

through the keyhole

Official Newsletter of
Cynon Tâf Community Housing Group

SPRING 2009

HOME CONTENTS INSURANCE



We would like to remind all our tenants of the importance of insuring the contents of your home. Whilst we insure the building, this does not cover damage to your possessions.

Out of 126 customer satisfaction visits carried out by Performance Officer Ann Costanza last year only 20% of the new tenants had taken out home contents insurance.

Two of our tenants have recently suffered damage to their possessions after leaks at their homes, neither of whom had their own insurance.

Due to our concern over this we would like to take this opportunity to inform you of a home contents insurance scheme specifically for housing association residents.

The scheme, 'My home', has been designed by Community Housing Cymru, in association with the National Housing Federation, to offer access to affordable contents insurance. Unlike most insurance policies there is no excess. The minimum level of cover is £6,000 for tenants

aged 60+ and £9,000 for all other tenants. Premiums can be paid fortnightly or monthly by cash at the post office or a pay zone outlet, as well as through bank accounts by direct debit.

If you would like some further information, please contact the office and we will arrange to send you a leaflet, which has full details of the scheme.

Please note, there are many other providers of home contents insurance for you to choose from.



YOUR COMMENTS

We are always interested in what you think about the service we provide. Here are some of your recent comments ...

"With all things taken into perspective I don't think I would find a better landlord"

"Every time we phone you have been helpful and have done what we ask for"



MYSTERY CUSTOMER REPORT



Thanks to all of you who answered the question regarding the new design of our calendar and 'You Said We Did' sheet . The majority 90% found preferred the new design of our calendar. 92% found the calendar useful and 88% felt the 'You Said We Did' sheet was useful..

Congratulations to Ms C Taplin of Pontypridd who won the £20 Argos Voucher.

DID YOU KNOW?

We have 107 mystery customers (which represents 5.8% of our tenants) who report on all aspects of the service they receive.

39 of our mystery customers were visited between June and September 2008. The majority of our mystery customers had rung to report repairs. 92% were happy with the standard of work carried out and 85% were happy with the arrangements made by the contractors to carry out the work. 85% were happy with the overall service received. Any issues raised have been resolved. Other reasons for contacting us included queries about rent, planned maintenance, drainage, service charges and adaptations.

If you would like to become a Mystery Customer and help us improve our services please contact **Ann Costanza** on **01443 743204**.

CONTRACTOR'S USE OF POWER TOOLS

Please be aware that contractors should not plug in to your electric supply without your prior permission.

If works are of a substantial nature and require extensive use of power tools the contractor may negotiate this with you. We have to stress that this arrangement is between you and the contractor, however if you are unhappy about the contractor's proposals you should contact the Association for further advice.



🔑 WHY MAY I BE ASKED TO SIGN A WORKS ORDER?

If your job is not an emergency, you should have received a letter / questionnaire in the post before the contractor calls informing you of what works are due to be carried out and a date by which the works need to be completed.

You may be asked by our contractors to sign a copy of an order. Please note, you should only sign this order if you are satisfied with the work that has been undertaken in your home.

The contractor should also note on the order the arrival and departure time at your home, it is important to check these times are correct.

If for some reason you are not happy with the contractor's performance / workmanship / attitude / arrival and departure time, you should

refuse to sign the order. If you feel uncomfortable doing this for whatever reason, please note the following:

Your tenant satisfaction questionnaire gives you opportunity to comment on the contractor's performance. At the bottom of the questionnaire you will note a box. If this box is ticked and returned to us, a member of staff will contact you; alternatively note your concern and this will be dealt with by the Association.

This information is vital to us in order to monitor the services you are receiving from our contractors. The Association values all comments, whether good or bad, and will strive to improve services wherever possible.

Thank you for your continued co-operation.



🔑 EXTRA HOMES BY THE END OF MARCH!

Following the lead of the UK government, the Welsh Assembly Government has allocated specific funds to help businesses cope with the credit crunch.

Some money has been given to Cynon Tâf Community Housing Group to buy up unsold properties from private builders. Over £2M will be spent by the end of March in areas such as Aberdare, Ynysboeth and Mountain Ash.

The houses will be targeted at people on low wages who would like to buy their own homes at some stage in the near future.

For further information, please contact your area housing officer.

🔑 CHANGES TO THE MAINTENANCE DEPARTMENT

In order to improve services to you our three maintenance officers now cover specific areas. For your information these are.

- **Alison Sheppard** covers the area from Pontyclun to Abercynon
- **Neil Phillips** covers the area from Matthewstown to Mountain Ash
- **Kerry Hansford** covers the area from Abercwmboi to Rhigos



TENANTS' FORUM NEWS

The Tenants Forum started the new year by welcoming representatives from the Abercynon Fire Station to the January meeting. They gave a very interesting talk about Home Fire Safety. To arrange a free home fire safety check see the enclosed leaflet.

The Forum also discussed our Tenant Participation Compact and agreed the use of a new leaflet 'Getting Involved' to let

everyone know about the ways they can be involved. We have enclosed a copy of this leaflet for your information. Please let us know what you think. The Forum also agreed to set up a Policy Review Panel to consider improvements to policies that we currently use and which need to be reviewed on a regular basis. If you would like to be involved in the Review Panel please



contact Ann Costanza on 01443 743204.

Why don't you come along and be part of the Tenants' Forum? The next meeting will be held at **11.00am** on **Wednesday 11th March 2009** at our office at Abercynon. We can arrange transport.



The Fire Rescue Service provide information on Home Fire Safety

HOLIDAY ARRANGEMENTS

The Office will be CLOSED from **4.00pm** on **Thursday 9th April 2009**

Until **9.00am** on **Wednesday 15th April 2009**

Monday 4th May 2009

Monday 25th May 2009

and **Tuesday 26th May 2009**

IN AN EMERGENCY RING 0345 2602633

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