

# chatterbox



[www.phahomes.co.uk](http://www.phahomes.co.uk)

## We want to know what you think of our service to you

During 2020 we will be conducting a **STAR** survey (Survey of Tenants And Residents)

**We conduct these surveys every three years because we want to know what you think about our service to you and how we can improve.**

**In May 2019 a comprehensive review of the STAR methodology was undertaken by HouseMark. HouseMark is jointly owned by the Chartered Institute of Housing and the National Housing Federation. HouseMark is one of the UK housing sector's largest membership organisations, providing solutions and opportunities to drive performance improvements.**

This review of STAR was because of the challenges set out by the government and the technological innovations in the collection and reporting of customer perception data since STAR was last revised. It aims to develop a modern yet consistent framework for measuring customer satisfaction that allows like-for-like comparisons but also enables landlords to make use of the data to drive improvements.

Significant resident consultation was undertaken with close to 8,000 online responses received plus six resident workshops across the country. This represents one of the largest resident consultation activities in recent years.



The updated STAR guidance was published in January 2020.

PHA Homes has engaged an external organisation to conduct the survey to ensure impartiality and confidentiality for you our tenants.

The survey will be undertaken in the summer by telephone and will consist of only eight questions..

We appreciate your help in responding to our surveys as it really does help us to ensure our service meet your needs and expectation.

# Tenant & Resident Engagement

NATIONAL  
HOUSING  
FEDERATION

together  
with tenants

early  
adopter

PHA Homes are proud to be an 'early adopter' and part of the National Housing Federation (NHF) Together with Tenants work.

The Together with Tenants work has come about following the tragedy at Grenfell and the resulting green paper, highlighting the need for closer working between tenants & their landlords.

The NHF and its early adopters have been working together to create a new Tenant & Resident charter. The plan is to place new requirements in the NHF's code of governance, which PHA follows, for our Board to be more accountable to our tenants & residents.



## PHA Homes commitment to tenants & residents (Tenant & Resident Charter)

**Relationships** – PHA Homes will treat all tenants and residents with respect in all our interactions. Relationships between tenants, residents and PHA Homes will be based on openness, honesty and transparency.

**Communication** – tenants and residents will receive clear, accessible and timely information from PHA Homes on the issues that matter to them, including important information about their homes and local community, how the organisation is working to address problems, how the organisation is run, and information about performance on key issues.

**Voice and influence** – views from tenants and residents will be sought and valued and this information will be used to inform decisions. Every individual tenant and resident will feel listened to by PHA Homes on the issues that matter to them and can speak without fear.

**Accountability** – collectively, tenants and residents will work in partnership with PHA Homes to independently scrutinise and hold their housing association to account for the decisions that affect their homes and services and the quality of the homes and services we provide.

**Quality** – tenants and residents can expect their homes to be good quality, well maintained, safe and well managed.

**When things go wrong** – tenants and residents will have simple and accessible routes for raising issues, making complaints and seeking redress. Tenants and residents will receive timely advice and support when things go wrong.

## What is Tenant & Resident Involvement?

**Tenant & Resident involvement is an evolving two-way process of communication between tenants, residents and their landlord, where tenants & residents are given a voice to help improve the services received from PHA Homes.**

Information and ideas are shared between tenants, residents, PHA staff and then, through our resident Board member, discussed with other Board members. This helps ensure the quality of services provided are constantly improving and the level of customer satisfaction increases.

### Barriers to Involvement

Tenant & resident Involvement requires a commitment of both time and resources from both PHA Homes and our tenants/residents. We recognise that there are many barriers which prevent tenants & residents from engaging with their landlord including:

- Lack of training / confidence
- Understanding published information
- Childcare requirements
- Travel and other expenses
- Time constraints.



### Removing those barriers

PHA Homes is committed to offering practical solutions to make tenant & resident involvement a viable option for as many tenants as possible. These solutions include, but are not limited to:

- Providing training and support for tenants / residents who are committed to engaging with the association
- Providing information in alternative formats to ensure it can be understood by all
- Providing transport and helping to cover the financial costs incurred by tenants in carrying out their roles
- Meeting the cost of childcare during meetings
- Offering as wide a range of involvement methods as possible to suit all lifestyles
- Arranging meetings at times and in locations that are most accessible to tenants wherever possible
- Providing practical support to establish tenant & resident engagement groups

**PHA Homes now plans to incorporate our existing resident scrutiny panel within our new tenant engagement panel so that the skills & knowledge that the scrutiny panel have can be used within the new engagement group.**

We have many tenants signed up to the new tenant engagement group already, but we are keen to get as many tenants & residents involved with this important work as possible.

If you are interested in finding out more about the Tenant and Resident Engagement group or are interested in joining then please contact us on **01730 263589** or email **admin@phahomes.co.uk** and a member of our team will be in touch.



## New Homes for Local People

**PHA Homes is delighted to be working with Cala Homes to develop new homes for local people in Stroud, near Petersfield.**

The site comprises 30 new homes with 12 for social housing, 4 of which are for shared ownership.

Four homes were completed in December 2019 and the remaining eight homes were completed in March 2020.





*Our new Housing Assistant*

## Welcome our new Housing Assistant!

**We are very pleased to welcome Sophia Hodgkins to our team as Housing Assistant. Sophia has previous experience in the legal and executive sectors and is keen to get out and meet PHA Homes tenants and residents.**

Sophia will be able to help with general enquiries regarding tenancy management, including rent accounts and anti-social behaviour. Should you have a query please do not hesitate to contact the Housing Team on **01730 263589**.



# Annual Estate Walkabout



**This year the Annual Estate Walkabout for all estates will be held on the same day and has been scheduled for Wednesday 27th May 2020.**

We will be visiting some of your estates at the approximate times detailed below. We hope that many of our tenants and residents will be able to join us to provide feedback which will help improve our services.

If you are not able to join us but would like to make a comment regarding your estate then please contact Lauren Parrett, Housing Manager, on 01730 263589.

<b>Paddock Way</b>	<b>10:00am</b>	<b>Ramshill*</b>	<b>11:15am</b>
<b>Fern Close</b>	<b>10:30am</b>	<b>Rushes Farm</b>	<b>1:45am</b>
<b>Tanners Reach</b>	<b>11:00am</b>	<b>Deans Dell</b>	<b>12:15pm</b>

*\* Ramshill - Charlton Drive, Collingwood Way, Small Close & Dickins Lane*



## Your Rent

**The way in which housing associations charge rent is controlled by government policy. From 2016 the government determined that your rent should decrease each year by 1% for a period of four year.**

**At PHA Home that four year period started in January 2017. Therefore, the fourth minus 1% was applied to your rent in January 2020.**

Going forward, the government has determined that your rent will increase by the Consumer Price Index (CPI) at September each year + 1% for the next 5 years. As such, and in accordance with the terms of your tenancy agreement, the rent charge for your property is reviewed and amended annually on the first Monday in January in accordance with government policy. As such, from 4th January 2021 your rent will be increased by CPI + 1%.

The increase in rent is to ensure that housing associations can provide tenants with an excellent service, maintain your home to a good standard and to enable us to develop much needed new homes. Also, since the tragedy at Grenfell Towers much has been done to ensure the safety of our tenants, but this also has added to the cost of maintaining our homes.



# Damp and Mould

**Our maintenance manager recently visited one of our properties to have a look at a damp and condensation issue.**

The property was extremely warm, and both the washing machine and tumble dryer were being used without any ventilation in the room. Although the tumble dryer was a condensing appliance, the running temperature of both these appliances is high and was causing some condensation to the windows and a general feeling of damp in the air.

The tenant was advised to open some of the windows whilst these appliances are in use, just a small amount, which then resolved the condensation issue and reduced the temperature in the room.

This is something to be aware of in rooms where appliances such as washing machines are being used as this is a very easy way to cause condensation and damp issues and by just opening a window or using an extractor fan you can prevent these issues occurring.

**BEFORE**



**AFTER**



## Internal Refurbishment Brownfield House

**Towards the end of 2019, we undertook the internal refurbishment of Brownfield House in Petersfield.**

This work was carried out as a project by Lifetime Construction and the feedback from the tenants living at Brownfield House has been extremely positive. We have now concluded the internal refurbishment of all our blocks of flats.

The work included the replacement of all the internal flat front doors and internal communal access doors, painting the cupboard doors,

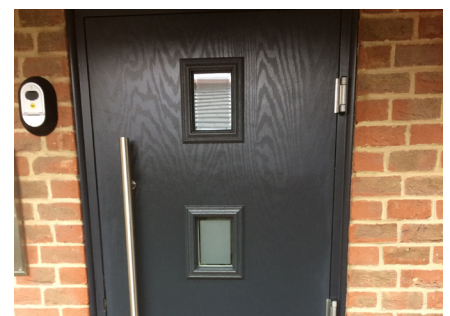
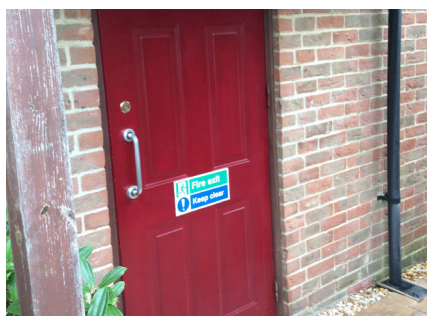
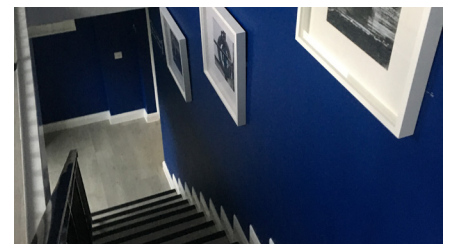
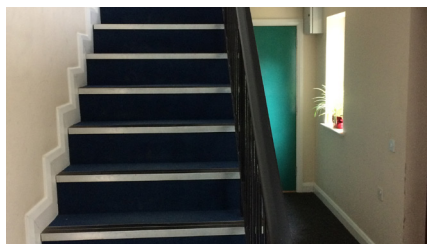
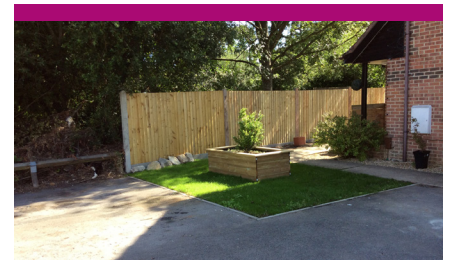
new flooring throughout, full redecoration, new lighting internally and above the outside of the front door, artwork, blinds to the windows and new signage. The communal front door to the building was also replaced during the refurbishment works.

During 2020 we will be considering how we can improve the external look of the building while reducing the need for future maintenance.

**BEFORE**



**AFTER**





## Good News Story

**Our Housing Manager has been working with one of our disabled tenants, his family and social services for many months now to obtain more suitable accommodation for him. This was necessary to help fulfil his support requirements, as general needs accommodation was no longer suitable.**

In November 2019, the tenant was successfully moved to residential accommodation where he receives the appropriate level of support. The tenant is now coping much better and is much happier. His flat has since been re-let to somebody else on EHDC's waiting list.

To discuss alternative accommodation, please do not hesitate to contact the office for advice on 01730 263589.



**Are you aged 55+ and in a position to buy your own home at 70% market value?**



**PHA Homes has a leaseholders' scheme at Alderfield in Petersfield which has a mixture of 1 bed and 2 bed flats at ground floor and first floor level, available for single people or couples.**

Comprising 22 homes, Alderfield is located close to central Petersfield and has ample parking and lovely communal grounds with a friendly and inviting atmosphere.

All applicants are subject to financial checks.

To put your name on the waiting list, call the office today on **01730 263589**. Priority is given to those on the waiting list.



# Planned Maintenance and Repairs

2019 was a busy year for planned works. During the year we replaced or upgraded 9 kitchens, 4 bathrooms, 10 front and rear doors, 6 heating systems, 6 chimneys, 2 communal entrance doors and 19 electrical consumer units.

We also repaired a roof to two properties at Lythe Lane, refurbished the communal areas to a block of flats and replaced a large area of fencing at Paddock Way which involved extensive tree and hedge work. We also undertook the replacement of several windows at East Lodge in Rogate which has upgraded the external look of the building significantly.



**There were 21 empty properties during 2019 and PHA took the opportunity to carry out extensive refurbishment work to four of these, including kitchens and full redecoration before re-letting.**

2019 also saw an increase of 15% in day to day responsive repairs compared to 2018. We encourage our contractors to highlight additional repairs

when working in our properties and our maintenance manager has also picked up several repairs when visiting our estates and properties.

2020 is already proving to be a busy year, so far, we have identified several doors requiring replacement, two boilers have needed replacing already and some roofing works are due to be completed following the stormy weather.

We have dealt with 4 empty properties already this year and another three are due to become empty during March. There are several planned works to be carried out during 2020, if there are works due to be carried out on your home, you will be notified in due course. We will also be carrying out Fire Risk assessments on all our blocks again in 2020 and this will involve checking fire doors are still fit for purpose.



# National Hoarding Awareness Week

Hoarding Awareness week is an initiative started by the Chief Fire Officers Association in 2014 and was launched at the houses of Parliament.

Hoarding is the persistent difficulty in discarding or parting with personal possession, even those of apparently useless or limited value, due to strong urges to save items, distress, and/or indecision associated with discarding.

**It is a very misunderstood and complex issue, affecting all socio-economic, age and ethnic groups.**

**This condition can be harmful to the person, their relationships, their families, friends and neighbours. It can lead to an increased risk of:**

- House fires
- Infestations
- Self-care issues
- Trips/falls
- Social isolation
- Challenging access for emergency services
- Child protection issues
- Decreased mental state

**Most importantly, it can cause tenancy management issues and form a breach of the tenancy agreement, which could in turn lead to eviction.**

If clutter, disorganisation or hoarding is affecting your health (mental or physical health) and making you feel anxious, depressed or unwell, then it's advisable to have a chat with your GP.

Alternatively, you could contact our Housing Team on 01730 263589 for more information.

**“WE CAN SORT IT, TOGETHER”**



## SUPPORT

**Clouds End CIC**  
[www.cloudsend.org.uk](http://www.cloudsend.org.uk)

**Fire Service**  
Provide 'Safe and Well' visits

**Help for Hoarders**  
[www.helpforhoarders.co.uk](http://www.helpforhoarders.co.uk)

**Local Authority**  
Multi-agency groups

**The Association of Professional Declutterers and Organisers**  
[www.apdo-uk.co.uk](http://www.apdo-uk.co.uk)

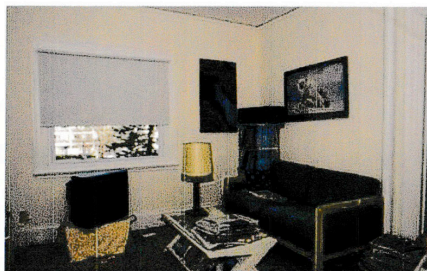




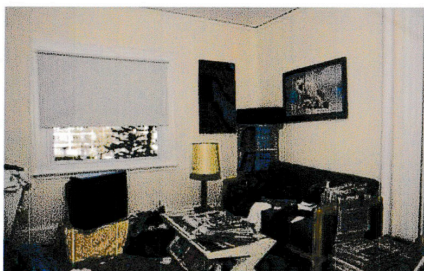
Where are  
you on this  
scale?

## CLUTTER IMAGE RATING - LIVING ROOM

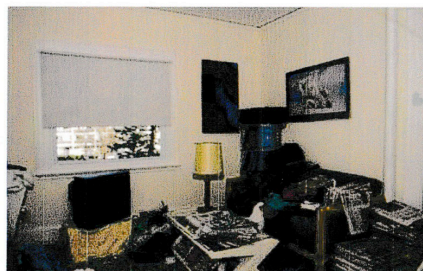
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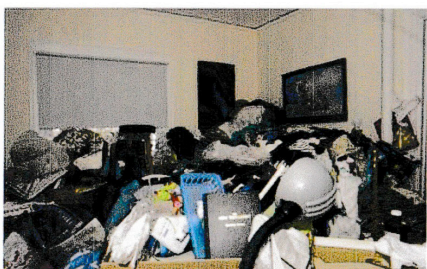
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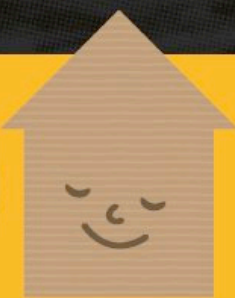


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We're supporting



**NATIONAL  
HOARDING  
AWARENESS  
WEEK**

**#HelpingHoarders**



# Universal Credit (UC)

## How does it effect you?

**PHA Homes is seeing more and more people transferring from the former six top benefits onto Universal Credit (UC). Universal Credit is causing problems for some of our tenants because when a claim is made you have to wait five weeks before you receive your first UC payment. You will still need to cover your bills during this time.**

PHA Homes has put together a simple checklist below for all tenants who are, or may be in the future, in receipt of UC. You will need to think about what you spend over the month and plan how you will spend and save.

Whilst on Housing Benefit, or before transitioning to UC, ensure your rent account is not in arrears and there is at least one month's credit on your rent account.

Ensure you include your rent liability in your claim and make sure the information you give to UC is up to date and accurate.

You can apply for an advanced payment; however, you will need to pay this back within 12 months.

You will need to apply for a council tax reduction to check if you are eligible.

Seek budgeting advice from Citizens Advice or the Money Advice Service if you are concerned how to prioritise and budget your monthly payment.

You can request Personal Budgeting Support from your work coach by telephone, online or face-to-face.

Ensure your rent is paid before anything else. Your rent is your main priority bill and is the roof above yours and your family's head.

If you have other debts, ensure that you advise those companies that you are in rent arrears and that these need to be paid before setting up arrangements with other companies.

Please note, none of these are a long-term option.

You can request that UC is paid with two payments per month, as opposed to one payment per month.

You may be entitled to a Discretionary Housing Payment via Housing Benefit if the changes to your benefits mean you receive less money.

You can contact PHA Homes if you are struggling to get essentials such as food.

You must keep UC updated with any changes to your household

Contact UC: 0800 328 9344, or through your work coach on your online journal, or in person at the job centre.



### **You can ask UC for your payments to be paid directly to PHA Homes if you have any of the following:**

- Rent arrears,
- Learning difficulties,
- Mental health issues,
- Suffer from domestic abuse or addiction problems,
- Are a Care leaver or have complicated issues affecting your family?
- Unemployed,
- Have debts or fines already being taken out of your benefit,
- Have a disability, etc.

You should note that PHA Homes will not stop any of its arrears processes and action may be taken against your tenancy if payments are not made in advance. We are happy to work with you to help you avoid falling into arrears. Should you fall into arrears, we are happy to discuss mutually acceptable arrangements to clear your arrears over an agreed period.

You can call our Housing Team on 01730 263589 for more information.



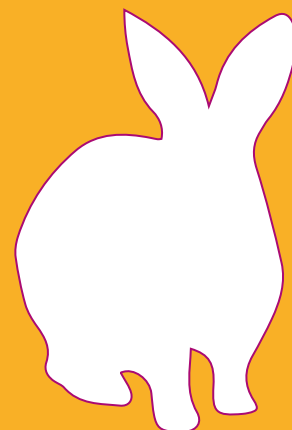
# Spring Wordsearch Competition

For your chance to win a £25 voucher of your choice complete the word search and return it to us at 32 Lavant Street, Petersfield or by email to [admin@phahomes.co.uk](mailto:admin@phahomes.co.uk) by 17th April 2020.

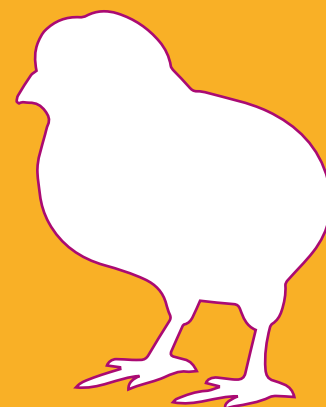
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APRIL	FLOWERS	PASSOVER
BASEBALL	GREEN	PUDDLE
BLOOM	GROW	RAINBOW
BUNNY	HATCH	RAINCOAT
BUTTERFLY	JUNE	SEEDS
CHICK	MARCH	SHOWERS
EASTER	MAY	SPRING
EGGS	NEST	UMBRELLA

## CONGRATULATIONS!

Our Autumn wordsearch winner was Mrs H from Steep who won a £25 Tesco voucher.



## Maintenance Manager Top Tips

### Dealing with a water leak inside your home

**Make sure you always know where your stopcock is inside your home.**

On a regular basis, check that the stopcock moves freely by turning it slightly.

**This will ensure that you can turn off the water supply if you should have a leak.**

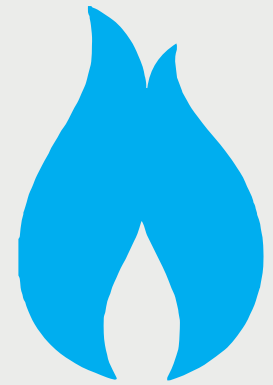
If you find you have a leak, turn off the water supply at the stopcock. Some properties have a Sure Stop switch (usually above where the stop cock is) to turn off the water supply instead of turning off the stopcock, but it may still be necessary to turn off the stopcock as well.

**If you can identify where the leak is coming from this is helpful information to provide when reporting the issue.**

Try to contain the water using a container or absorbent items such as towels.

**Contact PHA Homes to report the leak.**

## Gas Servicing Update



**PHA are considering moving the annual gas appliance servicing to a Summer programme in 2020. This would mean carrying out all our gas services and checks on unvented hot water cylinders between April and October.**

Making this change will ensure that our routine maintenance is completed outside the busy Winter period. This may result in your home requiring two gas services within the year to enable us to move the dates for your annual safety check to fall within a Summer servicing programme.

We are also considering changing our gas servicing programme to a MOT style service which would mean that your annual service date is always retained but we have flexibility to service the boiler up to 2 months in advance of the expiry date but keep the original servicing date on our records. For example, if your service in 2019 was carried out in April but in 2020 we carry out the service in March, we would retain the April date and that is when your service would then be due in 2021. The service would always be due in April each year.

If you have any queries regarding these proposed changes, please contact our Maintenance Manager.

We are also now into our last full year of contract with Robert Heath Heating (RHH) and we appreciate that some of our tenants & residents have had issues with RHH over the period of the contract with them (mainly with moving appointments late). We will be mindful of these issues as we go into any tender discussions with future gas contractors.