

Warwickshire Rural Life

The residents' newsletter for
**Warwickshire Rural Housing
Association**

SPRING 2020

www.warwickshirerha.org.uk



30 Happy Years!



CORONAVIRUS LATEST

We now have a page on our website www.warwickshirerha.org.uk dedicated to coronavirus. Find out whether we are having to make any changes to the services we provide and where to go for more information.

Jackie and Terrence Heritage were among the very first families to move into the first phase of our development at Stretton on Fosse 30 years ago.

And three decades later, the couple are still happy residents on the development, where the third and final phase of homes has recently been completed.

Jackie says: "We've moved once, from a two-bedroom to a three-bedroom home as we had our two boys, but my husband grew up in Stretton on Fosse and always wanted to stay in the village he loved."

Find out more at www.warwickshirerha.org.uk

FOR YOUR BENEFIT

TV LICENCE CHARGES

From 1st June people aged 75 and over will only be able to claim a free TV licence if they claim Pension Credit. Everyone else will have to pay £154.50 a year.

PENSION INCREASE

People who receive a state pension will find their income increases by the highest amount since 2012 in April. The weekly pension for people who reached state pension age after 6th April 2016 will rise to £175.20. Those who reached pension age before this will receive £134.25 a week.

JACK'S LAW

In April, the Parental Bereavement Leave and Pay Act (Jack's Law) will come into force. All employed parents who lose a child under the age of 18, including stillbirths from 24 weeks, will be entitled to two weeks' leave.

LIVING WAGE INCREASE

The National Living Wage (for workers aged 25 and over) will increase to £8.72 per hour in April. The National Minimum Wage will increase to £8.20 per hour for 21-24 year olds, to £6.45 per hour for 18-20 year olds and to £4.55 per hour for under 18s.

UC *Universal Credit*

BENEFITS FREEZE ENDS

The benefits freeze will end in April which means payments for working-age benefits such as Universal Credit and Job Seeker's Allowance could increase by 1.7%.

CHEAP FOOD

Download the Toogoodtogo app and order a magic bag full of perfectly edible food that shops and restaurants have to throw out at the end of the day if it's not been sold. Shops in the scheme include Morrisons, Nisa Local, bakeries, pubs and hotels.

FREE DENTAL CARE

Women who are pregnant or who have had a baby in the past 12 months get free NHS dental treatment and prescriptions. Make the most of it by booking a dental check-up just before the end of your first year as a new mum!



ON THE MOVE

There have been a few changes to our team recently:

Maintenance Surveyor, Robyn Jarvis has headed off on maternity leave and we can't wait to hear news of her new arrival.

Lauren Turner has moved from the Customer Care Team to become Maintenance Surveyor for Warwickshire and Leicestershire.

“ I'm looking forward to solving residents' queries and issues using the knowledge and expertise I've gained during the last 15 years I've worked here ”

Beth Willars, Development & Maintenance Assistant, is getting married and moving away from the area and we wish her lots of luck. We will be recruiting a replacement soon.

Having completed a Business Administration apprenticeship with the Customer Care Team, Leonie Aldridge has now been taken on as a Customer Care Co-ordinator.

“ I'm looking forward to continuing my training and speaking to residents. I feel very lucky to be able to continue working with so many great colleagues. ”

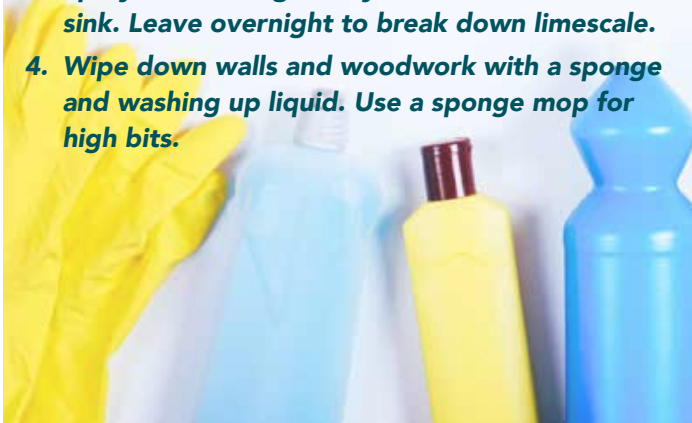
Directorate & RHA Board Secretary, Sandra Smith, is retiring at the end of April after 15 years. She's enjoyed ensuring the Board members have everything they need, and is now looking forward to a relaxing retirement!

Theresa Chamberlain, Housing Services Assistant, is going off on maternity leave soon and we'll keep you posted of plans to cover her post.

SPRING CLEAN

There's no better time than Spring to give your home a good clean! Here's our top Spring cleaning tips.

1. **Declutter your home. Separate items into 'keep', 'donate' and 'throw away'.**
2. **Wear rubber gloves to clean pet hair off sofas, carpets, curtains, bedding. The hairs will stick to the gloves.**
3. **Spray white vinegar on your toilet, shower and sink. Leave overnight to break down limescale.**
4. **Wipe down walls and woodwork with a sponge and washing up liquid. Use a sponge mop for high bits.**



EMERGENCY CHANGES

From 1st April until 31st October, if you experience a total loss of heating, this will not be classed as an emergency repair.

ENSURE YOU'RE INSURED!

Many residents still don't have contents insurance and it's so important to get it sorted.

It covers the cost of repairing or replacing your furniture and possessions such as clothing, jewellery, electronic goods and carpets, if they get damaged, destroyed or stolen. If you don't have insurance you'll face a hefty bill. You can usually pay for insurance in weekly or monthly instalments so find the best deal for you.



WEB ANSWERS

If you've a question about our services, take a look at our website first and you're likely to find the answer!

In the 'Living in your Home' section you'll find a host of information including details of reporting repairs, garden services, making home improvements and keeping a pet. If you can't find the answer, please complete the 'contact us' form on the website.



RENT REMINDER

Now that you've received your rent increase letter, please check you have:

- *increased your standing order (we'll increase your direct debit)*
- *informed your Housing Benefit department about the increase*
- *updated your Universal Credit journal*

BANK HOLIDAY CLOSURES

The early May Bank Holiday has moved to **Friday 8th May** this year to commemorate VE Day, and so the office will be closed on this day.

We'll also be closed for Easter on **Friday 10th** and **Monday 13th April**.

Other Bank Holidays are:
Monday 25th May **Monday 31st August**

NEW CHAIR

Ruth Bagley has become the new Chair of WRHA and is looking forward to working more closely with residents to meet the need for good quality affordable rural housing.

"Our residents are a valued and valuable source of ideas," she says. "I want to ensure that we understand their needs and keep improving our services."



NEW HOMES

- **A public consultation has just taken place about plans for two homes for shared ownership and six for affordable rent in Stourton.**
- **It is hoped that work on seven affordable homes in Bearley will start this Summer.**

To register your interest in any property, please visit our website: [find a home to rent](#).

PLAYGROUND PLANS

We've signed up to become a Premier Sponsor of the brand new playground planned for Claverdon. A team of local volunteers has been raising funds to transform the old play area into a fabulous new playground with lots of new equipment, and we're pleased to help.



IN YOUR OWN WORDS ...

We asked you what you think of your housing association?

"Thank you for giving me a home in the village I grew up in."

Warwickshire
Rural
Life

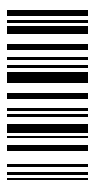


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