

RESIDENT NEWSLETTER



Housing People

Creating places that people love to come home to
March 2024 Issue

Great Places, Great Service, Great Business and Great People



Miss King's entry for our spring photography competition - see the page 24 for more information on how to enter

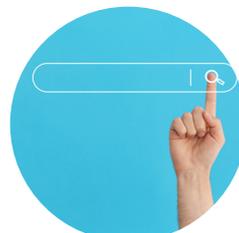
Inside this Issue



EASTER COLOURING



LEGIONELLA AWARENESS



ACCESSIBILITY



EASTER STORY

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

Out of hours

If you have an emergency with your home outside of our normal opening hours, you can call **01392 273462** (option 1) and your call will be diverted to our out-of-hours team.

WELCOME FROM JANET

Hello everyone.

We are beginning to see changes in the weather now, and spring is finally upon us. Therefore we must think about Easter.



In this month's Newsletter:

- We have an Easter colouring Competition reminder, so get out your crayons - get an Easter egg for each entry!
- Stress Awareness month - how to de stress, and we could all do with some of that.

There is a whole mix of interesting articles, so well worth a read.

The Residents Engagement Panel is at present looking at Anti Social Behaviour and how Cornerstone tackle it, and a big review of the Tenants Handbook, and how we can make it user friendly.

If you wish to join in on any of these reviews, please contact the office.

We are also looking for younger members aged 18 - 30 who would like to join the panel and attend the once monthly meetings, or by Teams online, or as an email eagle (someone to read through all our reports and have their say by emailing us what they think of the reports and how they could be changed.) Contact the Office if you are interested.

Thank you all for your support throughout the years.

Janet Gale

Janet Gale,
Chair, Residents Engagement Panel.

EASTER OPENING TIMES

We will be closed on Good Friday and Easter Monday (29th March and 1st April)
If you have an emergency repair during this time, please call 01392 273462 option 1

An emergency call out is something which has the potential to:

- cause danger to someone's health and safety or
- cause immediate serious damage and destruction to a property, home or building.

See www.cornerstonehousing.net/tenant-handbook for more information on what is classed as an emergency and what is classed as routine.



WELCOME TO HARRIET BOSNELL NEW CEO

We are pleased to announce our new Chief Executive Officer Harriet Bosnell.

Harriet will be joining Cornerstone towards the end of April after Tom departs after 4 years at Cornerstone. Harriet is joining us from City to Sea where she is currently CEO. Harriet is excited to be starting with Cornerstone and looks forward to leading us into our 100th Anniversary in 2026.



Harriet is second in from the right



Easter Colouring!



Easter is nearly here, and we are launching our 2024 Easter colouring competition!

Every entry received from a Cornerstone resident will receive an Easter egg!

How to enter: Submit an Easter 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 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 an Easter picture.



Closing date 22nd March 2024

Full terms and conditions and how to submit your entry can be found on our website:
www.cornerstonehousing.net/easter-colouring-competition



LEGIONELLA AWARENESS

As part of our ongoing commitment to your well-being, we want to tell you a bit about legionella. Legionella bacteria can thrive in stagnant water, posing potential health risks (cough, shortness of breath, high temperature and flu like symptoms). With summer just around the corner, it's the perfect time to highlight some important points that are easily overlooked at other times of year, namely hosepipes and paddling pools.

Don't worry it is easy to keep you and your family safe, here are some essential tips to keep your family safe:

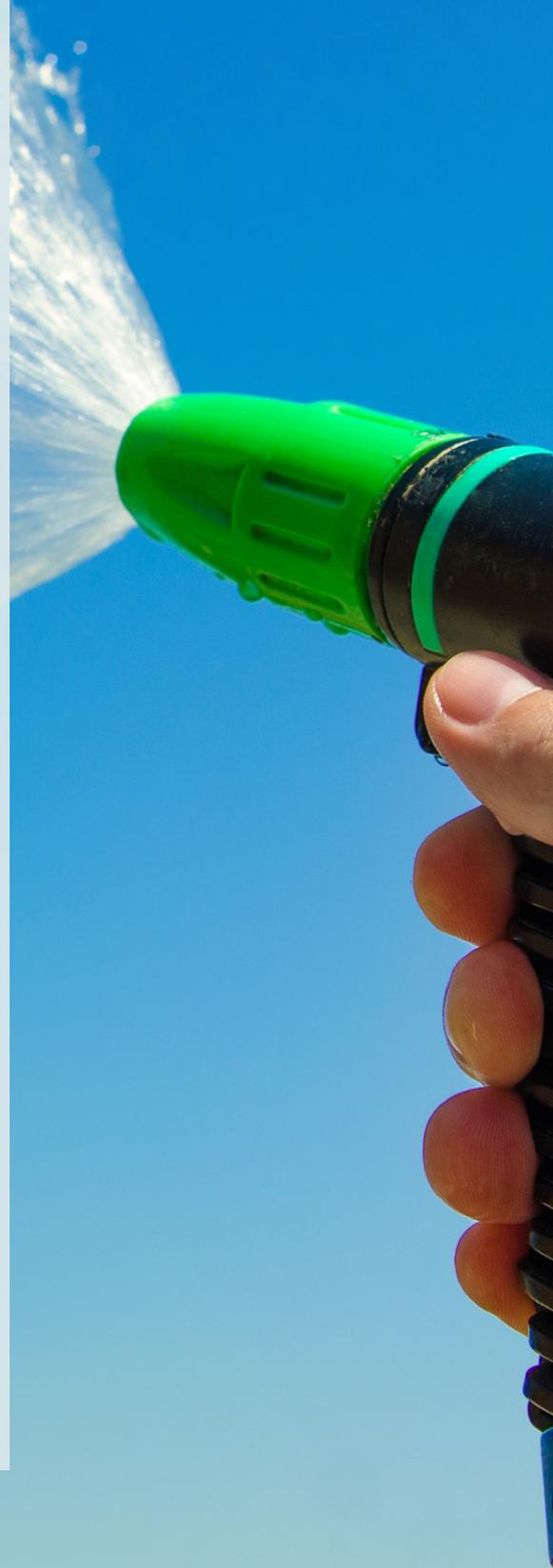
- water should be turned on slowly so as not to create a spray and left to flush through the hosepipe for a few minutes before use,
- regularly disinfect the nozzle to prevent bacteria build-up,
- after use drain your hose pipe and store in a shaded area and not in direct sunlight as legionella multiplies in warm temperatures,
- empty and clean paddling pools regularly,
- refill paddling pools using clean, fresh water.

If you notice any issues with water quality or suspect contamination report it promptly to

compliance@cornerstonehousing.net

Staying informed and taking simple precautions can significantly reduce the risk of legionella related health issues. As always, if you have any questions reach out to your housing officer or the Building and Customer Safety Team by emailing

compliance@cornerstonehousing.net



ACCESSIBILITY



We are committed to being fair and inclusive, supporting diversity and providing inclusion for all our customers. Ensuring that we communicate in a way that everyone understands is an essential part of our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion strategy.

To help us make our website accessible for everyone, we've begun using the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG). These guidelines explain how to make web content more accessible for people with disabilities, and user friendly for everyone. The guidelines have three levels of accessibility (A, AA and AAA). We've chosen Level AA as the target for our website and are working towards achieving that in 2024. We believe this level will provide the right level of accessibility for our residents

Please let us know if we can improve the accessibility of any of our services to you. If you come across any issues, or if you would like to receive communications from us in a specific way that helps you, please let us know.

You can contact us using our contact form on the website, mail@cornerstonehousing.net, call us on 01392 273462 or write to us.

CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARDS

Did you know that we have service standards that tell you about the service you should expect from us? All our standards can be found on our website

www.cornerstonehousing.net/customer-service-standards/ or ask us for a paper copy. Each edition we will be focusing on a different aspect of these, this time it is our communication standards.

Ways we can communicate	The service you can expect
<p>Email</p> <p>To report a non emergency repair repairs@cornerstonehousing.net</p> <p>For anything else mail@cornerstonehousing.net</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • you can email us 24 hours a day • you will receive an acknowledgment from us within 24 hours • we will aim to respond to your query within 5 working days • if you query will take longer, or if you only want contact with a particular person that is not available we'll let you know when you can expect a response • we might ask you security questions to check it's you we're dealing with
<p>Telephone</p> <p>01392 273462</p> <p>To report a repair is option 1 To make a rent payment option 2 For anything else option 3</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • our opening hours are 9.00am to 5.00pm Monday to Friday • you can leave us a voicemail outside of these hours if you want to • if you need to report an emergency repair outside of these hours you will get through to our emergency repairs service via the same number and option 1 • we will aim to resolve your query during that first call with you • if we can't we will try to put you through to someone who can help • if nobody is available at that time you will receive a call back by the end of the next working day • if you query will take longer, or if you only want contact with a particular person that is not available we'll let you know when you can expect a response • we might ask you security questions to check it's you we're dealing with

Ways we can communicate	The service you can expect
<p>SMS (text) Sent message to 07491 163432</p> <p>Start your message with: RENTS: if it's about your account BAL: to get your account balance REPAIR: to report a repair CARD: to order a new payment card DD: to set up or change a direct debit</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BAL will give you an automated response with your balance at the end of the last day. • all other enquiries we will aim to respond to your query within 5 working days • if you are reporting an emergency repair, please call us. • we may send you SMS messages, these will usually be surveys, receipts for payments or to communicate with you about a particular issue, • you can opt out of SMS if you prefer however you will not receive out reminder texts for repair appointments
<p>In writing You can write to us at: Cornerstone Housing Cornerstone House Western Way Exeter EX1 1AL</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • we will aim to respond to your query within 5 working days • if your query will take longer, or if you only want contact with a particular person who is not available we'll let you know when you can expect a response
<p>Website For a general enquiry To report a repair To report anti-social behaviour To log a complaint, provide feedback or a compliment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • there are a number of different contact forms on our website, the content of these forms come through to us as emails • your contact will be acknowledged within 24 hours • we will aim to respond to your query within 5 working days • if you query will take longer, or if you only want contact with a particular person that is not available we'll let you know when you can expect a response
<p>Face to face We don't have an office open to the public but we'll see you face to face when we are out in your area or visiting you for an appointment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • when we make an appointment we'll give you a date and a time slot, for repairs this might be morning or afternoon • we'll identify ourselves when we visit you and show you our ID • sometimes we use contactors for repairs but we'll let you know what company they'll be from and you can ask for ID

TEST YOUR SMOKE DETECTORS

When you are undertaking your spring clean don't forget to test your smoke detectors!



SAFETY TESTING – LET US IN FIRST TIME FOR THE CHANCE TO WIN A GIFT VOUCHER

We care about value for money here at Cornerstone, so if we visit for an arranged appointment and you're not in, it means the staff time and travel costs for that visit are wasted.

So, if you let us in first time for a gas or electrical safety check, you will be entered into a prize draw with the chance of winning a £25 voucher. The draw will take place every 3 months, with the first one at the end of March.

Thank you and good luck!

ASBESTOS AWARENESS WEEK

With Asbestos Awareness Week coming up we would like to highlight the importance of understanding the risks associated with asbestos in our homes. Asbestos containing materials are no longer used when building homes, however, some may still be present in those built before 2000.

Asbestos has a fearsome reputation but it is only when asbestos is disturbed that it poses a risk. If you are aware of where asbestos is within your property and do not disturb it, your home is perfectly safe.

All homes will be, or have already been, surveyed to check if and where asbestos is present. This survey will be carried out before any other work is completed in your home i.e. fitting a new kitchen. This is to keep both you and our employees safe. Any asbestos found in a property will be treated according to the risk posed. This might be not disturbing it, encapsulating it or removing it from the home all together.

You will be informed of any asbestos found and given guidelines to follow. These are usually simple safety measures such as not putting pins or nails in walls/ceilings.

Remember that although asbestos does pose a risk, if it is left undisturbed and you follow any guidelines given to you, your home is perfectly safe.

Your well-being is our top priority, and together we can contribute to a safer and healthier community.



NEURODIVERSITY CELEBRATION WEEK

Neurodiversity means that everyone's brain is not identical; people see and interact with the world differently. The word neurodiversity is used as an umbrella term to describe brain differences people may have. These can include but are not limited to Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, Dyscalculia, Autism and ADHD. Just like everyone's body looks different, everyone's brain has its methods of navigating the world. Approximately 15-20% of the population has a neurological difference. These differences should be celebrated as they can lead to some unique and strong characters.

Did you know...

- no two people are the same so we will all have different profiles,
- although we talk about specific neuro differences such as Autism and Dyslexia, the reality is that these can co-exist
- every neurodivergent individual has a unique pattern of strengths and challenges.

If you think you or a family member has a different thinking style, and you would like some further information contact your local GP.

Famous people who are neurodivergent



Bill Gates –
Dyslexia & ADHD



Emma Watson –
ADHD



Simone Biles –
ADHD



Tom Holland -
Dyslexia



Our Governance Manager Nicky Hallam has recently been diagnosed with ADHD at the age of 42, below is her story.



I was first diagnosed with ADHD last year. I was surprised, as like many others I associated it with young boys who can't sit still. My nephew, who was also diagnosed with ADHD a few years ago fits this stereotype perfectly. There are lots of people like me (especially women) who are being diagnosed as adults because our difficulties were missed for a long time, simply because we did okay at school and weren't particularly disruptive.

Another reason I went undiagnosed for so long was because of something called "masking." This is when neurodivergent people learn to hide aspects of their behaviour, especially by copying how other people behave.

Attention Deficit (Hyperactivity) Disorder (ADHD) can be hyperactive, inattentive or a combination. Symptoms include impulsiveness, disorganisation, restlessness, trouble completing tasks, mood swings, short attention span, fidgeting, poor memory, and easily distracted. Not all of this is negative: people with ADHD are often creative, and sociable and make good advocates.

In my case, the main symptoms are that I am both too easily bored and distracted. This is because my hyperactivity is internal: I have lots of things bouncing around in my brain all the time. I had always been told that this was due to anxiety. It was only when the treatment for that didn't work that I started looking for other explanations. I did some online tests which suggested that I might be neurodivergent, so I had an assessment.

Lots of things suddenly made sense. For example, I had a hearing test when I was around four years old because my nurse teachers said I wasn't hearing them. I was daydreaming, or, "in a world of my own" as many described me. My diagnosis also explains why I've always felt different to others.

The diagnosis has helped me because I now know that my brain works differently and I can find ways to help.



CHERRY BARTON HOUSING OFFICER DROP IN SESSIONS

We will soon be hosting drop-in sessions in the community room at Cherry Barton. These sessions will give all residents an opportunity to come along and have a chat about any housing or community related matters.

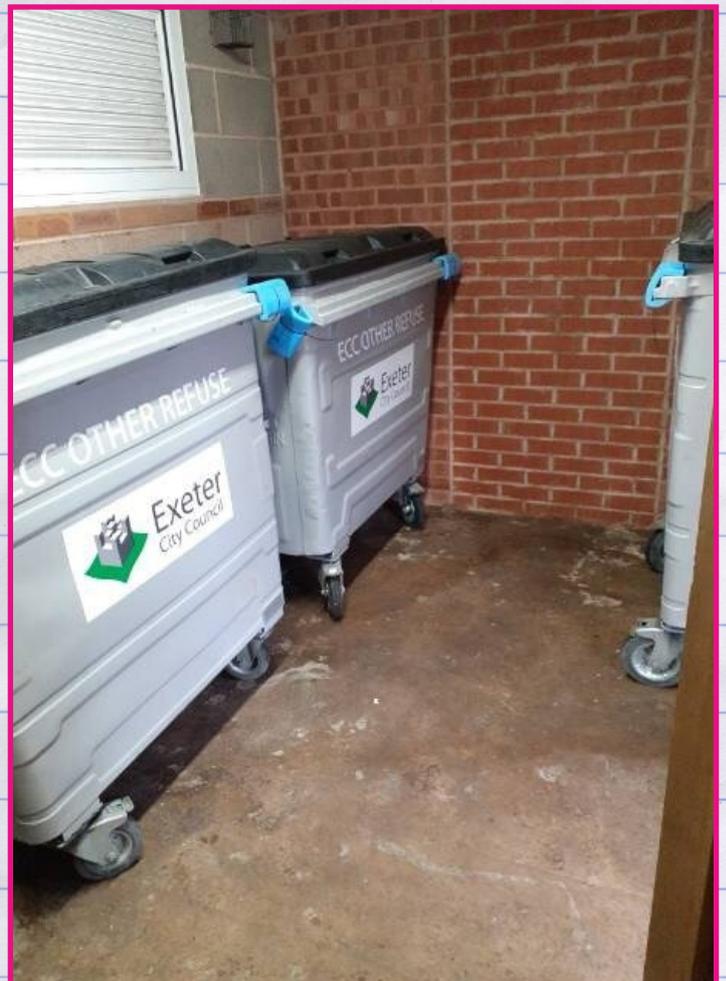
Your housing officer, Justin, looks forward to seeing you on one of the following dates:

- Wednesday, 27th March, between 10:00am and 1:00pm
- Thursday, 11th April, between 1:30pm and 4:30pm
- Monday, 22nd April, between 11:00am and 2:00pm

YOU SAID WE DID

CCTV brings improvement to Raleigh House bin store.

We have been receiving complaints about the condition of the bin store. This included overfilling of bins, fly-tipping and general misuse. Letters were sent out to residents about bin store usage, but there was no change. For many of the residents this had a negative effect on them. They didn't want to use the store due to the condition and sometimes they couldn't even dispose of their rubbish. Cornerstone took the decision, after discussions with residents, to install CCTV in the bin store to identify the individuals misusing it. Since deployment, the bin store has been kept tidy and the fly tipping has stopped. A great result for everyone effected.



ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR (ASB) REVIEW

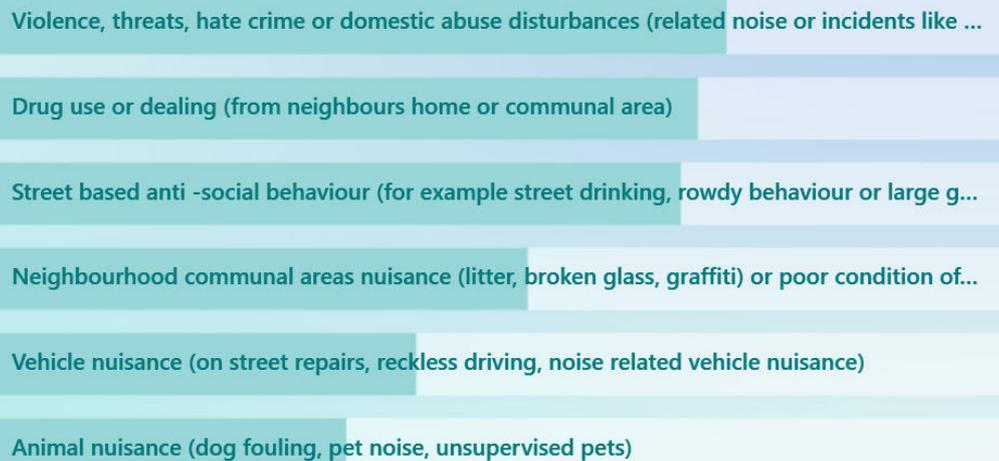
Thank you to everyone who took the time to complete the ASB review survey we recently sent you, if you didn't receive this it's not too late to get involved, please contact us by email or phone if you would like to take part in the survey or visit www.tinyurl.com/ch-asb-experience

Our Resident Engagement Panel (REP) also interviewed other residents and your housing officers to help with our review. Your housing officers have also looked at how we can improve our ASB casework to ensure you are getting a fast, supportive response to the problems you report.

Our customer service advisors have also taken part in reviewing how we can provide you with the right information when you first contact us to help prevent things from escalating.

Here are the findings so far

We asked 690 residents **“What worries you most about ASB?”** and 50 residents responded as follows:



This feedback shows that our residents are most concerned about crime like violence, threatening behaviour or drugs. Crime is a police matter, and residents should report this to the police, but please also let us know if you do report crime so we can follow up with the police if it is our residents that are affected or causing the issue.

Cornerstone will be aiming to work more closely and effectively with the police (and other services) to make sure we act one of our residents is proven to be involved in crime.

We also asked residents **“How do you think Cornerstone can best help keep you safe in your home and neighbourhood?”** and received the following response;



Enforcement action includes formal warnings, behaviour contracts, court orders and eviction. All of these can be used to try and stop residents behaving in an anti-social way. Eviction is always a last resort as we always try other methods of resolving the problem before someone loses their home.

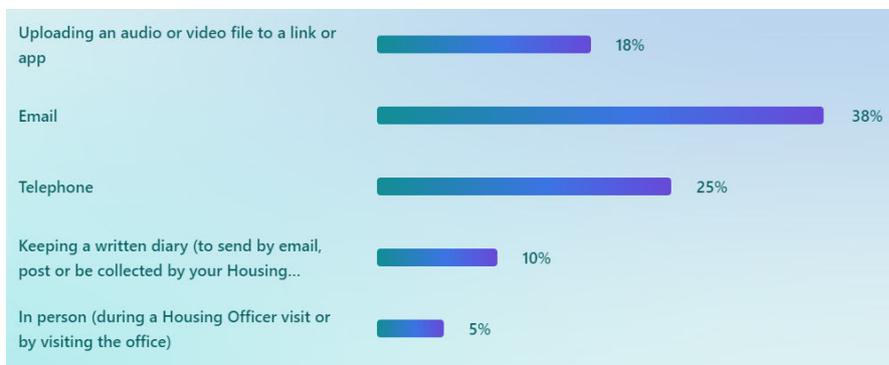
When proceeding with enforcement action this includes gathering evidence from residents, victims, witnesses and partner services like the police or environmental health officers. We then decide if we have enough evidence to prove that the resident has caused the anti-social behaviour, and if they have had enough support to change their behaviour.

If that is the case and the problems continue, we can apply for a court order for possession of their home as a last resort. We provide the evidence to the court, the resident has a right to defend themselves and there is a hearing where the evidence is decided on by the judge. This process can take a long time, and cost a lot of money, as there are often multiple court hearings and the courts are very busy.

However, we can usually access other types of court orders quickly to help keep people safe. This can include an injunction which tells a resident to behave in a certain way or stop behaving in a certain way. If they don't follow what the court orders, it can be considered contempt of court, which can carry a prison sentence or a fine.

Other ways that we can try to resolve ASB include neighbourhood agreements between residents, mediation (helping people talk safely together), meeting with our residents to talk about positive things that can be done with our support in the neighbourhood and improving the environment.

We also asked you **“How would you like to report ASB?”** and received the following response;



Considering this feedback, we will be making sure our website can make it as easy as possible to report any problems or provide evidence for an existing case. We will also continue to ensure our customer service advisors have the best information available to them and have the most effective ways to raise any issues you report with your housing officer.

Here are some comments from residents about ASB;

“The street is a mess, people leave bins in the street all week, furniture and other rubbish in front gardens. This creates a lack of respect in general for the community environment. It didn't used to look like a rubbish dump.”

“Make sure all main entrance door shut after a certain time via timer to stop homeless etc getting in to sleep in alcoves etc”

“Noise complaints need to be addressed promptly”



FREE Cat Microchipping Event

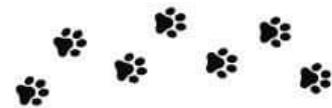


Tuesday 26th March
2-4pm



**Blue Cross Centre - Stratford House,
Marsh Barton, Exeter, EX2 8ED**

From June it will be a legal requirement for ALL cats to be microchipped, so Jonathan Wood Vets is teaming up with Blue Cross Devon to provide a free microchipping session for our feline friends.
No booking needed.



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

www.cornerstonehousing.net/rep

Get involved in your neighbourhood!

Our resident engagement panel is looking for new members. REP is open to all and we would love to have more residents from a diverse range of backgrounds involved. If you would like to engage with the REP but don't want to come to meetings, get in touch, we'd still love to hear from you.

If you are interested contact mail@cornerstonehousing.net



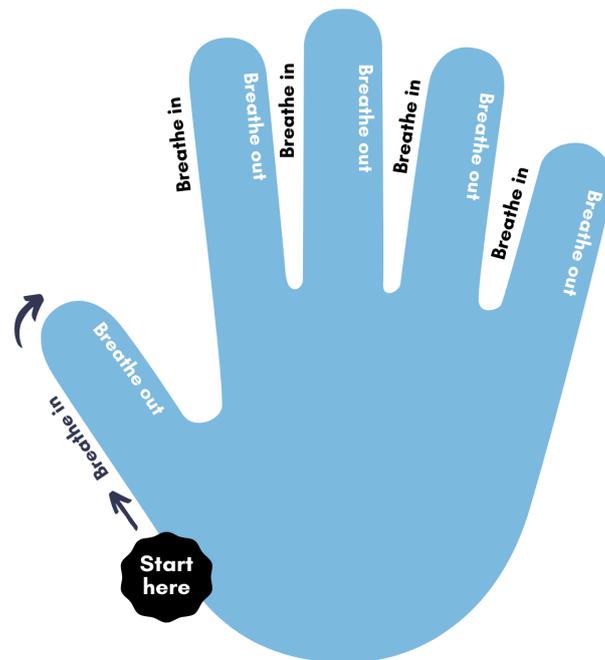
STRESS AWARENESS MONTH

April is stress awareness month. If you live a hectic life and sometimes have no time to prioritise yourself, in April try to think about yourself a little each day.

Think of it like building a house – laying down a single brick may not seem significant. You might start small e.g., taking deep breaths during a stressful moment, sitting to write a to-do list, making plans which you have been putting off or even sitting in quiet, or drinking a cup of tea.

These actions may seem small, but they serve as the foundation of your mental well-being. As you continue to add more bricks, your mental health house begins to take shape. Each brick represents a choice to prioritise and build your mental health. They all add strength and stability, making you more resilient to the challenges that life brings.

CALM YOURSELF WITH A 5 FINGER BREATHING BRAIN BREAK



Slowly trace the outside of the hand with the index finger, breathing in when you trace up a finger and breathing out when you trace down. You can also do this exercise using your own hand!

Small Actions To Make Big Changes



CONNECT WITH SOMEONE

Are they okay? · Are you okay? · Check in with your support network · Connect with someone new · A sense of belonging and community can help reduce feelings of loneliness.

PRIORITISE SLEEP

Take small steps to improve your bedtime routine. Wind down before bed by minimizing your screen time · Make your bedroom a 'tech-free' zone · Create a clean and restful sleep environment · Jot down what's on your mind and set it aside for tomorrow · Avoid caffeine after 4pm.



MOVE IN YOUR OWN WAY

Get moving the way you want to. This could be walking, running, yoga, stretches, doing some gardening. Move in a way you'll enjoy, get those endorphins flowing and let off some steam.

SPEND TIME IN NATURE

Take some time out of your day to step outside, get some fresh air and spend time in nature. This could be eating your lunch outside, or taking a short walk after work. Stimulate your senses and look at the beauty of nature

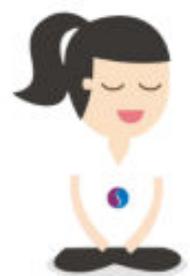


BREATHE DEEP

Your breath is a powerful tool to help with stress reduction and relaxation. Short, shallow breaths can heighten anxiety so being conscious and taking time to breathe deep helps us shift into a relaxation mode.

PRACTICE MINDFULNESS

Practicing mindfulness allows you to focus on the here and now. It aids self-awareness, helps you practice emotional regulation and control. You can actively practice during a designated mindfulness session or be mindful of your all five of your sense whilst participating in an activity, such as a nature walk.



#LittleByLittle

This months cultural and religion story is

EASTER CELEBRATION

While for many Easter is a day of chocolate for breakfast and egg hunts in the back garden, the meaning of Easter is founded in Christianity.

The Easter story explains the ascension of Jesus into heaven when Jesus was reunited with his father.



*Happy Easter to all our
residents*

STORY OF EASTER

Jesus had spent the last three years telling and showing people about God. He had performed miracles, healing people, feeding big crowds, and even bringing people back to life. Jesus was travelling to Jerusalem to celebrate a special festival, called Passover.

Jesus was with his friends as they celebrated the festival of Passover by having a special meal together. During the meal, Jesus told his disciples that he was going to die soon. He picked up some of the bread and said thank you to God for it. He then tore the bread into smaller pieces and gave it to his friends. He told them to eat it. Jesus said, 'This is like my body which I'm giving for you. Eat this as a way of remembering me. After the meal, Jesus took a glass of wine and held it up. He said, 'This is like my blood, which will be poured out for you'.

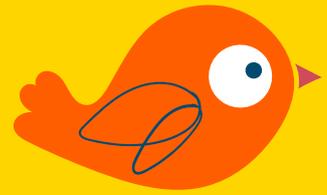
Jesus went to pray in the Garden of Gethsemane. His friends were with him. He asked them to pray too but Jesus went off on his own. Jesus asked God to help him. When he went back to his friends, he found that they had all fallen asleep! As he was waking them up, a crowd of people came towards him and Judas, who had been one of his twelve closest friends, was leading them. Judas kissed Jesus on the cheek. This was the sign to the soldiers to arrest Jesus and that is what they did.

The next day the city officials took Jesus to Pilate and then to Herod, who were both rulers of the area. Pilate wanted to let Jesus go free, because he did not think he should be killed, but the crowd shouted for Pilate to have Jesus killed. Pilate decided to do what they wanted and let the soldiers take Jesus away to be killed.

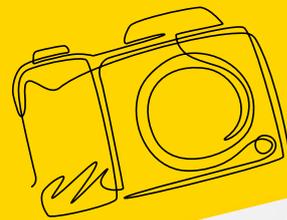
Jesus was taken to a hill where he was nailed to a wooden cross. The soldiers teased Jesus saying to him 'If you are God's chosen one and have so much power then why don't you save yourself?' But Jesus just said 'Father, forgive these people, they don't know what they are doing.' Even though it was the middle of the day the sun stopped shining and it became dark for three hours. Jesus shouted, 'Father, I put myself in your hands!' Then he died.

Jesus' body was buried in a tomb that had been cut into a rock and they rolled a large stone in front of the opening. Early on Sunday morning, a woman went to visit his tomb, but they found the stone had been rolled away from the entrance. They went in but Jesus' body was not there. They didn't understand what had happened. Suddenly two men appeared, they were wearing shining white clothes. They were angels. They said, 'Jesus isn't here! He is alive! It has happened just like he said it would.'

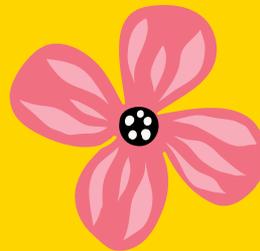
WILDLIFE IN YOUR COMMUNITY, SPRING PHOTO COMPETITION



Your picture here!



Are you a keen photographer? Have you taken any pictures of the area you live in? We would love to see your photos and feature them within our upcoming newsletters and on our website. It could be pictures of your garden full of ice on a sunny winter's morning. Your community gathering together for an event. The blossom appearing on the trees. We are excited to see what our residents send us and to show us what a great home and area you live in.



Anyone, any age can enter!

The winner will receive a framed version of their photograph, and the photo will be featured in our newsletter and on our website. email your pictures to mail@cornerstonehousing.net by 30th April 2024

