health difficulties and where to turn if you're in need of help:**

In Gloucestershire, a variety of help and support with your mental health is available to you any time of day.

If you need non-urgent help, please contact your GP in opening hours, or 111. If you don't have a GP, you can use the

NHS service search to locate the nearest one to you.

If you are experiencing mild to moderate stress, anxiety or depression, please contact Let's Talk on 0800 073 2200 or visit [www.talk2gether.nhs.uk](http://www.talk2gether.nhs.uk) You can self-refer to this service without visiting your GP.

Further information, and links to other organisations which can offer help and support is available at <https://ghc.nhs.uk/useful-contacts/> The Samaritans are also available 24 hours a day on 116 123.

**If there is immediate danger to life, please call 999 or go to your nearest A&E department.**

## REDJanuary

**Kick-start your 2020 in a positive way and raise funds for Mind so together we can be active for better mental health.**

RED January is a community initiative that encourages you to support your mental health by doing something active every single day.

January can be a difficult month for



people – and by focusing on goals you can start the year off with a bang. Visit [www.redjanuaryformind.co.uk](http://www.redjanuaryformind.co.uk) to sign up and get active every day!



## Stay Alive App

**A pocket suicide prevention resource for the UK, packed full of useful information and tools to help you stay safe in crisis.**

You can use it if you are having thoughts of suicide or if you are concerned about someone else who may be considering suicide. The app can be accessed through the Apple Store, Google Play and downloaded as a pdf.



## Time to Talk Day

Mental health problems affect one in four of us, yet too many people are made to feel isolated, ashamed and worthless because of this. Time to Talk Day is taking place on Thursday 6 February and encourages everyone to be more open about mental health – to talk, to listen, to change lives.

Find out how you can get involved by visiting [www.time-to-change.org.uk](http://www.time-to-change.org.uk)

time to change  
time to  
talk day  
06/02/20

**Choose talk,  
Change lives.**



# Want to help shape our services? TSIP wants YOU!

**Our Tenant Scrutiny Improvement Panel (TSIP) is looking for new members to help shape the way CBH delivers services to you – our customers.**

Since forming in 2010, the panel has been working to empower tenants and directly influence the way CBH is run, including helping to improve our repairs and maintenance services and carrying

out a review of our six year windows and doors replacement programme – feeding back the tenants views to us.

The panel meet every month at Hesters Way Community Resource Centre and all of the members are passionate about giving tenants the opportunity to be heard – which helps CBH to be the best landlord possible.

If you would like to get involved with the panel or have any new ideas that we should be looking at, you can e-mail [communityinvolvement@cbh.org](mailto:communityinvolvement@cbh.org) or call 0800 408 0000 and ask to speak with the Community Investment Team.





## INFO SPOT

## Keep your home warm this winter

The following simple tricks can make a big difference to keeping your home cosy this winter:

- Patching up drafts around windows and doors can improve the temperature inside your home. Insulating tape for use around windows and doors is self-adhesive and easy to install.
- An annual boiler check helps to ensure that it is working as efficiently as possible. If you're a CBH tenant, Liberty will let you know when your annual gas service is due.
- Close the curtains in the evening and whilst you're not in the house to keep the heat inside. You can even buy thermal curtain liners to make your home warmer!
- Cover bare floors as wooden and tiled floors can be cold to the touch, and gaps between wooden floorboards can let in draughts. But a rug can keep your toes toasty, blocking some of the draughts and making your home feel warmer.
- Know your perfect temperature. Most people set their thermostats between 18°C and 21°C. If you have it higher, and your house feels too hot, you could save money by turning it down a couple of degrees until your home is a comfortable temperature.

For more advice on how to keep your home safe and warm this winter, visit [www.liberty-group.co.uk/customer-hub](http://www.liberty-group.co.uk/customer-hub)

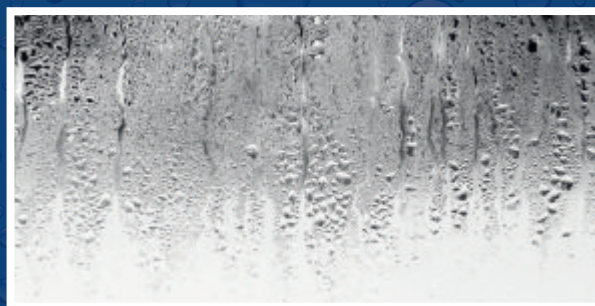
## What should I do if I have condensation in my home?

Now that winter is here, many of us will have the heating on and will be shutting windows to keep the warm air in – which may lead to condensation in your home.

If ignored it can turn your cosy home into a damp unpleasant place and increase your heating bills.

Thankfully, there are a few things we can all do to help prevent it:

- Don't hang wet washing on the radiators
- Hang washing outside to dry whenever you can



- Cover pans when you are cooking
- Don't leave kettles and pans boiling for longer than necessary – and use an extraction fan where possible
- Keep the bathroom door shut and the room well ventilated
- Keep your furniture away from the walls

More information on condensation can be found through our website at [www.cbh.org](http://www.cbh.org)

Small changes can make a  
**big difference** to your health.

Are you ready to:

- Stop smoking
- Lose weight
- Get more active
- Cut down on alcohol...  
but not sure where to start?

# Healthy lifestyles

Gloucestershire

Get **FREE support** from our  
friendly lifestyle coaches

Freephone **0800 122 3788**

Or visit **[www.hlsnglos.org](http://www.hlsnglos.org)**

A free service delivered by... **ice** 

