

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

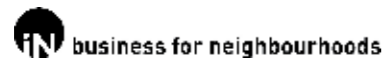
South Devon Rural Housing Association Limited
Registered England and Wales
South Devon House, Babbage Road, Totnes TQ9 5JA

T. 01803 863550 F. 01803 863685 E-mail: Info@southdevonrural.com

Website: 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

Autumn Newsletter

Inside this issue:

Chief Executive's welcome message | Employee of the Month winners |
Elmhirst Court occupied | Cornish cottages handed over | Autumn ideas for the
Garden and the Kitchen | Update on routine repairs | Winter energy-saving tips

Autumn 2021



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SOUTH DEVON RURAL
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Getting back on track and moving forward with confidence



Welcome from SDR Chief Executive Christine Candlish

Welcome to the Autumn issue of your newsletter, packed with news and useful information to help you make the most of this wonderful season, including useful guidance on energy saving in your home this coming winter.

In our recent reports to SDR's Annual General Meeting, both our Chairman Roger Hands and I were able to predict that we can look to the future with confidence, despite the many challenges and occasional setbacks that the past 18 months have thrown at us.

Whilst the general population have seen widespread examples of disruption to everyday life, not to mention intense pressure on the NHS and other key elements of the caring professions, operations like ours are by their very nature going to be at the sharp end of any issues caused by Covid-19.

I'm proud to say that everyone in our organisation has risen to the challenge and pulled together to not only keep things afloat but to enable us to drive forward with some of our exciting expansion plans.

SOLID PROGRESS

So this has been a year of solid progress, achieved under the shadow of a devastating global pandemic and the building blocks are now in place for us to grow and thrive in years to come.

I can't repeat often enough how grateful we are to our wonderful employees, our contractors and of course our residents for their patience, flexibility and resilience through these difficult times. They all deserve a big pat on the back, as do the latest winners of our Employee of the Month award at Forder Lane House Care Home. Well done to

Bozena and Monika – and we hope you both enjoy your bottles of prosecco!

We know we can rely on the wonderful teams of people who work hard every day to keep us going and deliver high standards of care, support and administration, at all times ensuring that keeping residents and colleagues safe is of paramount importance.

A people business such as ours also needs a solid, capable team at the helm – so I'm delighted that we have a strong Board, with a broad range of skills and experience, who have both the will and energy to formulate and drive forward a long-term plan to map and record our progress.

We measure our ongoing success through a series of key performance indicators and also by benchmarking ourselves against other similar outfits. I'm pleased to relate that all these measures, including vital Value for Money data, continue to be positive, with the exception of re-let times – unsurprisingly hit by Covid hygiene protocols.

Right: The cover of this year's SDR Annual Report, presented to our AGM on 28 September.



SPREADING WINGS

Despite all the distractions, the show must go on and we continue to offer a wide range of rented accommodation – for those just starting out, families and older people.

We're also spreading our wings, increasing the numbers of buildings we're constructing and managing, so that our operation covers an ever-widening geographical area of the South West.

Major projects have been slowed by lockdowns, plus some delays with materials. But our new apartments at Brimhay for people with learning difficulties are now occupied. Our new managed scheme of Cornish

cottages is also completed and we have further exciting new-build and management projects in the pipeline.

In time, these will join our growing portfolio of assets, helping to bring our long-term plans back on track and giving us good cause to look to the future with confidence.

So sit back and read our latest success stories. And please make full use of our interactive pages, where you can find energy-saving advice, Gardening guidance, a seasonal recipe and a brain-teasing Wordsearch puzzle. Enjoy!

Loyal, hard-working and cheerful – a winning combination!

Meet Bozena Mackawiak (right) and Monika Orpizak (left), the latest winners of the Employee of the Month award at our Forder Lane House Care Home.

Both Bozena and Monika have worked at the care home for some years and were nominated because they are extremely loyal to the residents and to the home. They actually returned to work in the middle weekend of a fortnight's holiday to help out when colleagues were off sick.

They work hard and are always looking for ways to improve the lives of residents. Monika in particular is always laughing and joking with everyone.



Elmhirst Court apartments are now occupied

Our 11 new apartments at Dartington, designed to give people with various levels of learning difficulties their first taste of independent living, are now fully occupied.

SDR worked with Devon County Council's Locality team to identify and shortlist the first set of tenants for this exciting new venture, named Elmhirst Court in honour of the Elmhirst family who founded the Dartington Hall Trust.

The project is a collaboration with Devon County Council and South Hams District Council and was funded by a £400,000 grant from Homes England and by the sale of market-value homes on our Brimhay Gardens development.



Cream of Cornish!

We were delighted to meet and sign up new tenancies for six excited local families at the latest affordable housing development in Ruan Minor on the Lizard Peninsula in Cornwall.

The new homes, at a beautiful location on the edge of the village at Plain-an-Gwarry, Ebenezer Road, comprise two houses and four apartments.

PARTNERSHIP

They are the fruits of a community-led affordable housing project for local families in need of homes by Grade Ruan Community Land Trust and delivered in partnership with Cornwall Community Land Trust.

They are managed and maintained by SDR by way of a management contract.

The homes have been constructed to a high standard by Cathedral Builders of Cornwall, whilst Cornwall Community Land Trust has received capital grant support from Cornwall Council and Cornwall Community Foundation.

Above

Our picture shows the completed homes as the finishing touches are made to landscaping at the roadside.

Green-fingered Janet revamps her patch of garden at Forder Lane House Care Home

Janet Pantry was always a keen gardener when she lived in her own home. Then, earlier this year, she became a resident at our Forder Lane House Care Home.

As soon as a room with its own little garden became available, Janet jumped at the chance of resuming her hobby and tending to her own plants again.

Green-fingered Janet has started giving the garden a makeover and will soon be planting some spring bulbs.

Like all keen gardeners, she finds preparing the ground and planting new flowers only part of the fun. She also enjoys sitting in the garden in the sun and chatting to those passing by.

Janet might get some ideas from our *Hello Autumn* gardening guide on Page 5. Don't forget to send us some photos of your gardening exploits. We look forward to seeing those and of course the results of Janet's latest efforts. Send them to: info@southdevonrural.com



REPAIRS: NORMAL SERVICE RESUMED

Due to Government lockdowns since March 2020, and other Covid-19 restrictions, we have carried out emergency repairs only whilst ensuring compliance with Health & Safety regulations. Since restrictions were lifted in July 2021, we are now carrying out routine repairs again, in addition to emergency and urgent repairs. To report a repair, please ring us on **01803 863550**.

We are working our way through routine repairs raised with us during the restrictions. If you have a query on any job you have raised, please contact us to discuss.

Whilst carrying out routine repairs, we are still mindful of Covid-19 and keeping everybody safe. Our contractors will continue to follow safe working guidelines and will discuss any concerns with you before visiting.

If you need to report an emergency repair out of office hours, please ring our main number 01803 863550. You will be transferred to our emergency out of hours service, National Property Assistance (NPA).

Please **ONLY** ring our out of hours service if it is an emergency repair. For any other repairs or housing related issues, please ring during normal office hours.



Hello Autumn GARDENING



Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness

Nobody relates to the sentiments expressed in John Keats' famous ode 'To Autumn' better than the gardeners amongst us. This truly is the time of year when the change in the seasons is most obvious. Days get cooler, the sun loses some of its warmth, but there's still plenty to see and enjoy in the countryside and in our own outdoor spaces, while churchgoers enjoy their harvest festivals. A season of plenty, when crops planted so carefully in spring and nurtured through the summer can be gathered in, whilst we lay the foundations for a rewarding display through the winter months.

Preparing for Winter – and planning for Spring!

If the weather's still mild, we may be able to continue sitting out in our gardens or outdoor spaces. If not, we can still sit back and enjoy the colourful displays provided by late blooming flowers and the autumn shades of trees and shrubs from the comfort of an indoor room.

There's also plenty still to do for those who like to be active in the fresh air whilst the weather allows. So here are some ideas for working in your garden in the latter part of the year: This is the time to start planning some of those spring and summer displays to cheer the soul when winter releases its grip.

October is a good month to establish new hedges. Many types are available bare-rooted at low prices at this time of year. Prepare the ground well in advance, with plenty of organic matter.

Growers and garden centres offer bare-rooted roses for sale through the autumn, so either plant now or, if the ground is too wet, heel them in by burying the roots in a trench of garden soil and well-rotted manure. Before planting, prune your rose bushes to shape, cutting above an outward facing bud.

If you have a lawn, now's a good time to scarify the surface and add apply an autumn fertiliser. Looking ahead to next year, this is the time to plant tulip bulbs (no deeper than 5") for a stunning spring show.

Don't forget to take good care of your tender plants by removing them to a frost-free place. If you're leaving some outside, these need to be carefully lagged to protect from Jack Frost.

Finally, deal with any fallen leaves, sweeping off lawns and clearing from gulleys and small plants. Enjoy your plants and please share your photos with us at info@southdevonrural.com

Daisies and bulbs

Autumn arrives in a blaze of glory, with Michaelmas Daisies, Asters and Golden Rod putting on a show. Autumn bulbs like colchicums, crocus and cyclamen are also starting to blossom and bloom, whilst many shrubs and trees change to vibrant reds and golds.

Michaelmas Daisies make a colourful autumn splash.



SEND
US YOUR
BLOOM
PHOTOS!

Hello Autumn COOKERY

Quick and easy food for your Hallowe'en or Bonfire party

Warming one-pot vegetable* chilli

WHAT TO DO

Place all the ingredients in a saucepan and cover with a lid. Gently bring to the boil, then simmer for 1 hour on a low heat, stirring occasionally. Remove the lid and continue to simmer until the liquid is reduced and the mixture is a thick constituency. Serve on a bed of boiled rice and add a side of tortillas for a bit of extra crunch.

**if you're feeding meat eaters, this recipe can be simply converted to chilli con carne. Start the cooking process by heating the beef mince in a pan or frying pan with a little oil until nicely browned, then add to the rest of the ingredients as described above. This is the perfect dish for guests at a Hallowe'en or Bonfire party. For more people, just double up on the ingredients and use a bigger pan!*

INGREDIENTS – serves 4

- 400g can tomatoes
- 225g can red kidney beans, washed and drained
- 150g can sweetcorn
- 1 teaspoon tomato puree
- 1 teaspoon chilli powder
- 2 teaspoons sweet pickle
- 1 clove garlic, crushed
- 1 eating apple, peeled and chopped
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 courgette, diced
- 100g carrots, diced
- 100g potatoes, peeled and diced
- 100g peas
- 100g broad beans
- 3 chillies, seeded and finely chopped
- 120ml vegetable stock
- 1 bay leaf

**for meat eaters add 400g lean mince – see What to Do above*





Get ready for winter with our guide to energy saving in the home

Help save the planet and save your wallet at the same time!

With winter not too far away, you might like some guidance on keeping your home cosy without breaking the bank. What might surprise you, though, is that saving your pennies and saving the planet go...well, hand in glove!

Being environmentally aware and living sustainably is about changing some of our habits so that doing the right things becomes second nature. So, how can you form better habits that reduce your energy use, cut your bills and reduce your carbon footprint?

Read on for some reminders of the obvious things you can do, plus some other easy changes that can make a big difference – like turning off appliances at the wall or even just putting a lid on a saucepan.

Energy Efficiency vs Energy Conservation

First, it might help to find out the difference between Energy Efficiency and Energy Conservation. Both can save energy, wasting fewer resources and reducing our carbon footprint. But there is an important distinction.

Energy Efficiency relates to advances in technology. So, a modern, energy-efficient fridge/freezer uses a lot less energy than an old-style refrigerator. And an LED unit uses less energy to produce the same amount of light as the traditional bulb with a glowing element inside. The latest equipment simply wastes less energy.

Energy Conservation is about the way we use our devices and appliances. Small changes in habits – like turning off the lights when you leave a room, or unplugging at the wall, rather than leaving appliances on standby. This guide shows how changing those habits can conserve energy, save you money and reduce your impact on the environment.

Conserve energy AND save money in the kitchen

When boiling water, use a kettle or put a lid on the saucepan, so it will come to the boil sooner and use less energy.

When boiling an egg, turn the heat off early and the egg will finish cooking in the residual heat.

Cooking food from frozen? Plan ahead and take it out of the freezer in time to thaw properly. This avoids wasting energy defrosting in the oven or microwave.

After baking, leave the oven door open for a while, so the heat can warm your kitchen (unless there are small children or curious pets around!)

Don't place your fridge or freezer near your cooker, or in direct sunlight.

Set your fridge thermostat at 3°C or get a cheap fridge thermometer and adjust the dial until the thermometer sticks at 3°C, as cold as it needs to be. Equally, keep your freezer compartment set at -18°C.

Defrost your fridge and freezer regularly. If they ice up, they have to work harder and use more energy.

An outdoor washing line is the most energy-saving way to dry clothes. If it's raining, an indoor airer is better than a tumble dryer.

Tiny tweaks to your lifestyle can shrink those energy bills!

A quick, simple way to conserve energy is to turn down your heating thermostat. Just 1 degree lower can save you around £80 a year.

If you've set the timer to switch your heating off at 10am, but you're leaving the house at 8.30am, change it to switch off as you leave the house.

Consider getting a Smart Meter, which helps you track energy consumption in real time so you can make on-the-spot tweaks to conserve fuel.

You can also buy a smart thermostat that allows you to control your heating and hot water anytime, anywhere controlled by a handy phone app.

To stay cosy indoors, wear something warmer. Layers like a vest and a light jumper will trap heat better than a single thick garment.

Take showers rather than baths. A family of 4 swapping one bath a week for a 5-minute shower would save to £20 a year on gas bills.

If you've got ventilation fans in your kitchen or bathroom, turn them off once they've cleared any condensation.

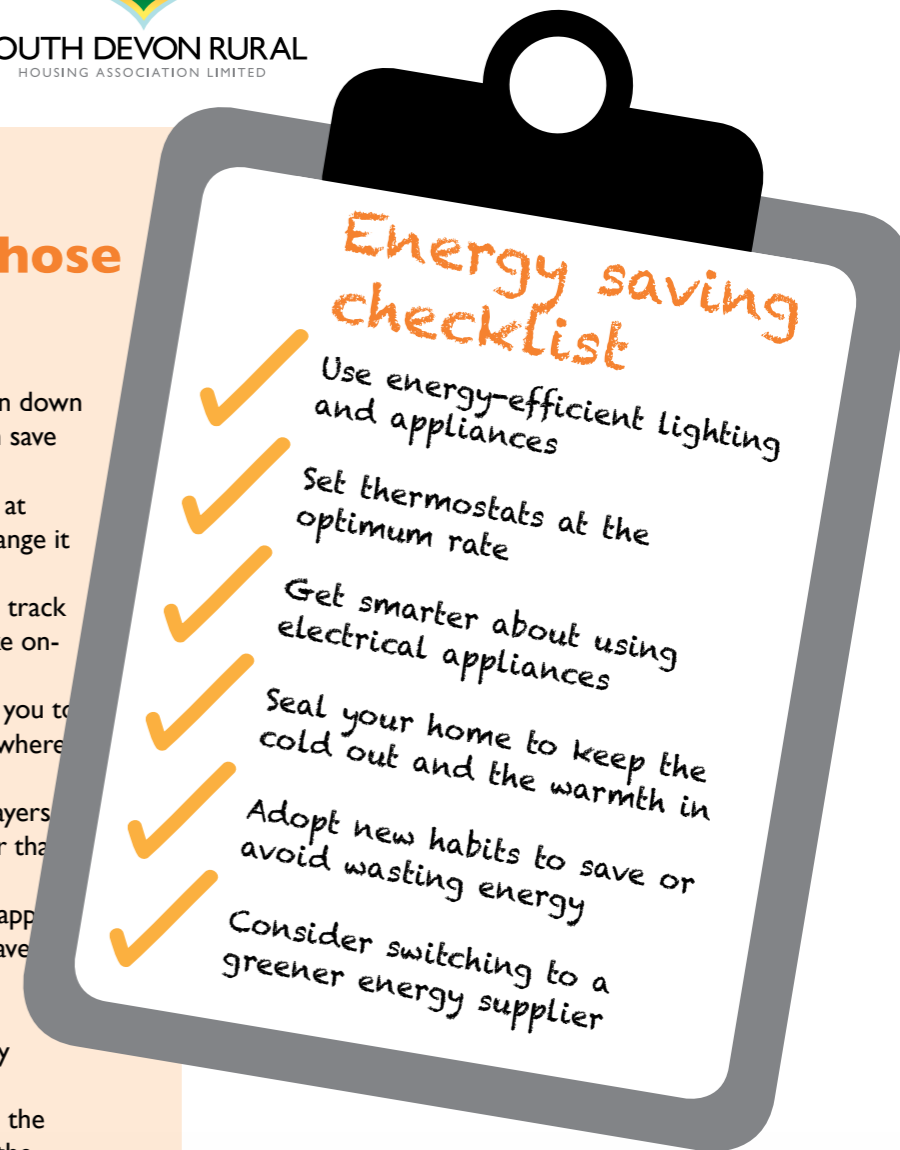
Open curtains and blinds during the day, to let in the warmth of the sun. Close them at night to keep the heat in and the cold out.

Use a draught excluder to stop warm air escaping, or cold air getting in, through gaps under your doors or in sash windows.

Install dimmer switches so you can light a room just as much as you need, but no more. They work well with new LED bulbs.

If you're not going to be using your computer for a while, switch it off, rather than leaving it in screensaver mode.

Take phone, tablet and camera chargers out of the wall socket. Leaving them switched on means they still use power, even when the device isn't charging.



Smart Meter

Around 22% of the UK's carbon emissions come from our homes"

Source: energy saving trust <https://energysavingtrust.org.uk/energy-at-home/>

HELLO AUTUMN - IT'S COFFEE BREAK TIME!

WORDSEARCH

Can you spot the 24 seasonal words hidden in our Autumn Wordsearch puzzle?

Here's a fun way to spend your next coffee break – solving our mind-bending Autumn Wordsearch.

Can you pick out the 24 Autumnal words hiding in the grid on this page?

Words are horizontal, vertical and diagonal. Good luck!

PUMPKIN	ACORN	SQUIRREL	HAYSTACK
COOL	SEASON	HALLOWEEN	FALL
ORANGE	CHESTNUTS	SQUASH	RAINCOAT
OCTOBER	PINECONE	PEARS	HARVEST
YELLOW	LEAF	THANKSGIVING	SEPTEMBER
NOVEMBER	APPLE	CORN	CHANGE

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



SDR monitor performance in a number of ways, to ensure quality of customer service and value for money is achieved. One of the ways we monitor performance is by using Key Performance Indicators (KPI's). Results from these regular checks on key areas are 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 2020/21	QTR 1 (Apr - Jun)	QTR 2 (July - Sep)	QTR 3 (Oct - Dec)	QTR 4 (Jan - Mar)	Target 2021-22
ASSET MANAGEMENT						
Annual Gas Safety Checks Completed	100%	100%	100%			100%
Emergency Repairs	100%	100%	100%			100%
Urgent Repairs	100%	100%	100%			95%
Repairs/Contractor Satisfaction	100%					90%
RENT ARREARS						
GN Tenant Rent arrears as % of annual debit	0.52%	0.45%	0.58%			1.00%
ALLOCATION AND VOID MANAGEMENT						
Void loss on homes as a % of gross rent	0.07%	0.37%	0.36%			1.00%
Average relet time (excluding major works)	36	N/A	44			14

Out of target, due to issues with contractor delays, covid deep clean delays, some complex terminations, and a need to revisit shortlist on one property.