



CBHnews

AUTUMN 2021



WIN a top prize
We had fun in the sun
Have your say!

FREEPHONE 0800 408 0000
VISIT cbh.org



YOUR VOICE MATTERS!

We've made it easier for you to let us know your thoughts and give your views on the way we deliver our services for you.

It's really important to all of us at CBH that you find it easy to share your feedback, so we can continue to improve.

Visit **cbh.org/complaints-compliments-and-comments/** to find out more.

You can find out more about what we do and how we do it any time anywhere at **cbh.org** email us **housing@cbh.org** or by giving us a call on **0800 408 0000**



A golden opportunity to put your safety first!



Great news, we struck gold in the annual Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) Awards for the seventh year running

Organisations receiving a RoSPA Award are recognised as being world-leaders in health and safety practice. Every year, nearly 2,000 entrants contend to achieve the highest possible accolade in what is the UK's longest-running H&S industry awards.

This is so important as it provides you - our customers with the peace of mind that we put health, wellbeing and safety first. It demonstrates the high standards we're committed to maintaining and where we can improve, to make sure your safety always comes first.

For more information about the RoSPA Awards visit **www.rospace.com/awards**

COVER PHOTO: Our fabulous winner, Patricia, celebrates her £50 prize in style - congratulations (see page 4)

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR FINALISTS

A massive thank you to our colleagues and everyone involved in the important work that saw us get shortlisted in the prestigious Tenant Engagement Experts awards for the following two categories:




Excellence in Community Action

For supporting the Monksroft Action Group (MAG). This influential group works closely with colleagues and local partners to provide a space for local people to meet up each week and bring about positive change by addressing any issues raised by the local community.

Community Focused Service of the Year

For providing Wellbeing Wednesdays and Foodie Fridays to improve people's emotional wellbeing and confidence. Online sessions that helped you to stay connected during the pandemic and learn valuable skills in cooking and arts and crafts, in the comfort of your home. Since they began in April 2020 the community Facebook groups have received more than 36,500 views and members have grown significantly. Have you checked them out yet?



On 8 October, our colleagues came together with members of the MAG group to watch the awards through live stream. Although there were no wins this year, they did fantastically well to get shortlisted. Congratulations to all the amazing finalists for their hard work and a shout out to the winners of this year's awards.

KEEP YOUR EYES ON THE PRIZE

It's worth keeping your eyes peeled on future editions of CBHnews as we will be providing **MORE** opportunities for you to win exciting prizes.

Massive congratulations to our winners Liz and Patricia who won a £50 voucher in two of our recent competitions.

Don't miss out on a chance to be our next winner. We're still running not one, but two opportunities to win a gift card.



Our logistics manager Karen (left), personally delivers a £50 voucher to our winner Liz (right)

1 Let us in to carry out your first electrical test appointment by March 22 and you could win a £50 voucher

2 Register or use our online portal by 1 February and you could win a £25 voucher - see back page or visit page 4 of your rent statement for more details



Congratulations to Patricia, who celebrates her win outside in the sunshine

For more information on this, email housing@cbh.org or get in touch with us on **0800 408 0000**

#CheltenhamZero

We're excited to support Cheltenham Borough Council's commitment to be a net zero carbon council and borough by 2030.

We're looking at options to help them achieve this as part of the £180m housing investment partnership and planned work to existing homes too.

If you'd like to find out more about what you can do to reduce carbon emissions Cheltenham Borough Council have put together the following useful toolkit to help here: cheltenham.gov.uk/info/61/climate_and_sustainability/1638/householder_climate_toolkit



NEW HOMES FOR CHELTENHAM



We're working with Cheltenham Borough Council (CBC) to increase the supply of new, and affordable homes in the town.

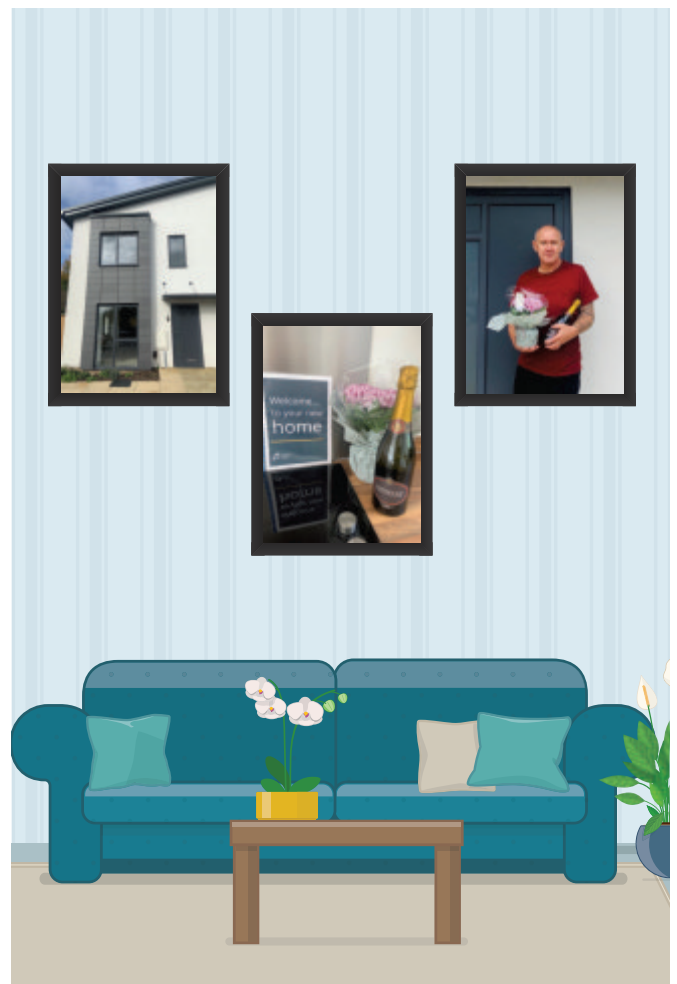
As part of the £180m housing investment programme, delivered in partnership with CBC, we have already delivered 29 new homes this year with a further 5 to be completed by the end of November.

If you have ever wondered about owning your own property, have you thought about shared ownership? Shared ownership is an affordable way of owning a home without taking out a huge mortgage.

Find out more at: www.cbh.org/services/your-home/shared-owners



29
homes already
delivered



WE HAD FUN IN THE SUN

Last year was an unusual time for us all, and we had to press pause on many of our face to face events to put the safety of you and your family first. You can imagine our excitement when we were presented with an opportunity to work closely with our local partners at Cheltenham Borough Council, Cheltenham Town FC, Family Space, Move More, The Music Works, St. Paul's Church - Cheltenham, Springbank Community Group, The Sober Parrot, Cotteswold Dairy and The Wiggly Worm to deliver a fun range of activities and healthy foods for young people to enjoy over the summer holidays.

Together we had a great time supporting Cheltenham Borough Council's No Child Left Behind Campaign in bringing families together to have some fun in the sun.

It was wonderful to see familiar faces again and we really enjoyed welcoming new people to the events too.

Although we've stayed in touch with you virtually, nothing quite beats an opportunity to meet up safely and catch up with you all.

The **10** summer events were a huge success with **706** attendances, and we provided:



240
school meals



210
pints of milk



593
portions of fruit

We also received the following glowing feedback:

"Amazing from start to finish, we were super sad when the holidays were over. Staff were amazing and kind and attentive to all the children and their needs"

"My children both absolutely loved move more they had the best time!"

"The girls loved it! Providing lunch for them was a godsend to be honest and it gave me some much needed rest time (I have a disability and struggle physically doing a lot in the holidays, plus can't afford expensive holiday clubs.) I'd use the service again in the future and would be prepared to pay an amount, say £5/£7 a session if it helped with running costs"

"I thought the sessions worked well and liked how the adults engaged with the children, all knowing their additional needs and learning their names quickly"

"My son thoroughly enjoyed the sessions. It was a great opportunity for him to be active, practice his football skills and meet new friends during the summer holidays"

"It was really nice for local kids to all get to know each other more - different age groups after all the recent small bubbles"



If you'd like to find out more about any future events taking place in your area visit our Facebook What's On Groups, email communityinvestment@cbh.org or give us a call on 0800 408 0000

YOUR THOUGHTS MAKE A DIFFERENCE



We are passionate about creating stronger communities and providing you with the support you and your family need. This is why we run quarterly telephone reviews, carried out by Acuity. One of the many ways you can have your say and share your experiences. So far this year we have had over 750 people respond to our survey, thank you to everyone who has taken the time so far to let us know how we're doing.

The answers you give help us make changes to continue to and improve the way our services are run, for example:

You said we actioned

You said: repairs to your homes were taking longer than normal.

So we: reallocated resources to improve this and introduced a new process that speeds up how quickly we can get materials, reduces the number of trips we make, saving time and reducing our carbon footprint meaning we can reduce the time it takes to complete a repair.

You said we actioned

You said: you missed the social events that took place in our sheltered schemes

We have: re-started these events with coffee mornings, lunches, afternoon teas and other activities.

To find out more about the events within your scheme please contact your housing support officer, or call **0800 408 0000** and ask to speak to Louise Oliver, activities co-ordinator.

As always, we want you to keep talking to us to tell us what we're doing right and how we could improve. Visit **cbh.org**, email housing@cbh.org or call **0800 408 0000**

HELP STOP CONDENSATION



Mike is back to share his tips on how to reduce the chance of condensation in our homes during the colder months.

“Unfortunately keeping our home warm during winter can lead to the common problem of condensation.

There are things we all can do to reduce this happening. These include:

- Covering pans when cooking
- Not leaving pans or kettles boiling longer than necessary
- Hanging washing outside - when possible
- Not hanging wet washing on radiators
- Keeping bathroom and kitchen doors closed at all times and the room well ventilated
- Keeping furniture away from external walls by around 10cm to allow air circulation behind

I've put together a full list of tips at **[cbh.org/download/repairs_and_maintenance/Condensation-document-for-website.pdf](https://www.cbh.org/download/repairs_and_maintenance/Condensation-document-for-website.pdf)**

You can also view a video with top tips for managing condensation in your home **[cbh.org/services/your-home/repairs/](https://www.cbh.org/services/your-home/repairs/)**



Don't forget we're here to help and, if after trying these tips you still need help, please call **0800 408 0000**

Weekly Men's Group

Did you know November is men's mental health awareness month? Anyone can struggle with their wellbeing and talking about it is so important.

Every week we run a Men's Group alongside our friends at Cheltenham Borough Council and our local partners to provide a safe space for men to talk. It's a great opportunity to take part in new activities and learn new skills within a welcoming environment.

The group meet up every Tuesday, 10:30am - 12:30pm at Oakley Community Resource Centre. Why not give it a go, we received the following fantastic response so far:

"I'm so glad I've found the men's group. I was so isolated and all I did was watch TV before joining the group. Every week we do different activities like playing cards and pool. We've been building air fix models and I'm making a SpitFire aeroplane which is great fun. I suffer with anxiety and I know that I can come to the Men's group and talk about my worries in a safe environment. I've even joined CBH's job club to learn better IT skills."

Joining the group is by invitation only, if you would like to join us let us know on 0800 408 0000 or email communityinvestment@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

STOPLOANSHARKS
Intervention . Support . Education

www.stoploansharks.co.uk

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

#CheltenhamSaysNo

DON'T GET BITTEN BY A LOAN SHARK

It can be an expensive time of year, with increased heating bills and the upcoming financial pressures of Christmas.

If you're struggling don't worry, our benefits and money advice team are here to help you. Grant Bailey our benefits and money advice (BMA) team leader says:



"Dealing with money worries is incredibly stressful and with the festive holidays fast approaching, it can be even harder to deal with the financial pressures that it brings. Of course, the anxiety caused is not just for Christmas and can affect us all year round.

It's so easy to fall prey to illegal money lenders who can pretend to be your friend. They charge extortionate interest rates, often referred to as 'double bubble'. For example, you borrow £100 and you must pay back double, £200! If payments are missed they often use intimidation methods and threats to get money from you.

If you or someone you know is being targeted by a loan shark, don't worry. There is help out there, all you need to do is visit stoploansharks.co.uk or contact the Illegal Money Lending Team's free 24/7 and confidential line on **0300 555 2222**.

That's not all as we're here to help you too. If you have concerns about paying your rent or are struggling to make payments, why not give me a call on **0800 408 0000**. Myself, or a member of my team will be able to make sure you get the support you need."

HELPING YOU INTO WORK

We've been busy delivering a wide range of training and workshop sessions, over the past few months, which have been a huge hit with our customers and partners.

Our employment experts Gayna, Lorna and Caroline provide some words below:

"What an exciting time it's been and we want to make it easy for you to find work, which is why we provide a variety of opportunities for you to develop your skills and get you on the right path to securing your dream job.

September marked the launch of our new training calendar and some of the training sessions we've carried out include:



Our fab trio, Lorna (left), Caroline (middle) and Gayna (right) can help you find work



Our Food Safety attendees celebrate achieving level 1 in their training

CSCS (Construction Skills Certification Scheme) training

"This was great. I got trained to take my Health, Safety and Environment Test. You paid for my test and my card. You got Charlie from Hays to help me get a job. I'm working full-time now - I was unemployed a few weeks ago and now I've got a job"

Training Attendee

Food Safety Course

"I would say, go on this course it's good and you get the help you need" **Attendee**

"Thank you, this is really helpful for me getting a job" **Attendee**

We're thrilled to bring back our face-to-face **Work clubs**, and are now delivering four sessions a week see page 15 to find out more about when these take place.

Providing employment support can make such a huge difference to people's lives, one of our attendees shared the following moving words.

"I can't thank your team enough for the support you gave me over the past 12 months, it has been a difficult time as I have never been out of work. But you never gave up and with your support I am now working full time... as a driver. This gives me job security and a bright future. Once again thank you all."

We also provide support for young people to prepare them for the working world and to inspire them to get the qualifications they need to secure their dream job.

We recently developed a pilot project - working in partnership with The GEM (Going the Extra Mile) project to support 18 - 24 year olds in gaining Employability Skills Development Certificate, work placements and careers advice. We received some fantastic feedback from those who took part and got involved with this life changing scheme:

"Relaxed and informative, everything explained really well. Tutors are friendly and approachable" **Attendee**

"Helpful and insightful. It was fun. I was nervous at first, but I really enjoyed it, I had fun" **Attendee**

Our Thrive scheme, which is designed to help young people stay in education, continues to transform lives.

"Thanks for everything, I got the apprenticeship at Kwikfit. I've got so much confidence in myself now. I really enjoy learning and earning my own money. It's what I always wanted" **Thrive Graduate**

"T' is so lucky to have the support of EI after leaving school and thank you for looking at all the potential career opportunities for him as I would not know where to start! His CSCS training will definitely put him on the right path." **Parent of Thrive graduate**

"I have passed my exams! "Thank you so much for helping me, I would not have done it without you" **Thrive Graduate**

If you're unsure on what to do next to secure work or are looking to develop your skillset, then we'd love for you get in touch with us and let us know. We really do want to help, we can look at your CV, advise you on interview techniques and look into the right training courses to help you get the qualifications you need.

If you're a parent and not sure how to help your child prepare for their future career, don't worry, we can advise on that too email **housing@cbh.org** or give us a call on **0800 408 0000"**

IMPORTANT FIRE ADVICE TO KEEP YOU SAFE

Did you know fire doors are an essential part of a building's fire protection system? They can save lives too, but are only effective in preventing the spread of fire, smoke and toxic gases when shut properly.

Fire doors wedged, or propped open can put the life of anyone living or visiting the building at risk. It's important to remember these three simple fire safety rules:



Shut your doors
before you go to bed



Make sure all fire
doors are closed in
the event of a fire



If you think there is
anything wrong with a
fire door report it

We take the safety of you and your family seriously and we have a legal duty to make sure all fire doors have a special hinge (known as a closer) that is working properly. **These should not be removed under any circumstances, even to move furniture into your home.** If you're finding it difficult to open the door and need them to be adjusted, please let us know and we can look into this for you.

You must not make any holes in the door to fit door security chains or hang things. If there is any damage to the fire door whether it be the letter box or the seals around the fire door/door frame or if you have any concerns on whether it is working properly or not, email housing@cbh.org or give us a call on **0800 408 0000**

INFO SPOT

THANK YOU...

Thank you for treating our colleagues and contractors with dignity and respect. At CBH we take the personal safety of our colleagues and contractors very seriously. Legally, we are required to tell you 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.

You will notice in your tenancy agreement, it is your responsibility to make sure 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 result in you losing your home.

LOOKING FOR WORK?

Why not join our club!

We're delighted to bring back our popular face to face weekly work club sessions to help those who are looking for a job. Finding work or taking that first step into training can be hard, so we want to make it as easy as possible for you. Our dedicated team of employment experts can offer one-to-one support to help you into work, education, or training.

The clubs are free join and held at:

Hesters Way Community Resource Centre

Cassin Drive, Cheltenham, GL51 7SU

Every Monday and Wednesday 10am - 12pm

Oakley Community Resource Centre

Clyde Crescent, Cheltenham, GL52 5QJ

Every Tuesday and Thursday 10am - 12pm

For more information **visit [cbh.org](https://www.cbh.org)**,

email **housing@cbh.org** or call

0800 408 0000



Don't forget to...

Make a payment and brighten up your rent account. If you're struggling with money, you don't have to go through this on your own. Keep your light shining by talking to us. We want to help you - give us a call on **0800 408 0000**

OPEN A PORTAL TO WIN



Could you be our next competition winner?

We're offering one lucky person the opportunity to win a £25 voucher!
Could it be you? To be in a chance to win all you need to do is register or use our online portal by the **1 February 2022**.

It's really easy to sign up and won't take up too much of your time either. All you need is your tenancy number (this can be found on your rent statement), your email address and date of birth.

The fun doesn't end there, whether you've just signed up or have been using the portal for a while, if you use it anytime up to the end of January you could win an additional £25 voucher.

You can find out more about the online portal on page 4 of your rent statement or by getting in touch with us on 0800 408 0000