

Useful numbers for you

Age Concern Day Care Services 01604 611 200	Northamptonshire Police 0300 0111222 (non-emergency calls)
Avoiding catching colds or flu 0845 4647or visit www.nhs.uk	Northants 50+ Network 01327 703626 (formerly Active Ageing)
Brackley Citizens Advice Bureau 0844 848 7922	Samaritans, Northampton 08457 909090
Care and Repair 01327 302322 (Daventry and South Northants)	South Northants Homes Repairs Team 0800 177 7001
Crimestoppers 0800 555 111	South Northants Homes Switchboard .. 08454 606888
Cold Weather Payments .. www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk	South Northants Council 01327 322322
Energy efficiency 0800 316 2805or visit www.warmfront.co.uk	South Northants Volunteer Bureau 01327 358264
Home Improvement Agencies 0145 789 1909	Towcester Area Door to Door (TADD) .. 01327 810300
Home Heat Helpline 0800 33 66 99	Volunteer Car Service (Brackley Area) .. 01280 841099
NHS Direct 0845 4647	Warm Front Scheme – 0800 316 2805or visit www.warmfront.co.uk
Northamptonshire Community 01604 636112	Wiltshire Farm Foods..... 0800 773773 (meals delivery service)
Law Service (Welfare Rights)	

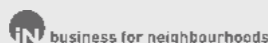
Police consultation event

What will boost your confidence in how police deal with crime and anti-social behaviour?

Northamptonshire Police and Police Authority are working with Daventry District and South Northamptonshire Safer Stronger Partnership to hold a consultation event in Towcester on **7 December 2009, 6.30-8.30pm, at Towcester Town Hall, 86 Watling Street, Towcester, NN12 6BS.** If you are unable to attend but would like to share your views please contact Anna Launay on **01604 887435** or complete a short survey on www.northants.police.uk For more information about this you can also contact SNH Community Development Team.

Wood Burcote House, Burcote Road,
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Registered address: Wood Burcote House, Burcote Road, Towcester, Northamptonshire, NN12 6TF
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The newsletter for South Northants Homes
retirement residents

ISSUE 1 | DECEMBER 09 |

SNH

Retirement News



Tenants on their trip to Northampton tenants forum.
Front row Becky Pavey, Brenda Gostelow, Malcolm Taylor, Elizabeth Darbin,
Back row Tio Gallant, Nick Rainey, Elaine Lovell, Roger Kightley

Welcome to your first edition!

Welcome to the first edition of SNH Retirement News from South Northants Homes!

This is a new publication which we aim to publish twice a year. It will be sent to all SNH residents living in retirement schemes and bungalows.

The newsletter is intended to be a mixture of fun items and information; we want to be able to tell you what has been happening within the Retirement Homes Service at SNH and we would really love to hear from you! For future editions, we would welcome any ideas for articles that you might have and also to contribute articles such as interesting hobbies, money saving tips or anything you feel our readers would be interested in. Why not join our SNH Retirement News panel – they have contributed to this edition by attending panel meetings and writing and suggesting articles. We have also had residents proof reading the articles from the comfort of their own homes.

Finally and most importantly we want you to enjoy SNH Retirement News, so if you would like to be part of developing your newsletter and would like to influence the next edition, please get in touch via your scheme manager/community warden or contact Retirement Homes Team on 08454 606 888. We are really looking forward to hearing your views, please send any articles you would like included in the next edition to:

**Retirement Homes, South Northants Homes,
Wood Burcote House, Burcote Road,
Towcester, Northants NN12 6TF**



Becky Pavey
Community Development Manager



Jayne Roycroft
Retirement Homes Manager



Meet the Retirement Homes Management Team

The SNH Retirement Homes Management team consists of manager Jayne Roycroft, and two team leaders – June McAlear who manages the north of the area which covers Cripps House, Raynsford House, Manning Watts House, and Haven Court, and Simon Barnes who manages the south area which includes Astrop Grange, Cheney Court, Bridgewater House, Meadow Court and Norton Court. As well as the schemes June and Simon also manage all the community residents and private lifeline accounts in their designated areas.

If you wish to speak to a member of the Retirement Homes Management team, you can contact them directly on the following telephone numbers:

Jayne Roycroft – 01327 357826

June McAlear – 01327 357828

Simon Barnes – 01327 357827



Have you heard of the Older Persons' Forum?

Do you have a representative living at your scheme who attends the Older Persons' Forum? Do you speak to your representative regularly about the Forum?

SNH Older Persons' Forum is a panel of SNH residents who live in retirement housing schemes and bungalows. The meeting is chaired by Henry Duffield who is a resident of Cripps House, Roade.

The Forum meets bi-monthly to discuss a range of topics related to Retirement Homes Services including Supporting People, Call Care Alarm Service, Policies and Procedures and new projects and initiatives.

The Older Persons' Forum is now held at different schemes each meeting, making it easier for you to come and observe the meeting and decide if you'd like to become a member. Transport is provided to meetings to ensure all our residents have the opportunity to be involved.

Currently, minutes of the Older Persons' Forum meetings are posted on scheme notice board. If you would like to receive minutes from the meetings then please speak to your community warden or scheme manager.

The Forum is currently under-represented and we would be interested to hear from you if you would like to join the Forum or if you have any items you would like to be brought up at the Forum.

For more information please contact SNH Community Development Team on 08454 606 888

Caption competition

Send us your caption for this photo and you could win a £25 shopping voucher. Please submit your captions for the photo by Friday 18 December 2009 to:

Caption competition, Retirement News, South Northants Homes, Wood Burcote House, Burcote Road, Towcester, Northants NN12 6TF.

All captions will be judged by the SNH Retirement News Panel.



Update from Retirement Homes

It has been a very busy and challenging year for us in Retirement Homes. We have been inspected by Northamptonshire Supporting People Team who fund our service, and were awarded a level 'B' which was a great achievement.

Our schemes hold a range of social activities in their communal lounges. The schemes also hire out their communal room to other agencies such as Age Concern. All activities are open to our residents whether you live in the vicinity or not – please contact the scheme manager for details.

The future for Retirement Homes is very exciting and one that will be progressed through engaging with our residents and listening to the comments about existing services and future services you would like to see implemented.

We have two exciting projects that we will be delivering in partnership with other organisations:

SNH and Places for People

SNH, working in partnership with Places for People, the Mayday Trust, Northampton Borough Council and St Mathews Housing have been successful in bidding for an exciting project, launched by Supporting People. The funding will provide a full time co-ordinator to encourage and support volunteering from residents across the partner organisations.

The service will be provided to our residents living in Milton Malsor, Roade, Blisworth, Towcester and Greens Norton. Some of the volunteering opportunities we are exploring are maintenance work for older/disabled people, computer skills, befriending and mentoring, life skills and special interest groups such as poetry, bird watching or crafts. It is hoped that this project will be running in the New Year, more details will be published when the scheme is launched. If you are interested in volunteering your time please contact Community Development Team on **08454 606 888**.

Village Agent Pilot

SNH has been asked by Supporting People to run a pilot programme in Greens Norton and surrounding areas, for a 'Village Agent'. The purpose is to reach out to vulnerable people living in rural areas and provide a signposting/referral service for them, working closely with other agencies such as Age Concern, Fire Prevention and local practitioners. The service will be aimed at all tenures (owner occupiers, privately rented), primarily older people but we will provide the support wherever it is needed. The pilot will run for 12 months, with a view to extending the service to other areas with proven demand.

Home Fire Safety



SNH want all their tenants to be safe from fire. All of our retirement homes accommodation have working smoke alarms that are checked monthly by the scheme manager or community warden.

Smoke alarms are essential as they are an early warning sign if there was a fire in your home. We are progressing with our Tunstall emergency alarm system upgrade programme and once complete, all properties will have a smoke detector and a heat detector, which is linked to our central emergency control room.

Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service have a Home Fire Safety Check Scheme which is free to the public. By ringing **0800 38 999 50** you can arrange for a fire fighter to visit your home to give advice on how to prevent fires and other hazards. They will also install free smoke alarms if required.

One SNH tenant and involved member of the Older Persons' Forum, Alan Springett, had a free Home Fire Safety Check and has nothing but good praise for the service he received:

"The fireman conducted a thorough check of my home to ensure there were no hazards that could cause a fire. I would recommend the service to everyone because they were very friendly and full of good advice. They also made me think about a fire escape plan and what we would do in the event of a fire."

Do you have a good eye for a bargain?

Nick on the SNH Retirement News Panel is keen to pull together all these top tips into a regular article to feature in future editions of this newsletter. If you have any good money saving ideas he would love to hear from you. Please send your ideas to Nick at: nick1936@gmail.com

Make sure you're claiming all your benefits

£3 billion top-up benefits go unclaimed each year. This month marks the sixth anniversary of the launch of Gordon Brown's flagship Pension Credit scheme. Are you eligible for the scheme?

You need to be over 60 to claim the guarantee credit and over 65 for the saving credit. Generally you will receive guaranteed credit if your weekly income is less than £130 if you are single, £198.45 if you are a couple. For saving credits you can have an income of £181 if you are single and £266 if you are a couple and still receive some benefit. All these amounts may be higher if you are severely disabled or have a carer. There is no savings limit for Pension Credit but if you have over £6000 this will reduce the amount you get. You can get a claim form by phoning the Pension Credit Line on **0800 99 12 34**.

Scheme Focus

Each edition we want to focus on one of our Retirement schemes to keep you informed of what's been going on.



Norton Court is our Sheltered Scheme situated in the lovely village of Greens Norton, close to the town of Towcester. Norton Court is made up of 6 bungalows, 12 two bedroom flats, 12 one bedroom flats and 5 bed sits. Ann Muxlow is their very enthusiastic scheme manager who has put on a fun filled timetable of activities including quizzes, bingo, coffee mornings, lunch clubs, line dancing and skittles.

The scheme has been very busy fundraising in their communal lounge this year, and so far they raised and donated the following: -

- Red Nose Day - March.....£95.00**
- Strawberry Tea - June£233.00**
- Race for Life - July.....£440.00**
- Air ambulance - Sept.....£181.50**
- Macmillan - Sept£211.50**

Well done to Ann Muxlow the scheme manager and all the tenants and friends of Norton Court who participated.

The Towcester Toy Library

One of our involved residents from our Older Persons' Forum and SNH Retirement News Panel, Mrs Doreen Shelmerdine volunteers her time at the Towcester Toy Library.

Doreen came to Towcester from Morecombe and was keen to find interesting ways to keep busy. Doreen first started volunteering at the local infant school as a reader, and then moved on to working in the Toy Library.

Doreen says "The Toy Library is a warm and friendly environment where you and your children can meet and make new friends. The library has two sections, one is a large room with toys of every description, from cars and toy kitchens to dressing up clothes where the



children can play while you can chat and keep an eye on them. The other area is a room full of toys that you can hire for two weeks and this is where I help. I sit at a table to check out toys in the same way as a book library. After two weeks the toys are returned and checked for any damage and missing parts, and then they are cleaned and put away."

If you have an interesting hobby that you would like to share in the next edition of SNH Retirement News please contact us.

Handyperson Service

Since its creation, the Handyperson Service has developed into a scheme highly valued by many of our elderly and vulnerable residents. The main aim of the service is to assist with small repairs and minor DIY jobs around the scheme, which would normally be considered the responsibility of the resident or a family member or friend.

A handyperson visits each retirement scheme and the surrounding community once a week and, as well as undertaking small jobs around residents' homes, they do minor adaptations such as fitting grab rails and small repairs. The work required should be minor and take no longer than about two hours.



Handyman Jim Prosser

Handyman Geoff Rooke

Examples of the types of jobs a handyperson can carry out include:

- minor decorating
- fitting curtain rails, coat hooks and shelves
- easing doors after the fitting of new carpets
- fitting additional home security measures
- clearing blocked sinks and external gully grids.

In certain circumstances, larger jobs can be undertaken; however, agreement must be sought in advance. Unfortunately, we must keep these larger jobs to a minimum so that we can maintain regular access to the service for all residents.

If you would like the handyperson to visit you, please contact your scheme manager or community warden.

A blast from the past

One of our residents, Mr Dudley Bass, was a member of the RAF Regiment from 1950-1953 and they were known as the 'rockapes' after the monkeys who live on Gibraltar rock.

Mr Bass is a subscriber to the RAF magazine, which comes out quarterly and he noticed a name in the magazine, which he recognised from his regiment days. Mr Bass instantly thought "that has to be my old friend and fellow soldier Mr M Duke whom I have not seen in 55 years!" So Mr Bass got in contact with a friend of a field representative from his old regiment, who then got in contact with his old army friend. From there the two friends got in touch, met up at Weston-Super-Mare and spent a day in a lovely caravan talking about old times and sharing a hearty meal.

Mr Bass has also met other friends through this magazine and he has remained in contact with them ever since finding them again.

// It is beautiful, I never thought we'd meet up again, we get on just like we did when we first met //

Above: From left to right, Mr Dudley Bass and Mr M Duke.
Above top Mr Dudley Bass and Mr M Duke in their Regiment days.



Children bring gifts to Meadow Court scheme

Pupils from Towcester Primary School kindly volunteered their time to celebrate the Harvest Festival with some of our older residents.

The pupils, along with two teachers, visited Meadow Court and delivered carrier bags of food to the wonderfully surprised residents. They all took it in turns to push the wheelbarrow carrying the bags of food and they all had a chance to meet and talk with the residents.

The residents were very happy to receive the generous harvest gifts from the pupils. One resident said "it was lovely for the youngsters to visit us in our homes and the gifts were lovely."



SNH wish to say a big thank you to Towcester Primary School, its pupils and to the teachers who delivered the food – you really did put a smile on the faces of our residents!

Major Works Programme

Mears have been appointed to carry out our internal modernisation programme. We understand that having workmen in your home can be a worry, so SNH will ensure that during the works Mears will:

keep you fully updated on the schedule of works being carried out

ensure any noise, dust, disruption to normal service or other inconvenience caused will be kept to a minimum

leave you with running water and cooking facilities at the end of each day

ensure workmen will turn up on time and appointments made are kept

ensure your property will be left tidy at the end of each day until the works are completed and remove all rubbish created from the works

always carry identification. Please ensure that all operatives have identification before letting them into your home.

PLEASE DO NOT ALLOW ANY PERSON INTO YOUR HOME THAT CANNOT VERIFY THEIR IDENTIFICATION

Your questions answered

What is the role of Mears customer care officer?

The customer care officer should be your first point of contact if you have any questions regarding the work to your property. They will arrange appointments for the works to be carried out, send you letters reminding you of the agreed dates and will visit you each day to check you are happy with how the work is progressing.



Who will be working in my home?

A multi-skilled team will be allocated to carry out the works in your home with specialist support from other contractors. At all times staff and workmen will have identity badges, with their own personal reference number and photograph. There will also be a site manager and customer care officer.

Do I have to have the modernisation works done?

No, but SNH is committed to bringing all our properties up to the Decent Homes Standard, which forms part of our Offer Document promises. We would therefore prefer to carry out the modernisations as part of the Major Works Programme timetable. However, if you do not want the works to be carried out at your property please discuss this with the tenant liaison officer in the first instance.

What should I do with my appliances, possessions and belongings?

Before the work starts you should remove all your pots, pans, foods and other items in your kitchen and bathroom. Your washing machine, dryer, fridge, freezer, dishwasher and other appliances may need to be fully removed from the kitchen area for the duration of the works.

What if I am unable to remove all my possessions?

We appreciate that not all our tenants will be able to remove their possessions. If you are unable to and do not have any family members that can assist you, please inform your customer care officer as they may be able to help.

If you have any other questions or concerns regarding the Major Works Programme then please contact SNH on 08454 606 888 or Mears Projects on 01604 878490.