

# RESIDENT NEWSLETTER

We would like your suggestions for a new name for this newsletter? Email suggestions to [mail@cornerstonehousing.net](mailto:mail@cornerstonehousing.net)

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



Gardening competition winner - Most creative use of space Mrs D from Mount Dinham

Great Places, Great Service, Great Business and Great People  
*Inside this Issue*



Resident  
Engagement  
Panel



DAMP AND MOULD



SELFILAND



SUPPORT OVER  
WINTER

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](mailto:mail@cornerstonehousing.net)



### Repairs

01392 273462  
(Option 1)

[repairs@cornerstonehousing.net](mailto: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 to the November resident Newsletter, not too long till Christmas! And talking of Christmas, see the launch of our Colouring Competition, inside this edition of the Newsletter.



Did you know Cornerstone now have an Instagram account? Please take a look and give it a follow.

Cornerstone has just published its annual report to residents, always worth a read.

They have also just published a statistics page containing information on resident satisfaction between April and September, thank you to everyone who has taken part.

Damp and Mould - please talk to us about this!

We also have a page on the services offered over the Christmas period for mental health support, remember that Christmas is not always a joyful time for a lot of people, if you know anyone that may need help, please let Cornerstone know. All information inside your Newsletter.

*Janet Gale*

Janet Gale  
Chair, Resident Engagement Panel.



## ANNUAL REPORT TO RESIDENTS

Our annual report to residents is now live for 2022/2023 highlighting the work we have achieved over the 12 month period

[www.cornerstonehousing.net/annual-report-to-residents/](http://www.cornerstonehousing.net/annual-report-to-residents/)

# COMMUNICATIONS GROUP

Cornerstone are looking for any residents who would be interested in joining our communications group. This group will focus on all the communication including social media that Cornerstone sends out. This group will meet once a month online. If you are interested in more information, please email [mail@cornerstonehousing.net](mailto:mail@cornerstonehousing.net) or if you would like to talk to us call **01392 273462** and ask to speak to Ross.



## 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](mailto:mail@cornerstonehousing.net) or calling **01392 273462**





# Resident Engagement Panel

Meet your Resident Engagement Panel



Keith Killingback Janet Gale (Chair), Charlotte Watkins, Gary Watkins, Bob Marles

**Resident Engagement Panel** meetings are held at 4pm on the first Wednesday of every month, at our Western Way offices but you can also join online. Travel to the office can be arranged please email [mail@cornerstonehousing.net](mailto:mail@cornerstonehousing.net)

Our current panel consists of the people above, plus two new 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



## 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

## RESIDENT ENGAGEMENT PANEL LAUNCH EVENT

On Wednesday 18th October we held our Resident Engagement Panel launch event where we saw residents from Cornerstone and Exeter City Council gather together at St Thomas Social Club. We held a prize draw for all the residents who attended.



The next REP meeting is the 6th December. If you would like to join the meeting to see what it is like please email [mail@cornerstonehousing.net](mailto:mail@cornerstonehousing.net).



# You are invited to... Selfieland



Christmas is on its way, and we want to share some festive joy (and selfies)!

Any resident living in a Cornerstone home can book to attend the new popup  
Selfieland in Marsh Barton on  
**Wednesday 20th December between 2.30 and 5pm for FREE!**

We have 2 sessions available to book - **2.30 pm & 3.30 pm**  
You must book with us for free entry and spaces are limited, so book today!

To book visit [www.cornerstonehousing.net/selfie](http://www.cornerstonehousing.net/selfie)  
or scan the QR code



## What is Selfieland?

Selfieland is in Marsh Barton and features 20 highly imaginative photo opportunities made from recycled materials. Visit a Sweetland, toyland, get a picture with a giant teddy, spot all the toys in the 6ft Christmas tree and step through a wardrobe into Narnia.



## Where is it?

The Prop Factory - Unit 2, 8 Marsh Green Road North, Exeter, EX2 8NY  
Bus route - It is located on the Park and Ride from both Matford and Sowton. The B bus also stops a short walk away.



# CHRISTMAS COLOURING COMPETITION

Christmas is nearly here and we are launching our 2023 Christmas colouring competition. Following the success of our Easter competition, we are continuing the chocolate treat for any resident who enters the competition.

Every entry received from a Cornerstone resident will receive a Cadbury's chocolate surprise!

## How to enter

Submit a Christmas picture – this can be drawn from scratch or you can colour in one of our colouring sheets from our website.



Not got a printer at home? Don't worry you have two other options

1. Email [mail@cornerstonehousing.net](mailto:mail@cornerstonehousing.net) with your name and address and how many colouring sheets you would like, and we will post some to you the next day (we will even include a return envelope!)
2. Colour it digitally! If you have a computer, tablet, or phone there are many apps available for you to draw or colour a Christmas picture.

**Closing date 14th December 2023**

Full terms and conditions and how to submit your entry can be found on our website: [www.cornerstonehousing.net/christmas-colouring-2023](http://www.cornerstonehousing.net/christmas-colouring-2023)



# OUR WORK IN YOUR NEIGHBOURHOODS

Walk around with Abi in October!

Hi I am Abi and I am one of the Housing Officers at Cornerstone. In October I visited many different estates as part of a walk around! If you would like to join me on future walk arounds please let me know by emailing

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



Abi is the housing officer for Mid Devon, St Davids, Uffculme, Whipton, Wonford

## BEACON AVENUE FLATS

The area is looking good overall. The garden in particular did look lovely in the unusual sunny weather we had. The back flats have had their new fire safe front doors fitted, they make the building look very smart.

And a reminder letter has gone out to all (96-115) flats to keep their bins in the bin area in between collections and not out on the pavement next to the building, as this could be a fire hazard.

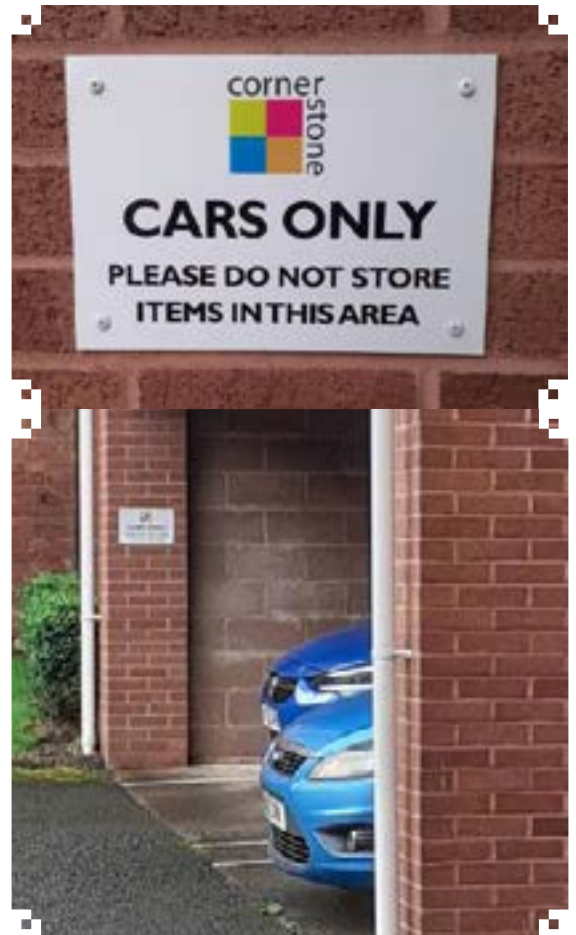




# RALEIGH HOUSE BLOCK INSPECTION

Raleigh House overall is looking good.

- We have new signs up in the car ports; some residents had raised that other items that weren't theirs, were being left in their parking bays, making it harder to park.
- The bin shed was in an OK condition. This is going to be continually monitored due to recent issues.
- A resident raised that the intercom system that services flats 5-10 was out of action for some time, this has now been fixed.
- The tree out the front needs a light prune; this has been raised with the gardeners.



# BEACON AVENUE



The street is overall in a good condition. It is great to see residents taking pride in their garden and area.

Things picked up to be actioned:

- A resident highlighted the bollards to the bin area at the bottom of the road have been damaged – bollards are to be removed and holes filled.
- There were 6 untidy front gardens – residents will be contacted directly to rectify.
- Electric substation still broken – I will see if I can find a time scale for its repair as this look unsightly but is out of our control over the repair.
- The rear communal garden to 12 – 26 which was previously overgrown has now been cut back.

# SHARED OWNERSHIP APPLICATIONS NOW OPEN

Indio Fields, Bovey Tracey, TQ13 9BG

1 x Two bedroom semi detached  
1 x Three bedroom semi detached

If you would like to apply for one of these new homes, visit  
[cornerstonehousing.net/properties-coming-soon](https://cornerstonehousing.net/properties-coming-soon)



**AVAILABLE SUMMER 2024**

# HEALTHY HOMES - DAMP AND CONDENSATION

A few of our residents have been contacted by no win no fee solicitors (Housing disrepair services) regarding damp and Mould. Please contact us directly if you have damp or mould in your home. When you tell us about it we will arrange for someone to visit your home to assess the problem and discuss the options with you. If you do not feel we acted quickly enough, please tell us. You can find more information about complaints procedure on our website.

[www.cornerstonehousing.net/make-a-complaint-feedback-compliment/](http://www.cornerstonehousing.net/make-a-complaint-feedback-compliment/)



## 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 - ON THE OUTSIDE?

We have had quiet a few queries regarding condensation on the outside of a window from residents who have recently had their windows replaced.

Where previously the heat was escaping and the cold was entering your home, your new windows and doors are so good, the heat is staying in your home and the cold is being prevented from entering it. The outside of your window is now colder than the glass or the window it replaced.

A great example is defrosting a frozen windscreen on a cold morning. Your car heating is warming up the windscreen from the inside, the heat is passing through and defrosting it on the outside. An energy efficient window prevents the transfer of heat.



# SUPPORT OVER WINTER



Age UK - Is open 365 days a year, including Christmas day, providing answers and reassurance to older people who have no one else to turn to. If you or someone you know needs support, call them free on

0800 678 1602, 8am to 7pm.

For more information visit [www.ageuk.org.uk](http://www.ageuk.org.uk)



Mind - If you find Christmas a difficult time of year, Mind have some tips to help you cope:

- Plan ahead - think about what might be difficult about Christmas for you, and if there's anything that might help you cope.
- It's ok to prioritise what's best for you, even if others don't seem to understand.
- Consider talking to someone you trust about what you need to cope.

For more information visit [mind.org.uk](http://mind.org.uk)



Beat Eating disorder - Their helpline is open 365 days a year. Christmas can be a difficult time for people with eating disorders. Changes to routine, whether one developed as part of the eating disorder or one that is helping you in recovery, can be difficult.

Beat Eating disorders offer a range of advice to get you through the festive season

For more information visit [www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk](http://www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk)



Samaritans - Is open 365 days a year. Whatever you are going through you might be feeling tired more often, be feeling emotional, and you might

not want to do the things that you usually enjoy right now.

Samaritans are there to listen.

You can call them on 116 123, email [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org)

For more information visit [www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)

# SOCIAL MEDIA

After a consultation with our Resident Engagement Panel we have expanded our social media channels to now include Instagram

You can find us on



[www.facebook.com/cornerstonehousingpeople](http://www.facebook.com/cornerstonehousingpeople)



[www.instagram.com/cornerstonehousingpeople/](http://www.instagram.com/cornerstonehousingpeople/)



[www.linkedin.com/company/cornerstone-housing-limited-exeter](http://www.linkedin.com/company/cornerstone-housing-limited-exeter)

## TENANT SATISFACTION MEASURES

We have recently published our first two quarters of the Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM) which is the new way for tenants to understand how we are performing against key service areas. [www.cornerstonehousing.net/tenant-satisfaction-measures](http://www.cornerstonehousing.net/tenant-satisfaction-measures)



# If you look after someone, who looks after you? We do!

We understand the  
challenges you may face  
and can help with getting:

- The support you need
- A break from caring
- Benefits advice
- Information & advice
- A carers passport giving  
benefits & offers
- A carers assessment



Please contact our helpline on:  
**03456 434 435 | [info@devoncarers.org.uk](mailto:info@devoncarers.org.uk)**  
**[www.devoncarers.org.uk](http://www.devoncarers.org.uk)**



# 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 ACTION  
PARTNERSHIP

Exeter Community Energy doesn't just cover Exeter, they hold clinics in Mid Devon, East Devon, Torbay and Teignbridge. To find out where the clinics are near you visit [www.ecoe.org.uk/healthy-homes-clinic-information](http://www.ecoe.org.uk/healthy-homes-clinic-information)

Recently one of our residents used the service and said the following:

*"ECO referral was amazing. They came to my home. Had a meeting for about two hours in which they checked the whole house to see what savings could be made gave me energy saving equipment such as lightbulbs, draft excluders, packing panels for radiators and a heated blanket, which is amazing."*

*On top of all this amazing advice they also issued me with three £49 energy vouchers which I could use on either gas or electricity.*

*The lady that came to see me, was absolutely amazing easy to talk to nonjudgemental and incredibly understanding Definitely a service I would recommend to anybody struggling and have done."*



## CANDLE SAFETY

Decorations are slowly coming out of storage and over the winter months more candles are being lit. Here are a few ways to use candles safely in your home.

- Make sure candles are in a fire-resistant holder
- Keep candles away from furniture and curtains. Don't put them under shelves
- Leave at least 10cm between burning candles and tea lights
- Always put out candles before you go to bed. Never leave a burning candle unattended
- Use a snuffer or spoon to put out candles. Blowing them out can send hot wax flying



# Bereavement Benefits

**Now available to unmarried parents.**

The rules have changed. If you were living with your partner when they died, you may now be entitled—see over for details.

My partner died in 2019 when my son was two. I've just applied for Bereavement Support Payment and been told I'm entitled to a lump sum of £9,800.



## Don't miss out!

The rules are complex, so chat to a Benefits Adviser to see if you could be entitled.

NOTE: Entitlement depends on many factors and amounts will vary.





## Could I be entitled now the rules have changed?

### If your partner died on or after 9th Feb 2023:

You could be entitled to Bereavement Support Payment if

- ☑ you were living together, and
- ☑ responsible for a child (or pregnant), and
- ☑ under State Pension age when your partner died.

### If your partner died before 9th Feb 2023:

You could be entitled to Bereavement Benefits if

- ☑ you satisfied the above when your partner died, and
- ☑ you were under State Pension age on 30th August 2018.

**IMPORTANT: For deaths before 9th February 2023, claims must be made by 8th February 2024.**

**Entitlement depends on your late partner's National Insurance record.**

How do I know which benefit to claim?	Widowed Parent's Allowance is for those whose partner died before 6 <sup>th</sup> April 2017. Bereavement Support Payment is for those whose partner died on or after that date.
What if I am working?	Bereavement Support Payment and Widowed Parent's Allowance are not means-tested and it does not matter if you are currently working or not.
How will a lump sum payment affect my other benefits?	<b>Bereavement Support Payment:</b> Any retrospective payments received will be taken as capital and ignored for 52 weeks. <b>Widowed Parent's Allowance:</b> Seek advice from a Benefits Adviser before you make a claim for WPA. This is because a retrospective payment can affect an award of other benefits you were receiving for the same period.

Note: the rules have not changed for those who were married or in a civil partnership when their spouse or civil partner died - seek advice.

### Bereavement Service helpline:

**Telephone: 0800 151 2012 Welsh language: 0800 731 0453**

Based on the information known at time of going to print: April 2023. Rules are subject to change.  
Produced by [www.housingsystems.co.uk](http://www.housingsystems.co.uk). An Information website for housing professionals and advice workers.  
Specialising in Universal Credit and Housing Benefit.

# ELECTRIC SCOOTERS AND EBIKES

E-bikes and e-scooters are becoming increasingly popular. Most are powered by lithium-ion batteries, which can be charged in the home. But there are some fire safety concerns related to their charging and storage.

London Fire Brigade reported 8 fires caused by e-bikes and e-scooters in 2019. This rose to 24 in 2020 and 59 by December 2021.

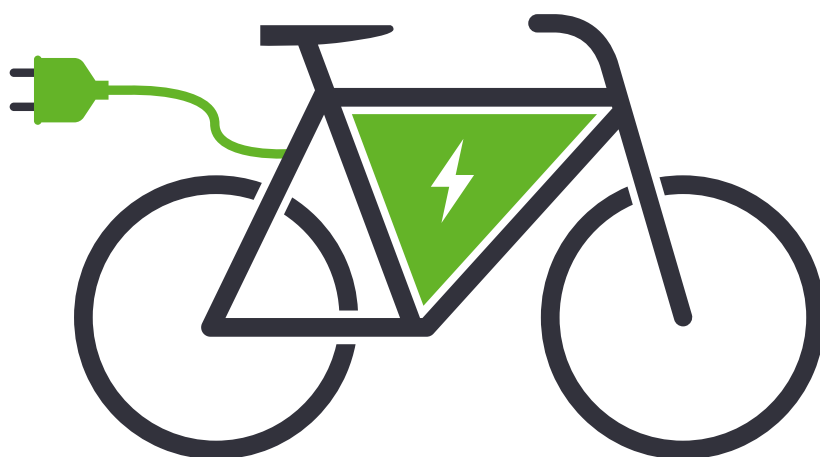
Sometimes, batteries can fail catastrophically, they can 'explode' and/or lead to a rapidly developing fire.



## TOP TIPS!

### Charging

- Follow the manufacturer's instructions when charging, and always unplug your charger when it's finished charging.
- Make sure you have a working smoke detector where you are storing your e-bike or e-scooter and test it regularly. Please contact us if you don't have a working smoke detector.
- Charge batteries whilst you are awake and alert so if a fire should occur you can respond quickly. Don't leave batteries to charge while you are asleep or away from the home.



## Storage

- Do not store or charge e-bikes on escape routes or in communal areas such as a hallway or stairwell in a block of flats.
- Store e-bikes and e-scooters and their batteries in a cool place. Avoid storing them in excessively hot or cold areas.



## Buying

- Buy e-bikes, e-scooters and chargers and batteries from reputable retailers.
- Many fires involve counterfeit electrical goods. Items which don't meet British or European standards pose a huge fire risk and while genuine chargers (or battery packs) may cost more, it's not worth putting your life at risk and potentially destroying your home by buying a fake charger to save a few pounds.
- If buying an e-bike conversion kit, purchase from a reputable seller and check that it complies with British or European standards. Take particular care if buying from online auction or fulfilment platforms. Also be aware that if buying separate components, you should check that they are compatible.



# Digital mental wellbeing support in Devon, Plymouth & Torbay

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



Get started today by visiting [www.qwell.io](http://www.qwell.io)



**Westcountry Savings & Loans**

*for people not profit*



2023

**CHRISTMAS PLANNING ON THE TO-DO LIST?**

**WE'VE GOT IT COVERED!**

Read our tips for keeping Christmas manageable at [www.westcountry.org.uk](http://www.westcountry.org.uk)