

Good news as routine repairs and maintenance are able to resume!

We have some good news for our tenants, with routine repairs and maintenance starting to come back on stream following an enforced break caused by Covid-19.

Since the national lockdown began in March, South Devon Rural Housing Association's offices have been closed and all our staff have been working from home.

That is still the situation at the time of writing and of course tenants continue to be able to access our services by telephone or email.

During this lockdown period, our ability to work out in the community has been extremely limited and so until recently we have been carrying out only urgent and emergency repairs.

We are pleased to advise that we are now able to resume routine repairs and we will also be looking at how we can carry out planned maintenance, such as new kitchens and bathrooms.

All existing Covid 19 protocols remain in place, such as contractors using Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and social distancing. They will carry out a risk assessment with you, asking you if any of your household are isolating, or had any symptoms of Covid 19, and if you are comfortable with a contractor entering your home.

We are now revisiting any routine jobs that were booked just before lockdown but had to be put on hold.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your understanding and support during these last few months and our hope that you continue to stay safe.

If you have any questions regarding the repairs service, or any other matter, please feel free to contact me directly on the details below.

Thanks, Francis.
Francis Bourke, Operations Director
01803 863550
francis@southdevonrural.com



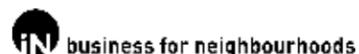
SOUTH DEVON RURAL
HOUSING ASSOCIATION LIMITED

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

Summer Newsletter

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Summer 2020



Large print copies available on request. Please call 01803 863550



SOUTH DEVON RURAL
HOUSING ASSOCIATION LIMITED



Hello and Welcome to our Summer Newsletter

I know that all of our staff and residents have been personally impacted in some way by Covid-19, whether that has been adjusting to working at home, home-schooling children, caring for elderly relatives or just simply dealing with the anxiety the virus has brought.

I'm immensely proud of how all of SDR's staff have responded to the crisis. In a very short period of time we went from thinking this was a virus that only affected China to having to empty our offices of staff, close our care home to visitors and work out how to change our service delivery to enable us to continue to support our residents and communities whilst still keeping everyone safe.

So, as the country starts to move gradually out of lockdown, I've been reflecting on what we've learnt as an organisation over the last few months.

When I was at school I played netball and enjoyed cross country running; later in life I turned to baking and gardening. I have friends who sail, who are cyclists, who paint watercolours or enjoy arts and crafts. We all have one thing in common – apart from, as we approach our mid fifties, a delusional sense of how “fantastic” we once were – and that is the knowledge that to be good at anything you need to do fewer things but do them well.

The same is true of running a housing association during lockdown and SDR staff have done an amazing job at that. Why? Because they have been pragmatic and done the simple things well.

They have focused on what NEEDED to be done: carrying out emergency and urgent repairs only, making sure our Forder Lane House residents stayed happy and healthy and safe and “checking in” with tenants on a regular basis just to make sure they're ok!

As an organisation we could have tried to be all singing, all dancing, trying to do everything as we had before, but I'm not convinced that would have been successful. So, we've tried to strike a balance over the last 4 months with staff knowing what had worked in the past, working out what might work in the weird present and what could work as we face an unpredictable future.

We have all been changed by this pandemic but we have all learned a valuable lesson: do the simple things WELL!

Christine Candlish,
Chief Executive



Why not join Age UK's team of kind and dedicated volunteers?

Age UK has a strong and growing network of volunteers, but there's always room for more. You could be part of this success story locally by getting involved with Age UK Devon as a supporter or helper.

These kind and dedicated volunteers share a desire to support wellbeing in later life and to enable older people to remain independent and safe living in their own homes, simply by giving some of their own time.

Our volunteers have readily adapted to new ways of offering support, often to the extremely vulnerable who have been most affected by government lockdown measures resulting from the COVID19 pandemic.

There are lots of ways to get involved, whether you want to give your time by volunteering, take part in a fundraising event, or help with our campaigns. Your help would be much appreciated.

AGE UK aim to improve the lives of older people in Devon through delivering services that:

- tackle loneliness and isolation
- promote health and wellbeing
- increase independence
- support families and carers
- help people access local services
- help people identify and claim benefit entitlements
- enable people to get the most out of life.





RECYCLING: Have it collected or take to your local bank...

More and more of us are making a difference to the local environment and to our planet by recycling waste and unwanted goods.

There are a variety of recycling banks around the district where you can take items that are not currently picked up in your regular household collections, including glass and textiles.

At some sites there are containers belonging to charities which may recycle other items, such as shoes.

Remember that recycling centres or charities such as ReFURNISH may take furniture and white goods for free, so long as they are working and in good condition. You can also take these items to your local household recycling centre for free.

You can find out more by going online at:

www.southhams.gov.uk/article/3430/Recycling-Banks

Did you know? Food and drink cartons can now be recycled in your blue recycle sack. You can also recycle many bulkier items by arranging a special collection from your home premises.

Collection service do's and don'ts

- The collection covers bulky items that form part of the contents of a residential property.
- Any item for collection must be manageable by one person using a sack truck
- It does not include construction or renovation waste

- It does not include collections from commercial properties or collections of commercial waste, such as commercial sized fridges or freezers, from domestic properties
- It does not include bulk food collections from private functions.

How are bulky waste items collected?

Items for collection need to be outside from 7 a.m. on the day of collection, in an accessible place, free of steps and obstructions.

Our operatives are not permitted to enter communal premises and households, or to take any payments.

How much does it cost?

The collection cost for a single item is £18, plus £18 for each additional item. For example:

- A bedframe and headboard would be classed as 1 item.
- A bed and mattress would be classed as 2 items.
- A 3-piece suite would be classed as 3 items.
- Individual white goods (fridge, freezers, washing machines and so on) are classed as 1 item.

For more information about bulky waste collections, go online:

www.southhams.gov.uk/article/3272/Bulky-Waste-Collections

Concessionary parking for South Hams residents

The South Hams Resident Concessionary Parking Permit has been designed to help local residents find parking during the busier times outside of working hours for tasks such as school pick-ups.



What is a Resident Concessionary permit?

- A Resident Parking Permit allows the holder to park in South Hams District Council car parks between the hours of 3:00pm and 10:00am every day.
- Permits are issued to one vehicle registration and are valid for 12 months.
- The cost for a permit is £40 per year (inc.VAT).
- Resident parking permits are managed online, so you don't need a paper permit to display in your vehicle.
- The permit does not allow parking in the following places: Reserved bays, South Embankment, Dartmouth Park and Ride and Dittisham - The Ham and The Level car parks. For more information, go to:
www.southhams.gov.uk/article/3075/Resident-Concessionary-Permit

Volunteer groups and emergency funding during the Covid-19 crisis

Please go online for a list of Volunteer Groups in South Hams providing support during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic:
southhams.gov.uk/findagroup

The South Hams Local Action Support Fund has been formed to support community work happening across the South Hams in responding to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

We will rapidly provide small amounts of grant funding to community-led schemes, which identify and/or achieve the small but important things that

can safely address some of the issues that are arising because of the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.
southhams.gov.uk/LASFund (COVID-19) outbreak.

southhams.gov.uk/LASFund

MORE POSITIVE NEWS FROM FORDER LANE HOUSE AT BRIMHAY

Proud dad, 93, sees daughter make masks and scrubs for care home where he lives

The daughter of one of our residents at the Forder Lane House Care Home in Dartington has donated a supply of locally sewn face masks and scrub tops to the home to help keep residents safe during the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.

Now, the lovingly made protective garments are helping to protect staff and residents at Forder Lane House, whilst a consignment has also gone to Torbay Hospital.

The Stone Fabrics shop in Totnes was started by Jane Starey in 1997 when she found she could not obtain the natural fibre quality dress fabrics needed by dressmakers and sewing enthusiasts.

Jane runs the shop and sewing surgery with her daughter, Bess Hills. Together the two women were dismayed at reported shortages of protection for health care workers and naturally wanted to protect their family and the wider community.

Challenge

When Bess heard news about the shortage of scrubs she joined a few Facebook groups whose knowledgeable members helped with patterns and construction techniques.

Once they had mastered this new sewing challenge, Stone Fabrics' first task was providing scrubs for Torbay Hospital. Suitable fabrics were being depleted – not to mention Jane's and Bess's available time, as their online shop was getting busier! But before stocks ran out Jane and Bess ensured they could also kit out the wonderful staff at Forder Lane House.

"Face masks were a contentious subject but the evidence suggested a well-fitting and properly cared for re-usable mask would help," said Jane.

"It's usual for dressmakers to consider the fit of the garment over the bust or perhaps an uneven hip. It's less common to have to consider nose shapes!"

Still, they took on the challenge and donated the masks to local volunteers and to Forder Lane House, where Jane's father is a resident. Alec has just celebrated his 93rd birthday in lockdown at the care home.

Privilege

Jane added:

"It's unfathomable how we have found ourselves in this situation, but it's a privilege to do our bit to help the nursing and caring staff, as well as their clients and patients, in any small way possible".

Christine Candlish, CEO of South Devon Rural Housing Association (SDR) which owns and manages the Forder Lane Care Home, said:

"We are so grateful to these lovely ladies for the wonderful work they have done. We had made sure that we had good stocks of protective clothing for our staff before the pandemic took hold in the UK. But it's always helpful to have extra supplies and Jane and Bess are doing a wonderful service for the community."

"I know that Jane's father is very proud of the work his daughter and grand-daughter are doing, both for him and his fellow residents at our Dartington care home".



Alec Stone, 93, with care home staff Brenda (left) and Susana (right), both wearing the masks and scrubs made by Alec's daughter.

'it's a privilege to do our bit to help the nursing and caring staff, as well as their clients and patients'

Jane Starey

Are you facing financial hardship as a result of Coronavirus?



Unable to cover basic needs? Need help with utility or essential mobile phone bills, transport costs, purchase of white goods or other essential items?

The Teignbridge Covid-19 Hardship Fund may be able to help with any essential additional costs arising from coronavirus.

To be considered applicants need to be:

- ▶ Resident in Teignbridge for three months prior to the application
- ▶ Financially impacted by the COVID19 pandemic
- ▶ Unable to receive funding from other sources
- ▶ Without savings or with £500 or less disposable income

Payments will normally be up to £200 other than in exceptional circumstances and will be paid directly to creditors/suppliers.

Get more details and apply on our website at www.teignbridge.gov.uk/covid19hardshipfund

If you don't have internet access call us on 01626 215 512.



www.teignbridge.gov.uk/covid19hardship
01626 215 512

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



THE OLD SCHOOL HOUSE
GEORGE PLACE
PLYMOUTH PL1 3NY

Apartments available in Plymouth

Rent with an option to buy

South Devon Rural Housing currently have three flats available to rent in a refurbished building in Plymouth.

Apartments benefit from:

- High Ceilings and Light Rooms.
- Secure Gated Communal Parking and Garden Area (1 allocated parking space per flat).
- Secure Intercom door entry system.
- Comprehensive Communal Fire Alarm System.

How the scheme works:

The option to buy scheme works by creating a maximum of a 10% deposit and building up a credit history over the first 5 years of the tenancy. At that point you can choose to take up the option to buy, or continue to rent securely for a further 15 years.

Flat 2: 2 Bed - Ground Floor Flat:
Monthly Rent is **£702.13** with a Monthly Service Charge of £49.65
Total **£751.78** per month

Flat 5: 1 Bed - Ground Floor Flat:
Monthly Rent is £545.30 with a Monthly Service Charge of £49.65
Total **£594.95** per month

Flat 11: 1 Bed - First Floor Flat:
Monthly Rent is £545.30 with a Monthly Service Charge of £49.65
Total **£594.95** per month

Contact South Devon Rural on 01803 863550 or E-mail: Info@southdevonrural.com

Keeping Connected and Going Forward Together

As a small community-based housing association, it's really important to us to maintain connections with our residents.

Over the last four months, with the continuing threat of Covid-19, we're very conscious that we've not been able to have face-to-face meetings with you as often as we'd all like.

We also know that a lot of you are now digitally connected in a 'virtual world' in a way you weren't before the virus outbreak. Using Facetime, Skype and Zoom to talk to colleagues, friends and relatives is now a daily routine for many of us.

Throughout early August we'll be holding a series of virtual **'Keeping Connected'** events for residents via Zoom. These events will only be an hour long, will be very informal and will be an opportunity for you to talk to SDR's staff, including our CEO, and also 'meet' some of your fellow SDR residents from across Devon.

You will be able to hear about volunteer opportunities that you can get involved in and you can also influence how SDR is managed and how we can develop our new Corporate Plan **'Going Forward Together'**. So...

- Are you a budding writer and could you help with content for our quarterly newsletter?
- Do you have an eye for detail and could you proof-read some of our policies and documents to make sure they're easily understandable?
- Would you and your neighbours like some help in setting up a local residents' group?
- Would you like to take part in residents' surveys to help us further improve our service to you?

.....or is there anything else you think you could contribute...?

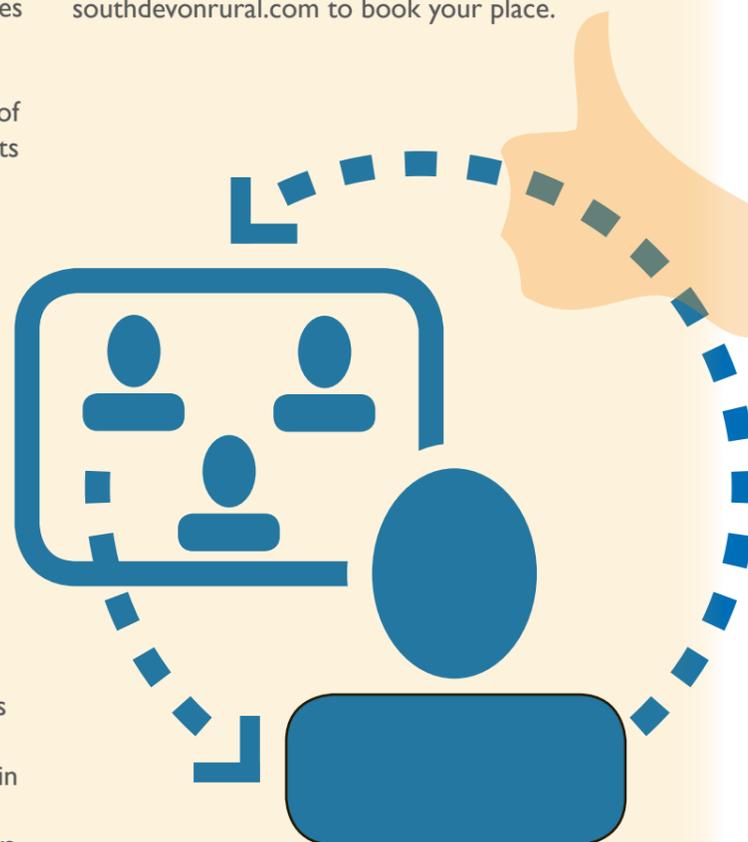
These Zoom meetings will be held on:

Tuesday 18th August 2-3pm

Friday 21st August 10.30-11.30am

Monday 24th August 2pm-3pm.

Places on each session will be limited so, if you'd like to take part, booking will be essential. Please contact us on 01803 863550 or info@southdevonrural.com to book your place.



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 2019/20	QTR 1 (Apr - Jun)	QTR 2 (July - Sep)	QTR 3 (Oct - Dec)	QTR 4 (Jan - Mar)	Target 2020-21
ASSET MANAGEMENT						
Annual Gas Safety Checks Completed	100%	100%				100%
Emergency Repairs	100%	100%				100%
Urgent Repairs	100%	100%				95%
Repairs/Contractor Satisfaction	97%					90%
RENT ARREARS						
GN Tenant Rent arrears as % of annual debit	0.58%	0.60%				1.00%
ALLOCATION AND VOID MANAGEMENT						
Void loss on homes as a % of gross rent	0.17%	0.48%				1.00%
Average relet time (excluding major works)	14	52				14

Out of target, due to delay in void process due to Covid 19, including delay in contractors getting back to work, and time delays whilst deep cleaning properties.