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Mansfield District Council

NEWS



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The Council has started work on the first of two housing schemes, which will see 18 high quality new bungalows built in Mansfield District.



e have appointed Novus Property Solutions to build two two-bed bungalows on an old garage site in ad Mansfield one of which

Bonington Road, Mansfield, one of which will be wheelchair accessible. Work started on 15 September and will be completed by March 2015.

We are also building 16 bungalows at Flint Avenue in Forest Town. The £3m development will include a one-bed and fifteen two-bed properties. Four of the two-bed properties will be wheelchair accessible.

The design detail is being finalised with Wates Living Space in readiness to start work on site

Like our Facebook page

The Housing department has its own Facebook page called Our Homes and Neighbourhoods (Mansfield).

The page has regular housing updates, estate walkabout and repairs dates and locations, information about what's happening in your neighbourhood, hints and tips for your home and money saving ideas. The page provides a great way for you to communicate with us, see what we are up to and have your say. in mid-November, with a completion date of October 2015. The outside space will also be landscaped to provide a more attractive communal area that will include exercise equipment. The community centre will also be refurbished and new kitchen and toilet facilities will be installed.

We will be renting out the properties to people aged 60 plus and they will firstly be offered to residents currently living in Council accommodation who wish to downsize and free up family housing.



We will try to respond to any questions or comments you may have.

If you haven't already, why not like our page **www.facebook.com/ ourhomesandneighbourhoodsmansfield** and keep up to date with everything that is going on.

NEWS

WORK STARTS ON EXTRA CARE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

The Council has started work on a project to build 64 new homes on Brownlow Road.



his is the first stage of the extra care scheme, which will help people over the age of 55 who have additional care needs live as independently as possible with care staff on site 24 hours a day.

Since taking over the site at the end of August, the contractor Keepmoat has created a site compound, put up hoarding, removed vegetation and begun levelling the site. Within the next few weeks work will take place to put in the foundations and a retaining wall. Work is due to be completed in November 2015.

Keepmoat will be sending newsletters to residents living in the surrounding area throughout the duration of the project to keep them updated about how the project is progressing. They will also be arranging open events so people have the opportunity to meet the team and ask any questions. Details of these events will be available in the newsletters and via the Council's website and social media.

The development will be made up of bungalows, houses and apartments, which will be built in the style of a village with a village green and communal hub.

The communal facilities include a kitchen, lounge and television area and two multipurpose activity and meeting rooms as well as allotment space and a sensory garden. The Council is funding 16 of the 64 properties, which includes six houses that will be available for Council tenants to rent and ten shared ownership properties that will be available for homeowners to buy.

The six rentable houses will be allocated to Council tenants who are registered with the Homefinder Service and need support to live independently.

The ten shared ownership properties (five two-bed bungalows and five two-bed houses) will be available for people aged 55 and over to buy. These will be put up for sale in 2015 to homeowners who need to downsize their current homes or have extra care needs.

There are ten one-bedroom bungalows for people with low-level dementia, which have separate communal areas and are built around a secure courtyard. These are included in the 48 homes that Nottinghamshire County Council (NCC) is funding. These homes will be allocated to Mansfield District Council tenants who need extra support. The Council is working in partnership with NCC to provide the £8.4m development. The District Council, which owns the land, has invested around £11m preparing the site and will contribute just over £3m towards the development.

The County Council will provide up to £4m towards creating 48 of the homes including the ten bungalows for people with low-level dementia.

The Department of Health has provided £1.3m in grant funding through the Homes and Communities Agency's Care and Support Specialised Housing programme. A 3D tour of the redevelopment is available to view at **http://youtu.be/Tc96M20K0vw**

The extra care scheme is the first of three stages to redevelop Brownlow Road and Bould Street. The next stage is to build 20 properties in a similar design and the final stage is for 80 family homes.

FEATURE ARTICLE

One of the best ways of keeping yourself well during winter is to stay warm as a cold home can have a significant impact on health.

eeping warm over the winter months can help prevent colds, flu, heart attacks, strokes, pneumonia and depression. Below are some top tips for keeping warm:

- Try to keep your home warm and keep your main living room at around 18-21°C.
- If you can't heat all the rooms in your home, heat the living room during the day and the bedroom just before you go to sleep.
- You can also use a hot water bottle or electric blanket (but not both at the

same time) to keep warm while you're in bed.

- Eat well. Food is a vital source of energy, which helps to keep your body warm. Try to make sure that you have hot meals and drinks regularly throughout the day and keep active in your home if you can.
- Wrap up warm, inside and out. Layer your clothing to stay warm and wear shoes with a good grip if you need to go outside. If possible, stay inside during a cold period if you have heart or respiratory problems.
- Check on older neighbours or relatives to make sure they're safe and

well. Make sure they're warm enough, especially at night, and have stocks of food and medicines so they don't need to go out during very cold weather.

Wear several thin layers, rather than one thick layer. This is because they trap warm air close to the body.

in winter

- Draw your curtains as soon as it gets dark to stop the heat escaping and to prevent draughts.
- Wear warm clothes in bed. When it's really cold, wear thermal underwear, bed socks and even a hat.

FEATURE ARTICLE



Financial assistance

You may be eligible for financial help towards the cost of your energy bills over the winter period through the Winter Fuel Payment, Warm Homes Discount or Cold Weather Discount.

Winter Fuel Payment

You could get between £100 and £300 tax-free to help pay your heating bills if you were born on or before 5 July 1952.

Most payments are made automatically between November and December and you should receive your payment by Christmas. You should receive a Winter Fuel

Payment automatically from the Government if you get the State Pension or another benefit (not Housing Benefit, Council Tax Reduction, Child Benefit or Universal Credit).

Warm Homes Discount

You may be eligible for a £140 discount on your electricity bill through the Warm Home Discount scheme.

You qualify for the discount if on 12 July 2014 all of the following applied:

- Your supplier was part of the scheme
- Your name (or your partner's) was on the bill, and
- You were receiving the Guarantee Credit element of Pension Credit (even if you receive the Savings Credit element as well).

Some suppliers may offer the discount to vulnerable people or those on a low income so check with your supplier to see if you are eligible.

Cold Weather Payment

You may be eligible for Cold Weather Payments which are made when your local temperature is either recorded as, or forecast to be, an average of zero degrees or below over seven consecutive days.

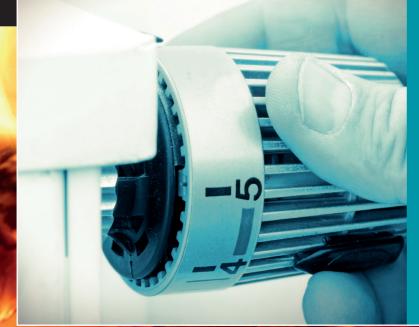
You'll get a payment of £25 for each seven day period of very cold weather between 1 November and 31 March. You may get Cold Weather Payments if you receive:

- Pension Credit
- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance, or
- Universal Credit.

Tariff switching

One of the easiest and most effective steps households can take to cut their energy bills is to switch to a new supplier. Significant savings can be made, especially if you haven't switched before or for a long time. The increase of smaller suppliers into the market has led to increased price competitiveness and more opportunities for customers to save money.

You can check to see if your current supplier can offer you a cheaper deal or it is quick and easy to check what else is available to you on a comparison website. All you need is a copy of your most recent bill or, for prepayment meters, a copy of your annual statement.



You could get between £100 and £300 tax-free to help pay your heating bills if you were born on or before 5 July 1952. Most payments are made automatically between November and December and you should receive your payment by Christmas.

YOU AND YOUR HOME

Report repairs quickly and easily via your smartphone



lookinglocal

Mansfield District Council has teamed up with Looking Local to provide you with new ways of getting in touch with us and finding out information.

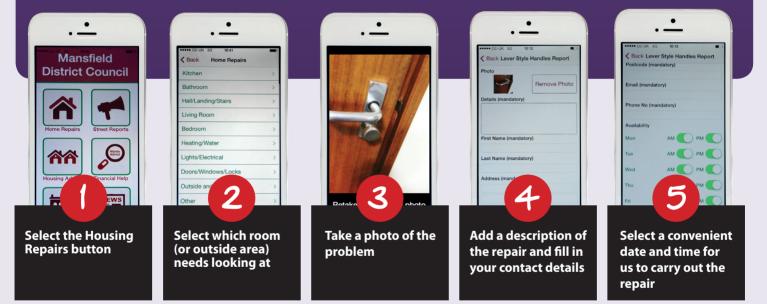
You can now receive information through your TV and report housing repairs and receive information through our app on your smartphone.



To download the app

You will need to go to your app store and download our app which is called Mansfield District Council. Once the app is downloaded you will see a button called Housing Repairs.

You can report a repair directly to the Council's Housing Repairs team by following these easy steps:



You can also report street repairs, find out information about the Housing Service and other Council Services, receive money advice and find out the latest Council news via the app.

The app will provide you with basic information from the Council's main website **www.mansfield.gov.uk** which is currently being

redeveloped. The new Council website will provide you with a wide range of information and will enable to you to easily access a wide range of Council services.

To use our TV package

You will also be able to receive information about the Council and our Housing Service through your TV if you have Sky (channel 539) or a Virgin media package (channel 233). You will need to press the red button once you have selected the relevant channel.

For more information contact the Tenant Involvement Officer on **01623 463 485** or email **malonso@mansfield.gov.uk**



YOU AND YOUR HOME



Improving our Homefinder Service

We are looking to improve our Homefinder Service to ensure that local people are prioritised for Council and other social housing in the Mansfield and Ashfield areas. We also want to make sure that households living in poor housing conditions that desperately need to move can continue to do so.

overnment guidance about how social housing should be allocated has recently changed. The Council developed some proposed changes as to how we can comply with this guidance and improve the Homefinder Service for our tenants.

We wanted to consult on these changes so invited everyone living in the Mansfield and Ashfield Districts, social landlords, charities and support providers, such as Framework to express their opinions on the proposed changes via a consultation in September 2014.

Currently it is possible for anyone to bid for a home in the area but new Government advice states that if a person does not have a connection to the local area then they will not be able to bid for a property. Some households will be exempt from this change, for example when families are fleeing violence or have been serving in the Armed Forces. One of our proposals was to adjust our service so that applicants must establish a local connection by living in the District for at least two years, or have a close family member living in the area for the same length of time before they are able to bid for a property. We also consulted on changing the service to ensure we are making the best use of our housing stock by proposing that existing Council tenants who have suitable housing will not be able to register for a transfer until at least two years from the start of their current tenancy. This will try to encourage applicants to move into a home that is suitable for their long-term needs. However, if your home does become unsuitable within this time then you should still be able to register for a transfer.

Our proposals were supported by the people and organisations who responded to the consultation. If approved, the changes will come into effect in early 2015. The Homefinder team will write to all tenants who will be affected by the changes and explain what the impact (if any) will be.

We currently have a lot more demand for housing than available properties. In September 2014, we had 6,361 households registered with Homefinder in the Mansfield area. This figure includes 2,173 families with children, as well as 1,257 single people or couples aged over 60 years of age looking to be rehoused. During the previous 12 months, we only had 198 houses, 295 flats and 157 bungalows available for letting to new or existing tenants across the entire District.

THE CONSULTATION.

If your current home is unsuitable, please contact the Homefinder Service for more help and advice on 01623 463 402 or visit our website **www.amhomefinder.co.uk**

As the demand for our homes is far greater than the supply of available properties, we are not able to help large numbers of applicants who need to quickly move into social housing. However, we do have schemes available to help households find a new home via a private landlord. The MARS scheme can help families move into private rented houses or flats and our SOLAR scheme can help single people move into a flat or shared accommodation. For more information about these schemes please contact the Housing Needs team on **01623 463 147** or visit

www.mansfield.gov.uk/MARS



COMMUNITY CORNER

Does your street have a Neighbourhood Watch?

If not, you could consider setting up one yourself. It's free and easy and could go a long way towards protecting you and your neighbours.

eighbourhood Watch schemes are run by volunteers in the community who work closely with their local police team to prevent and detect crime.

Criminals are put off by Neighbourhood Watch areas because they know people are actively determined to prevent crime and may be more vigilant than in other areas.

MORE INFO...

For further information about local Neighbourhood Watch and how to get your free sign and sticker call 101 ext **8015 297**, email **countyadmin@ nottswatch.co.uk** or visit **www.nottswatch.com** Residents in Neighbourhood Watch areas also feel safer knowing their neighbours are keeping an eye out for one another while they are at work or on holiday.

66...it also helps your local officers to prevent crime or target criminals. 99

Being part of a Neighbourhood Watch scheme means you will be kept informed about local crime that may affect you.

This extra knowledge allows you to take immediate action if you see anything suspicious. By sharing details of suspicious activity with the police, it also helps your local officers to prevent crime or target criminals.

HAVE YOUR SAY

Tenants' Forum joins with the Community Exchange

The Mansfield District Tenants and Residents' Forum has joined up with the Community Exchange to create a stronger voice for residents across the District.

The two groups had similar aims and decided that together they would be able to improve their communities, gather information about various services, raise issues that affect communities and share ideas. Any community group can attend their meetings and raise any issues. Meeting dates are available on p12.

For more information contact the Tenant Involvement Officer on **01623 463 485** or email

malonso@mansfield.gov.uk

POSITIVE FEEDBACK ABOUT OUR WELFARE AND MONEY ADVICE SERVICES

he Housing Services Panel recently scrutinised the Council's Tenancy Support Service to ensure that we have the resources available to deal with the impact of Welfare Reform on our service and our tenants.

The scrutiny exercise also looked at our service standards to ensure that they continue to reflect the needs and expectations of our tenants.

Mystery shopping and scrutiny exercises were carried out over the summer and showed that we provide a good service to our tenants.

We received positive feedback from the panel about our welfare and money advice



services. However it was felt that more officers should be trained to offer this advice with only higher level cases being referred to the two specialist officers. This would provide additional resources for tenants and support for the two officers currently in post.

Other recommendations were made in order to improve the service.

If you would like to see the full panel scrutiny report please contact the Tenant Involvement Officer on **01623 463 485** or email **malonso@mansfield.gov.uk**

COMPLAINTS AND FEEDBACK

New Act introduced to review complaints of anti-social behaviour

The Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 came into force on Monday 20 October. It replaced 20 powers with six powers.

he Community Trigger was introduced as part of this Act and means members of the public can request agencies such as the Council and the Police to review their responses to complaints of anti-social behaviour.

The Trigger is designed to ensure that all agencies work together to try to resolve complaints of anti-social behaviour.

The Trigger does not replace individual organisations' complaints procedures or your opportunity to complain to the Ombudsman or Independent Police Complaints Commission, which you can use if you are unhappy about the service you have received from an individual officer or service.

WHEN CAN I USE THE TRIGGER?

The Community Trigger can be used in the following situations:

- You have complained to Mansfield District Council, the Police and / or a Registered Social Landlord (Housing Association) three times about separate incidents of anti-social behaviour within one month beginning with the date on which the behaviour is alleged to have occurred, and
- the application for the ASB case review is made within six months beginning with when the complaint is made.

You can also activate the Community Trigger on behalf of someone else if you have their written consent.

HOW CAN I MAKE A TRIGGER?

You can either:

- Complete an online form at www.mansfield.gov.uk/ communitytrigger
- Email communitytrigger
 @mansfield.gov.uk
- Phone 01623 463 428 or 463 185
- In person or in writing to:
 - Mansfield District Council Civic Centre Chesterfield Road South Mansfield NG19 7BH

STAFF SPOTLIGHT

New frontline staff for Tenancy Services

Over the last few months three new Housing Officers have joined Mansfield District Council's Tenancy Services team. They are Mark Wreghitt, Hayley Jackson and Kim Whetton.

ark is now working in the central Mansfield patch which covers the Broomhill, Portland and Town Centre wards.

Hayley Jackson has started working in the area which covers the upper part of the Oak Tree Lane estate, including the Maltby Road and Eakring Road areas and Kim Whetton covers the Bellamy Road estate.



All three are enjoying their new roles and are enthusiastic about improving the areas they manage.

In addition to these new Housing Officers we now have two new specialist Anti-Social Behaviour Response Officers, Helen Howis and Geoff Lomas. Helen previously worked at the Council as a Housing Officer and Geoff used to work for the Council as a Neighbourhood Warden. Both have extensive experience of dealing with anti-social behaviour and they will be working towards reducing crime and disorder across the District.

Housing Officers Mark, Hayley and Kim can be contacted on **01623 463 127/463 354/463 357** and Helen and Geoff can be contacted on **01623 463 377/463 082**.

Food and clothes appeal

Due to the success of our Housing Needs team's appeal for food and warm clothes last year, we have decided to run another appeal this year.

e hope to help vulnerable people living in temporary accommodation, sheltered or supported housing complexes, the Mansfield Baptist Church homeless shelter and people who use the Council's Tenancy **Support and Homeless Prevention** Services.

If you are able to help in any way please bring donations to the Civic Centre before 19 December.

We need:

- Non-perishable food such as tins, packet food, dried pasta and rice
- Warm clothing such as socks, coats, hats, gloves and scarves

Last year the response to the appeal was amazing and the people of Mansfield were incredibly generous. Thank you to everyone who made a donation - it really did make a difference. Those that received the parcels were very grateful and some were in tears because they were not expecting it.

For more information contact the Council's Housing Solutions team on 01623 463 121 or 463 125.



TIME TO TEST

You are at least four times more likely to die in a fire in your home if you have no working smoke alarm

Test your smoke alarms on the first of every month, then you know that they're working. Don't take risks with your family when a simple action is all that's needed. It's your life, take extra care of it.

These are often caused by smoking materials, cooking accidents, candles and faulty electrical wiring or appliances - especially heaters.

These simple steps can reduce the risk of fire and keep everyone safer:

Fit smoke alarms on every level of your home

Test them on the 1st of every month and

Plan your escape route and make sure

never take out the batteries

everyone knows it

Take extra care in the kitchen and never leave cooking



unattended

Make a bedtime check last thing at night to reduce fire risks eg unplug heaters

Never try to tackle a fire yourself

If a fire breaks out in your home. Get out, stay out and call 999 www.gov.uk/firekills







Dates for housing repairs

Over the next 18 months, the Housing Repairs team will be carrying out non-urgent external housing work by area as part of their batched repairs programme.

FEBRUARY 2015

his includes work such as repairs to roofs, window frames and paths.

Please see the calendars to find out when the Council's Housing Repairs team will be in each area. A full list of the streets in each area can be found at www.mansfield.gov.uk/housing

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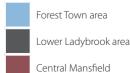
Key



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Sandy Lane and Ravensdale areas Upper Oak Tree Lane and Eakring areas Lower Oak Tree Lane

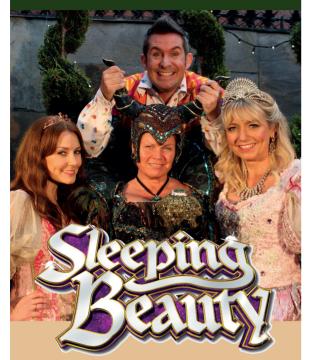




Central Mansfield

WHAT'S ON

What's on November 2014 -January 2015



What:The Big Switch OnWhen:Sunday 16 November, 10am to 5pmWhere:Mansfield Market PlaceCost:FREE

This year's event features a full day of **FREE** and low-cost activities and entertainment in the town centre, followed by a spectacular stage show in the Market Place. For more information visit **www.mansfield.gov.uk/switchon**

What:Sleeping BeautyWhen:Saturday 29 November to Sunday 4 JanuaryWhere:Palace Theatre, Leeming Street, Mansfield

 Cost:
 Adults £13.84, concessions £12.81, family tickets £49.20

Come along to this year's magical Christmas pantomime, Sleeping Beauty, which features former Coronation Street actress Vicky Entwistle as Carabosse the Bad Fairy, Milkshake star Amy Thompson as Sleeping Beauty and former Hollyoaks actress Sarah-Jane Buckley as the Good Fairy. To book contact the Box Office on **01623 633 133** or visit **www.mansfield.gov.uk/**

palacetheatre

What:	Mansfield Museum Christmas Market		
When:	Thursday 4 December to		
	Saturday 6 December		
Where:	Mansfield Museum, Leeming Street,		
	Mansfield		
Cost:	FREE		

Get some great gift ideas at the Mansfield Museum Christmas Market where a range of stalls will be selling Christmas treats including toys, crafts and food.

Housing group meetings



Housing Services Panel

The Housing Services Panel works closely with the Council's Housing department to identify ways of improving how we deliver the service. The panel also monitors the Housing department's performance and ensures that appropriate action is taken where necessary.

Housing Services Panel meetings

13 November 10am - 12noon Sherwood Room, Civic Centre, Mansfield

18 December 10am - 12noon Meden Room, Civic Centre, Mansfield

Community Exchange

The Mansfield District Tenants and Residents Forum has joined up with the Community Exchange to create a stronger voice for residents across the District.

The group, now called the Community Exchange, will work to improve communities, gather information about various services, raise issues that affect communities and share ideas.

Community Exchange meetings

3 December 6pm – 7.30pm Oakham Room, Civic Centre, Mansfield

GET IN TOUCH

USEFUL CONTACTS

Mansfield Housing Office	01623 463 129
Housing Repairs Contact Centre	01623 463 500
Out-of-hours Emergency Contact (repairs)	01623 463 050
Ashfield and Mansfield Homefinder	01623 463 402
Central Control	01623 463 341
Housing Advice Service	01623 463 125
Money Advice Officer	01623 463 451
Welfare Rights Officer	01623 463 450
Right to Buy/Leaseholders Officer	01623 463 062
Tenant Involvement Officer	01623 463 485

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.