

SUMMER 2013

# Contact

THE QUARTERLY MAGAZINE FOR MANSFIELD DISTRICT COUNCIL TENANTS



## Shaun can lend a helping hand

[www.mansfield.gov.uk](http://www.mansfield.gov.uk)



**Mansfield  
District Council**



## Inside this edition of Contact

### 2 - 3 NEWS

ASSIST Service gets good feedback  
Shaun can lend a helping hand

### 4 - 9 WELFARE REFORM SPECIAL

### 10 GET INVOLVED

Become a mystery shopper  
Become a Housing Panel member

### 11 HAVE YOUR SAY

Contact reader survey

### 12 HOUSING GROUP MEETINGS

### 12 WHAT'S ON

### 12 GET IN TOUCH



## Foreword

As you will no doubt be aware, Government changes to the welfare system were introduced in April this year.

**T**hese changes, in particular the introduction of the under occupancy charges, have caused much concern and we are working hard to minimise the disruption to your lives.

This edition includes information about the changes as well as debt and money advice. I hope this will give you some guidance and help answer any questions you may have.

We are also keen to help the most vulnerable residents in the District and have developed the ASSIST Service to help us do this. While the service was only introduced in April this year, it is clear that it is already having a positive impact upon the everyday lives of people in the community.

Best wishes,

**Cllr Mick Colley, Portfolio Holder for Tenancy Services and Housing Needs**

## NEWS

# ASSIST Service gets good feedback

**T**he ASSIST Service has now been running for four months and we have received positive feedback from residents who have been using the service.

Mr and Mrs Marriott are homeowners who use the Enhanced Support part of the ASSIST Service to help them with cleaning they struggle to do themselves. Every week, their Support Worker comes to their home and helps them with whichever cleaning tasks they need support with, which can range from vacuuming to cleaning the bathroom or clearing out cupboards.

Mrs Marriott said: "The service is brilliant and now we have it I don't know how we would cope without it. It was so easy to arrange to have the service and we started receiving it the week after we asked for it.

We are happy with the cost of the service as it is well worth the money and reassuring to know that someone reliable will be turning up every week. I would recommend it to anyone!"

Mr Stokeley lives in a sheltered housing complex and uses the Respond and Support part of the ASSIST Service. He says that his Support Workers have gone above and beyond their duties in helping him. Mr Stokeley was struggling to get around so his Support Workers helped him to buy a wheelchair. They also assist him with his cooking and washing and take him out to the shops or to places he wants to visit, such as the house in Mansfield where he grew up. Mr Stokeley said: "I am really happy with the service I receive as it helps me to be independent."

To find out more about the ASSIST Service, call **01623 463 076/420 768** (during office hours Monday – Friday),



**01623 463 050** (out-of-office hours),  
email [assistservice@mansfield.gov.uk](mailto:assistservice@mansfield.gov.uk)  
or visit [www.mansfield.gov.uk/assist](http://www.mansfield.gov.uk/assist)

# Shaun can lend a helping hand



New Handyperson Shaun Barlow can help you with any small jobs you need doing around your home.

**S**haun started working for Mansfield District Council in April and his role is part of the new ASSIST Service.

As with the other services provided as part of ASSIST, the Handyperson Service can be tailored to suit individual needs. Shaun can help you with any small repair you need in your home and garden, which can range from small decorating jobs, putting locks on doors and windows to cutting back small trees or hedges. Shaun has his own equipment but you will need to supply materials, such as paint, yourself. If you are unable to get your own materials, you can arrange for Shaun to get them for you.

Shaun, who previously worked as a joiner, is available Monday-Friday, from 8.30am to

4.30pm. If you would like to use the Handyperson Service you will need to contact the ASSIST team, who will pass on your details to Shaun. Shaun will then give you a call to discuss the work you need doing, the cost and the time it will take to complete. If you are happy with the quote Shaun will come and carry out the work within an agreed timescale which can range from 48 hours to a month from the date of your quote, depending on the type of work, urgency and demand.

Once the work has been completed you will be sent an invoice from the Council which you can pay a number of ways including online, in person at the Civic Centre or via telephone. Shaun cannot accept a cash payment for the work.

The Handyperson Service is available to vulnerable Council, private and Housing Association tenants and homeowners living in the Mansfield and Ashfield Districts. If you are a Council tenant, the majority of household repairs will be carried out by the Council's Housing Repairs team however you can still use the Handyperson Service for any repairs you are responsible for as a tenant (these will be stated in your tenancy agreement).

The service is for individual household use only and cannot be used by landlords or businesses. If you would like to use the Handyperson Service please call **01623 463 076 / 463 341** or email **assistservice@mansfield.gov.uk**

## What jobs can the Handyperson do?

(This is not a conclusive list – if you need a job doing that is not on the list please contact the ASSIST team to discuss).

### Joinery

- Window repairs (minor works)
- Door repairs (minor works)
- Fitting cat flaps
- Cupboard repairs
- Fitting shelving
- Fitting window locks and sensors
- Draught-proofing
- Hanging doors
- Skirting, and
- Architrave.

### Plumbing

- Fitting toilet seats, and
- Fitting sink and bath plugs.

### Electrical

- Securing trailing wires
- Fitting bulbs and lampshades

- Changing plugs, and
- Replacing light bulbs (low energy).

### Security

- Fitting door and window locks
- Fitting door safety chains and spy holes
- Replacing light bulbs in exterior security lights
- Replacing batteries in burglar alarms
- Replacing batteries in smoke alarms
- Fitting carbon monoxide detectors, and
- Fitting key safes.

### Clearance/storage

- General clearance
- Furniture/equipment
- Assembling small items of furniture, and

- Moving heavy items of furniture.

### Miscellaneous interior

- Putting up curtains and rails
- Hanging pictures and mirrors
- Securing carpets, and
- Minor painting and decorating work.

### Miscellaneous exterior

- Fixing gates and fences (minor works)
- Fixing paving (minor works)
- Putting up washing lines
- Gutter clearance and repairs (ground floor only), and
- General gardening such as mowing lawns, trimming hedges and weeding.





The Government has introduced major changes through the Welfare Reform Act, which will affect many Mansfield residents. In previous editions of Contact we have kept you up to date with those changes including the Housing Benefit changes that came into effect in April 2013.

**M**any of our tenants have been affected by the under occupancy rules and as a result have lost part of their Housing Benefit entitlement because they are considered to have more bedrooms than the Government says they need.

#### What we have done to help?

Mansfield District Council has:

- Written to all households affected by the under occupancy rules
- Tried to make direct contact with those affected either by telephone or a visit to discuss their housing options and offer money and budgeting advice
- Held an open day so that any household affected could come to discuss their options, and
- Given additional priority for re-housing to households that are under occupying by one bedroom and wish to downsize to a smaller property.

If you are affected by the under occupancy rules and want to discuss your housing options you can contact your Housing Officer or the Council's Welfare Reform Officer on **01623 463 450**.

## WHAT NEXT? – UNIVERSAL CREDIT

#### What is Universal Credit?

Universal Credit is a new benefit for people of working age. It will replace benefits for people who are out of work and tax credits for people in work.

Providing your income and savings don't go above certain limits, you can carry on claiming Universal Credit if you are working or out of work. Universal Credit may help people on low incomes who move in and out of work by reducing the problems caused by benefits stopping and starting.



#### UNIVERSAL CREDIT WILL REPLACE THE FOLLOWING BENEFITS:

- £ **Housing Benefit**
- £ **Income Support (IS)**
- £ **Job Seeker's Allowance (JSA)**
- £ **Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)**
- £ **Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit, and**
- £ **Budgeting loans and crisis loans.**







### Timetable for the introduction of Universal Credit

Universal Credit will be introduced gradually across the country in stages. It will initially be used by single people making new benefit claims.

From October 2013, Universal Credit will start to be introduced nationally. New benefit claimants will start using Universal Credit instead of Income Support, Job Seeker's Allowance, Employment and Support Allowance and Housing Benefit. If you come off benefits because you are starting work, you will claim Universal Credit instead of Tax Credits.

From April 2014, people of working age who are in work will claim Universal Credit instead of Tax Credits.

Finally, between April 2014 and October 2017, people already claiming other benefits will gradually be transferred to Universal Credit.

## ARE YOU READY FOR THE CHANGES?

Benefits payments are currently paid weekly or fortnightly. Universal Credit payments will usually be made every month and will be paid in arrears, not in advance.

Housing costs will be claimed as part of Universal Credit, so a separate claim for Housing Benefit won't be needed.

## REMEMBER: IT'S NOT ALL YOURS!

You will need to think about how you are going to budget and make arrangements to pay your weekly or monthly rent from your Universal Credit payment.

You'll also need to make sure you have a bank account for your Universal Credit payment to be paid into.

Visit [www.gov.uk/universal-credit](http://www.gov.uk/universal-credit) for more information.



## WAYS TO PAY

**While the Council offers several rent payment options, our preferred method of payment is by Direct Debit as it is the easiest way to pay your rent and other tenancy charges.**

You don't have to remember when to pay, as your bank or building society automatically pays the Council on the date the money is due.

You remain firmly in control of your money as we will always give you at least ten working days notice of any changes we want to make in the amount we collect from you. This means you have the opportunity to query the change and even, if you wish, cancel the Direct Debit authorisation.

In the unlikely event of a mistake you are covered by the Direct Debit

guarantee which is offered by all banks and building societies.

Even if you find yourself in arrears with your rent, then you can still pay by Direct Debit. You must however have an agreement in place with your Housing Officer, to pay an additional amount each month with your Direct Debit to help clear your arrears.

By taking up the opportunity to pay by Direct Debit you will be in with a chance of winning a £25 Tesco voucher. The winners for April, May and June are Mr Stevens of Newhaven Avenue, Mrs Bucklow of Babworth Court and Mrs Ashett from Perlethorpe Avenue.

If you do not have a bank account and would like some help setting one up, the Council can also help you to do this.

## CREDIT UNION

A Credit Union is a profit sharing, democratically run, financial co-operative which offers convenient savings and low-interest loans to its members. The members own and manage their Credit Union themselves.

The three main aims of a Credit Union are:

- £ To encourage its members to save regularly
- £ To provide loans to members at very low rates of interest, and
- £ To provide members with help and support on managing their financial affairs (if required).

A Credit Union can offer very low cost loans, insurance at no direct cost and a range of savings accounts. As a Credit Union member, you are in control of your own finances and have a say in

how your financial service provider is run.

East Midlands Credit Union (EMCU) has developed several new financial products in order to reduce the impact from the introduction of Universal Credit.

EMCU provides access to several services including a Rent Payment Budget Account which will allow you to have your benefits or wages paid directly to the Credit Union. Your rent payment will then be automatically taken out of the account and paid directly to Mansfield District Council.

For more information or to set up an account visit

[www.emheartcu.coop/home](http://www.emheartcu.coop/home) or contact the Council on **01623 463 402**.



# DEALING WITH DEBT

As the price of every day basics such as food, gas and electricity are increasing, more and more people are struggling to make ends meet and are finding themselves in debt.

## Priority and non-priority debts

When you are in debt, it's important to know which debts should be paid first. Knowing which debts should take priority can help you to keep your home. It's important to understand what happens if you don't pay your debts.

## Priority debts

Some debts are called priority debts because the consequences of not paying them are more serious. Priority debts should be dealt with before your non-priority debts.

Priority debts include:

- Mortgage repayments and loans secured on your home
- Rent
- Fuel debts (gas and electric)
- Child support and maintenance payments
- Council Tax
- TV license, and
- Certain payments ordered by the courts.





If you don't pay a priority debt:

- You could lose your home through mortgage or rent arrears
- Your gas or electricity supply could be cut off, or you may have to accept an expensive pre-payment meter instead, or
- You could go to prison if you don't pay your Council Tax, TV license, taxes or Magistrates' Court fines.

**LAST YEAR  
1 IN 3  
PEOPLE COULDN'T  
PAY OFF THEIR  
FIRST PAYDAY LOAN  
SO HAD TO TAKE  
OUT ANOTHER  
ONE.**

### Non-priority debts

Failing to pay non-priority debts is usually less serious than not paying a priority debt. However, your creditors (the people that you owe money to) may sue you for any money that you owe them. This could result in a County Court Judgment (CCJ) against you.

Non-priority debts include:

- Credit card debts
- Hire purchase agreements (HP)

# BT

- Unsecured bank loans (loans that are not secured against your property)
- Water bills, and
- Loans from friends and family.

If a creditor gets a CCJ against you and you don't keep to the terms of the court order - for example, you fail to pay a certain amount each month - your creditor can go back to court and apply to enforce the debt. The creditor can apply to enforce the debt in a number of ways such as sending bailiffs to your house, deducting money from your wages or freezing the money in your bank account and using it to pay the debt.

# DON'T GET BITTEN BY A LOAN SHARK!

If you are struggling to repay existing debts and/or stay on top of monthly bills, it is all too easy to turn to payday and short-term lenders for help.

**Payday loan companies, often referred to as legal loan sharks, sell themselves on the basis that getting hold of a loan from them is quick and easy and they will consider your application even if you have a poor credit history. They can give you cash for unexpected one-off expenses but they are a very expensive way to borrow.**

Last year one in three people couldn't pay off their first payday loan so had to take out another one.



**SOME MONEY LENDING WEBSITES CHARGE MORE THAN 4,000% INTEREST**

If you are considering taking out a short-term loan you need to be aware of the consequences as some money lending companies charge more than 4,000% interest.

By saying no to payday loans you can avoid getting deeper into debt and have more chance of balancing your finances.

To lend money lawfully you have to be licensed by the Office of Fair Trading (OFT) and while most payday companies are legal, some people lend money without a license. These people are often referred to as illegal loan sharks.

Illegal loan sharks often work from home, charge very high rates of interest and don't give you much paperwork to confirm the arrangements they have made with you.

These loan sharks often take other illegal action to collect the money they have lent you, such as threatening violence or taking away your credit cards or valuables.

### What can you do if you've borrowed from a loan shark?

The good news is that you haven't broken the law – they have.

You can't be prosecuted for having taken a loan from a loan shark and because any loan made by someone without a license is unenforceable it means you cannot be legally made to pay it back.

### How can you report a loan shark?

Have you been approached by a loan shark? Do you know if a loan shark is

operating in your community? If so you can report loan shark activity in a number of ways:

- Report it to your local Trading Standards Office
- Report it in confidence over the phone – **0300 555 2222**
- Text loan shark and your message to **60003**, or
- Email [reportaloanshark@stoploansharks.gov.uk](mailto:reportaloanshark@stoploansharks.gov.uk)

If you've got money worries or debt problems you don't need to turn to a loan shark or take out high interest payday loans. Call our Money Advice Officer on **01623 463 451** for **FREE** debt counseling advice.

### What other ways are there to borrow money?

Credit Unions can offer loans at competitive prices, so you don't have to pay the high interest rates charged by payday loans and other door step lenders. (See page 5 for more information on Credit Unions).



# WAYS OF SAVING MONEY

IF YOU  
LIVE ON YOUR  
OWN, YOU'RE  
ENTITLED TO A  
**25% DISCOUNT** ON  
YOUR COUNCIL  
TAX BILL.



Try to avoid borrowing money if you can and build up some savings for unexpected expenses. Improve your finances by cutting back on your spending if you can and start budgeting.

## SAVING MONEY ON PRIORITY LIVING COSTS

### Rent

If you haven't already claimed, check if you are entitled to Housing Benefit.

If the amount of Housing Benefit you get is not enough for you to afford the rent because you are classed as under occupying your property, you may need to consider a move. Homefinder staff are available to help and advise you on your housing options including moving to a smaller property.

All empty properties available to let are advertised each week on the Homefinder website [www.amhomefinder.co.uk](http://www.amhomefinder.co.uk)

If you are interested in a property, you can apply to Homefinder for that specific property. When the bidding period closes (usually after six days) the property is offered to the person with the highest housing need who has been in need for the longest period.

Owing to the high demand for some properties, we do have to set qualifying criteria. For example, properties may be prioritised for people with medical needs or families with children. All qualifying details are placed on the property advert.

Remember, to bid for properties, you need to be registered with Homefinder. It's easy to register online at

[www.amhomefinder.co.uk](http://www.amhomefinder.co.uk) or call **01623 463 402** to request an application form. We will send you your unique

application number and then you can start applying for properties.

You could also consider exchanging your property for a smaller property. Homefinder offers information about the Mutual Exchange Scheme and has details of schemes to help applicants move within Mansfield District and other areas of the country. See [www.homeswapper.co.uk](http://www.homeswapper.co.uk) for more details.

### Council Tax

You might be able to get your Council Tax reduced if you are on a low income or welfare benefits. If you live on your own, you're entitled to a 25% discount on your Council Tax bill.

### Fuel bills and energy costs

Shop around for deals. Fuel is supplied by companies operating in competition with each other – you can choose to switch your supplier. While gas and electric can be set up separately, it often works out cheaper to set them up together as a dual fuel package.

You may also want to compare results from price comparison websites such as:

- Which? Switch
- Energy Helpline
- Simply Switch, and
- MoneySuperMarket.

Energy suppliers offer social tariffs with reduced rates for vulnerable or disadvantaged customers. They may be a good option if you are over the age of 60 or claiming means-tested benefits.

Residents in Mansfield District can get **FREE** advice on how to keep their homes warm in winter and save money on energy bills.

If you are interested in receiving advice, a **FREE** energy audit, or more information please contact the Council on **01623 463 472**.

### TV license

Most people need a TV license to use a television, but there are some exceptions. You don't have to pay if a member of your household is aged over 75, people who are blind or severely sight impaired can get a 50% reduction and students can ask for a refund during the summer holiday period.

If you have difficulty paying, you can choose to pay by instalments.

### Water bills

There are two ways you can pay for water – either through water rates, or using a water meter. You may save money by using a water meter if you are a small household and don't use much water. Once you have a water meter installed, you can't change back to paying water rates. More information is available from Ofwat at [www.ofwat.gov.uk](http://www.ofwat.gov.uk)

You can usually pay for water rates in installments – contact your water company for details.

Severn Trent currently offer a WaterSure scheme, which offers financial assistance for people with certain medical conditions or large families on low incomes.





## SAVING MONEY ON EVERYDAY LIVING COSTS

### Events

Do you know what you spend on birthdays, Christmas, holidays and other celebratory events? Get help online from money saving websites such as [www.moneysavingexpert.com](http://www.moneysavingexpert.com) for ideas on how to reduce these costs.

### Food bills

Consider if shopping online will help you budget your food bill or find the cheapest deals in the supermarkets – compare costs using sites such as My Supermarket.

Search out cheaper supermarkets and look to see what markets have to offer. Try supermarket own-brand foods - you won't know if you like them unless you try. Make a shopping list, it may help you buy only what you need.

Don't buy expensive ready meals - cook instead. You can find tips on websites such as:

- Love Food, Hate Waste, and
- Frugal living in the UK.

### Health

Can you register with an NHS dentist instead of paying privately? Check if you are eligible for help with health costs, e.g. free prescriptions, dental treatment, sight tests and help towards the cost of glasses.

### Leisure

If you are not using your gym membership, save money and cancel it. Check if you can save money by using local Council run sport centres. They may have cheaper pay-as-you-go

memberships or special offers for local residents, children, older people or people with disabilities.

### Phones and TV packages

There are a lot of companies competing for business, so the package that offers the best value now may not be the best offer in a few months time. Check that you need and are using the features of your existing package. You may be able to save money by shopping around for the best deals. Avoid getting tied into deals for long periods if you think your circumstances might change.

### Transport and travel

You may be able to save money on public transport by looking at special deals – can you get season tickets or reduced price tickets to cut your costs?

Work out the true cost of your car. Shop around to save money on insurance, fuel and running costs – take a look at MoneySavingExpert's cheaper fuel tips.

Look at individual journey costs – a cheap train ticket may be less expensive than the petrol costs for your journey. Can't afford to run a car? Look at other options – public transport, cycling, car sharing with friends, car sharing clubs or car hire.

### Save money with a phonecall

If faced with a change in your circumstances, a phone call to cancel services will often produce an offer of a reduced price service.

If you shop around for cheaper alternative services, you may find your existing supplier will match a rival's deal, saving you the hassle of switching.



### Find money saving ideas online

There is no shortage of online money-saving help – just check that you are using guides dedicated to saving you money rather than financial sites offering a quick fix that could cost you more.

You could save money by using online money saving vouchers, discounts and promotional codes.

### Save money by thinking the unthinkable

Everybody's circumstances are different, but sometimes a change in circumstances means you may have to radically rethink your lifestyle for a while.

- Can you holiday at home?
- Do you need to run a car?
- Can you ask your grown-up son or daughter to share more of the running costs of the home if they are living with you?
- Would cutting down or giving up a regular cost mean that you have more money for other things you'd rather do?

## BECOME A HOUSING PANEL MEMBER

The Housing Services Panel invites tenants and residents to help identify ways of improving how the Council delivers its Housing Service.

### What is the Housing Panel?

The Housing Panel works closely with the Housing department to influence and scrutinise the Council's performance and make recommendations on how it might be improved.

### What is scrutiny?

Scrutiny is the process in which Council tenants are able to assess the Council's performance as a landlord and ask questions about the service.

### What does the Housing Panel do?

The panel scrutinises how each section of the Housing department is performing and can request information and ask for improvements to be made to the service.

### What is required to be a Housing Panel member?

You need:

- To be 18+ years old
- Experience of being a tenant and using Housing Services or being part of the tenant involvement structure
- Basic knowledge of how Housing Services are delivered
- The ability to challenge opinions and be challenged
- To be able to work as part of a team, and
- Common sense.

### How much time will I need to commit?

The panel meets once a month but this is flexible. You will be expected to read any information sent out to you before meetings.

### Personal development

Being a panel member could help you improve your communication skills and build your confidence.

### Confidentiality and social media

Panel members will be required to handle and deal with restricted and confidential information and will be required to adhere to confidentiality guidelines.

### Training

Full training and support will be given for this role.

Anyone interested in being a panel member can contact Milly Alonso on **01623 463 147** or at **malonso@mansfield.gov.uk**

**The closing date for applications is Friday 27 September 2013.**



## Become a mystery shopper

The Housing team needs mystery shoppers to join the growing team of residents who want to make a difference to the Housing Service.

### What is mystery shopping?

Mystery shopping is a form of market research where individuals are trained to observe, experience and evaluate the customer service they receive from the Housing Service.

### What does a mystery shopper do?

A mystery shopper acts as a customer and carries out a series of agreed tasks, which monitor the quality of customer service. They then report back on their experiences in a detailed and objective way.

For example, a mystery shopper may be asked to call a member of the Housing team and request information. They would have to monitor how long it took staff to answer, how they were greeted and how professionally their request was handled – was the member of staff polite, helpful and informative?

The mystery shopper would then have to report back accurately and objectively by completing a questionnaire. Mystery shoppers can help the Council improve its customer service by providing information on the quality of the current service.

### What is required to be a mystery shopper?

You need:

- To be 18+ years old
- To be reliable and committed to providing a regular service

- Good written and verbal communication skills
- The ability to be discreet, and
- The ability to work independently.

### How much time will I need to commit?

Mystery shoppers are asked to take part in at least two mystery shops per year. Each mystery shop will last approximately four to eight weeks and it may take 10 minutes per week to carry out the mystery shop activity and 20 minutes to complete the questionnaire. We will agree specific times with each mystery shopper.

### Personal development

Being a mystery shopper could help you improve your communication skills and build your confidence.

### Supporting mystery shoppers

Full training and support will be given to all mystery shoppers. You can claim back any expenses you incur and will be given a gift voucher for each mystery shop as a thank you.

Anyone interested in being a mystery shopper can contact Natalie Wilmot on **01623 463 438** or at **nwilmot@mansfield.gov.uk**

**The closing date for applications is Friday 20 September 2013.**



# Contact

## READER SURVEY

**We want to make sure that Contact provides you with the information you need to know about your Housing Service. To do this we need your views to help us to continue to improve it.**

Last April, we redeveloped the magazine, changed the design and layout and split the magazine into different sections to make it easier for you to access the information you need.

We would like to know what you think of the magazine and find out if there

is anything else you would like to see included. We would really appreciate your input and are offering you the chance to win a £30 High Street voucher for your views.

Please complete the survey below and return it to:

**FREEPOST RSUG-HGXX-UAET**  
**Marketing and Communications**  
**Mansfield District Council**  
**Civic Centre**  
**Chesterfield Road South**  
**Mansfield NG19 7BH**

Alternatively you can respond online at **[www.mansfield.gov.uk/contactreadersurvey](http://www.mansfield.gov.uk/contactreadersurvey)**

Surveys can be completed anonymously but please leave your contact details if you would like to be entered into the prize draw. All completed surveys with contact details will be entered into a draw to win a £30 High Street gift voucher.

**The survey closes on 31 October 2013.**



### SURVEY

#### 1. Do you read Contact? (Please tick one)

- ☐ Yes ☐ No  
☐ Sometimes

#### 2. There are 12 pages in Contact - Would you prefer the magazine to be bigger/smaller/the same? (Please tick one)

- ☐ Smaller - 4 pages  
☐ Smaller - 8 pages  
☐ Same size - 12 pages  
☐ Bigger - 16 pages  
☐ Bigger - 20 pages

#### 3. We produce four issues of Contact a year. How many editions of Contact would you like to receive each year? (Please tick one)

- ☐ 1 ☐ 4  
☐ 2 ☐ 5  
☐ 3 ☐ 6

#### 4. Would you like to be able to submit article ideas for Contact? (Please tick one)

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

#### 5. Do you like the design? (Please tick one)

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

If no, why not?

#### 6. Do you think the articles are well written? (Please tick one)

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

If no, why not?

#### 7. Do you feel that the information is helpful? (Please tick one)

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

If no, why not?

#### 8. How interesting/informative do you find the articles? (Please tick one)

- ☐ Very interesting/informative  
☐ Quite interesting/informative  
☐ Not at all interesting/informative

#### 9. Do you read the following regular features? (Please tick all that apply)

- ☐ Foreword  
☐ News  
☐ Community Corner  
☐ Council Catch Up  
☐ Feature articles  
☐ Staff Spotlight  
☐ You and Your Home

- ☐ Green Zone  
☐ What's On  
☐ Housing Group meetings  
☐ Key Contacts

#### 10. What else would you like to see in Contact?

#### 11. Do you have any further comments about Contact?

#### 12. Overall how would you rate Contact? (Please tick one)

- ☐ Excellent ☐ Good  
☐ Adequate ☐ Poor

**Your name**  
**(Optional to be entered into draw)**

**Contact number**  
**(Optional to be entered into draw)**

# What's on September - October 2013

Nick George & Jason Francis for Premier Stage Productions in association with Classic Media present

**Postman  
Pat  
Live!**



**What:** Mansfield's Garden and Craft Festival

**When:** Saturday 14 and Sunday 15  
September, 11am to 3pm

**Where:** Market Place, Mansfield

**Cost:** **FREE**

Mansfield BID is reintroducing this festival which will include horticultural stalls, a baking competition, gardening and flower demonstrations, food and craft stalls plus much more.

**What:** Postman Pat Live – It's Showtime!

**When:** Wednesday 23 October, 1pm

**Where:** Palace Theatre, Leeming Street,  
Mansfield

**Cost:** Adults £12.81, children £10.76

A brand new, fun filled, all action show featuring everyone's favourite postman.

**What:** Robin Hood Pageant 2013

**When:** Saturday 26 and Sunday 27 October,  
10am to 5pm

**Where:** Nottingham Castle, Off Friar Lane,  
Nottingham

**Cost:** Call **0115 87 61 400** for prices

The Robin Hood Pageant will once again take place in the historic setting of Nottingham Castle with thousands of people expected to enjoy and experience the life and times of Nottingham's famous outlaw, Robin Hood!

## 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

19 September  
1.30pm - 3.30pm  
Meden Room, Civic Centre,  
Mansfield

17 October  
1.30pm - 3.30pm  
Meden Room, Civic Centre,  
Mansfield

### 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

4 September  
1.30pm - 3.30pm  
Stacey Road Community Centre,  
Mansfield

2 October  
1.30pm - 3.30pm  
Stacey Road Community Centre,  
Mansfield

## GET IN TOUCH

### USEFUL CONTACTS

Mansfield North Housing Office (Civic Centre)	<b>01623 463 129</b>
Housing Repairs Contact Centre	<b>01623 463 500</b>
Ashfield and Mansfield Homefinder	<b>01623 463 402</b>
Central Control	<b>01623 463 341</b>
Housing Advice Service	<b>01623 463 125</b>
Money Advice Service	<b>01623 463 451</b>
Welfare Rights Officer	<b>01623 463 450</b>
Right to Buy/Leaseholders Officer	<b>01623 463 062</b>
Tenant Involvement Officer	<b>01623 463 147</b>
24-hour Emergency Contact (repairs)	<b>01623 463 050</b>

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.