



AUTUMN NEWSLETTER 2021



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- Community Events
 - Puzzles, recipes
- International Mens' Day Article
 - Be safe at home

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CORONAVIRUS

As you are probably aware, the office currently remains closed to visits other than in exceptional, pre-arranged occasions. We will be following the Government's Covid roadmap timescales, so we would hope to have some level of access from July.

Similarly, as restrictions are removed, we will be extending our repairs service to cover routine repairs and hopefully, looking to arrange a range of safe and socially distanced community events. We will also hope to be safely out and about and undertaking some of our normal duties such as home visits and estate walkabouts and in the not-too-distant future, please keep a look out on our website and Facebook page for the latest updates.

However, it is unlikely that we will completely return to the previous ways of working straight away, so if you are in any doubt, please check our website or social media or phone to check the current position.

*In the meantime, please continue to contact us on **01983 525985**, or our repairs team can be contacted on **01983 520353**. If you are unable to get through straight away, please bear with us.*

You can still make rent payments over the phone or online using MyTenancy. We hope that you are all keeping safe and well, please ensure you follow the correct advice and guidance and contact if you need any support.



MARTYN'S COLUMN



So, this is the last newsletter before Christmas. It is hard to see where the year has gone, despite spending so much of it unable to go anywhere or do anything. Needless to say that although we are in a much better place now as a result of the rollout of the vaccine, the pandemic is far from over. The winter months are always likely to be the most challenging, coupled with return to school and the relaxation of many of the controls. So, please take care and remain safe.

We will continue to operate a restricted service aimed at safeguarding your health and that of our staff. As a result, access to the office is limited to pre-arranged appointments and home visits will be conducted only if appropriate social distancing arrangements can be put in place.

Clearly the impact of Covid has been felt very heavily by some and if you are struggling financially or with support or health issues, do please get in contact and we will do our best to help or find help the best we can.

But for the good news. Our Branstone Farm development is progressing really well and we have recently received grant funding approval from Homes England for phase 2. We are shortly hoping to start on site in Brighstone with 14 new homes. We are playing our part in delivering high quality, affordable homes for local people.

Our Housing staff will be restarting our programmes for community involvement, so do keep an eye out for events near you. We can probably help with transport if they are not close by. Our Head of Neighbourhoods and Communities, Sharon Harvey will also be working with you to improve the way we engage with you and enable you to have your say in what we do and how we do it. If any of you are interested in paying a more active role, we will have spaces coming up on our Board of Management. Just talk to Sharon.

Finally, can I take this opportunity to wish you all a safe and happy festive season when it comes around. I am sure we all wish for a more settled year moving forward

Martyn Pearl
Chief Executive, Vectis Housing

STAY SAFE THIS AUTUMN/WINTER

31st OCTOBER 2021

A spooky reminder, that could save lives....

The twice-yearly clock change is a task that everybody takes for granted. Turning the clocks back for an extra hour in bed will already be on the 'to-do' list for the majority of households over the clock change weekend. While timekeeping is a vital part of our lives and we all keep our clocks working to stay on track, it's shocking to know that many people forget to ensure the safety of themselves and their loved ones by keeping their smoke alarm in the same working order. A working smoke alarm can buy you valuable time to get out, stay out and call 999. This year the clocks go back on Sunday



Woman photo created by gpointstudio - www.freepik.com

31st October, so don't get spooked, check your alarm works, by pressing the button and ensure you can hear the beeps from around your home. If this doesn't work, or there is a problem with your alarm, report it through to the repairs team and we will get it checked or replaced.



AND WHEN IT COMES TO CHRISTMAS...

We all love the festive season and decorating our homes but please remember the following to keep yourself, your friends and family safe:

- replace failed lamps immediately to prevent over heating ensure plugs and transformers are plugged in indoors, even if the lighting is suitable for outdoor use
- switch your lights off and unplug them before you go to bed or go out
- keep lights away from flammable decorations and materials that can burn easily



NEVER

- use lights outdoors unless they are specially designed for such use
- connect different lighting sets together
- connect lights to the supply whilst still in the packaging
- remove or insert lamps while the chain is connected to the supply
- overload sockets - try to avoid the use of extension leads or adaptors
- attempt to repair faulty lights - replace them
- use lights that are damaged or faulty



MONEY MATTERS – UNIVERSAL AND WORKING TAX CREDITS

CUTS TO UNIVERSAL CREDIT AND WORKING TAX CREDIT



In October the government plans to cut £20 a week from Universal Credit and Working Tax Credit payments.

If you are in receipt of Universal credit this cut will be from 6th October.

If you are in receipt of Working Tax Credit, you will have already had your payments cut from April 2021, you will receive a one-off payment of £500 in April 2022 to offset the difference.

We understand that this cut will have a massive impact to some of our residents, many of whom are already struggling.

If you find that you are struggling to cope financially, please contact your Housing Officer who can offer support and guidance and may be able to assist with referrals to agencies that can help with debt and benefit claims.

It is important in these trying times that you continue to pay your rent and maintain regular payments, if your account is showing arrears, it is important that you have a repayment plan in place. If you are worried about your account or wish to arrange a repayment plan, then please contact the office on **525985** and we will be happy to help.



Loan Sharks

If you have borrowed money from a loan shark you haven't broken the law they have. If you are worried about this talk to your debt adviser or call the confidential number below.

Remember loan sharks often:

- offer you a cash loan but do not give you any paperwork
- take your benefit or bank card as security on the loan
- don't tell you when you will finish paying
- increase the amount you owe even if you are making regular payments
- threaten or use violence to get money from you.

If you think you may have borrowed from a loan shark call the England Illegal Money Lending Team hotline and talk to us in complete confidence.

We can discuss with you any worries you may have and will listen, give information and offer advice on your particular situation. We help people make sense of what is happening to them and will explain to you the choices you can make and help you take back control from the loan shark.

Call us on: 0300 555 2222

Text: 07860022116 with your message

Email: reportaloanshark@stoploansharks.gov.uk

Report a loan shark online at: stoploansharks.co.uk

Illegal Money Lending
Team England

STOP LOAN SHARKS
Intervention . Support . Education

29/10/5 - June 2017

COMMUNITY EVENTS

MUDDY BOOTS

Our sessions at the Muddy Boots project at Quarr Abbey have got off to a successful start. We enjoyed the perfect balance of warmth and shade, and the tranquil surroundings were blissful. Our first job of the day was to harvest the kohlrabi, then trim them and pop them down to the farm shop at the Abbey where they are sold to the general public. We then turned over the land, ready to start planting winter onions. We enjoyed a well-earned tea break, as well as sampling some of the delicious blackberries and raspberries that are growing in abundance. It was lovey spending time outdoors and slowing things down for a few hours.



Food photo created by cookie_studio - www.freepik.com

We are currently running these sessions every other Wednesday morning from 10am - 12.30pm. We can provide gardening gloves and kneeling cushions and can also arrange for transport for any resident that would like to attend. If you would like to join us, please call Sarah Bonser, Community Housing Officer, on **01983 525985** or email us at communities@vectishousing.co.uk We would love some more hands on deck!

COMMUNITIES PANEL

In July, we held our first face to face Communities Panel meeting at the Isobel Café, since the pandemic started. We talked about what events we have run in the past, and what we would like to be able to do in the future. The key thing for us is knowing what our residents would like to see on offer. We have lots of ideas in the pipeline and are always keen to hear your feedback, so do feel free to get in touch with us and share your views and please do take the time to respond to your surveys when they come your way.



CONTACT DETAILS

Have we got up to date contact details for you and is your household information correct? We often run trips and events, as well as giving away things like Easter eggs, Christmas hampers and toys for children at Christmas. This is one of the reasons we fill out customer profiling forms; it helps us to know our tenants, and by knowing who we have in our households we are able to reach as many as people as possible and provide help and support where needed. You could be missing out, so please do get in touch with us to make sure we have your most up to date information.

MINDFULNESS PACKS

Over the last few months we have been delivering Mindfulness packs which are made up of word searches, crosswords, sudoku, adult colouring book and pens, to tenants who are living on their own. These have been really well received and we are thrilled to have recently received some extra funding to extend this project to single tenants with children. Eventually we would like to incorporate this with a Coffee Morning once a month. If you feel these packs would benefit you, please do get in touch our Community Team at communities@vectishousing.co.uk or give us a call on 01983 525985.

CHRISTMAS TOY APPEAL

For the last few years, we have been lucky enough to receive toys and gifts from the Isle of Wight Radio Toy Appeal, which we have then been able to deliver to families across the island. This year has been challenging to say the least. If you feel your family would benefit from this project, please get in touch and we will do our very best to fulfil as many requests as possible.



NEIGHBOURHOOD EVENTS

We are planning to run a number of small neighbourhood days in areas where we have recently completed new housing developments. These will be fun social events (weather permitting), with refreshments and children's entertainment provided. We will write directly to all those living in the area, so keep an eye out for an invitation. These events will be open to those who rent their homes, as well as our shared owners.



Don't forget we are here to help and support you. We can help with Foodbank vouchers, referrals to the Citizens Advice Bureau for debt advice, signpost you to training and employment schemes and assist with CV writing. If you are experiencing financial difficulty, please do contact your housing officer as we may be able to offer some help.



JOIN THE TEAM!

WE NEED YOU!

We are currently recruiting for a Tenant Board Member.

Vectis is governed by people from the local community who give their time voluntarily. Their role is to ensure that Vectis is properly run as a viable business, and within the boundaries of the law and regulation.



Board members possess a wide range of skills and experience, which combine to make an effective unit. This normally includes representation from two Vectis tenants. The Board currently meets every six to eight weeks. In addition to dealing with routine matters, each meeting based around a particular theme of either:

- Governance, Policy, and Strategy, or
- Finance, or
- Housing management and maintenance, or
- Best Value and Continuous Improvement

There is also an Audit and Risk Committee, which meets half-yearly to review the annual audited accounts with the Auditors, budgets for the forthcoming year, treasury management, and staffing matters.

Sub-groups are formed from time to time to consider specific topics delegated to them by the main board.

Each of these bodies comprise members of the Board itself, and report to the Board.

If this something you would be interested in please contact Sarah or Sharon on **(01983) 525985** or email us on residentinvolvement@vectishousing.co.uk for a Tenant Board Member Recruitment pack.

EQUALITY, DIVERSION, INCLUSION

Did you know 19th November 2021 is International Men's Day?

International Men's Day is to celebrate positive male role models and to raise awareness of men's issues.

ROLE MODEL

A positive male role model within housing is, Prince Albert. Prince Albert created the 'Model Cottages' concept to help with the easing of poor-quality housing in the 1850's for manufacturing operatives and their families residing in towns/cities. The model cottages were designed by Henry Roberts to house four families, two flats on each level. Each family was designated a living room, kitchen, three bedrooms and a toilet. They were never built in masses but are dotted all around the country.

MENTAL WELLBEING.

Over the last 18 months everyone has had to limit contact with others due the pandemic which has had an impact on people's mental health. Vectis will be running projects to help tackle loneliness, isolation and bring people together, please see our community pages'. However, there is the Men In Shed projects creating opportunities for men to come together, please see below for your nearest project:



Cowes - Adam Martin, meninshedsowes@gmail.com, Phone: **01983 209734**

Newport - Lois Prior, lois.prior@ageukiw.org.uk Phone: **01983 525282**

Ryde - Shane Randall, mis@aspireryde.org.uk Phone: **01983 716020**

Nettlestone & Seaview - Rob Webb, netaseashed@gmail.com Phone **01983 565307**

Bembridge - bembridgemis@gmail.com

Brading - Lois Prior, lois.prior@ageukiw.org.uk Phone: **01983 525282**

Sandown - Peter Knight, peterknight103@btinternet.com Phone: **0771 539 550**

Shanklin - mis.shanklin@gmail.com

Ventnor - David George, misventnor@google.com Phone: **01983 857848**

West Wight - David Waldock, men@estwightshed.org Phone: **01983 897352**



TIME FOR A BREAK







Arrowword





Solve the clues given within the puzzle to fill the crossword grid.





| | | | | | | | | |
|---------------------|----------------------|---------------------|---------------|---------------------------|-----------|---------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|
| Utter joy | ▼ | Portals | ▼ | Job | ▼ | Rough drawing | ▼ | Put down |
| Italian greeting | | Bank amenity (abbr) | | 'Right away!' (abbr) | ▶ | | ▼ | |
| ▶ | | ▼ | | Atmosphere | ▶ | | | Plant that reproduces with spores |
| Hit | ▶ | | | | | | ▼ | Wear away |
| Text message (abbr) | ▶ | | | Enemy | A pair | ▶ | | |
| Snake-shaped fish | Female sheep | Citrus fruit | Confronts | ▶ | | | | |
| ▶ | ▼ | ▼ | Small boulder | | Possesses | ▶ | | |
| Existed | ▶ | | ▼ | | Male pig | Japanese Prime Minister, Shinzo | | Division |
| Guitar music genre | ▶ | | | Park boundary ditch (2-2) | ▶ | | ▼ | |
| Arrange in order | Tenth calendar month | ▶ | | | | | | |
| ▶ | | | | Disease-causing organism | ▶ | | | |





SOMETHING FOR THE KIDS







Using a pencil, can you solve the sums using the secret code?







| 1. | 2. | 3. | 4. | 5. | 6. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  |  |  |  |  |  |



TIME FOR TEA AND CAKE



INGREDIENTS:

- self-raising flour - 300 g - 2 1/2 cup
- eggs - 3
- lemon unwaxed or organic - 1
- desiccated coconut - 6 tbsps
- sugar - 160 g - 3/4 cup
- butter - 75 g - 1/3 cup
- natural yogurt - 200 g - 0.82 cup
- apples - 4 (medium size)
- milk - as needed



METHOD:

Whip the egg yolks with 120 g of sugar, add the yogurt, the melted butter, the flour, the zest and juice of the lemon. Mix well.

Peel and cut the apples into thin slices then add 2/3 to the mixture, stir well. You need to get a smooth consistency but not too runny, add a little milk only if the mixture feels too dry.

Whip the egg whites to a firm consistency with the remaining sugar. Add the coconut and stir well.

Grease a round baking tray (about 20 cm diameter) or use a silicone one, put 3/4 of the dough on the mould then place the coconut mixture on it.

Put the remaining mixture on top and finally the remaining apples. Cook for 40-45 minutes at 180C.

When the cake has cooled down you can sprinkle it with icing sugar if you like.

CITIZENS ADVICE ISLE OF WIGHT

Citizens Advice Isle of Wight provides free confidential and impartial advice and campaign on big issues affecting people's lives, they support over 7,000 people a year with a range of issues including:



Money Advice team

The Money Advice team can help you to take control of your finances and provide you with solutions for dealing with your priority and non-priority debts.

Welfare Service

The Citizens Advice Isle of Wight Welfare team provides specialist advice and representation, with particular focus on disability benefits.

Help Through Crisis

Help Through Crisis (HTC) aims to provide assistance for island residents who are in genuine hardship, enabling them to quickly access help with food, gas and electricity in an emergency.



Tax Team Service

Citizens Advice Isle of Wight Tax Team deliver the first face to face tax service on the Isle of Wight since 2014.

They can help you with a range of tax enquiries including: Self-Assessment, PAYE, Tax Codes, Tax Credits, National Insurance, Capital Gains and navigating online HMRC resources. For General Advice appointments or to find out more about volunteering with us please call **01983 823898** ext: **2828**

DROP IN

To get in touch, drop in and see an advisor at:

Citizens Advice Isle of Wight

Isle Help Advice Centre, County Hall, High Street, Newport, Isle of Wight, PO30 1UD

Our drop-in service is open Monday to Friday 9.30am until 3.30pm

Please ensure you arrive no later than 2.45pm so that we have adequate time to deal with your enquiry.



Give us a Call

Or call Adviceline on **03444 111 444***

Adviceline is open 9am until 5pm Monday to Friday
Citizens Advice Centre - outreach venues

| DAY | TIME | VENUE | FURTHER INFORMATION |
|-----------|-------------------|--|---|
| Monday | 1pm -3.30pm | Ventnor Outreach Ventnor Town Council, 1 Dudley Road Ventnor, Isle of Wight PO38 1EJ | 1st Monday of each month, by appointment only tel 01983 823898 Ext 2828 |
| Thursday | 1.15pm - 4pm | East Cowes Town Hall, York Avenue, East Cowes, Isle of Wight, PO32 6RU | Alternate Thursday afternoons by appointment only Tel: 01983 823898 Ext 2828 |
| Tuesday | 9.15am - 12pm | Community and Leisure Centre Moa Place Freshwater Isle of Wight PO40 9XH | Alternate Tuesday Mornings by appointment only. To book an appointment tel 01983 823898 Ext 2828 |
| Thursday | 10am - 1pm | Sandown Town Council Broadway Centre, 1 Broadway, Sandown, PO36 9GG | Alternate Thursday afternoons by appointment only tel 01983 823898 Ext 2828 |
| Wednesday | 10am - 12.30pm | Aspire Melton Hall, 43 Dover St, Ryde PO33 2BN | Drop in service |
| Wednesday | 1pm - 3pm | Ryde Town Hall 10 Lind Street RYDE, Isle Of Wight PO33 2NQ | General advice by appointment only - telephone 01983 823898 Ext 2828 for an appointment |
| Friday | 10am - 1pm | Ryde Town Hall 10 Lind Street RYDE, Isle Of Wight PO33 2NQ | General advice by appointment only - alternate Fridays telephone 01983 823898 Ext 2828 for an appt |

Veterans Outreach

Address The Riverside Centre, The Quay, Newport PO30 2Q **About Our Advice Service** Veterans Outreach Support (VOS) is a registered charity providing welfare advocacy and mental health support to Armed Forces (Regulars and Reserves), Merchant Navy and Royal Fleet Auxiliary veterans and their dependants. **Advice Session Times** Drop in is every 3rd Wednesday of every month from 12pm until 4pm.



Home Swapper

The mutual exchange solutions for tenants and landlords

Want to Move Home?

HomeSwapper.co.uk's local & national service means mutual exchange is better than ever. It's the UK's largest community of social housing tenants looking to swap homes.

- Tenants from over 1,000 landlords are registered
- 2 out of 3 matched to potential swaps in 24 hours
- hundreds of households move every month

How it works:

1



Join the website

2



...we find you potential swaps

3



You get match e-mail or SMS alerts

4



Find your new home!

HOME SWAPPER

If you have an assured tenancy with Vectis you have free access to the services offered by HomeSwapper. The system is easy to use and has already helped many residents find a new home better suited to their needs.

VISIT US:

www.facebook.com/VectisHousing
www.vectishousing.co.uk



CONTACT US:

Emergency Repairs
Phone Vectis Repair Line:
01983 520353

Please call this number to report emergency repairs. Inappropriate use may result in any additional costs being re-charged to you.

Please do not use the text service for emergencies, especially over bank holidays as we will not receive them out of hours.

*Please phone these through on the maintenance line **01983 520353**.*

All other enquiries: **01983 525985**
enquiries@vectishousing.co.uk