

Home Matters

AUTUMN 2017

www.circle.org.uk

Resident Engagement Day

Have you got your place?

Stay warm this winter

How to avoid broken boilers

**Circle
Housing™**

Enhancing Life Chances

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WELCOME

to your Autumn edition of Home Matters.

It can be an expensive time of year for residents as Christmas plans start to unfold, but we've got your financial needs covered with help from our new budgeting service Money Buddy, which helps you to keep on track of your savings.

Have you signed up to attend our first Clarion Housing Group, Resident Engagement Day? This is your chance to come along and meet other Circle Housing and Affinity Sutton residents and discuss the issues that matter to you, see across on how to attend.

Finally, if you're worried about a loved one or need support yourself this Autumn with avoiding any trips or falls when the cold weather sets in, Centra are here to help. Find out more on pages 4 & 5 for our range of services and personal alarms.

Grace Award Winners

Congratulations to our 2017 Resident Role Models:

- Lin Hulford, Surrey
- Steven Medlin, Devon
- Anne Razey, Southampton
- Frank Alecks, Essex
- Jim Wood, Birmingham

Thank you for making a difference to your neighbourhoods and community.



Are you coming to our Resident Engagement Day this Autumn?

This year Clarion Housing Group is running five Resident Engagement Days (REDs) across the country and there's still time for you to register and attend.

These full day events will bring together between 80 and 100 Circle Housing and Affinity Sutton residents and give you the opportunity to learn more about Clarion Housing Group. You will have the chance to ask questions directly to Members of the Board and Senior Leadership Team, plus learn more about our vision, particularly how you can get involved and shape the services you receive.

There will also be opportunities for you to take part in our interactive workshops on topics such as repairs and maintenance and how to get involved with our digital channels.

Two events have already taken place. The remaining REDs are on:

- **10 November 2017** - Amba Hotel, Charing Cross, London
- **17 November 2017** - Hilton Hotel, Gatwick
- **24 November 2017** - The Bull Hotel, Peterborough

To register your interest in attending please visit www.circle.org.uk/red or for more information please contact getinvolved@clarionhg.com

Centra Falls Awareness Week



The 10th annual 'Falls Awareness Week' was in September offering an opportunity for older people, relatives and carers to find out more about falls and the support available to help prevent them.

Did you know most falls can be prevented and you have the power to reduce them. Here are three of the biggest misunderstandings people make about falls:

Myth 1: Falling happens to other people, not to me.

Fact: About 30% of over 65s and 50% of those over 80 will fall every year.

Myth 2: Falling is something normal that happens as you get older.

Fact: Falling is not a normal part of ageing. Strength, exercise, regularly checking your vision and managing your medication will make your living environment safer and less likely to have an accident.

Myth 3: As long as I stay at home, I can avoid falling.

Fact: Over half of all falls take place at home so be sure to keep your home free from clutter and any other hazards such as rugs and poor lighting. Make simple home modifications, like adding grab bars in the bathroom, a second handrail on stairs, and applying non-slip paint on outdoor steps.



Managing Falls with Centra

Experiencing a fall can be a frightening experience - especially for those who live alone. With the right telecare like a falls detector, Centra can help you get back on your feet and gain the confidence you need to carry on living a healthy happy life.

What is a falls detector from Centra?

It's a small device which can be worn on your wrist or hip. If you have a fall, it will automatically trigger an alarm call which will go through to our 24/7 telecare team who will check that you're okay and if help is required.



What about minor stumbles?

The device can also detect trips and recovered falls, which can often be hidden from carers or assumed to have caused no physical injuries. The wearer has the option to cancel an alarm before it contacts our team.

For more information on how we can support you around the home, speak to a member of our friendly team today on: **0300 456 3548** or visit www.centragroup.org.uk/falls

Beat the rush and stay warm

Switching your heating on now before it gets really chilly will help prevent you being left in the cold when the winter weather sets in.

Our heating engineers are already starting to get busy as residents begin turning on their heating for the first time after the summer and find a pump has seized or a pilot light won't light. Ideally you should beat the rush by checking your heating now.

Checking it now means that if you need repairs to your boiler or heating system you can book it in time before you really miss or need your central heating.

Check your boiler is ready for the winter switch with these easy steps:

- Turn your heating on
- Turn the thermostat up to 30 degrees and leave on for half an hour only
- Check that your radiators are warming up
- Check your timer to see if this is working

Gas boilers should be serviced every year and as your landlord we are legally required to do this. This is to check your boiler or solid fuel appliance and smoke alarms are safe and your appliances are in good, working order.

Having a service every year should mean we can identify any issues early on so that your boiler is less likely to break down. We will contact you to make an appointment for your annual service.

If you experience any problems with your heating please call:

- (Central Region) **BSW Heating** on 0800 090 2359
- (Southern Region) **Smith & Byford** on 0800 085 7031
- (East & Midlands) **Morgan Sindall** on 0800 085 3035



Get online

Did you know that you could save more than £500 a year by shopping online? People with digital skills typically earn up to 10 times more than those without.



Here at Circle Housing we provide a flexible and comprehensive support package tailored to help you do just that.

What we offer:

- **Basic digital skills training** – this can range from group based sessions in your local community or one-to-one sessions in your home if you're unable to get out and about.
- **Low cost connectivity kit and broadband options** – you can call 03333 444 754 to find out more about the best deals available.
- **Digital Champions** – would you like to volunteer your time to become a Digital Champion? It's a great way to make a difference to other people's lives. You don't have to be an IT whizz, you just need a bit of spare time and enthusiasm to support others using digital technology. You will receive free training and support with self-study courses and teaching resources. You will also get to meet and work with other Digital Champions in your community.



To find out more about our offers please email: getonline@circle.org.uk



Would you like more control of your money?

Do you run out of money, or simply not have enough for important events like Christmas or holidays? Now you can get help with our FREE online coach service 'Money Buddy.'

Money Buddy can help you start a savings habit, keep track of your spending and achieve your financial goals. You can access Money Buddy online anytime, in the comfort of your own home.

How does it work?

Money Buddy will guide you through 5 short modules covering every aspect of money management from saving, budgeting and reducing debts, all in straightforward language. Money Buddy is completely self-paced and flexible, which means it fits in around your life.



Why should I join?

- **It's FREE for anyone aged 18-64**
- **Access online, anytime**
- **Great tips for saving money**
- **Find out how to reduce your debts and have more money.**

Start today! Email your name and contact number to: moneybuddy@clarionhg.com

TOYNBEE HALL 
For a future without poverty


Funded by the Money Advice Service

Employment and training support

Are you looking to get back into work or need support with education and training?

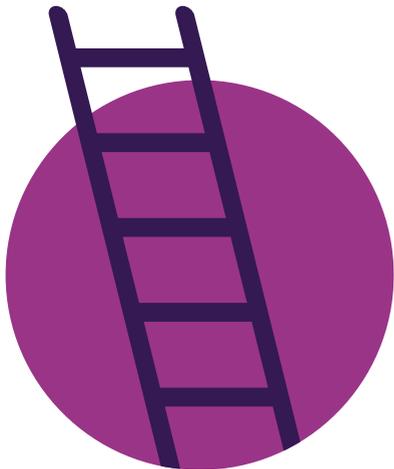
We are offering a new employment and training service to residents to help you achieve just that.

We can help you build upon your confidence to approach employers, support with CV writing and improve your chances of having a successful interview.

Here are a few other reasons to get involved:

- Training opportunities in Construction, Beauty, Customer Service, Security and Retail
- Into work support to access further training, licenses, childcare, travel, uniforms
- Work experience opportunities
- Job and apprenticeship opportunities
- CV writing, interview preparation, job searching
- Improve your IT skills
- Gain budgeting skills

For more information on how to get support please call **0300 100 0303** and press 4. Please note, this will take you through to our Affinity Sutton contact centre. You can then ask to speak a member of the Guideline team who will refer you where appropriate.



LGBTQ+ questionnaire

Are you Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans or questioning your sexuality? If so and you're aged 18 or over, we'd like to hear from you to take part in our research with the University of Surrey.

The University of Surrey are helping us carry out some independent research into the experiences of LGBTQ+ residents living in social housing.

We know that many people still face discrimination across a range of public services so we wanted to find out what support we could provide as landlords to our LGBTQ+ customers.

We are working alongside five other housing providers who are all members of House Proud* to conduct this research.

If you are over 18 and would like to complete the survey please visit www.circle.org.uk/lgbtsurvey

If you would prefer a paper survey please call Frances, the research project assistant on **07895 656222** or email f.sanders@surrey.ac.uk.

**House Proud is an LGBT network group for LGBTQ+ people working in social housing. Established in 2015, it now has 41 represented organisations, varying from housing associations, ALMOs, local authorities and care providers.*





Got a question about your home, rent account or local area? Or need assistance with who to contact for advice?

Visit our website www.circle.org.uk for information on a range of topics from understanding your rent statement and paying your rent online.

You can enter your postcode and find information on services specific to you and the area you live, including local news and events. You can also find advice and support on energy saving services and tips to reduce your bills and much more.

Contact information

**For all Circle Housing residents
including Circle Housing Russet and
Circle Housing Old Ford:**

Tel 0300 500 8000

Email customerservices@circle.org.uk

Website www.circle.org.uk



Enhancing Life Chances