IN THIS ISSUE...

P5: Meet your new Neighbourhood Team

P11: Catch up on the latest Money Matters

New improved offices now open
Offices reopen for business

Our new office at Dimple Mill is open to visitors after refurbishment work.
The office boasts an attractive new reception with spacious interview rooms and internet access for our customers.
We also have a new meeting room, which will be available to community groups or other partner organisations.
As well as a number of facilities for our customers to use, staff are also making good use of the open plan space.

David Knowles, Neighbourhood Co-ordinator, said: “It’s now really handy being in the same office as our Maintenance and Customer Service teams, whom we work with very closely. It means that we can provide joined up services and better outcomes for our customers”

Our new entrance is located at the rear of the building, just off the car park at the top of the hill. Thank you for your patience during the work and we look forward to seeing you soon.

Stay safe this summer

There’s nothing better than having a barbecue in the summer months, but there are a few things you should look out for.

Here is a handy guide to help you stay safe this summer:

What NOT to do:

• NEVER use petrol, lighter fuel, methylated spirits or similar highly volatile fuel – apart from the obvious dangers, they give a nasty taste to food.
• NEVER leave a lit barbecue unattended.
• NEVER add more fuel of any kind to charcoal that has been ignited, but appears not to be burning. The charcoal is likely to be glowing hot inside, even if there is no visible sign on the surface.

When the cooking is complete:

• Snuff out the coals – when using covered barbecues, simply close the dampers at the top and bottom. With smaller barbecues the coals can be either transferred to a coal bucket with a lid, or put into a bowl of water and left to dry out.
• NEVER pour water over the barbecue.

What you SHOULD do:

• A simple way of lighting a charcoal fire is to buy a pack of specially treated briquettes. The pack, with its contents, should be placed on the fire bed or charcoal grill and lit. After around 20-40 minutes, the charcoal should be hot enough for you start cooking.
• Using white firelighters is also a safe and efficient way to get your barbecue going.
• If you are using a gas barbecue and suspect a leak, turn it off immediately.
• When changing gas cylinders, ensure they are fully turned off before disconnecting and properly reconnected before the new valve is opened.
• The person who is cooking should avoid consuming alcohol, as this increases the chance of injury.
• Stop young children playing around the barbecue area.
Easter events go down a treat

Our teams went the egg-stra mile this Easter by organising a number of events to benefit the local community as part of a ‘Team Challenge’. The Customer Service Team involved local schools, tenants and our partner agency Church in the Peak in their fun-filled schemes.

The first event, Highfields School Bake Off, saw a class of enthusiastic 13-14 year olds bake scrumptious chocolate covered marble cakes in their food and technology class. The cakes, crafted using ingredients donated by the team, were then gifted to Church in the Peak for their Easter meal the following day.

The creative theme continued into the next day as residents of Denefields Court in Matlock made Easter gifts alongside children from St Giles Infant School. Using a variety of fun and colourful materials supplied by the team, the group went away with presents and cards for their families.

Later in the day, staff gave up their time to assist the volunteers of Church in the Peak’s Jigsaw Café by serving up hot food and cake to those in need in Matlock.

Lisa Twigg, who helped the budding crafters, said: “At the Easter craft morning it was great to see everyone getting stuck in. The age gaps between the school children and our elderly Tenants seemed to disappear, as they happily worked together to make all sorts of creative crafts which was positive to see. Fully enjoyed by all!”

Introduction to Dales Housing’s new Neighbourhood Team

As many of you will have noticed, Dales Housing has recently restructured its Neighbourhood Services Team. Over the next four pages we’ll explain the changes and introduce you to the new team.

Why change?

The new Neighbourhood Team will provide extra support to the Income Team and also enable us to let our empty properties more quickly.

What’s changed?

- Our Housing Officers will now be known as Neighbourhood Co-ordinators. This reflects their wider responsibility for dealing with issues within your neighbourhood in partnership with other agencies.
- More details about who you should contact can be found on pages 6-8.
- The Income Team has been boosted to help deal with the Government Welfare Benefit changes. Your Income Management Co-ordinator can be found on pages 6-7.
- The Neighbourhood Team will be supported by a team of Assistants who will be available to help you with queries about your tenancy.
- There are also a number of specialist roles within the new team, including Money Advisor, Allocations Co-ordinator and Wellbeing Co-ordinator.
- The Customer Services Team has also been boosted to help deal with customer enquiries on the telephone or at our brand new office reception.

What will we be doing differently?

- Over the coming year we will be developing Area Plans which set out the key priorities for each of the neighbourhoods we work in. These plans will be developed in consultation with residents and partners.
- Your Neighbourhood Co-ordinator will be developing an annual plan of Dales in the Community activities that are specific to your neighbourhood. This may include walkabouts, clean ups, fun days, etc. If you have an idea of something you’d like us to arrange, please let us know.
- As your Neighbourhood Co-ordinator and Income Management Co-ordinator are both responsible for the same areas, they will offer a more comprehensive service, with both team members being available to answer your queries.
- Due to the impact of Welfare Reform, we will be contacting customers in arrears at an earlier stage to offer support and money advice.
Who do I contact?

Contact your Neighbourhood Co-ordinator.
They are responsible for:
- Investigating anti-social behaviour complaints
- Signing up new tenants for their tenancy
- Dealing with requests for tenancy changes
- Dealing with requests for a pet
- Organising community events including, estate walkabouts
- Ensuring communal areas are well maintained including grounds maintenance, cleaning etc.

Contact your Income Management Co-ordinator.
They are responsible for:
- Managing customer rent accounts
- Dealing with arrears, including taking possession action and attending court
- Liaising with support agencies including Citizens Advice Bureau

North Area

The North area begins at Hathersage and stretches down as far south as Winster.
The largest town in the patch is Bakewell and includes the following villages; Ashford in the Water, Beeley, Curbar, Stoney Middleton, Bradwell, Rowsley, Stanton in the Peak and Tideswell. Other areas include, Carson Croft, Dimple Road, Rutland Street and Smedley Street, Matlock.

Mark Spencer
Neighbourhood Co-ordinator

Liz Plummer
Income Management Co-ordinator

South Area

The South area begins at Hartington and stretches down to Sudbury.
The largest town in the patch is Ashbourne and includes surrounding villages, such as: Brassington, Brailsford, Doveridge, Hartington, Kniveton, Parwich and Marston Montgomery.

Theresa Whyte
Neighbourhood Co-ordinator

Thomas Evans
Income Management Co-ordinator

Central (Matlock) Area

The Central (Matlock) area covers the Hurst Farm Estate and many locations surrounding this area including, Starkholmes, Tansley and any properties past Matlock Green towards Chesterfield and Tansley.

David Knowles
Neighbourhood Co-ordinator

Liz Plummer
Income Management Co-ordinator

Central (Wirksworth) Area

The Central (Wirksworth) patch covers Darley Dale, Darley Bridge, Two Dales, North Wingfield, Gateway Court, Mettesford House in Matlock, Matlock Bath, Cromford, Bonsall, Wirksworth and any outlying villages.

Hazel McMillan
Neighbourhood Co-ordinator

Emma Hudson
Income Management Co-ordinator
The Neighbourhood Team also includes some specialist roles. These team members can be contacted by any customer who has a query.

**Neighbourhood Assistance Team**

Our friendly Neighbourhood Assistant Team’s role is to provide support to the Neighbourhood Team and to respond to customer enquiries. They each have a specialist role, but are trained to deal with all team enquiries.

- **Neighbourhood Assistant**
  - Hannah Fox

- **Allocations Assistant**
  - Paul Mitchell

- **Resident Involvement Assistant**
  - Samantha Taylor

- **Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) Money Advisor**
  - Emma King

Dales is working in partnership with the CAB and Derbyshire Dales District Council and have recruited specialist Money Advisor, Emma King. Emma can help you with your queries about benefit changes and money issues. Emma will be able to give you advice about the benefits you are entitled to and help with any debt problems you may face.

- **Money Advisor**
  - Helen Sutton

  Helen’s role is to provide specialist money advice to customers who need help with their finances. Helen will be able to help you put together a full financial statement that shows all your income and outgoings. She will also help you contact your creditors and put a repayment plan in place.

- **Allocations Co-ordinator**
  - The Allocations Co-ordinator looks after letting our empty properties. They may contact you if you have made a successful bid on Home Options.

- **Wellbeing Co-ordinator**
  - Beverly Crowther

  Bev’s role is to provide one to one support to help you to live a healthy lifestyle, so if you want to become more active, stop smoking, eat more healthily or cut down on alcohol consumption Bev can help. Just ring our Customer Service Team who will be able to make an appointment for you. This post is funded by Derbyshire Clinical Commissioning Group.

**Contacting us**

If you have any queries please contact our Customer Services Team on 01629 593200 who will be able to help or direct you to one of our team members who can help.

The service we launched earlier this year to help residents in their own homes is now working with 72 people in the community.

The Independent Living Service is tailored to the individual needs of residents. This allows our older tenants to continue to enjoy a great quality of life in their own homes by ensuring professional support is at hand. We offer three levels of support, all of which include the installation of a ‘Lifeline’ unit and pendant. The current levels and costs are as follows:

- **Gold standard**
  - £16.05 per week – a visit every week day

- **Silver standard**
  - £6.50 per week – a weekly visit

- **Bronze standard**
  - £4.50 per week – a fortnightly visit

Support includes:

- Regular home visits of a frequency that serves your needs
- Lifeline emergency call system installed at your property providing 24 hour emergency response
- Help in accessing third-party support, such as Social Services for Home Care and help with meals
- Help to improve the safety and security of your home
- Help with application forms
- Practical help following hospital discharge or after a crisis

We’ve had some great feedback already:

- “Mr P was grateful for the assistance he received in order to apply for his new Gold Card and for the help completing the form for his driving licence renewal application which was posted for him.”
- “Mr and Mrs C have signed up for a Silver package of support. Mrs C has started to suffer with memory loss problems and so Mr C is very grateful for the help he is now getting with light household jobs like dusting and ironing. Mr C says it is the best £6.50 per week he has ever spent.”
- “Mr D says he really appreciates the support and company that a regular visit provides.”

For any further information or to arrange a home visit please contact Dales Customer Service team on 01629 593200.
New Properties at Mount Pleasant, Grindleford and Wash Green, Wirksworth

Two exciting new building developments have recently been completed by Dales Housing at Wash Green, Wirksworth and Mount Pleasant, Grindleford.

At Wash Green, 18 properties were available for rent; as a mix of 2 bedroomed apartments and 2 and 3 bedroomed houses. Priority was given to applicants with a strong local connection to the area and a number of residents have already moved into their new homes, with the remaining properties due to be occupied over the coming weeks.

Two very successful pre-tenancy meetings were held with prospective tenants for the Wirksworth properties, enabling everyone to find out further information about their new homes and to meet their new neighbours.

Nine properties were available for renting in the picturesque village of Grindleford in the Peak District National Park. These new homes, both 2 bedroomed flats and 2 and 3 bedroomed houses, are also available in the first instance to people who have a strong local connection to the area.

Our new homes at Grindleford, as it is recognised that it can sometimes be very difficult to obtain housing in rural areas.

We have had great feedback from the new occupants of both developments and Dales will be arranging some community events later in the year so everyone can get to know other residents in the area.

A small number of houses are available to buy under the Shared Ownership scheme at both sites. If you would like further information regarding these properties, please contact Jane Andrews at Acclaim Housing Group on 01629 761540.

Welfare Benefit Update

As you know, in April 2013, the Welfare Benefit system underwent its biggest change in 60 years.

On 1 April 2013 – the following changes took place.

Under occupancy (also known as the bedroom tax)

Housing Benefit may be reduced for tenants who have spare bedrooms in their homes and were born after the 5 October 1951.

If you are affected then you must pay the rental shortfall each week as you will receive less Housing Benefit.

If you are affected by this change and are struggling to budget for your rent please contact us for advice on 01629 593200.

Benefit Cap

There will be a limit on the amount of benefits that someone can receive.

The weekly limit will be:

- £350 for single people
- £500 for families

If you have further questions please contact us on 01629 593200 to discuss how you may be able to help.

Council Tax Benefit

Council Tax Benefit has changed and all working age residents will have to make a contribution to their Council Tax bill.

You will have received a bill from Derbyshire Dales District Council which sets out how much you need to pay.

What can we do to help?

Our newly restructured Neighbourhood Team can provide a wide range of help and support as described in the article on pages 5-8 but here’s a quick reminder:

Money Advisor

Make an appointment to see our friendly and knowledgeable Money Advisor – Helen Sutton.

Citizens Advice Bureau

Dales is working in partnership with the CAB and Derbyshire Dales District Council and have recruited specialist Emma King who can give you independent advice to ensure you are receiving all the benefits that you are entitled to.

Chesterfield Law Centre

A community legal practice which provides free, confidential help and advice to individuals or groups. Chesterfield Law Centre can help with legal problems concerning housing, debt/homelessness prevention, employment, immigration and tackling hate crime and harassment.

Moving Home

If you are affected by the bedroom tax and want to downsize to a smaller property, please contact our Customer Service Team who will be able to provide you with advice about your options.

Rent Issues

If you are worried about how you are going to keep up with your weekly rent payments, please contact our Customer Service Team. They will be able to talk through your options and provide you with advice about how to pay your rent. Please don’t struggle alone – contact us so we can help.

If you fail to make your rent payments, action will be taken against you. Your home may be at risk.
MONEY MATTERS

Bank Accounts

How much do you know about your bank account?
Is it working for you?
Is it costing you extra money?
These are all questions that we should be asking ourselves on a regular basis.

Do we ask them? I suspect not.
We open a bank account when necessary to pay money in, but an account that was opened, maybe years ago, may not be the best one to deal with your needs today.

Are you paying a fee for your account?
There are a number of accounts offered by most of the banks that carry a monthly fee of up to £15 per month.

These accounts offer a range of other services available to the account holder. Holiday insurance, mobile phone insurance, gadget insurance, theatre booking service, discounts on goods and services are typical but do you actually use these products?
The deal sounds very good when you sign up for the account but if you don’t make full use of what’s on offer then effectively you are paying out £180 per year for nothing.

This is the time to consider a Basic Bank Account.
This is a simple, no frills account. It does not have a cheque book or overdraft facility but it does allow you to receive money and pay bills.
The basic account is especially designed for people who are unable to open a current account for whatever reason.
Maybe they have a poor credit rating, an account already in overdraft or other debts or perhaps they just want a simpler account to manage their money.
Most basic bank accounts will have the following features:

- No fees to pay
- Wages, benefits, tax credits and cheques can be paid directly into your account for free
- Cash card or debit card with most accounts
- Cash withdrawals can be made from cash machines and at the Post Office
- Direct debits and standing orders can be used to pay bills – meaning you could pay less for some things like gas and electricity.

In order to open a basic bank account you will need to provide two forms of identification to the bank; one to prove your name and one to prove your address.

Each bank has their own list of what they will accept, a valid passport and driving licence are ideal but if these are not available then you may be able to use:-
- Benefit entitlement letters
- Other bank or building society statements
- A gas, electricity or water bill
- Tenancy agreement
- Council Tax bill

When you have decided which account is best for you, visit the bank and arrange for the account to be set up. If your application for a basic bank account is refused you can ask the bank for the reason why.
They should tell you unless there are exceptional circumstances such as the suspicion of fraud or money laundering.
Remember that all banks are different so if you have problems with one bank you can always try another one.

How to pay for your water

From 1 April 2013, Dales Housing customers now pay water rates directly to Severn Trent.

WaterSure
WaterSure is a special tariff with a capped charge. This is aimed at customers who have a low income or use a lot of water due to a medical condition.

Water Meter
Water meters allow you to pay for the water you use. You can have a water meter fitted for free and you could save money if you feel that you are not using a great deal of water.

A water meter means that you will only pay for:
- The water you use
- Surface water drainage (rainwater that drains off your property)
- A sewerage charge
- A small standing charge

If you would like a water meter fitted, please contact Severn Trent direct – you do not need permission from Dales Housing.

Please be aware that a water meter cannot be fitted in all properties. Severn Trent will advise you if your property is suitable or not.

Water Card
You can pay your water rates using a Severn Trent Water card.
- Cash card or debit card with most accounts
- Cash withdrawals can be made from cash machines and at the Post Office
- Direct debits and standing orders can be used to pay bills – meaning you could pay less for some things like gas and electricity.

For further information please contact Severn Trent Billing Enquiries on 0845 500 500.
Estate inspections

Dales Housing carries out regular estate inspections with tenants and partner organisations such as the police, councillors and community groups.

These ‘walkabouts’ provide a great opportunity to uncover any environmental issues or ant-social behaviour problems that they need addressing.

The table opposite contains details of our forthcoming inspections. We’ll be writing to tenants in each area nearer the time to let you know the meeting point for each inspection. We hope you can join us.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Time and estate</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11 July</td>
<td>Stoney Middleton</td>
<td>2.30pm – 3.00pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 July</td>
<td>Hazel Court, Matlock</td>
<td>10.00am</td>
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<tr>
<td>18 July</td>
<td>Hazel Dene, Matlock</td>
<td>10.30am</td>
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<tr>
<td>18 July</td>
<td>Hazel Grove/Highthop, Matlock</td>
<td>11.00am</td>
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<tr>
<td>24 July</td>
<td>The Firs, Ashbourne</td>
<td>3.00pm – 3.30pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>9 August</td>
<td>Lime Grove, Darley Dale</td>
<td>2.00pm – 3.00pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>13 August</td>
<td>Youlgrave</td>
<td>3.00pm – 3.30pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>14 August</td>
<td>Hulland Ward</td>
<td>2.00pm – 2.30pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>14 August</td>
<td>Bradbourne</td>
<td>3.00pm – 3.30pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>21 August</td>
<td>Mettesford, Matlock</td>
<td>11.00am – 12noon</td>
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<tr>
<td>12 September</td>
<td>Middleton Youlgrave</td>
<td>2.00pm – 3.00pm</td>
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Beware of bogus callers

One of our tenants recently answered the door to his bungalow to find two men, who said they were from the water authority. They told him that they needed to come in to test the water pressure.

He let the men in. They appeared to check the water pressure in the bathroom and kitchen then left saying that the water pressure was fine.

Later that day, he discovered that the £200 he was keeping under his mattress had disappeared.

He telephoned the water authority, who advised that they had not made any visits to his address.

He realised he had been the victim of theft by bogus callers.

He reported the incident to the police, who provided him with a crime reference number.

Thankfully, he had taken out Home Contents Insurance with Dales Housing and was paying for this weekly with his rent.

He called the claims number and advised them of the crime number and the sum of money stolen.

After discussing the incident in full during a call with the Loss Adjuster, he received a cheque for £200.00 which he put in the bank.

Thinking Caps

Dales Housing celebrated this year’s World Book Day in style at a local library.

Armed with children’s book ‘I want my hat back’, Anne Farrington, Dales’ Resident Involvement Officer, headed to Bakewell Library’s reading and hat making session.

The event, organised to coincide with the worldwide celebration of authors, illustrators, books and reading, saw library staff act out the book by award-winning author Jon Jlassen.

The day, which was thoroughly enjoyed by the 20 attendees, ended on a high as Anne, alongside a representative from Derbyshire Dales District Council, handed out a copy of ‘I want my hat back’ to all the children at the event.

Library staff acted out the book, much to the delight of the children at the event.

There are two chances to win £25 if you can find the following words:

BEACH PARASOL AEROPLANE SUNSHINE SPADE BUCKET SANDCASTLE SWIMSUIT

CR THERMUT WY ISPTAQ S OELAZETCBROUAJUF AXBECHBIAPSNOERZ DTWFOIOWPMWSSAHL GOUTRPEDHAEUHKQYE XRKJGITHORFOIAFIN UFPHNRAUAGMNOEDTABQESANDCASTLESCIZ GIYCEAOSLOWMTERAW POUTHRACTESLIEODNKBKGSWOODMIEQUYAEBSTFEHPNWPRLWGOWAUMISRVLAFISTMYPTUCPLJSPADEVIOACEISKE DHYONENUPEJFTAXEOEIUZEORASWIMSUITIKSWPATECGIOUWPASH

Please note that this competition is only open to current Dales Housing tenants. Friends and family of Dales Housing personnel and Board members may not enter. The Editorial Team’s decision is final. Editorial Team: Melvyn Farrington (Hathersage), Peggy Duncan (Stoney Middleton), Pat James (Matlock), June Poke (Bradwell) and Vic Smith (Darley Dale).

Please send your entries and contact details to: Samantha Taylor (Resident Involvement Assistant), Dales Housing Ltd, Dimple Mill, Dimple Road, Matlock DE4 3JX.

Deadline for entries: Friday 26th July 2013.

Please do not use Dales Housing pre-paid envelopes to send in your entries. Remember to use small envelopes when returning your entries otherwise Dales Housing has to pay excess postage for large envelopes, which costs £1.17 each!

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE WINNERS FROM THE LAST NEWSLETTER – THEY EACH RECEIVED £25

Joanne Johnson of Eyam and Mrs Edwards of Ashbourne
We do not collect cash payments at the office. You can pay your rent using your Allpay card at any Paypoint in shops and garages or by using the 24 hour credit or debit card hotline

0870 243 6040

We have hearing loop systems in the Board Room and Meeting Room at Dimple Mill.

Call our customer service team for all enquiries on

01629 593200

To report a repair only

0800 294 1335

Out of office emergency repairs only

0800 294 1335