

CBHnews

SPRING 2023



**Find out about our free
training workshops**

Help us celebrate our 20th birthday

Meet your community teams

FREEPHONE 0800 408 0000
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#OURTOWN

We had a fantastic evening at this year's No Child Left Behind (NCLB) awards. It was a true celebration for the people and all of the organisations who do so much work for our communities.

Our hugely successful Moors Kids Club, which we deliver in partnership with the Big Local and Art Shape, was shortlisted for the

category of #OurTown (which celebrates projects that help children and young people to thrive).

We didn't come away with a trophy this time, but we remain so proud of everyone involved in the project.

Three families who attend the club went along to the awards and had a great time!



ANDY'S COMMUNITY AWARD

Great news! Andy Wood, your ASB lead at CBH was shortlisted for 'Practitioner of the Year' award at the Resolve Awards 2023.

Andy works extremely hard to keep you safe and is always going above and beyond to find the best solutions for everyone.

His team say Andy is: "An inspiring, motivating and approachable person with a great sense of humour, a caring nature, and a very serious side. He cares about people, knowing when extra support is needed, and his approach to his work makes everyone want to do a good job."

Andy has been working in St Paul's to help young people get back into education or learn skills for life through courses and volunteering. He also works with homeless people in Cheltenham, making sure they feel listened to and are able to get the support they need. A big champion of Monkscroft Action Group (MAG), Andy was key in supporting the MAG's development and loves to hear what the group are planning next".



Although there were no wins on this occasion he did extremely well to get nominated. Congratulations Andy, from all of us at CBH.

COVER PHOTO: Our fab trio of employment experts are making a difference to lives across Cheltenham. (see page 7).



IT'S OUR BIRTHDAY!

SPRING 2023



We are celebrating 20 years of CBH this year!

We love what we do and are so proud of how far we've come in the last two decades - but don't just take our word for it. We share some of our top highlights below:

We delivered water to vulnerable people and their families when Cheltenham was without water for 18 days during the 2007 Gloucestershire floods until water supplies returned.



Put people's wellbeing first and helped reduce social isolation with virtual coffee mornings during the Covid pandemic.



Also worked with key partners to support customers who needed help with accessing food, prescriptions, emergency repairs and benefit and money advice.

When we first started out we provided exciting opportunities for young people in St Paul's to become Junior Wardens, Young Leaders and enjoy fun events during the school holidays.



Since then we've branched out to provide a diverse range of activities to other communities across Cheltenham. Inspiring more young people to discover new interests.

Worked with partners to support local people in bringing about positive change to their area. The Monkscroft Action Group (MAG) is a great example of neighbours coming together to harness the community spirit and secure new opportunities to develop their skills.



For more information visit: cbh.org/2023/04/13/anniversary-celebrations



Help us celebrate - calling all photographers

As part of our 20th anniversary celebrations, we plan to snap some shots of customers, colleagues and partners who've been a part of the CBH journey. If you're a dab hand with a camera and would like to see your photos in the spotlight, we'd love to hear from you. Whether you're new to the world of photography, an experienced photographer or have recently discovered a passion for pictures, contact us at communications@cheltenham.gov.uk

WE HAD A CRACKING EASTER

Over the Easter holidays we let the kids out and provided a range of fun activities for children and young people to enjoy during their school break.

Working closely with local partners including Move More, Art shape and CTFC (Cheltenham Town Football Club), together we supported Cheltenham Borough Council's No Child Left Behind (NCLB) campaign and Gloucestershire County Council's Holiday Activity Fund (HAF) programme in bringing families together for some fun.

It was a great opportunity to try something different, including a variety of new sport sessions, football, trips to Laser Tag and Jumpin Fun inflatables.



We also engaged with over 160 young people and their families at the NCLB Fun Day in Pittville Park, where everyone had a great time making Easter wreaths, fuzzy felt bookmarks and gliders.

That's not all, as there was a delicious range of free healthy meals and snacks available, to help the kids keep their energy levels up whilst having fun.

Don't just take our word for it though, check out the wonderful feedback we received below:



Keep your eyes peeled on our Facebook What's On groups via the groups tab which you can find through our @cheltborohomes page, as we'll soon be sharing our exciting plans for the Summer.

Meanwhile our friends at NCLB are running an exciting free event on the 24 June (see page 5).



"They had a GREAT time at Laser Tag! We were really impressed that one of our children took part as we weren't sure if she would like it".

"The kids love it when you guys are here, it brightens up their week".

CHILDREN'S FESTIVAL CHELTENHAM

**Family Fun at the
Children's Festival:
Saturday 24 June**

Looking for some free family fun? Come and join us for an exciting day of fun entertainment, thanks to No Child Left Behind and Cheltenham Borough Council. You'll find activities, performances, workshops, and more, all at Cheltenham Town Hall and in the town's Brewery Quarter.

There will be science, music, yoga, martial arts, drama and football, plus live performances from local schools. This year's theme is 'togetherness' and the day is a great chance for families and friends to play and learn together.



Find out more: nclbcheltenham.org.uk/childrens-festival

KNIT AND NATTER FOR GOOD CAUSES

The Knit and Natter group have been busy bees! They've knitted for several great charities, helping people and animals far and wide. They've knitted blankets and clothes for babies being cared for at Gloucestershire Royal Hospital and Shape Africa (a health centre in Eastern Uganda), as well as for earthquake victims in Syria and Turkey. Their blankets have also been sent to the Dogs Trust to help keep the rescue animals warm and well during the cold, winter weather.

The Knit and Knatter sessions take place every Thursday, 10:30am at Wallace House - if you would like to join us or for more information please contact louise.oliver@cbh.org or call 0800 408 0000.



TAKING ACTION ON DAMP AND MOULD

Emma Wall, Executive Director of Property and Communities, says:

"Since the tragic death of two-year-old Awaab Ishak, which was linked to damp and mould in his home, we have been working hard to review and improve how we resolve damp and mould for you in your home.



We don't want any of our customers to be experiencing damp and mould and take this seriously. We are here to support you with any concerns and will take action to identify and address any reports of damp and mould in your home.

So far, we have:

- Contacted each customer who has reported damp and mould in the last year to ensure it has been resolved.

- Enhanced our response times, making sure we respond to you as quickly as possible, when you report damp and mould in your home. Ensuring those that need urgent attention are prioritised.
- Developed a specialist team who are trained to deal with damp and mould and closely monitor any cases so that it is addressed.
- Transformed the way we work, so we can proactively support you, putting your needs first, (more details to follow in a future CBH News).

If you have any concerns about damp and mould in your home, please let us know as soon as possible so that we can act. You can:

- contact us through your MyCBH account
- call 0800 408 0000
- visit our website at www.cbh.org/help-with-damp-and-mould/

MAKE THINGS RIGHT

The Government has launched a 'Make Things Right' campaign, encouraging tenants to make their voices heard and let their landlord know if they're unhappy about the condition of their home.

If you have any concerns, please let us know through your MyCBH account, email us at housing@cbh.org or call 0800 408 0000

Find out more about how to contact us with a complaint here: www.cbh.org/complaints-compliments-and-comments/

Find out more about the 'Make Things Right' campaign here:

socialhousingcomplaints.campaign.gov.uk/

WARMING NEWS FROM THE ONE SHOW

Did you see the One Show on Monday 13 February? Our customer, Jacqui, explained how she became a Warmth on Prescription client as part of a trial between Gloucestershire NHS and Severn Wye.

Jacqui says: "I have some medical conditions which are badly affected by the cold weather. I'm really grateful to my GP who put me forward for the trial. Severn Wye came out and did a home energy assessment which has really helped me with my budgeting – now I

can turn my heating on without worrying about the cost."

If you're worried about paying bills, or simply want to check you're receiving all the benefits you're entitled to, our friendly benefit and money advice team are only a call away. Lianne, Suzanne and Jo all offer free and confidential advice about welfare benefits, ways to save money and day to day money management.

Contact us on bma@cbh.org or 0800 408 0000.

A HELPING HAND

We offer lots of support for our customers. Our friendly experts can help you manage your money, understand the benefits you can claim, find training, look for work, and much more. You don't have to struggle on your own – just get in touch for a chat.

Here's the story of one of our customers (Mrs D) who sought help:

Mrs D moved to Cheltenham last summer and had been out of work ever since. The job centre referred her to our service as she was struggling to find employment and her confidence in using IT and having interview experience was low.

We were able to help her update her CV and give her some training in using a laptop, being able to upload and download information using Microsoft Word and accessing her Universal Credit journal. As Mrs D was unfamiliar with the area,



Our employment experts, Lorna (left), Janine (middle) and Gayna (right) are here to help you.

we also helped her with journey planning and bus timetables to map out locations of prospective employers.

After applying for various roles and attending some interviews, Mrs D has now gained a full-time position which has improved her life massively. She now has a regular good income, has been able to pay her bills, and is planning a holiday with her husband.

It's not always easy to ask for help and seek support, but we are here to help anyone with employment or training needs. Please get in touch if you would like our help. Give us a call on 0800 408 0000

HAVE YOU HEARD ABOUT THE NEW TENANT SATISFACTION MEASURES (TSMS)?

The Regulator of Social Housing (RSH)

regulates landlords (like CBH) to check that they are giving people good housing and that they are efficient and run well.

Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) are a new part of the RSH's regulatory approach aimed at making it easier for people to find out how good a landlord is and compare different landlords. This means people can see which landlords are better at looking after homes and tenants. The RSH thinks it is important people know how tenants feel about their landlord, and if landlords are doing what they are supposed to do. We will need to report how we are doing to the RSH every year, starting with information covering the period April 2023 to March 2024.



TSMs are made up of 'tenant perception' questions and 'performance' measures.

We already ask you the tenant perception questions

as part of our rolling quarterly telephone surveys, which are one of many ways that we seek your feedback on how we're doing.

We currently do this through a company called Acuity, who provide an objective approach, and flexible times to contact people, so those people at work during the day have opportunity to participate in evenings or Saturdays.



This is done in a way that ensures we understand not just if you are happy or not, but also why. The second part is important as we use this to improve what we do on an ongoing basis.



If you think we should be asking these questions in a different way, then please let us know by going to our website and adding your thoughts to the contact form.

Performance measures are already part of the day to day life of running CBH and we are already collecting the information needed to report the TSMs.

Tenant perception and performance information is regularly scrutinised by senior leaders in CBH, our Board and Committees, by our Tenant Scrutiny Panel (TSIP) and by Cheltenham Borough Council too. We make sure that the annual report for tenants we send you every summer covers some of these areas of performance and satisfaction.

We must now make sure that we make available on our website, and on CBC's website too, the RSH's specific TSMs. We must provide clarity about what is being collected, what targets we are aiming for, and how we are doing against those targets.



The type of questions we'll ask will look at how satisfied you are:

- With us here at CBH
- With the time we took to complete your most recent repair
- The way your home is maintained
- With your home – do you feel safe?
- That we listen to your views and act on them
- That we keep you informed on the things that matter to you
- We treat you fairly and with respect
- With our approach to handling complaints
- That we keep communal areas clean and well maintained
- That we make a positive contribution to your neighbourhood
- With our approach to handling ASB

We'll also review the:

- Complaints we've received
- Time it takes to respond to complaints
- Anti-social cases we're working on
- Homes that do not meet the Decent Homes Standard
- Repairs completed within target timescales
- Gas safety checks
- Fire safety checks
- Asbestos safety checks
- Water safety checks
- Lift safety checks



Keep talking to us so we can continue to listen and act on your feedback. We really value your input and make changes as a result. For more information on TSMs visit: cbh.org

THRIVING STUDENTS OF PITTVILLE SCHOOL

Our training and employment experts, Gayna and Janine, have been back to Pittville School to give certificates to students taking part in the Thrive Light programme.

"It was a really good experience – I really enjoyed it."

The students have now finished their Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) course in Employability Skills Development, which means they have another recognised qualification to show future employers.

Young people on Thrive Light also receive advice about applying for apprenticeships and college courses, as well as writing a CV. Plus, once they've finished the sessions at school, they attend work experience placements with us at CBH.

From not knowing what they wanted to do after leaving school, the students have all said they'd like to work at CBH or similar organisations in the future.

Here's just a few of the things they said:

"We did lots of different things, plumbing, tiling, electrics, changing locks, painting, laying slabs."



Mr Raistrick, deputy head teacher at Pittville School, adds: **"Once again this has had a positive impact on our students and their attitude towards school and their futures.**

Thank you to all at CBH for making a difference in these young people's lives."

RENT-FREE WEEKS

As you know, there are four rent-free weeks each year. Here's a reminder of your rent-free weeks over the next 12 months:

- Week 09: **29 May 2023**
- Week 22: **28 August 2023**
- Week 39: **25 December 2023**
- Week 52: **25 March 2024**

If you're struggling to pay your rent, don't worry... we're here to help. Let us know as soon as possible and we will work with you to find a solution. You don't have to struggle on your own.

Call our friendly team on 0800 408 0000 or drop them a note at incometeam@cbh.org.



BRINGING YOU NEW AFFORDABLE HOMES

We're excited to share that we're working with Cheltenham Borough Council to bring 14 new, high quality, affordable homes to Cheltenham.

Five of the new properties will be at Hillfort Place on Shurdington Road (built by Kendrick Homes) and a further nine homes will be at Pear Trees on Kidnappers Lane (built by Newland Homes). The Newland Homes

houses will be net zero carbon, so they will be cheaper to run and kinder to the environment.

Across the two developments we will have a mix of 1, 2 and 3 bedroom houses, available for rent and shared ownership. They are being funded as part of Cheltenham Borough Council's £180m housing investment in Cheltenham's future.

IN THE MOOD FOR FOOD?

If you would like to try something new and make some healthy, nutritious meals from scratch and on a budget too – then look no further.

We've teamed up with our friends at The Wiggly Worm to provide an exciting new 10 week Food for Mood course to help you put your cooking skills to the test.

It's a great way to meet new people as you'll get a chance to eat your meal together too. That's not all as not only is the course free but all the ingredients will be provided too.

Interested? Check out the details below:

Date: Starts 21 June for 10 weeks

Time: 11am – 1pm

Location:

St Marks Church Hall,
Cheltenham, GL51 7AL



To book your place all you need to do is register your interest through our online form at forms.office.com/e/kgTaxBiLcR or contact us at communityinvestment@cbh.org or call 0800 408 0000

GREENING YOUR HOMES

We have lots of energy efficiency improvement projects taking place across your homes. A total of 59 existing properties are being worked on at the moment, all part funded by the Government's Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF).

- Some of our independent living spaces (flats and bungalows) at Cumming Court are having new windows, improved cavity and loft insulation (where required), upgraded ventilation and ground source heat pumps put in (to replace old electric underfloor heating systems).
- Another 34 homes on Hawthorn Road, Orchard Avenue, Lee Close and Kingsmead Road are having external wall insulation, loft insulation and ventilation installed.

The improvements will make the homes energy efficient, warmer and cheaper to heat, so will mean lower energy bills for you.



THAT'S NOT ALL...

We've got some more exciting news which is not only good for our customers but also good for our environment.

We've also secured £2m worth of funding through a consortium bid led by Stroud District Council, as part of the Government's Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) to improve the energy efficiency of an additional

187 homes identified as having a low performance rating.

You can read all about it here:

www.cbh.org/2023/04/03/energy-efficient-homes-for-cheltenham/

This is all part of our commitment to support Cheltenham Borough Council's ambition to be net zero carbon by 2030.





**If you had a flood
could you keep your
head above water?**

From £0.51 a week you could!

Having home contents insurance can't prevent floods, thefts or fires from happening, but it can help you get back on your feet.

- Pay-as-you-go
- No excess
- Choose to pay with your rent
- Choice of payment methods paying weekly

Insure your belongings

It's our responsibility to insure the structure of your home but this doesn't include what's inside, like your furniture and personal possessions.

As a tenant of Cheltenham Borough Homes you are eligible for a home contents insurance scheme, created just for Cheltenham Borough Homes starting from just £0.51 a week for £4,000 standard cover. There's no long-term commitment, it can be cancelled at any time and there's no excess to pay if you need to make a claim.

Call: 0800 408 0000

Terms and conditions apply, contact above.

Price includes Insurance Premium Tax (IPT) charged at the appropriate rate.

The policy is underwritten by Aviva Insurance Limited. Aviva Insurance Limited, Registered in Scotland Number 2116. Registered Office: Pitheavlis, Perth PH2 0NH. Authorised by the Prudential Regulation Authority and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority and the Prudential Regulation Authority.

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JOIN OUR FREE WORKSHOPS

Would you like to brush up on your maths skills and become more confident with job applications? Join us at one of our new free workshops.

Ten spaces are available for each workshop (you must be 19 or over to attend). Each is run by two qualified tutors. Hot and cold drinks are provided.

Numeracy Skills: 10 May, 12:30 - 2:30pm, Hesters Way Resource Centre

Join our 'Multiply' sessions and improve your numeracy skills. This is a friendly and relaxed session for anyone who wants to improve their maths (and doesn't already have maths GCSE at grade C or above).

Budgeting: 16 May, 12:30pm - 2:30pm, Oakley Resource Centre

Our money management sessions are a great way to help you develop the skills to better manage your household budget.

Application Forms and Interview Techniques: 24 May, 12:30-2:30, Hesters Way Resource Centre

Get help with those job applications and brush up your interview skills in this relaxed workshop.

To book your place contact us by email at tes@cbh.org or call 07917 517091 or 07920 206881.



PLAY YOUR PART

It's important you have your say. There are lots of ways to get involved – you could join our Tenant Scrutiny Improvement Panel, become a member of our board, or pop along to chat to our community team.

We're also here to support you if you would like to set up something of your own in your community. There are also opportunities for you to help us develop and review our policies too. To find out more about how you can get involved, contact communityinvestment@cbh.org or call 0800 408 0000



NEW LIFE-SAVING DEFIBRILLATORS

Two defibrillator units have been installed at our Swindon Road office and at Hesters Way Community Resource Centre.

They are available for the whole community to use in an emergency, if you think someone is having a cardiac arrest. Anyone can use a defibrillator, you don't need special training, and it will potentially save a life. The machine gives you instructions, so you can't cause anyone harm by using one.

The defibrillators are available 24 hours a day and are directly linked to the ambulance service. They have been donated by Public Hearts, a local training organisation. Please spread the word about them.

See where your nearest defib is:

Read more about how and when to use a defibrillator: bhf.org.uk/how-you-can-help/how-to-save-a-life/defibrillators



MEET CLARE... WHO RUNS OUR MEN'S CLUB

"I'm Clare and I've been helping run a weekly Mens Group for two years with a colleague from Caring for Communities and People (CCP).

The club is really welcoming and members decide on the activities. It can be anything from playing pool and cards, having a chat



over coffee or tea to bigger events. We've helped Westonbirt

Arboretum build a visitor's shelter, made leather wallets with Art Shape and been on a mindful photography walk in Pittville Park.

It's a privilege to be able to offer a space for members to talk about difficult topics, maintain good mental health and see great friendships form. If you're interested and want to come along the Mens Group meet at Oakley Resource Centre on Tuesdays 10:30-12:30 please contact me at clare.davies@cbh.org."

CAN YOU SPOT THE DIFFERENCE?

Birds are tweeting, buds on trees are growing and as we welcome Spring, we're inviting you to take part in our latest competition.

Can you spot 5 differences in the images below:

A



B



Let us know the differences by emailing communications@cheltenham.gov.uk by 10am on Friday 30 June for your chance to win a £20 voucher from Cheltenham BID presented by the Mayor of Cheltenham with an opportunity to have afternoon tea in the Mayor's parlour.

Terms and conditions available at cbh.org