

Housing news for  
tenants & leaseholders



NORTHAMPTON  
PARTNERSHIP HOMES

# voice

ISSUE 17: SUMMER 2020



## Go green with NPH!

### Also...

DAPHNE THE NPH BUS IS BACK

4

THE CLOCK HOUSE

8

THE PAINT SHOP

13

# Welcome

## Welcome to the summer issue of NPH Voice!

We hope that you and your loved ones have been keeping well and safe since our last issue. This year has really highlighted the strength and kindness of our local communities, as so many people have pulled together to support others during the hardest of times. We'd like to thank you for your continued support and patience while our services have been disrupted.



In the following pages, you can read about how we've responded to the pandemic, what we're doing to invest in your neighbourhoods, an exciting new town centre development and lots more.

We hope you enjoy the read. If you have a story to share with us or any feedback on NPH Voice, please get in touch – we'd love to hear from you.

Take care and stay safe!

**Nicky McKenzie**, assistant director of housing



NORTHAMPTON  
PARTNERSHIP HOMES

Voice Editor, Northampton Partnership Homes,  
Westbridge Depot, St James Mill Road, Northampton, NN5 5JW

T: 0300 330 7003

E: [voiceditor@nph.org.uk](mailto:voiceditor@nph.org.uk)



@NPH\_news



[www.nph.org.uk](http://www.nph.org.uk)

02

**NPH Voice** Issue 17 Summer 2020

## At a glance...

**Daphne the NPH Bus** 4  
Daphne is back on the road and coming to an area near you soon

**Warm Homes Fund** 5  
Meet one of our residents who has recently had their central heating upgraded

**Introducing the Clock House** 8  
One of our largest ever projects of a Northampton landmark has now been approved!

**The Paint Shop** 13  
Marvin from Lemon Pop Academy has created a stunning mural just for us!

**Big Interview** 15  
Meet Anna our lovely resident involvement officer who is making a big difference to our engagement offering

## Large print?

If you would like a version of this magazine in large print, or another language, please call

**0300 330 7003**



**Reader Friendly**

# Notice board

## GET ONLINE

Our colleagues at the One Stop Shop can only take pre-booked appointments if they are unable to help you over the phone or online. To help keep staff and residents safe, there has never been a better time to get online.

Head to [www.nph.org.uk](http://www.nph.org.uk) to register. Make sure you have your tenancy reference number to hand.

WOOF!



### Don't miss out on pension credit

If you are 65 or over, you could be entitled to pension credit to top up your income. And if you're over 75, this could mean you get a free TV licence.

If you're not sure what to do, just get in touch with our friendly financial inclusion team on **0300 330 7003** for a benefit check.

### Rent Prize Draw Winners – Win £100!

Since our last NPH Voice issue there have been 3 winners in our Direct Debit Prize Draw.

Mr Williams, Mr and Mrs Shaw and Miss Bak.

All you have to do to be entered is to pay your rent by Direct Debit for at least 4 months.

### Star in our next edition!

We're looking for residents to feature in future issues of NPH Voice. Do you have an interesting story to tell? It could be about your community; your volunteering role; an interesting job, hobby or family history. Or maybe you have a hidden talent? If you've got something you'd like to share with us, we can't wait to hear from you.

[voiceeditor@nph.org.uk](mailto:voiceeditor@nph.org.uk)  
01604 837836

At NPH, we celebrate the diversity of our residents and community. So, to maintain a safe and welcoming space for everyone, we may delete and report replies or comments that are considered discriminatory or offensive.

Please help us to look after the community we love by thinking before you post and above all being kind. ❤️

### Get social

NPH Connect

@NPH\_news

# Daphne the NPH bus is back on the road!



## We've missed you!

It's been a while since the NPH bus was out on the road.

But great news! We'll be coming to an area near you soon.

With the One Stop Shop closed for walk-in enquiries, coming to see us on the bus is the best way to get advice and support in person!

There's no need to book in, just turn up and we'll be there to help.

We've taken care to make sure the space is safe for you and our staff. There is hand sanitiser onboard, the bus is deep cleaned each day and we will be asking you to socially distance.

## Join us onboard for a cuppa and a chat about:

Your home

Your tenancy

How to get online

Your neighbourhood

Your bills

How to get involved

 @NPH Connect [www.nph.org.uk](http://www.nph.org.uk)

Check out Daphne's timetable at [www.nph.org.uk/daphne-nph-bus-timetable](http://www.nph.org.uk/daphne-nph-bus-timetable)

If you can't get online, just call our friendly team on **0300 330 7003** to find out when Daphne will be in your area.





# Warm Homes Fund

We've been installing new central heating systems at no cost to our residents thanks to The Northants Warm Homes scheme. The scheme is funded by National Grid's Warm Homes Fund and covers everything needed to get the new system up and running; including the survey, gas connection; gas meter and central heating installation itself.

We recently met with Miss Rogers who was eligible for the new system.

*"I wasn't sure if I was eligible at first, but Jon and the team at NPH were able to help me with it all. I've lived here for 12 months on the old system and it really wasn't great for me. There were a lot of days I couldn't enjoy a nice bath or had to wait for the flat to get warm"*

*"But now, I can come home and it'll be nice and warm. And I can have a relaxing bath without waiting for it to all warm up!"*

The Warm Homes Fund was introduced earlier this year, and our team began finding homes that were eligible without residents having to pay or do any of the work.



The new system now means Miss Rogers and hundreds of others will:

- See a considerable saving on their energy and heating bills;
- Have a much warmer home compared to the old system; and
- Enjoy peace of mind that their boiler is reliable.

**If you think you may be eligible for this new heating system, get in touch with us on: 01604 837407**

# How we helped during the pandemic:

During lockdown, all of us have faced our own issues in dealing with how life has changed. It has been a difficult time, but every one has pulled together to get through it.

*The support I have had in the past was fantastic but you people are going above and beyond to help when we are feeling vulnerable and in need of support.*

**Mrs York, NPH resident**

We've made welfare calls to 5,334 households across Northampton. These calls have helped make sure that residents have everything they need when they are unable to leave their home.



**650+**

help requests supported



**560+**

food parcels have been delivered



**18,500+**

calls have been made to our vulnerable residents



**912**

Gas Safety checks LGSR



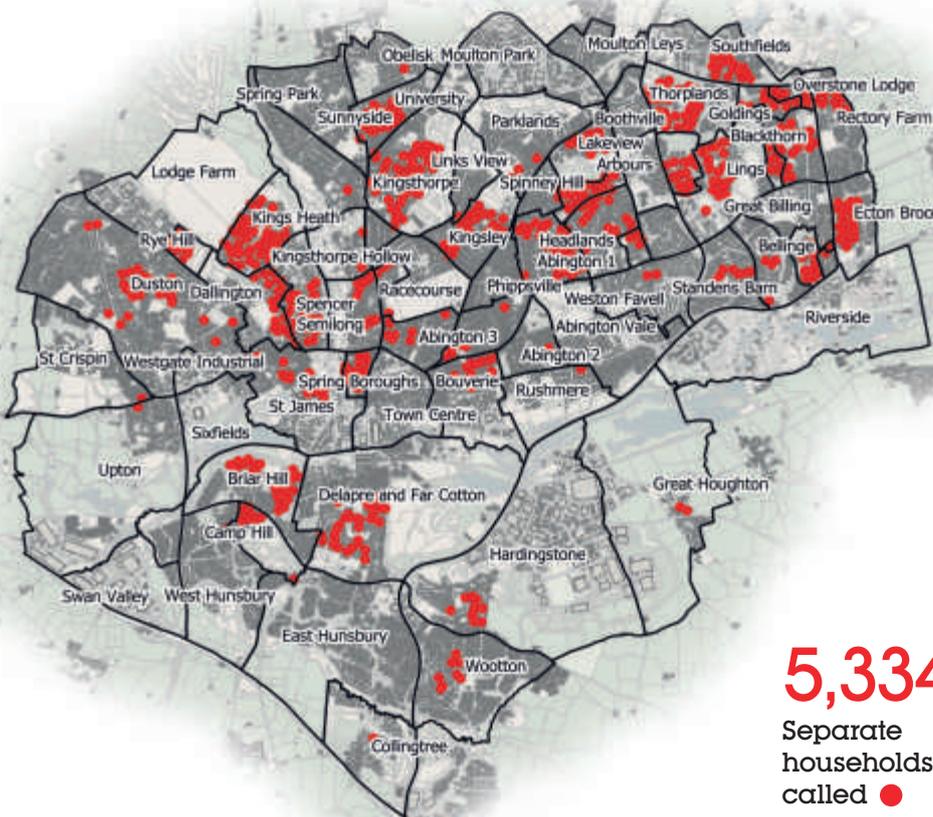
**17**

Fire risk assessments (FRA)



**179**

Electrical installation condition reports (EICR's)



**1,917**

Emergency Repairs carried out

**5,334**

Separate households called ●

*I very much appreciated her phone calls and it was very good to have someone from NPH ringing to see if everything was ok*

**Mr Green, NPH resident**

# Be kind to yourself

As lockdown restrictions continue to ease, lots of us will be excited about getting back to some of the things we love. At the same time, it's important to remember that many of us will be feeling uneasy and nervous as more public places reopen. If you're struggling to readjust, we hope some of the ideas below will help.

## Look after yourself physically

The same tips that applied as we came into lockdown such as finding routines, staying connected, eating well, getting enough sleep and exercising, apply just as much now as they did then. Looking after yourself physically will give your mental health a boost.

## Pace yourself

Going to public places may feel overwhelming at first, with lots of guidelines to follow such as one-way systems and face coverings. Pace yourself rather than doing everything at once, so that you gradually get used to doing these things again.

## Follow the guidelines

Safety guidelines are there to reduce your risk of contracting the virus and following them at all times can help put your mind at ease if you're worrying about this when out and about.

## Try your best

There are a lot of new rules to follow and it can be hard to make them a habit. From knowing how to insist on social distancing with friends to knowing where you have to wear a mask. You may slip up at times. All you can do is try your best and you'll start to get used to it.

## Celebrate small wins

Challenge yourself to try something different every couple of days and be

proud of yourself when you manage to do something that you were worried about!

## Focus on the present

The uncertainty of the future and the frequently changing regulations can be overwhelming. Try to focus on the present and the things that are certain. You could try practicing mindfulness which is great for helping you to focus on the present.

## Use trusted and reliable sources of information

There is lots of fake news and speculation out there. Go to reliable sources such as the Government website for updates, and always check if something you hear is official news before you share it.

## Do more of what makes you happy

If there are things that you'll miss from your lockdown routine, like spending more quality time with your family or practicing your favourite hobby, try and schedule time into your post-lockdown routine to do these things.

## Being there for others

If you have a friend or family member who isn't ready to socialise yet, be understanding of their feelings. We're all dealing with these changes in our own way and at our own pace. Try to plan ways for them to virtually take part in your social gatherings.

## Talk to someone you trust

Sharing how you feel really will help. There couldn't be a better time to phone a friend!

Take care  
of your  
mental  
health



# Introducing.... The Clock House

We're thrilled to announce that NPH's plans to convert Belgrave House, a large town- centre former office block, into apartments for local workers have been approved. The development will completely transform the building and not only provide much needed homes in the town centre, but improve the appearance for the benefit of all Northampton residents.

## What we're planning to do:

- Convert the offices into 122 new apartments;
- Create 70 one-bedroom and 52 two-bedrooms flats;
- Offer the apartments to key workers based in and around the town;
- Overhaul the current design, turning the space into a bright landmark for Northampton;
- Change access pathways for easy access to the town centre; and
- Build a roof garden for residents.



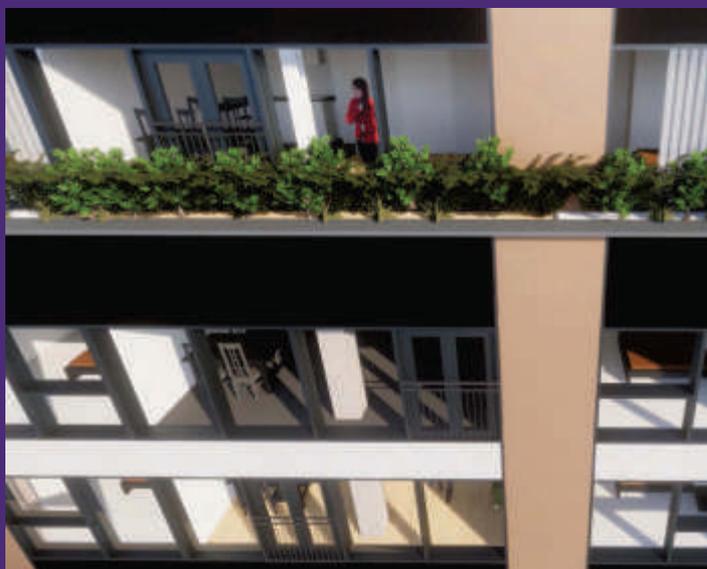
To mark this huge transformation, we will also be changing the name of the building to 'The Clock House'.

This is great news for Northampton, and we are excited to be part of the wider regeneration of the town centre.

Providing homes for key workers is such an important part of this scheme. The pandemic has highlighted the incredible job our key workers carry out to keep the country moving!

The new design means that The Clock House will be bright and welcoming in the day and will light up for the evening. The clock feature and attractive panels will give the building a total make over!

Look out for project updates on our website and social media.



# More new homes

It's been challenging, but we managed to keep our new build sites running throughout the pandemic. Our teams and contractors have overcome material shortages, new working practises, changing Government guidelines and reduced staffing levels due to the impact of Covid-19. We know how much Northampton needs new homes and we are doing everything we can to keep building.

We've completed a number of gorgeous new homes recently. Some are pictured here and you can check out our social media posts for regular updates.

## Neighbourhood investment is back!

During lockdown, most of our neighbourhood works were on hold. But we are glad to be back and investing in your homes across Northampton.

Our colleagues and contractors are closely following Government guidelines to keep you and themselves as safe as possible.

If you live in Goldings, Southfields or Briar Hill, you've probably noticed our teams out and about!

For latest updates on our neighbourhood investment programme, head to: [www.nph.org.uk/development-and-investment](http://www.nph.org.uk/development-and-investment)



**HINTON CLOSE**



**CAMBORNE CLOSE**



**BRIAR HILL**



**RINGWAY**



**NURSERY LANE**



**GLOUCESTER AVENUE**

# Radon – know the risks

**Northampton has been identified as an area with high levels of radon. This may not be anything to worry about, so keep reading for everything you need to know.**

## What is radon?

Radon is a radioactive gas that you cannot see or smell. It's formed by the radioactive decay of the small amounts of uranium that occur naturally in all rocks and soils.

## What are the risks?

The radioactive elements can be inhaled and enter our lungs, which can lead to serious health problems such as lung cancer.

## Where is it found?

Radon is everywhere – outdoors and indoors. In many areas, the risk to health is small. Even in areas with high levels of radon, not all buildings will have high levels.

## Is there high radon in my home?

The only way to find out whether the levels of radon are high in your individual home is to get a testing kit.

## How does testing work?

Tests are provided by Public Health England. They will send two detectors, one for your living space and one for your sleeping space, along with instructions on how to place them. It takes three months to show accurate results and you will need to return the detectors to Public Health England for the results to be processed.

## The good news!

Tests usually cost £52.80 and NPH will be picking up the bill for tenants that choose to order a test.

All you need to do is:

Call NPH on  
**0300 330 7003**  
to request a test



# Woodvale School needs you!

**Sadly, our friends at Woodvale Primary School in Goldings are currently trying to rebuild their forest school area after it was vandalised recently. We've provided some of our wildlife habitats (find out more opposite) and a raised bed to help out and maybe you can help too?**

The school needs volunteers to help clear the area and rebuild their precious outdoor space, as well as donations of old pots and pans that can be used in their mud kitchen. If you can help, please email the school directly on [admin@woodvaleprimaryacademy.org](mailto:admin@woodvaleprimaryacademy.org).

Lending a hand could really support the children in our community to discover and enjoy the natural world on their doorsteps.



# Calling all nature lovers



Check out this great new project that will help you care for the environment and local wildlife. We'll also be helping you to grow your own food.

The project consists of 3 stages:

## Autumn – Wildlife

This autumn we want to help you turn your garden into a haven for hedgehogs, birds and other wildlife. We'll provide box sets giving you everything you need to create wildlife habitats in your own garden. These will be free of charge, supplied as flat pack items with all the materials you need to put them together. Don't be put off if you live in a flat, you can put the boxes in communal gardens too.

There are a limited number of sets available and they will be distributed on a first come, first serve basis. And only one request per household please!

If you are part of a community or youth group that would like one for your community space, we would love to hear from you too. Only one item can be given per household.

On offer are:



Hedgehog house



Nut feeder



Bug hotel



Bird box

## Winter – Trees

For our winter project we'll be providing small trees for your garden. The trees will be free to NPH residents and come with everything you need to look after them.

The species on offer will be small, low maintenance, beneficial to the local wildlife, and add lovely colour to your garden!

We'll help find the most suitable place for your tree, and if you're part of a neighbourhood group, we can give you what you need to go green up your street!

Get in touch with our team and apply for one of our trees!

## Spring – Grow your own

In spring 2021 we are planning to offer planting boxes for you to grow some veg or flowers in your garden. These will be free of charge, again with all materials included! We will give you more information on this in our next issue of the NPH Voice!

Just get in touch with our resident involvement team if you would like to know more:



[GetInvolved@nph.org.uk](mailto:GetInvolved@nph.org.uk)



01604 837836



Or send us a message on our NPH Facebook page – @NPHConnect



@NPH\_News

Tel: 0300 330 7003 Email: [voiceditor@nph.org.uk](mailto:voiceditor@nph.org.uk)

# You can make a difference



## Scrutiny

In the last edition of NPH Voice, we asked you to complete a survey and share your views on NPH Voice. This survey was created by our wonderful scrutiny panel members, who have continued their work by meeting over Zoom recently. They've looked at the feedback from the survey and have now finished their review of NPH Voice. We're looking forward to taking the panel's suggestions on board, so look out for some changes in future issues of this newsletter!



The scrutiny panel is deciding which area to focus their next review on soon. We'll keep you up to date with their work on our social media channels. You don't need to be on the scrutiny panel to share your ideas and feedback, we would love to hear from as many residents as possible. Get in touch anytime:

- NPH Connect
- @NPH\_news
- [getinvolved@nph.org](mailto:getinvolved@nph.org)
- 01604 837836

## Community Grants

Happy To Help's Communities Fund is still open for applications. If your group and its activities have a positive impact on the lives of NPH residents, we'd love to hear from you. Groups can also apply for funding to help Covid-19 related community response work, like the United African Association below.

To find out how to apply, head to [www.nph.org.uk/happy-help-cic](http://www.nph.org.uk/happy-help-cic)

The Communities Fund has been helping community groups across Northampton since our last issue, this is how:



Food ingredients for socially-distanced picnics and group activities to The Healthy Eating Project;



Non-essential items such as toiletries, nappies and sanitary items for the United African Association to add to food parcels; and



Materials and tools for Growing Together Northampton's communal garden.

## Community hub update

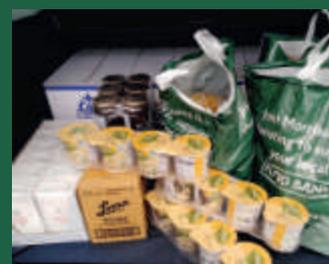
**Our hubs are still closed to community groups. We hope to be able to reopen them soon, but we have more work to do before we can do so safely. We will be contacting all groups who use our hubs to make sure that when we do reopen, the spaces stay COVID-secure.**

We've managed to make use of one of our hubs at this difficult time by supporting community groups involved with Northampton's pandemic response to use the space safely. One of these groups is the United African Association and its

members are currently supporting over 90 families in Northampton.

UAA volunteers Anne, David, Pedro and Catarina have used our Leicester Street hub as a base to make up food parcels, before delivering them to families in Northampton's BAME community.

The group received funding from Happy to Help to buy items such as toiletries, nappies, and cleaning products to add to the food parcels.





# The Paint Shop

We're excited to let you know that the Paint Shop is open for business, and we've welcomed some very happy customers.

The Paint Shop was set up by Happy To Help CIC and is ran by volunteers. It takes surplus paint and sells it on for a low price to the community, helping people to decorate on a budget and stopping waste paint going to landfill

Erica Johnson wanted to decorate her rented property to make it feel more like home, so she decided to visit the paint shop as she knew the paint would be good quality and sold at a decent price – as little as £1-£2 a litre.



While you're at the shop, check out the new mural painted by the very talented Marvin from Lemon Pop Academy. The mural will be filled in by staff, volunteers, and young people from the local community. We can't wait to see it in technicolour!



Erica said:

*"The volunteers in the shop were very friendly and helpful. There was hand sanitiser available on entry to the shop, and social-distancing rules were followed inside the shop, so I felt very safe in there.*

*I'd recommend anyone who wants to decorate their home visits the shop for their paint. It stops the paint going to waste, and is a great help to people who don't have a lot of money but want to put their own stamp on their homes."*

The Paint Shop is open on Wednesdays and Fridays, 10am – 2pm. If you're looking to spruce up your home with some good quality, affordable paint, head over to the shop: Park Square, Kingsheath, NN5 7LQ.

If you're planning to pop in, please don't forget your face covering!



# Get discount prices and expert support from Buildbase

**We've teamed up with local builders' merchant Buildbase to improve our maintenance and repair services. If you book a repair with us and our trades person doesn't have the materials needed, we can now have them delivered directly to your property. This will help us get the job done quicker, and if possible, on the same day.**

The great news is that we've made sure you also benefit from this new partnership. By applying for an NPH tenant privilege card, you can save money on a wide range of products from any branch of Buildbase, Hirebase or Electricbase.

## Save money

The NPH tenant privilege card entitles you to:

- 5% discount on landscaping, DIY and timber products;
- 10% discount on tool hire, hand tools, skip hire and carpet cleaner hire;
- 15% discount on paint and ironmongery; and
- Free Deliveries on orders over £50 with a reduced delivery charge of £5 if your order is under that value.

Cut out the temporary card on this page and exchange it for a permanent card at the Rushden branch:

Buildbase Rushden  
Northampton Road  
Rushden, Northants NN10 6AR

If you cannot make it to the Rushden branch, please call **01933 314703** and quote this reference: **BRUS661**

## Expert help and advice

Buildbase has been serving local tradespeople for decades and many of its staff used to work as builders, electricians and plumbers. This means you can take advantage of your expert knowledge and experience, as well as great customer service.

Buildbase will be arranging special events for NPH tenants, where you can go along and improve your DIY skills. Keep an eye on our website and social media for announcements:

[www.nph.org.uk](http://www.nph.org.uk)

 **NPH Connect**

 **@NPH\_news**

## TENANT PRIVILEGE CARD



Customer Name:

Find out more about Buildbase at [www.buildbase.co.uk](http://www.buildbase.co.uk)

# BIG INTERVIEW

## Meet Anna Thorpe, one of NPH's Resident Involvement Officers

### Hi Anna, tell us about your job.

My role is all about engaging with our residents, talking to them and finding out what they think of our services. Their views are used to make improvements and find new ways of working that benefit both our residents and the organisation.

I enjoy finding new ways to engage with our residents. We had lots of exciting plans to attend events like Northampton Pride over the summer, but unfortunately the covid-19 outbreak meant we couldn't do this. So instead, I've worked with the communications team to test new ways of using our social media channels to have conversations with residents on our social media channels.

I also look after our scrutiny panel, who have continued working during lockdown. We've been meeting online, and it's worked well. They recently submitted a report which is now being reviewed by NPH, and I'm really proud of the work we've done together.

### You sound very busy! What is the Scrutiny Panel?

I like to describe the scrutiny panel as a critical friend. They're a group of NPH residents who do in-depth reviews of services, undertake research, speak to other residents to gather their views, and they look at what other similar organisations are doing. Once they've gathered all their information, they make recommendations about how services can be improved.

We really value the panel's hard work and the effort they put in. It's a voluntary role, so everything is done in their own time. We're always looking for more residents to get involved, so if this is something you'd be interested in, we'd love to hear from you!

### What do you love about your job?

People! My role is all about people, including my NPH colleagues and our residents. It's a joy to be able to talk to them, to find out what

they think and to be able to use that information to make positive changes. There are lots of very passionate people who want to make a difference.

### What do you do in your spare time?

I make things. Lots of things! Usually out of fabric but not always – I've made 18th century ballgowns and Minecraft quilts, silver necklaces and linoprints.

Oh, and I've also got three boys, three chickens and two dogs (one is a puppy!) to keep me from getting too bored.



*We really value the panel's hard work and the effort they put in.*



# WELLBEING WORDSEARCH

Thanks to NPH tenant Oscar Woodcock for this issue's feel-good wordsearch.

For your chance to win £20 in Love2Shop Vouchers, can you find all the words that help make us feel better?

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

- BALANCED DIET**
- CHILL OUT**
- DELIGHT**
- EXERCISE**
- FULFILLMENT**
- GAIETY**
- HOBBIES**
- LEISURE**
- MENTAL HEALTH**
- OPPORTUNITY**
- PLEASURE**
- SELF ESTEEM**
- SOCIALISE**
- WELLBEING**

To enter, just email us a snap of your completed grid [voiceditor@nph.org.uk](mailto:voiceditor@nph.org.uk) or send it the traditional way to the address on page 2!

## A picture speaks a thousand words

We know many of you have been enjoying new hobbies, going on more walks and bike rides, and taking more photos to help pass the time in lockdown.

We would love to see what you've snapped on your camera or phone. Send one in, and we'll feature as many as we can in our next issue.

**Email:** [voiceditor@nph.org.uk](mailto:voiceditor@nph.org.uk)

**Or WhatsApp to:** 07342 070887

