Get organised!
Tips for de-cluttering your home

www.mansfield.gov.uk
Heating system work is progressing well

Work to replace the coal fired District heating system at properties at The Willows and River View in Warsop is progressing well.

The gas connections to each property were completed before Christmas and the Council is now in the process of appointing a contractor to carry out the work.

Work is expected to start in June and be completed by September this year. A meeting has been held with each household to discuss the implications of the work. We are also looking at developing our programme of District heating replacements and are currently investigating different areas. Once more information is available, people living in the proposed areas will be contacted.

The Council sent 4,000 Housing Needs surveys out in March, to households picked at random across the District.

The survey aims to identify the housing aspirations and preferences of households across Mansfield. If you are one of the households that have received a survey it is important to send it back to us by Wednesday 30 April and give your views as we use the information to decide on our spending priorities and target our housing resources.

Have you received our Housing Needs survey?

The Council sent 4,000 Housing Needs surveys out in March, to households picked at random across the District.

The survey aims to identify the housing aspirations and preferences of households across Mansfield. If you are one of the households that have received a survey it is important to send it back to us by Wednesday 30 April and give your views as we use the information to decide on our spending priorities and target our housing resources.
The Council has introduced a new housing scheme called SOLAR (Sharing or Letting a Room), which helps single people to find rooms in properties in the private rented sector.

The scheme matches people to a house shared with other single people or a room in a property that is currently occupied by a family or couple.

The scheme is designed to help people who are at risk of becoming homeless or need to downsize their current property due to the new under occupancy changes brought in by the Government as part of Welfare Reform. The scheme can also help tenants who can’t afford to pay charges to rent a property such as a deposit and rent in advance.

The SOLAR scheme can help tenants by offering:

- Financial help with your deposit through a Bond Guarantee
- High quality houses, flats and rooms to rent
- Access to a Tenancy and Landlord Support Service
- Help with paying your first rent payment if it is required in advance through the Council or Nottingham Credit Union, and/or,
- Support to access employment or training.

If you cannot afford to pay a deposit in advance you may be able to receive help through the Bond Guarantee. This is a national initiative that is offered through the SOLAR scheme and enables the Council to provide eligible tenants with a deposit that is paid directly to the landlord before their tenancy starts. The Bond Guarantee is valid for up to 12 months and after this period the tenant will need to replace it with a cash deposit to the landlord. The tenant is also liable to pay for any successful claims against the deposit.

The Council’s Tenancy Support Officers will be able to provide support throughout the process and can help you fill out forms and assist you with any support needs you may have.

Each applicant is considered on an individual basis. If you are interested in applying for the SOLAR scheme please contact the Council’s Landlord Liaison Officer on 01623 463 121, email homelessenquiries@mansfield.gov.uk

The Council’s Tenancy Support Officers will be able to provide support throughout the process...
The main part of the role is to create planned steps for people who are at risk of becoming homeless before they reach a crisis point of actually becoming homeless. This also involves intervention to stop people becoming homeless and making them aware of the realities of being homeless.

Homelessness Prevention Officer Paula explains: “We work with all people across the District, including private tenants and home owners, voluntary and statutory agencies. If someone comes to us for support we will arrange a housing advice appointment and normally visit them in their current accommodation to assess their situation and discuss their concerns. If someone is struggling to maintain their current accommodation we can give advice and make suggestions to help them adapt their current situation and lifestyle.

“If a person aged 16 or 17 years of age finds themselves at risk of becoming homeless we can help liaise with their family. If the situation cannot be resolved we can help them explore other options that may be available for them.”

Kath, who also works as a Homelessness Prevention Officer, adds: “We often work with young people, families, vulnerable, disabled and elderly residents as they are classed as priority groups. We can also help single adults who are at risk of becoming homeless by negotiating on their behalf with their landlords or by arranging budgeting and financial advice with the Council’s Welfare Advice Officer or Money Advice Officer.

“We can also refer people to the Council’s Tenancy Support Service, which aims to help people keep their homes.

“Our advice for anyone worried about becoming homeless is to get in touch with us as soon as possible, as the more notice we have the more we can do to help. We can often offer immediate assistance or an immediate referral. If you are made homeless in an emergency situation, the Council’s Homelessness Prevention Service is available 24/7.”

Since the Homelessness Prevention Officers have been in post, 65% of people who presented as being potentially homeless were prevented from actually becoming homeless.

To contact the Homelessness Prevention Officers, please call 01623 463 121 or email homelessenquiries@mansfield.gov.uk

You can also find out more at www.mansfield.gov.uk/housingsolutions
What the Council can do to help

How we can help prevent you from becoming homeless
If you feel that you are at risk of becoming homeless it is essential that you contact the Council as soon as you start to experience difficulties. We will do our best to try and prevent you from becoming homeless by:

■ Visiting you in your current home
■ Negotiating with your landlord or mortgage provider on your behalf
■ Providing welfare rights and budgeting advice including help with housing benefits claims
■ Explaining your rights to you or your landlord
■ Liaising with other services who may be providing you with support, and/or
■ Ensuring that you are on the right banding on the Homefinder housing register.

If you become homeless
Unfortunately, on some occasions we will be unable to prevent people from becoming homeless. If this happens an appointment will be made with the Housing Solutions team who will carry out an interview and make enquiries to find out the following:

Q Are you eligible for help?
Yes, if you are:
■ A British citizen
■ A citizen of a member country within the European Economic Area (EEA) or the Commonwealth, who has the right to live in the UK and workers’ rights.

Q Are you homeless?
Yes, if:
■ You have no accommodation which you are legally entitled to occupy in the UK or elsewhere.

Even if you think that you have to move out of your present home, you may still be legally entitled to stay there.

Q Are you in priority need?
Yes, if you:
■ You have dependent children
■ You or your partner is pregnant
■ You have become homeless because of a disaster, such as fire or flood
■ You are vulnerable as a result of domestic violence, or
■ You are a vulnerable person (this is assessed on an individual basis).

Q Are you intentionally homeless?
If you are considered to be intentionally homeless we may have no duty to house you. You could be intentionally homeless if you:
■ Have not paid your rent or mortgage when you could afford to
■ Have been evicted for breach of tenancy conditions such as committing antisocial behaviour, or
■ Have left accommodation without good reason.

This list is not exhaustive and we will look at all cases individually.

Q Do you have a local connection to Mansfield District?
Yes, if you:
■ Have lived in the area for a total of six out of the last 12 months or three out of the last five years
■ Work within the District
■ Have immediate family in the District, or
■ Have special reasons for needing to live in the area.

Your homeless application will go more smoothly if you can bring as much information with you as possible. Relevant documentation to bring to your interview may include:
■ Identification such as a birth certificate, passport or driving licence
■ Proof of Child Benefit
■ Proof of pregnancy
■ Tenancy agreement
■ Eviction notice, and
■ Court possession papers.

If you would like more information or are worried about your housing situation, please contact the Housing Solutions team on 01623 463 121.
TEN WAYS TO PROTECT YOUR HOME FROM BURGLARS

1. Many burglaries happen when a house is empty. If you leave your home for an extended period of time, create the illusion that someone is there by using switches to turn on lights. If you can, get a friend or neighbour to keep an eye on your home. Ask them to collect your mail and draw your curtains at night and open them in the mornings to make your home look lived-in.

2. One of the most intrusive and dangerous forms of burglary occurs when somebody pretends to be a legitimate worker, for example from a utility company, and tricks their way into homes. Protect yourself against this by fitting a door chain or bar and door viewer (spy-hole) and use them. Always ask for ID and if you are concerned, contact the organisation to check the person is who they say they are.

3. Don’t leave spare keys under doormats, potted plants or any other obvious outdoor location. Burglars have experience and know exactly where to look. Instead give a set to someone that you can trust, such as a friend or neighbour.

4. Always keep your garage doors closed and locked, even when you are home and leave your lights on and shut the curtains when you go out in an evening.

5. Develop the habit of performing a security review before leaving your home. Check to make sure all of your doors and windows are locked, that candles and fires are completely extinguished and any potentially hazardous appliances are turned off and unplugged.

6. Keep your tools and ladders out of sight and securely locked up. A burglar could use them to get into your house.

7. Install exterior security lighting to keep your home well lit on the outside. If other people can see your property a burglar may think twice.

8. Increasingly, burglars are breaking in to steal cars. Make sure your car keys are inaccessible and, if you have a garage, keep your car in it rather than on the driveway.

9. Don’t leave empty boxes of new purchases outside your home as it indicates that new and expensive equipment is inside, which may attract a potential burglar.
Tips for de-cluttering your home

Whether you can’t walk into a room in your house without tripping over something or you just want to do some spring cleaning, de-cluttering is a great way to feel more calm and comfortable in your home.

If you decide you want to de-clutter it is a good idea to make a schedule and decide how much time you are going to allocate to it. If you only have a few hours a week it is a good idea to focus on one room or one part of a room at a time. It is also a good idea to ask other people to help you as they can help you decide what to get rid of.

Once you have decided what you want to get rid of, you should organise them into items for selling, donating, recycling and binning.

Selling
You can sell any unwanted items on car boot sales or on websites such as Ebay, Amazon or Gumtree.

This is a good way of raising a bit of extra money to put towards your household costs.

Donating
If you can’t sell your items, you could ask friends, neighbours and relatives if they want anything you are looking to get rid of. This could help them to save money on items they would have otherwise spent money on. You can also donate unwanted items to a charity shop or put them in a charity bag or bin to help raise money for good causes. Another option is to put items on Freecycle which gives people the option of taking your items off you for free. This could be a good idea if the item you are getting rid of is large or bulky as it may save you spending money on removal costs.

Recycling
Over 37% of Mansfield’s waste is now being recycled. All residents have a blue bin that they can put the following waste in to recycle:

- Paper (newspapers, magazines, envelopes and writing paper)
- Cardboard (cards, cereal boxes and egg boxes)
- Plastic bottles (plastic milk, fizzy drinks and shampoo bottles)
- Food and drinks cans (drinks cans, pet food tins and aerosol cans)

Recycling that is placed into your blue bin must be clean, dry and loose. If it is not, the Council will not be able to empty your blue bin.

Binning
Once you have sold, donated and recycled as much as you can there might be some items left that you just need to bin. It is still worth checking whether there is another way of getting rid of something. For example, the Council is not currently able to recycle plastic bags, plastic food trays, shredded paper, textiles, glass or plastic toys but you may be able to recycle some of these items at your local recycling bank.

Ways the Council can help you to get rid of your waste

The Council’s Assisted Collection Service is for residents who are struggling to put their wheeled bins out for collection. If you are experiencing problems due to age, disability or medical problems please contact the Council on 01623 463 463 or email cleansingservices@mansfield.gov.uk

We also have a chargeable Bulky Item Collection Service, which collects items such as:

- Furniture
- Domestic appliances including fridges and freezers
- Bagged household rubbish, and
- Larger items that cannot fit in your wheeled bins.

The service will not collect:

- Heavy garden waste
- Brick and building rubble, or
- Engine parts.

Residents who receive certain benefits may qualify for a discount on most bulky collections. For further details contact the Council on 01623 463 463 or email cleansingservices@mansfield.gov.uk
Physical benefits of eating healthy
For adults over 50, the benefits of healthy eating include resistance to illness and disease, higher energy levels, faster recovery times and better management of chronic health problems. Good nutrition keeps muscles, bones and organs strong. Eating vitamin-rich food boosts immunity and fights illness-causing toxins. A proper diet reduces the risk of heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure, type-2 diabetes, cancer and anaemia. Eating sensibly also means consuming fewer calories and more nutrient-dense foods, which helps keep weight in check.

Mental benefits of eating healthily
Key nutrients are essential for the brain to do its job. People who eat a selection of fruit, vegetables, fish and nuts can improve focus and decrease their risk of Alzheimer’s disease. Healthy meals give you more energy and help you look better, resulting in a self-esteem boost.

Things to be aware of
Metabolism - Every year over the age of forty your metabolism slows. This means that even if you continue to eat the same amount as when you were younger, you’re likely to gain weight because you’re burning fewer calories. You may also be less physically active. Consult your doctor to decide if you should cut back on calories.

Weakened senses - Your taste and smell senses diminish with age. Older adults tend to lose sensitivity to salty and bitter tastes first, so you may be inclined to salt your food more heavily. Use herbs, spices and healthy oils to season food instead of salt.

Medications and illnesses - Some prescription medications and health problems can often negatively influence appetite and may also affect taste, leading older adults to add too much salt or sugar to their food. Ask your doctor about overcoming side effects of medications or specific physical conditions.

Digestion - Due to a slowing digestive system, you generate less saliva and stomach acid as you get older, making it more difficult for your body to process certain vitamins and minerals, such as B12, B6 and folic acid, which are necessary to maintain mental alertness, a good memory and good circulation. Up your fibre intake and talk to your doctor about possible supplements.

On 19 March the Council held a Big Tea Party at Willingham Court on the Oak Tree Lane estate.

This was part of several events that were held around the country to promote Nutrition and Hydration week, which aims to raise awareness of the importance of good nutrition and hydration, particularly for elderly and vulnerable people.

A key priority for the Council is the welfare of our elderly and vulnerable tenants living in our rented and sheltered accommodation.

As part of the event, which was delivered in partnership with Nottinghamshire County Council Enterprise Foods, tea and cakes were available to buy and there was information available about good nutrition and hydration.

We have put together a guide to healthy eating below for people who would like to learn more about nutrition but were unable to attend the event.

Margaret Anderson and Pat Rathbone enjoy a cup of tea
Malnutrition

Malnutrition is a critical health issue among older adults caused by eating too little food, too few nutrients and digestive problems related to aging. Malnutrition causes fatigue, depression, weak immune system, anaemia, weakness, digestive, lung and heart problems.

Tips for preventing malnutrition as you age

- Eat nutrient packed foods.
- Eat a healthy balanced diet.
- Eat with company as much as possible.
- Get help with food preparation.
- Consult your doctor.

Try to eat with others

Eating with others can be as important as adding vitamins to your diet. A social atmosphere stimulates your mind and helps you enjoy meals. When you enjoy mealtimes, you’re more likely to eat better. If you live alone, try eating meals with relatives, friends and neighbours or join a local group such as Age Concern that often meet for lunch or tea.

Loss of appetite

First, check with your doctor to see if your loss of appetite could be due to medication you’re taking and whether the medication or dosage can be changed. Try natural flavour enhancers such as olive oil, vinegar, garlic, onions, ginger and spices to boost your appetite.

Difficulty chewing or dry mouth

Make chewing easier by drinking smoothies made with fresh fruit and yogurt. Eat steamed vegetables and soft food such as couscous, rice and yogurt. Drink eight to ten glasses of water each day. Take a drink of water after each bite of food and add sauces to your food to moisten it.

Adding variety to your diet

If you were raised eating lots of meat and white bread, for example, a new way of eating might sound off-putting. Start with small steps to introduce more variety to your diet.

- Keep an open mind. If a food is healthy it doesn’t mean it can’t be tasty.
- Try including a healthy fruit or vegetable at every meal.
- Focus on how you feel after eating well. This will help encourage new habits and tastes. The more healthy food you eat, the better you’ll feel afterwards.

If you can’t shop or cook for yourself

There are a number of possibilities, depending on your living situation, finances and needs:

- Take advantage of home delivery. Many big supermarkets have internet or phone delivery services.
- Ask a friend if they would be willing to shop for you.
- Use the Council’s ASSIST Service - ASSIST can help with meal preparation and shopping. For more information call 01623 463 076, email assistservice@mansfield.gov.uk or visit www.mansfield.gov.uk/assist.
COMMUNITY CORNER

Sing the praises of your community heroes

Nominations are being sought for the Mansfield Volunteer Awards, which recognise the unsung heroes who work tirelessly to help their communities.

There are six categories covering individuals, young volunteers, groups and paid members of staff in the voluntary sector.

The awards are organised in partnership with Mansfield District Tenants and Residents’ Groups, Mansfield Community and Voluntary Service (CVS), Mansfield District Council and Ladybrook Neighbourhood Management Team.

Nominations close on Friday 25 April and the awards will be presented at a ceremony on Thursday 5 June at the John Fretwell Centre, Warsop, Mansfield.

For further information contact Mansfield CVS on 01623 651 177 or to complete a nomination form online visit www.mansfield.gov.uk/volunteerawards

Mansfield householders receive energy advice

Householders found out how to save money on energy bills at free events across the District in March.

A drop-in session was held at the Civic Centre on Monday 10 March to give people advice about managing their bills and information about schemes offered by the Government and energy suppliers that could help with their energy costs.

Drop-in sessions also took place in libraries across the District. Mansfield District Council’s specially trained advisor ran the sessions, which were funded by the Department of Energy and Climate Change and supported by the sustainability and education charity, Change Agents UK.

For more advice, information and tips to keep your house warm visit www.energysavingtrust.org.uk

GREEN ZONE

Contact is distributed four times a year to over 6,000 homes occupied by Mansfield District Council’s tenants.

For details of advertising rates call 01623 463 323, email publicrelations@mansfield.gov.uk or visit www.mansfield.gov.uk/advertise

Contact

ADVERTISE YOUR BUSINESS FROM AS LITTLE AS £250

Contact

10
Walking about your estates

Estate based walkabouts run every three months to give tenants and residents the opportunity to meet up with Tenancy Service Officers and discuss issues such as fly-tipping, graffiti and overgrown gardens.

Members of Tenants and Residents’ Groups, Councillors and other Council staff also regularly participate in the walkabouts. If there are any issues that affect your area or you have an idea or suggestion which you think may improve it, please join in! Dates, locations and times are available below:

### Estate walkabout schedule 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MEETING PLACE</th>
<th>TIMES AND DATES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Park Road Resource Centre, Park Road, Mansfield Woodhouse</td>
<td>10am</td>
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<td>12/9/2014</td>
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<td>5/12/2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ludborough Walk Community Hall, Off Peafield Lane, Mansfield Woodhouse</td>
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<td>2/12/2014</td>
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<td>Sandy Lane Surgery, Sandy Lane, Ravensdale</td>
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<td>15/5/2014</td>
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<td>22/5/2014</td>
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<td>Willingham Court car park, Off Jubilee Way South, Mansfield</td>
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<td>Reindeer pub car park, Southwell Road West, Mansfield</td>
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<td>Roston Court, Off Roston Close, Mansfield</td>
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<tr>
<td>Barrowhill Community Link, Barrowhill Walk, Mansfield</td>
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<td>Garibaldi Road shops, Forest Town</td>
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<td>Buddies, Peel Crescent, Mansfield</td>
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<td>New England Way, Pleasley</td>
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<td>Cyril Stone Hall, Off Blyth Close, Mansfield</td>
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<td>Lord Street, Ladybrook, Mansfield</td>
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<td>Mellor Road, Ladybrook, Mansfield</td>
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<td>18/12/2014</td>
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<td>Ladybrook pub car park, Ladybrook Lane, Mansfield</td>
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<tr>
<td>Longstone Way car park, Off Ladybrook Lane, Mansfield</td>
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<td>Nursery Court car park, Off Nursery Street, Mansfield</td>
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<td>8/7/2014</td>
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<td>18/11/2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>Harold Harvey Hall, Mattersey Court, Mansfield</td>
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<td>25/4/2014</td>
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<td>24/10/2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>Civic Centre car park, Chesterfield Road South, Mansfield</td>
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What’s on April - June 2014

**Fluttering Thursday**
*What:* Help the RSPB to give nature a home by creating your very own colourful butterfly feeder to attract an array of butterflies to your back garden!
*When:* Thursday 17 April, 11am - 1pm
*Where:* Mansfield Museum, Leeming Street, Mansfield
*Cost:* £1 per person

**Love Your Local Market**
*What:* During the two weeks a range of activities will be running alongside Mansfield's traditional market as part of the national Love Your Local Market campaign.
*When:* Wednesday 14 May to Wednesday 28 May
*Where:* Market Place, Mansfield
*Cost:* FREE

**Skittles, Hoops and Whistles - Edwardian Children’s Games**
*What:* Tell the kids to leave their computer games and mobile phones at home and let them get their hands on some traditional Edwardian games, such as croquet, skittles, giant chess and much more.
*When:* Tuesday 27 May to Sunday 1 June, 11am - 5pm
*Where:* Brodsworth Hall and Gardens, Brodsworth, Doncaster, South Yorkshire
*Cost:* Adults £9.70, concessions £8.70, children 5-15 years £5.80

**Useful Contacts**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Phone number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mansfield Housing Office</td>
<td>01623 463 129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing Repairs Contact Centre</td>
<td>01623 463 500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashfield and Mansfield Homefinder</td>
<td>01623 463 402</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Control</td>
<td>01623 463 341</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing Advice Service</td>
<td>01623 463 125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Money Advice Officer</td>
<td>01623 463 451</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welfare Rights Officer</td>
<td>01623 463 450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right to Buy/Leaseholders Officer</td>
<td>01623 463 062</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenant Involvement Officer</td>
<td>01623 463 485</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24-hour Emergency Contact (repairs)</td>
<td>01623 463 050</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Information has been gathered by Mansfield District Council in good faith. Every effort has been taken to ensure accuracy at the time of production. We cannot be held responsible for any amendments, changes, alterations or rescheduling of events or meetings presented in this magazine.