

## We have **vacancies** at our care home. *A safe caring, homely environment.*

When looking for a care home, you need to feel that the care and services provided meet or exceed your expectations. At Forder Lane House we focus on the individual, their needs, preferences and aspirations. Driven by an individual care plan, our team aims to balance care and support to maintain independence, along with encouragement to lead an active lifestyle wherever possible. Our friendly, homely atmosphere allows each resident to continue their daily life in a dignified way, with a high level of privacy, knowing that care and support is always available.



Please call us for more information 01803 863532



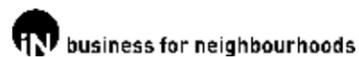
**SOUTH DEVON RURAL**  
HOUSING ASSOCIATION LIMITED

South Devon Rural Housing Association Limited  
Registered England and Wales  
South Devon House, Babbage Road, Totnes TQ9 5JA

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Website: [www.southdevonrural.com](http://www.southdevonrural.com)

**We are open from 8.45 am to 4.45pm Monday – Friday**

An Exempt Charity. South Devon Rural Housing Association Limited is a registered society under the Cooperative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014 and The Homes and Communities Agency No. LH0920.



Totnes work hub – a South Devon Rural Housing enterprise

[www.totnesworkhub.co.uk](http://www.totnesworkhub.co.uk)

# Autumn Newsletter

Inside this issue:

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October 2017



Large print  
copies available  
on request.  
Please call 01803  
863550



**SOUTH DEVON RURAL**  
HOUSING ASSOCIATION LIMITED

# Prime Time, Message from the Chief Executive

**Once again I am able to report that SDR have been involved in solving a complex housing problem for a local family. A local family of 8 had been struggling with their accommodation as their four year old son, with multiple disabilities was growing. This meant that the property needed adapting to provide the family and carers with the equipment and facilities needed to fully support their son and people caring for him. The property unfortunately was not suitable for adaptation and had many serious safety issues. The family owned the property (on mortgage) and could not afford to purchase a larger property despite Social Services and South Hams District Council willing to help with the adaptations.**

SDR were approached to see if we could help. We offered to buy a property, large enough for their needs and with the cooperation of Social Services and South Hams District Council, adapt it to their needs. After a relatively short period of time a suitable property was found and the family were able to purchase the new property on a shared ownership basis, keeping the equity from their own home in their new home. The family have moved in and steps are in place to complete the adaptations needed for their son. I have since spoken to the family and they are enjoying their new home and the living space it has provided for all the family.

Work will start on our 12 new flats on Brimhay soon, which will accommodate the three current residents. As the need to accommodate former Brimhay residents has reduced dramatically from our original plan, we will be in a position to consider letting a number of flats to local people. Preference will be given to people downsizing from a property bigger than their needs, which releases an affordable property to be re-let to local people. Please Contact Samantha McNamee in the first instance.

As always, any comments, suggestions or ideas to [info@southdevonrural.com](mailto:info@southdevonrural.com)



Best Wishes  
**Steve Prime** (Chief Executive)



## Allowing access for contractors

**SDR have recently encountered difficulty accessing some of its properties to conduct The Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) inspections and Asbestos Surveys.**

The EICR is to check the condition of the electrical installation at your home and ensure there is no deterioration.

The Asbestos survey allows us to identify any potential risks and ensure any risks are suitably managed.

SDR has a legal obligation to ensure these inspections take place. It is your legal obligation to allow SDR's appointed contractors to access your home for these appointments. If you miss arranged appointments, you could be recharged the cost SDR have incurred. If you do not allow access for these inspections to take place, you could risk losing your home.

### How will I be recharged?

An invoice will be sent to you – this will include a copy of the invoice issued to us by the contractor, as proof of the cost.

If you wish to discuss the debt or want to make arrangements to repay what is owed, you can call us on 01803 863550

If you do not pay the amount recharged in full or make arrangements to pay the debt off, we will pursue the debt through the small claims court.

### What can I do if I disagree with what I am being charged?

If you feel that you are being unfairly charged, or that the amount you are charged is incorrect; you must contact us as soon as possible. You can appeal against SDR's decision to recharge you, using our complaints procedure.

**It is your legal obligation to allow SDR's appointed contractors to access your home for these appointments. If you miss arranged appointments, you could be recharged the cost SDR have incurred.**

# Claiming a benefit online is:

- **Quick to do**
- **Mobile device friendly**
- **Simple as it tells you what information you need to provide**

## Advantages of managing your Housing Benefit Claim Online:

- You can receive a trial calculation, giving you an idea of how much Housing Benefit you may be awarded.
- You can update your claim at any time, which should speed up the process for you.
- Can support avoiding delays in claims and changes.

To find out how you can claim online, contact your Local Authority, or look on their website.



## Once you have made a claim

If you are eligible for housing benefit, the amount you will get depends on who lives with you, your total income and any savings you may have. It can also be affected by the amount of rooms your family needs.

If you are eligible for Council Tax Reduction, it will be taken off the amount of Council Tax you have to pay.



## Changing a current claim

If you are claiming benefit and you have any change in your circumstances you must inform the Local Authority straight away.

If you do not tell the Local Authority about changes in your circumstances you could be getting the wrong amount of Housing Benefit. If you get too much you will in most cases have to pay this money back. To ensure you receive all the benefit you are entitled to you must tell the Local Authority within one month.



## Some examples of changes in circumstances that you need to tell the Local Authority are:

- If you move to a different address
- If someone moves into or out of your home
- If you have a baby
- If a child leaves school and you no longer get child benefit for them
- If your income goes up or down - this includes other household members
- If you or anyone in your household starts or stops work
- If you or your partner's job seekers allowance, employment support allowance or income support stops or changes.

*Remember, there are also other changes that may affect your Housing Benefit so please tell the Local Authority even if you think it will not make*

## Methods of Payment to South Devon Rural Housing Association Ltd

There are a number of ways you can pay your rent. These methods are currently available:

Further information can be found on the website [www.southdevonrural.co.uk](http://www.southdevonrural.co.uk).

**Direct Debit** – please complete a Direct debit mandate with your account details and return to South Devon House, Babbage Road, Totnes Devon, TQ9 5JA. The advantage to you is you will only need to fill this form in this year. Next year you will receive a rent change letter, but South Devon Rural will adjust your direct debit payment for you. We will only do this after the

letter has been issued so that you have plenty of notice of the change in value.

**Standing Order** – please complete a standing order mandate and take to your bank.

**Please note DO NOT complete a direct debit form AND a standing order form. Please choose one method only.**

**Alternatively if you do not want to set up a Direct Debit or Standing Order you can pay by any of the following methods.**



### By Card (Callpay)

please ring our office on 01803 863550. You will need to provide your debit or credit card details.



### Cash

you can come to South Devon House and pay by cash. You will be given a receipt of payment.



### Cheque

you can send a cheque to South Devon house. Please ensure you write your name and address on the cheque so we ensure it is posted to your rent account. A receipt will be posted to you.



**To use the following methods you must have an Allpay Card. This has to be requested from South Devon House and will be sent to you within 5 working days of request.**



### Allpay Card

this will enable you to pay at the Post office or other Pay point outlets.



### Via the internet

go to [www.allpayments.net](http://www.allpayments.net) and create a login. You can then access your account at a convenient time to yourself and pay by debit or credit card.



### Allpay App

if you have a smart phone you can download the Allpay app which will allow you to make payments using a credit or debit card.

## What is condensation?

### Condensation is just water, Pure and simple!

Water can be solid, liquid or gas and can go from one to the other just adding or taking away heat. If you boil a kettle, the water quickly turns to vapour whereas if you leave water out for a long time it will slowly vaporize. This is what causes humidity. The more water vapour there is in the air, the higher the humidity.

Air can only hold a certain amount of vapour and when the air is warm, it can hold more than if it were cold. If warm air which is holding a lot of vapour is cooled down, it can no longer hold the same amount of vapour and some of the vapour turns back into liquid water.

## This is condensation.

### Stopping Condensation

Put less water into the air:

- Put lids on pans once they are boiling and turn the heat down
- Dry clothes outside if possible
- If you use a tumble dryer, always vent it to the outside air
- Don't run the shower for longer than is needed
- Don't use portable gas or paraffin heaters
- Dry the air by using a dehumidifier

### Stop water vapour spreading:

- Shut kitchen and bathroom doors and doors where washing is drying
- Let vapour out:
- Open the windows a little (in wet rooms)
- Use extractor fans but ensure that there is enough fresh air getting into the house for any fires or boilers to burn safely.

### Use some heating:

- Apply more heat
- Heat more evenly throughout your property
- Experiment to see what works best
- Ask for heating advice

### Other Tips

- Keep furniture away from outside walls
- Mop up condensation
- Wipe off and treat mould growth

### Do you have a mould problem?

Are you seeing black mould on walls, soft furnishings, furniture or belongings? If so then you are seeing the result of condensation in your home.

Mould can damage your home, your possessions and even your health so it is important to keep it to a minimum and remove it as soon as it appears.

Please see the list below of some ways that you can control condensation:

### Less moisture:

- Put lids on saucepans
- Don't dry clothes in front of your fire or radiators
- When running a bath, try putting in cold water first as this reduces steam which can cause condensation
- Vent your tumble dryer to the outside
- Don't use portable gas and paraffin heaters

### Better ventilation:

- After bathing or showering, open the window to let the steam out
- Use extractor fans
- Keep doors shut when cooking
- Don't block air vents in walls or floors
- Open a window when cooking or washing

### Better heating:

- Ensure your gas appliances are serviced regularly
- Keep a constant temperature throughout your home

# Danger Fire risk

Communal areas must be kept clear, this includes the landing areas in stair wells. These areas must not be used for storage

## Fire safety

**Tenants are reminded that communal areas must be kept clear. This includes the landing areas in stair wells. These areas must not be used for storage. Heaters in communal areas should not have equipment or furniture leaning against them. These actions create**

**a fire hazard and could put you, your neighbours and the properties at risk.**

**Our Housing Officer will be inspecting communal areas in the coming months, as part of our Fire Risk Assessment process.**

## Staff Update:

**We are pleased to announce we have just appointed a new housing officer, Samantha McNamee (Sam). Sam, started with SDR on 21st August 2017, and we're sure you will get to know Sam over the coming months.**

Sam is looking forward to meeting you in due course, if you have any issues or questions for Sam, please contact our office and ask for Sam.



Sam has varied experience in housing and public services, and is already making great progress with SDR. You may have already met Sam, however if not, Sam will be visiting you whilst on scheme inspections.



SDR monitor performance in a number of ways, to ensure quality of customer service and value for money is achieved. One of the ways SDR monitors performance is by using Key Performance Indicators (KPI's). This performance is monitored, analysed and acted on by the management team, and also reported to SDR's board.

These indicators cover a number of operational areas, such as repairs, allocations, rent arrears and anti social behaviour.

Please see table below on how SDR are doing on some of the main KPI's. Green indicators show we are meeting or exceeding targets.

## Performance Dashboard

	Performance 2016/17	QTR 1 (Apr - Jun)	QTR 2 (July - Sep)	QTR 3 (Oct - Dec)	QTR 4 (Jan - Mar)	Target 2017-18
<b>ASSET MANAGEMENT</b>						
Annual Gas Safety Checks Completed	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>			<b>100%</b>
Emergency Repairs	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>			<b>100%</b>
Urgent Repairs	<b>100%</b>	<b>95%</b>	<b>98%</b>			<b>95%</b>
Repairs/Contractor Satisfaction	<b>98%</b>					<b>90%</b>
<b>RENT ARREARS</b>						
<b>GN</b> Tenant Rent arrears as % of annual debit	<b>0.59%</b>	<b>0.58%</b>	<b>0.58%</b>			<b>1.25%</b>
<b>ALLOCATION AND VOID MANAGEMENT</b>						
Void loss on homes as a % of gross rent	<b>0.07%</b>	<b>0.21%</b>	<b>0.18%</b>			<b>1.00%</b>
Average relet time (excluding major works)	<b>13</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>26</b>			<b>14</b>

### Commentary

Qtr Over target due to delays in 2 properties, to facilitate relocating Brimhay residents, and needing to readvertise properties.



## Christmas Hamper Giveaway!



If you would like to be in with a chance to win our **Christmas Hamper** worth **£75**, complete the slip below and return to us at:

**South Devon Rural,  
South Devon House,  
Babbage Road,  
Totnes, TQ9 5JA**

**Entries must be received by no later than 30th November 2017.**

Any entries received after this date will not be considered.



Picture for illustrative purposes only

**Name**

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**Address**

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