

# SHELTERED HOUSING ACTIVITIES NEWSLETTER

## HELLO AND WELCOME TO OUR FINAL SHELTERED HOUSING NEWSLETTER FOR THIS YEAR!

We hope you enjoy this festive edition of our newsletter. In the meantime, keep positive, remain strong, take care and stay safe. We sincerely hope you have the best Christmas you can under the circumstances and send our good wishes to you all!

### THE YEAR 2020

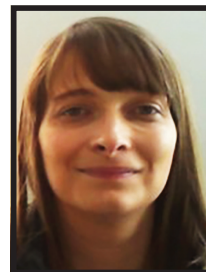
Well what a year this has been! It has certainly been a different time for us all and we would like to thank you for your understanding and co-operation during the pandemic situation. It has not been easy and we have some way to go yet before we can get back to any kind of normality in our schemes.

With staff unable to work on site and working from home, we have had to work hard as a team to continue to deliver the service and support to all our sheltered housing tenants and have had to adapt the way we work to do this. Everyone is receiving reassurance calls and since July this year we have made over 27,000 calls to our tenants...an amazing achievement and we

know how much you appreciate this from the feedback we receive from you.

We would remind you that our scheme communal lounges and areas currently remain closed and only the laundry facilities should be accessed by tenants but as always, we will keep you informed of any changes to the current restrictions as soon as we can. Please follow this guidance in the interests of the safety and wellbeing of everyone.

Unfortunately, Christmas festivities and decorations/trees in communal areas cannot be considered this year but we hope we can celebrate in style with you when this pandemic is over, and we can re-open our communal areas.



**Victoria Roper**  
Activities  
Co-ordinator



Sadly, our annual scheme Christmas tree competition cannot take place either, but we have engaged with the Caerphilly Miner's Centre to promote an alternative option which you were able to get involved with from your own home. The project involved designing and making individual Christmas trees up to a maximum of 30cms (12 inches). The trees could be knitted, sewn or crocheted or created simply by using any household objects and could either be free standing or a decoration to hang on a Christmas tree.

This project closed on **7th December 2020** and we hope to see your entries appear across social media and our websites.

For information on the wide range of activities provided by Caerphilly Miners Centre, please see their website at: [www.caerphillyminerscentre.co.uk](http://www.caerphillyminerscentre.co.uk)

or get in touch for more information:

The Miners, Watford Road, Caerphilly CF83 1BJ

tel: **029 2167 4242**

email: [secretary@caerphillyminerscentre.org.uk](mailto:secretary@caerphillyminerscentre.org.uk)

Don't worry if you missed this project, we would be happy for you to send us your own photos of your Christmas trees for publishing in our next newsletter. It could be your own personal decorated tree or one that you have made - you will see some ideas below to get you started or you may have some new ideas yourself!



**In this winter edition of your newsletter you also will find the usual (and ever popular) Christmas quiz, activity pages and brain teasers to entertain you.**

We would also like to hear from you with your messages and stories and you can do this by emailing us at [Olderpersonshousing@caerphilly.gov.uk](mailto:Olderpersonshousing@caerphilly.gov.uk) or by writing to us.

*Why not share a few memorable facts with us, such as:*

- Sharing your favourite Christmas memory and what made it so special
- Sharing your favourite Christmas tradition
- Telling us your favourite Christmas cracker jokes?
- Letting us know about your best ever Christmas present and why?
- Sharing some of your Christmas recipes
- Describing your current Christmas traditions or from when you were a child?

*You may want to write a Christmas poem or short story to share too. We would love to read them!*

# CHRISTMAS TREE PATTERN

## Materials and tools you need

1. Acrylic or Cotton yarn in Green and white or nay other colours you like
2. Steel hook size 2.5mm
3. Embroidery needle for finishing and embroidering if you wish
4. Scissors



### Top of the tree

(make 2 with green)

- \* Chain 2.
- \* 1SC in the 2nd chain from the hook, chain 1. From now on, turn after every row. (1)
- \* INC by doing 2SC in the SC of the previous row, chain 1. (2)
- \* INC in every SC, chain 1. (4)
- \* 4SC, chain 1. (4)
- \* 2SC in the first SC, 2SC, 2SC in the next stitch, chain 1. (6)
- \* SC6, chain 1. (6)
- \* SC6, chain 1. (6)
- \* 2SC in the first SC, 4SC, 2SC in the next stitch, chain 1. (8)
- \* 8SC, chain 1. (8)
- \* 8SC, chain 1. (8)
- \* 2SC in the first SC, 6SC, 2SC in the next stitch, chain 1. (10)
- \* 10SC, chain 1. (10)
- \* 10SC, chain 1. (10)
- \* 2SC in the first SC, 8SC, 2SC in the next stitch, chain 1. (12)

\* 12SC, chain 1. (12)

\* 12SC. (12) Fasten off and leave a long tail for sewing the two parts together.

After you've made the two sides of the tree: sew both sides together. Keep the bottom open. Now stuff the tree and make the tree trunk.

### Tree trunk

- \* SC4 in the middle of the last row of one of the two halves of the tree, chain 1. Turn after every row.
- \* SC4, chain 1.
- \* SC4, chain 1.
- \* SC4, chain 1.
- \* SC4, chain 1.
- \* SC4, chain 1.
- \* SC4, chain 1.
- \* SC4, chain 1.
- \* SC4, chain 1.
- \* SC4. Fasten off and leave a long tail for sewing the two parts together.

Now fold the tree trunk and sew the end on the other side of the tree (also in the middle). After doing so, close the bottom.

## XMAS CRAFTS



## WOOD BEAD SNOWMEN

### What you need:

- Large wood beads
- Twine
- Permanent markers
- Scissors
- Tape (optional)

Start by cutting a length of twine and knotting at the top. Gather the two ends and wrap tape around them if desired. This will help you when threading on the wood beads. It is not required but definitely recommended.

Thread the end through three of your wooden beads then remove the tape. Tie the ends together a dew times and trim away any excess twine. Use the markers to add a snowman face on your ornament.



# COVID-19 UPDATE -

## Stay safe and help prevent the virus from spreading

**It is clear that this virus is still with us and will be for a while longer and we must still work together to prevent its spread and to save lives.**

Restrictions to communal areas within our schemes are still in place for tenants, including any essential visitors to our schemes, and will remain so until they are eased by the Government.

Your Sheltered Housing Officer will continue to support you and provide ongoing reassurance calls and support when relevant. Remember, if you have any queries we are here to help, please telephone for assistance or contact Careline using your pendant. In the meantime, please remember the action you need to take to help prevent the spread of this virus and save lives.

### **Hands, Face, Space – and follow this guidance:**

- If you develop a new continuous cough OR a fever you must let your Sheltered Housing Officer know and remain in your home for 7 days in order to avoid contact with any other person - you must keep contact with those you live with to a minimum.
- If you have someone living with you and that person develops a new continuous cough OR a fever you must remain in your home for 14 days from the day the other person's symptoms started.
- Wash your hands with soap and water often, and sanitise in between.

- If you go out, ensure you wash your hands as soon as you get back home.
- Wear a face covering when travelling on public transport, shopping or when taking part in any activity indoors as per Welsh Government guidance.
- Avoid touching your face or mouth.
- Avoid shared areas within your scheme as much as possible.
- Keep a minimum of 2 metres apart from others. If you have signs of coronavirus you should get a test.

### **You can book a test by:**

- Calling **119** - people with hearing or speech difficulties can call **18001 119**. If you feel you cannot cope with your symptoms at home or if your condition gets worse, or your symptoms do not get better after 7 days, use the **111** online coronavirus service or call **111**. In a medical emergency - dial **999**.
- Visiting the NHS website online

If you are unable to book a test yourself, the Sheltered Housing Officer will be able to assist you. For the latest advice on staying safe, staying at home and testing, you can also visit [gov.wales/coronavirus](http://gov.wales/coronavirus).

The local and national requirements are subject to regular changes, if you are in doubt as to what is required of you, please ask your Sheltered Housing Officer.

**Please do not visit your GP surgery or hospital to request a test.**



## CONTACT TRACING SCHEME

**This scheme remains in place.**

**The system works by:**

- Testing people and asking them to isolate from wider family, friends, co-workers and their community while waiting for a result.
- Tracing individuals who had close contact with someone that tested positive for coronavirus, while requiring them to take precautions and self-isolate for 14 days.

**As a basic guideline, contact with a positive case which results in the need to self-isolate would result from :**

- Being in a conversation with someone within 1m of each other for over 1 minute.
- Being in a conversation with someone within 2m of each other for over 15 minutes.
- Passing, using, handling items without sanitising the area/item e.g. drivers driving the same vehicle at different times of the day without sanitising the touch points before and after use.
- Providing advice and guidance particularly where the person who tested positive or their contacts are vulnerable or at greater risk.

**The Test, Track & Protect team have identified that some tenants are not disclosing their close contacts when questioned. This is a legal requirement and it is important that you share this information if you have a positive test, as it will be critical in preventing any further spread of the virus.**

***Please ensure you help them to help others and to keep everyone safe!***

## A BIG THANK YOU

Since March we have seen the sheltered housing service delivered in a different way and with some tenants needing to isolate and shield, daily tasks such as shopping and prescription collection became an issue for many. Support was provided to get this essential support needed.

We have also been informed that some tenants have been truly selfless and have been supporting their neighbours by completing shopping for essential items, online orders and prescription collections and have continued to do so throughout the pandemic whilst safe distancing and following the Welsh Government advice.

A big thank you goes to those tenants who have provided any support to another person or neighbour within their community in order to ensure they have the essentials they need.

**REMEMBER:** If you are providing support to anyone please ensure you maintain good social distancing and follow the advice and guidance in relation to 'social bubbles' and 'household mixing'.

## We are there for you

Since March our Sheltered Housing Officers have been contacting every tenant in Sheltered Housing Schemes. These daily reassurance calls are vital for our tenants, during these calls Sheltered Housing Officers make conversations with the tenants to make sure they feel well and offer the latest Covid-19 advice.

These calls will help us evaluate if any support is needed and signposting to others as appropriate. As a service we are doing all we can to continue to support you with self-isolation and reduced social gathering, which will reduce the spread of Covid-19. Since July we have made over 27,000 reassurance calls to tenants!

*(Numbers correct at time of printing).*

# PUZZLE PAGES

(ANSWERS CAN BE FOUND ON BACK PAGE)



## CHRISTMAS CROSSWORD

### Down

1. Alternative word to 17 across
2. Christmas drink
4. Christmas dinner centerpiece
5. December holiday
7. Christmas warmer
8. "Jingle \_\_\_\_\_"
10. Christmas tree
11. O. Henry's "The Gift of the \_\_\_\_\_"
12. What carolers do
15. French Christmas
16. Snow glider

### Across

1. Pumpkin or mincemeat
3. Santa's ride
6. Celebration
8. Newborn
9. Northpole crew
13. Word of praise
14. Words on a Christmas card
17. It's opened on Christmas

E	R	E	T	N	I	W	D	S	L	O	R	A	C	Q	D	X	K	S
W	O	V	E	Y	L	L	O	H	V	Q	H	Z	U	D	R	L	N	T
W	Q	T	P	J	S	T	W	X	Z	S	C	U	U	X	E	U	P	H
R	C	K	E	Z	E	K	A	L	F	W	O	N	S	F	I	I	P	G
E	E	S	L	L	E	B	E	L	G	N	I	J	E	E	N	E	T	I
A	L	N	C	J	T	G	D	N	D	P	M	N	S	X	D	E	H	L
T	V	O	J	A	W	S	I	E	S	B	A	Z	P	R	E	R	B	E
H	E	I	P	W	N	K	I	L	C	C	S	R	E	G	E	T	C	R
M	S	I	F	H	C	G	E	M	Y	O	E	I	I	R	R	S	I	U
W	F	L	V	O	T	I	E	D	H	S	R	N	S	S	J	A	H	S
J	V	P	T	T	G	R	N	L	E	P	G	A	F	N	E	M	R	S
F	S	S	M	H	M	A	O	N	D	E	A	Y	T	C	W	T	U	N
I	A	D	S	S	C	Q	T	N	R	W	O	K	B	E	M	S	D	A
T	N	L	E	W	C	S	W	B	W	J	P	X	A	K	W	I	O	T
S	T	N	E	M	A	N	R	O	Q	A	B	X	B	B	C	R	L	I
Y	A	O	C	K	X	E	T	S	O	R	F	K	C	A	J	H	P	V
T	L	K	Y	N	A	M	W	O	N	S	P	V	O	P	D	C	H	I
B	D	L	Q	D	O	V	G	O	N	G	G	E	F	O	P	T	T	T
S	D	E	P	W	T	P	O	H	S	K	R	O	W	C	O	P	F	Y

## WORD BANK

- |                |           |
|----------------|-----------|
| Angel          | Reindeer  |
| Candy Cane     | Rudolph   |
| Carols         | Santa     |
| Christmas Tree | Sleigh    |
| Decorate       | Snowflake |
| Eggnog         | Snowman   |
| Elves          | Stocking  |
| Gingerbread    | Winter    |
| Holly          | Workshop  |
| Jack Frost     | Wreath    |
| Jingle Bells   |           |
| Joy            |           |
| Lights         |           |
| Mistletoe      |           |
| Nativity       |           |
| North Pole     |           |
| Ornaments      |           |
| Presents       |           |



# Christmas Quiz

1. According to the poem, 'The Night Before Christmas', how many reindeer did Santa have to pull his sleigh? Eight, nine or 10?
2. What is traditionally hidden inside a Christmas pudding?
3. What is the name of the character in Charles Dickens' 'A Christmas Carol' who gets visited by the ghosts of Christmas past, present and future?
4. A foreign city has donated a huge Christmas tree to the people of Britain every year since 1947, which is always displayed in Trafalgar Square. Which city is it?  
Munich  Stockholm  Oslo
5. How many days are there on a traditional advent calendar? 12, 24, 31?
6. In the song 'The 12 Days of Christmas' how many gold rings does the singer's 'truelove' give him?
7. There are 365 days in a year. What number day is Christmas Day?
8. Why did Father Christmas need Rudolf the Reindeer to use his large, glowing nose to guide his sleigh?
9. What is the last day of Christmas called?
10. Which plant, beginning with P is associated with Christmas?
11. What's the name of the ballet traditionally performed around Christmas each year?
12. Stollen is a cake with fruit and marzipan, traditionally eaten at Christmas and originating from which country?
13. Who introduced the Christmas tree to the UK?
14. What is a female turkey called?
15. Which unusual ingredient did Victorian cooks use in mince pies?
16. If you're born on Christmas Day, what's your star sign?
17. When Santa got stuck up the chimney, his beard was all black, his nose was tickling, and what did he have in his sack?
18. Because of the time difference, do the people of Australia get to celebrate Christmas Day before we do in the UK, or after the UK?
19. What's the fun name for the sausages wrapped in bacon traditionally eaten with the Christmas dinner?
20. When was the first Christmas card printed? 1823  1843  1900
21. What birds are popular on Christmas cards?
22. What gifts did The Three Wise Men give Jesus on his birthday?
23. Who wrote A Christmas Carol?
24. What is the most popular Christmas tree ornament for the tip?
25. The first royal Christmas broadcast was in 1932 but which monarch made it?



# Useful numbers and information

Caerphilly County Borough Council support services:

Latest information on Council services and Government advice during the Coronavirus outbreak can be found on the website

[www.caerphilly.gov.uk/Coronavirus](http://www.caerphilly.gov.uk/Coronavirus)

Caerphilly County Borough Council Financial Support Line to help with Covid-19 related financial concerns -  
**Telephone: 01443 866534**

## LOCAL HOUSING OFFICES: EASTERN VALLEYS

**Tel: 01495 235974**

Email: [eastvalleyaho@caerphilly.gov.uk](mailto:eastvalleyaho@caerphilly.gov.uk)

## UPPER RHYMNEY VALLEY

**Tel: 01443 873535**

Email: [urvaho@caerphilly.gov.uk](mailto:urvaho@caerphilly.gov.uk)

## LANSBURY PARK Tel: 02920 860917

Email: [lansburyparknho@caerphilly.gov.uk](mailto:lansburyparknho@caerphilly.gov.uk)

## GRAIG-Y-RHACCA Tel: 02920 853050

Email: [graigyrhaccanho@caerphilly.gov.uk](mailto:graigyrhaccanho@caerphilly.gov.uk)

**Report a repair:** 01443 864886

**WHQS enquiries:** Tel: 01443 866497

Email: [whqsenquiries@caerphilly.gov.uk](mailto:whqsenquiries@caerphilly.gov.uk)

**Rents / Tenancy support:** Tel: 01443 811450

Email: [rents@caerphilly.gov.uk](mailto:rents@caerphilly.gov.uk)

**Bulky Items to be collected:** 01443 866533

**Housing Allocations:** 01443 873552

**Tenancy enforcement:** 01443 811448

**Refuse/recycling:** 01443 866533

**Tell us once (registrars):** 01443 863478

**Pest control:** 01443 866544

**Council Tax:** 01443 863002

**Housing benefits:** 01443 866567

**Out of hours emergencies:** 01443 875500

## IF YOU SUSPECT A GAS LEAK CALL WALES AND WEST UTILITIES ON: 0800 111 999

**Information, Advice and Assistance  
(IAA) for Adult Social Services:  
0808 100 2500**

**CCBC Drug and Alcohol Team:  
02920 859872**

**The Wales Illegal Money Lending Unit  
(WIMLU):**

**0300 123 3311**

## COMMUNITY CONNECTORS

Advice and information for people who are isolated from their community or family, people who have low confidence or individuals who appear lonely. Provide information, advice and assistance; help people remain as independent as possible; help people improve their sense of wellbeing; help people feel less lonely; help people feel part of their community.

Telephone: **0808 100 2500**

Email: [asdit@caerphilly.gov.uk](mailto:asdit@caerphilly.gov.uk)

## MEALS DIRECT

(MEALS ON WHEELS)

Telephone: **01443 863053 or**

**01443 864055**

Email: [meals@caerphilly.gov.uk](mailto:meals@caerphilly.gov.uk).

## SUPPORTING PEOPLE

Telephone: **01443 864548**

Email: [supportingpeople@caerphilly.gov.uk](mailto:supportingpeople@caerphilly.gov.uk)

## ANEURIN BEVAN UNIVERSITY HEALTH BOARD

Telephone: **01443 864548**

Visit: <https://abuhb.nhs.wales/>

Getting Messages to patients:

[MessagesfromHome.ABB@wales.nhs.uk](mailto:MessagesfromHome.ABB@wales.nhs.uk)



## FOODBANKS IN CAERPHILLY COUNTY BOROUGH (TRUSSELL TRUST)

A temporary system has been put in place for Caerphilly county borough to support current provision with food bank vouchers, donations and delivery. This support aims to help existing individuals or families that are currently in crisis, please note that this is not for those that are social distancing or self-isolating and unable to access food.

This will lead to a discussion with a triage worker, who will assess the current needs and connect the individual to a local voucher distributor if needed to make the referral.

The Food Bank will then prepare parcels ready for dedicated staff to pick up the parcel and deliver to door steps.

**Telephone: 07825634157 or 07720948030**

**Email: [CommunityRegen@caerphilly.gov.uk](mailto:CommunityRegen@caerphilly.gov.uk)**

## TELEPHONE HELPLINES - NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND COUNTY

### Action on Hearing Loss

Tel: **02920 333034**

[information@hearingloss.org.uk](mailto:information@hearingloss.org.uk)  
[beta.actiononhearingloss.org.uk/coronavirus-response/](http://beta.actiononhearingloss.org.uk/coronavirus-response/) -

Includes online chat line for information during Covid-19 outbreak.

### Age Cymru –

Check in and Chat

Tel: **08000 223 444**

E: [enquiries@agecymru.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@agecymru.org.uk)

### Alzheimer's Society

Dementia Connect support line on **0333 150 3456**

Welsh-speaking support line **03300 947 400**

### Anxiety UK

Tel: **03444 775 774** (Monday to Friday, 9.30am to 5.30pm)

Text Service: **07537 416 905**

Visit: [www.anxietyuk.org.uk/coronanxiety-support-resources/](http://www.anxietyuk.org.uk/coronanxiety-support-resources/)

### Bereavement Support Network

Tel: **08080 168 9607**

[www.bereavementadvice.co.uk](http://www.bereavementadvice.co.uk)

### British Heart Foundation

Tel: **0300 330 3311**

### British Deaf Association

Text: **07766600597**

Email: [cao.wales@bda.org.uk](mailto:cao.wales@bda.org.uk)  
[www.britishdeafnews.co.uk/navigating-self-isolation/](http://www.britishdeafnews.co.uk/navigating-self-isolation/)

### Deaf/Blind Cymru

Tel: **0800 132 320**

### Dementia UK Helpline

Tel: **0800 888 6678**

E: [helpline@dementiauk.org](mailto:helpline@dementiauk.org)

### Diabetes UK

Telephone: **0345 123 2399**

Mon-Fri 9am - 6pm

[www.diabetes.org.uk/about\\_us/news/coronavirus](http://www.diabetes.org.uk/about_us/news/coronavirus)

### Hourglass Cymru

(previously Action on Elder Abuse)

Tel: **0808 808 8141**

[www.wearehourglass.org/](http://www.wearehourglass.org/)

### Live Fear Free

Tel: **0808 80 10 800**

[info@livefearfreehelpline.wales.gov.wales](mailto:info@livefearfreehelpline.wales.gov.wales)/live-fear-free

### Stroke Association

Tel: **02920 524400**

E: [info.cymru@stroke.org.uk](mailto:info.cymru@stroke.org.uk)

### Macmillan Cancer Information and Support Line

National helpline:

**0808 808 00 00** Monday - Friday between 9am - 5pm

ABUHB area: **07583 047205**  
Mon - Sun from 9am to 7pm

### MIND Cymru

Infoline: **0300 123 3393**

Text: **86463**

[www.mind.org.uk/about-us/mind-cymru/](http://www.mind.org.uk/about-us/mind-cymru/)  
Elefriends: [www.mind.org.uk/information-support/support-community-elfriends/](http://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/support-community-elfriends/)

### Royal Voluntary Service

Royal Voluntary Service offer a service to help people with collecting shopping, medication or other essential supplies. If you need help collecting shopping, medication or other essential supplies, please call **0808 196 3646** (8am to 8pm).

### The Silver Line

Free confidential helpline providing information, friendship and advice to older people, open 24 hours a day, every day of the year:

**0800 4 70 80 90**



*Merry Christmas  
and a Happy New Year*



## Keeping warm this winter

Even if it isn't a severe winter, cold weather makes us more vulnerable to certain illnesses. Follow these tips to stay healthy and keep warm indoors and out.

- Wearing several thin layers will keep you warmer than one thick layer.
- Use a hot-water bottle, wheat bag or an electric blanket to warm the bed, but never use a hot-water bottle and an electric blanket together as this can be dangerous.
- Check local news and weather forecasts for advice when bad weather is forecast.
- Keep your hands and face warm by wearing gloves and a scarf.
- If you spend a lot of time sitting without getting up and moving about, wiggle your fingers and toes.
- Preheat your bedroom so that it's warm for when you settle for bed.
- Keep your home at a warm and stable temperature.
- Close doors to keep the heat from moving to the rooms you don't use.



## Save money on your energy bills

Follow these steps to save money on your energy bills.

- Turn lights off when you leave a room, but not at the expense of your safety. Keep stairs and other areas well lit to reduce the risk of falling.
- Turn off standby appliances.

- Keep radiators and heaters clear so hot air can circulate. Don't forget to draw your curtains and tuck them behind radiators to minimise heat loss.
- Your energy supplier may be able to offer you a discount if you are on certain benefits.
- Don't boil more water than you need. Making a hot drink? Just boil enough for one.

Please contact your Sheltered Housing Officer if you need help with budgeting advice.

## Electrical safety and fire risks at Christmas

Putting up your Christmas tree and decorations within your home should be an enjoyable task at this time of year but please be mindful of the risk of electrical dangers. Below are some tips to make sure you are safe:

- Do not overload sockets and try to avoid the use of extension leads or adaptors.
- Check your Christmas lights are not damaged or broken before use and look out for loose wires and ensure they meet the required electrical safety standard by checking they have the right safety markings and instructions.
- Be wary of illegal/unsafe goods being sold and not meeting appropriate safety standards.
- Electric blankets should be checked regularly for signs of wear or damage
- Keep your tree a safe distance away from any heat source.
- If you do opt for an artificial Christmas tree, choose one that is fire resistant.
- Fairy lights must be turned off at night.
- Do not use inside lights in an outside area or vice versa.
- Where possible turn off and unplug items at the end of the day.

The fire risk is also a high risk to us all in our homes and we need to be as proactive and safe as we can:

- Do not trail wires or hang items over any source of fire risk.
- Do not allow trailing wires or extension leads in open places.
- Do not place hot lights next to any flammable materials.
- Christmas trees/trimmings should be fire retardant and this should be clear on the packaging.
- Avoid decorations made of light tissue paper or cardboard.
- Avoid using candles.
- Do not put decorations around any computer equipment or other electrical items which generate heat or have a fan system as this could affect airflow and be a potential hazard.
- Be extra vigilant of portable heaters that may be close to furnishings/trimmings.
- Be aware of potential hazards, trips, obstructions and dangerous items.
- Do not put decorations near to any source of heat, e.g. on top of radiators.

**HAVE FUN BUT BE CAUTIOUS AND STAY SAFE!**

## Scams

BE AWARE OF SCAMS! They are especially high in numbers during this pandemic and always increase at Christmas time. Scammers use telephone calls, emails, correspondence and sometimes cold calling at your door and it is important that you remain vigilant at all times. If you are unsure about something then make sure that you thoroughly check it out before going any further or seek advice. If you are not expecting a call or visitor do not exchange any information and do not let them into your home.



***NEVER give any personal details or bank account information over the telephone or to anyone you don't know or are not expecting.***

If you are a victim of a scam then the worst thing you can do is to do nothing. This will only result in the fraudster getting away with what they have done and is free to target other victims. Reporting the scam will help to make sure that others don't fall victim to the same fraud.

If the scam is financial please seek help and contact your bank or card provider immediately, and tell them how you have been affected. This will enable your bank or card provider to act quickly and prevent you losing more money. They may even have a chance of pursuing the fraudster and refunding your money.

You can also report the scam to the police, your local Trading Standards team in the Council and you can contact Action Fraud using the online fraud reporting tool on their website [www.action.fraud.polic.uk](http://www.action.fraud.polic.uk) or by calling **0300 123 2040**. You can do this any time of the day or night.

If you're concerned about any callers to your home or your sheltered housing scheme do not allow them access and contact the Older Persons' Housing Team on **01443 811431** or use your pendant to seek assistance from the Careline Community Alarm service. NEVER give anyone access to your scheme through the main access door if you do not know the person or are not expecting them! All callers to our schemes, other than family/friends who will be known to you, should have identification on them and must access the scheme through the door intercom system.

## Technology

In the last newsletter we included a digital questionnaire. We are currently evaluating the results from this. Thank you for all the responses we have had so far.

It will really help us to know if you are able to use any form of technology to assist us to plan different ways of involving and contacting you in the future. If you have not responded then please do so as soon as you can.

Age Cymru are also promoting a 'Think Digital' support programme. If you are baffled by your mobile phone or not getting the most from your iPad or any other device, they have dedicated Digital Champions on hand to help support you.

The sessions are free and delivered safely over the phone. They will teach you how to safely video call family and friends, make an online shop or help you pursue some hobbies and interests. To find out more or register your interest call them on; **07747 027623** (Nia Thomas) **07783 710481** (Chloe Robinson) or email them at [digital@agecymrugwent.org](mailto:digital@agecymrugwent.org)

## Tackling Loneliness Digitally - New British Red Cross Education and Resources

Over the last few months, the number of people at risk of feeling lonely or isolated has increased – in some groups at a disproportionate rate – as connections with friends and family may have shifted or changed in light of restrictions.

British Red Cross have launched a new Tackling Loneliness Digitally program. There are some exciting new online resources to help empower people who may be feeling lonely, and provide them with tools to build confidence, reach out to others and look to the future.

Call the British Red Cross on their free support line for advice on British Red Cross support, including in your local area

Or just call to chat

Open 10.00 am to 6.00 pm everyday - free and confidential

For more activities and information to help build confidence, coping skills and ease loneliness visit [www.redcross.org.uk/loneliness-resources](http://www.redcross.org.uk/loneliness-resources)

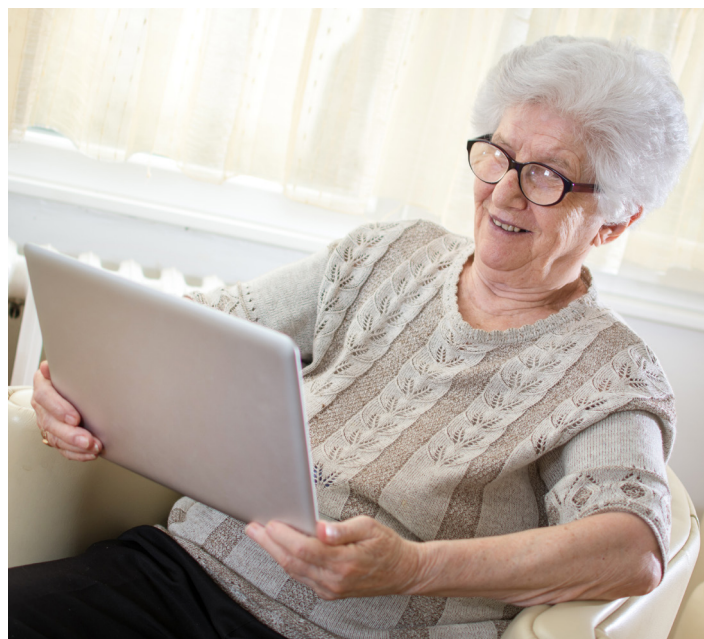
Here are some of the areas where they can help you

- Loneliness
- Support at home
- Money problems
- Hiring a wheelchair

Free Online Digital sessions offering you the chance to connect with others and learn new skills. Please call **0344 412 2734** or email [redcrosseducation@redcross.org.uk](mailto:redcrosseducation@redcross.org.uk) for how to book.

To find out more about our free British Red Cross first aid face-to-face sessions, please call 0344 412 2734

Attending Red Cross Training courses - please call **0344 871 800**



## Managing Stress and Pressure

Looking forward, we will be able to reflect on 2020 as the year the World we knew quite literally changed. We have all been forced to take on the challenges of change and have had to learn to adjust and adapt very quickly.

This has been a year unlike anything we've seen before and we have been forced to make some major lifestyle changes incredibly quickly. The restrictions placed on social contact have been more difficult for some of us to deal with than for others, and the same is likely to be true as the measures are eased over the coming months.

What we know about change, is that it affects us all differently and, depending on our resilience, how well we manage generally. Our mental health and wellbeing is possible to manage, however, the constant changes and the drain to our emotional and physical wellbeing can cause too much added pressure. In order to manage, we need to feel as if we have some control over what is happening to us.

### Helpful coping strategies

- Go outside for fresh air or for a walk (please remember social distancing)
- Sleep is essential for the body to function properly. Try going to bed early enough to enable you to have 8 hours sleep a night
- Remember to smile – It is important to keep a sense of genuine curiosity and natural inquisitiveness about yourself and your personal journey to wellbeing. A little giggle now and then is a healthy part of maintaining balance in your life.
- Keep hydrated
- Remember you are not alone, support is available
- Be kind to yourself
- Talk to someone

If you need any support please contact your Sheltered Housing Officer for further advice and assistance.

## WHQS update

Welsh Housing Quality Standard improvement works in sheltered housing schemes have experienced some delays due to the COVID-19 situation but this work will continue shortly. In the coming months you will see some environmental and external work being undertaken where this is outstanding. You will also have contact from the WHQS team if you are due to have any further work carried out within your home. For further enquiries please contact:

**Tel: 01443 866497**

**email: [whqsenquiries@caerphilly.gov.uk](mailto:whqsenquiries@caerphilly.gov.uk)**

## Tenant Participation – Your views are important to us

Calling all Caerphilly Homes tenants. During these unusual times we are still committed to involving you in developing and shaping future Housing services.

- Do you have internet access in your home?
- Would you like to share your views so that we can ensure that tenants remain at the heart of everything we do?
- Do you want to meet new people and get involved in some of our online activities without having to leave your home?
- Can you spare some time to talk to us and other tenants about what housing services are important to you and why?

If the answer is 'Yes' to all the questions above, then please get in touch with Liz or Gail to find out more. We can be contacted on **01443 811434** or **07827 420457** or **07739 969723** or email **[tenantinvolvement@caerphilly.gov.uk](mailto:tenantinvolvement@caerphilly.gov.uk)**.



**Also why not follow us on Facebook @Caerphilly Homes**

# Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year



If you need help to get started or if you have any other ideas you would like to tell us about please contact your Sheltered Housing Officer or Vicky Roper our Activities Co-ordinator **tel: 01443 866449** and perhaps we can share them with other tenants in our next newsletter or media story.

**It is good for you to try and keep yourself busy and just to remind you here are some ideas for you do at home or out and about:**

- Brain teaser games, crosswords or quizzes (you can find these online)
- Letter writing – do you know anyone who would like regular contact or who may feel lonely?
- Letter writing is a lovely way to keep in touch.
- Make or write a Christmas cards to family or friend
- Phone a friend – have a chat and a catch up from a distance with your friend
- Colouring/ colour by numbers (in the pack or you can find these online)
- Art work – if you feel artistic we would be happy to see and share your pictures
- Baking/ cooking a new Christmas
- Write a poem/short story
- Scrapbooking photographs from previous Christmas's or memorable events
- Read books/ audio books
- Watch Christmas films
- Jigsaws
- Chair based exercises (these were included in the first pack you received from us)
- Walking or gentle outdoor exercise but remember to keep your social distance from others

**For more information or help with activities for sheltered housing tenants please contact: Victoria Roper – Activities Co-ordinator on 01443 866449**

## Answers to puzzle pages

**Christmas Quiz Answers:** 1. Eight 2. A coin  
3. Ebenezer Scrooge 4. Oslo 5. 24 6. Five 7. 359  
8. It was foggy on Christmas Eve 9. Twelfth Night  
10. Poinsettia 11. The Nutcracker 12. Germany 13. Queen Victoria and Prince Albert 14. Hen 15. Minced meat  
16. Capricorn 17. Soot 18. Before us 19. Pigs in blankets  
20. 1843 21. Robins 22. Gold, Myrrh, and Frankincense  
23. Charles Dickens 24. An angel 25. King George V

## Christmas Crossword



The newsletter is also available in Welsh