

Door to Door

Your local tenant magazine October 2018



Welcome to the October issue, which includes a copy of our Annual Review. It's been a year of change and progress - find out what we've been up to in 2017-18, And remember, if you'd like to 'go greener' and receive your next copy of Door to Door by email rather than in the post, just drop us a line at tenantengagement@broadlandgroup.org

PLEASE NOTE our new telephone options from Monday 1 October - **0303 303 0003**



- 1** To make a payment
- 2** To report a repair
- 3** Housing and Tenancy Support
- 4** All other enquiries

What makes our new Executive Housing Director tick? Mr Headicar, one of our Woodcote tenants, asked Catherine Little about her new job and how she's finding life in Norfolk.

R: Welcome from a fellow veggie! What made you decide to join Broadland?

C: I'd seen that Broadland really has its heart in the community – it understands its social purpose. A lot of other housing associations have moved too far from that. And for me personally, I was ready for the next step. Housing is such an exciting career. It's all about supporting people in one of the most important things in their lives.



Was it a big decision to move to another part of the country?

Not really, I moved around a lot as a child. My kids are primary school age and they're settling in well. They absolutely love living near the beach! My husband is a teacher and has just started his job. We're all excited about getting to know this part of the country.

You've only been here a short time, but what have you seen of Broadland so far and how will you develop it?

I've really enjoyed meeting tenants and shadowing Broadland staff. I'm passionate about tenants being involved in decisions and service standards. Broadland is accountable to you – you're the reason we exist! I want to focus on developing the culture, to make sure we're always listening to tenants.

What experience do you bring from Soha?

When I started at Soha, there was a Tenants' Forum which had 16 members. By the time I left, Soha had a national reputation for involving tenants, with more than 400 tenants regularly involved in improving services and accountability – and having fun while they were at it! Soha also became a shareholder organisation – like Broadland. It's core accountability at a high level: tenant shareholders get a vote.

I hope I bring to Broadland a real commitment to the need and right for everyone to have a decent place to live, and a commitment to service standards and good communication. Not talking to each other within the organisation, so tenants don't know what's happening, is often where we get complaints and lack of tenant satisfaction.

Yes, an informed tenant is a happy tenant! What about the issue of ASB?

Everyone should feel safe in their home, and listened to. There is no easy answer. Depending on the issue, it could involve some work on neighbour mediation, or there might be more serious action that we need to take. It's difficult sometimes to keep people informed about ASB because you can't always share details, but in the end it always comes back to good communication.

Again, we all want the same thing – great services, the best possible housing and thriving communities.



Coming soon: NEW Tenants Online!

The new, upgraded Tenants Online will make it easier for you to pay your rent and schedule repairs.

- Soon, you will be able to:
- create your own online account
 - update your account information (eg if you change your mobile phone number)
 - manage your rent account and make payments
 - set up a direct debit for your rent payments
 - send enquiries direct to us
 - schedule a repair for your home or the communal area at your scheme
 - view all the repair reports for your home or communal area



The new service is due to launch later this autumn. Of course, you'll still be able to contact us at your local area office and by phone if you need to.

Do you need help to get back into work?

If you live in the King's Lynn/West Norfolk area, you may be eligible for 1-to-1 coaching.

As one of the partners of the New Horizons Building Better Opportunities project, we can help you:

- get online
- start to look for work
- manage your finances

For more details, contact Louise MARRS on 01603 750116, email louise.marrs@broadlandgroup.org



Dreading the bills after Christmas? Here's some good news!

Thanks to our new partnership with Norwich Credit Union (Norfolk Save & Borrow), you could be better off by £25. Broadland Housing tenants who join the credit union this month and save regularly for 3 months will get £25 added to their account in the new year. Tenants in certain postcodes – if they continue to save for 6 months – may qualify for an extra £25 reward at that point, making £50 in total!

See www.norwichcreditunion.org.uk for full details of this offer, local service points, terms and conditions.

When joining in person or online, please quote **BHA**.

Did you know...?

You can have your Universal Credit payment paid direct into your credit union account



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Universal Credit – we can help!

Universal Credit reaches these job centre areas this autumn:



October

Norwich City Council - Norwich
Broadland District Council - Norwich
North Norfolk District Council - Cromer

November

King's Lynn & West Norfolk - King's Lynn

December

Forest Heath District Council - Mildenhall & Newmarket
North Norfolk District Council - Fakenham & North Walsham

What's changing?

This new monthly payment only affects **people of working age**. It replaces:

- Income Based Job Seeker's Allowance
- Housing Benefit
- Working Tax Credit
- Child Tax Credit
- Income Related Employment and Support Allowance
- Income Support

If you want to make a NEW claim for any of these benefits, or have a change of circumstances, you'll need to apply for Universal Credit. Otherwise, you won't be affected until the Department of Work and Pensions get in touch about transferring you onto Universal Credit.

However, we'd like to help you get prepared:

How does Universal Credit affect your rent?

With Universal Credit you must pay your rent directly to us from your monthly payment *as soon as you receive it* - so call **0303 303 0003** to set up a direct debit if you haven't already done so.

What else is different?

When on Universal Credit, you're required to update an online journal. If you don't have access to the internet or don't know how to use it, please contact us for help.

Help to manage your money

Universal Credit is paid monthly, in arrears. You'll need a bank account or a credit union account (see page 3) to receive your payments. For help with banking or budgeting, or to discuss any rent arrears, please contact us on **0303 303 0003** as soon as possible.





Gas and electrics – keeping you safe

Gas

Always make sure you're at home for your annual gas service check. These yearly appointments are important to protect you, your family and your home. We now send you a text or email with your appointment details (NB: we're no longer sending out letters).

If you missed your appointment, call **0303 303 0003** to re-book ASAP.

Electrics

Did you know that over half of all accidental domestic fires in the UK are caused by electricity? It's important that you let us into your home to do your 5-year electrical inspection and test. We'll repair anything that is dangerous and check in case any re-wiring might be necessary.



Top safety tips

- Be aware of loose wiring – it can look normal but may still be dangerous
- A smell of rotting eggs could be plastic burning in your electrics. Report this immediately!
- Never overload a plug socket with too many appliances – it's a common cause of electrical fires in the home
- Always unplug hair straighteners after use

More tips at www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk

Repairs: who pays?



Check your individual tenancy agreement to find out what repairs are your responsibility.

Tenants are usually responsible for repairing:

- damage that you, a family member or a visitor to your property have caused, either accidentally or intentionally
- decorations inside your home and replacing light bulbs
- door handles and latches inside your home
- replacing keys and locks if you lose your key or it has broken in the lock
- clearing blockages to sinks and basins if you have caused the blockage
- TV aerials (unless it is a shared aerial we have provided), phone lines, satellite and cable TV, and broadband
- fencing between properties
- sheds

We assess broken windows on a case by case basis. If the breakage is a result of vandalism or crime, you must provide a crime reference number.



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Norwich

Last month we held a community clean-up day. Tenants enjoyed facepainting, stone painting and planting. Later they helped with litter picking and clearing pathways of unwanted items. Everyone who got involved said it was great to bring the community together and help to look after where they live!



Dereham

Throughout the year we've been inviting tenants to their local office to find out more about our Tenancy Support Services. At a 'What we do' day in Dereham recently, our Tenancy Support Team gave tenants guidance on employment and training, rent arrears, reducing energy bills and more.

The next Tenancy Support day is on 21 November, 11.30am-1.30pm, at our Great Yarmouth office. Feel free to drop in!





King's Lynn

Tenants made the most of this summer's glorious weather. With help from our Estates Team, they transformed their open spaces. Tenants had asked their Neighbourhood Officer for planters and flowers in bedding areas at the front of their scheme. After a morning's work, tenants were pleased with the improvements.



King's Lynn

Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service joined our first fire safety awareness day. Firefighters gave tenants advice on fire safety in their home and around the scheme. Everyone found the day helpful. As a result, we're planning to hold similar events at other schemes later this year.



MAKE A STAND

Our homes, our people,
our problem.

Domestic abuse – Make a Stand

Millions of people experience domestic abuse every year. Every week two women are killed by their partner or ex-partner.

We're one of the 50+ housing associations that have pledged to Make a Stand against domestic abuse. We're working with the Chartered Institute of Housing, Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) and Women's Aid to tackle this issue and support victims - see www.cih.org/makeastand for details.

If you are experiencing domestic abuse, call the Freephone 24 Hour National Domestic Violence Helpline, 0808 2000 247, or visit www.nationaldomesticviolencehelpline.org.uk. If you are in immediate danger, call 999 and ask for the Police.



Better Together Week

During our second Better Together Week in September, we invited a range of organisations to talk to Broadland staff about their work to combat loneliness, including:

- Royal British Legion
- Friend in Need
- Friends against Scams
- Carers Matter Norfolk
- Pets as Therapy
- ACT (Aylsham & District Care Trust)

We visited tenants in Honeypot Meadow, Bunnewell Avenue, The Steps, Barrack Road, Feltwell Road, Lion's Close, Ladys Drove and High Road. Like our Out and About visits (see opposite), it was a chance for tenants to report any housing issues and find out about:

- the Norfolk Directory of support services
- what's going on in the local area
- opportunities to volunteer and get involved in the community
- the impact of loneliness in more rural areas



We are listening!

In the STAR Survey you told us you wanted us to communicate better with you. As a result, we've launched 'Community Conversations'. This summer our Chief Executive Michael Newey and members of the senior management team have been meeting small groups of tenants around the county in the evening, to find out what we do well and what we could do better.

So far we've been to Great Yarmouth, Lowestoft, Bodham and Dereham. The response has been excellent and we've got quite a list of actions to go away and look at! Here's a flavour of the feedback and what we're doing about it:



“Repairs take too long!”
 We're currently reviewing the way we update and communicate our repair response times to tenants. We'll update you on the outcome ASAP through the usual channels.

“We need more patch visits...”
 We'll be adding more properties in Great Yarmouth to next year's Out and About programme. We're actively promoting it when we're in the area.

“Door to Door isn't relevant to us in the East...”
 We've already set up an editorial panel for Door to Door, and invited all areas of the business. This will help ensure we cover the whole Broadland region.

Community Conversations are a great opportunity to talk to senior management personally. **The next one is in King's Lynn on 11 October.** Look out for your invitation and more feedback from the sessions.

Out and about

Here's the schedule for our remaining scheme visits. This is your chance to meet us and find out the different ways to contact us and help us improve the service you receive under your tenancy agreement.

East
 Wed 17 October 10am-12pm Wayland Way, Banham

Norwich
 Fri 2 November 10-4pm Shipfield, Norwich
 Wed 14 November 9.30am-1pm Augustus Hare Drive, Hankin Court, Sarah Williman Close, Norwich

West
 Mon 22 October 1.30pm-5:30pm Lineside & Mallard Way, Dereham
 Fri 26 October 10am-12pm Jubilee Road & Burrow Drive, Lakenheath
 Wed 21 November 10am-12pm Portland House, King's Lynn
 Fri 23 November 2.30pm-4:30pm Oddfellow Field, Blakeney



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Congratulations to our winners!

Thanks to everyone who entered our 2018 Gardening Competition. Our gardeners faced particular challenges this year. Jane, one of the competition judges, said: "The unusual fluctuations in the weather (snow in March followed by a six-week drought with temperatures in excess of 30C) could have resulted in a very poor show But Broadland Housing gardeners made a supreme effort and managed to create some stunning garden displays! It's been a great pleasure to be part of this competition."



Special Judges Award -
Best Garden Design, Norwich



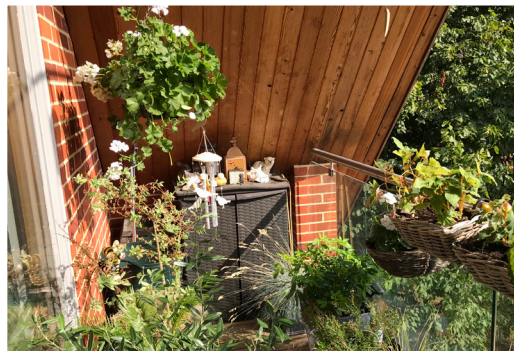
Best Garden Award, King's Lynn



All About Colour, Lowestoft



Wild About Your Garden,
Scarning



Best Balcony/Window Box,
Norwich



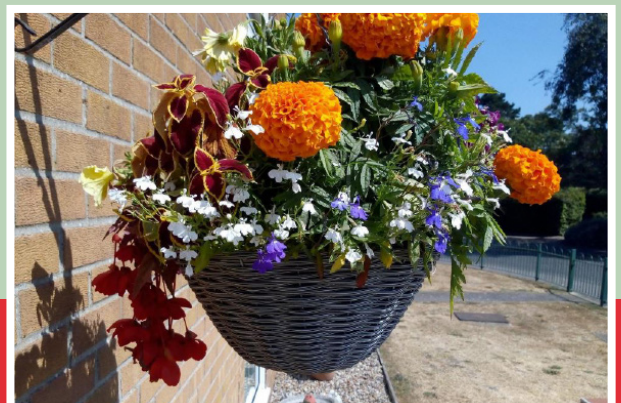
Best Community Garden,
Aylsham

We also had winners and runners-up for the Best Upcycled Garden, Best Ornaments, Tallest Sunflower and Young Gardener's award (under-16s). Find more photos on our website and Facebook page.

We're also pleased to announce the result of our **hanging basket competition** for sheltered housing schemes:

- 1st place** Oulton Court
- 2nd place** York Place
- Highly Recommended** The Lawns & Samford Court

Again, there were some stunning entries, which made the judges' task all the more difficult!



Community inspectors needed

Do you care about where you live? Help us keep your scheme safe and tidy. We're looking for community inspectors to report any damage or other problems.

As a community inspector, you volunteer to walk round your scheme around 4 times a year. You will report any issues you find directly to your neighbourhood officer. Once a year you'll also have the chance to get together over tea with other community inspectors in your area.

Contact tenantengagement@broadlandgroup.org



Be
involved!

Join our Digital Panel

We need regular feedback so we can continually improve our services to you. Join our Digital Panel to share your views instantly from a phone, tablet or home PC!

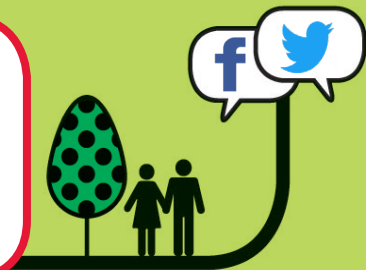
We'll send you online surveys to your email on a variety of subjects - you can choose to answer as few or as many as you like.

Your views are really important to us and we'd like to get as many of you on board the panel as possible. **Sign up today-** email tenantengagement@broadlandgroup.org



Like & follow us online

Did you know we're active on social media? Keep in touch with us from your PC, phone or tablet when you're at home or on the move. Like or follow us on Facebook & on Twitter. We're always keen to hear your views on social media, but bear in mind that we can only respond in office hours.



TOYS & TINS APPEAL



Once again we're supporting the Salvation Army's Toys and Tins appeal as part of our ongoing Better Together project. If you'd like to donate, please bring your new and unopened gifts of food items or children's toys to your **local area office by 30 November**. Toy parcels and food hampers will be packed and distributed by Salvation Army volunteers to those who might otherwise go without at Christmas. Here's a selection of donations that would be greatly appreciated:

Toys: Soft baby toys, books, cars, dolls, colouring sets, puzzles, stationery, toiletries, gloves, scarves, DVDs, CDs, crosswords, footballs, bath toys.

Tins: Meat or fish, baked beans, vegetables, soup, fruit.

0303 303 0003

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Make your own home-cleaning products

Save money with these expert tips from our Cleaning Team:



Kitchens

Use a sprinkle of baking soda on a sponge to clean any surface you would usually use a cream cleaner on. It'll work just as well to remove dirt and grime! It won't leave a harsh chemical smell either. Finish with a micro fibre cloth for an immaculate finish.



Bathrooms

Mix ¼ cup of baking powder with 1 tablespoon of liquid detergent, and add some vinegar to give it a nice thick consistency. Put a large dollop on a sponge to clean all your bathroom fittings. You'll never need to buy bathroom cleaner again.

Look out for more eco-cleaning tips on our Facebook page!



New battery recycling bins

All our Housing with Care schemes in Norfolk now have bright new battery recycling bins in the communal areas. We've installed them to support our older tenants with care needs who find it difficult to get to battery recycling points at supermarkets etc.

You can use these bins to recycle your old batteries from hearing aids, watches, TV remote controls, clocks etc.

We'll collect the old batteries and dispose of them safely at a local recycling centre. Soon we'll be introducing battery bins in our sheltered housing schemes too.



Why should you recycle your batteries?

Every year 22,000 tonnes of UK household batteries are sent to landfill, where they leak harmful chemicals into the soil that cause damage to the environment and wildlife.



We are listening, get in touch



broadlandgroup.org