

# Tenant Newsletter



Housing People  
February 2023

**THE ONLY NUMBER YOU NEED FOR CORNERSTONE**

**01392 273462**

**Press 1 for Repairs**

**Press 2 for Allpay**

**Press 3 for Customer Services**

We only have one number for any queries, general repair requests and emergency repair requests (which will forward you automatically on to our out of hours team) please check any contacts saved within your phone is not calling a different number.

**The stunning view from the front door of our new properties in Uffculme**



## HELLO AND WELCOME FROM JANET

February, not so far from Spring now and the warmer, better weather, we hope.



I have just had my kitchen replaced as part of the component replacement scheme. It started at 8.15am all the kitchen knocked out by 12.00 noon. The Electricians moved in at about 2pm after the plumber had finished disconnecting the sink. I have spoken with other people that have had their work completed, and they are all thrilled with the work carried out and worth a little disruption. I must admit it did feel a bit like Student Digs. I was without electricity for about 2 hours, I sat and made plans for what I am going to do in the front garden this year, thinking I would try a dry and dusty western waste land style, suit the global warming issues. Have you all signed up for the Gardening Competition yet? Go on have a go, you may win!

The Panel has been on a course to learn about Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, which is very interesting, we all thought we knew enough about this subject, but there is so much more to it. The biggest issue I found was the lack of respect some tenants have given the staff, the very people they have asked help from, this has come as a great shock and sadness to the panel; so please, be kind.

Exwick Road Tenants will be relieved to know that a meeting has taken place with Drainology to try and start to find the cause of the flooding along the service road, I will keep you updated with this procedure.

Mould and Damp, with this cold damp weather we are having at the moment, we have all been affected by black mould and damp, reports have been coming in from several households, to Cornerstone. I do, however, find that getting my Marigolds out, and a good spray fit for mould and damp, a damp cloth, and a bit of elbow grease has proved to be the answer for me. Takes me about ten minutes to complete, smells good and keeps it at bay for some considerable weeks. Also, open your windows for about half an hour, I turn the bed down and air this off at the same time, getting the air moving and keeping everything clean in the affected areas seems to be my personal answer in our house. The Cornerstone website now has a whole area dedicated to help keep your home healthy. [Click here to view](#)

Janet Gale  
Chair, Tenants Performance Panel.

# FIRE DOOR SAFETY

Under recent updated Fire Safety Regulations, we are now required to carry out an inspection of all fire doors in block of flats which includes communal entrance doors and property entrance doors. Communal fire doors within the block need to be inspected every three months, and property entrance door annually.

We need to emphasise the importance to all customers of keeping all fire doors closed, and fire doors must not be wedged open. Self-closing devices must not be tampered with and any faults or damage to a fire door must be reported immediately.

## **Why are we doing this?**

Fire doors are a really important element of the fire safety to your building. Used correctly, they stop fires from spreading through a building, giving people time to escape and for the fire and rescue services time to attend and potentially save the premises. Fire doors, keep any fire in the compartment or flat in which it starts; protect the occupants (and contents) of other compartments, and flats; and provide a safe, protected route to allow the occupants to escape.

## **What we are doing**

Cornerstone has instructed a fire door inspector who will be contacting you during February and March, to arrange an appointment with you to gain access to your flat to carry out the necessary fire door inspection. As part of the inspection our fire door inspector will need to gain access to the hallway of your flat, and view the door from the inside. We would appreciate your cooperation in arranging this appointment as it is vital that we keep all fire doors well maintained in full working order.

These inspections will be taking place on a Friday and Saturday during February and March 2023.

Cornerstone would like to thank you for your co-operation in making sure that all fire doors including your entrance door is well maintained and in good working order. Going forward we will need to gain access to your flat on an annual basis for this inspection as the wear and tear that a flat entrance door takes on a daily basis can effect the life of the door.



# FOOD BANKS

Food banks are there to help you if you are struggling to feed yourself or children. If you require a referral code for any of the above food banks please call Cornerstone Customer Services.



## Exeter Food bank

**The Mint Methodist Church**, Fore St, Exeter EX4 3AT

**The Beacon Centre**, Pendragon House, Beacon Lane, Exeter, EX4 8LZ

Mint Methodist Church - All week - 11am - 2pm

Beacon Centre - Wednesday/Friday - 10am - 12.30pm

For information on opening times call **07818 226524** or email

**info@exeterfoodbank.org.uk**



## Dawlish Food bank

**Helping Dawlish** - Hope

Church Centre, Swift Rd,

Dawlish EX7 0FS

For more information call Adam on

**07711234948**

or email **gidney@hotmail.co.uk**



## Crediton Food bank

**The Manse - Crediton Congregational Church**

**98 High Street Crediton EX17 3LF**

Monday 6pm - 7 pm & Tuesday and Friday

10am till 2pm

For information on opening times call **07740202721** or email

**help@creditonfoodbank.org.uk**



## Exmouth Food bank

**Salvation Army Hall, Sheppards Row**

**Exmouth EX8 1PW**

Tuesdays between 1:30pm - 3pm & Fridays between 1:30pm and 3pm

For information on opening times call **07749 322 291** or email

**help@exmouthfoodbank.org.uk**



**DEVON &  
SOMERSET**  
FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE

## ADVICE FROM DEVON AND SOMERSET FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES

This winter, we know many people will be using cost-effective heating methods to keep warm. We wanted to bring to your attention the potential fire risks of wheat bags and some important safety advice if you are using them.

Wheat bags are packs that you warm up in a microwave. Please use them with care. Follow the instructions and don't overheat them. Only use wheat bags on the body. Do not use them as bed warmers because they get even hotter under the bed covers, which could result in a fire.

Over the past few months, we've seen similar products such as microwavable soft toys can also be a fire hazard and should be used with caution. Always read the manufacturer's instructions. We recommend never using them in bed and always ensuring an adult is present.

For keeping warm in bed, we recommend using a self-heating mattress topper. These are priced around £35-40 and adds an extra layer of heat to your bed. Foil lining in the topper uses your own body heat (rather than electricity) to retain warmth during the colder months.



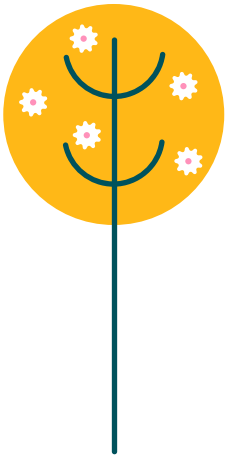
### HOME SAFETY CHECK

Devon and Somerset fire and rescue offer two fire safety services to people who live in Devon and Somerset.

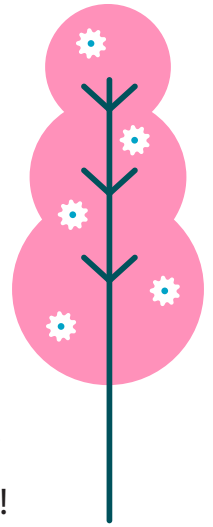
An online home fire safety check takes around 15 minutes and is a convenient way to help look at areas of your home and provides tailored fire safety advice. Visit [www.dsfire.gov.uk/safety/home/home-safety-visits](http://www.dsfire.gov.uk/safety/home/home-safety-visits) to complete online

They also offer home safety visits for the most at-risk members of our community. They will come and visit your home at a convenient time to see what we can do together to make you safer. If you would like a home visit please contact our customer service team on **01392 273462** who will be able to make a referral.





# Cornerstone Gardening Competition 2023



Calling all green fingered tenants!  
We are launching a gardening competition for 2023.

Whether you have a full lawn with flowerbeds or a selection of hanging basket and pots at your property - everyone can enter!

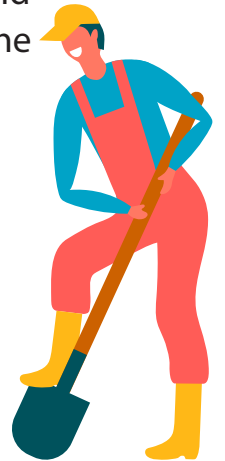
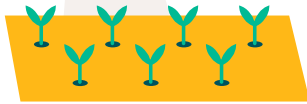
We are launching this competition as we have noticed a lot of our tenants take so much care and attention to their outside spaces and we would like to reward them on the positive impact this has on the people around them.

**Best overall Garden - £100**

**Most creative use of space! - £25**

**Best young gardener - £25**

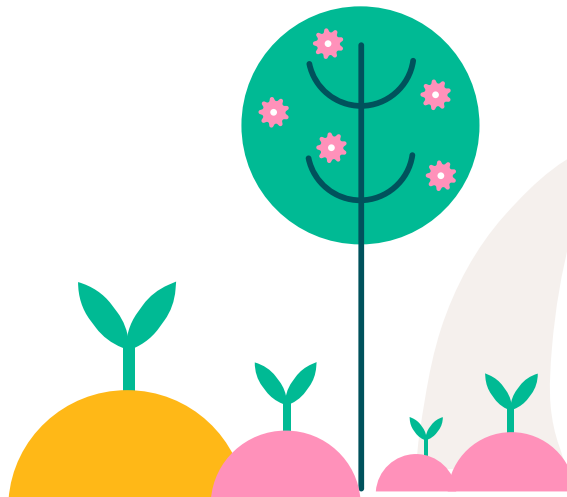
**Tallest Sunflower - £25**



We can post sunflower seeds to anyone wishing to take part, contact [mail@cornerstonehousing.net](mailto:mail@cornerstonehousing.net) before the end of March.

To enter, please email 3 photos of your garden to [mail@cornerstonehousing.net](mailto:mail@cornerstonehousing.net), include your name, address and contact details, or enter via our website [www.cornerstonehousing.net/2023-gardening-competition/](http://www.cornerstonehousing.net/2023-gardening-competition/)

Closing date of entries is 31st July. Our performance panel will judge all the entries the first week of August.



# CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARDS

We believe customer service should be the core of our business, we have developed a customer service standards outlining the service you should expect from us. We have split the standard into 6 different sections.



## Ways we can communicate

- Email
- Telephone
- Website
- SMS
- In Writing
- Face to face

## Response times for repairs

- Emergency
- Routine
- Servicing
- Planned and regular maintenance

## Giving us feedback

- Compliments, concerns and complaints
- Customer surveys
- Customer performance panel

## Keeping you informed

- Customer newsletter
- Annual report to customers
- Tenant handbook

## Behaviour standards - what you expect from us

How we will act

## Behaviour standards - what we expect from you

How we expect you to act

The standard can be viewed on our website -

[www.cornerstonehousing.net/customer-service-standards](http://www.cornerstonehousing.net/customer-service-standards) or if you would like a printed copy please call our customer service team on **01392 273462** or email [mail@cornerstonehousing.net](mailto:mail@cornerstonehousing.net)

# HOW WE DEAL WITH COMPLAINTS

## What is a complaint?

We define a complaint as any dissatisfaction expressed by you, whether justified or not. This could be regarding our services, action or a lack of action by Cornerstone Housing, our staff, or anyone acting on our behalf. You don't need to ask to make a complaint or use the word 'complaint' as we will recognise what a complaint is from talking to you.

## What is not a complaint?

- A maintenance issue
- A neighbour dispute
- Disagreement with a decision
- Where the issue occurred more than six months ago.
- Feedback about our policies and procedures
- A person reporting it is behaving in an unacceptable manner towards our staff
- An issue that is being investigated by other agencies



## Stage One: Complaint

If an initial attempt by our staff to resolve your issue is not successful, a formal complaint will be recorded. Complaints at this stage will usually be dealt with by a senior member of staff. We will log and acknowledge your complaint within 5 working days

## Stage Two: Review

You can request a review or an escalation of the complaint if it is still not resolved once stage one has been completed. Complaints at this stage will usually be dealt with by a member of our Executive Team who has had no involvement in stage one so that the review can be independent. You can also ask for a member of our Board or Tenant Performance Panel to be involved.

We will acknowledge the complaint has progressed to this stage within 5 working days and aim to resolve the complaint within 20 working days.

## Taking your complaint further

The Housing Ombudsman Service is set up by law to look at complaints about housing organisations that are registered with them (which Cornerstone is), including housing associations and local authorities. You can make a complaint via the Housing ombudsman website [www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk](http://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk)



# ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR PERFORMANCE UPDATE

We are committed to, and passionate about, ensuring your home and neighbourhood are safe places and somewhere that you love to live.

Since April 2022, we have received 87 reports of anti social behaviour including reports of;

- Drug use and/or dealing – including “cuckooing” (where drug dealers take over a property)
- Threats of or actual violence
- Abuse, harassment or intimidation
- Safeguarding reports - including domestic violence, vulnerable adult or child safety concerns
- Property condition – including arson, unacceptable outdoor space, graffiti and communal areas
- Noise problems – including music, shouting and DIY

We have resolved 80 reports during the past year.

Of the 80 cases of ASB investigated and resolved, there have been;

- 30 serious safeguarding concerns investigated with partner agencies (including the police, mental health teams and adult or children’s social work services).

Enforcement action is always a last resort, when all attempts at resolving issues have been exhausted, in the past year Cornerstone have been required to take legal action regarding 7 properties that are the cause of serious and ongoing ASB;

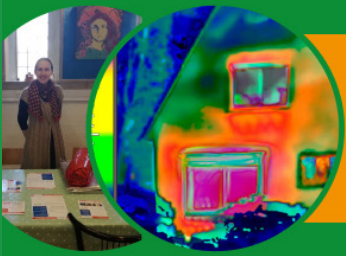
- 3 Possession orders enforced – tenants evicted from the property
- 2 Injunction orders - to protect individuals or the community
- 4 active legal cases – where Cornerstone have submitted possession or an injunction order application

**You can find out more about ASB, how to report it and how we deal with ASB here:**

[www.cornerstonehousing.net/anti-social-behaviour](http://www.cornerstonehousing.net/anti-social-behaviour)



# Exeter Community Energy Healthy Homes for Wellbeing

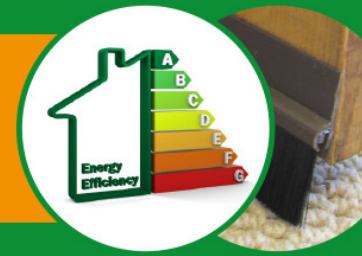


Do you want lower energy bills?  
Do you struggle to heat your home?

Contact ECOE for free energy advice and home visits

healthyhomes@ecoe.org.uk 0800 772 3617

[www.ecoe.org.uk/healthy-homes-wellbeing](http://www.ecoe.org.uk/healthy-homes-wellbeing)



**ecoe**

**LEAP**  
LOCAL ENERGY ADVICE  
PARTNERSHIP

## Exeter

St Katherine's Priory, St Katherine's Road, EX4 7JY	1st Friday every month, 10.00 – 12.00
Chatterbox, Alphington Village Hall, EX2 8UP	Quarterly on 2nd Friday of month, (March, June, Sept, Dec) 10.00 – 12.00
Beacon Community Centre, Beacon Lane, EX4 8LZ	3rd Friday every month, 10.00 – 12.00
Exeter Library, Castle Street, Exeter, EX4 3PQ	2nd Thursday every month, 9.45 – 12.00
Mint Methodist Church, Exeter Foodbank 'Living Room', 1-8 The Mint, Exeter, EX4 3BL	Weekly Every Thursday 11.30 am – 1.30 pm

## Mid Devon

Fishtank Café/Foodbank, Crediton Congregational Church, 98 High St, EX17 3LF	1st Tuesday every month, 10.00 – 12.00
St Andrews coffee morning Community Centre, Pye Corner, Cullompton EX15 1JX	Last Friday every month, 10.00 – 12.00
Uffculme Warm Space, The Square Corner, 18 The Square, Uffculme, EX15 3AA	2nd Friday every month . 11.00 – 13.00 * Except March when it will be the 1st friday*
CHAT Office (Churches Housing Action Team), Phoenix Lane, Tiverton EX16 6LU	2nd Tuesday every month, 10.00 – 12.00
Sunningmead Community Centre, Lazenby Road, Wilcombe, EX16 4AL	Quarterly on First Friday of month, (Nov 2022 and Feb 2023) – 11.00 – 13.00

## East Devon

Job Club, Pippins Community Centre, Lyme Road, EX13 5AZ	First Thursday every month, 10:00 – 12:00
Exmouth Open Door, Church Street, Exmouth, EX8 1PE	2nd Friday every month, 10.00 – 12.00

## Teignbridge

The Strand Community Centre, 32 The Strand, Dawlish, EX7 9PT	2nd Wednesday every month, 10.00 – 12.00
Newton Abbot's Buckland Hub, The Buckland Centre, Gilbert Road, TQ12 4HS	2nd Tuesday every month, 10.00 – 12.00

## MYSTERY SHOPPER

Cornerstone are always seeking ways to improve and ensure we deliver the best services possible for our customers.

Mystery shopping is a great way of us to understand our customers experience, evaluate how we are performing and make any improvements needed.

We have created mystery shopper questionnaires focusing on our overall customer service and our Healthy Homes customer experience. The questionnaires are easy and effective, with questions designed for feedback on different aspects of the service.

Our Performance Panel will be working with our other customers to contact us, by telephone or email, to ask questions designed to evaluate how we respond to queries about repairs, neighbourhood management, tenancy matters and damp and mould concerns.

If you would like more information about the mystery shopper project, or if you are interested in being a mystery shopper and help us to understand how we can provide the best service possible. please contact [ross.hamilton@cornerstonehousing.net](mailto:ross.hamilton@cornerstonehousing.net) or call **01392 273462**.

We will report back later this year in your Cornerstone newsletter about the mystery shopper experience.



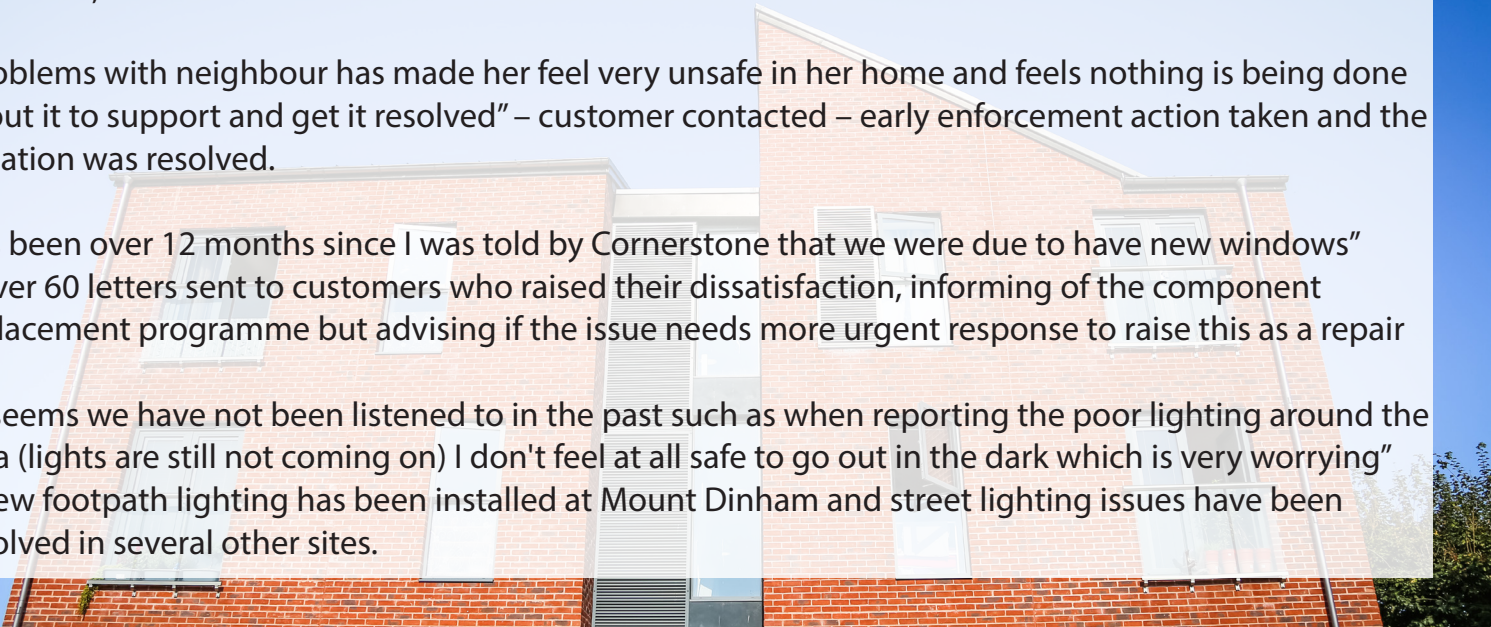
## SURVEY FEEDBACK – YOU SAID WE DID

Our Property Services and Housing Management teams have been busy contacting customers this year and following up on the survey comments made in last years Tenant Survey. Here are some of the outcomes;

“Problems with neighbour has made her feel very unsafe in her home and feels nothing is being done about it to support and get it resolved” – customer contacted – early enforcement action taken and the situation was resolved.

“It's been over 12 months since I was told by Cornerstone that we were due to have new windows” – over 60 letters sent to customers who raised their dissatisfaction, informing of the component replacement programme but advising if the issue needs more urgent response to raise this as a repair

“It seems we have not been listened to in the past such as when reporting the poor lighting around the area (lights are still not coming on) I don't feel at all safe to go out in the dark which is very worrying” – new footpath lighting has been installed at Mount Dinham and street lighting issues have been resolved in several other sites.



01392 273462  
Opening hours: 9.00am - 5.00pm  
Monday to Friday

**Head Office**

Cornerstone House  
Western Way  
Exeter  
EX1 1AL

**Customer Services**

[mail@cornerstonehousing.net](mailto:mail@cornerstonehousing.net)

**Repairs**

[repairs@cornerstonehousing.net](mailto:repairs@cornerstonehousing.net)

