

WINTER 2013

Contact

THE QUARTERLY MAGAZINE FOR MANSFIELD DISTRICT COUNCIL TENANTS



Helping you manage your money this Christmas

www.mansfield.gov.uk



**Mansfield
District Council**

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Foreword

Welcome to the December edition of Contact. Once again it has been a busy year for the Housing Service and a very challenging one for some of our tenants as they adjust to the changes brought about by Central Government's Welfare Reforms.

While we have worked closely with those affected to provide additional support and advice, some households have seen their income reduced and the cost of living increase and are now struggling to make ends meet.

These households, along with many others, have to cope with the added pressures of Christmas which is always an expensive time. To help ease the pressure this edition contains some festive advice for cutting the cost of Christmas.

We are continuing to work hard to improve the delivery of our services so that they meet your needs and expectations and the development of our new IT system, due to be implemented in the new year, should provide better access to our services.

In order to find out if you were happy with our services, we asked you for your feedback through a STAR survey that was carried out in September. While the results from this survey were encouraging, we recognise that there is room for improvement and staff are already identifying actions that will improve those areas that you said you weren't completely happy

with. You can find the results from the survey on page 9.

Members of the Housing Services Panel have been working hard to ensure we are delivering services to the standards that you expect. The panel has just completed its scrutiny of how we deal with empty Council properties, estate walkabouts and what we are doing to minimise the impact of the Welfare Reform changes. The panel's findings and recommendations are summarised on pages 10-11 with a full report due to be published by panel members in April 2014.

As this is the season of goodwill, I hope you will support the work of the Housing Solutions section and donate your old winter coats and more importantly work with us to ensure that old and vulnerable residents stay safe and secure in their homes during this period. This edition also includes a feature on the dangers posed to vulnerable tenants by doorstep callers. Finally, all the staff working in Housing Services and I would like to take the opportunity to wish you all a very merry Christmas and a happy and prosperous new year.

Hayley Barsby
Head of Housing Services

NEWS

New heating systems for The Willows and River View

Work has started on a project to replace the out-dated District heating system with new and efficient gas central heating systems at properties at The Willows and River View.

The first part of the project which involved laying gas pipes, making connections to individual properties and installing individual meter boxes is now complete.

As tenants expressed concern about disruption at this time of year, it was agreed that the internal installation work would not start until after Christmas.

Each tenant will receive advance notice of when work is due to start in their property. Assistance can be provided if tenants need help moving their furniture. New heating systems should be fully operational on the

same day as the old system is removed, so no tenant should be left overnight without heating and hot water.

Work to convert most of the bedsits at The Willows to self-contained flats will be carried out as part of this project. This will involve combining two or three existing bedsits together. There will be detailed consultation with tenants prior to this conversion work taking place.

New computer system to improve our services

We have just started to install a new computer system to help us provide an improved service to our tenants.

The first phase, which will include the replacement of the Tenancy Services and Repairs system, is expected to be completed by April 2014. This will give Housing and Contact Centre staff better access to a wider range of information, which will mean that queries about rent and repairs can be answered more easily and quickly. It will also prevent tenants from being passed from one person to another. Another benefit will be that the system will reduce the amount of time that Housing Officers spend at their desks manually updating records.

The second phase, which is expected to be in place by April 2015, will include the

implementation of an online system where tenants can access their rent statement and repairs history, edit personal details, request information or a call back or report a new repair.

As part of phase two, a wide range of Housing staff will also be issued with mobile devices, which will mean that a member of staff visiting your property will be able to immediately answer any questions about your rent, set up payment agreements, report anti-social behaviour and repairs or get an update on repairs already reported without the need to get back to you at a later date.

...THIS WILL GIVE HOUSING AND CONTACT CENTRE STAFF BETTER ACCESS TO A WIDER RANGE OF INFORMATION...

Choose your support

Mansfield District Council has signed up to the ChooseMySupport website which enables service providers across Nottinghamshire to register their services to provide a one stop shop of social care services. We have registered our Handyperson, Assist Enhanced Service and Lifeline Service on the site. The service is available for all Nottinghamshire residents and you can browse the services to see what is available. You will need to register your details if you wish to get in touch with service providers via the website.

The website provides a directory of local services to give Nottinghamshire residents the choice and control to decide which services they want to use.

Services include accommodation, access to carers and personal support, health and wellbeing support, domestic support, volunteer opportunities, repairs and support and advice services.

Each service provider is assessed by Nottinghamshire County Council before they can appear on the site to ensure that they meet the required standards.

The directory gives information about the services such as costs (if applicable), contact details and what the service provides, which makes it easy to compare services in one place.

To find out more visit
www.choosemysupport.org.uk

Help keep Mansfield warm this winter

Mansfield District Council is once again providing severe weather shelters for rough sleepers.

We are collecting winter coats, hats, gloves, scarves and sturdy shoes which will help keep homeless people warm this winter. If you have anything you could donate, please bring them in to the Civic Centre on Chesterfield Road South or contact our Housing Solutions team on **01623 463 121** or **463 125**. Any donation will be greatly appreciated.

Birthday celebrations for Vale Court



Vale Court housing complex is celebrating its 50th birthday this month. Residents, staff and Councillors got together on 10 December for a celebration lunch which included speeches, singing and cakes! The complex is run by the Council and offers sheltered, retirement and supported housing for older people.

MAKE SURE YOUR CHRISTMAS IS SAFE AND HASSLE FREE

Many people will find themselves targeted by nuisance callers and this can be worse in the run up to Christmas. The following article will give you some advice about how to deal with unwanted callers.

Doorstep callers

Many honest traders use doorstep calling to sell goods and services, but so do criminals and it is worth taking steps to keep yourself and your money safe. We wouldn't recommend employing someone following a knock on the door as genuine callers will use another method to try and contact you.

If you would like a No Uninvited Caller notice, you can download one from www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/tradingstandards or call **01623 452 005** for more information. Some people do still knock at the door even though the notice is displayed and we would advise you not to answer the door unless you are expecting a caller.

It is always a good idea to do your research, shop around and obtain three written quotes for any service or product that you wish to purchase. This will allow you to

compare the products or service being offered and also gives you time to think about any questions you might wish to have answered. Asking friends and family for their thoughts and suggestions is also recommended. This is especially important if you are considering buying equipment such as mobility scooters as you need to make sure it is suitable for your needs.

If you need consumer advice, please contact the Citizen's Advice Consumer Service, which provides free, confidential and impartial advice. Visit www.adviceguide.org.uk or call the Citizen's Advice Consumer Service on **08454 04 05 06**. If you feel threatened or in any danger, always dial **999** and request police assistance.

Nottinghamshire Alert

If you are concerned about doorstep callers, scams or consumer issues you may wish to register for Nottinghamshire Alert. This is a messaging system that allows

Nottinghamshire Police, Nottinghamshire County Council, Neighbourhood Watch and other public organisations to send community safety emails, voicemails or text messages to you directly. To register with the **FREE** service please visit www.nottinghamshirealert.co.uk

Scam mail

Scam mail is a serious problem and many people receive mail and telephone calls that they do not want. Within the UK, it is estimated that £3.5billion is lost to scammers each year.

One of the most common scam mailings informs you that you have won a huge sum of money in a lottery – even though you haven't bought a ticket. To claim your winnings you are asked to send money to cover administration or taxes. You may also be asked for personal or bank details to confirm your identification.

The scammers will take your money and you will get nothing in return.



**WE WOULD
ALWAYS SUGGEST
SHREDDING ALL
UNWANTED
MAIL...**

Another scam mailing may appear to come from a psychic. They will claim to be able to make predictions that will change your life for a fee. Sometimes these letters are aggressive and tell you that something terrible will happen to you if you don't pay up. Alternatively, they will say that they can see wonderful things in your future and request money for a full report.

Once you reply to a scam letter or call, your contact details may be marked and you will receive further calls and letters. Some of the letters are personalised by handwriting your name on the envelope. If something sounds too good to be true, the chances are it is!

We would always suggest shredding all unwanted mail. If you are unsure whether it is a letter that requires a response, show it to a friend or relative.



Unwanted post and telephone calls

If you want to be removed from mailing and telephone sales lists in the UK you can contact the Telephone Preference Service (TPS) and the Mailing Preference Service (MPS).

This will stop many of the direct marketing messages you receive but cannot stop them all, particularly if they come from outside the UK.

You can register yourself and also anyone who has recently died.

Telephone Preference Service:

■ 0845 703 4599

(option 2)

■ www.tpsonline.org.uk

Mailing Preference Service

■ 0845 703 4599 (option 1)

■ www.mpsonline.org.uk



Silent Callguard

You can prevent silent and recorded message calls by registering with Silent Callguard on **0844 372 2325** or visiting www.silentguard.com/register.aspx

Silent calls are generated from the use of automated diallers. When these are incorrectly set, more numbers are dialled than there are operators available to take the calls. If the purpose of the call was to sell you a product or service, then registering

on TPS will reduce these. However, companies use automated diallers for things such as debt collection and market research calls and TPS will not reduce these.

Unwanted text messages

You can mostly avoid unwanted text messages by being careful with your personal details. However, modern technology means that computer programs can generate phone numbers at random and will keep guessing until it finds an active number.

One option is to report the received message to your service provider by texting it to the following numbers:

- Orange, O2, or T-Mobile - **7726**
- Vodafone - **87726**
- 3 - **37726**

When you forward the message, include the telephone number of the sender, if available. You may get an automated response thanking you for the report and giving you further instructions if needed. Unfortunately, as the numbers that send illegal marketing texts often change, your network provider cannot guarantee to stop all marketing texts.



We are here for you all year round - not just for christmas

Welfare Rights Officer Michelle Males and Money Advice Officer Graham Moffat work tirelessly all year round to provide money, debt and welfare support and advice to everyone across Mansfield who needs their help.



THERE IS NO NEED FOR ANYONE TO STRUGGLE ALONE OR SUFFER IN SILENCE AS THE ADVICE AND SUPPORT I OFFER IS FREE TO EVERYONE...

Michelle can help with anything benefit-related such as helping you complete forms, explaining the forthcoming Universal Credit system and supporting you with benefit appeals.

If you are concerned about anything benefit-related, Michelle's advice is to contact her as soon as possible.

Michelle said: "If you are worried please don't leave it until you are desperate before you seek help or advice. I will try to help anyone who contacts me as soon as I can."

Michelle said: "If you are confused about what benefits you should be on or not sure if you are entitled to anything, please get in touch as there are 24 different benefits available and the system can be quite hard to understand. I am more than happy to have a chat to clear up any issues."

"I can arrange appointments for people to come and see me at the Civic Centre but

if they are unable to I am happy to arrange home visits. I look at each case on an individual basis as there can be so many different circumstances with every person. I also find that it is more helpful for people to talk through all of their options rather than putting their data into a website that does not take account of their personal circumstances."

Michelle said: "There is no need for anyone to struggle alone or suffer in silence as the advice and support I offer is free to everyone, all you have to do is get in touch!"

Graham provides a free service to help with any money-related issues ranging from serious debt problems to advice on how to manage your household budget. Graham said: "If anyone has any money-related issues they can get in touch with me by phone or by coming into the Civic Centre to see me.

It is helpful to fill in one of our household budget sheets (see opposite page) to help you work out your monthly budget and see how much money you have coming in and going out.

"I would also urge people to get in touch if they are worried about any threatening letters as the sooner we look at the problem, the sooner it can ease people's minds, which can make a big difference to someone's quality of life. I can liaise with creditors on your behalf to come to a payment agreement that you can afford."

Graham also provides ongoing support which can range from days to months depending on your circumstances. Graham says that his role is not just looking at the figures but the individual circumstances that people have that may have caused them to get into debt or be unable to manage their money.

Graham said: "When somebody finds themselves in trouble with money it is rarely a black and white scenario – there is often something else going on as well.

I try and look at the situation from all sides and can work with other members of staff or agencies that can help tackle other issues that may be affecting someone."

"There is no time limit on how long I can work with someone and people are also free to get back in touch with me months or years later if they need to."

Graham said: "I do appreciate that it can be hard for people to break away from certain spending habits and that it is a difficult time at the moment with increasing food and bill costs and reductions in income and benefits.

"There is also no minimum level of debt that people must have to use this service. People with no debt who would like advice on how to manage their money more effectively or people who are worrying about situations, such as what to do if they lost their job, are also very welcome to get in touch."

If you need support or advice from Michelle you can call her on **01623 463 450** or email **mmales@mansfield.gov.uk** or to contact Graham you can call **01623 463 451** or email **gmoffat@mansfield.gov.uk**

Household budget sheet

Name: _____

Income:	Weekly/monthly
Wages/salary	
Partner's wages/salary	
Income Support/ESA	
Job Seekers' Allowance	
Child Benefit	
Child Tax Credit	
Working Tax Credit	
Pension	
Disability Living Allowance	
Maintenance	
Non-dependant Contribution	
Other	
Other	
Total income (Box A)	

Priority debts:	Amount owed	Weekly/monthly Payments
Rent/mortgage		
Council Tax		
Maintenance payments		
Gas		
Electricity		
Magistrate fine arrears		
Water		
Social Fund loan		
Other		
Other		
Total priority debts (Box C)		

Outgoings / household expenses:	Weekly/monthly
Rent/mortgage	
Council Tax	
Water	
Gas	
Electricity	
Heating	
Food/housekeeping	
School meals	
Contents insurance	
Life insurance	
TV Licence	
Telephone	
HP payments	
Travelling expenses	
Clothing/footwear	
Magistrates' Court Fines	
Health expenses	
Maintenance payments	
Childcare	
Hobbies, pocket money etc	
Tobacco/alcohol	
Total outgoings (Box B)	

Credit debts:	Amount owed	Weekly/monthly payments
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		
10		
Total credit debts (Box D)		

Total income	Box A	
Total outgoings/household expenses	Box B	
Total priority debts	Box C	
Total credit debts	Box D	

This is an accurate record of my financial situation at the following date: _____

Signed: _____

CHRISTMAS ON A BUDGET

If you are living on a budget, setting money aside for Christmas may seem like a daunting prospect. Here are some tips that could save you some money over the festive period.

ingredients. The site compares the price of groceries at Asda, Tesco, Sainsbury's and Waitrose. You can also use

www.lovemoney.com/blogs/frugalfood for a weekly round-up of the top supermarket bargains.

Use your loyalty points

If you have Nectar or Clubcard points, you could put them towards the cost of your Christmas food and drink.

Make it, don't buy it

It's much more expensive to buy ready-made food such as mince pies and stuffing

than it is to make it yourselves. Try www.lovefood.com for lots of festive recipes.

Ask your guests to bring something to the party

If you're having family or friends round for Christmas dinner, why not ask them to bring a starter or a pudding or some drink to share the costs.

Plan ahead for next year

It's never too early to start shopping for next Christmas. Christmas cards, wrapping paper and decorations are all in the bargain bins after Christmas, so stock up and save a fortune. Another good tip is to buy your gifts throughout the year, particularly if you spot something that's particularly cheap.

Draw up a budget

The first thing you should do is draw up a budget and decide exactly how much you can afford to spend this Christmas and list all of the things you're going to need to pay for, such as food, drink, presents and decorations.

Save money on your presents

You could make your own presents such as cakes, chutney, knitwear or a photo collage of your family and friends. If you don't fancy making your own presents why not see if you can get them second hand from charity shops. Take a look at these websites where you can pick up a huge variety of items other people want to give away.

www.freegle.org.uk
www.freecycle.org
www.snaffleup.co.uk

Save money on food and drink

Stock up at discount shops

Aldi, Lidl and Poundland all have brand name products at low prices so stock up a couple of weeks before Christmas. Just make sure you stick to your shopping list.

Compare prices at the big supermarkets

Use www.mysupermarket.com to find out where you can get the cheapest festive

CHRISTMAS LEFTOVER RECIPES

After spending money on your Christmas food it would be a shame not to use up the leftovers. Here are some budget leftover recipes to try over the festive season.

Leftover turkey casserole

Serves 4

Ingredients:

- 2 onions, finely chopped
- 1 eating apple, cored and chopped
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tsp dried sage or 5 sage leaves, chopped
- 2 tbsp plain flour
- 300ml vegetable or chicken stock
- 2 tbsp wholegrain mustard
- 2 tbsp runny honey
- 500g leftover turkey, shredded
- 350g leftover roasted vegetables such as potatoes, parsnips and carrots, chunkily diced

Method:

1. Fry the onion and apple in the oil until softened. Stir in the sage for 1 minute and then stir in the flour. Gradually stir in the stock followed by the mustard and honey.
2. Bring up to a simmer and stir in the turkey and roast vegetables. Cover and gently simmer for 15 minutes until the turkey is piping hot. Season and eat with mash or jacket potatoes.

Turkey and parsnip curry

Serves 4

Ingredients:

- 2 tbsp vegetable oil
- 2 onions, thinly sliced
- 500g parsnips, peeled and cut into chunks
- 5 tbsp madras curry paste
- 400g can chopped tomatoes
- 500g boneless cooked turkey, cut into chunks
- Cooked basmati rice (to serve)

Method:

1. Heat the oil, add the onions and fry gently for 10 minutes. Add the parsnips and stir well.
2. Stir in the curry paste, then add the tomatoes. Add 1½ canfuls of water and bring to the boil. Reduce the heat, cover and simmer for 15-20 minutes, until the parsnips are tender.
3. To finish, stir in the turkey chunks, cover the pan again and simmer for a further 5 minutes until the turkey is heated through. Serve with basmati rice.

Contact

READER SURVEY RESULTS

In the last edition of *Contact* we included a survey to find out your views about the magazine. Your responses gave us a good idea about what you liked and disliked about the magazine and some ideas of things you would like to see included in future editions.

We are keen to take your views into account and will continue to produce 12 pages and send the magazine to you four times a year as the majority of you said you wanted. We will make sure that your favourite features are continued and look at changing the ones you don't read as often. Interestingly more of you said you preferred not to submit article ideas but if there is something you would like us to consider please contact the Tenant Involvement Officer on **01623 463 147** or email **malonso@mansfield.gov.uk**



The winner of the £30 High Street voucher who was picked at random is Mrs Patricia Rathbone.

THE RESULTS WERE:

1. Do you read *Contact*?

Yes 83% No 0%
Sometimes 17%

2. There are 12 pages in *Contact* - Would you prefer the magazine to be bigger/smaller/the same?

Smaller – 4 pages 0%
Smaller – 8 pages 9%
Same size – 12 pages 48%
Bigger – 16 pages 30%
Bigger – 20 pages 13%

3. We produce four issues of *Contact* a year. How many editions of *Contact* would you like to receive each year?

1 – 0% 4 – 52%
2 – 9% 5 – 0%
3 – 2% 6 – 37%

4. Would you like to be able to submit article ideas for *Contact*?

Yes 22% No 78%

5. Do you like the design?

Yes 87% No 13%

6. Do you think the articles are well written?

Yes 100% No 0%

7. Do you feel that the information is helpful?

Yes 100% No 0%

8. How interesting/informative do you find the articles?

Very interesting/informative 65%
Quite interesting/informative 35%
Not at all interesting/informative 0%

9. Do you read the following regular features?

Foreword 65%
News 83%
Community Corner 65%
Council Catch Up 74%
Feature articles 70%
Staff Spotlight 48%
You and Your Home 70%
Green Zone 48%
What's On 57%
Housing Group meetings 48%
Key Contacts 52%

12. Overall how would you rate *Contact*?

Excellent 61%
Good 37%
Adequate 2%
Poor 0%



What you think of our services

In May 2013, we conducted our **Survey of Tenants and Residents (STAR survey)** by sending out questionnaires to a random sample of people. We received responses back from 998 households.

The STAR survey is useful in helping us improve and develop our Housing Service as it:

- Provides information about tenants and residents' satisfaction with our Housing Service, their homes and neighbourhoods
- Provides information about whether we are meeting,

exceeding or failing tenants and residents' expectations

- Allows us to make meaningful performance comparisons with other social landlords that have used STAR surveys
- Provides us with information regarding the value for money of particular services, and
- Allows us to identify tenants' priorities and make informed decisions about service reviews.

The results, which were scrutinised by the Housing Services Panel, can be seen in the table below and comparisons have been made with the 2011 STAR survey.

	Very or fairly satisfied		Improved or declined from 2011
	2011	2013	
How satisfied are you with the services provided by the Council?	83.10%	83.90%	0.80% ▲
How satisfied are you with the overall quality of your home?	81%	80.50%	-0.50% ▼
How satisfied are you with your neighbourhood as a place to live?	79.30%	79.30%	◀▶
How satisfied are you that your rent provides value for money?	83.10%	72.70%	-10.4 ▼
How satisfied are you with the way the Council deals with repairs and maintenance?	76.20%	78%	1.80% ▲
How satisfied are you that the Council listens to your views and acts upon them?	62.70%	60.90%	-1.80% ▼

The next STAR survey will be conducted in Spring 2015. If you would like to make any comments or provide us with feedback please contact us on **01623 463 438** or at **mansfieldhousing@mansfield.gov.uk**

HOUSING SERVICES PANEL UPDATE

The Housing Services Panel is a diverse group of tenants and leaseholders who have a wealth of experience and an interest in helping the Council improve the services it delivers.



What do we do?

Our role is to work on behalf of all tenants and leaseholders to scrutinise Mansfield District Council's Housing Service.

Who do we work with?

We work closely with the Housing Service, which has resulted in many changes and improvements to services.

What have we done?

We have worked with the Council on many services and projects, which include:

- Improving access, facilities and customer care by relocating the Homefinder office, the Council's Choice Based Letting Scheme, back to the Civic Centre

- Setting the standard and schedule for the Council's capital improvement programme which includes improving and upgrading tenants' bathrooms and kitchens
- Introducing multi-skills training for all Housing Repairs staff to ensure repairs are completed quicker, and
- Delivering a more responsive Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Service which provides ongoing and targeted support to the victims of ASB.

The success of these changes has resulted in improved performance, with a recent tenant satisfaction survey showing increased satisfaction following the implementation of these changes.

What are we working on now?

We are currently looking at how the Housing Service:

- Deals with its empty properties
- Works to improve the neighbourhood through regular estate walkabouts
- Has taken action to deal with the impact of the recent Welfare Reform changes, and
- Supports tenants affected by changes to Welfare Reform.

**THE SUCCESS OF
THESE CHANGES
HAS RESULTED
IN IMPROVED
PERFORMANCE...**

The following provides a brief outline of the work completed by the panel during the recent scrutiny process and its recommendations.

Empty properties



Members of the panel carried out several inspections of empty properties both before and after completion of any repairs and a review of information which included:

- Performance information
- Service standards, and
- Customer feedback.

As a result of the scrutiny process the panel members recommended that a moving in and moving out standard be produced so that tenants are aware of the standard the property should meet when they move in and the standard it should be left in when they move out.

They also recommended that work is carried out to improve the appearance of internal and external communal areas.

Estate walkabouts



Members of the Mansfield District Tenants' Forum carried out a review of information which included:

- Performance information from the latest Survey of Tenants and Residents (STAR) survey
- Service standards relating to estate walkabouts, and
- Information provided to tenants on estate walkabouts and feedback on outcomes.

As a result of the scrutiny process the panel members recommended that feedback is provided to tenants on the outcomes of estate walkabouts and any improvements that have been made as a result.

**Estate
walkabout**

Welfare Reform



The panel carried out a review of information which included:

- Performance on levels of arrears and action taken as a result of the under occupancy rule
- Information provided to tenants on the Welfare Reform changes introduced
- Results from the latest STAR survey relating to money advice and tenancy support
- Service standards relating to tenancy support
- Progress against the Housing Quality Network's Welfare Reform checklist, and
- Relevant mystery shopper exercises.

As a result of the scrutiny process panel members recommended that more support is provided to tenants to help them access bank accounts or credit union accounts with resources being made available to help people with budgeting and money advice.

What's on December - April 2014



What: Cinderella
When: Saturday 14 December 2013 to
Sunday 5 January 2014
Where: Palace Theatre, Leeming Lane, Mansfield
Cost: Adults £13.32, concessions £12.30,
family tickets £47.15

Come and be enchanted by this year's Christmas pantomime, Cinderella, which features Hi-De-Hi star Ruth Madoc as the Fairy Godmother and family entertainment star Dave Benson-Philips as Buttons. To book contact the Box Office on **01623 633 133** or visit **www.mansfield.gov.uk/palacetheatre**

What: Alice in Wonderland Trail
When: Saturday 22 February to
Monday 3 March 2014, 10am to 4pm
Where: Brodsworth Hall and Gardens, Brodsworth,
Doncaster, South Yorkshire
Cost: Adults £5.90, concessions £5.30,
children 5-15 years £3.50

Enter the magical world of Lewis Carroll in this enchanting trail around the gardens at Brodsworth Hall. There are six characters to find along the paths that lead visitors through the gardens. There's a certificate for everyone who completes the trail. Tickets will be available to purchase at Brodsworth Hall on the day.

What: International Clean-Up Mansfield Day
When: Wednesday 9 April 2014
Where: Various locations across Mansfield
Cost: **FREE**

Mansfield District Council is encouraging individuals, groups and organisations across Mansfield to register to take part in clean-up activities for next year's International Clean-Up Mansfield Day to make Mansfield the cleanest place in the world. For more information visit **www.mansfield.gov.uk/cleanup** or **www.facebook.com/cleanupmansfield**

Housing group meetings



Housing Services Panel

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

Housing Services Panel meetings

The dates for next year's meetings had not been confirmed at the time of going to print. Once the dates have been agreed they will be available on our website at **www.mansfield.gov.uk/hsp** and in the spring edition of Contact.

Mansfield District Tenants' Forum

Mansfield District Tenants' Forum ensures that the Council helps tenants and residents improve their housing and living environment

by giving them the opportunity and support to get involved with housing groups and external organisations.

Mansfield District Tenants' Forum meetings

Wednesday 8 January
1.30pm - 3.30pm
Stacey Road Community Centre,
Mansfield

Wednesday 5 February
1.30pm - 3.30pm
Stacey Road Community Centre,
Mansfield

Wednesday 5 March
1.30pm - 3.30pm
Stacey Road Community Centre,
Mansfield

Wednesday 2 April
1.30pm - 3.30pm
Stacey Road Community Centre,
Mansfield

GET IN TOUCH

USEFUL CONTACTS

Mansfield North Housing Office (Civic Centre)	01623 463 129
Housing Repairs Contact Centre	01623 463 500
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 463 147
24-hour Emergency Contact (repairs)	01623 463 050

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.