

Wellbeing 21

News, information and advice for Oldham residents

Easter celebrations took place across the Courts. Examples shown are School House Flats, Charles Morris House, and St. Herbert's Court



WHAT'S INSIDE?

- Around the courts
- Greenfingers
- Advice from the NHS

The Covid pandemic continued to restrict communal activities across our Courts during the last quarter, but despite those problems, there were still some special moments. Here is selection from across the Courts –

At Lido House, a local lady, Elaine Buckley, has joined a local group on Facebook called Random Acts of Kindness. She made these for all the residents at Lido House to give out on Valentine's Day. They also knitted some love heart strings for the fence outside.

Then, on the Thursday before Easter, the residents received some funds from Councillor Val Leach. This was used to deliver 55 afternoon teas to Hood Square and Lido House. Mr & Mrs Ryder from Lido House picked them up from Morrisons, assisted by Mr & Mrs Beech (also from Lido House) and helped Court Manager Vicky deliver them all.



At St. Herbert's Court, Mrs. Brady, a resident from Cypress Avenue donated lovely knitted Easter gifts. She also donated the knitting patterns to share with other residents.



Also at **St. Herbert's Court**, following a successful grant application from the Oldham Community Recovery Fund, Court Manager Tara was able to purchase Easter eggs and a puzzle book for each resident in St Herbert's Court for over the Easter break.



In addition, Oldham Food Bank donated items for the residents, which really helped some and a St Herbert's Court resident brought 2 bags of shopping to the office to hand out to his neighbours. **How lovely is that!**

Residents at **School House Flats**, had an unusual visitor at Easter! Court Manager Karen said - 'The Easter Bunny visited School House Flats on Easter Sunday and surprised all the residents with gift of a chocolate bunny.

Many thanks to Anita and Marie, the Court Voices for their kindness and to the Easter Bunny for making a surprise appearance'



At **Charles Morris House**, Easter treats were prepared and delivered to all residents, which were kindly provided by Vicky from our on-site restaurant provider, Relish 21.

In addition, more Easter treats for residents were kindly supplied by Trescothick and the community champion Rose.



At **Violet Hill Court**, Court Manager Joanne provided a little Easter treat to all her tenants... **Happy Easter.**



Whilst at **Millgate**, Easter eggs for tenants were kindly donated by Morrisons supermarket.

At **Holland Close**, one tenant knitted hats, to keep the keyworkers warm and cosy! The picture shows one modelled by Police Officer, Stuart Little to match his football team colours, as he requested!



At **Old Mill House**, Court Manager Dianne said 'A big thank you once again to our lovely local community and friends of Old Mill House. The kind donations of Easter eggs certainly helped to give our residents a very Happy Easter!!

And last but not least, at **Hopwood Court**, the in house caterer Marj, who we featured in the last edition of this newsletter, has now been awarded a 5 star hygiene certificate by Oldham Council! **Well done Marj!**



WELCOME TO THE TEAM!



We've welcomed two new additions to the property team recently as we have said a fond Happy Retirement to John Hughes and Howard Burgess.



Kerry Whittle has joined us as Property Services Manager, leading the team managing repairs, servicing and planned maintenance across Oldham. Kerry has an excellent range of experience including working for maintenance contractors as well as housing providers and is already getting stuck in to understand the services we provide and what we can do to improve the way we work. Kerry has an active life, enjoying cycling and walking her dogs.



Brian Walker is our new Property Inspector. Brian is working alongside John Blakeley, post inspecting repairs and getting properties ready to let. They also help diagnose any issues that might come up and look at possible improvements you want to make. Brian enjoys fixing up old cars and motorbikes in his spare time and is currently working on a mini clubman!

Linda Fox and Luke Dearden have also joined Housing 21

Linda has joined the Oldham team as a Customer Services Advisor. Linda has a wealth of customer service experience and will be working with the team on the letting and rent account maintenance. She will be a friendly voice on the Oldham phone lines. Linda enjoys travelling (when times allow) dog walking and has a busy family life.

Luke has joined the repairs team as a repairs customer advisor, he is working alongside Michael Lucas logging repairs from residents and court managers via email and phone calls. Luke has a vast amount of knowledge in repairs and maintenance and has settled into the team really well.



HOUSING 21 COMPLAINTS, COMPLIMENTS AND COMMENTS - JANUARY TO MARCH 2021

We received 2 complaints during the quarter both relating to the closure of communal lounges. The lounges were closed in line with Government and local Public Health advice to reduce the transmission of coronavirus, we are pleased to report that as of 12th April communal lounges are now open to residents and we are hoping in the near future to allow family members and visitors to use the communal facilities.

We have received 4 compliments during the quarter, 3 were relating to work by a repairs contractor and 1 was thanking the Court Manager for sorting an issue out.

WHY BECOME A PRIORITY SERVICES CUSTOMER?



Sign up to Electricity North West's Priority Service Register to benefit from a variety of free support services

Information from Electricity North West

Communication

Once we are aware of a power cut in your area our welfare team will make every effort to contact you. Power cuts can be planned or unplanned and as a priority customer we will:

- Prioritise your call and put you straight through to a dedicated team member
- Keep you up-to-date with text messages and phone calls using telephone 07786 201716
- Contact you six days before any planned work and send you a reminder the day before to help you prepare
- Send you warnings of bad weather that may cause power cuts.

Nominated contact

As well as your own details, you can nominate up to six friends, carers or family members to receive updates on your behalf. If you live on your own this can reassure your friends or family that you're safe or let them know you need support.

Welfare

If a power cut lasts all day we may provide additional welfare support such as: hot food and drinks, blankets, flasks, analogue telephones, glow in the dark torches, small generators or alternative accommodation.

Dedicated welfare team

Our team of customer service experts have been trained to deal with sensitive situations meaning we can help you if you need some extra support, either over the phone or face-to-face.

Support from our partners

We work with a number of partners to offer extra support to our customers, for example if you have mental health concerns, mobility issues or if you rely on electricity for medical reasons.

Sharing is caring

We can share your details with United Utilities, the region's provider of water and wastewater services.

Priority services register

Sign up to our free priority services register and our welfare team will help keep you safe and comfortable until the power is back on. Contact us on 105 or 0800 195 4141, or email us at customerwelfareteam@enwl.co.uk

More information can be found on the Electricity North West website www.enwl.co.uk/power-cuts/priority-services-register/

GREENFINGERS SUMMER SEASON

Mid-March - October

What should I expect from my grounds maintenance service?

- Your grass will be cut and cleared approximately twice per month, keeping it looking tidy at all times
- All obstacles and edges will be trimmed and left tidy
- Grass will be cut and mulched, keeping it green and clean!
- We will remove all litter before each cut
- An application of herbicide to all weeds in paths, shrub beds and parking areas will be applied
- Hedges and shrubs will be trimmed once to ensure they remain healthy and away from path edges



Quick guide for residents

STEP 1 - REGISTER

Register your details online by visiting the Greenfingers website greenfingers-group.co.uk

Fill the online form located on the contact us page



STEP 2 - LOGIN TO FIELD LOGIC

Once registered, we will provide you with details. You can then access the online portal at any time from your computer, tablet, phone by visiting the website fgf.altlogic.com



STEP 3 - WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT?

- Visit dates
- Time spent onsite
- Before & after photos
- Works completed
- Comments & observations



Housing 21

2021 Garden Competition

- Best communal garden.
- Best garden.
- Best pot, box or hanging basket.
- Best creative expression of gardening (e.g. poem, drawing or knitted/embroidered item).
- Best video of 'why I love gardening.'
- Best grow your own fruit or veg.



1st Prize: £30 shopping voucher

Highly commended: £20 shopping voucher

Entries will need to be photographed/videoed and emailed to Vincent.Sexton@housing21.org.uk or posted to Vince at Chambers Business Centre, Chapel Road, Oldham, OL8 4QQ

Please include your name, address, contact number and confirm which category you are entering. The video entry should be no longer than 1 minute and please limit your photo entries to a maximum of 5 photos.

If you'd like to enter but need some help with capturing your entry please call Vince on 07860 267 695 or speak to your Court Manager.

Entries close on Friday 2nd July 2021

*Only open to Housing 21 residents.



Relax with Lucy

They are a team of relaxation, meditation and wellbeing instructors.

Relax With Lucy & Co is a not for profit organisation who work with the local community of Oldham in providing free classes and resources in relation to relaxation and wellbeing promotion.

Their most recent project has been an eight week Radio Relax feature, which currently airs every Tuesday and Thursday afternoon on Oldham Community Radio and Oldham Hospital's Radio Cavell station. The Radio Relax project came about from being made aware that many older people in Oldham were unable to access their resources online. They decided to put together a recorded series all around relaxation and a practice known as 'mindfulness', to help to advocate ways in which to feel calmer and happier.

For anyone who can't listen to the series live, they also have a Radio Relax podcast which is available for free on Spotify. Relax With Lucy & Co are continually working hard to help spread a little relaxation to anyone who needs it, whether you struggle with anxiety, low mood, sleep or even pain.

You can find out more about Relax With Lucy & Co at their website www.relaxwithlucy.co.uk and you can also access their resources on their YouTube channel – Relax With Lucy & Co. Oldham Community Radio is broadcast on 99.7fm in the Oldham and immediate surrounding areas.

Let's Discover IT



Let's Discover IT is a new resource for residents to explore the internet and have fun together!

There are loads of topics to choose from and new projects to check out!

Best of all – you can contribute to **Let's Discover IT** by sending your favourite website links or suggesting new topics to explore.

Created and developed by a staff member of Housing 21, with contributions from court managers and staff, **Let's Discover IT** is a great way to stay connected and be a part of our community.

Just log on to the website and **Let's Discover IT** together! And don't forget to follow us on Facebook too!



<https://letsdiscoverit.org>



@LetsDiscoveritClub



Letsdiscoverit.club@gmail.com

Advice from the NHS about dry mouth

A condition of the mouth caused by lack of saliva which increases the risk of dental problems

Protect your mouth:



- Cut down how often you have sugary foods and drinks.
- Have frequent small sips of plain water or suck ice chips.
- Brush twice a day, always last thing at night with a toothpaste that contains at least 1350ppm fluoride.
- After brushing don't rinse with water or mouthwash, rinsing washes away the fluoride toothpaste.
- For extra protection use a daily fluoride (0.05%) mouthwash at a different time to brushing.
- Ask your dentist and doctor for advice on managing your condition.

Keep hydrated throughout the day – aim to drink 6 to 8 glasses of plain water



Five tips to boost good nutrition and hydration in older age

Friends of the Elderly has partnered with the British Dietetic Association (BDA) to highlight the importance of good nutrition and hydration in older age.

1. Eat enough!

Malnutrition increases the risk of disease, delays recovery from illness, and adversely affects body function, wellbeing and clinical outcome. Try to eat three small meals and three small snacks each day, which include protein (fish, meat, tofu, soya, eggs etc), carbohydrate (starchy food potato, bread, rice), plenty fruit and vegetables fresh, frozen or canned.



BDA The Association of UK Dietitians

Friends of the Elderly

Registered charity no. 226064

2. Keep hydrated

Older people can be more vulnerable to dehydration. Avoid this by aiming for around six to eight glasses of fluid per day (a minimum of 1.5 litres). This includes milky drinks, hot drinks, pure fruit juice, cordials, water, and also tea and coffee up to the recommended daily amount.



3. Take vitamin D

Vitamin D helps your body absorb calcium for healthy bones and teeth. The Department of Health recommends everyone over the age of four takes a 10ug (0.01mg) vitamin D supplement, especially 'at risk' groups which include those over 65 years of age. Foods that provide vitamin D include: oily fish, cod liver oil, egg yolk, meat, offal and milk; margarine, some breakfast cereals, and some yogurts are 'fortified' with vitamin D.



4. Make sure you're getting enough calcium

We lose bone mass as we age, so it is important to consume plenty of calcium. Good sources of calcium include: dairy products like milk, cheese, yogurt, fortified bread and fortified milk alternatives such as soya/rice milk, fish such as mackerel and sardines, some leafy greens, figs and almonds.



5. Dose up on B vitamins (folic acid, B6, B12)

B vitamins have a range of important functions in the body, including contributing to healthy red blood cells, bodily functions, nerve function, healthy skin, vision and reducing tiredness. Good sources of B vitamins include: green vegetables, fortified cereals, peanuts, pork, poultry, fish, milk, and other fortified foods, such as fortified milk alternatives (soya, rice milk)



Energy Switching Could Save You £££££

Switching energy supplier could save you hundreds of pounds on your gas and electricity bill.

According to Energy UK's electricity switching figures for 2019, more than 6.4 million customers moved to a new supplier - an average of 12 switches every minute. And there's never been a better time to change energy suppliers as energy prices are on the rise.

Since the introduction of Ofgem's energy price cap in January 2019, most suppliers have based energy prices on their default tariffs on the rate of the price cap. Following an increase in the price cap level announced in February 2021, suppliers have begun to raise their prices for customers on default tariffs.

All of the 'big six' energy suppliers (Centrica plc (parent company of British Gas), E. ON UK, Scottish and Southern Energy (SSE), RWE npower, EDF Energy and Scottish Power) have announced price rises, each implementing an average £96 annual increase for customers on standard variable and default tariffs. These price rises will come into effect from 1 April 2021 so there's never been a better time to consider switching.

So when was the last time you checked your energy tariffs?

If it was more than a year ago, you could be paying far more than necessary. You need to go on to a better deal. Here are some questions about switching energy:

The Ofgem approved list is –	
• Energy Helpline	www.energyhelpline.com/ Phone 0800 074 0745
• Energylinx	www.energylinx.co.uk/ Phone 0800 849 7077
• The Energy Shop	www.theenergyshop.com/ Phone 020 3951 8617
• Money Supermarket	www.moneysupermarket.com/
• My Utility Genius	www.myutilitygenius.co.uk/ Phone 0203 468 0461
• Runpath	www.runpathdigital.com/gas-electricity/
• Simply Switch	www.simplyswitch.com/ 0800 011 1395
• Switch Gas and Electric	www.switchgasandelectric.com/ Phone 03333 700 600
• Quotezone	www.quotezone.co.uk/
• Unravel It	www.unravelit.com/energy-switching
• Uswitch	www.uswitch.com/

Will I experience any power cuts during the switch?
You won't experience any power outages during your switch.

Can my energy supplier stop me from switching?
If you pay for your energy bills it's entirely up to you whether you want to switch your energy, and your supplier can't stop you. Many fixed rate energy plans run on a contract of 12-18 months and you may have to pay an exit fee if you switch during this period, but there's nothing to stop you from switching if you're willing to pay the exit fee.



What info do you need to switch energy supplier?

The more detailed information you can provide when you're getting a quote for a new gas and electricity tariff, the more accurate it will be. You will need your full address, the name of your current gas and electricity supplier and tariff, how much gas and electricity you use and your payment details.

Is it safe to switch energy online?

Absolutely. You can simply and safely switch your energy supply online through an accredited energy switching service. If you are unsure of an energy switching service's credentials, look for a notice of their Confidence Code. The Confidence Code is a voluntary code of practice for domestic energy price comparison services and is managed by the UK energy market regulator, Ofgem.

COMPETITION TIME!

ENTER OUR SUMMER WORDSEARCH COMPETITION TO WIN £25 WORTH OF LOVE2SHOP VOUCHERS!



Simply enter your contact details below and post your answers, to –Vince Sexton, Housing 21, Chambers Business Centre, Chapel Rd, Oldham OL8 4QQ. The closing date for entries is Friday 2nd July 2021.*

NAME:
ADDRESS:
TELEPHONE:

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X	A	U	T	I	S	E	S	S	A	L	G	N	U	S
C	P	N	H	A	C	S	U	N	S	C	R	E	E	N

August	barbecue	beach	family
flipflops	fun	holiday	hot
icecream	icepop	July	June
ocean	picnic	pool	relax
shorts	sprinkler	summer	sunglasses
sunscreen	sunshine	swimsuit	

*Only Housing 21 residents are eligible to apply

THE WINNER OF OUR SPRING COMPETITION WAS MRS CROWTHER,
61 VICTORIA STREET, SHAW.



Our contact details:

Housing 21
Units 403/404
Chambers Business Centre
Chapel Road
Oldham
OL8 4QQ

Email: OldhamEnquiries@housing21.org.uk
Customer Services Telephone: 0345 604 4447

OTHER USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS:

Repairs Line (24 hours)
0800 032 1215

Oldham Council main switchboard
0161 770 3000
You can access lots of our services online at:
www.oldham.gov.uk

Council Tax
0161 770 6622
council.tax@oldham.gov.uk

Environmental Health
0161 770 2244
environmentalhealth@oldham.gov.uk

Housing Benefits and Council Tax Reduction Scheme
0161 770 6633
benefits@oldham.gov.uk

Payment line
0161 770 6611
24 hour automated payment service

Registrars
0161 770 8960

Waste and recycling
0161 770 6644
waste@oldham.gov.uk

Age UK Oldham
0161 633 0213
Ring & Ride
0161 652 0248

Citizens Advice Bureau
0844 847 2638

Silverline
(confidential friendship support)
0800 470 8090

NHS Advice
111

Police non-emergency
101

Oldham Community Leisure
0161 207 7000

Action Together
(formerly Voluntary Action Oldham)
0161 339 2345

Oldham Library
Greaves St
0161 770 8000

Making Space
Tandle View, Royton
07966 887 152

Oldham Community Transport
0161 633 0097 (mobility scooters and wheelchairs)
0161 633 0040

Greater Manchester Fire & Rescue Service
Book a Safe and Well Appointment
0800 555 815
<https://www.manchesterfire.gov.uk/staying-safe/what-we-do/safe-and-well-visit>