

# YOUR VOICE

Issue 24 | Winter 2022

HOUSING NEWS FOR  
TENANTS & LEASEHOLDERS



NORTHAMPTONSHIRE  
PARTNERSHIP HOMES



**Season's greetings  
from all at NPH**

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# Welcome

## to the winter issue of Your Voice

**I**t's been another busy year at NPH and it's my pleasure to introduce you to the winter issue of Your Voice.

You might have noticed a change to our logo on the front cover, which marks an important change for the future.

West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) has been in existence since April 2020, and we've been working together with its members and officers to build a strong partnership as WNC's housing provider of choice. To reflect this, we've changed our name to Northamptonshire Partnership Homes.

We're looking forward to supporting WNC to deliver their housing strategy and continuing to develop services for residents across West Northamptonshire.

You can find out more about this on our website.



This newsletter is full of useful information about your housing services, and you'll get to meet some fellow residents with amazing stories. I would like to thank everyone who has appeared in Your Voice in 2022. This is your newsletter, and we wouldn't be able to produce it without your fantastic contributions.

So... grab a cuppa, take a break and enjoy the read.

Finally, I would like to wish you all a fabulous festive season and a happy, healthy new year.

**Mike Kay**  
Chief Executive



**NORTHAMPTONSHIRE  
PARTNERSHIP HOMES**

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@NPH\_news



NPH Connect



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

## 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

## CHRISTMAS WASTE AND RECYCLING

With the festive season fast approaching, we are advising residents of the arrangements for waste and recycling collections over the Christmas and New Year period.

Waste and recycling collection crews will be working throughout the festive season to make sure services are delivered on time and with no delays.

To find out more, please visit:

**[www.westnorthants.gov.uk/news/waste-and-recycling-collection-arrangements-christmas](http://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/news/waste-and-recycling-collection-arrangements-christmas)**

## MUTUAL EXCHANGE

Find out more about swapping your home!



### Apply today

It is easy to sign-up and start looking for your new home



### Friendly advice

Our experienced home-swapping team are here to help



### Processing your application

Once you have found a swap, we'll sort out the rest



Scan here to download our helpful mutual exchange 'how-to guide'

## NEW NPH WEBSITE COMING SOON!

Our website has been in place for over 7 years now and is in need of a refresh. Thank you to everyone who gave us their views, either in person or online. We're using everything you told us to design the new site.

Some of the feedback we received was about the customer portal rather than the website, and this is really valuable. We've shared your experiences with our systems team, which can be used to inform future developments.

**Look out for the new NPH website in 2023.**

## CHRISTMAS OPENING TIMES

Our opening hours over the festive period are as follows:

Friday 23rd December – normal working hours

Monday 26th, Tuesday 27th, Wednesday 28th, Thursday 29th, Friday 30th, Monday 2nd January – office closed

Tuesday 3rd January – normal working arrangements return

**If you have an emergency during this time, we have a fantastic on-call team who can help. Call them on 0300 330 7003.**

# Your community

## NPH Litter Picks

### A year of keeping Northampton tidy.

At NPH, we love Northampton and we know that local residents are often not to blame for the litter or flytipping in their area, so we understand the frustrations.

That's why #TeamNPH for the past year has been supporting residents to love their neighbourhood and encourage feedback on how we can tackle this issue.

We encourage all readers to follow 'Northants Litter Wombles' and 'NPH Connect' on Facebook to get updates on future litter picking events.

We're so proud to have collected so much rubbish and brought neighbours together this past year.

## 2022 STATS

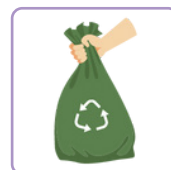
**16 litter picking events** since the start of 2022



**Over 160 people** have volunteered their time to help pick litter



**3 tonnes of rubbish** collected



## THE LOWDOWN

### Donation from the NPH Paint Shop

Our Paint Shop in Kings Heath recently donated 30 litres of paint to local charity, the lowdown, to brighten up their new premises in St Giles Street.

The lowdown provides free and confidential support services for young people in Northamptonshire, including counselling, mental health support, wellbeing drop-ins and LGBTQ+ support.

The charity has recently needed to add to their existing office space due to demand on their services, to ensure they can continue to support local young people.

The paint was put to great use, helping to brighten up the charity's new space, creating a friendly and welcoming environment for the lowdown to offer their services.

**The Paint Shop is located in Park Square, Kings Heath NN5 7LQ, and is open to everyone.**

#### Opening Times:

Monday, Wednesday and Friday 10am – 2pm

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



# Cooking Good

## Celebration dinner for care leavers

Right Resolution CIC held their first care leavers dinner at the Leicester Street hub recently. With some guidance from the Cooking Good course leaders, the young people taking part in the course planned and set the menu, cooked the food, and set the table ready for a delicious meal. The dinner was held during Care Leavers Week to celebrate the resilience, determination, and friendships built by the young people.

**Amarjit Pawar, director of Right Resolution CIC said:**

“It was brilliant to see this group come together to celebrate their achievements, friendships and the support they all give each other. I’m so proud of this group and the relationships they’ve built. I know they all really appreciated the chance to learn new cooking skills through the Cooking Good course, and they’ve told me they’ve learned so much and are eating healthier as a result.

The meal was such a success we’re now hoping to make this an annual event! I want to say a big thank you to NPH for letting us use the hub.”



## Competition winner launches Thorplands hub

Thorplands residents recently joined us to celebrate the opening of their new community hub.

The hub is in Farm Field Court, and was built as part of the redevelopment of the former Tanners pub site. We recently shared information on the 17 new homes built on the site, and we’re pleased to say the hub is now officially open too!

Local residents enjoyed tea and cake, and found out about the activities being offered in the hub. Sarah Hayman, chair of the Thorplands Residents Association, has been hard at work alongside local organisations Growing Together and Emmanuel Church to offer a wide variety of groups and activities. These include weekly arts and crafts groups, tea and a chat, wellbeing support, a tots group, and warm spaces.

Elodea from Thorplands Primary School brought her friends along to officially open the community space. She unveiled the sign she had designed for the hub, which was chosen from lots of fantastic entries from the pupils at Thorplands Primary School. We’re sure you’ll agree it’s a perfect way to show it’s a space where everyone is welcome!

The hub is available for booking, so if you’re interested in using any of the hub spaces or would like to find out what’s going on at the hubs, go to **[www.nph.org.uk/community-hubs](http://www.nph.org.uk/community-hubs)** or call the resident involvement team on 01604 837836.

# Damp, Mould and Condensation

## Information for residents to reduce moisture in the home

We want to let you know how we're currently dealing with the issue of damp, mould and condensation and what we've been working on throughout this year to make our approach more effective and proactive.

Firstly, we acknowledge that unfortunately some of the homes we manage can be affected by damp, and that we can't resolve this overnight. We take our responsibility to provide you with a safe home extremely seriously and we want to hear from you if you have concerns.

### Mould is either:

- The result of damp penetration, which is caused by property structure issues; or
- Caused by condensation, which is the result of lack of air movement, ventilation and heating.



In May, we invited our resident scrutiny panel to carry out a review of how we deal with reports of damp, mould and condensation. We also encouraged residents to respond to the Housing Ombudsman review of the issue across the social housing sector. It's important that residents are involved when we review any of the important issues that affect the services we provide.

We are continually surveying homes where we consider the risk of damp, mould and condensation to be high, and any homes where mould issues have been reported. These surveys will help identify how we can best address the problem and support residents to prevent damp, mould and condensation. This includes carrying out the necessary work to deal with any existing issues.

Colleagues who visit residents in their homes have been trained to spot and report damp, mould and condensation. They will also advise and support residents to do everything they can do to reduce moisture in the home.

If you report damp, mould and condensation to us, we promise to:

- Listen to you and treat you respectfully;
- Consider the impact the issue is having on your health and wellbeing;
- Work with you to help reduce moisture in your home;
- Keep records of your report and agree the next steps with you; and
- Refer you to additional support services if needed.

### How to reduce condensation at home



Always cook with lids on pans to prevent steam escaping



Avoid drying clothes directly on radiators



Leave small windows open for 30 minutes a day



Close doors when using your kitchen or bathroom to reduce moisture



Dry your windows and window sills every morning



Keep a small gap between furniture and walls



### If you're struggling to heat your home

or have other issues with damp, mould and condensation, please contact us on 0300 330 7003. You can also find some helpful advice on our website.

# Bed Bugs

Don't let the bedbugs bite



## What causes bedbugs?

Bedbugs are small insects that often live on furniture or bedding. Their bites can be itchy, but they don't usually cause other health problems. We know how difficult it can be to deal with these pesky little critters.

There are some simple steps you can take to get rid of them and to stop them invading your home in the first place.

Firstly, we need you to know that it's not NPH's responsibility to treat bed bugs in your home. In certain circumstances we may help with removal, but only if the problem can spread to other homes, in blocks of flats for example.

We're always on-hand to give you advice and support, so we thought we'd share some tips with you.

## How to spot bedbugs

Bedbugs can hide in many places, including on bed frames, mattresses, clothing, furniture, behind pictures and under loose wallpaper.

### Signs of bedbugs include:

- Bites – often on skin exposed while sleeping, like the face, neck and arms.
- Spots of blood on your bedding – from the bites or from squashing a bedbug.
- Small brown spots on bedding or furniture (bedbug poo).

## Treating bites

Bedbug bites usually clear up on their own in a week or so.

### Things you can do include:

- Putting something cool, like a clean, damp cloth, on the affected area to help with the itching and any swelling;
- Keeping the affected area clean; and
- Not scratching the bites to avoid getting an infection.

## How to get rid of bedbugs



Wash affected bedding and clothing on a hot wash (60C) and tumble dry on a hot setting for at least 30 minutes.



Put affected clothing and bedding in a plastic bag and put it in the freezer for 3 or 4 days.



Clean and vacuum regularly – bedbugs are found in both clean and dirty places, but regular cleaning will help you spot them early.



Don't bring second-hand furniture indoors without carefully checking it first.



Don't take luggage or clothing indoors without checking it carefully if you've come from somewhere where there may have been bed bugs.



Don't keep clutter around your bed.



# NPH RESIDENT STORIES

**We love hearing stories of how residents have worked with us to make big changes in their lives. Settle down with a cuppa and read these heart-warming stories from Wendy, Joe, Jack and Glen.**

---

Wendy has been working with support officer Julia, through our Next Steps programme. Julia has worked with Wendy to build her confidence, help her gain the skills to manage her tenancy and to move into her new home and live independently.

**Wendy said:**

"I started working with Julia around a year ago, and she's really helped me in that time. Before I started working with her, I'd often avoid things, not pay bills and ignore people knocking at the door.

I get anxious and overthink things. That has stopped me dealing with issues in the past. Often my anxiety and my need for everything to be just right would stop me leaving my home, but Julia started encouraging me to get out of the house. She would book appointments in cafés, so I'd have to leave the house to see her. Now, I've managed to get that under control and going out isn't such a challenge. I still overthink things, but I know now that when I actually go out and do things, I'll be fine.

I volunteered at The Paint Shop for around 8 months. At first, Julia would take me there and pick me up at the end of my shift, but eventually I started getting the

bus myself. I loved volunteering there and having the uniform meant a lot to me as I'd never had one before. It made me feel part of something. I've also been on some NPH training, like the Cooking Good and DIY essentials courses. They made a big difference to me and I'm grateful that NPH offer these opportunities. I even got interviewed by BBC Look East at the Cooking Good course, that shows how far I've come – I'd have never dreamed of doing that before.

I moved into my new flat around two months ago, and I've loved putting my own stamp on it. I've decorated it with wallpaper I got from The Paint Shop and Julia's helped me to set up all my bills. Now I manage everything on my own. This is the first time I've lived on my own for a long time and I'm loving living independently. When I look back, I can see how far I've come.

Now I feel ready for the next step, that might be college. I really enjoy doing my own hair and I might try a hairdressing course. It'll be nice to learn new skills and meet new people too. Before working with Julia, I wouldn't have been able to think about that. She's really encouraged me to do things myself. She supports me but doesn't do everything for me.

**I'm so grateful for her support, I've learned a lot and come so far. Without her help, I wouldn't be the changed person that I am."**



**Wendy**



Joe has received support from two support officers - Andrea and Emilia.

Emilia began supporting Joe a year ago, when he was discharged after being in hospital with serious health problems. Thanks to Joe's determination and Emilia's persistence, he is now in a much better place and has recently celebrated one year of sobriety.

**Joe said:**

"Due to my alcoholism, I'd neglected my flat and hadn't been looking after it at all. I ended up in hospital with life-threatening conditions relating to my liver and kidneys. I was there for a long time, and the staff didn't think I'd survive, but I found inner strength and fought.

When I came home, Emilia started supporting me. She makes me feel better on my down days and knowing she's there for me makes a massive difference.

Thanks to Emilia's persistence, I have carers visit me twice a day, and she's helped me with my PIP claim, which was approved a few months ago. The backdated payment came as a huge relief, especially in the current climate.

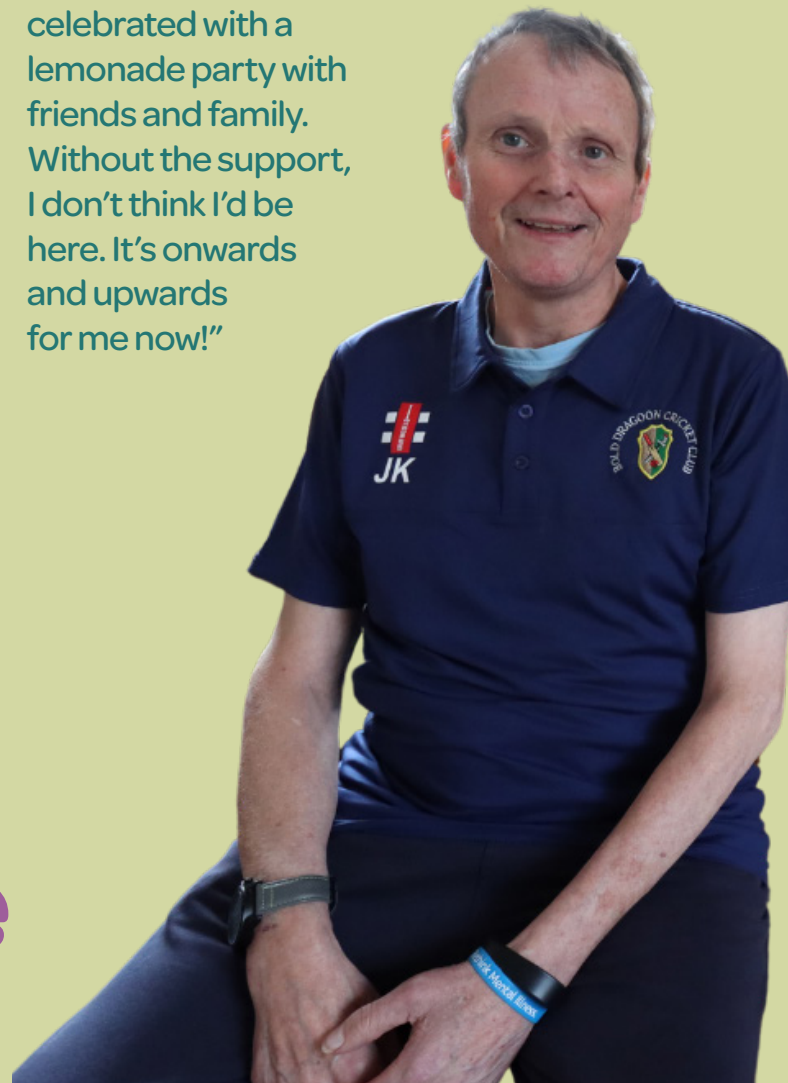
It means I don't have to struggle getting the bus to appointments, and I've been able to get work done in my home too. I booked NPH's handyperson to decorate my flat

using paint I picked from the Paint Shop, and he put up some curtain rails for me too. I've got new furniture and flooring, and it feels much more homely now.

The mental, emotional and practical support I've had from Andrea and Emilia has been brilliant, and I'm so grateful. When you're surrounded by things you can't do, it affects your mental health and your mood, so having the help to make changes helps to keep me positive.

**I'd encourage anyone who needs some support to reach out, it really can change your life.**

I've been sober for over a year now, and celebrated with a lemonade party with friends and family. Without the support, I don't think I'd be here. It's onwards and upwards for me now!"



**Joe**

Jack has been a volunteer at the Paint Shop for a year, having signed up as soon as he turned 18. Since then, he's really grown in confidence and is a regular at the Paint Shop, volunteering every week.

**Jack said:**

"I'd had issues with going to school, and then I was supposed to go to college but that didn't work out. I tried to get a job but that didn't work out either.

One of the team at Free2Talk CIC told me the Paint Shop was looking for volunteers and encouraged me to try that, so I popped in to find out more. Everyone seemed really nice, and so I signed up to volunteer as soon as I turned 18 last November.

I love it! It's helped me talk to people I don't know, grow my confidence and get out of the house too. I help to stock the shelves, check paint to make sure it's useable, and help and sell paint to customers.

I enjoy chatting to people here, that's something I wouldn't have been able to do before this.

It's also given me the confidence to go on the Cooking Good

course which was recommended to me. I really enjoyed it and got more confident each week.

It was great to get to know everyone else on the course. It took me a while to get talking to them, but we were all chatting lots by the end of it. Now I can cook for myself, and I even put my own twist on recipes too.

The pack we were given at the end of the course was really helpful, as I now have my own bowls, cooking equipment and ingredients.

**Although I still struggle with confidence at times, I can see a big change in myself.**

I managed to buy something in a shop for myself at the weekend, it was the first time I'd used my bank card. Although it went a little wrong and I needed help, I didn't feel super embarrassed and I'm just proud that I tried. That's all thanks to this.

My parents will be really surprised that I've done this interview, I can't wait for them to see me in here.

**Hi mum and dad!"**

**Jack**



Glen had been struggling with drinking, he had lost his job, home, and important relationships when he got involved with the Next Steps programme in August 2021 and began working with Julia.

**Glen told us:**

"I had a problem with drinking which started a long time ago, but the realisation that I had a problem didn't come until years later when it had properly got a hold on me. I worked in roofing and cladding and the culture was that we'd all go to the pub when we finished work. I can't blame everything on that, but it really did spiral from there. It got out of hand. I lost my job, my home, and lost relationships – with my partner, with friends and my family. I also ended up getting caught for drink driving more than once.

When Julia started helping me, I was still drinking and found dealing with appointments very stressful. She started coming to them

with me, and helped me get support with my drinking too.

She's helped me to live independently, and I'm finding new ways to keep organised.

I'm not

confident with mobile phones or computers, so I bought a whiteboard where I list all the important things I need to remember.

I've started working two days a week and hope to pick up more hours and more responsibility too. I'm learning the tools of the trade, and they're helping me to learn how to use a computer, and to improve my reading and writing.

Obviously, these skills are important for jobs, but they're a huge benefit to me personally. Working is helping me with structure and developing a routine, and although I'm just doing two days a week, it's massive for me.

## **I'm in a much better place now, and feel like everything's getting back on track.**

I have a 10-year-old son who stays with me at the weekends, and that was a big factor in making me turn things around. I'm making amends with my family and friends too.

They can see how I've turned my life around, so I'm able to start rebuilding those relationships. I'm fortunate to have a great relationship with my dad and he's been a rock throughout this. I'm hoping to move soon to be closer to my son's school so I can pick him up and have him in the evenings.

I want to keep telling my story to help other people. Half the battle for me was knowing who to turn to, it's hard to know what help is out there. I had no idea, and kept burying my head in the bottle. Without Julia I wouldn't have found it. She's helped me turn my life around and never given up on me, she's amazing."



# **Glen**



# NPH Handyperson

## Amazing feedback for Josh



ur community interest company, Happy to Help's handyperson service has been receiving many five-star reviews from happy residents.

The handyperson service launched in January 2021, and since then has provided over 200 residents with a low-cost service for jobs around the home from someone they can trust.

Josh, Happy to Help's handyperson, can help with tasks such as putting up shelves, building flat-pack furniture, decorating, attaching curtain poles, or changing tricky light bulbs.

Josh has been praised for his professionalism, politeness, hard work and reliability.

We know money's tight at the moment and that everything's getting more expensive. We're offering a reduced hourly-rate for our five-star rated handyperson service.

You can now get help with tasks such as putting up shelves, decorating, building flat-pack furniture or attaching curtain poles for £15 an hour. There may be reduced rates for those on benefits or if you book full or half days.

If you'd like to book our handyperson service, please get in touch on **01604 837836**

### Monica, NPH resident

"My husband is disabled so to have this service and someone like Josh is such a blessing!"



### Kezzie, NPH resident

"Josh was so polite and friendly. Went above and beyond for us! Definitely recommend Josh."



### Monica, NPH resident

"I fully recommend this service. Josh helped us several times and was so helpful and polite. 100% recommend reaching out for a free quote."



### Janet, NPH resident

"Josh has been a very polite and helpful worker, conscientious and has treated my home with respect. I have been very happy with the work he has done and would highly recommend him."



### Kirsty, NPH resident

"I'm so pleased with the results after having my bedroom painted. It looks lovely, and I'm very happy."



# Home Contents Insurance

## Protect the things you love

We all hope that the worst won't happen, but have you ever thought about how you would replace all your possessions if there was a fire, flood or burglary at your home?

NPH is responsible for the building side of things, but not everything you own inside.

We've teamed up with an insurance provider that offers a policy specifically designed for tenants. It's low cost and has some special features you won't find elsewhere. The friendly advisors at Thistle Tenant Risks and Ageas Insurance Limited can explain how it all works and help you to sign-up if you decide to.

Just call Thistle Tenant Risks on 0345 450 7286 or head to their website [www.crystal-insurance.co.uk](http://www.crystal-insurance.co.uk) for more information. You can even request a call back so that you're not waiting on the phone.

### Reasons to choose Crystal Insurance Scheme

- Flexible payment options
- New for old cover
- Low minimum sums insured
- A range of brilliant cover options

## Leaseholders we want your feedback

We carried out our first leaseholder survey in 2020-21 and the feedback we received from you has helped us identify how we can work to improve the services we provide.

We made a commitment to ask for further feedback to see whether any changes made by us are making a difference.

We will be running a new survey in January 2023 for all landlords, leaseholders and private tenants. This is your chance to tell us what you think of our services and help us to improve on the things that matter to you. Leaseholders and private tenants in a leasehold property will have the opportunity to take part in a free

prize draw for 'Love2Shop' vouchers.

The Leadership Factor (TLF Research), an independent research company, is running a confidential survey on our behalf and will analyse your returned questionnaires for us.

If you need help with the questionnaire when it arrives, to check that this survey is genuine, to request a large print version or a version in a different language, you can call us on 0300 330 7003.

The deadline for responding to the survey is 10th February 2023 and we will share the results on our website later in the year.





# More New Homes

## Avenue Campus

Work is well underway on this exciting development, in a fantastic location right next to The Racecourse.

Contractors are currently removing asbestos, along with the former university's fixtures and fittings. This initial phase will be complete around April 2023, when work can begin to create 170 new homes.

## Southbridge Road

We're thrilled to share with you that we are working on another new site to provide 28 one- and two-bedroom apartments. We expect construction to start in Spring next year, so watch this space for updates.

## Riverside House

This former office block has been completely transformed, with 60 flats now in place. Contractors are currently in the final phase of internal works so that we can welcome residents to their new homes next Spring. We can't wait to meet them!





## This year we've installed:

- Over 500 loft insulations
- External wall insulation on over 500 homes
- 1800 new windows and 300 new doors
- 75 new kitchens
- 120 new bathrooms



## We've been working hard to make improvements to homes across Northampton.

These upgrades will help keep you warmer, safer and can reduce your energy bills.

### Decent homes standard

Work began in 2009 to make sure that each of our homes meets a national standard. This work included upgrades to kitchens and bathrooms and checking electrics for safety.

We believe that these works have been completed in all cases, except in those homes where work was refused.

If you don't feel this is the case, please contact us on 0300 3307003 and we will book a convenient time to visit you and survey your home.

The decent homes standard sets the expectation that kitchens will last 20 years and bathrooms 30 years. If you have a problem with your kitchen or bathroom within these times, we ask you to report it as a repair.

### Get in touch:



0300 330 7003



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



# HAPPY TO HELP

## PROJECT UPDATES

Happy to Help CIC's Communities Fund offers support and funding to community groups and projects across Northampton. Read on to hear about the projects the fund has supported recently.

If this inspires you, or your group is already doing great things in Northampton, we'd love to hear from you. Contact the Happy to Help team on [happytohelp@nph.org.uk](mailto:happytohelp@nph.org.uk) or 01604 837836.

### Defibrillators

Happy to Help CIC has bought 9 defibrillators, which will be available at our community hubs. The team has worked with East Midlands Ambulance Service to identify areas that don't already have accessible defibrillators locally.

The units will be installed in locked cabinets on the outside of hubs, and will be registered on The Circuit – a national register of defibrillators that can be accessed by the 999 services. If it's needed, the access code will be shared by the 999 operator.

As the units are designed to be used by members of the public as well as emergency service staff, they're easy to use with clear instructions. They can be used on adults and children and, if needed, they should increase the chances of survival for people experiencing cardiac problems in the community.

### Abington Youth Group

Abington Youth Group meets every week and provides a safe place for young people to make new friends and get involved with physical and creative activities. The young people had a wish list of items they'd like for their activities, and the Communities Fund was delighted to help them. They now have new basketball nets and basketballs, sensory toys for relaxation and calming, and games including Quoits and Jenga to enjoy.

### Neighbourhood Watch

Arlbury Road Neighbourhood Watch received a gift card to buy winter flowering plants to brighten up the communal gardens. The group works hard to keep the gardens well-maintained for local residents, to boost wellbeing and pride in the area.

### Emmanuel Group of Churches

Emmanuel Group of Churches received funding to help them set up and run warm spaces at Thorplands Community hub 3 times a week. The funding has helped them to buy blankets, magazines, refreshments, and other items to make the hub warm and inviting for residents over the winter months. Find out more about the warm spaces on the next page.



DEFIBS



Abington Youth Group  
Awarded £250



NEIGHBOURHOOD  
WATCH



EMMANUEL CHURCH

# Warm Spaces

## Keep warm this winter



We're joining organisations across Northampton in offering warm spaces to residents. Chat, work or relax in our community hubs with free heating. There's also free Wi-Fi, hot drinks, and books available, and you're welcome to bring along things to keep you entertained.

Some of the warm spaces are run by community groups, and some are run by us. Everyone is welcome to go along to any of the sessions, and there's no charge for popping in.

Don't worry if we're not offering a warm space near you - West Northamptonshire Council has created a directory of the warm spaces available across Northampton. To find out more, go to: **[www.westnorthants.gov.uk/cost-living-support/looking-warm-spaces](http://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/cost-living-support/looking-warm-spaces)**

If you're struggling to pay for essential items such as food, gas or electricity, please get in touch with us.

Our Housing Support and Financial Inclusion teams are here to help you.

Call us on 0300 330 7003 or complete our online form and someone will get in touch with you:

**[www.nph.org.uk/our-housing-support-service](http://www.nph.org.uk/our-housing-support-service)**

### Opening times:

#### **Arlbury Road Community Hub**

Arlbury Road, Blackthorn, NN3 8QJ  
Wednesdays: 12pm - 3pm

#### **Cardigan Close Community Hub**

Cardigan Close, Dallington NN5 7DH  
Tuesdays: 9am - 4pm

#### **James Lewis Court**

James Lewis Court,  
Cherry Orchard NN3 8XJ  
Monday to Friday: 1pm - 4pm

#### **Liburd Community Room**

Whilton Road, NN2 7RR  
Sunday: 11:30am - 5pm

#### **Thorplands Community Hub**

Farmfield Court, Thorplands NN3 8AQ  
Open throughout the week -  
Varying times

#### **Blackberry Lane Community Hub**

Briar Hill, NN4 8QU  
Open throughout the week -  
Varying times

Go to our website to find out more about our opening times:

**[www.nph.org.uk/warm-spaces](http://www.nph.org.uk/warm-spaces)**



# Get to know...

## Diane Dean | Involved NPH Resident

**She's cooked for the Queen of Norway but is now a Blackberry Lane hub champion and an involved NPH resident, so we couldn't wait to sit down and catch up. Meet Diane Dean!**

Lovely to meet you Diane, can you tell us a bit about yourself?

I am the 'Hub Champion' for Blackberry Lane community hub and have been living in the area for a few years now. Before Northampton, me and my family lived in Zimbabwe. We then all started moving over as a relative began working at Barclays.

What does it mean to be a 'Hub Champion'?

I am often just making sure everything in the hub is working OK, a little bit like a caretaker.

I also help organise events and make sure everyone has what they need when they come in. I like to make sure everyone who comes in feels welcome and most importantly, wants to keep coming back.

After Covid, it was really difficult to get people back to the hub and out their home.

So whenever someone new comes in now, I like to introduce them to new people and get people talking more.

Can you tell us about some of the NPH courses you've attended?

I first went on the cookery course that was available to residents. Although I've done a lot of cooking for large groups, I needed a bit of inspiration on just cooking for one. As part of the training, we even received some new cooking equipment.

I've also been along to the wellbeing course, and the IT skills course which the attendees found extremely helpful.

I'm also hoping to attend one of the upcoming DIY courses as again, I need a bit of help and confidence doing work in my own home.

I recently attended the NPH website review as the site is going to be upgraded for the benefit of residents. (Read more about this on page 3)

What would you say to someone who's thinking about getting involved more?

I think it's really easy to criticise what other people are doing or not doing in some cases. And I think sometimes you have got to do that job yourself.

I have really enjoyed getting more involved, and being someone people can come to if they need help with anything.

I also like to keep in contact with Dan who is the housing officer for Briar Hill. He has been brilliant in listening to us and the concerns of the neighbourhood.

So you cooked for the Queen of Norway? Please explain!

Yes, the Queen of Norway, and also several Zimbabwe Prime Ministers. Donations would be made to hospitals in the country, and then it would be my job to feed everyone!

# MEET THE TEAM

## Ryan Surridge, NPH's ASB Team Leader

### How long have you been at NPH?

I joined NPH in June, and I'm loving it so far. These first few months have flown by, I'm learning lots about the job and how Team NPH works. They're a great bunch here, and they've made settling in that bit easier.

### What did you do before joining NPH?

My last job was at Milton Keynes Council working in the ASB team. Before that, I worked at Thames Valley Police for 7 years as a police officer. I loved it, and only left as I wanted to be around more for my family. Working shifts wasn't ideal for that!

### Tell us about your role

I manage NPH's team of tenancy compliance officers who respond to reports of anti-social behaviour. I'm always on hand to support them and answer any questions they have. They're a very knowledgeable team and really know their stuff, so they don't have lots of questions for me!

It's really important to us that we work together with our partners across Northampton to make sure we have a joined-up approach to dealing with ASB. So, I often represent NPH at partnership meetings with organisations like the police, West Northamptonshire Council, and voluntary agencies.

We're always looking for ways to improve our service, so I monitor our team's performance by looking at statistics and resident satisfaction reports. I also deal with complaints and develop policies. One policy I've been working on recently is about cuckooing. We've seen more cases in recent years, so it's important our policy supports an effective response to cuckooing reports to make sure we safeguard victims and deal with offenders.

### Can you tell us more about cuckooing?

Cuckooing is where gangs take over the homes of vulnerable people to use as a base for selling drugs. Often, they'll befriend the resident or supply them with drugs to build a relationship before taking control of their homes. People with mental health problems or addictions are often targeted, and sometimes criminals target those who are lonely or isolated.

Signs someone is being cuckooed include lots of people coming and going from a property, evidence of drug use, noise nuisance or disturbances, or even drastic changes in the way they're behaving.

### And how can residents help if they're worried about a neighbour being cuckooed?

If you've spotted any of the signs, or you're worried someone might be being targeted, please report this to us. You can speak to us in confidence, or if you'd rather speak to the police you can do. Call us on 0300 330 7003, go online to [www.nph.org.uk/anti-social-behaviour](http://www.nph.org.uk/anti-social-behaviour) or call the police on 101.





# Thank you Oscar

Our wordsearch creator and involved tenant, Oscar Woodcock is stepping down from his duties on our Happy to Help board. Oscar will still be involved with NPH in different ways, which is a relief to all of us!

Oscar will carry on providing his brilliant wordsearches, but on this occasion, we've created our own, to pick out some of his favourite things. As a proud and devoted Bury Football Club fan, we had to get in some mentions of their rich history.

Please join us in saying thanks to Oscar for all of his work and dedication whilst on the Happy to Help board. And best of luck to Barbara, Oscar's loving wife, now that he has a bit more time on his hands.

## Wordsearch

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

- ☐ The Shakers
- ☐ Gigg Lane
- ☐ Aiden Arrowsmith
- ☐ Colin Bell
- ☐ Southall
- ☐ Happy To Help
- ☐ Handyperson
- ☐ Communities Fund
- ☐ The Paint Shop
- ☐ Get Involved
- ☐ Tenant Chair
- ☐ Barbara
- ☐ Barnet
- ☐ EMI Music

To enter, please send a picture of your completed grid to our Facebook page: **NPH Connect**, or email to **voiceditor@nph.org.uk**, or send it the traditional way to the address on page 2.

