



# Waveney Tenants Magazine

Produced by tenants and officers for you

Winter 2018



## WAVENEY TENANTS MEET THE HOUSING MINISTER

See page 5

**WIN  
GREAT  
PRIZES**

See pages 7, 9 & 10



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@waveneydc



@eastsoffolkcouncils

## The Editor's point of view

New year and a new leaf for our Tenants Magazine. Did any of you miss the Christmas edition? We thought that you might enjoy the old mag a little better after the hustle and bustle of the festivities died down. And I was fed up of clip art Santa's, so I gave him the sack.

There have been some changes to your editorial team, new faces joining and old ones stepping out and moving on. Dave Howson who has been a key team member for many years has taken up a new post (see article p 4). He will be very much missed by myself and fellow Tenant Representatives. We all wish Dave well in his new role and thank him for all his warmth and dedicated service over the years. He will still be contributing to the magazine, but you can expect to hear from some fresh new voices. Add your own voice to the mix and send us a letter before that page grows cobwebs and becomes a permanent poets corner, there is a prize to be won.

Talking of great prizes check out pages (9 & 10) for two great chances to win big. Enjoy doing the word search flip it over and complete a short survey, which will help the department provide a better quality of service too you its customers. Enjoy doing one or both but remember you've got to be in it to win it! And we do really want to hear your feedback.

Lastly let me Just say a warm welcome to our new girl Sam. Dave with size 11 feet leaves a big hole to fill but Sam has hit the ground running, she is enjoying getting to know her new staff and looking forward to meeting you and the challenges ahead (see article p 4).

Regards, Ali Smith, Editor



## Meet the humans at the heart of housing Introducing Samantha Shimmon

**“Describe yourself in three words, or thereabouts?”**

*“Honest, conscientious and kind.”*

**“What do you find most rewarding about your job?”**

*“Being able to help people in their darkest hour.”*

**“What did you want to be when you grew up?”**

*“A helicopter pilot in the Navy.”*

**“What’s your favourite album or tune at the moment?”**

*“I like a bit of everything.”*

**“Do you have any pets?”**

*“Two moggies called Poppy and Daisy.”*

**“If you could have a super power what would it be and why?”**

*“I hate aeroplanes, so I’d love to be able to fly.”*

**“If you could put one thing into room 101 what would it be?”**

*“Companies that actively hide their telephone number, they drive me mad.”*

**“What’s your favourite film?”**

*“I love anything Disney, The Lion King’s great.”*

**“What was the last book you read?”**

*“Pharaoh by Wilber Smith.”*

**“I know you work hard Sam, but what do you like to do in your spare time?”**

*“I love to read and enjoy getting out for walks with my Husband.”*

Editor Ali Smith was talking to Samantha Shimmon, Tenant Services Manager

# The History of Social Housing

© Photographs courtesy of the Ian G Robb Archive

This is the opening chapter of a three part series on the history of social housing, which will be presented to you over the next three tenants magazines.



*Entrance to the Lowestoft Charity Board's almshouses.*

As social housing tenants you may be interested to know the long and fascinating history of social housing in Britain. The story begins in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, with buildings called Almshouses. They trace back their history to monastic origins and were charitable housing for those

who could no longer work and live in a community. Almshouses continue in existence right up until the present day, with 1,700 Almshouses still in service and with many celebrating anniversaries of over 400 years.

As history continued, very little changed in terms of social housing up until the 1800s - but along came the industrial revolution, businesses were booming and opportunities arose. A by-product of this was a population crisis in Britain's major cities; thankfully help arrived from Philanthropists. The age of Philanthropy helped families who could not afford to live in private housing, with such generous and public spirited individuals as Robert Owen, Titus Salt, George Cadbury, Joseph Rowntree and William Lever helping out their employees by providing model villages



*Victorian almshouses, Lowestoft.*

such as Bourneville Green, Saltaire Mills, and Joseph Rowntree Village Trust etc. These provided families and workers with houses that were not privately owned and very affordable.

Fears were starting to grow about disease and hygiene and so added pressure was put on the government to help out with housing issues.

Throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century there were many new acts passed through government to help combat the poor conditions many people had to live with, especially during the industrial revolution. The 1848 Public Health Act helped improve drainage and provide clean drinking water to houses, the 1866 Sanitary Health Act made local authorities responsible for sewers and street cleaning.

But the most important act passed was the 1890 Housing for Working Classes Act, which finally meant

efforts were made to build and regulate private common lodging houses and improve housing. Ten years after the act was passed, the first council estate was built by the London County Council on Boundary Street, on the border of Shoreditch and Bethnal Green, East London. Another form of social housing popped up around this time in the form of Garden Cities. It was a method of urban planning surrounded by greenbelts proposed by Ebenezer Howard. The first Garden City was in Letchworth in 1899.

Building of new houses then began to grow significantly and many people were being housed, however when WWI started in 1914, building came to a virtual standstill while the country fought, thus

ending this chapter on the history of social housing.

**Max Hutchins**, Housing Degree Apprentice



*Unsung local hero and philanthropist, Thomas Elven Thirtle.*



## A sort of Goodbye

Well, after 23 years at Waveney DC as the Tenancy Services Manager (amongst many titles I carried over the years)

and 32 years in housing management it just goes to prove that you are never too old for a new challenge in life. In August I took up my new role in Housing Strategy and left housing management behind – so I have left but haven't really, if that makes any sense. I am ably replaced by Samantha Shimmon as the new Tenancy Services Manager to oversee the housing management of our housing. I will be involved with writing lots of documents and reports now covering everything that is Housing in East Suffolk.

Over the years there have been many memories (good and bad if I am frank) and over that entire time I have been involved in tenant participation. I recall meeting with the Tenant's Panel every

couple of months in pubs all around Waveney... Ah, fond memories 😊. We have been really active in the past with I think 11 tenant associations and the Tenant's Panel but I know that we need new people now to get involved, to help our current fantastic band of tenants who are too few.

I would like to thank all my former team and colleagues that (I think) deliver a great service to our tenants (accepting that with over 40,000 contacts in a year of one form or another there will be the odd problem). I would also like to particularly thank those tenants that are involved now and in the past that do a thankless job but do it out of a duty to make sure the tenants voice is heard. I admire you all greatly. Thanks for the memories...

*Dave*



## Sam says hello

As I write this article on a grey mid November afternoon, I cannot believe I have already been at Waveney District Council

for 3 months. As Dave has already told you I have taken over from him as Tenancy Services Manager, inheriting a team of fantastic people.

I have over 13 years experience in housing, but this is the first time I have worked for Local Government, having previously been with a Housing Association. I like most people in Housing, stumbled across it as a career, and when looking for jobs after University applied for what I thought was a call centre job, and it turned out to be a Housing Assistant role. Since then I have worked my way up, becoming a Housing Officer and Housing Manager before taking up my new post with Waveney. I thoroughly enjoy my job and the vast array of topics it covers, no day is ever the same and it keeps you on your toes.

Housing is a challenging and ever changing environment to work in, political influences in recent years such as The Welfare Reform Act 2012 has meant we need to adapt and change to ensure we can continue to deliver the high standards of service our tenants expect and deserve.

We also need your help, it shouldn't be for us as officers to make all the decisions, tenants are at the heart of what we do, and should therefore play a key part in our decision making processes. Maybe you feel you do not currently have the time to be part of our tenants forum, but what can you offer, what time do you have and how would you like to be involved? Any thoughts and suggestions on this are always welcome and you can contact Samantha Shimmon, Tenant Services Manager on [Samantha.Shimmon@eastsoffolk.gov.uk](mailto:Samantha.Shimmon@eastsoffolk.gov.uk) or 01502 523451.

*Sam*



# Meeting The Minister

On the 12<sup>th</sup> of October 2017 three Waveney Tenant Representatives and I attended the first Social Tenant Engagement Event hosted by Alok Sharma, Minister of State for Housing and Planning.

Instructed by PM Theresa May following the Grenfell tragedy, the Minister had been tasked with consulting social housing tenants across Britain in preparation for a Green Paper.

The main objective of this ongoing consultation is to really listen to tenants and pinpoint what our major concerns and issues are, helping to define our needs as individuals and plan ahead for the future. It is a tough task to even build new housing stock, let alone anticipate the needs of a diverse and ageing population in an age of austerity.

The Minister who took up his post the day before the Grenfell fire stated, "housing in Britain is now only working for the exceptional few, we have to change that." He

intends to help increase the social housing stock, but also accepts that there is a major need to make the broken housing market work for people right across society again. He said "Government are absolutely in listening mode."

It is a massive and near impossible challenge that he and doubtless other Ministers will have to face over time, Rome wasn't built in a day! But we are in an ongoing crisis. You can help by expressing your views via an online form which is waiting for you at: <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/tenants2017>.

His ears are open, when I met him I reflected his own message back at him, saying that empowered people like himself should meet



**Minister Alok and Editor Ali enjoying getting up close and personal !**

*Photograph courtesy of Ian G Robb*

with regular people like myself, look us in the eye, connect as individuals and really actively listen to one another because it is invaluable.

Then backed up by positive and sound actions, perhaps we could all build not just more housing, but better and stronger, more healthy communities.

**Ali Smith, Editor**

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## HAIR TODAY GONE TOMORROW

With fire safety on everybody's minds I thought I'd share this with you. I've owned my old faithful hair dryer for about twenty years. I used it about eight o'clock before going off for the day to meet with the Minister and fellow tenants. I'd turned it off (or so I thought) and lobbed it on the bed, got myself suited and booted and left for Woodditton.

I'm a night owl and after a stimulating day I finally went to bed

about three. Picking up the dryer my hand was met with hot plastic and the elements were glowing orange. My stomach turned over as I realised that I'd nearly burnt my hand, and the house down.

Just a little freak incident it had never happened before, point of fact in all those years I'd not realised it was possible to leave it half on like that. With a knot of adrenalin in my stomach I spent a while thinking about the what

ifs... ? Including the thought that having come home from an event prompted by the Grenfell tragedy I could have discovered I'd burnt my home down.

Needless to say in future I will be taking the plug out and also looking for other dangers about the place that I could be oblivious to.

**Ali Smith, Editor**



# Household Dangers



## Do you have gas?

Many of our properties have gas supplies not just for heating purposes but for cooking too.

Gas appliance manufacturers recommend that all gas appliances should be serviced and checked for safety at least once a year.

Incorrectly installed and inadequately serviced gas appliances can be dangerous and here at Waveney District Council safety is our priority.

Our Gasway Engineers will conduct a visual safety check of any gas cooker they come across in a tenant's home when carrying out the annual gas safety inspection.

If a cooker is deemed to be dangerous it will be disconnected until the problem has been rectified, then the engineer will return and re-commission the appliance.

### Some reasons for an unsafe gas cooker could be:

- An incorrect gas supply connection.
- A missing safety chain or stability device.
- Incorrect or insufficient ventilation.
- A defective lid safety shut off device.

It is important to ensure that any gas appliance is installed by an appropriately qualified Gas Safe engineer and serviced annually to ensure continued safety for the lifetime of the gas appliance.

The Gas Safe register keeps a record of all qualified and registered gas engineers in the UK. If you're not sure you can check on the Gas Safe register [www.gassaferegister.co.uk](http://www.gassaferegister.co.uk) to make sure your trades person is qualified and registered for the work they are about to undertake.

## Clutter & Hoarding

High levels of clutter make it much easier for a fire to start and create a greater risk of fire spreading, increasing the risk of injury and death. It can also make it very difficult to escape and can lead to difficulties for firefighters tackling the blaze.

Compulsive hoarding is a debilitating psychological condition that is only just beginning to be recognised.

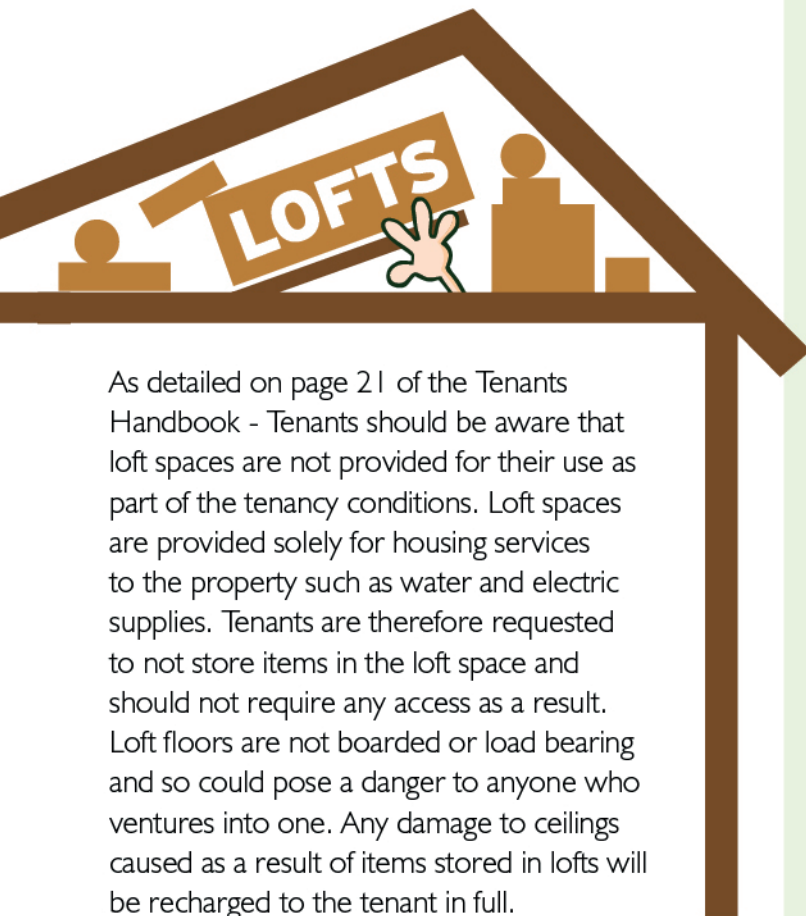
A very basic description of a compulsive hoarder is someone unable to dispose of excess or unused things to the point where their belongings are clogging their living space.

Making a cup of tea, or sleeping in their own bed becomes impossible because the spaces designed for living in have become storehouses.

If you feel that you need some help or assistance with the above there are many organisations that will support you through the process free of charge - for details and general information go to [www.helpforhoarders.co.uk](http://www.helpforhoarders.co.uk)



*Tracey Emin eat your heart out, the bed's in here somewhere!*



As detailed on page 21 of the Tenants Handbook - Tenants should be aware that loft spaces are not provided for their use as part of the tenancy conditions. Loft spaces are provided solely for housing services to the property such as water and electric supplies. Tenants are therefore requested to not store items in the loft space and should not require any access as a result. Loft floors are not boarded or load bearing and so could pose a danger to anyone who ventures into one. Any damage to ceilings caused as a result of items stored in lofts will be recharged to the tenant in full.

**Martin Swan,**  
Tenant Services Team Leader

# MORE WARTIME CHILDHOOD MEMORIES

A lot has been written historically about the British people's attitude and response to the various changes that took place during the war years '39 to '45.

Apart from the battles being conducted all over Europe and the east and on the oceans which people read about in the daily newspapers, everyone knew that things would get worse and worse before (hopefully) one day things would start to get better.

Meantime, craters in the ground would get bigger and there would be more of them. Food would get scarcer; damage to utilities would cut into all sorts of essential services and make life generally uncomfortable and miserable for everyone.

However, people adjusted to the changes to a large extent because they were expecting them and therefore would find ways of coping.

Such was not the case with the enemies' introduction of the V2 rocket bomb, a weapon very sophisticated and far ahead of its time.

This was different. There was no defence against it. It was a very powerful weapon and it was wreaking havoc and killing the population by the hundred. Suddenly the "Don't worry we can take it" element was stopped dead in its tracks. People were frightened.

One morning in late '44 father took me across the fields to have a look at a large crater close to the reservoir bank.



I was used to playing in fresh bomb craters and if a large bomb had impacted into soft soil the resulting crater could, on a dry day, be turned into an excellent slide with the modest addition of an old tea tray!

But what I was looking at in awe now was a monster.

To a 7 year old everything looks big, but I recall saying to Dad "Crumbs Dad, what would make such a big hole in the ground?" Nearby was a large piece of shiny metal with some pipes attached with blue coloured wires. "What's this Dad?" I enquired. "That my son is part of a rocket engine...." He paused, "a very big one."

Nearby, partially covered by a tarpaulin was a dead Friesian cow, her luck, like for so many, had run out.



**Brian Parsons,**  
Tenant  
Contributor

## SEE YOUR PHOTO ON THE FRONT PAGE

Send us a great Spring themed photograph and you might win a 50cm x 50cm framed print worth £65.

To enter, simply send us a Spring themed photo, ideally containing people and in portrait format, that we could use on the next cover to [charlotte.read@eastsuffolk.gov.uk](mailto:charlotte.read@eastsuffolk.gov.uk). The Editor and Editorial Board will choose the winner who will receive a 50cm x 50cm framed print (worth £65) of their winning photo to hang on their wall.



*Our Summer edition winners  
Zoe and her son Dean*

Our framed print prize is kindly sponsored by Red Hot Media.  
[www.redhotmedia.co.uk](http://www.redhotmedia.co.uk)



# Sarah's benefit update

## Universal Credit Full Service How will it affect me?

### Q What is Universal Credit (UC) and what is it replacing?

UC is the new benefit that merges six benefits into one single benefit. It is for anyone of working age on a low income; regardless of whether you are in work, looking for work, too ill to work, or caring for someone. Claimants of Pension Credit age will continue to get Pension Credit and Housing Benefit.

#### Features of UC:

- It needs to be claimed online;
- Payment is normally made monthly;
- The payment, which includes housing costs, is normally paid directly to the claimant.

#### It replaces the following:

- Income-based Jobseekers Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Income Support
- Child Tax Credit
- Working Tax Credit
- Housing Benefit

The amount you receive is worked out each month and takes account of your income, rent, household and personal circumstances.

### Q When is it being introduced to my area?

UC Full Service was introduced to Lowestoft Jobcentre on 26th May 2016 and Beccles Jobcentre on 18th October 2017. This means almost the whole of Waveney area is part of UC Full Service. The only postcode that is not covered by these two Jobcentres is IP20, which comes under Diss Jobcentre, and UC Full Service will be introduced there in February 2018.

### Q Who can claim UC?

Most working age people who need to make a NEW claim to one of the six benefits listed above, will instead need to claim UC. There are some small groups of people that will need to continue claiming the benefits listed above, please check online for further information - visit [eastsoffolk.gov.uk](http://eastsoffolk.gov.uk) and look for Benefits and Universal Credit. You can also find information on what would make a NEW claim on our website.

### Q What can I do if I don't have access to a smart phone, tablet, computer or the internet?

The UC claim should be made online, if you are able to use online services you can access PC's, and free Wi-Fi at a number of locations across East Suffolk including your local library or Citizens Advice office.

### Q I am not confident using online services, what shall I do to claim?

If you are able to claim online with a little support, Waveney District Council is happy to help. You can visit us at one of our Customer Service Centres located at the Marina in Lowestoft or Beccles Library.

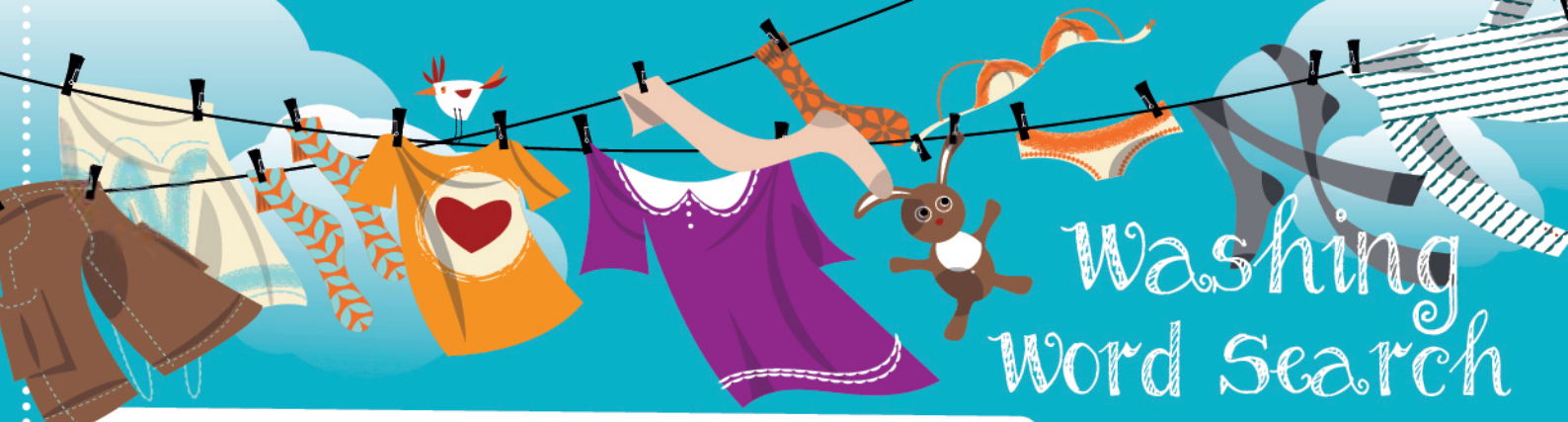
### Q I am really worried about managing the monthly payment, and budgeting to pay my rent, is there any help available?

Personal Budgeting support is offered to every claimant when they move onto UC. Your work coach at the Jobcentre will talk to you about how you feel you will manage with the change to a monthly payment. They can set up an appointment for you to have tailored advice that is provided by Citizens Advice. The advice and support delivered by Citizens Advice can also be requested by you, speak to your work coach or visit Citizens Advice and ask for Personal Budgeting Support.

Personal Budgeting Support can help you apply for an Advance Payment, and Alternative Payment Arrangements, in some circumstances the monthly payment can be split and your Housing Element paid directly to your Landlord. A Personal Budgeting Support session can also help you understand what else is available, like Discretionary Housing Payments to help with the shortfall in your rent. Visit [www.angliarevenues.gov.uk](http://www.angliarevenues.gov.uk) and look for Discretionary Payments for further information.

**Sarah Hyman,**  
Benefits Liaison Officer





# Washing Word Search

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

Enjoy drawing a line through the washing hanging out to dry. Then if you'd like to, turn the page and fill in Martin's survey for your second chance to win a prize.

## WIN £50 Jewsons Voucher

Kindly donated by Jewsons

- |           |           |           |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| ANORAK    | GLOVES    | SARONG    |
| BABYGRO   | HEADSCARF | SCARF     |
| BLOUSE    | JEANS     | SHORTS    |
| BOXERS    | JUMPER    | SOCKS     |
| CARDIGAN  | JUMPSUIT  | TOWEL     |
| CATSUIT   | KAFTAN    | TROUSERS  |
| COAT      | KNICKERS  | T-SHIRT   |
| DRESS     | LEGGINGS  | VEST      |
| DUNGAREES | OVERALLS  | WAISTCOAT |
| DUVET     | PASHMINA  | Y-FRONT   |
| GILET     | PETTICOAT |           |

Find the words and when you have completed it send to:

Waveney Tenants Magazine,  
c/o Charlotte Read, Waveney District Council,  
Rotterdam Road, Lowestoft, NR32 2EF.

**Entries should arrive no later than 28<sup>th</sup> February 2018.**

The winner, who will be picked at random, will receive a £50 Jewsons Voucher

*Employees of the Council and members of the Editorial Board are not eligible to enter.*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

## Summer Word Search Competition Winner

Winner of the Summer Word Search competition is Mrs J Harrison, Bungay. She wins a £50 Jewsons voucher.

**BAG YOURSELF ANOTHER CHANCE TO WIN, TURN THE PAGE AND FILL THE SURVEY IN!!**



# TENANT HANDBOOK

## Time to turn over a new page



The Tenant Handbook has been around in its present form for as long as anyone can remember and it is long overdue for a refresh. Although updates are made to it now and again to keep up with changes in legislation (for example the introduction of Universal Credit) it's fair to say it's looking a bit tired.

As this is **YOUR** handbook it makes sense to ask you what you feel it should include.

It will always have some core information such as contact details for the various departments and some important information regarding emergencies (gas leaks etc) but beyond that I'd really like to know what your thoughts are.

### Some ideas I've already received include:

Information on the prevention of condensation and how to treat mould.

Information regarding tenant involvement and how everyone can get involved.

Your rights and options as a tenant.

A separate booklet about repairs.

I would also be interested to hear your thoughts on the current handbook, whether you have one and what you use it for. Please complete the form below (feel free to continue on a blank piece of paper, the more ideas the better) and return to us for your chance to **win a £50 'Love to Shop' voucher**. All responses will be entered whether emailed, phoned or received by post. **Don't forget to turn over and complete the word search for another chance to win.**

Do you have a Tenant Handbook? YES  NO

Did you know it is also available online? YES  NO

What do you use it for?

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What would you like to see included in future?

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### YOUR DETAILS

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

If you prefer you can phone me on **01502 523178** or email me at [martin.swan@eastsoffolk.gov.uk](mailto:martin.swan@eastsoffolk.gov.uk)

Please return your completed questionnaire by 28<sup>th</sup> February 2018.

I look forward to hearing your views.

Martin Swan, Team Leader, Tenant Services



# FIRE SAFETY

## at St Peters Court, Lowestoft

It is only right in a tenants' magazine, that we acknowledge the devastating fire that took place in June at Grenfell Tower in London. The fire consumed the block and resulted in 71 people losing their lives in the place they should feel safe – their home. I speak on behalf of all at Waveney District Council, that we offer our heartfelt sympathy and sorrow to the friends and families of the people that perished in the fire, those that were injured and the families that have lost their homes.

Following this tragedy, it has been important to ensure that Waveney's own residential tower block is as safe as it can be in the unlikely event of a fire, and all residents are reassured and kept up to date with all information relating to their homes.

Waveney proactively organised a Fire Risk Assessment for St Peters Court to update the previous one completed in 2015. Whilst the results for this Assessment were

challenging, the positive outcome was a list of recommended works to improve the fire safety of the block which benefits the residents. We are currently working through a list of twenty actions which have come from the assessment, and other works such as New Front Doors which will improve the look of the whole building. Fifteen of these actions are complete; the remaining five are larger pieces of work such as the installation of a sprinkler system to the whole building including inside residents flats. These last five actions are all in hand and will be completed next year with the sprinkler system being the final action to complete in October 2018.

We understood from the morning of 14<sup>th</sup> June when the fire occurred, that residents of St Peters Court would be viewing the fire on the news and this would cause worry and alarm for their own safety in the unlikely event of a fire at St Peters Court. We ensured that there were Officers from Waveney at

St Peters Court that very same day to offer advice and reassurance to all residents. This was followed up by another visit to the building on 21<sup>st</sup> June this time accompanied by Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service to again offer advice and reassurance.

Residents meetings have been held on 19<sup>th</sup> July & 12<sup>th</sup> October giving residents updates of all works and it was at the residents meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> July, Councillor Mark Bee as Leader of the Council announced Waveney would be installing a sprinkler system at a cost of more than £200,000. We are continuing to work closely with Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service who recently conducted a fire training session on 5<sup>th</sup> December, which they like to do once a year. The residents of St Peters Court at the meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> October were all very excited to hear that firemen would be running around the building in uniform.

Fire safety is important for everyone to think about and should you wish to know more about fire safety in your own home, please call Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service on 01473 260588 to see if you are eligible for safer home visit.

**Samantha Shimmon,**  
Tenant Services Manager



## WANTED

### DO YOU HAVE A SPARE ROOM TO RENT?

Could you benefit from some extra income?  
Would you like some company at home?

Charity number: 1068017 HCA Registered Provider number: 4696

Solo Housing are a registered charity based in Diss. We have been successfully finding housing solutions for people aged 18-65 since 1985. Through our lodgings scheme we help single people in need of assistance to find accommodation in the form of renting a room in someone's home.

We are looking for people who would like to rent out their spare room in their home or even if you have a studio flat/bedsit to let. We meet with all parties and match the requirements of both and take away some of the uncertainty of finding the right lodger for your circumstances.

This is a completely free service as we are funded by Waveney District Council. We are particularly searching for rooms to rent in Lowestoft/Waveney areas.

**If you are interested in renting out your spare room or would like some more no obligation information, please call 07788 177020.**

## For Safety's Sake – Water Hygiene

# Legionella

Where does it come from?

Legionella bacteria are widespread in natural waters like rivers but outbreaks of the illness can occur from exposure to legionella growing in houses and flats where water is maintained at a warm temperature that encourages growth, e.g. your hot and cold water systems.

People contract Legionnaires' disease by breathing in small droplets of water that contain the bacteria.

### How do people get it?

Certain conditions increase the risk from legionella if:

- The water temperature in all or some parts of the system is between 20°C - 45°C, which is suitable for growth
- It is possible for breathable water droplets to be created and dispersed, e.g. fine sprays created by shower heads
- Water is stored and/or re-circulated



- There are deposits that can support bacterial growth providing a source of nutrients for the organism, e.g. rust and scale
- Taps etc. are used infrequently
- The system contains dead ends or unused pipe work, e.g. hot water feed for cold fill equipment.

### Reducing the risk of Legionella

The risk of Legionella causing illness in small domestic properties is really low.

Possibly the biggest risk is when you have been away from the property for more than a week or so (e.g. holiday), or there are taps /showers /toilets that are not used daily. Good practice in this situation is simply:

- Run the hot water taps (a very unlikely source anyway) for a minimum of 60 seconds
  - Flush shower heads for a minimum of 60 seconds (to do this, remove from holder before turning on the shower, then hold down over plug hole to lessen risk of inhaling sprayed droplets)
  - Shower heads should be dismantled and cleaned of scale and debris every 3 - 6 months
  - Keep the hot water on your boiler system at a temperature of minimum 50°C - 60°C
- WARNING: BE AWARE OF SCALDING!**
- Flush the toilet twice to circulate fresh water through the system and empty the cistern.



Millie Knights, enjoying getting up close and personal with the wildlife at the Gunton estates autumn fair, held in September. This gentle event is held annually and the organisers were pleased saying "a good time was had by owl!"



Since 1974, Lowestoft has been administered by Waveney District Council and there has been no specific parish or town council to advocate and support developments for and in Lowestoft.

This changed earlier this year when the new parish council, called Lowestoft Town Council, came into existence. All 20 councillors and the Town Clerk are determined to advocate for the interests of Lowestoft and want this town to be a vibrant, vital and positive place to live and work in.

In the north of the town we have been given various assets to administer.

These include the Sparrow's Nest, Belle Vue and Normanston Parks, which we would like to make favoured destination places for families and people of all ages. For instance, in Belle Vue Park there are only 4 benches to sit on and we will look at increasing seating.

We have also been given some play areas to administer, e.g. Stoven Close, Normanston Park, Cotman Close and Gunton Community Park. Stoven Close and Normanston are

due to have new equipment soon, which should be more stimulating for local children.

The North Denes and the area of the proposed East of England Park are also assets of the Town Council. I, personally, would like most of the North Denes to be maintained as an area of open space for the public, as was intended when it was purchased in 1891 under the provisions of the 1875 Public Health Act.

Our assets also include the Marina Theatre and the Town Hall. The latter building stands at the heart of the High Street and the Heritage Action Zone. A survey of the fabric of this building is necessary to discover what must be done to bring this it back into use. The town council has plenty of ideas and has had many suggestions on how to utilise this building. We'll be seeking more views from the community, but it needs serious maintenance before its doors can be opened on its new life!

So you can see there's plenty to do for the new council.

**Cllr Sue Barnard**, Gunton Ward



## Lowestoft Town Council Chatter...

As Cllr Barnard says in the previous article, the Lowestoft Town Council is certainly busy! We have a lot to cover next year and with 20 unpaid councillors working for over 60,000 people in Lowestoft, we'll be working hard for you.

But it's not just working FOR you, we want to work WITH you. Volunteering is tremendously rewarding and I urge every one of you to think about how you can also give back a few hours to your community. Volunteer a few hours in your club, community centre or for your housing provider. Organise a litter pick. Think about how you can help the children, the vulnerable, the elderly in your neighbourhood be happy, healthy, and active.

Don't think that you don't have anything to offer...

you do! Don't think you have to give a massive amount of time... every hour you can help adds up. Don't worry about spending money; YOU are the most valuable part of the community and YOU are needed more than your donations.

There's not much at the grass roots level that can't be done better by volunteers, so get out there and run YOUR neighbourhood the way YOU want to. Solving problems and making our communities better for everyone is why people just like you ran for the Lowestoft Town Council, but we can't do it all alone. Volunteer! Let your voice be heard and let's all work together to make Lowestoft a better place to live and work this next year and in the future.

**Cllr Alice Taylor**, Kirkley Ward



**LOVE YOUR TOWN? WHY NOT GET INVOLVED AND VOLUNTEER A LITTLE OF YOUR TIME?**

# Call Centre Update



You may recall an article in the Spring Edition of the magazine when I introduced the new telephony system being used by tenancy services. This new system places your call into a queue to ensure it is answered as soon as the next free line becomes free rather than having to leave a message.

This line can be used for reporting repairs along with making rent payments, requesting a rent balance or statement and requesting a new rent payment card.

In the first nine months of our new telephone system being up and running we have received 24,112 calls (as at 20/10/17) and 44% of these were received within the first 2 hours of the day.

Although our phone lines open at 8.45am each day Monday – Friday it is always busiest between 8:45am

and 10:45am. If your call can wait it's much better to phone later in the day, ideally after 2pm, when the lines are much quieter and queuing time much shorter.

Our call answer rate is currently 91% and I am sure we could answer more of your calls first time if they were spread out across the day. Those callers who do hang up rather than wait in the phone queue currently wait an average of 28 seconds before doing so.

## Don't forget –

If your call is to request a repair or make a rent payment then there are of course easier ways to do this.

To make a rent payment you can call the automated payment line on

0845 8350137 which is available 24 hours a day or go online at [www.angliarevenues.gov.uk/waveney](http://www.angliarevenues.gov.uk/waveney) choosing the option 'make a payment' and then by clicking on 'housing rent'.

To request a repair on-line you should visit the council's website at [www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk](http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk) and click on housing and then follow the on-line instructions or alternatively you can email us direct at [repairs@eastsuffolk.gov.uk](mailto:repairs@eastsuffolk.gov.uk) but please remember to include your name, address and contact details. For out of hours emergencies please continue to call 01502 515435.

**Martin Swan,**  
Team Leader Tenant Services

## Crackdown On Condensation

This is the time of year when the Housing call centre gets loads of calls about all sorts of repair related matters. A common one is the report of damp but nearly always it isn't damp but condensation. Condensation can cause dampness and damage to your home but you can reduce it by:

- keeping ventilation vents clear;
- opening windows as the circulation of air is really important;
- making sure saucepans are covered while you are cooking. Steam really can cause problematic condensation issues.

- allowing steam to get out of the house while having a bath or shower;
- drying your washing outside if possible;
- wiping away any condensation on windows, sills and tiled surfaces; and
- remembering to clear mould away by using anti-mould detergent as soon as you see any, following the manufacturer's instructions.

**Please, before you phone check that you are doing these things which will certainly help. The Repairs man can easily check if it is damp or condensation and will only offer the same advice above.**

# Letters Page



## Letter from the Editor

We'd love to print your letters,  
so do please mail them in.

We don't exactly get inundated, so there's  
a good chance that yours may win.

Do please put your pens to paper, and write  
us a line or two.

We're happy to keep our poems coming but...

We'd much rather hear from you.

Ali Smith, Editor

## Deer in Garden

So unexpected -  
likes some kind of dream,  
there the deer stands  
We seem to catch  
one another, eye to eye  
or so it seems.

Being both from  
own worlds,  
this deer and me  
Surroundings are  
perfect, within  
a garden charm  
Deer follows along  
path then being gone  
Both me and deer  
of a moment.

Tony Oxborough,  
Tenant Contributor

## Season of change

Season of change...  
Earnest wishes for spring.  
Eyes open, let the light in.

You gone now.  
Out of sight...  
Under the weather, taking flight.

Always with us.  
But further away.  
Old chap, here's to you!!!  
Unforgotten, but..  
Taken and moored now, by the Riverside Bay.

Ali



## When.....

When life is difficult,  
When you're hurting inside,  
When you feel swayed  
and unsteady,  
When you are numb inside.....

When you're caught in a vortex-  
A whirlpool that takes you down,  
When what's happening to  
you is cruel,  
When the fight just to be "you"  
is so hard.....

## Then...

Pause for a moment to ponder,  
Encourage your thoughts  
to wander,  
Look, see how far you have come.  
Think what you've made of  
your life.

Reflect on so much you have given,  
Imagine what you mean to those  
close to you.  
How desolate the world would be  
Without the warm glow of your  
very being,  
And the deep lasting love that  
you give.

Brian Parsons, Tenant Contributor

## Please send your submissions to:

Charlotte Read, Tenant Support Officer, Waveney District Council, The Depot,  
Rotterdam Road, Lowestoft, NR32 2EF or email: Charlotte.Read@eastsuffolk.gov.uk



# TENANTS' SERVICES CONTACTS

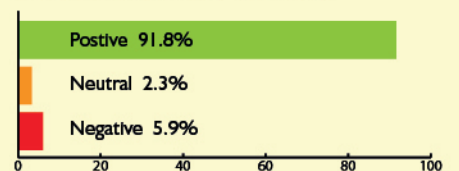
An update of useful names and contact numbers

## Satisfaction Survey 31<sup>st</sup> December 2016 to 12<sup>th</sup> December 2017

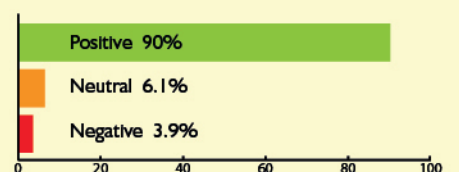
These figures are the outcome of the monthly random survey carried out by an independent company on our behalf. The data in green is the percentage of tenants satisfied and the data in the red box is the percentage of tenants dissatisfied.

The survey is carried out by an independent company to find out what you think and the results have been compiled from the 389 respondents. You were asked:

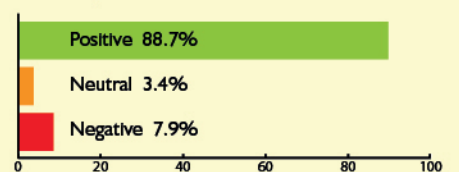
**Taking everything into account, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the service provided by Waveney?**



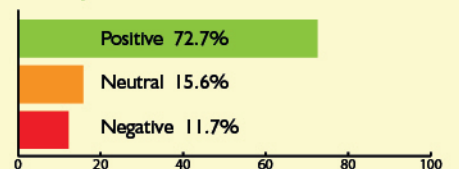
**How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that your rent provides value for money?**



**Generally, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way Waveney deals with repairs and maintenance?**



**How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that Waveney listens to your views and acts upon them?**



Published by Waveney District Council Housing on behalf of Waveney Tenants Forum.

Housing Services, WDC, Lowestoft, NR33 0EQ  
Tel: 01502 523593 Website: www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk

### Housing Management

#### Senior Housing Officer

Email	Phone
Peter.Fitzpatrick@eastsuffolk.gov.uk	(01502) 523424

#### Housing Officers

Angie Woodrow	Angie.Woodrow@eastsuffolk.gov.uk	(01502) 523121
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John Barber	John.Barber@eastsuffolk.gov.uk	(01502) 523128
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Angela Bruce	Angela.Bruce@eastsuffolk.gov.uk	(01502) 523125
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Gary Mortishire	Gary.Mortishire@eastsuffolk.gov.uk	(01502) 523166
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#### Rent Officers

Tracy Fitchett	Tracey.Fitchett@eastsuffolk.gov.uk	(01502) 523122
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Leah Anderson	Leah.Anderson@eastsuffolk.gov.uk	(01502) 523165
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Myles O'Connor	Myles.OConnor@eastsuffolk.gov.uk	(01502) 523126
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Elizabeth Allen	Elizabeth.Allen@eastsuffolk.gov.uk	(01502) 523120
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#### Universal Credit Officer

Tracey Pike	Tracey.Pike@eastsuffolk.gov.uk	(01502) 523578
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#### Nuisance Enforcement

Mike Hill	Michael.Hill@eastsuffolk.gov.uk	(01502) 523127
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### Report a Repair

Tenant Services	Repairs@eastsuffolk.gov.uk	(01502) 523593
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Out of Hours Emergencies		(01502) 515435
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### Useful Numbers

24hr Rent/ Council Tax Payments	www.angliarevenues.gov.uk/waveney	0845 8350137
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Police – non emergency	101
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Marina Customer Service Centre	(01502) 562111
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Waveney Norse	(01502) 527100
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### Tenant & Residents Associations

Waveney Tenants Forum Chair	(01502) 451466
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<b>Editor</b> , Beeches Estate	(01502) 574802
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Gunton Estate	(01502) 564601
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Beccles	(01502) 219100
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Whitton Estate	(01502) 584973
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Shadingfield & Willingham Tenants Representative	(01502) 575259
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**SAMARITANS 116 123 FREEPHONE 24/7**