

Sheltered Housing Herald



Spring 2024



EDITORIAL

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To receive your *Sheltered Housing Herald* by email instead of on paper, just email independent.living@cambridge.gov.uk

From Laura Adcock, your Housing Services Manager

Welcome to the Spring issue of your *Sheltered Housing Herald*. It's full of news about what's going on at your Independent Living Service schemes, as well as lots of support that's available to you from the wider Council and around town.

Our Activity Coordinator, Olivia James-Watts, brings you updates on activities at your schemes, and is reaching out for some of you to help with them too. As part of getting more active and out there for Spring, we also bring you a feature on the wide range of free activities to combat loneliness that are offered by local organisation *COPE*, and by other organisations over the phone and online.

Our focus this time is on Brandon Court, with Olivia doing a detailed interview there with resident Harmony, who leads up their Social Club. Harmony explains how that activity also led to her becoming a high-level tenant representative on wider issues.

The Council's Financial Inclusion Team are reaching out to you on page 8 of this edition to ask you to get in touch if you are struggling with the cost of living. They can offer a friendly, confidential support service to get your budget running smoothly again.

This time we bring you another chance to return our Internet Questionnaire, so we can help you get fully online if you're not. And page 9 brings an invitation from the lovely *Computers, Coffee & Cake* seniors' club at the Meadows Community Centre in Arbury, where they also offer you that free computer support in person.

This issue also includes our nutritionist's tips for healthy ageing and a simple, low-cost, tasty recipe that helps protect your brain and memory. And we have our Puzzle Page to keep that brain busy too.

Please continue to send us your suggestions for articles, news or interviews. You could just tell them to your ILF or if you use email, email them to opendoor@cambridge.gov.uk

With kind regards, Laura



PEOPLE & NEWS



Receive Activities Updates by email

Would you like to be updated regularly on all our schemes' trips and activities by email? If so, please email Olivia.James-Watts@cambridge.gov.uk or phone me at 07849-400542.



ILS needs a Quiz Master! Could it be you?

We are on the hunt for a **Quiz Master** to help us deliver monthly quizzes in some of our schemes. If you reckon you've got the gift of the quiz, let me, Olivia, know by phoning 07849-400542.

"Hello again everyone. Thank you all for welcoming me into your schemes since I started in October. I am very pleased to have lots to update you on: see our **Activities Update** section below.

My focus at the moment is on making sure that all our residents are aware of what is happening at other schemes. We want you to feel free to go along and meet other ILS residents at them. You will now find an '**All schemes activity calendar**' up on your scheme's **Notice Board**. Please do go and have a look at it, and see if there is anything you fancy among the activities happening at other schemes.

You can also contact me, Olivia, with any suggestions you may have for activities. Just phone 07849-400542 or email Olivia.James-Watts@cambridge.gov.uk"



OLIVIA'S ACTIVITIES UPDATE

New Strength and Balance Class at Ditton Court

We are very pleased to have gained further funding for a new Strength and Balance Class! This will be at Ditton Court on Fridays at 11am. All welcome, the cost will be £2.50 per session.

New activities at Ditchburn Place - All are welcome!

We also have a new Film Afternoon and Craft Session once a month at Ditchburn Place. We would love to see tenants from other schemes at these. Film afternoons are on the last Monday of the month at 2pm. Craft sessions are on the third Thursday of the month at 2pm. There is a small charge of £2 per person to cover costs.

Book Club

Do you enjoy reading, and would also enjoy getting to know tenants from other schemes? We are starting up an **Independent Living Schemes Book Club**! Register your interest by phoning me, Olivia, at 07849-400542.



KNOW YOUR SHELTERED SCHEMES



Guess the scheme... Did you manage to identify the Mystery Scheme that was pictured in the last edition? It's pictured again here, on the top left. Answer: It was Talbot House. Why not get to know some of its residents by going over there and joining in with some of the organized activities there?

Now try this edition's **Mystery Scheme**: can you identify the Independent Living Scheme pictured here, second on the left? Maybe you know someone who lives there - or you could go over to join in with their activities and get to know them...?

FOCUS ON...BRANDON COURT

Meanwhile, in this edition we focus on Brandon Court sheltered scheme (pictured, bottom left). Brandon is located in Prospect Row, just behind the police station. It's within convenient walking distance both of the city centre and the Grafton shopping centre.

Brandon has 30 flats spread across 3 floors, with full lift access to the upper floors. As part of their private accommodation, Brandon residents enjoy a fitted kitchen, lounge and dining area, and wet-room shower.

And Brandon's communal facilities include a further shared lounge, meeting room, kitchen and enclosed garden. Outside there's a clothes-drying area, storage for bikes and buggies, with a limited number of parking spaces, including some disability parking.



RESIDENT INTERVIEW: With HARMONY, social club leader at Brandon Court

As we saw on page 2, Olivia James-Watts develops and raises awareness of activities for residents across all your schemes. Here, Olivia sits down with Brandon Court resident Harmony, (pictured overleaf on page 4). Harmony leads the residents' social club at Brandon Court.

In fact, we're looking for residents to help lead or organize similar activities at each scheme. As you read about Harmony's activities, have a think. Could you do something similar - in your own way and your own style - at your scheme? If so, why not phone Olivia today and have a chat with her about it, at 07849-400542?



RESIDENT INTERVIEW

Olivia: Hi Harmony. Thank you for the organizing that you're doing at Brandon Court. What were activities and social events like when you first moved in there?

Harmony: There was very little happening. Just the Friday morning *Coffee Morning*.

Olivia: What made you decide to volunteer with the Social Club?

Harmony: Our Independent Living Facilitator Larissa was encouraging us to get a Social Club up and running again, so we could regain access to funds left over from previous Social Clubs and Coffee Mornings.

I strongly believe that if you want something to happen, you have to be prepared to do it yourself, and I wanted social activities!

I believe too that community is as important as environment, and that sharing social activities is a good way to build community. Also, I am a qualified bookkeeper so the accounts side of things didn't scare me.

Olivia: What do you personally gain from organising the activities at Brandon Court?

Harmony: Well, to start with, I always know what's happening! I make lots of social connections from attending the activities, which stops me from getting lonely. I enjoy the Craft Club and Film Night in particular. It helps me keep in touch with what is happening around me, and has given me the confidence to also apply to become a Tenant Representative and sit on the Council's Housing Scrutiny Committee.

This is something that has become more important to me, as I have seen how easy it is for the needs of the elderly and disabled to be overlooked by those who do not understand those needs. So I will be a Tenant Representative from April onwards, as a direct result of my engagement with the Social Club here!

Olivia: What feedback have you had from other tenants about the activities on offer at Brandon Court?

Harmony: Many tenants have expressed appreciation for the range of activities being offered. Sometimes they make suggestions for other activities which we always attempt to try out. But there does sometimes seem to be some reluctance from people to try new activities. It does tend to be the same residents who attend all activities. I would like to see this widen out but really don't know how to encourage other residents to get more involved.

I would also like to invite residents from other schemes to come join us in our activities here at Brandon - the more, the merrier!



"I always know what's happening! I make lots of social connections from attending the activities, which stops me from getting lonely. And I will be a Tenant Representative from April onwards, as a direct result of my engagement with the Social Club here!" ~ Harmony, Brandon Court resident

Meadows Bowlers

(on carpet)

Meadows Community Centre, 299 Arbury Road, CB4 2JL. Every Thursday 2-4 pm. £3 per session, including refreshments.

Men's Social Group,

Mondays 2-4pm. Cards, dominoes, scrabble, chess, curling and darts.

'Young At Heart'

Women's Social Group,

Fridays 2-4pm.

Both at Cherry Hinton Leisure Centre, Colville Road, CB1 9EJ. Email Julie.howard@gll.org or phone 01223-576412.



COPE (Cambridge Older People's Enterprise) is a wonderful local organization that supports, brings together and entertains older people in Cambridge. It has over 3,000 registered members in Cambridge! (Some are pictured above, on a ramble, beneath a great oak.) Membership is free, and makes you automatically a member of this big friendship network of older people around town. *COPE* opens the doors to dozens of different groups and activities. It also entitles you to their regular *Newsletter*, full of news and activities. To become a COPE member, just phone 01223-364303, or download their membership form from their website at www.copecambs.org.uk/membership.html

Talking Together – These are COPE's inspiring group phone meetings for older people, especially those who may be housebound or find it hard to get out. They are entertaining free events over the phone - cultural talks given by experts on topics from history to books to nature, and you just attend over the phone! To register for the next series, phone 01223-364303 or email cambridgecope@hotmail.co.uk

Here's just a selection from the many other groups that COPE recommend. Why not reach out and try one, or bring a friend along and try it together?

Arbury Artists Watercolour Painting Classes: Tues 10am-12noon, Meadows Community Centre, 299 Arbury Road, CB4 2JL. Tel. Celia Conway, 01223-523680.

Supervets - Older People's Football. Abbey Leisure Centre Complex Astro turf, CB5 8NT. Email Helena.knock@gll.org or phone 01223-576412.

Coffee Morning every Weds, Methodist Church, Castle Street, 10.30-12 noon, plus **Strength & Balance Class**, noon-1 pm (£3 per session). Phone Amanda at 01223-354904.

Women's Institute Meeting, Church End, Cherry Hinton, every Monday. Phone Margaret at 01223-249247 or email kjrmdp19@btinternet.com

Cambridgeshire Companions: A lunch club for the single over 50s. Phone Celia at 01223-523680.

Chesterton Knitters meet on the 1st Thursday of each month, 2.30-4.30pm, at Café 121, 121 Milton Road, Cambridge. Bring your own knitting work if you wish. Phone Eileen at 01223 369376 for details.

Grovebury Ladies Club: Meets Tuesdays, 7.30-9.30pm, Arbury Community Centre, Campkin Road, Cambridge. Phone Barbara at 01223-570707.

Tea@3, St Giles Church, Castle Street, Cambridge every Wed, 3pm.

DON'T STAY LONELY: NEW FRIENDS ARE WAITING...



Friday Friends

Knitting, crafts, scrabble and cards, 1.30-3pm every Friday at the Family Centre, Fishers Lane, Cherry Hinton CB1 9HR. Phone Nic or Jo at 01223-561139.

It is normal for anyone to feel lonely at times. But in fact, if you feel lonely, you are not alone - over 9 million people nationwide say they have often felt down with loneliness!

The NHS strongly recommend that **talking to someone about it is a key step** for feeling better. And there are solutions for loneliness all around you in our sheltered schemes, around the city and at the other end of the phone. So please do take at least one of these actions today: -

Tell your Independent Living Facilitator (ILF) how you're feeling. Say you saw this article in the newsletter and want to take some of the steps below. Ask them to help - and they will!

Attend an activity at one of our sheltered schemes - either at your own, or another scheme. Ask your ILF to help you go. From coffee-mornings to bingo, there really is something for everyone.

Get connected up with a 'Buddy'. Tell your ILF you'd like a 'Buddy' from the *Buddying* scheme at Stanton House, to be a regular friend for you.

Get a regular Phone Buddy. Many organisations provide a weekly phone call for a regular chat and catch-up. You can request this free service by phoning *The Silver Line*, a Helpline for older people set up by Esther Rantzen, on 0800-470-8090. Or phone *Independent Age* on 0800-319-6789 or *Age UK* on 0800-678-1602. Say you'd like them to phone you regularly. *Friends of the Elderly* also offer phone buddies, where a volunteer phones you at least every fortnight: phone them at 0330-332-1110 or email hello@fote.org.uk

Local libraries have activities to support social contact and wellbeing – go along and ask at their desk. They can also offer a *Library at Home* service, where volunteers bring books to your home if you can't visit a library. Phone 0354-045-5225 for information.

Community Navigators at the *Care Network* will inform you about suitable events and services in your community: phone them at 01223-300460.

Fill in our Internet questionnaire on page 9 of this newsletter and we'll help you get online, where we can connect you with a world of resources to prevent loneliness, such as audio **interviews by the Red Cross** with people experiencing loneliness. They discuss what it feels like and what is helping them. Visit www.redcross.org.uk/about-us/news-and-media/podcasts/the-kind-place-podcasts



Tasty, affordable foods that protect your brain

Scientists have documented places around the world - such as certain islands in the Mediterranean and a peninsula in Japan - where many people enjoy full health until at least 75, and can expect to live quite well till they reach 100.

These people are also especially good at retaining their mental faculties into advanced old age, with less depression and dementia than in other societies. The scientists found that being socially active, physically active and eating a good diet are all important for achieving those extra years of good health. And the good news is that eating similar foods to these elderly people can help you live longer too!

Most people know that oily fish is good for their brain. But studies have also found that eating lots of plant foods such as fruit, vegetables and whole-grain cereals - and importantly, *avoiding* junk food - is also very important for brain health.

When it comes to fruit, red berries stand out as being particularly beneficial for the brain, and the darker the berry, the better. Blackberries and blackcurrants are particularly recommended, and blueberries and red currants are good too.

As for vegetables, some of the most effective veggies for slowing mental decline are the green leafy ones. Again, the darker the better, as this means the leaves are rich in these all-important brain nutrients. Darkest and best of all is a very dark type of Italian kale called 'Cavolo Nero'. Kale is now widely available, but spinach is good too.

Regular oily fish, berries and green leafy veg are 'superfoods' for protecting your brain but remember, they must be part of an overall healthy diet! Eating lots of junk food alongside them can undo the benefits they bring you.

Tips for shopping and storing

Fresh berries are seasonal and don't stay fresh for long. But bags of frozen berries are a great substitute, and just as good nutritionally. You can defrost a small bowlful at a time, in the microwave if you wish, and sweeten them with a little sugar or honey.

Kept in the fridge, this makes a great breakfast topping for porridge or muesli, or with yogurt it makes a delicious snack or dessert later in the day.

Similarly, frozen leafy veg such as spinach is a great standby. As well as being a great vegetable on its own, spinach can also be added to many cheap, tasty stews and soups, as demonstrated by our easy recipe overleaf.

**Healthy Ageing with
Dr. Richard Hoffman**

**Registered Nutritionist
University of Hertfordshire**



Eat your greens!

Eating lots of them is one of the best things you can do to protect your brain and memory.

Ribollita

This is a thick vegetable soup from Italy that tastes good reheated the next day too (its name, Ri-bollita, means 're-boiled').

- 1 medium carrot
- 1 medium onion
- 1 stick of celery (or replace this with a little celery salt)
- 1 potato
- a good handful of kale or spinach (fresh or frozen)
- tin of white beans
- 2 tomatoes, or some tomato puree
- a teaspoon of dried mixed herbs
- 1-2 tablespoons of olive oil (or other vegetable oil)
- salt and pepper

Roughly chop the carrot, onion, potato and celery (if using) and gently fry them in the oil in a covered saucepan for 5-10 minutes. Stir occasionally to avoid sticking.

Add the tomatoes or tomato puree, the dried herbs and salt and pepper and cook for a couple of minutes. Add 1-2 pints of water depending on how thick or thin you like your soup, and simmer gently. (I like my soups almost as thick as stews: I call them *stewps*!)

Meanwhile, in another pan cook the kale or spinach in a small amount of water until soft. When cooked, lift out the leaves and chop them. Then add both the chopped leaves and their cooking water in to your main soup.

Cook until all the vegetables are soft. Add the tin of white beans last, just simmering enough until they are heated through. For an extra-filling meal with even more taste, you can chop bread into cubes, fry them for a minute in olive oil in a different pan, and dot them on top of your *Ribollita*. Delicious, filling, cheap and super-healthy!

SUPPORTING YOU WITH THE COST OF LIVING

For advice on how to maximise your income, book an appointment with one of the Council's friendly **Financial Inclusion Officers** by phoning 01223-457000 or emailing incometeam@cambridge.gov.uk They offer free, confidential one-to-one appointments to:

- check your income and your outgoings, to achieve a balanced budget for you
- check whether you are receiving all the benefits you may be entitled to
- see whether you are eligible for financial support with your rent, moving costs or essential items in your home
- help you apply for those further supports

Another safe place they recommend for financial tips, support and money-saving is the *Making Money Count* website at <https://makingmoneycount.org.uk>





WANT TO GET ONLINE, OR DO MORE ONLINE?

Why not go along to the free **Computers, Coffee & Cake Club** for seniors at the Meadows Community Centre, 299 Arbury Road, CB4 2JL? Their friendly poster invitation is here on the right.

It's a warm gathering where you'll be helped to get online, in a relaxed setting over hot drinks and cakes! It's on Tuesdays 10am-noon. For more information, phone 01223-300407 or email help@cambridgeonline.org.uk

Or if you'd like some help or support at home in your own scheme, in this edition again we ask you to fill in our short **Internet Questionnaire** below, if you didn't do so after the last edition. It will enable us to give you whatever support you need to make the best use of the internet and email.

From training and guidance to equipment or advice, just let us know what you need to get fully comfortable online. So please do fill in the questionnaire below if you haven't. Then cut it out and hand it to your ILF. Or for more information, phone Ditchburn Place at 01223-457199 and speak to Olivia or Teresa.



Do you currently use the internet or email? YES / NO

Do you have all the knowledge and equipment you need to access the internet easily? YES / NO

Would you like to learn to use internet and email, or learn to do more with them? YES / NO

What equipment do you currently have, if any, for getting online?

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Are you signed up to the Customer Portal on the City Council's webpage? YES / NO

Your Name.....

Your Address.....

Your Tel.....

Your email address (if any).....

If you'd also like your family to receive information so they can help you be online, please give us their email address (if they consent to it being shared with us, solely for this purpose)

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Sudoku

This time we have two new Sudokus to exercise your brain!

Remember, every 9-box square inside the bigger square must be filled in with numbers from 1 to 9 inclusive. You can't repeat the same number within the same row, column or square-of-9 box. Each full vertical column in the whole image must only contain each number from 1 to 9 once. And each full horizontal row in the whole image can only contain each number from 1 to 9 once. Good luck! Answers will be in the next edition.



				9				
	7	5						2
		4			1	3		6
				8			6	
			4		6		8	
		7						
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6	2	3				8		
			7					9
		8						2
		2	6	5				4
				8	9	1		
						9		3

The answers to last edition's Puzzle Page:

Creamy Italian dessert (meaning 'Pick-me-up' in Italian): *Tiramisu*

International alliance that is called OTAN in French: *Nato*

Abbreviation using the first letter of each word: *Acronym*

A word that means the opposite: *Antonym*

Letters of a word re-arranged to make another word: *Anagram*

The shortest stretch of water between Russia and America: *Bering Strait*

Also known as 'Big Foot': *Yeti*

Last edition's *Sudoku* and its solution are here on the right:-

2	5			9			4
					3		7
7			8	5	6		1
4	5		7				
		9				1	
				2		8	5
	2		4	1	8		6
6	8						
1		2			7		8

2	1	5	3	7	9	8	6	4
9	8	6	1	2	4	3	5	7
7	3	4	8	5	6	2	1	9
4	5	2	7	8	1	6	9	3
8	6	9	5	4	3	1	7	2
3	7	1	6	9	2	4	8	5
5	2	7	4	1	8	9	3	6
6	4	8	9	3	7	5	2	1
1	9	3	2	6	5	7	4	8