

YOUR MAGAZINE

THE MAGAZINE FOR GUILDFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL TENANTS AND LEASEHOLDERS

Contact *point*



GUILDFORD
BOROUGH

and



working together

Summer 2024



**Days out this
summer**

**Summer is
coming!**

www.guildford.gov.uk



***Guildford
Walkfest 2024***

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Your magazine... summer 2024

Hello again,

Welcome to the summer edition of your magazine.

If you're stuck for ideas of where to go with the children over the summer holidays, have a look at our ideas for days out article. Janet and Pat have written about their experiences of learning, remember it's never too late to learn something new. Dale has written an interesting article about Alan Turing and the 70th Anniversary of breaking the Enigma code. If you would like to write an article on something that interests you, just drop us a line or call.

The Tenant Engagement Group have been meeting with the new directors for Housing, we have been briefed on the new improvement plan and are looking forward to working with them in the future to implement the plan and improve services for tenants and leaseholders. The new staff are determined to rebuild the trust with you all.

We will be visiting various areas across the borough to let people know what we do and how they can get involved. We started in June at the Great Get Together that was held on Send Rec. We will be leafletting and publicising events on the Community Wellbeing Facebook page. Although we will be at the Tongham Rec on Friday 16 August from 10am till 2pm, if you're around come and meet us in person.

We have recently had new members join us but are always looking for new blood. If you can offer an hour or two a month, then please do let us know.

Enjoy your summers!

Alan,
Chair of Tenants Group



 tenants.group@guildford.gov.uk

 **Jo or Tracy on 01483 444150**

If you would like:

- more information on any of the articles in this edition of Contact Point
- to receive in large print, Braille, audio or another language

please contact us.

Community Wellbeing Team
The Hive,
Park Barn Drive,
Guildford, GU2 8EN.

 01483 444150

 Email: community.wellbeing@guildford.gov.uk

 @GBCCommunityWellbeing

 @GBCCommunityWellbeing

Front cover photo: Young people from Youth Cafe at West Horsley Place.

Answers to spot the difference on page 20





Merrow Community Garden

With the aid of Jo Packman, Community Engagement Advisor, three women from Merrow have come together to create a small community garden.

Merrow Methodist Church offered the use of the lawn outside the church and with the award of an Aspire grant from Guildford Borough Council, the project is beginning to take shape with hands on help from GBC Parks and Countryside Services. The aim is to start small so that local people can influence the development of the garden, starting with a couple of raised beds for vegetables, herbs and a few flowers, growing bigger as funds allow.

The area chosen gets a lot of footfall as pedestrians, including parents and children walking to Merrow Junior School, cut across the corner of Bushy Hill Drive and Sheeplands Avenue.

Helen, one of the team says: "It is widely acknowledged that gardening can improve both physical and mental health and we hope that local people will want to get involved in any way they choose, participation is open to all."

Look out for further details in future editions of this magazine.



Tenant Engagement Group – Annual General Meeting (AGM) Notice

All tenants and leaseholders are hereby advised that the AGM of the Tenant Engagement Group will be held on **Tuesday 29 October 2024** from **7pm till 8.30pm**.

The meeting will be held at:

The Hive, Park Barn Drive, Guildford GU2 8EN

ALL TENANTS AND LEASEHOLDERS WHO LIVE IN THE BOROUGH OF GUILDFORD ARE INVITED

AGENDA

- Welcome and Apologies
- Minutes of previous AGM
- Chair's Report
- Financial Report
- Election of Chair, Secretary and Treasurer



Ideas for Days Out



For those of you with children, the summer holidays will soon be upon us, we wanted to share some ideas of places across the borough that you might like to visit. Remember, these are for everyone, have a read through and maybe visit somewhere new!



Riverside Nature Reserve

This is a 30-hectare wildlife haven. It is located in North East Guildford along the River Wey. The reserve supports many amphibian and mammal species. It consists of four main habitats: meadow, wetland, open water and woodland. There are amazing views across the lake and reed bed, to enjoy from the picnic tables. Use the boardwalk routes to explore the wetlands and the bird hide to see the birds. Feed the ducks frozen peas on the main lake or go just before sunset and look for the bats eating midges.

You can access the location by foot from Stoke Lock, Woking Road, GU1 1QE or through Thorneycroft Wood, behind Spectrum Leisure Centre, Parkway, GU1 1UP.

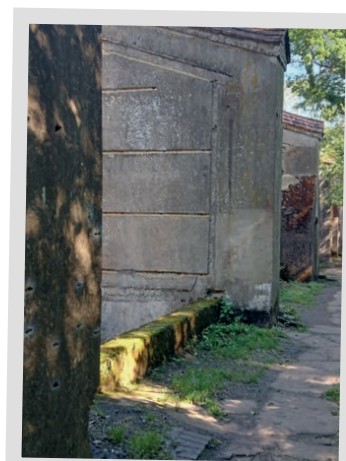
To travel by car from Bowers Lane in Burpham, GU4 7ND.

Chilworth Gunpowder Mills

The Chilworth Gunpowder Mills is a historic site in the Tillingbourne valley.

The mills were built over 300 years ago and were operational from the 1620s until 1920, being most extensive and productive in the 17th century, from the 1880s to the end of World War I. Traditional black gunpowder was made throughout its history with modern explosives such as cordite, manufactured in the last decades of its operation. There is a heritage trail you can follow with QR codes on posts that when you scan will give you more information.

They are located in Chilworth with limited parking and three main pedestrian entrances - these are signposted in the village.





Silent Pool

Silent Pool was probably an old chalk quarry fed by underground springs and would have been a precious source of pure water in days gone by. The pool and nearby Sherbourne Pond became home to many different species of aquatic life and one can often glimpse the blue flash of a kingfisher as it darts across the water.

More recently, the pool has had a tendency to dry out due to the springs feeding the pool suffering from the lower-than-average annual rainfall.

Silent Pool has always been a popular place to visit and many feel an eerie stillness looking out over the still water surrounded by the evergreen box trees.

Legend has it that this is due to the fate of a woodcutter's daughter who was surprised by a nobleman on a horse as she bathed in the pool.

Having failed to lure her to the bank, he rode his horse into the water and caused the girl to move out to deeper water where she drowned. When the woodcutter returned and found her body, he also found the nobleman's hat floating on the water. It bore the crest of none other than Prince John!

It's located at Shere Road, Albury, GU5 9BW. There is a small car park and for the adults, this is the site of the Silent Pool Gin too.

There's lots of places to visit and if you're looking for something to do, have a look at the Visit Surrey website at www.visitsurrey.com

Don't forget Heritage Week from **6 to 15 September** when you'll be able to visit lots of places that aren't normally open to the public and normally for free.

Stoke Park Mini Golf

From Saturday 8 June to Friday 19 July, mini golf will be open weekends only, from 10:30am to 4:30pm (last admission).

From Saturday 20 July to Sunday 1 September, mini golf will be open daily, from 10:30am to 5:00pm (last admission).

- Located in Stoke Park Gardens
- Advanced booking not required
- We only accept card payments
- Mini golf will be closed in bad weather



TICKETS FOR MINI GOLF

| Ticket type | Cost per person, per game |
|---|---------------------------|
| Adult | £5.30 |
| Junior/Concession (under 18, over 60 or unemployed) | £3.70 |
| Family (up to 2 adults and 3 under 18s) | £15 |

Contact the Ranger team on 07880 784 947 with any enquiries.



Youth Café



Looking for a place to visit on a Thursday afternoon after school? Then look no further!

The Youth Cafe is open to everyone in school years 7 – 11 from 4.00pm to 5.30pm at The Hive, Park Barn Drive, Guildford, GU2 8EN (term time only).

There is so much to do from quiz challenges, table tennis, arts, board games, Wii, use of a piano, occasional trips and of course...space to chill out with friends old and new!

The coffee shop is open for tuck, offering a range of snacks and drinks!

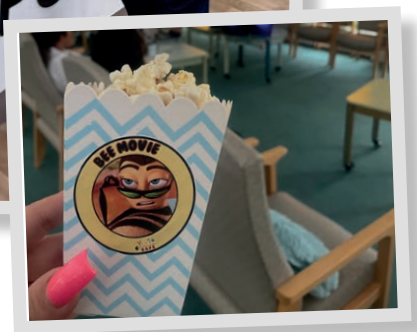
Need more information, easy... please contact the Wellbeing Team on either:

☎ 01483 444 150

✉ community.wellbeing@guildford.gov.uk

📘 @GBCCommunityWellbeing

📷 @GBCCommunityWellbeing





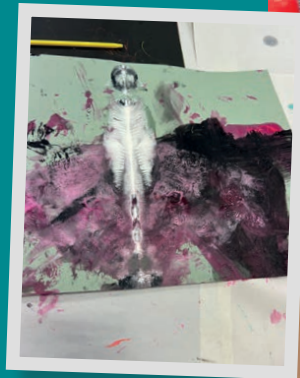
Colour Magic

Guildford play zone at the Hive was transformed into a deluge of colour magic.

My nineteen-month toddler was really excited to take part in the free creative arts and craft session run in partnership with the Watts Gallery staff, for the under sixes. It was easy to reserve my one-hour slot by emailing the Community Wellbeing Team.

All the paints and creative materials were kindly provided by the Watts Gallery. My daughter loved creating her own splashes and splodges of all the colours of the rainbow to create the most spectacular angelic moth. Thank goodness she wore an apron as she was covered in a spectrum of paint.

By Janet B



Community Meals Service

Could you, a family member, or friend benefit from Guildford Borough Council's Community Meals Service?

At Guildford Borough Council, we believe in the power of promoting your independence by supporting you to remain healthy and happy in your own home.

What sets us apart:

Delicious and nutritious meals – our suppliers create a variety of dishes using fresh ingredients. From hearty classics including Roast Chicken and Shepherd's Pie to globally inspired cuisines such as Curry and Spicy Bean Casserole, there will be something on our menu to tantalise your taste buds.

Convenience - say goodbye to meal planning and cooking. With our Community Meals Service, you can enjoy a hot two-course lunchtime meal from our purpose-built vehicles, all delivered with a smile! It's convenience at its finest.

Community connection - Our caring drivers can help to signpost you or refer you to other support services, offering a daily welfare check for peace of mind. Our knowledgeable office team are always just a phone call away to advise on any help that you may need. Our customers look forward to the arrival of their meal each day, and we hope you will too.

Flexible options - We understand that everyone's needs are different. That's why we offer a menu for you to select your preference. We are also happy to discuss any special dietary requirement you may have. Your deliveries can take place on whichever days of the week you need – weekends and bank holidays are covered too.

Whether you're starting to find it harder to prepare a full meal, are not motivated to cook for yourself, or are unable to shop for nutritious food, the friendly team at our Community Meals Service are here to support you.

We look forward to your call or email on:

 **01483 458055**

 **info.communityservices@guildford.gov.uk**

or pop in to see us at The Hive on Park Barn Drive.





2024 marks the 70th Anniversary of Alan Turing's death

Alan Turing was a wartime codebreaker and widely hailed as the “father of computer science.” Alan and his family lived in Ennismore Avenue, Guildford.

Alan worked at a research and development laboratory where he would design the ‘automatic computer engine’, one of the first programmable computers. During the Second World War, he was instrumental in the breaking of German enigma codes at Bletchley Park. It has been estimated that the efforts of Turing and his fellow codebreakers, shortened the war by several years, saving countless lives as a result.

(source: Imperial War Museum)

Little was known about Alan until the release of the film *The Imitation Game* in 2014. The nature of his work was shrouded in secrecy, but furthermore as a gay man and due to social attitudes at the time, his place in history is one that was until recently arguably ‘covered up’.

Alan was prosecuted in 1952 for ‘homosexual acts’ and accepted a hormone procedure referred to as chemical castration, as an alternative to prison. Turing died from cyanide poisoning; an inquest determined his death as suicide.

Following a public campaign in 2009, Gordon Brown the Prime Minister at the time, made an official public apology for his treatment. In 2013, he was granted a posthumous pardon.

A new book has been released by Guildford Town Guide Paul Backhouse. You can find out more about local stories involving Alan and his links to the building that is today’s Mandalay Hotel and the Mount Cemetery. There is a statue dedicated to him at the University of Surrey and a road bearing his name at the Surrey Research Park. The book is on sale for £5 at Guildford Museum and Tourist Information Centre. The Alan Turing Encounter Walk has been refreshed by the Guildford Town Guides for the summer. Walks are free but must be booked in advance, for more details and bookings visit guildfordwalks.org.uk

The book has been published and printed by Guildford Borough Council.

By Dale Askew

Housing Improvement Plan, the way forward

Guildford Borough Council have published two reviews, one into their governance and a second into the housing landlord function.

These were published alongside their comprehensive Improvement Plan which addresses the recommendations and findings in both reviews.

The Improvement Plan will ensure that the council works together with partners to provide excellent value for money and services that we can all be proud of. Progress against the Improvement Plan will be reported to councillors and TEG every six months. This will be accompanied by an update from the Independent Assurance Panel to keep work on track. Both of these reports will be made public.

The housing team at the council are working hard and good progress is being made to ensure the health and safety and continued wellbeing of all their residents is maintained.

If you would like to find out more or get involved and have your say, please contact TEG on:



01483 444150



tenants.group@guildford.gov.uk



GUILDFORD
BOROUGH



Complaints are often seen as a negative, but what can we learn from them?

By Dale Askew



It can be frustrating not getting a response to a request for service or perhaps a repair not being completed in a timely manner or to a satisfactory standard.

When you report a repair, the Council commits to carry these out within the following timescales:

| PRIORITY | RESPONSE | EXAMPLE OF WORK |
|---------------------------|--|--|
| Priority essential | Work will normally be carried out the following working day. | Total loss of heating, insecure ground floor window. Only toilet not flushing. |
| Urgent | Work will normally be carried out within 4 working days. | Leak to sink, basin or bath. Water wastage. Loose roof tiles not over public footpath. |
| Normal | Contracts are currently being re-negotiated for non-urgent works. Once contractors are back in place work is normally carried out within 27 working days. | Renew bath or hand wash basin. Repair kitchen unit. Repair gutters. |

If you contact the Council regarding any other matter, they commit to respond as follows:

| CONTACT METHOD | RESPONSE |
|------------------|--|
| Web-forms | Reply within 2 working days for an acknowledgement and 7 working days for a complete response. |
| E-mail | Reply to emails within 2 working days for an acknowledgement and 7 working days for a complete response. |
| Telephone | Answer the telephone within 4 rings. |
| Letters | Reply to letters within 10 working days. |

What to do if you are not happy?

If you are not happy, as a first step it is always advisable to re-contact the relevant department or officer you contacted initially, as the dissatisfaction maybe more quickly resolved through this route. If you do not receive a response or are still unhappy with the response, then you could consider making a complaint.

How do I make a complaint?

Through the self-service section of the website, go to 'report an issue' and you will find the 'make a complaint' option, select 'make a complaint about a Council service'. Alternatively, if you don't have web access you can make your complaint by calling **01483 505050** or by writing in. Complaints can also be made by advocates on your behalf, such as a carer, relative or friend.

How will my complaint be dealt with?

Your complaint will be acknowledged within five-working days of receipt and the relevant officer dealing with your complaint will aim to email or write to you about your complaint within ten working days of receiving it. If they cannot resolve your complaint within this period, you will be notified of this and any likely timeframes in the resolution of your complaint.

Still not happy?

Once your complaint has been considered, investigated and decided how it will be dealt with you will be notified of the Council's decision. At this stage you have a right of appeal, which must be submitted in writing within 28 days.

Housing Ombudsman

There may be occasions the Council are not able to resolve a complaint to a resident's satisfaction. If your issues have not been resolved after completing the first part of the Council's complaint process, and they are housing related, you can take a complaint to the Housing Ombudsman. The Ombudsman can also help if you are not getting a response to the complaint you made to the Council. The Housing Ombudsman is a free, independent and impartial service. They will investigate the complaint, identify any lessons that can be learned and depending on the outcome, they may set out orders and recommendations to the Council in their report to put things right. The Housing Ombudsman can be contacted at:

 **0300 111 3000**

 **www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk**

 **info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk**

Local Government Ombudsman

If you are not satisfied after receiving an appeal response and it is unrelated to housing, you can refer your complaint to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman. You can contact the ombudsman at their website **www.lgo.org.uk** or call them on **0300 061 0614**. The Ombudsman is a free service, they will decide whether or not to investigate your complaint. They are independent and do not take sides. When they investigate they will recommend how the Council should put things right for you and possibly other people in the same situation. They can ask the Council to change how it works to stop the same thing happening in future.

Compliments

Let the Council know when they are getting it right! You can also make compliments through the same contact methods mentioned for making a complaint above.

New Consumer Standards

Final consumer standards and plan for inspections published

The Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) has set out its new standards for social housing landlords, designed to protect tenants and improve the service they receive. RSH has also confirmed how it will regulate and inspect landlords against these final set of standards, following a lengthy consultation process.

Under the new standards landlords will need to:

- ensure tenants are safe in their homes
- listen to tenants' complaints and respond promptly to put things right
- be accountable to tenants and treat them with fairness and respect
- know more about the condition of every home and the needs of the people who live in them
- collect and use data effectively across a range of areas, including repairs

To hold landlords to account, the regulator will:

- inspect larger landlords regularly to check they are meeting the outcomes in the standards
- scrutinise data about tenant satisfaction, repairs and other relevant issues
- continue to ensure landlords protect tenants and put things right when there are problems
- use a range of tools when needed, including new enforcement powers

The inspection programme commenced in April 2024 and will run in four-year cycles.

Tenant Satisfaction Measures

All social housing providers are required to collect data, tenant satisfaction measures (TSMs), on areas such as repairs, safety checks and complaints. The measures are intended to enable

residents to scrutinise their landlord's performance and hold them to account and provide a source of intelligence to the RSH on whether landlords are meeting the regulatory standards. TSMs will be used alongside other tools to gain assurance from social housing providers. Landlords with a stock of over 1,000 properties will be required to submit this data on an annual basis.

We have commissioned Acuity Research, an independent market research company that specialises in the housing industry, to carry out a survey for our tenants.

Acuity Research provides tenant satisfaction surveys and many other research services across the housing sector. They also provide benchmarking services, data analytics and customer analysis to improve services and engage with residents across the country. They have been working with social housing organisations to measure and understand resident satisfaction since 1998.

Who will be contacted?

Residents will be contacted either by phone, email or SMS text with the aim of interviewing a wide range of tenants. This commenced in May 2024 and the survey should take no more than 10 minutes to complete.

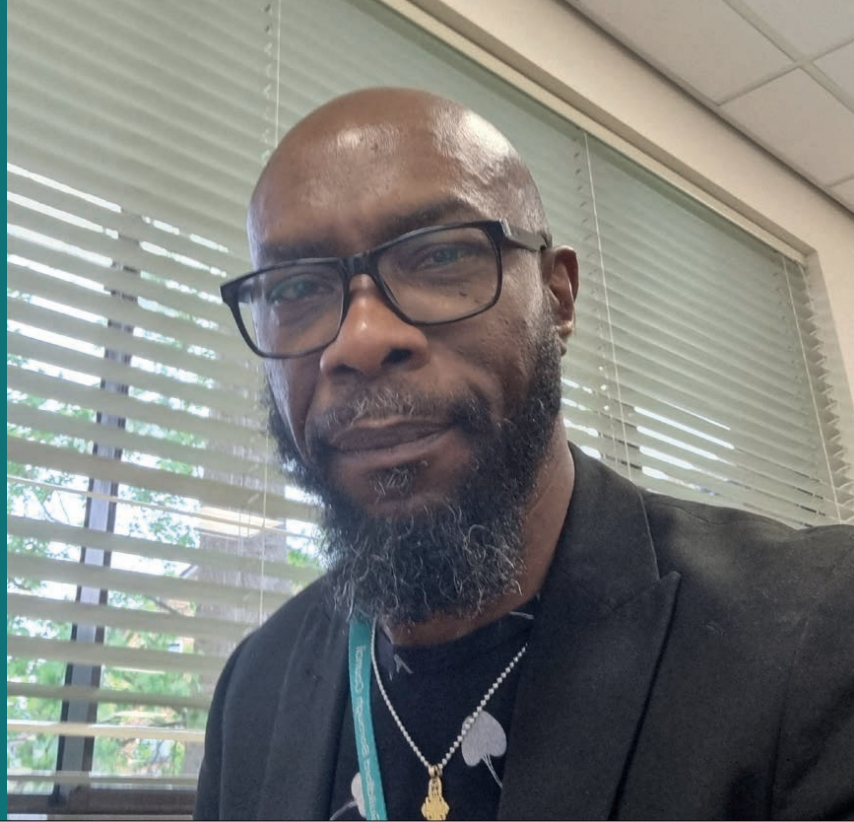
The caller will introduce themselves as Acuity Research and say that they are working on behalf of Guildford Borough Council.

Performance Data

| | OUR PERFORMANCE IN 2022/23 | OUR PERFORMANCE IN 2023/24 | NOTE |
|---|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|---|
| % of rent collected of rent due | 99.48% | 99.56% | |
| Overall Current Rent arrears as a % | 0.90% | 1.12% | |
| Number of NOSP's served - Rent arrears | 17 | 20 | |
| Number of ASB cases opened | 75 | 45 | |
| Number of ASB cases closed | 34 | 31 | |
| Average days taken to re-let all voids | 150 days | 177 days | Re-let times increased in 2023/24. A comprehensive review to establish voids will be taken in 2024/25 |
| Total number of complaints received | 263 | 262 | |
| Complaints responded to within target | 186 | 87 | Performance dipped in 2023/24 due to vacancies in the Team. |
| % of homes that meet the Decent Home Standard (DHS) | 99.4% | 97.45% | |
| Repairs completed within target timescale (emergency & non-emergency repairs) | 86.6% | 83.5% | |
| Number of homes let | 241 | 148 | |
| Number of mutual exchanges | 34 | 26 | |

A day in the life of... a housing officer

Herold Riley is a temporary Specialist Officer in the Estates Team covering a maternity cover and has been with Guildford for over two years.



My job can be summarised in a single word and that word is “unpredictable”. After two years working at Guildford you never know what is coming next. I have a wide remit with tasks that cover tenancy enforcement, sustainment, involvement and the provision of quality management for over a thousand tenants.

A typical day is often likened to ‘balancing multiple plates on broom sticks’ and is not for the faint hearted, however, good results through working with tenants, hard work, teamwork and persistence, brings tremendous job satisfaction.



Get in Touch - Contacting the Housing Team

How to report a repair

☎ 01483 505050

Out of hours emergencies 01483 532122

✉ www.guildford.gov.uk/reportarepair

How to get tenancy and estate advice

☎ 01483 505050

✉ estatemangement@guildford.gov.uk

How to report a compliment or complaint

We want your feedback to help us improve. Please let us know what we have done well and where if we have failed.

☎ 01483 505050

In person to any Council employee

Guildford Walkfest 2024

The annual Guildford Walkfest returns this September, bigger and better than ever! There will be over forty free walks throughout September.

The annual Guildford Walkfest returns this September, bigger and better than ever! There will be over forty free walks throughout September.

Walkfest will launch from Queen Elizabeth Park Centre, Railton Road, Guildford, Surrey GU2 9LX on 2 September 2024 at 10am, and all are welcome to join.


The walks are designed to suit all ages, interests, and abilities. There will be family, push chair and dog-friendly walks. This year's Walkfest focuses on highlighting the well-known and hidden parts of our beautiful area. If you love history, nature, beautiful views, coffee stops, friendly company and even some pub trips...Walkfest is for you!

Walking in a group is sociable, fun and a great opportunity to meet people and get involved in and explore your community.

 Please like and follow the Guildford Walkfest Facebook page:
www.facebook.com/guildfordwalkfest

 There is also a website with various blogs for more information on joining in this year:
www.guildfordwalkfest.co.uk

Finally, if you would like any more information about walking, link up with local walking groups or just want to share a passion for walking and nature, we would be delighted to hear from you.

 Get in touch by emailing
community.wellbeing@guildford.gov.uk

 Calling **01483 444150**



Never too late or old to learn!

I hated maths at school. In fact, I actually got scared of maths.



I quite enjoyed maths at primary school, but when I moved up to secondary school it was a totally different story.

To start with, my maths teacher at secondary school was horrible to me. He scared me with his sarcastic comments and the way he talked to me, which filled me with fear and a sense of dread before every lesson I had with him. Needless to say, I did not do well in the subject and ultimately failed my maths GCE (no surprise there).

It is interesting that, over the years, I have heard so many people say that it was their individual maths teachers who turned them against maths. This really speaks to the impact our experience can have on how we see our own capacity to learn new skills.

Following many different types of employment from nursing to Personal Assistant roles, I finally found my passion and began my training to become a Life and Business Coach which was my true path in life. I loved having the ability and influence to transform people's lives for the better, and help them to achieve their life goals. In particular, I loved helping people start up their own businesses in areas they loved.

At 60, I had to close my business to become a full-time carer to my husband due to his poor health. I'm grateful I was able to do it, but being a carer for someone else, no matter how much you may love them, can be a very lonely life and I am very much a people person.

One day I spotted a copy of my local adult education course book and browsed through it, looking for something that I might enjoy. I noticed they were offering free GCSE courses in English and Maths and I thought "hmmm, I wonder..." could now be the time to give education another try?

Rather than go straight for the Maths qualification, I first applied for the English GCSE. I had always enjoyed English but didn't get a particularly good result when I took my exams at school. I passed the test and interview and a few weeks later I attended my first class.

I loved it. I had a great tutor who made the lessons interesting and a lovely group of people on the course. Despite being the eldest by far, we all got on so well and helped and supported each other. I achieved a Grade 7 (old style A grade) which was very satisfying.

My success in English gave me the push I needed to challenge myself and apply for the Maths GCSE course. It wasn't quite as smooth sailing and I failed the initial test. However, they suggested I do the pre-GCSE course for a year and try again for the GCSE course for the following year.

I really enjoyed that first year, we had an excellent tutor who not only got the information into us but also made it fun as well.

I passed the tests at the end of the year and was accepted onto the GCSE course for the following academic year.

The work was much harder now but I was not going to let it beat me. I was determined to banish my fear of maths for good and my tutor was equally determined that I was going to succeed.

Following surgery on my back which meant I couldn't make it up stairs, she moved the whole class into a ground floor classroom and even personally delivered maths work to my home to stop me falling behind.

This experience could not have been more different to the one I had as a child.

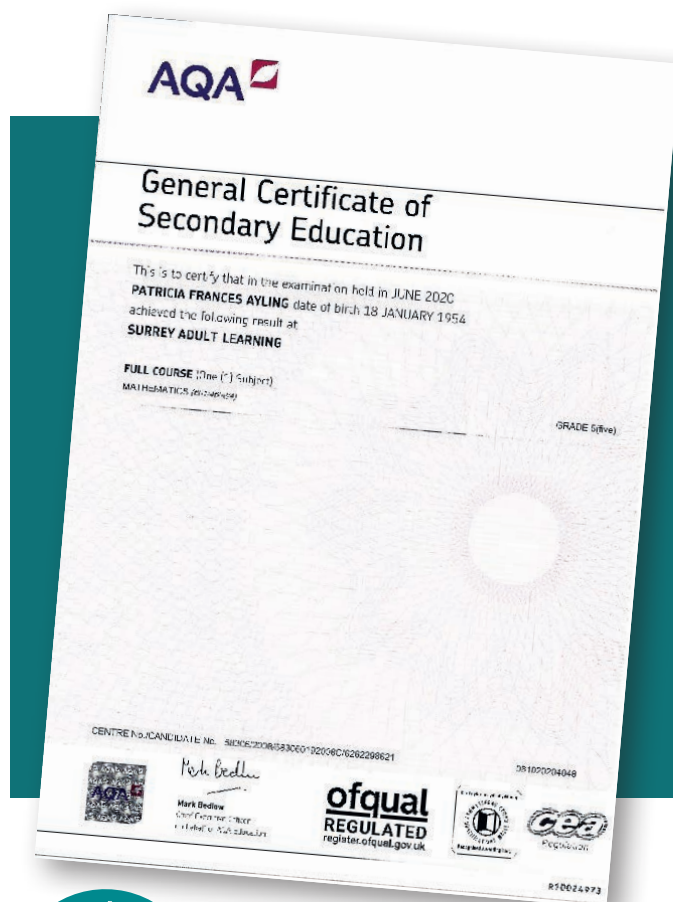
I am proud to say I achieved a Grade 5 (old style C grade) which was the highest mark possible for the Adult Ed course.

But by far the biggest result for me is that I am no longer scared of maths. And I can now confidently help my grandchildren with their maths homework.

If you're considering gaining additional qualifications or going back to studies, I cannot recommend the Adult Education Colleges highly enough. The team there are fantastic and are as committed to your success as you are.

It's never too late and you're never too old.

By Pat Ayling



Celestial celebration

I have been studying with The Open University for several years, with the aim of having a legal career by the end of it. Fresh out of the sixth form, I didn't want to follow the conventional route and I certainly didn't want to be in debt, so I studied part-time whilst undertaking a legal internship at a law firm in Guildford.



It was the proudest day of my life. I had my graduation ceremony at Ely Cathedral in Cambridge. It was extra special because The Open University was celebrating 50 years. The Cathedral was majestic, hanging from the ceiling, was a great big magnificent moon. My family and friends were in awe as the ceremony started. I walked up the stairs in my beautiful blue graduation gown to collect my glitzy gold & blue OU scroll, which contained a sparkly silver Open University badge and a congratulations note.

I could see my friends and family beaming with pride, and I waved with enthusiasm. What a journey it has been to gain a legal qualification in English Law with the Open University in collaboration with the College of Law, which is now known as The University of Law in Guildford.

The day was complete with celebrating my success with my family and friends in The Old Palace Gardens with a glass of bubbly on the hottest day of the year, it was absolutely breathtaking.

How has the studying changed my life:

Thanks to The Open University I was able to work in my dream legal career at a Solicitors as a junior legal conveyancer assistant. My message to everyone in Guildford is that it is never too late or early in life to pursue your passion to learn through further education, no matter what age you are.

By Janet B

Energy Manage

We know there can be a lot to think about so here's a handy checklist!



Are your radiators heating up properly?

If the radiators have cold patches when the heating is turned on, they may need bleeding. This can be done by someone that is competent at DIY or speak to an engineer. For those in rented accommodation, inform the landlord who may be able to arrange for the radiators to be bled.

Are the thermostatic radiator valves working correctly?

If the dials are stuck or are not moving properly, arrange for a heating engineer to visit or speak to your landlord.

Is your heating system and hot water controls easy to understand and use?

There are YouTube videos available with step-by-step advice. Also search on the internet for the make and model of the heating system as there are often links to the manual.

Do you have night storage heaters?

Old style night storage heaters have 'input' and 'output' dials which need to be set ahead of the following day. New style night storage heaters have digital controls which are used to set the time and temperature of each heater.

For more information, you can visit The Centre for Sustainable Energy as they have information about night storage heaters and how to use them.

Is your hot water tank insulated?

Modern tanks have foam insulation already applied to them, but older tanks would benefit from having a jacket fitted. They are reasonably priced and easy to fit.

Is your energy tariff the right one for the type of heating?

Those with night storage heaters, should be on an electricity tariff called Economy 7 that has 2 different unit rates for day and night. If there are electric panel heaters or gas central heating, the tariff should only have one unit price.

Have you heard of the Priority Service Register?

This register will make sure that households that may be in a vulnerable situation are looked after when there is a power cut. This is particularly important if electrical equipment is used for health reasons, including oxygen use, there is a stairlift, or medicines kept in the fridge. Visit the priority service register website for more information.

Are the gutters clear?

Blocked drains and gutters can cause a problem with damp, regular inspections and clearing will prevent leaks and water penetration in the property. This is a job for someone competent at DIY, a handy person, or window cleaner.

Have you checked your home for draughts?

Draughtproofing the home will make it feel warmer and more comfortable. Check for draughts around doors and windows, holes in walls, loft hatches, chimneys etc. Most draughtproofing can be installed by someone competent at DIY and are not too expensive to buy.

Has any mould been cleaned and treated?

There are many things that can be done to prevent the build-up of condensation and mould. Cleaning a metre wider than the mould patch with bleach will help to stop it returning. Close doors and open windows in rooms where moist air is being produced. Use a hygrometer to measure the humidity of the home and keep it below 60%.

Are there any water leaks or dripping taps?

Having a dripping tap can add £100's to the water bill each year. Check your home for any potential leaks and try to get these fixed asap.

Are there working smoke and carbon monoxide alarms?

When the heating is turned on and open fires or log burners are lit, there is a potential for carbon monoxide to be released into the air. Make sure that alarms are installed and working – if not, the Fire Service sometimes provide these.

Do you have an oil tank and is it in good condition?

Oil tanks can deteriorate over time, ensure that it is in good condition before having it topped up.

Is there enough OIL, LPG, Wood for the winter?

It is often cheaper to buy this in bulk during the summer or join an oil buying club.

Would a heated throw, heat pad, wheat bag be useful?

Make sure that there are enough jumpers, bedding, and other equipment to help you keep warm and feel more comfortable.

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✉ info@energymanage.org.uk

Can you spot 10 differences



Answers on page 2.

PRIZE wordsearch

Win a £25 voucher, donated by the Tenants' Engagement Group.

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

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|-------------|-----------|
| Summer | Walkfest |
| Community | Learn |
| Mini Golf | Repair |
| Alan Turing | Energy |
| Ombudsman | Celestial |

Name:

Address:

Tel:

Send your completed wordsearch along with your name, address and a telephone number to:

Tenants' Engagement Group, The Hive, Park Barn Drive, Guildford, GU2 8EN or photograph your completed wordsearch and email to tenants.group@guildford.gov.uk

Closing date is Friday 6 September 2024. Previous winner of the winter wordsearch was Julie from Tongham.

Community Wellbeing Team, The Hive, Park Barn Drive, Guildford, GU2 8EN.

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