

RESIDENT NEWSLETTER

Creating places that people love to come home to
October 2023 Issue

We would like your suggestions for a new name for this newsletter? Email suggestions to mail@cornerstonehousing.net



Great Places, Great Service, Great Business and Great People

Inside this Issue



DAMP AND MOULD
AWARENESS



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INSURANCE



FIRE SAFETY IN
YOUR HOME

corner
stone
Housing People

CONTACT US



Postal
Cornerstone
House
Western Way
Exeter
EX1 1AL

Please note our office is
appointment only



Customer Service
01392 273462
(Option 3)

mail@cornerstonehousing.net



Repairs
01392 273462
(Option 1)

repairs@cornerstonehousing.net

We are open Monday to Friday
from 9.00am – 5.00pm.

What you can do on our website

- Report an ASB Incident
- Report a repair
- View your tenant handbook
- Apply for a mutual exchange
- Make a complaint, give feedback or a compliment

WELCOME FROM JANET

Welcome everyone

I hope you have had a wonderful Summer, Autumn is truly upon us. We have taken the time over the summer to revamp the newsletter.

This issue is filled with lots of important information for residents, we hope you enjoy the changes, please email any comments and suggestions to mail@cornerstonehousing.net.



In this issue we are officially relaunching and renaming the Performance Panel to the **Residents Engagement Panel (REP)** who have a new logo which can be seen on the front cover. We have details of the winners and runners up in the Gardening Competition which I had the privilege to judge.

This September was fire door safety week and we have information for residents on why we carry out safety checks and why it is so important.

This month has been productive for the REP, with plenty of new reviews to look at including a focus on parking management. We are also identifying training to keep us all up to date in order to help you with any problems or issues that you may have.

We are also working on the re-launch for the Residents Engagement Panel, which will take place later this month, keep reading to find out more, all residents are invited and we would love to see as many as possible

If you have any issues that you would like to chat to the Residents Engagement Panel about, then, please get in touch.

Janet Gale

Janet Gale
Chair



GARDENING COMPETITION 2023 WINNERS

Janet Gale, Board member and Resident Engagement Panel (REP) Chair, and members of the Cornerstone team visited all Garden Competition entries at the beginning of August. We were amazed by the time and effort that goes into some of our residents gardens making them really lovely spaces for all to enjoy. The gardens were beautiful and we could see that they have put a lot of care and attention into making their spaces enjoyable to put in.

After much consideration, a unanimous decision was reached and the following gardens won:

Best overall garden

= Mrs B from Barley Mount

Most creative use of space

= Mrs R from Ennerdale Way

Most creative use of space

= Mrs D from Mount Dinham

Tallest sunflower

= Mr S from Egret Close

Thank you to everyone who entered this years competition.





Resident Engagement Panel

Meetings are held at 4pm on the first Wednesday of every month, and at our Western Way offices but you can join online. Travel to the office can be arranged please email mail@cornerstonehousing.net

Cornerstone's Performance Panel have decided to relaunch under the name of **Resident Engagement Panel**. The current panel have decided to re brand in order to reflect the engagement work they do when representing our residents rather than just the work they do which focuses on services to you.

Who are the current panel member?

Our current panel consists of the below members who live across various locations. We would love more people to join the panel and give their opinion. Involvement is an opportunity for you to interact with us in an open and direct way – you can have a real say in the way that your homes and neighbourhoods are managed.

Some of the policies and services which have been reviewed in the last 18 months are :

- Lettings policy
- EDI Policy
- Sign up process for new residents
- Customer Voice
- Neighbourhood management
- Social Media Policy

Meet your Resident Engagement Panel



Top: Janet Gale (Chair), Bob Marles, Gary Watkins
Bottom: Christine Walmsley, Charlotte Watkins, Keith Killingback



Facebook Group



The members of REP have created a residents only Facebook group which anyone can join to ask the panel questions or give feedback to a policy currently being reviewed.

Search **Cornerstone Housing residents engagement panel** to join



WEDNESDAY 18TH OCTOBER 3PM TO 6PM
ST THOMAS SOCIAL CLUB, EX4 1HW



Come along to meet our Resident Engagement Panel, staff from Cornerstone (Inc Managers and Directors) and local partners. We will be providing a buffet for all who attend.



Some of our partners include



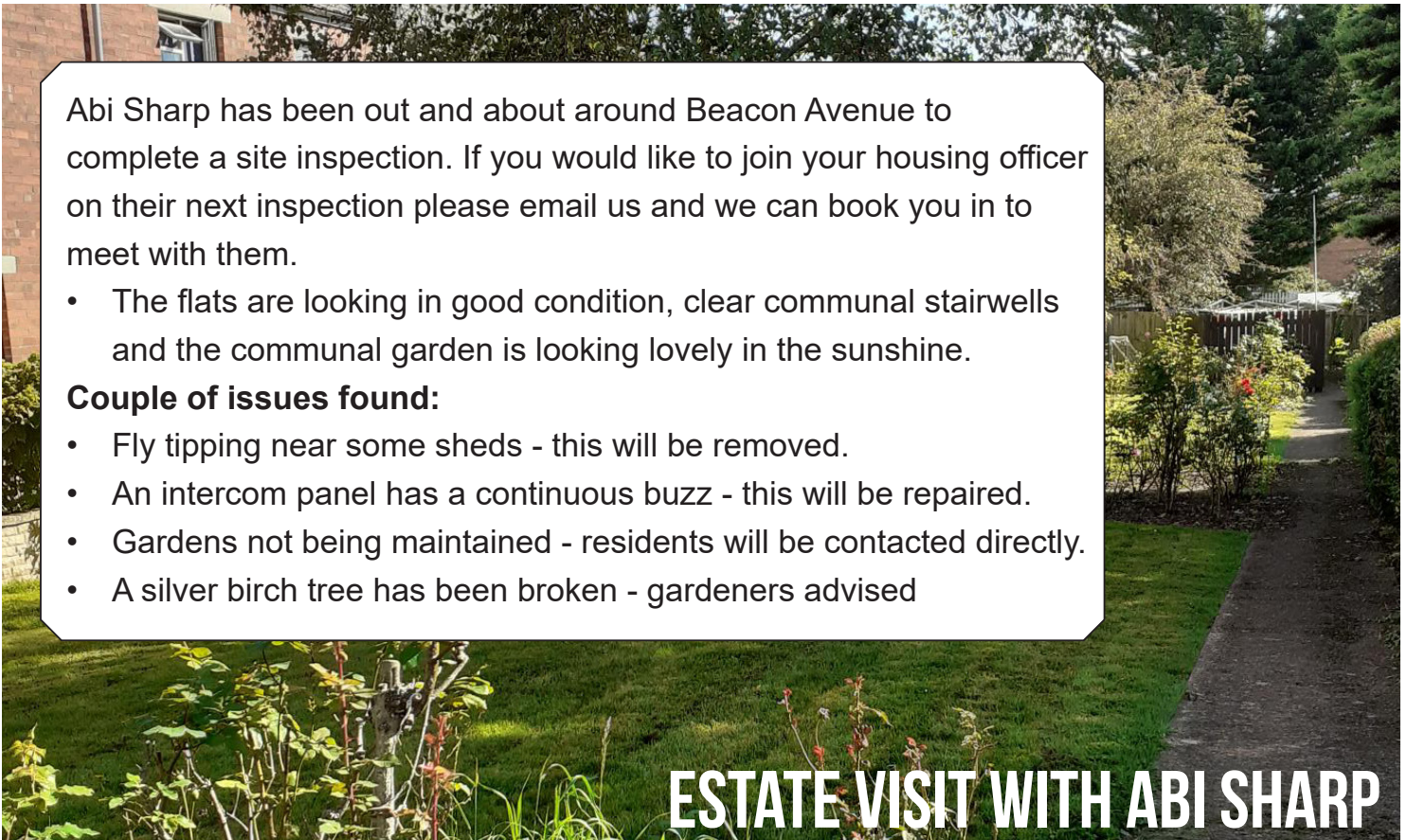
Parking is available behind the venue via Old Vicarage Road, we will reimburse any bus/train tickets used to get to the event
mail@cornerstonehousing.net 01392 273462

YOUR HOUSING OFFICERS

We are always striving to provide the best possible service that we can to our residents and communities. Housing Officers, in addition to ensuring your neighbourhood is a great place to live, can help with; tenancy queries, anti-social behaviour concerns, providing advice or accessing support for you and/or your family.



On 31st August we had a skip day at Mildmay, by early morning the skips we provided were already full! Residents had been out in the rain shower filling up the skip with bulk items from their homes. One resident even enlisted the help of some manpower from her son to clear her rear garden. We helped another resident clear rotting decking from their front garden, the resident showed us the planters she had made with the good bits of wood, painted up and already put to use, a great bit of recycling and up cycling in action. We look forward to more skip days in other areas.



Abi Sharp has been out and about around Beacon Avenue to complete a site inspection. If you would like to join your housing officer on their next inspection please email us and we can book you in to meet with them.

- The flats are looking in good condition, clear communal stairwells and the communal garden is looking lovely in the sunshine.

Couple of issues found:

- Fly tipping near some sheds - this will be removed.
- An intercom panel has a continuous buzz - this will be repaired.
- Gardens not being maintained - residents will be contacted directly.
- A silver birch tree has been broken - gardeners advised

ESTATE VISIT WITH ABI SHARP

Sponsor



Are you involved in a group or event based in Devon that could benefit from some sponsorship? If so, we may be able to help! We are developing our sponsorship programme for 2024.

Do you belong to a team, club, or group?

Do you need a new kit, art supplies, help to progress your group, please complete the application form on the link below by the 31st October to be considered to receive help in 2024.

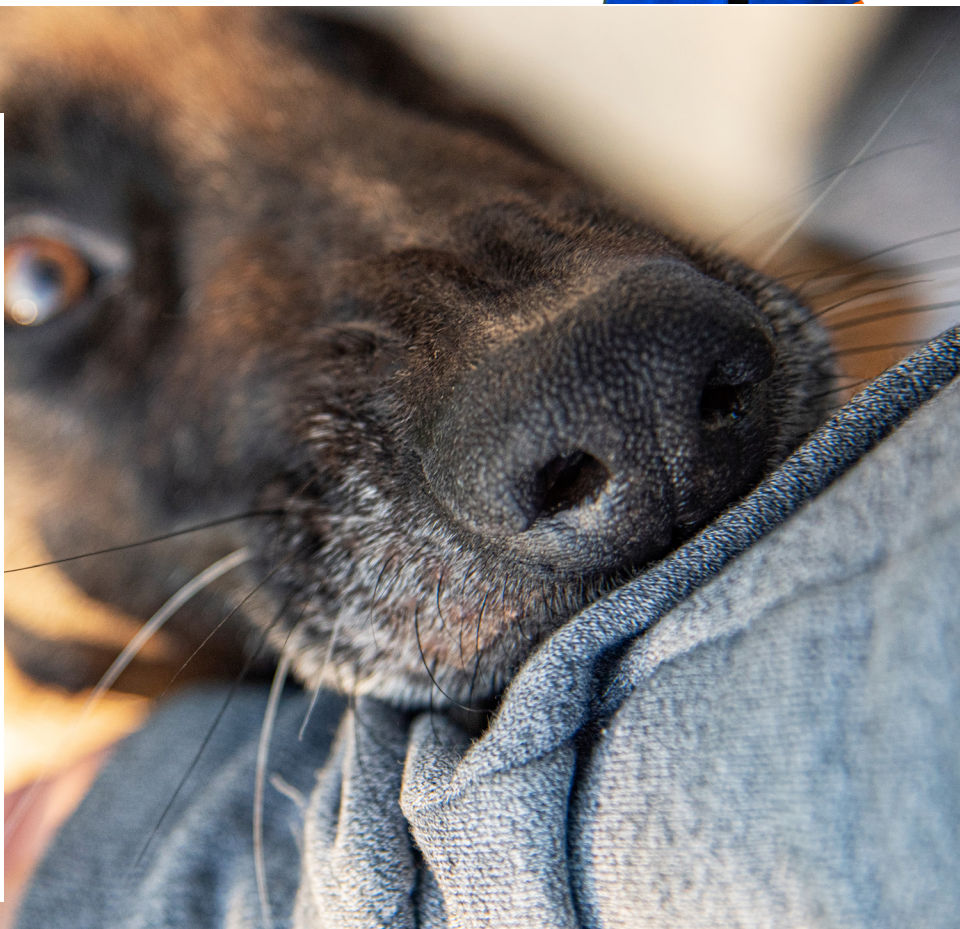
www.cornerstonehousing.net/sponsorship-application



DOG BITE

We have recently had an incident where a member of our staff was bitten by a dog. Please can we ask all residents to keep animals in another room if an operative is visiting your home. Thank you.

Please refer to your tenant handbook for more information.



Dyslexia

Awareness

Week

Celebrate being
Uniquely You

#DAW23

Each person with dyslexia experiences it in ways unique to them. Each will have their own set of strengths and challenges and tread their own path through life. We have redesigned our newsletter using the guidelines set by the British Dyslexia Association to help anyone who has struggled to read our newsletter in the past.

Updates include

- Arial font throughout
- All text a minimum 13 point
- Avoiding use of Pink/red text

DO YOU USE A TEXT READER OR SCREEN READER?

We are looking for a group of our residents who use text screen readers to give us feedback on our website and how we could improve it to make it more accessible.

- Do you find your reader can translate the website correctly?
- Are you able to access all the information you need?
- Why do you use a screen reader?
- Which reader do you use?
- Would you prefer more aspects of the website as videos or info graphics you could listen to and watch?

If you would like to give us feedback please get in contact either via email - mail@cornerstonehousing.net or calling 01392 273462



South West Residents Design Conference 2023



Wednesday 22 November • In person & online

Join Social Housing staff and residents from across the South West for engaging talks, interactive activities and refreshments.

At Plumer House, Local Housing Offices (TBC), or remote via Microsoft Teams

This year's conference theme is:



Future homes design
and technology



If you would like to attend please email mail@cornerstonehousing.net reference Residents Design Conference and we will send you more details.

A loan shark is someone who lends money illegally and without the proper authorisation to do so. These criminals are lurking everywhere and they could be a parent in the playground, a friend of the family, a neighbour. With the current cost of living crisis, loan sharks are looking for anyone who needs to borrow money.

They can make the offer of quick cash seem hard to resist but quickly the situation can spiral out of control, the outstanding debt can escalate rapidly and borrowers can be subjected to threats, intimidation or worse.

The warning signs to indicate that you could be dealing with an illegal money lender include them

- not undertaking any credit checks
- not giving borrowers any paperwork
- taking items such as a bank cards or passports as security against the loan.

The England Illegal Money Lending Team (EIMLT) is a dedicated team of specialists that are leading the fight against loan sharks. They have helped over 32,000 borrowers escape the clutches of these criminals and have wiped out over £90 million worth of illegal debt.

The borrower is not in trouble if they have taken any money – the loan shark is the only person who has committed a crime. If you or someone you know is being affected by illegal money lenders, then contact the Stop Loan Shark team for help, support and advice on 0300 555 2222 or visit www.stoploansharks.co.uk



THEY WILL FIND OUT IF I TALK TO YOU

THIS IS A MYTH

THIS ISN'T THE CASE YOU CAN REPORT A LOAN SHARK ANONYMOUSLY



Exeter Connect



Need IT Support?

Got a smart phone, tablet or PC but don't feel confident using it?

**Digital Buddies help you build confidence and know-how to make better use of your gadgets, and solve your IT problems
Get in touch to make a 1- 1 appointment**

Contact: ☎ 0800 048 7642 ✉ enquiries@abilitynet.org.uk

✉ exeterconnect@eci.org.uk

☎ 01392 205800

🌐 www.eci.org.uk

🏠 148-149 Fore Street, Exeter, EX4 3AN

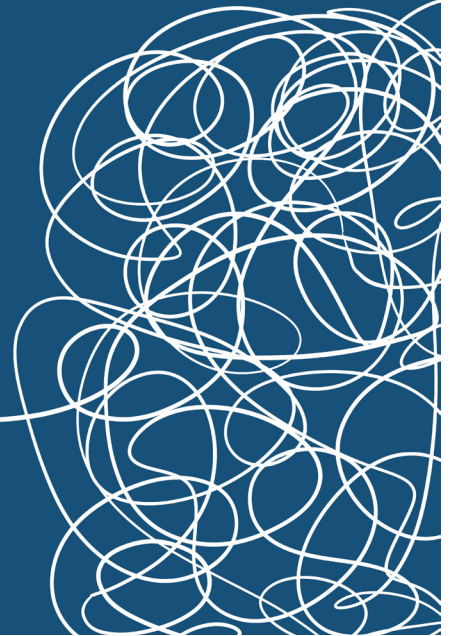


Exeter
City Council



Registered Charity Number: 1026229
Registered Company Number: 2844870 (England)

DO YOU HAVE AN ESCAPE PLAN?



We recommend that you plan a fire escape route.

The best escape route is usually the normal way in and out of your home.

Think of any difficulties you may have getting out.

- Keep all paths including stairs clear of obstructions, like pushchairs, toys, or bikes.
- Do you know where your keys are? Decide where the keys to doors and windows should be kept and always keep them there. Ideally, this should be close to the door or window (whilst keeping security in mind) not in a bag away from the door. Make sure everyone in your household knows where they are.
- Plan for a second escape route, in case the first one is blocked, how else could you escape the building if you needed to quickly?

If you are not sure how to escape your property then you can book an appointment for Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue to attend and complete a home safety plan.

Cornerstone can refer you for an appointment if you call or

email us or you can visit www.dsfire.gov.uk/safety/home/escape-plan



**DEVON &
SOMERSET**
FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE

Escape plans for disabled, older or vulnerable people

If you – or anyone you live with – might find it difficult to escape in an emergency, we recommend you book a free home safety visit with DFRS, and they will give you the right advice for your circumstances. We can also discuss getting a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEPs) in place for you especially if you suffer from any of the following:

- Mobility issue
- Visual impairment
- Hearing impairment
- There may be children or elderly people living with you
- You have a temporary disability like a broken leg or had an operation and are recovering
- You may be dependant on equipment like an oxygen tank which you would need help with

FIRE SAFETY IN YOUR HOME

STOP

**TEST YOUR SMOKE
DETECTORS!**

Test your smoke alarm and any carbon monoxide detector every month by pressing the button. If the alarm doesn't sound, replace the battery – or contact us immediately if you have a mains-powered smoke alarm fitted, so we can arrange to fix it.

FIRE SAFETY IN YOUR HOME

BEDROOM DOORS

Everyone has a bedtime routine, but does yours include shutting your bedroom door?

In the event of a fire, closing your bedroom door can mean the difference between the room heating to 1,000 degrees if left open, and 100 degrees if closed if a fire was to break out. Closing the door stops the spread of fire.

Make sure you close before you doze!

A close-up photograph of a hand reaching for a silver door handle on a light-colored wooden door. The door has a silver handle and a silver lock. The hand is positioned to the right of the handle, with fingers extended towards it. The background is a blurred view of a hallway or room.

CLOSE
before
you
doze!

FIRE DOOR INSPECTIONS

Cornerstone are required to carry out an inspection of all fire doors in block of flats. Communal fire doors within the block are inspected every three months, and property entrance door annually. We want to raise awareness to all residents to make sure you report anything you discover on your fire doors and do not wait for the inspection to happen. Below is an info graphic on what you should be looking out for.

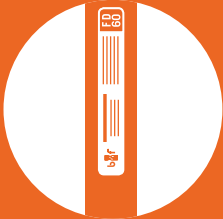




You can report any issues via the following routes:

Email - repairs@cornerstonehousing.net

Website - www.cornerstonehousing.net

Phone - 01392 273462



	Certification	Gaps	Seals	Hinges	Closing properly
WHAT TO CHECK	 <p>Look for a label or plug on top (or occasionally on the side) of the door.</p>	 <p>Check the gaps around the top and sides of the door are consistently less than 4mm when the door's closed. The gap under the door can be slightly larger (up to 8mm), but it does depend on the door. Ideally, you should not see light under the door.</p>	 <p>Look for any intumescent seals around the door or frame. Check they're intact with no sign of damage.</p>	 <p>Check all hinges are firmly fixed (three or more of them), with no missing or broken screws.</p>	 <p>Check the door closes firmly onto the latch without sticking on the floor or the frame.</p>
WHY	Without a certification mark, you cannot be sure this really is a fire door.	Make sure gaps are not so big that smoke and fire could travel through the cracks.	Be sure the seals will expand if they're in contact with heat, and will stop the fire (and in some cases smoke) moving through the cracks.	Be sure the door has been properly maintained, and in the intensity of a fire will perform properly.	A fire door only works when it's closed. A fire door is completely useless if it's wedged open or can't close fully.
HOW	Use a mirror or the selfie function on your camera phone.	Use a £1 coin to give a feel for scale, this is about 3mm thick.	Take a look at the edges of the door and frame.	Open the door and take a look at the hinges.	Open the door about halfway, let go and see what happens when you allow it to close by itself.

ELECTRICAL TESTING

We have a duty to conduct regular electrical maintenance checks to make sure your property is safe. It is the law and we need to get inside to complete the inspection.

You will get a letter or call from us, we will do our best to find an appointment time which is suitable for you to be home.

LET
US
IN!

These inspections will be completed by a qualified, competent electrician and will take around 4 hours. We will need to turn the electric off and on to complete the inspection.

A certificate will be completed and sent to you, and the test will be completed every 5 years before the certificate expires.

If you are not able to keep the appointment we would appreciate as much notice as possible to be able to reschedule the appointment to keep you and your property safe.

🏠 We must ensure that the electrical installation and electrical equipment we own in your property is safe

🏠 We must ensure your property is free of any serious electrical hazards, including:

- 🚫 Exposed wiring
- 🚫 Overloaded sockets
- 🚫 Poorly installed electrical systems



🏠 We must ensure that any threats from accidental fires are minimised, through:

- 🚫 Ensuring Residual Current Devices (RCDs) are fitted.
- 🚫 Ensuring the distribution board and wiring are regularly checked and maintained.

🏠 We must make sure any electrical work complies with the Building Regulations, in particular Part P. Some work (including new circuits, alterations to existing circuits in bathrooms, and replacement consumer units) is notifiable. This must be verified by the issuing of a Building Regulations compliance certificate.

🏠 It is recommended best practice that we arrange for an Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) to be carried out at least every five years. EICRs are important to verify the electrical safety of properties and spot hazards.

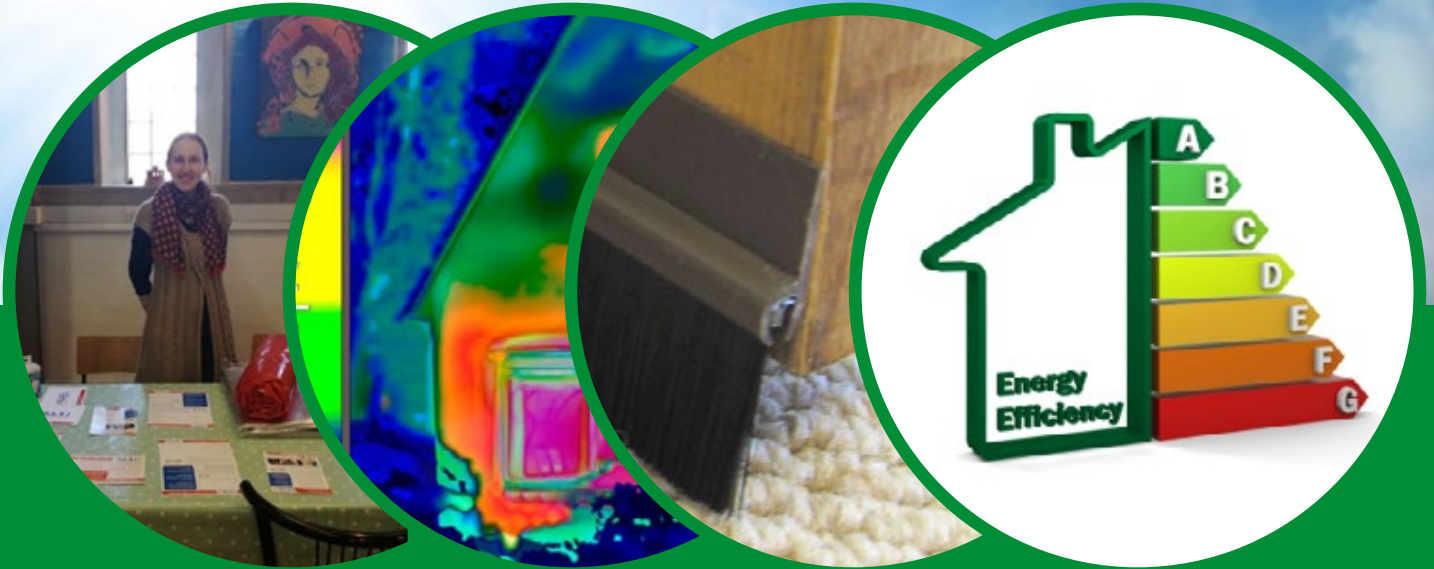
What we'll do

When we visit to check the electrics in your property we may:

- 🏠 Conduct a visual inspection of the electrics, checking:
 - ✓ The electrical intake (where the electricity enters the property, near to the consumer unit/fuse box)
 - ✓ The consumer unit
 - ✓ The main protective bonding (which connects pipework with the electrics in a property)
 - ✓ Any fixtures and fittings (such as light fittings and sockets)
 - ✓ The state of wires and cables



exeter community energy



Exeter Community Energy



Healthy Homes for Wellbeing

Do you want lower energy bills?

Is it hard to heat your home?

Free energy advice at our events.

Book a free energy and money saving advice call.

Contact ECOE's Energy Advice Team

healthyhomes@ecoe.org.uk 0800 772 3617

www.ecoe.org.uk/healthy-homes-wellbeing

HOME CONTENTS INSURANCE



Looking around the room you are in how much would it cost to replace everything in the room?



As your landlord we insure your building which covers the physical structure of the property including the walls, roof and floors, anything which if you turned the property upside down and shook it would not fall out. We do not cover the contents of your property. We suggest to all our resident they take out home contents insurance to cover things that can be carried out of your property. This includes things like floor coverings inc carpets, curtains, white goods, furniture, gadgets and even the fish fingers in your freezer. All your

worldly goods should be covered under this policy.

A content insurance policy will cover you for eventualities like the cost of replacing or repairing your possessions that are damaged or destroyed as a result of an insured event such as:

🏠 Flooding

🏠 Subsidence

🏠 Fire

🏠 Storms

🏠 Theft

🏠 Burst pipes and water damage, including frozen pipes



My Home
Contents Insurance

The National housing Federation and Cornerstone recommend **Thistle My Home** as a content insurance provider. They are a specialist insurance company aimed at the social housing sector to make sure the correct cover is in place.

We recommend all our resident complete the sum insured calculator on the Thistlemy home website. Some people might find that their household content is worth more than they think.

www.thistlemyhome.co.uk/calculator-form

HEALTHY HOMES - DAMP AND CONDENSATION

We want all our homes to be great places to live, and especially to be dry, warm and healthy. If any of our homes have damp and mould this is a great concern for us, and we will work closely with residents to find a solution.

We would like to make all our residents aware that as we are heading into autumn the temperature within your home is going to change and you will need to adjust the way you live to prevent mould from growing.

Ventilation is key when it comes to preventing condensation, damp and mould as this will help any moist air escape. As air circulates round the home, it is drawn outside through windows, doors, vents and extractor fans etc. The way to prevent mould escalating is to remove it as soon as it is noticed by thoroughly cleaning and drying the area.

Report anything you discover

All problems with your home should be reported as soon as possible, this allows us to intervene at an early point.
Report via our website or by calling us



Condensation, damp and mould can be prevented as much as possible by following some simple tips:

- Keep your home well ventilated by opening windows for a few minutes each day, this will allow air to circulate.
- However during cold weather, it is important not to over-ventilate your home by leaving windows open for long periods as this will cause your walls to lose all of their stored heat and create cold spots.
- Use any trickle vents and do not block up air vents.
- Keep windows free from moisture by wiping/cleaning them down regularly, remember to include the frames and window cills. There are useful tools available to assist you such as window vacuum.

If you are unable to heat your home please contact us for advice

Digital mental wellbeing support in **Devon, Plymouth & Torbay**

Free, safe and anonymous mental health support for children
and adults. **All accessible online from anywhere.**



For ages 11-19 visit
www.kooth.com

For ages 18+ visit
www.qwell.io