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Rent statements – we hope to mail out your rent statements and Home Matters together next year – watch this space...

New affordable homes for local residents

MVHA's development of 18 much needed affordable homes in Laundry Way, Capel, is now well underway.



Construction work is well underway at Laundry Way.

David Searle, Managing Director of MVHA said, "This development is about providing real family homes in a sustainable community environment which will enhance the Life Chances of local residents. It reflects our ability to continue providing new homes for both rent and shared ownership during a time of difficult economic circumstances."

The homes, which will be completed next summer, will be in great demand from people in housing need; however a lettings plan will give preference to local people. Residents interested in the shared ownership homes should phone **0845 304 1007** or email: marketingteam@circleanglia.org. Priority for the homes will go to local people. Those interested in the rented homes should contact **Mole Valley District Council** on **01306 879142**. ■

The new development on a former industrial site will provide ten two-bed houses, six three-bed houses and two one-bed flats, of which 13 units

will be available to rent and five units for shared ownership. It is MVHA's first major development aimed at providing affordable homes for local people.

Christmas opening times

The MVHA offices opening times during the festive season will be as follows:

Christmas Eve	Open 8.30am – 3pm
Christmas Day	Closed
Monday 28 December	Closed
Tuesday 29 December	Open 8.30am – 5pm
Wednesday 30 December	Open 8.30am – 5pm
Thursday 31 December	Open 8.30am – 5pm
Friday 1 January	Closed

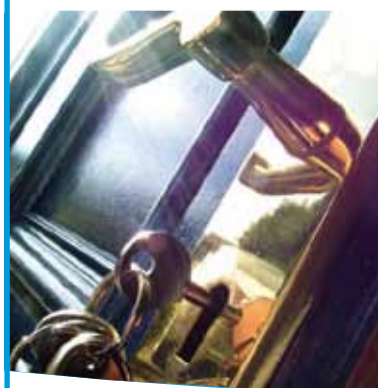
During the times when our offices are closed, please use call 0800 6349876 if you have an emergency repair.



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Contents Insurance – are your valuables protected? Peace of mind at affordable cost



- Did you know that your landlord is not responsible for insuring the belongings in your home?
- Could you afford to replace your possessions if the worst was to happen?
- Did you know that you can protect the valuables in your home from just £3.69 per month for £9,000 cover and that if you are 60 or over you may qualify for an even lower monthly amount?

Circle Anglia offers low cost contents insurance to its residents through Aviva.

The policy includes;

- protection for your clothes, furniture and electrical goods
- covers insurance for carpets and decorations
- accidental damage
- theft of your keys and lock changes
- contents in your freezer

- the contents of outbuildings
- contents whilst household members are at university
- documents insurance

Against damage caused by:

- fire
- water
- theft
- vandalism

For more information on Circle Anglia's Home Contents Insurance, please call Wessex Administration Services on 01962 844454 or email resident.communications@circleanglia.org. A full guide to our low cost insurance policy and application form is also available at www.circleanalia.org/insurance.html



Welcome from David Searle



are able to continue with our development programme despite the current economic climate. In this issue you can see the progress with our development in Capel. Early in the New Year, you will see work commence to convert the old Dorking fire station into 16 flats plus a new shop on the ground floor. I also hope in the next couple of months to bring you news on some exciting proposals for new affordable homes in the Leatherhead area and another village in the South of the District.

In the meantime, I would like to wish you and your families a very merry Christmas and happy New Year, from all at Mole Valley Housing Association.

With best wishes

David Searle

Managing Director
Mole Valley Housing
Association

Welcome to the winter edition of Home Matters. I hope you find it interesting and helpful.

I am delighted to bring news of the new Mole Valley Resident Involvement Group and look forward to the programme of events and meetings the group is organising. Your input to the way we run our services is so important - so please get involved.

You have always been clear that development of new affordable homes is a top priority for residents. I am pleased that we

New Chair, New Name



Roy Hobson



Roy Hobson was elected as Chair of MVTAG in September. One of Roy's first changes was to rename the group to reflect how residents are involved in shaping the services of MVHA. At the first meeting after the AGM a new name was agreed – Mole Valley Resident Involvement Group (RIG) – and group members have designed a new logo (see above).

Roy reports; RIG held their first open meeting in November to talk about Estate Inspections and Walkabouts taking place in 2010.

If you would like to join RIG and MVHA on any of these to help improve our estates, please contact either myself or the Resident Involvement Team.

The RIG are working with MVHA to listen to residents. If you would like to 'Meet the Contractors' that will be making improvements to your kitchens and bathrooms, come along to this event in early February at Regent House.

RIG plan to hold many more open meetings next year and would be delighted to see you come along and give

your views on the service that MVHA provides.

Wishing you all a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year,
Roy Hobson
Chair, RIG

For more information on 07788 843 383 or email mvharig@hotmail.com. Alternatively you can contact the Resident Involvement Team at MVHA on 01306 505529/30 or email residentinvolvement@mvha.org.uk



Giving Respect

MVHA has supplied Therfield School with Respect booklets that tackle subjects including bullying, crime and ASB, peer pressure, staying safe and drug misuse. Pupils can use the books to get answers to questions and issues they may be facing and the school can use them to promote discussion with pupils.

Tom Thornton, Head of PSHE,



said, "The safety guides have received brilliant feedback from our pupils and the PSHE department have been able to use them as excellent classroom resources." ■

CAB update

The Citizens Advice Bureau has been working in partnership with MVHA since mid-August. A new service was put in place to assist residents with independent advice, particularly around financial information, debt advice and support.

By the end of October, the CAB case worker, Janet

Blair, had generated £4,800 additional income for MVHA residents, prevented one person from becoming homeless and had assisted two other residents by preventing the need for possession orders to be obtained on their homes. These are just a few examples of the residents

Janet has seen and helped.

If you would like to see the CAB, Janet is available for appointments on Wednesdays at MVHA's office in Dorking, or on Thursday mornings at the Dorking CAB office.

To make an appointment, please ring us on 01306 505555. ■



Services Update Taking your views into account on the mobile office and skip scheme.



During the year's pilot scheme, very few residents actually made use of the service. Following a review involving residents it was decided to end the service in October.

The vehicle is now being used for community events, resident involvement and other activities. If you feel that your area would benefit from the mobile office on an occasional basis, then please let us know and we'll see what we can do.

For residents who find it difficult to visit our office

in Dorking, we can always visit you so please do not hesitate to ask. **Please contact Glynis Gatenby on 01306 505503 or e-mail at glynis.gatenby@mvha.org**

Thank you to the many residents that took part in the Skip Scheme survey. The results showed that the scheme was generally welcomed but that the majority of residents would like the skips to be available to MVHA residents only. Most of you responded that you wouldn't be willing to pay for the service.

We have looked at this and are unable to find a practical way of restricting access. For those residents that would like to dispose of rubbish or other bulky items, the district council provides a relatively low-cost scheme. They can be contacted on **01306 885001**.

If residents have strong views on the skip service we can always review it in the future and look at what would need to be charged for this – so do let us know. ■

Fire safety – is your home safe?



My name is Graham Mitchell and I work for Surrey Fire and Rescue Service, based at Leatherhead Fire Station.

We can provide a variety of services to the community which aim to reduce the number of fire related accidents, injuries and in some cases deaths, suffered by residents of Mole Valley each year.

I would like to ask you all:

- ✓ Are you safe from the dangers of fire?
- ✓ Is your home protected from the risks of fire?
- ✓ Are you doing the most to ensure your safety, your family's safety and the safety of your community?

If the answer is no, then we may be able to help by offering you the following services:

- Home Fire Risk Checks to improve fire safety within your home.
- Free smoke detectors, fitted by local community fire station personnel as well as advice on where to put them and how to maintain them.

- Referrals to other agencies if you require specialist smoke alarms if you have a disability.
- Counselling for youngsters who are showing tendencies for setting fires or are already fire starters.

To arrange this service, please call free phone 0800 0850767.

I hope that by working together, Surrey Fire and Rescue and Mole Valley Housing Association can help to make your home a safer place.

Home Fire Safety checks

If you would like a Home Fire Safety check, please let Maggie Newland know. Maggie will compile a list which we will then forward to Surrey Fire & Rescue Service with your details. Please note that we will need to provide the Fire Service with personal details such as your name, address, age and any disabilities/vulnerabilities so they can then prioritise their visit to you. Maggie can be contacted by telephoning 01306 505504 or by e-mailing her at maggie.newland@mvha.org.uk

How do I deal with condensation in my home?



Every home gets condensation from time to time – it's caused by water in the air collecting on cold surfaces. You can reduce it by doing a few simple things;

- Cover pans when cooking and hang washing outside to dry
- Avoid using paraffin or portable gas heaters – one of the main causes of condensation
- Keep bathroom and

kitchen doors shut when you are using them

- Don't completely draught-proof rooms with condensation as this could make it worse

- If rooms are cold and are not being used, keep the doors shut
- Keep a small window ajar or a trickle ventilator open in each occupied room *Don't forget – if you open windows; make sure you shut them when you go out*
- Heating can help but only if it's used in addition to the other suggestions
- It needs to be 'dry heat' like central heating or gas fires, not paraffin or portable gas heaters

- It's best to heat your home at a low level for a long time instead of an hour here and there

Dealing with mildew

Mildew may first appear in corners or behind cupboards, but it can spread across entire walls and on to furnishings.

It can be removed by wiping with detergents or mould removers. It can be washed out of fabrics, but may leave stains or spoil colours.

For more information on dealing with condensation, please visit our website area www.mvha.org.uk/resident-info/energy-advice to see a video guide and more information. ■

MVHA's new resident handbook

The new Residents Handbook will shortly be available to all residents on request. It has been developed in partnership with resident reps and acts as a speedy guide to repairs, rents, your rights and your responsibilities. It also lists handy MVHA contacts and other useful information.

If you would like a copy, please contact Maggie Newland on 01306 505504 or e-mail maggie.newland@mvha.org.uk. Maggie will ensure that you receive a copy once it's available. Alternatively, take a look at our website, it will be there to view once completed at www.mvha.org.uk ■

Community clear up in Beare Green



Area Housing Manger Julie Beach, Community Warden Adrian Birtchnell and Housing Management Support Officer Mandy Eggleton, have been working with residents of Beare Green to improve their neighbourhood.

A community clear up afternoon was held and was a great success.

Residents of Beare Green are also hoping to form a residents group. If you would like to join, please contact Julie Beach on 01306 505514. ■

Autumn leaves and winter gritting

MVHA and Burleys are out and about clearing leaves and gritting as necessary in the coming weeks and months. Priority for this is given to Sheltered Housing residents and where residents are elderly. All other sites are also being cleared as part of Burleys Rota.

It is not practical, nor economical to have to attend to all roads and paths. Therefore residents need to be vigilant and take care in these conditions.

If you have a problem with leaves in your area or need gritting assistance please contact the Estate Team on 01306 505555 or email jill.hunter@mvha.org.uk



How are we doing? Performance monitoring

We have “performance indicators” in place to ensure that we are delivering value for money from the rent we receive from our customers. Achieving our performance targets will directly influence how good our services are.

◆ MVHA is pleased to announce that it has reached 100% gas certification compliance in October. This has been achieved by hard work and efforts of everyone involved, including

residents who allowed access to our engineers to undertake the necessary servicing and inspections. Congratulations to all.

- ◆ In October the average re-let time for General Need's properties was 22 days, which has more than halved since the MVHA transfer.
- ◆ 97% of emergency repairs were completed within target
- ◆ 84% of tenants are satisfied with the services provided by the landlord

Also to assist us in providing our best service we have quarterly Resident Performance Monitoring group meetings, whereby residents look at the services we provide. Positive changes can result from resident input and we are currently looking for new recruits to join the group.

If you are interested in being involved please contact our Head of Continuous Improvement Jane Arditti on 01306 505554. ■



▶▶▶ Helping you to keep warm this winter ▶

The price of energy continues to go up. Circle Anglia and its partners are dedicated to offering residents advice on keeping energy costs down and are investing millions of pounds in making homes more energy efficient.



If you have any further questions, speak to your neighbourhood officer or when you call us, ask if we can help. Visit our website www.mvha.org.uk/resident-info/energy-advice for useful videos and links to other further information.

Answering your questions

What is fuel poverty?

If you spend more than 10% of your income on energy you are in fuel poverty. It is estimated that 4.6 million UK households are in fuel poverty.

How can I save money on my energy bills?



- Don't leave TVs and monitors on standby. **SAVE** up to £40 a year
- Buy smaller LCD TV screens rather than large plasma screens. **SAVE** up to £25 a year



- Put silver foil behind your radiators to reflect heat back into the room. **SAVE** up to £20 a year
- Turn your thermostat down by one degree. **SAVE** up to £60 a year
- Have shower instead of a bath. **SAVE** up to £40 a year
- Buy energy efficient appliances. **SAVE** up to £30 a year
- Wash your clothes at 40 degrees. **SAVE** up to £10. Dry them outside instead of in a tumble. **SAVE** up to £25
- Use energy efficient bulbs. **SAVE** up to £40 a year
- Switch off lights when you leave a room. **SAVE** up to £10
- Making a cup of tea? Only use the water you need. **SAVE** up to £10

That's a saving of up to **£360**. It all adds up!!

Getting the best deal on energy

What are social energy tariffs?

Energy deals for people that are classed as fuel poor. Many companies offer these tariffs:

EDF Energy – Energy Assist

Call the EDF Energy Priority Services Team on 0800 269 450

npower – Spreading Warmth Tariff

Call 0800 9751373

E.ON – Staywarm

Go to www.eonenergy.com/At-Home/Going-Green/Energy-Saving-Advice/Guidance-And-Caring-Energy.htm

Scottish Power – Carefree Plus

Call 0845 2700 700

Scottish and Southern Energy – Energyplus Care

Call Careline on 0800 622 838

British Gas – Essentials

Call Essentials Tariff on 0845 850 2207

For free, impartial advice on energy bills, contact any of the following:

- Home Heat Helpline on 0800 33 66 99 (freephone)
- Energy Saving Trust advice centre on 0800 512 012 (freephone)
- Age Concern on 0800 00 99 66 (freephone)

If you are struggling to pay your bills, don't ignore it. Get advice. Call us on 01306 505 555 or;

- Consumer Credit Counselling Service 0800 138 1111 (freephone)
- National Debtline 0808 808 4000 (freephone)



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