



# CBHnews

AUTUMN 2020



**Real awards for extraordinary people  
New homes are go!  
Cheltenham shows its true colours**

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



# You're invited to our AGM!



Our Annual General Meeting (AGM) takes place online on **Wednesday 28 October 2020 at 5:30pm**. It's a great opportunity to see your Board in action and find out more about CBH, recent milestones and our exciting plans for the future.

Everyone, including our tenants are invited to join us in the discussion.

If you're interested, please contact [rhian.watts@cbh.org](mailto:rhian.watts@cbh.org) for more information.

## See your BOARD in action:



### Did you know our Board and Committee meetings are open to the public?

At the moment, due to Covid-19, CBH Board and Committee meetings are taking place 'online' using widely available software.

For a list of available meetings please visit: [www.cbh.org/about-us/who-we-are-what-we-do/cbh-board/](http://www.cbh.org/about-us/who-we-are-what-we-do/cbh-board/)

If you would like to join us please contact [rhian.watts@cbh.org](mailto:rhian.watts@cbh.org) at least 24hrs before the scheduled date and time of the meeting you wish to attend and we will send out relevant links and guidance.

**COVER PHOTO:** We celebrate our new Tenant of the Year winner, Edwin Trevena, with a glittering award (see page 6).



# A message from our new Interim CEO:

**In August we announced Steve Slater had taken up his new position as Chief Executive for an interim period.**

**He shares below a few introductory words:**

"The role of CEO has now been entrusted to me for an interim period, and I cannot express how proud I am to be able to lead CBH forward into that future, and working with Cheltenham Borough Council (CBC) and other local partners to make Cheltenham a place where everyone thrives.

Great Customer Service is our top priority. We aim to take our customer service to an even higher level of excellence. This means looking at how we can deliver great service on every occasion we come into contact with you – day in, day out, and across all areas of the business.

Our people are the beating heart of CBH. They are professional and committed, and really do care about what they do. They see

the person, not just a tenancy and they are trusted, friendly faces in communities across the town.

Our neighbourly and caring approach, and desire to proactively provide solutions to challenges is what sets us apart.

Although we find ourselves in a different operating environment with Covid-19 restrictions I am extremely proud of how colleagues have come together to deliver for our customers.

I am genuinely excited by the future at CBH and delivering our Vision and aims: We want to make Cheltenham a better place to live by providing great homes, building strong communities with inspired people."



**INSPIRED  
PEOPLE**



**GREAT  
HOMES**



**STRONGER  
COMMUNITIES**



# NEW HOMES ARE GO!

We maybe in the midst of a pandemic and bracing ourselves for a very wet and cold winter ahead, but that hasn't stopped our plans to bring more high quality homes to Cheltenham.

We're pleased to announce that we're still on track to deliver the following:



Our Holy Name Hall site is progressing well and the crew at J Harper and Sons are making fantastic progress with the 8 new homes and we hope to have our new tenants moved in before Christmas.



Works are continuing at pace at our site at Monkscroft Villas and the 27 homes being built by E G Carter & Co Ltd are really taking shape. The new homes will all be complete early summer.



We're working closely with our developer partner Newland Homes, to secure three homes on Prestbury Road – these will be completed early winter.

Watch this space – we are in the process of outlining our plans to provide more homes over the next 5 years so that we can meet the demand for more housing in the town.



## Worried about paying your rent?

**Remember rent first because everything starts with home.**

We believe no one should be forced to choose between paying their rent or bills.

If you are facing money worries speak to our team today for advice, call **0800 408 0000** or visit **[www.cbh.org](http://www.cbh.org)**



# "I'm really happy to be in a home where I can feel safe"



## On the 7th October we supported the annual social media event #HousingDay.

The theme for this year focused on the 'importance of home' which has never been more important.



**Shane Brimfield, our tenant and Vice-Chair of the Board, shares why his home makes him feel safe below:**

After 10 years as a long-distance Trucker

in America, Shane and his wife returned to the UK and to Cheltenham where four generations of his family were raised. They discovered, when applying for a Council home that Cheltenham's housing department had been replaced with an ALMO.

During their 18 months, they noticed a difference in the way that CBH colleagues dealt with their application and communicated with them too. Passionate about finding out more about this new and improved service, Shane attended a 'CBH Customer Experience Day' to find out more about how CBH homes are managed and was inspired to join the Tenant Scrutiny Improvement Panel (TSIP). For three and a half years he saw how the views of tenants made a difference to CBH Services.

Shane is now a member of the CBH Board, making sure the voice of the tenant is represented. He believes everyone deserves a safe and secure place they can afford and call home.

### In Shane's own words:

"In these difficult times I'm really happy to be in a home where I can feel safe. I really enjoy having a back garden and room to walk along the River Chelt so that I can get some fresh air, it really does do wonders for my mental and physical wellbeing.

My home is close to many shops and other amenities which has been so useful during this pandemic. I've been able to stay safe locally and it has meant I haven't had to make any unnecessary trips into town, or further.

It's given me room to grow and has also made it possible for me to do more for others around me and further afield.

I must say that none of this would have been possible if it had not been for the love and hard work of my wife who is not mentioned much in what I do but is a very strong part of why I do it. She has a strong drive to do everything she can to help others and is good at it."



# A VIRTUAL CELEBRATION!

## Real awards for extraordinary people

During 21-25 September 2020, we held our 12th, annual CBH Tenant and Leaseholder Awards, online for the first time!

Not even the current pandemic could keep us away from celebrating the extraordinary and caring people who make a real difference in your neighbourhoods.

Each evening, a video was presented on our social media channels by BBC Radio Gloucestershire's, Faye Hatcher to share the incredible stories and achievements of our finalists and winners.

It was an inspiring week with the much coveted title of Tenant of the Year going to Edwin Trevena.

### Full list of winners:



**Tenant of the Year Award: Edwin Trevena**

### Community Impact Award: The G-Café



### Personal Achievement Award: Sam Lane







**Partner Impact Award:  
The Cheltenham Trust**



**Lifetime Achievement  
Award: Lucy Barnett**



**Young Star Award:  
James Cooper**

**Our Interim CEO, Steve Slater said:**

"As ever the awards have been an amazing success, despite the fact we couldn't meet in person this time. There have been many examples of wonderful stories of how people have got involved with their neighbourhoods and supported each other through really tough times.

The whole week has been a massive celebration of all that work and it's a real pat on the back for everyone who has got involved in supporting their communities. These awards highlight the power of people and that through kindness, compassion and care, we can deliver great things together. A massive thank you to all the winners, nominees and attendees, sponsors and colleagues for helping to recreate these inspirational awards virtually."

If you missed these, don't worry, you can still view the videos at:



@CheltBoroHomes



@cheltborohomes



Cheltenham Borough Homes Ltd

CBH would like to thank Travis Perkins – Managed Services for their generous sponsorship and Joyner P.A. too, Faye Hatcher for presenting, the representatives from our partner organisations and to colleagues who helped to organise and deliver such a wonderful virtual experience to celebrate our unsung heroes.

**If you know someone you would like to nominate we'd love to hear all about them! The search is now on to find Cheltenham's extraordinary people for 2020 – visit [www.cbh.org](http://www.cbh.org) for more information.**





# Families bring artworks a'LIVE'

In May, we introduced our first virtual weekly workshops on our Facebook 'Whats On' groups, which have been going from strength to strength (see page 12).

Over the Summer we delivered 100 crafting packs to families across Cheltenham; so they could join in while watching the live sessions we ran with local artist, Harriet West on Thursdays.

The project was a huge success and witnessed the creation of many creative masterpieces.

It was great to see so many individuals and communities connecting and inspiring each other.



"Me and the girls have had a busy afternoon! I've always used the large old coffee jar as an extra vase, so it's lovely that it now has some extra decoration. The girls did themselves some sweets jars."

"Thank you guys so much, it was so much fun trying something we've never done before!"

These stunning designs are currently displayed in the front window of the Wilson Art Gallery as part of the 'Art in YOUR Quarter' exhibition and is on until the end of October – for more information visit: [cheltenhammuseum.org.uk/event/art-in-your-quarter](http://cheltenhammuseum.org.uk/event/art-in-your-quarter)

## Recognising those simple acts of kindness

During lockdown we launched our very own 'Kindness Campaign' to recognise individuals who had gone above and beyond during the pandemic to look after their neighbours.

We asked our tenants in our sheltered schemes, who were shielding, to nominate their friends, relatives and caring neighbours who had gone the extra mile to help them during this difficult time.

We received more than 40 nominations for individuals who had shown kindness in different ways. These simple acts included, doing a regular weekly shop, a friendly phone call, running errands or providing a helping hand when needed.

Last month, our Community Activities Co-ordinator made a special visit to a number of extraordinary helpers to

present them with a voucher and a special thank you.

Without these caring people, a lot of our most vulnerable would have struggled.

A massive thank you to those who were involved we are very proud of you.





During September, the streets were transformed when more than 80 national and international artists left their mark on 18 locations across the town.

# Cheltenham shows its true colours

It's hard to believe a year has gone by since we saw Arundel House on Princess Elizabeth Way receive a splash of colour as part of the annual Paint Festival.

After the success of last year, which saw many diverse and eye-catching artistic masterpieces pop up across Cheltenham, we jumped at the opportunity to get involved with this incredible festival in 2020.

We were delighted to welcome back to Princess Elizabeth Way, the incredibly talented Dan Kitchener. This year he was joined by creative aerosol artist Jody, and together they brought their artistic flair to our very own Sudeley House and Kenilworth House.

The pieces of art definitely have the wow factor. Both artists received positive comments from those passing by at the time and many more are making a special trip to see the finished walls.



Creative artist, Jody

Jody

Dan Kitchener

The talented Dan Kitchener

Councillor Wendy Flynn (right) with Jody (left)

## Our Interim CEO, Steve Slater said:

"I was blown away by the incredible designs along Princess Elizabeth Way. So many of our tenants and local residents were engaging with the incredible masterpieces by the artists Dan Kitchener and Jody.

"Events like the Paint Festival are so important, they bring communities together, reinvigorate the places we live and help to bring more money and visitors into the town.

"Due to COVID-19 we are spending more time in our local areas and the Paint Festival

not only changes the look of where we live, but also gives a reason to go and re-explore our communities and enjoy the work of talented artists.

"This is why we sponsor artists like Dan and Jody and I hope they will inspire others to get creative and connect with the areas around them.

"I am so pleased we had the opportunity to get involved again this year and I hope by working with the Paint Festival and local residents that we can identify more walls for future festivals."

You can find a map of all the artwork around town at [www.cheltenhampaintfestival.co.uk](http://www.cheltenhampaintfestival.co.uk)



# Don't be rubbish!

## Keep yourself and others safe

**If you live in a home with communal areas including landings, stairwells and walkways, do not leave bin bags or clutter outside your door. Not only could this lead to a fire, but can also block emergency escape routes.**

Unfortunately during lockdown we have seen boxes, decorations, rubbish, bikes, bins, scooters and even a fridge left in communal areas, posing a real hazard.

If you see anyone using these spaces in this way, please let your Tenancy Management Officer know by calling **0800 408 0000**.

We take your safety seriously, and for this reason we carry out risk assessments on all our blocks. If you would like a copy of this please contact our Investment and Technical Team on the above number.



# Keep warm this winter!

**Now the colder months are here, many of you will be thinking about switching on the heating.**

Did you know there are a few things you can do before then to make sure that everything is in working order before the cold spell arrives?

Our new gas contractor, PH Jones has popped together some useful 'how to' videos to give you some top advice on bleeding radiators, using your heating and checking your boiler pressure.

You can view these useful clips here:  
**[www.phjones.co.uk/videos/](http://www.phjones.co.uk/videos/)**



As a reminder if you need to contact PH Jones you can, call **0800 408 0000** and select option 2.

Please note if you live in a scheme with a commercial central heating system please call the above number and select option 4 instead.





# Residents are growing together

**For the last two years we've seen our allotment scheme grow in popularity with more local people coming together put their green fingers to the test.**

It all started with an underused plot of land at Edward Wilson House. Determined to restore it to its former glory, our tenants, who live in the area, came up with the brilliant idea of an allotment as a way of reviving the green space.

With our help and the support of our local partners we were able to turn this dream into a reality. Since then the group, known as the 'Happy Potters' have continued to thrive, helping each other to grow vegetables and plants.

Another allotment in Clevedon Square has also been set up with our help, by a resident who was keen to bring their community together. Run by an amazing group of volunteers and families all passionate about having a safe space to enjoy and grow their own produce, it's proving to be a huge success amongst others in the area. Many

have found it a great way of meeting new people and it's really helped those who have felt isolated during the pandemic.

They also received some top gardening advice from Adult Education on what they can plant during the different times of the year including how to plan and manage the allotment. Due to social distancing guidelines, we provided a separate session for children so that they could also get involved in decorating and potting plants for the allotment.

It's great to see that this fantastic project is inspiring so many different generations and is helping our communities to thrive.

**If you'd like to find out more about how you can 'Get Involved' with our allotment scheme please see page 13.**



## Join us online

If you're on the lookout for some inexpensive baking tips and some fun crafting ideas to keep your family entertained, then look no further than our online workshops.

Why not join us each week on our 'What's On' Facebook groups and try something new with the following sessions:

**Craft along with CBH**  
– every Wednesday at 1pm



If you're on the lookout for some fresh new design ideas to use as decorations around your home, or as a gift for someone then this is the workshop for you!

**Foodie Fridays**  
– every Friday at 1pm



Whether you enjoy cooking or not, each week we guide you through some really easy and inexpensive recipe ideas that you can bake or cook with the family.

For more information on the latest upcoming workshops and free crafting packs, contact [communityinvestment@cbh.org](mailto:communityinvestment@cbh.org)

## What's on?

Check out our Facebook 'What's On' Groups to find out the latest goings on and more about our upcoming online workshops.



These informative groups are your one stop shop for keeping up to date on the latest goings on in your area and are run by our Community Investment Team.

To find them visit our [@cheltborohomes](https://www.facebook.com/cheltborohomes) Facebook page and click on the 'Groups'

tab. There you will find your local group and Community Investment Officer.

For more information please contact our Community Investment Team on **0800 408 0000** or email [communityinvestment@cbh.org](mailto:communityinvestment@cbh.org)





# Inclusion & Ability Hub

If you have a mental health need, a health condition or a disability and are looking to try something new, we'd love to hear from you!

Each week we hold the following fun and interesting activities and workshops for people of all abilities:

- Arts and crafts
- Workshops to support learning and development
- Sports and physical activities
- Fitness sessions
- Other health and wellbeing activities



It's a great opportunity to meet new people, enjoy a cuppa and have a chat.

Sessions run every **Wednesday from 1pm – 3:30pm**

If you feel that there are any barriers that may stop you from taking part let us know as we can work with you to remove any difficulties you may have in accessing or attending the hub.

**Important note:** the recent re-opening of the hub is by invitation only and with a phased return timetable to ensure we are adhering to government guidance and keeping everyone safe. This will be continually assessed and take account of any future changes. Please call **0800 408 0000** or email [communityinvestment@cbh.org](mailto:communityinvestment@cbh.org) to register your interest.

## We're looking for green fingers

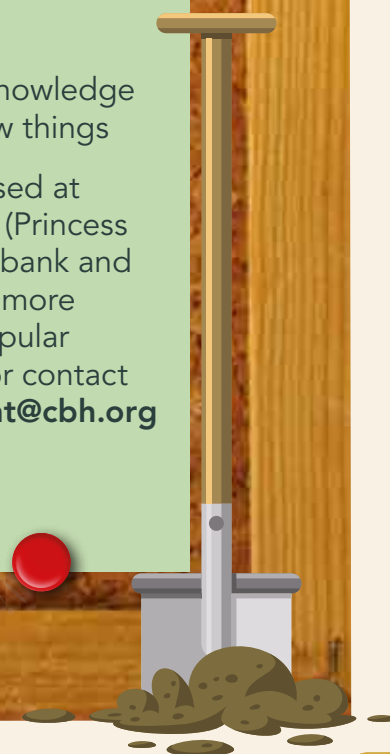
Have you ever thought about growing your own vegetables, fruits or herbs? If so, why not turn your dream into a reality and join our popular allotment scheme.

Not only is it a great way to brush up on your gardening skills but it also brings the following benefits:

- Opportunities to grow your own food
- Reduces isolation, as you will meet other like-minded people
- Is a great way to keep active – boosting your mental and physical wellbeing

- A chance to expand your knowledge on gardening and learn new things

The allotments are based at Edward Wilson House (Princess Elizabeth Way), Springbank and Clevedon Square. For more information on this popular scheme see page 11 or contact [communityinvestment@cbh.org](mailto:communityinvestment@cbh.org)





## Real stories from our neighbourhoods: Christie Kennedy

**Working closely with families so they can thrive is what we're all about. Of course, we couldn't do this without the invaluable support of our tenants and the people in our communities.**

Our inspirational CBH **Tenant & Leaseholder Awards** finalist, Christie Kennedy is a wonderful example this.

**Read on to see how her tenacity to go the extra mile is transforming the lives of others in her neighbourhood.**

A real community spirit, before lockdown, Christie volunteered at two community centres: The Rock and St Paul's Community Hub. Brilliant at working with younger children, she enjoys helping others to achieve new goals and overcome barriers. Not one to shy away from responsibility she always goes the extra mile to help organise activities and events.



Her ability to read the room and provide one to one support to young people who are struggling to join in during group games has helped them to engage with others.

Passionate about helping people, she joined the Youth Mentor Programme to support the younger members of the community with any issues they may have. Hugely popular with her peers, Christie has inspired other young people to get involved and become 'Young Leaders' themselves.

During the pandemic, she's continued to go above and beyond to help her family and neighbours. She carried out food shops and has checked in with others in her area who are shielding or vulnerable. A true inspiration, she's also helped a neighbour who was seriously ill and in hospital, care for her child and dog.

This is a huge achievement and really shows how the neighbourly and caring approach our tenants take every day is helping our communities to thrive.



## INFO SPOT

## Record of aggressive behaviour towards CBH staff and contractors

At CBH we take the personal safety of our staff and our contractors very seriously. Legally, we are required to tell you that we keep a record of potentially violent and/or aggressive customers. Any incidents are recorded on a "Staff Personal Safety Register" and are accessed by CBH staff as appropriate.

In some cases, depending on the severity of the behaviour, we may also share relevant information with other partners such as the

Council or Police. As stated in your tenancy agreement, it is your responsibility to make sure that you, anyone living with you, or your visitors, does not act in a violent and/or aggressive manner towards CBH staff or contractors. Failure to do this may, ultimately, result in you losing your home.

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## \*NEW\* REPAIRS SATISFACTION SURVEY

If you've recently had any work done on by our repairs service on your home, you may be asked by text message to take part in a quick survey to let us know how we did.

If you're are contacted we will send you 2 messages, each with a different question. We'd be grateful if you could take part as your responses will help us to understand how happy you are with the service and where we can make improvements.

To find out more about the survey, just give us a call on **0800 408 0000**



## The Power of three

**Our Community Investment Team were crowned the winners at the national TPAS Awards 2020.**

This amazing achievement was reinforced by being named finalists in not one, but three categories including; 'Team of the year 2020', the Strive programme in the 'Excellence in employment, skills and training award – under 10,000 homes', and a young tenant from St Paul's was shortlisted in the 'Inspirational young tenant of the year award'.

The team are delighted with the win. For more information on this visit: [www.cbh.org](http://www.cbh.org)



# BEWARE.... IT'S NOT ALWAYS EASY TO RECOGNISE A LOAN SHARK.



Loan Sharks may seem like a friend at first, but borrowing from them is never a good idea.

**Call our confidential  
24/7 helpline**

**0300 555 22 22**

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

[www.stoploansharks.co.uk](http://www.stoploansharks.co.uk)

 **Cheltenham Borough Homes**  
great homes | stronger communities | inspired people

**#CheltenhamSaysNo**