



In Sight

inside this issue...

Meet Hannah Packham Exeter's new Portfolio Holder for Housing

Councillor Hannah Packham has recently become Portfolio Holder for Exeter City Council's housing stock. In this item she talks about her aims and ambitions for Landlord Services and the desperate need for more affordable housing in the city.



I was pleased to be asked to become the Portfolio Holder for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), the part of Exeter City Council which looks after the city's housing stock in May 2017, having been elected to the city council to represent St Thomas in May 2015.

"My role is to give strategic direction to the department, support and work with the staff to ensure that Exeter City Council is a good landlord."

I'm proud of Exeter City Council's housing team which works hard throughout the year to support tenants and leaseholders in their homes. It's been really interesting to have been out with members of staff to see first-hand the work undertaken to support residents and look after our housing stock.

I have enjoyed meeting tenants and leaseholders across the city, and will continue to work with colleagues in listening and responding to residents' views. I would encourage tenants and leaseholders to get involved in the City Council's resident-led Performance Scrutiny Partnership (PSP) to learn more about, and have an input into the work of the housing team.

A key part of my role is also to highlight areas of government policy which frustrate the Council's ambitions and ability to build the desperately needed affordable housing in the city. For example, the government's 1% rent reduction has meant a reduction, on average, of 75p per household per week. This has reduced the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budget by £8 million which had been earmarked for building. Similarly, the HRA borrowing cap restricts our ability to borrow against our stock, which would provide a substantial and sustainable source of finance to build the homes we need.

"I am a passionate advocate for council and social housing, and will continue to campaign for the council to be given appropriate resources and powers to build for the future. The six months I have been in the role as Portfolio Holder have been interesting and rewarding. I fundamentally believe that decent housing is a basic human right for all; therefore I am pleased, and feel the responsibility of being in a position to help and support the residents of Exeter."

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Merry Christmas
& Happy New
Year from the
Editorial team



THE PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY PARTNERSHIP IN 2017



Over the last few months there have been a number of changes to the PSP.

Sim, PSP Chair and Ildi, PSP member have moved onto an exciting new adventure in Scotland so unfortunately, we have lost them from the Panel. We would like to thank them both for their contribution to the group over the years, especially during its formative stages and we wish them well for the future.

We know that the PSP will continue to be an integral part of scrutiny for Housing Services. Cindy Watts, who has been a PSP member for the past few years, has become the new Chair. We know the PSP will continue to be a success under her guidance.



Performance Scrutiny Partnership

The Performance Scrutiny Partnership (PSP) is a 'critical friend' to the Housing Service. The meetings are interesting, lively and valuable with volunteer tenants and leaseholders meeting regularly to review and to discuss the performance of Landlord Services and identify possible areas for improvement.

If you are interested in joining the PSP, please contact us on 01392 265815, email residentinvolvement@exeter.gov.uk or view our video on our 'Exeter Housing Services' Facebook page and click the 'video' tab. Alternatively, the video is also on the Council's YouTube page.

WHY NOT CHOOSE TO PAY YOUR RENT BY DIRECT DEBIT?

No more queuing, debit cards or rent swipe card.

What is Direct Debit?

A direct debit gives Exeter City Council permission to take rent from your bank account in agreed amounts at agreed times. You will be given at least 10 working days' notice if any changes need to be made and you can cancel at any time. Advantages of paying by direct debit are:

- It's simple** - complete the form and we will send your details to your bank to set up.
- It's convenient** - choose to pay on either the 1st of the month or fortnightly.
- It's secure** - the Direct Debit Guarantee protects your payments.
- It's efficient** - the money we save can be put back in to improving services.
- It's regular** - your rent is calculated into equal monthly or fortnightly payments.
- It's flexible** - payment plans can be agreed to recover arrears.



TERRY TALKS

Keeping the right side of the law

Recent legal cases highlight the problem of illegal drugs in our communities and their corrosive effect on communities and the individuals involved.

Organised Crime Gangs (OCGs) from other parts of the country have been using vulnerable local people to peddle their wares and have been using their homes as a base. As a result staff from ECC's Landlord Services have had to play a part in removing this serious problem from our midst.

Devon and Cornwall Police and the Council working together, have successfully used different legal remedies, including closure orders, injunction orders and possession orders.

Let there be no doubt that our zero tolerance policy means that legal action will be taken.

Remember, your Tenancy Agreement makes it quite clear that 'you must not use your home or the locality for any unlawful activity.'

Vulnerable tenants will be supported to resist the actions of Organised Crime Gangs, but sometimes we must put the interests of the community ahead of individual needs.

If you need support then the Council and the Police are ready and willing to help you.

When we receive your form, we will take your bank details and set up your Direct Debit. We will send you a confirmation letter that includes a copy of the Direct Debit guarantee. We will also give you at least 10 working days' notice of how much will be debited from your bank account. Contact us now on **01392 265527** and arrange to pay your rent by direct debit.



Garden Project Day at Southlands

It was a beautiful sunny morning in late October, when a group of volunteers led by Jane Hawking, who is the Ripple Effect Community Worker for Exeter Community Initiatives, turned up at one of our Older Persons' Housing schemes; armed with gloves, secateurs, loppers and bags of enthusiasm to give the overgrown flowerbeds a make-over. The residents had asked for help to tidy up the out of control undergrowth and were happy to lend their expertise as to what could be cut back and how.

Anna Day, the Housing Officer who had taken the initial request told InSight, "The residents were really pleased with what had been achieved and the garden area now looks a great deal tidier than it did before."

If you live in one of our Older Persons' Schemes and would like a spring garden project day, please let us know and we'll try to arrange it for you.

Please email
sarah.hemming@exeter.gov.uk
or call 01392 265766.



Tips for a debt free Christmas

Christmas is usually a huge expense, especially for those with families. It is vital to clear Christmas debts quickly to avoid interest rates adding to the original cost of purchases.

Remember - The more that you spend during Christmas - the harder it will be to reduce Christmas debts quickly.

Here are some top tips to help you have a debt free Christmas

Eliminate Credit Interest on Christmas Purchases - Most credit and store cards will give interest free periods in which to pay off the balance without incurring interest. This period could be a month or longer depending on the lender.

Look for the Best Deals at Christmas - Keep an eye out for bargains, especially online. Online purchases are generally much less expensive than buying goods in the stores. Take the time to compare online shopping providers. A few hours research should bring good savings.

Keep an eye out for pre-Christmas sales - which usually start in November.

Minimising the amount you spend on credit and store cards will be one of the best ways to help the quick reduction of Christmas debts.

Increasing Earnings after the Christmas Period - Taking on part time work for a few nights a week, for a few months, will reduce debt rapidly. Consider selling unwanted Christmas gifts on internet auction sites to bring in some extra income.

And most important of all....set a budget for Christmas spending

Remember to place a limit on how much to spend at Christmas. It's very easy to get carried away with the festive spirit when shopping in stores over the Christmas period. It's even easier to find credit cards and store cards maxed out due to over zealous spending. Work out exactly how much to spend on credit cards and stick to that budget. Don't be tempted into thinking a few more items on top of the budget won't make a difference. The more that is spent during Christmas the harder it will be to reduce Christmas debts quickly.



Ian's insight - Each publication, Ian Miles, our Health Safety and Compliance Lead, will provide some practical advice for health and safety in the home. You may have noticed his articles about fire and electrical safety in our previous editions. In this edition, Ian considers

Legionella and how to avoid it

What is legionella?

Legionella is a bacterium found in most water sources, including rivers and lakes. It can also be found in mains water and household plumbing.

Legionnaires' Disease is an illness similar to pneumonia, but tends to be more serious and so has a higher mortality rate. It was first identified in 1976, after a group of people attended a convention of the American Legion and a large number of them were struck down with the same illness - hence its name. The source of the illness was found to be bacterium in water droplets generated by an air conditioning system. There is a less serious variant which can lead to Pontiac Fever.

Where can it be found in the home?

All hot and cold water systems in any residential property, rented or owned, can be a potential source for legionella.

The main areas of risk are where the bacteria can multiply. Bacteria thrive in warm water between 20°C to 45°C which is relatively stagnant. For example a seldom used hot water pipe, water tanks with debris inside, water pipe dead-legs (redundant pipes which come off a water system but no longer have an outlet) or even a hot water tank which has been set at a low temperature. In ideal conditions, the bacterium have the potential to increase to hazardous levels.

Legionella can also multiply on limescale or rust which can build-up on taps or shower heads because it is less likely to be washed away.

How might I catch it?

To develop Legionnaires' Disease, a sufficient amount of the bacterium must reach the lungs. To do so, the bacterium must be in an aerosol form such as a fine mist or spray of water droplets. Legionella does not spread from person to person.

The most common source of mist and sprays at home are showers and from taps which are not hot or cold enough. So, if hazardous levels are reached and the bacteria does enter the air in sufficient quantity, it can be inhaled deep into the lungs which may lead to the infection Legionnaires' Disease.

How likely am I to catch it?

Legionnaires' Disease poses a higher risk to people over 45 years of age, smokers and heavy drinkers, people suffering from chronic respiratory or kidney disease, diabetes, lung and heart disease and anyone with an impaired immune system.

Symptoms include high temperature, fever or chills, headache, tiredness, muscle pain and/or a dry cough. If you are concerned at all seek medical advice.

Fortunately, Legionnaires' Disease is not very common in the UK. Of all the cases in the UK each year, about half are associated with a recent holiday abroad.

How can I avoid legionella?

- Make sure the temperature settings on your boiler or hot water system is set at 60°C
- Contact us if the boiler or hot water tank is not working properly
- Contact us if you find any debris or discolouration in the water
- Use all your taps at least once a week
- If you seldom use your shower, then flush it through by running it at a high temperature for at least two minutes once a week. Keep out of the way whilst this is being done to avoid inhaling any droplets; for example switch it on and then leave the room
- If you have a garden hose, slow run it for two minutes if you haven't used it for more than a week before using the spray
- Keep your taps and showerhead clean. In addition, every three months you should descale and disinfect them with a proprietary product - you should follow the instructions carefully. Most hardware stores and large supermarkets will stock them.

If you have been away for more than a week:

- Heat your water system to 60°C
- Slow run all taps for at least two minutes
- Flush the shower through as described above
- Flush the toilet with the lid down.



How to avoid condensation in the home

What is Condensation?

All homes suffer from condensation, especially in the winter. When the cold weather sets in, condensation can often occur when there is a build-up of moisture in the air. Warm damp air condenses and forms water when it cools: for example when it touches a cool surface. In your home these are outside walls, mirrors, windows, wall tiles and even clothes.



Why is condensation a bad thing in the home?

Condensation not only affects a property, but also the objects and belongings inside. Mould growth if not treated correctly will manifest at great speed and some areas will require treating and redecoration. Most importantly, it affects the health of those living within. You are one and a half times more likely to suffer from asthmatic symptoms if you live in damp or mouldy house. If you change the environment in your home you can reduce the asthma by about half.

There is always moisture in the air, but you create additional moisture in your home by:

- Cooking or boiling water
- Taking baths or showers
- Drying clothes indoors
- Watering plants
- Using paraffin or bottled gas heaters.



If this condensation cannot dry out it will cause mould to form on walls, in cupboards and on window sills, and mildew to form on clothes, especially leather goods.

What practical steps can I take to prevent condensation in my home?

There are many steps, big and small that you can undertake to help reduce condensation in the home.

- Open your windows from time to time to keep your house aired
- Open trickle vents on your windows if they have them
- Keeping doors closed while cooking or washing
- Always use extractor fans in bathrooms and kitchens - these are not expensive costing approx a £1 a year to operate.
- Treat existing areas of mould growth with fungicidal washes, available at most hardware stores or supermarkets.



Keep Warm this Winter

Top 10 Tips for keeping warm in winter inside and out

1. Keep your main living room around 70°F (21°C), and the rest of your home heated to at least 64°F (18°C).
2. Close the curtains at dusk and fit thermal linings if you can. This will keep the heat in.
3. Check the weather forecast so you can be ready for the cold weather.
4. Keep your bedroom window closed at night when the weather is cold. The coldest time of the day is just before dawn and breathing in cold air raises the risk of chest infections.
5. Make sure you keep your hands and face warm with a hat, gloves and scarf.
6. Wear layers - several thin layers of clothing keep you warmer as the layers trap warm air.
7. If you're sitting down, a shawl or blanket will provide a lot of warmth.
8. Keep your feet warm. Choose boots with non-slip soles and a warm lining, or wear thermal socks.
9. Wear warm clothes in bed. When very cold, wear thermal underwear, bed socks and even a hat – a lot of heat is lost through your head.
10. Use a hot-water bottle, wheat bag or an electric blanket to warm the bed, but never use a hot-water bottle and an electric blanket together as this can be dangerous.

REMEMBER - the colder your home, the higher the risk to your health.

Extra money to stay warm in winter

Most people born on or before 5 August 1953 are entitled to the Winter Fuel Payment in 2017-18 to help with heating costs. This is a tax-free payment of between £100 and £300 paid to you between November and December. Contact the Winter Fuel Payment helpline on 0345 9 15 15 15 to find out more.

If you receive pension credit, or certain other benefits, you're automatically paid a Cold Weather Payment when the temperature is 0°C (32°F) or below for seven days in a row.

You may be entitled to a Warm Home Discount on your electricity bill if you receive Pension Credit or if you're on a low income. It's a one-off discount usually made between October and March. Find out more at www.gov.uk/the-warm-home-discount-scheme

Never pour oil or fat down the drain

There's been a lot of coverage on the news and in social media recently about the consequences of pouring fat down the drain resulting in 'fatbergs'. This leads to terrible blockage in pipes and can eventually lead to sewer blocking and flooding.



What is a fatberg?

Perhaps you haven't come across this term before but fatbergs are essentially made up of grease and oil from the kitchen, and tissues and wipes from the bathroom, combined with other chemicals in the sewers to form a congealed chemical build up that blocks the pipes carrying water to wastewater treatment plants. Fatbergs can cause massive blockages and are very hard to shift.

Dispose with caution

If you do have leftover fat or oil from cooking simply let these cool before scraping the solid fat into your food waste bin for recycling if you have one or alternatively, pour them into a non-recyclable container and put it in with the household waste.

If you've used a small amount of oil for cooking, let the pan cool down then wipe out the fat/oil with kitchen roll and then throw it in the bin. You can then wash the pan in the sink or dishwasher.

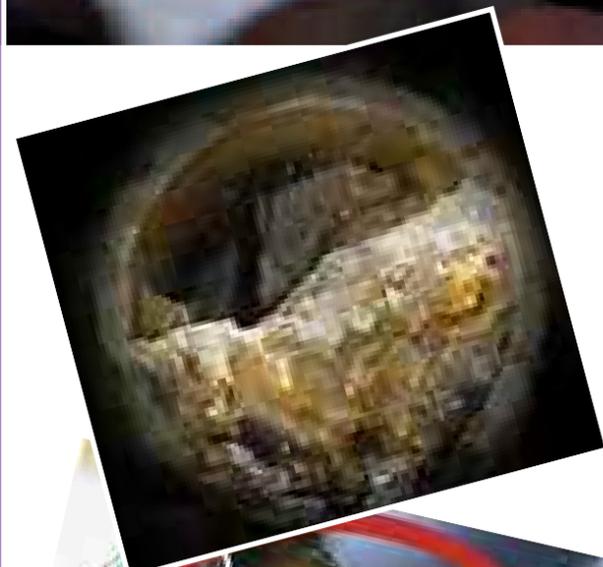
Dishes that still have oil on them after you've eaten can be wiped down with kitchen roll before you wash it up in the sink or dishwasher.

If fat does go down the drain

Sometimes fat and oils do end up down the drain by accident. If this does happen it's important that you flush the pipes with boiling water and a mixture of vinegar and baking soda in order to keep the fat from sticking to the walls of your drainpipes.

Top Tip

The most commonly used DIY drain cleaner is **one cup of baking soda mixed with one cup of cider vinegar**. The intense foaming action, followed by running plenty of hot water, is good routine maintenance. If you don't like the smell of vinegar you can replace this with lemon juice.



Saving Energy in your home

The cost of energy and water is going up every year so you want to make sure that you use as little as possible in your home. There are simple ways to do this without making life uncomfortable:

- Use low energy light bulbs
- Switch electrical appliances off when they are not in use: do not put them on standby
- Look for 'Energy Saving Recommended' ratings when buying appliances
- Use lower temperatures for washing
- Make sure the dishwasher or washing machine is full before you switch it on
- Set room heating to 18 °C - 21 °C and programme heating and hot water for when you need it
- Draught proof doors and windows
- If you do not have loft insulation grants may be available to install it
- Defrost your fridge and freezer regularly
- Only put the amount of water you need in the kettle to boil.



Comments & Compliments

FREEPOST CUSTOMER COMMENTS AND COMPLIMENTS

What are we getting right?

What are we doing wrong?

How can we improve?

We need your help, have YOU got any bright ideas?

Help us to identify areas where we can improve the service we provide. If you have any comments to make about the service you receive or wish to express a view about an article in this newsletter, why not write in and let us know.

The points I would like to raise are:-
(continue on a separate sheet if necessary)

Name:

Address:

Telephone:

Email:

Cut out and return this form to:

Jason Ham, Housing Complaints Co-ordinator
FREEPOST EX132, Exeter City Council, Paris Street, Exeter EX1 1RJ
or email your comments to housing.complaints@exeter.gov.uk

Whether sending in a complaint, a compliment or a comment about our service, you can be sure that we read all of your feedback and try to act on it accordingly. You can communicate to us via telephone, email, on our website, or in person by visiting the Civic Centre.

You can contact Jason Ham on 01392 265376 or housing.complaints@exeter.gov.uk

We will publish some of your customer comments and compliments in future issues of InSight.

A Positive Comment goes a long way...

It brings our housing teams great joy to hear from our residents with compliments about the service they have received.

We look after around 5000 properties around the city, so as you can imagine on a day-to-day basis the team are very busy working and a positive comment goes a long way!

Here are some of the compliments you have recently sent into us:

"Thank you for getting back to me promptly and thank you to your colleague for being so helpful."

"Thank you for sorting out the confusion over the back door..."

I'm very relieved to have it sorted out 2 weeks early."

"I want to express my gratitude and thanks for the excellent service received when asking for aids in my property. I'm delighted with the grab rails and railings!"

"I'm grateful for you for coming to my rescue! And getting the job sorted quickly."

As well as receiving compliments, we understand that we don't always get things right, and we genuinely want to hear from you if there is something we can do better. Whether it's a repair that you don't think was carried out properly, a complaint regarding some aspect of customer service received, a concern regarding works to outside spaces, or anything else, do let us know so we can investigate properly and see whether there is anything we can do to help. Your satisfaction is important to us, after all, you are our customers!

We want to make it easy for you to get in touch with us, either with a compliment or complaint. You can send your feedback through our website, email, via telephone, letter or in person by visiting the Civic Centre.

So what happens when you make a complaint?

Firstly, we acknowledge this via telephone/letter, it is then investigated thoroughly by the relevant officer. In ECC Housing, we operate a 15 day working deadline for any complaints that are received, and where possible we hope to seek a resolution before this time. We undertake regular reviews of complaints with managers across the housing department, to see whether we can take away any lessons to avoid similar complaints happening in the future.

The complaints reporting process is always being evaluated and improved where possible, so your feedback about your experience is important to us. Therefore, if you have previously submitted a complaint to us, you might be receiving a phone call from me to carry out a satisfaction survey.

Dealing with Unwanted Doorstep Callers

Unfortunately these days, not everyone who calls at your door may be a genuine caller, so you should always be on your guard. The person stood on your doorstep could be a legitimate caller, a rogue trader, or even a distraction burglar.

Follow the three step plan below and you'll always know exactly what to do.

Remember any genuine caller on legitimate business will accept they have to wait whilst you make the appropriate checks.

The Three Step Plan (Cut out and keep)

Remember genuine callers will accept they have to wait. It's your home - you don't have to let anyone in!

1. If in doubt, keep them out. It sounds simple, but if you don't let someone in - they will go away. Don't let them pressure you into opening your door.

2. Be prepared. Be in control. Think about what to say to any doorstep cold callers in advance. And keep a list of key contact numbers near your phone so you can check out legitimate callers using reliable contact numbers for them. You have the right to ask all other unwanted callers to go away and not return.

3. Call a neighbour or the police if you are suspicious of the cold caller. Contact a local relative or nominated neighbour who can help verify a cold caller. If you think someone is a rogue trader call 101. To report a distraction burglar or rogue trader who has taken your money and is still in the area - call 999.

If you have any suspicions about a cold caller they will more than likely continue knocking on doors in your neighbourhood until they find someone who may be vulnerable. If the police don't know about them - they can't do anything. So, if someone suspicious does call at your door, always report it and call 101 to help safeguard your community.

Guard yourself, family and friends against Identity Fraud and Theft

Identity Theft happens when fraudsters access enough information about someone's identity (such as their name, date of birth, current or previous addresses) to commit identity fraud. Identity theft can take place whether the fraud victim is alive or deceased.

Identity Theft can lead to fraud that can have a direct impact on your personal finances and could also make it difficult for you to obtain loans, credit cards or a mortgage until the matter is resolved.

Fraudsters can use your identity details to:

- Open bank accounts.
- Obtain credit cards, loans and state benefits.
- Order goods in your name.
- Take over your existing accounts.
- Take out mobile phone contracts.
- Obtain genuine documents such as passports and driving licences in your name.

The first you know of it may be when you receive bills or invoices for things you haven't ordered, or when you receive letters from debt collectors for debts that aren't yours

Protect yourself against Identity Fraud (cut out and keep)

Here are five simple steps to help protect yourself from financial fraud

- 1.** Never disclose security details, such as your PIN or full password - it's never okay to reveal these details.
- 2.** Don't assume an email request or caller is genuine - people aren't always who they say they are.
- 3.** Don't be rushed - a genuine bank or organisation won't mind waiting to give you time to stop and think.
- 4.** Listen to your instincts - if something feels wrong then it is usually right to pause and question it.
- 5.** Stay in control - have the confidence to refuse unusual requests for information

Combat Cold Callers - Register with the Telephone Preference Service

If you don't want to receive marketing calls, sign up your home phone and mobile to the Telephone Preference Service (TPS). It takes about 28 days for calls to stop. It's then illegal for firms in the UK and the rest of the EU to call those who have registered, unless you had opted in to receive them (including if you ticked the often confusing "allow third parties to contact me" box when filling in an online form). TPS may also stop distressing calls intended for a deceased relative.

How to add your number to the register depends on if it's a mobile or landline:

Landlines. Add your landline number at the tps website at www.tpsonline.org.uk or by calling **0345 070 0707**.

Mobiles. Text 'TPS' and your email address (required to verify your identity) to **85095**.

Older Persons' Property Services

Laundry facilities

All our Older Persons' Schemes that have laundry facilities will have been informed that they will now or soon will be able to pay by 50p for tumble driers and £1 for washing machines rather than tokens. We are rolling this out and it should be completed over the winter. We will also be considering changing the scooter charging points to coin operated! We have decided to make this change after tenant feedback - telling us this would make life easier!

Key boxes

In conjunction with the roll out of changing our hardwired call system to individual alarms, we have been fitting key boxes to the outside of flats on some of our schemes. This is necessary to allow access to the Emergency Services should an incident occur. Key boxes are the most secure way of allowing access and are used by many organisations.

OPPSO - A day in the life

Hello my name is Sarah Easton and I have recently joined ECC as an OPPSO.

Across the city we have 22 older person sites and my job, along with my two colleagues in the OPPSO - Older Persons Property Services Officer team - is to ensure the sites are run as smoothly as possible.

The day starts with a team briefing and responding to any emails or phone messages that come in overnight. This can range from questions about repairs to arranging changes of code to key safes where emergency services have been called out. There is a rota in place that changes every four weeks. This ensures we are all aware of issues happening at each scheme.

We head out across the city and whilst on site, carry out compliance checks to ensure fire alarms and emergency lights are tested to the required frequency and we run little used water outlets to comply with Legionella Safety Regulations. There are a number of weekly, monthly and three monthly checks that we carry out, such as ensuring fire doors close properly, means of escape are kept clear and that there are no hazards on the site that may impact on residents' safety. We check fire signage on site, making sure that all escape routes are clearly marked. Our primary concern is always the safety and wellbeing of our residents.

On each site there is a blue book kept in the common room where residents can request a home visit so we check these each time and help where we can. If we cannot respond to a resident's request directly we signpost them to the correct service.

When we return to the office we complete the necessary inspection records and deal with any issues that have come in whilst we were out.

"Alongside the routine health and safety work there is also the best part of the job, engaging and helping our residents where we can. This could just be helping to read a meter. We always try to take part in singalongs and other community events!"



You are invited to a Coffee Morning with our maintenance



All tenants and leaseholders of ECC are invited to take part in coffee mornings, hosted by Mears, at older persons' schemes. These coffee mornings are attended by a representative from Age UK to talk about the services they offer including insurance, the Age UK Careline, befriending service, wills, funerals etc.

Tenants are also invited to visit the local Age UK café in Exeter to encourage meeting new people and give them access to the popular trips that Age UK runs locally.

They also hold a raffle for a hamper of goodies which is very popular and bring cakes for the coffee morning.

"Tenants really appreciate the input from Age UK and the information they provide to make their lives easier and more interesting." Mears You don't have to live in older persons' accommodation to attend, so drop in for a chat!

Diary date

December 14 - Faraday House - Christmas theme

If you would like to attend and need more details about where these schemes are located contact Older Persons Property Support Officers on 01392 265338.



Christmas leftovers filling your fridge up?

Here are some tempting recipes to stop you from throwing them away

Turkey and Goat's Cheese Tarts

These tasty tarts are a great way to use up leftover chicken or turkey. If you don't have any goat's cheese you can use a soft cheese of your choice.

Serves 4 as a starter or light meal - Prep: 10 minutes - Cooking time: 15 minutes

Ingredients

350g pack light puff pastry sheet
100g pack soft goats' cheese, cut into 4 slices
100g cherry tomatoes, halved
100g leftover roast turkey, cut into 1cm dice
4 tsp redcurrant jelly
1 tsp pesto sauce (optional)

To make

Preheat the oven to 220°C, gas mark 7. Unroll the pastry and cut into 4 squares. Place a slice of goat's cheese in the centre of each pastry square and top with a quarter of the pesto, turkey and tomatoes. Place a tsp of redcurrant jelly on top of each and bake for 15 minutes until golden. Serve with a salad.



Christmas Pudding Trifle

Serves 6-8 - preparation time less than 30 mins - no cooking required

Turn leftover Christmas pudding into a new fun dessert with just a few simple ingredients!

Ingredients

400g leftover Christmas pudding (about half a large pudding)
2 tbsp dry sherry
400g tin pear halves in juice
150g mascarpone
1 square of dark chocolate
500g ready-made custard
300ml whipping or double cream
Handful of flaked almonds (optional)

To make

Break the Christmas pudding into chunks and place it in the bottom of a trifle bowl in an even layer. Sprinkle over the sherry and 1 tablespoon of the pear juice. Drain the pears and cut each one in half, then layer them on top of the cake. Beat together the custard and mascarpone and spoon on top of the pears. Whisk the cream until soft peaks form, then spoon it onto the custard. Finely grate over the chocolate and sprinkle over the flaked almonds, if using.

Gammon and Pea Soup

This warming soup takes only minutes to make using leftover cooked gammon and a few other simple ingredients.

Serve this with crusty bread and cheese as a light lunch or supper.

Serves 2-3 for a light lunch

Prep: 10 minutes

Cooking time: 15 minutes

Ingredients

1 tbsp oil, 1 onion chopped
1 litre chicken or vegetable stock
450g frozen peas, defrosted
250g leftover gammon, shredded

To make

Heat the oil in a large frying pan and fry the onion for 4-5 minutes. Add the stock and peas and bring to the boil. Reserve 100g gammon and add remaining to the soup. Cover and simmer for 10 minutes. Blitz with a hand held blender until smooth and stir in the reserved gammon and cook for 1-2 minutes.



Cranberry and Turkey Pasties

Make the most of leftovers from a Christmas meal by combining cooked turkey, cranberry sauce and stuffing in these festive pasties. They can also be frozen before cooking so any you don't need won't be wasted.

Serves 6 - Prep: 15 minutes

Cooking time: 20-25 minutes

Ingredients

500g pack shortcrust pastry
200g leftover roast turkey, diced
2 tbsp cranberry sauce
6 leftover stuffing balls, roughly chopped (140g)
50g low fat soft cheese
75g frozen peas, defrosted
1 medium egg beaten

To make

Preheat the oven to 200°C, gas mark 6. Roll out the pastry and cut 6 x 17cm (7") circles. Mix together the turkey, cranberry sauce, stuffing, soft cheese and peas and divide between the pastry circles. Brush the pastry edges with egg. Bring the edges up and press to seal well to form a pasty shape. Place the pasties on a baking tray, sealed edges facing up and brush with the egg. Bake for 20-25 minutes until golden.

Freezer advice - Assemble and freeze before cooking.

Thaw in the fridge or cool place before reheating. Reheat only once.



Love Food Hate Waste

If you are a family of four, you could be saving as much as £60 each a month by using leftovers. This is a huge opportunity for all of us to cut what we spend at the checkout simply by saving more of the food we buy from the bin.

Also saving food saves money and helps to slow down global warming and deforestation. Reducing the amount of food that ends up in the bin also means you can say goodbye to unnecessary packaging waste.

Find out more about the benefits of using leftovers and some great recipes at www.lovefoodhatewaste.com

Christmas Fun Facts

Speedy Santa - US scientists calculated that Santa would have to visit 822 homes a second to deliver all the world's presents on Christmas Eve, travelling at 650 miles a second.

Robins on cards were a joke 150 years ago when postmen wore red tunics and were named after them.

Mince Pies in Victorian times were made with beef and spices.

Wassailing or singing carols began as an old English custom called wassailing, toasting neighbours to a long life.

Christmas Trees - nearly 60 million are grown each year in Europe

The world's tallest Christmas tree was 221ft high and erected in a US shopping mall in Washington in 1950.

White Christmas - The chances of a white Christmas are just 1 in 10 for England and Wales, and 1 in 6 for Scotland and Northern Ireland.

BEFORE TURKEY, the traditional Christmas meal in England was a pig's head and mustard.

World's Biggest Snowman - In 1999, residents of the state of Maine in America built the world's biggest ever snowman. He stood at 113ft tall.

The Beatles hold the record for most Christmas number 1 singles, topping the charts in 1963, 65 and 67.

Christmas Movie - the highest-grossing Christmas movie to date is 'How the Grinch Stole Christmas.'

The First Christmas celebrated in Britain is thought to have been in York in 521AD.

Christmas pudding was originally a soup made with raisins and wine.



Snowman Wordsearch

Congratulation to Mr Haydon of Leypark Road who wins £20 of high street gift vouchers.

S	B	D	R	I	F	T
N	O	S	L	U	S	H
O	N	T	E	E	L	S
W	F	R	E	E	Z	E
M	I	C	I	C	L	E
A	R	E	T	N	I	W
N	E	G	D	E	L	S
H	E	A	T	O	B	O
R	O	I	J	A	B	L
E	S	T	A	N	G	E
L	L	E	C	H	I	L
F	E	F	K	H	D	R
F	A	A	F	R	E	E
U	R	E	R	I	F	S
M	C	L	O	M	N	N
S	T	A	S	H	U	S
B	I	T	T	E	R	F
S	C	O	R	E	R	P
G	Y	M	V	I	P	W
U	N	I	G	O	I	S
N	H	I	S	N	E	E
S	D	O	D	A	R	K

ICE HOT CHESTNUTS
FOG TANGERINES
FIRE CHILBLAINS
WIND JACK FROST
SNUG EAR MUFFS
COLD SNOWDROP
DARK DRENCHED
SLEET INFLUENZA
MUFFLER
BLANKET
SOPPING
SLEDGE
SNEEZE
WINTER
SHIVER
BITTER
POLAR
NIPPY
NUMB
LOGS
DRIFT
ICICLE
SLUSH
TOAST
FRIGID
ARCTIC
JUMPER
FREEZE
SNIFFLE
BONFIRE
CHILLING
FREEZING
CARDIGAN
SNOWMAN
SNOWBALL
TOBOGGAN

Win £20 of high street gift vouchers.

All you have to do is find the words listed in the grid. Words may read across, down or diagonally in any direction.

Please cut out your entry and fill in your details on the form provided. This competition is open to all residents and leaseholders of Exeter City Council. **Jane Norton, Housing Assistant, Exeter City Council, FREEPOST EX132, Civic Centre, Exeter EX1 1RQ before Wednesday 10 January 2018.**

NAME:

ADDRESS:

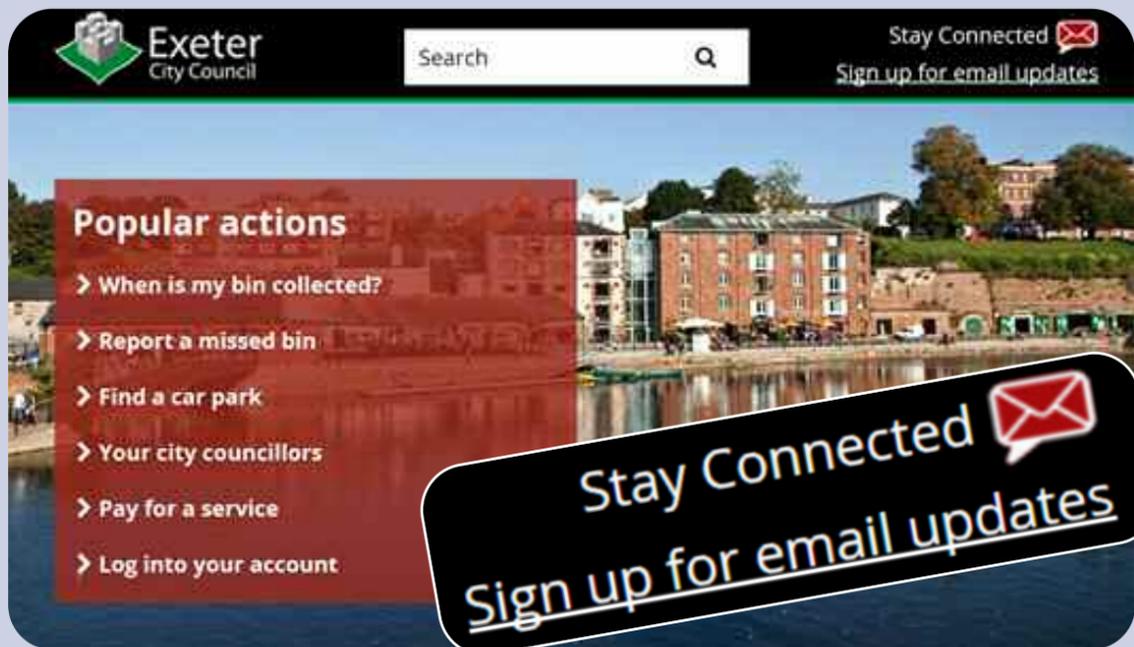
TEL NO:

Email:

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If you head to Exeter City Council's website (www.exeter.gov.uk) you can sign up for email updates in the top right hand corner. You can select the topics you are interested in - there are currently three that relate to housing including one for tenant and leaseholder news.



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Email: sarah.hemming@exeter.gov.uk

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WE ARE NOW ON TWITTER!

Follow us to get updates on how many homes are available for rent, the repairs service, cleaning service and much, much more about our work to meet housing need in the City. **@ECC_Housing So get tweeting!**



If you would like this information in other languages or formats, please contact: Landlord Services, Exeter City Council, FREEPOST EX132, Civic Centre, Exeter, EX1 1RQ

Tel: 01392 265033 or email: housing@exeter.gov.uk
www.exeter.gov.uk

The City Council is committed, both as an employer and as a deliverer of services, to ensuring that no recipient of services provided by the Council receives less favourable treatment on any grounds such as disability, ethnic origin, age, gender, sexual orientation, language, religion or belief, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, locality, property, birth or other status. The Council has also stated its commitment to ensuring that institutional racism and discrimination in general does not exist within Exeter.