

CBHIEWS

SUMMER 2018



FREEPHONE 0800 408 0000 VISIT www.cbh.org





Our Charity of the year is

Following a vote from our staff, we are delighted to announce that Maggie's Cheltenham Centre has been overwhelmingly voted our Charity of the Year 2018/19.

Maggie's Centres offer free practical, emotional and social support to people with cancer and their family and friends. This influential charity has professional staff on hand to offer the support people need.





More information about Maggie's Centres can be found at www.maggiescentres.org



Last year our members of staff went the extra mile and raised over £1,282 for Young Gloucestershire Carers!



We're looking forward to yet another year of raising life changing funds and providing services to help transform lives!

You can check out our exciting new Annual Report 2017/18 on page 10 to find out more about how we're continuing to add value in providing great homes and stronger communities.

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: Your Tenant of the Year winner! It's smiles all around as Sarah Godfrey celebrates her well-deserved award!

Our audience with a top VIP

We welcomed an influential VIP to the world of CBH recently when we received a private audience with none other than government Housing Minister, Dominic Raab MP.



On Friday 1 June, Mr Raab met with Paul Stephenson; our chief executive, our tenant board member; Trish Blain (see page 4), Jason Langley; Chair of the Board, representatives from Cheltenham Borough Council including Councillor Peter Jeffries, Cabinet Member for Housing and local MP Alex Chalk.

The purpose of this visit was for Mr Raab to find out more about the services social housing landlords, like us, deliver to tenants. We also took the chance to talk about the challenges we face to create more homes and Mr Raab was particularly interested to learn more about the exciting Cheltenham West Vision project – find out more about this project below.

Cheltenham West Vision – UPDATE

In partnership with Cheltenham Borough Council we have been carrying out a project called Cheltenham West Vision. The aims of this project is to research and map out how the Cheltenham West neighbourhood might look in the future.

So far we have gathered the thoughts of residents at a number of community drop in events and listened to community representatives' views. This has helped shape an emerging vision for the area, including how housing, public spaces, roads and transport, community, character and the local economy might look and work for the whole community in the future.

We have also carried out our own research looking at; existing issues, census data and information we have about the buildings and who lives in them. This research has created an evidence base which is helping us to identify which areas may be most in need of change.

Next steps

A draft masterplan, setting out potential affordable, achievable options will be presented to Cheltenham Borough Council members in July and will then go out for consultation to the wider community later this year.

Find out more at www.cbh.org/ cheltwest



We're on Board with the next generation...

It's been yet another positive year for our CBH Board as we welcomed a new Vice Chair, Shane Brimfield and our new Company Secretary, Helen Price to the fold.

The Board has continued to grow and has undergone an exciting transformation to reach out to new forward thinking and enthusiastic people to join our influential and welcoming team.

We're also delighted to announce that our latest recruit is Trish Blain who is an active member of the Benefit to Society Campaign which aims to tackle the common misrepresentations and stereotyping of social housing tenants in both local and national media. She was appointed as a Tenant Board Member in April 2018, read her story below:

on and off for the past 35 years and strongly believe that we have a voice that should be heard and be able to influence what happens within our neighbourhoods. I run a support group for people suffering with fibromyalgia and ME/CFS, and for their families and friends. I also enjoy talking to people about our local community"

Our Company Secretary Helen Price (right) with new member of the Board Trish Blain

Did you know...

The CBH Board has a maximum of 10 members. Our rules state that there must be 3 places on the Board reserved for Tenants, (including 1 Leaseholder), 2 for Cheltenham **Borough Council** (CBC) members and 5 places for 'Independent' individuals who have been chosen for their knowledge and understanding of social housing.

For more information about our current Board vacancies please contact our Company Secretary on 0800 408 0000

Universal Credit

IT'S HERE, IT'S HAPPENING, IT COULD AFFECT YOU

Universal Credit (UC) has now reached Cheltenham and it is changing the way you apply for and receive benefits.

We've got some vital tips to help you understand what this means for you and how you can make a claim:

MAKING A CLAIM

- Apply online: claims must be submitted online and you need to log in to your account on a regular basis to keep your claim live. If you don't, your claim will be closed and you will have to restart your application
- Put in the correct landlord details: for most of you the landlord will be Cheltenham Borough Council, this is because they receive your rent. But we (CBH) do own a small number of homes so that rent is paid to us. Not sure who to put? Call 0800 408 0000
- Tenancy name must match UC claim: the name on your tenancy account must match the name you enter to claim for UC. If your name has changed we can amend it on your tenancy account but we will need the following proof: marriage certificate, decree absolute or a certified deed poll document. Please contact your tenancy management officer
- Changes to tenancy joint to sole: if you have a joint tenancy but are now a sole occupant of the property call us on 0800 408 0000
- Claims made before December 2017:
 if you claimed before the full roll out of UC
 you will have to reapply. BUT wait until you
 receive a letter from UC telling you when
 to make your full service claim



- UC is paid monthly in arrears in one payment: Your first assessment period starts on the date you make your claim and runs for one calendar month, subsequent assessment periods will then run consecutively
- First UC payment will be approximately 7 days after your first assessment period ends. You will then be paid on the same date each month
- Make sure you budget if you are working.
 Your payments will be affected depending on how you are regularly paid:
- Weekly You may receive 5 wage payments in one UC assessment period; if this makes your income for this period too high you will not receive any UC for this assessment period
- Two-Weekly You may receive 3 wage payments in one UC assessment period; if this makes your income for this period too high you will not receive any UC for this assessment period
- Four-Weekly At some point during the year you will receive 2 wage payments during one UC assessment period; if this makes your income for this period too high you will not receive any UC for this assessment period

Find out more at www.gov.uk/universal-credit



Contact our housing revenues team when you make a claim – they are on hand to offer advice and support. **CALL 0800 408 0000**

Cheltenham remembers

It's been 100 years since the end of World War One and to mark this special occasion we teamed up with Cheltenham Borough Council (CBC) and the Cheltenham Trust to deliver a series of FREE art classes.



Run by artist Robyn Woolston, the workshops were a huge success and everyone had a great time flexing their creative talents to remember the men and women of the First World War.

Not to worry if you missed these classes as there will be an opportunity to check out all the designs that were created during these sessions at the Wilson Art Gallery in September - dates to be confirmed, please visit www.cheltenhammuseum.org.uk for more information.







Schools out! Let the games begin...

This summer we will be letting the kids out with an exciting selection of FREE activities that we will be running during the school holidays.

There will be FREE food and drink available plus lots of family fun to be had including glitter tattoos, face painting, football, arts and crafts, circus skills and much, much more...

You can find a list of dates and areas below:

31st July - Ismay Road Green

2nd August - Barlow Road Green

7th August - St Pauls Community Hub

9th August - Fiddlers Green Lane Park

14th August - Rowanfield Living Room – Devon Avenue

16th August - Triscombe Way Playground

17th August - Cleeveland Square Flats Green

21st August - Pilgrove Way Playground

23rd August - Monkscroft Flats

28th August - Scott and Edward Wilson House

30th August - Coronation Square

All activities will take place from 11am - 2pm for more information please contact a member of our Community Investment Team on 0800 408 0000



New kids on your block!

You can look forward to seeing some fresh faces down your street this summer after the launch of our new look neighbourhood team

This team has six tenancy management officers who are on hand to offer you advice and support to manage your tenancy. This support covers day to day housing enquiries, advice on your tenancy and how to report issues.

Meet the team



Linda Bannister:St Peters, Arle,
The Moors



Gemma Brooks: Alstone, Hester's Way East, Rowanfield



Diane Hamilton:
Town Centre, St Paul's,
Charlton Kings,
Leckhampton,
Swindon Village



Adam Mace: Warden Hill, St Marks, Hatherley, The Reddings, Hester's Way South



David Swift:Priors Farm, Priors,
Prestbury, Whaddon,
Lynworth



Sian Warren: Hester's Way West

Contact your local officer on 0800 408 0000 or TenancyManagementTeam@cbh.org



It's a digital success!

We're delighted to announce that our positive partnership with local organisation Adult Education in Gloucestershire has successfully delivered a series of computer lessons for the local community.





Throughout April and May, nine members of the Chinese community took to the screen at our Digital Den (based at Hester's Way) to receive some IT training.

The six week course has proven to be very popular with our savvy computer learners who have successfully completed part one of their training.

Double whammy of new homes on the way!





Our second exciting new development is at the rear of Coates and Elgar House, off Newton Road. Called Neptune House, these six flats will be completed by February 2019 and will offer four x 1 bedroom flats and two x 2 bedroom flats.











#ILoveCheltenham

we're aiming high for our borough!

The sky's the limit for Cheltenham thanks to an exciting new partnership which will help everyone in the borough thrive.

Headed up by Cheltenham Borough Council, other local partners, including CBH, who will be working together to deliver an ambitious plan to help define what Cheltenham should feel and look like in the future. Known as a 'place vision', the aim is a Cheltenham where:

 all our people and the communities they live in thrive

- culture and creativity thrives, is celebrated and enjoyed throughout the year
- businesses and their workforces thrive
- everyone thrives

Action plans are being created and are already having an impact across Cheltenham. Great examples include:

HEALTH

Veg box scheme:

During the school summer holidays Inspiring families offer a great value veg box scheme.

Available through participating local primary schools, for £2.50 a nutritious bag of fruit and vegetables and fun recipe cards will be delivered to families every fortnight.

Check with your child's school. PLEASE NOTE: forms must be completed and returned before end of term.

CULTURE

Book bank: Donations of good quality books are welcomed for the Book Bank Scheme. Run by Inspiring Families this scheme delivers hundreds of books to a number of primary schools in Cheltenham.

Donations can be dropped off at participating schools and at the Council's Municipal Offices on the Promenade.

Keep up to date with news from Inspiring Families on twitter @IFamilieschelt

TRANSPORT

Town centre traffic schemes: Since 28 June, there has been a trial closure at Boots corner. This trial is part of a plan to improve pedestrian, cycle and public transport access and reduce car use in the town centre. New blue badge spaces have been created in Crescent Terrace: Inner Promenade; Grosvenor Place South; Imperial Square (Eastern arm); and Clarence Street.

Share your feedback about the trial road closure and new blue badge parking at www.gloucestershire. gov.uk/ctp

For more information visit www.cheltenham.gov.uk/place and follow #ILoveCheltenham

Your 2017/18 Annual Report is here!

This report highlights just a few of our achievements during the year which saw us launch our new vision and plans to make Cheltenham a better place to live by providing great homes and stronger communities.

We've continued to deliver value for money (VFM) for your rent through developing strong links with local organisations to provide excellent services and life changing opportunities that make a difference to people's lives.

Read on to see how we provide Great Homes and Stronger Communities with Inspired People:



Did you know? In Cheltenham a 3 bed home in the private sector costs on average **£1,268** per month to rent - it costs on average **£400** to rent similar home with CBH

GREAT HOMES – EXCELLENT SERVICES

Providing new homes:

Launched an exciting new project known as Cheltenham West Vision to find out how people living in West Cheltenham would like to see their neighbourhoods grow and improve in the future





We built **9** new homes on **3** sites – all three projects were delivered on budget and ahead of time; this meant that families could move into their new homes sooner

We also acquired **6** recently refurbished flats in Gresham Court, Hester's Way and took over the management of **5** apartments in the Town Centre Brewery Complex

apartments and flats

Repairs to your homes:

99.2% of tenants satisfied with the repairs carried out

Carried out **10,500** responsive repairs

10,500 REPAIRS

Continued to deliver an out of hours emergency repairs service during the severe weather conditions and snow VFM

92.7% of which were completed on first visit

Maintaining and improving your home:

Our **7** year cyclical redecoration programme was successfully completed during 2017/18 which has seen almost **5,000** homes benefit from painting works worth **£2.6m**

£2.6m
painting works
to 5000 homes

We've completed the second year of our **6 year** windows and doors programme and so far in year **2** we've achieved the following:

- Over 2,036 homes have had new doors fitted
- Over 1,263 homes received new windows
- 95% satisfaction with their new windows and doors

Installed **409** new energy efficient 'A' rated boilers achieving **100%** satisfaction, helping to keep your energy costs down



VFM

Keeping your communal areas clean and safe:

Successfully completed neighbourhood works at Australia and Canberra House. Residents are now enjoying an enhanced garden space and improved bin areas. Shed doors have also been upgraded to provide more secure storage spaces for residents



STRONGER COMMUNITIES – TRANSFORMING NEIGHBOURHOODS

Reducing ASB in the community:

Our ASB team dealt with **206** ASB cases, successfully resolving **97%** of cases

To make it easier to gather evidence of ASB and monitor crime hotspots remotely, the ASB team have invested in a mobile CCTV

Thanks to the strong links that we've formed with other partners we are increasingly able to continue to deal with community and neighbourhood issues more effectively - a great example of this is the 'Cocooning Event' held in January in St Peter's Square and Moors Avenue.

We joined the Police, Fire and Rescue and CBC to visit residents and talk to them about any



housing, ASB or fire safety concerns. We also gathered vital community intelligence which led to the seizure of Class A drugs

206 ASB CASES

Celebrated an incredible **10** years of crowning Cheltenham's remarkable individuals and groups who go the extra mile at the CBH Tenant & Leaseholder Awards 2017



Our many activities held at our popular Lynworth Court, Wallace House and Oasis community hubs received more than **5100** attendances and continue to transform lives:

"The Hub has been a life line for me. I cared for my mother full time and used to bring her to activities at the hub. When she died, I carried on attending and it has filled a big void in my life."

The Tenant Scrutiny Improvement Panel (TSIP) helped us to test and shape our services by:

Represented Cheltenham's residents and highlighted the issues social housing tenants are facing at a special housing event attended by Alok Sharma, the former Minister of State for Housing and Planning Put forward **13** recommendations to enhance activities available to people at our community hubs. For example improving the customer communications for residents and the wider community to promote the events available at our sheltered schemes more effectively



CHANGING LIVES

Our employees are passionate about what they do and often go the extra mile, whether that is raising over £1,282 for charity in 2017/18 or contributing over 300 gifts and 20 food hampers to the Hamper Scamper Christmas appeal at Christmas



Employees also launched a staff volunteering project called **Help 2**, designed to provide emergency assistance to help our tenants who are facing exceptionally difficult circumstances

Helping you stay independent in your home

We made **765** referrals to local organisations to help our residents to remain in their homes and stay independent. Examples include Social Services, GP's, nurses and the Local Council

referrals

We continue to work closely with community gardening organisation, Down to Earth, to deliver a low cost gardening project to help our disabled and older tenants maintain their beautiful gardens



Support and advice on benefit and money matters:

In January 2018 our Benefit and Money Advice and our Housing Options Teams delivered a new successful benefit drop-in service for our customers and the wider community at the Cheltenham Job Centre – so far, advice has been provided to **76** people



Secured £2,500 from the Illegal Money Lending Team (IMLT) to raise awareness across Cheltenham about the dangers of loan sharks – the campaign won a national award and we were awarded a further £3,000 from IMLT to continue to protect the communities we manage from these illegal money lenders

Helped tenants claim an additional **£1.1m** in benefits

Received 964 referrals



in benefits

Carried out **959** face to face meetings to provide advice to tenants in need of financial help

Housing Options:

Provided advice and assistance to those affected by the benefit cap and helped the whole of Cheltenham get ready for the arrival of Universal Credit; this included enhancing promotional materials to feature vital tips, locations to access computers and information about support agencies

Helped people to claim

Our Housing Revenues Team:

Visited **1,800** of our tenants who were highly likely to be affected by Universal Credit to raise awareness of the support available for those in financial difficulty and to help them prepare for the change in the way that they claim benefits

Helping you into work, training and education:

Our Employment Initiative Team:

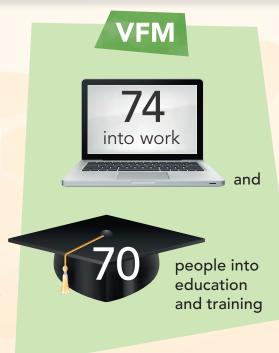
• Received 137 new referrals

92% of work club attendees reported an increase in confidence and

89% noted an increase in employability skills

100% satisfaction received from work club attendees

Our Employment Initiatives Team were runners up in the 2018 South Region TPAS Awards! We were nominated for our successful Alternative Provision Programme (APP) set up to help inspire a group of young people from All Saints Academy to stay in mainstream education. The students gave 100% to the course and 6 months on, all of them are still in education



Treating you fairly:

Received:

84 compliments

48 complaints





100% of complaints were resolved within agreed timescales

Plans for the future:

• **£15,600** of external funding will be used to deliver after school sessions for kids, additional support and advice for families and events to bring the local community together



 In the future kitchen and bathroom replacements will be carried out in-house by our repairs team to drive down costs and to continue to deliver an excellent service





- We are already working on two former garage sites, which will provide 4 brand new homes and 6 flats - we aim to supply 25 new homes in total by the end of the year
- Exploring new ways of enhancing the Digi-Den Benefit and Money advice group sessions to encourage more people to come along and access the service
- Finalise a new tool that will help us to support you in your tenancy by directing our resources to meet your needs in the best way

The feedback received in our STAR customer survey was very positive and your responses revealed that satisfaction with the quality of homes is up to **87%** with value for money remaining at **87%**. Overall customer satisfaction has increased **2%** to **88%** and we are using the feedback you provided to inform our work and priorities, for example we have reviewed our approach to customer service and have a plan to deliver changes over the coming year.

OUR FINANCES

Every year your rent is paid into a pot of money called the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). The income generated in this account is spent by a variety of teams across the company to enable us to:

- deliver enhanced services
- maintain and improve your home
- provide more affordable homes

We set clear budgets and targets every year and monitor closely how we are doing throughout that year to make sure we spend money in the best way to maximise the delivery of the services you need. CBH doesn't make profit, any surplus is re-invested back into to providing services, maintaining and supplying homes.



The HRA spent a total of £20.6m and every £1 was distributed across the following service areas:



We're fighting tenancy fraud – IT'S NOT RIGHT, IT'S NOT FAIR

Most people applying for housing wait their turn to be allocated a home. Housing cheats don't wait, they jump the queue. It's not fair and it's tenancy fraud.

Here are some of the most common types of tenancy fraud:

- obtaining housing by deception is where a person gets a council or housing association home by giving false information in their application, for example, not telling the landlord they are renting from another council or housing association or property.
- unlawful subletting is where a tenant lets their council or housing association home without the knowledge or permission of their landlord. They often charge rent to the person they are subletting to and this is often at a much higher rate.
- wrongly claimed succession is where a tenant dies and someone, who is not entitled to, tries to take over or succeed the tenancy. For example, they might say they lived with the tenant before they died, when in fact they were living elsewhere.
- key selling is where a tenant is paid to pass on their keys in return for a one-off payment.

We take tenancy fraud very seriously and will take action wherever we find evidence of tenancy fraud. For example last year we successfully prosecuted two tenancy fraud cases, one concerned with a fraudulent right to buy application and another concerned with a fraudulent homelessness and housing application.

We are working successfully with the Gloucestershire Counter Fraud Unit (CFU) to continue to identify tenancy cheats and make sure that homes are given to those who need them the most. Your help in reporting housing fraud is vital because you can see what's going on in your neighbourhood. If you suspect someone has committed tenancy fraud, let us know. It could make a real difference.

What can you do to help?

Call us anonymously on 0800 408 0000 or report it online at www.cbh.org or www.tellustoday.co.uk

Anything you tell us will be held in the strictest confidence. All reports can be made anonymously.



Awards success for your community heroes

Tuesday 24 April 2018 was a milestone date for many of Cheltenham's unsung heroes as we celebrated our tenth anniversary of running the CBH Tenant & Leaseholder Awards 2017.

We hold these awards to crown the remarkable groups and individuals who have overcome personal challenges to make a difference to their community and the neighbourhoods they live in.

Held at the Jury's Inn, the awards attracted over 100 people including tenants, leaseholders, CBH staff, board members, the Mayor Klara Sudbury, and BBC Points West Reporter Steve Knibbs.



Presented by: Shane Brimfield

Sarah's passion for helping others and her dedication to volunteering and carrying out community work is inspirational. She plays an active role in helping to improve services for CBH tenants and is always looking at ways to bring the community together. Sarah is a member of St Paul's Community Committee Group, who work together with CBH to fundraise and organise local events and

she is also part of the Shaping Services Working Group and the Tenant Scrutiny Improvement Panel. She has undertaken a variety of training courses to fulfil her voluntary roles and her limitless compassion and support for others shows that she is a positive role model to many in her local community.

Highly Commended: Lucy Barnett and Gerry Brown



Presented by: Dave Hill

Overcoming challenges with Autism, Louise has refused to let this hold her back and in 2017 she stepped out of her comfort zone to join the St Paul's hub Youth Club (run by CBH) to try new things and to encourage others to join in. At school, she was proactive in helping her teacher to set up a lunchtime 'Anime

Club' to share her passion for Japanese animation. This has become very popular and is attended by around 16 different students. Louise is an incredibly skilled artist and has used her talents to help design posters for St Paul's community events.

Highly Commended: Alfie Lightstone and Liam Rogers



Knit & Knatter
Group – Winners
Wallace House - Knit
& Knatter Group
with Kevin Caveney
from Nationwide
Windows & Doors

Presented by: Kevin Caveney

Dedicated to bringing together those who share a love of knitting, this influential group was set up in partnership with national charity the Brandon Trust to provide a friendly setting that is fun and inclusive for people of all ages and abilities. The Knit and Natter sessions are run by the residents themselves and the incredibly creative Carol Gatter who volunteers her time and brainstorms these fabulous creations.

This wonderful group is a fantastic opportunity for those supported by the Brandon Trust to bring along their carers to join in the fun and offers them a chance to build new friendships. This talented Knit and Natter group have knitted a real mixture of fantastic life changing designs to donate to both local and national charities.

Highly Commended: Pop up-Pop in Group

Personal Achievement Winner: **Matthew Spencer**



Matthew Spencer

– Andy Wood (right)
accepts the award from our
Executive Director of
Finance and Resources,
Steve Slater on behalf of
Matthew Spencer

Presented by: Steve Slater

Matthew has overcome some very challenging circumstances over the past few years. He undertook forklift truck training and Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) to develop his employment opportunities. Achieving these qualifications has boosted his confidence in his career journey and has helped him to secure in November 2017, full time employment working as a labourer on a building site.

Highly Commended: Katrina Cordwell and Sylvia White

Good Neighbour

Winner: Luke Johnson and Lucy Lyons



Luke Johnson and Lucy Lyons – Winners Luke Johnson and Lucy Lyons with Brendan Quinn from Travis Perkins

Presented by: Brendan Quinn

True community heroes, both Lucy and Luke, have experienced some difficulties with a neighbour who is dealing with health issues. To help resolve the situation they endeavoured to go the extra mile by providing some extra help. This included, doing the shopping, cooking some meals and helping to redecorate their neighbour's home. Lucy and Luke's dedication and commitment to helping others in need of some support makes them excellent neighbours.

Highly Commended: Carol Jones

Active in the Community Winner: **Pat Thompson**



Pat Thompson
– Masterdor's
Debbie Hicks
commending
worthy winner
Pat Thompson

Presented by: Debbie Hicks

A true inspiration, Pat is always encouraging people to participate in local community activities. She is an active member of the Wallace House Hub, which she attends weekly and although she doesn't live there, she plays a pivotal role in greeting and welcoming new people. Pat is very aware of the individual needs of everyone who attends the activities and is proactive in making sure that they can access the hub easily. One resident, who is in a wheelchair, regularly receives a helping hand from Pat, who always makes sure that an accessible place has been reserved. The support she provides is endless as Pat also goes the extra mile to provide additional help to those running the activities.

Highly Commended: Ann Downey

Congratulations to all the winners of the CBH Tenant & Leaseholder Awards 2017! THANK YOU





masterdor' ion williams

A massive thank you to our supporting partners, Nationwide Windows & Doors, Travis Perkins, Masterdor, Ian Williams and Liberty Group whose generous sponsorship of this event made this year's awards ceremony even more special! We would also like to extend thanks to Steve Knibbs (right), who did an amazing job of compering this special occasion.

Your consent matters to us!

Taking photos is a great way for us to capture the events that we run and show how they bring communities together to have fun.

We've just reviewed our photographic consent processes and have designed a new form to keep you informed about...

WHY we are taking your photo
WHAT we will be doing with it
YOUR rights and what they are

