

Peak District
Rural
Life

The residents' newsletter for
**Peak District Rural
Housing Association**

SPRING 2014

www.peakdistrictrha.org.uk


PEAK District
Rural Housing Association



**WIN A
HAMPER!**

Share your favourite recipes
to win a tasty hamper.

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for details

Housing heroine!

Wherever you live, if your home is a Peak District Rural Housing Association property, you can be sure that Alison Clamp has had a hand in it somewhere along the line!

During the past 23 years, Alison has risen through the ranks from Housing Officer to Company Secretary. And now she's been shortlisted for the UK Housing Lifetime Achievement Award.

Well done, Alison!

- Read the full story at www.peakdistrictrha.org.uk

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**FOR YOUR
BENEFIT**

Take control

Getting into financial difficulties? Talk to us!

We can try to find a solution such as applying for Discretionary Housing Benefit or helping you move to a smaller property.

Don't stick your head in the sand – we can help you take control of your debt.



Food for thought



No-one should go to bed hungry. Did you know that foodbanks can provide a minimum of three days' emergency food?

The Trussell Trust has opened hundreds of foodbanks where food is donated by local communities for people in need. If you're struggling to feed yourself or your family, talk to your Housing Officer about gaining a foodbank voucher.

To find out about foodbanks near you, visit www.trusselltrust.org

Budget bargains

Furnishing your home needn't be expensive. Why not...

- join your local Freecycle group. People offer their unwanted items and give them for free to those who can use them. Visit <http://uk.freecycle.org>
- visit a furniture charity shop. British Heart Foundation, Acorns, Sue Ryder, British Red Cross, Oxfam and Emmaus all have dedicated shops for furniture.
- log on to the Furniture Reuse Network at www.frn.org.uk Put in your postcode to find your nearest furniture re-use charity.
- register on ebay at www.ebay.co.uk Search for the items you want and place your bid.
- ask your Housing Officer if they can put you in touch with any local furniture schemes.

Rent increase

You will now have received your rent increase letter.

- If you pay by **standing order** please contact your bank and increase your payment.
- If you claim **Housing Benefit** please inform your Housing Benefit department of the increase
- If you pay by **direct debit** Allpay will have sent you a letter - please check the amounts and dates are correct.

If you have any queries about your increase, please contact your housing officer.

Save your **energy!**



For top tips on how to save energy – and money – visit our new facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/ruralfuelpoverty>

It's part of our energy campaign which is monitoring how tenants use energy in their homes so we can help you reduce your bills by making small changes.



Clear the decks

Tenants moving out a property now need to sign the new Recharge Information form. This states what you have to repair in the property or remove from the property when you leave and what you'll be charged if you fail to do so. Housing Services will go through it with you.



Where you don't clear your loft space it will cost you a minimum of £69.52 or if your garden is full of rubbish it will cost you a minimum of £37.45, if the contractor needs to use a skip or mini skip to remove your rubbish there will be an extra charge of between £120 to £338 which will be added to your bill.

SERVICE DUE



If your home has a renewable energy system, such as air source heating, rainwater harvesting etc, during May, June and July, our contractor, Garry Hamilton, will be making an appointment to complete your annual service.

If you're a shared owner, you're responsible for your own servicing. Garry comes highly recommended as he's a specialist in renewable energy systems. To gain a quote for a service or repairs work, email garryhamilton@virginmedia.com

RESIDENT INVOLVEMENT

Meeting your needs



Members of our Resident Involvement Board (RIB) are looking at our local offers for 2014/15

to check on performance and confirm that the offers still reflect your needs and priorities.

Our local offers set the standards for our service delivery and it's important that we ask our tenants to review

them every 12 months. They cover:

- **resident involvement**
- **garden maintenance**
- **improvements to your home**
- **allocations**
- **repairs & maintenance**
- **anti-social behaviour.**

Want to get involved in the RIB?

Call Robyn Jarvis, on **01629 826040** or email

Robyn.Jarvis@midlandsrh.org.uk



Noticeboard

New post

We're strengthening our housing management team with the creation of a new post - Housing Services Assistant.

Once they're in post, we'll be introducing them to you! Watch this space.

Customer Care Team

Our Customer Care Team will provide a telephone service from 9am to 5pm from Monday to Friday. Occasionally, staff training may mean we need to change these hours, but we will leave clear messages telling you when the office will re-open.

www.peakdistrictrha.org.uk

SHABBY SHED?

Please remember that all sheds, greenhouses, outbuildings and other temporary structures are your responsibility.

They must be kept in a good, safe condition and must be installed or fitted to a professional or competent DIY standard. Even if they've been given to you, this is still the case.

We are only responsible for brick built permanent structures.

If you have an unsafe shed, we can remove it for you if you empty it first, but we won't replace it.

Home improvements

We're committed to continually improving your homes and have now set our planned maintenance budget for the next 12 months.

During 2014/15, windows will be replaced at 10 properties, making homes more energy efficient. Six homes will have new kitchens fitted and tenants will be able to choose from a selection of styles and colours of units, worktops and flooring, plus a limited choice of sinks and taps.

Work will begin from July onwards and tenants have already been notified.



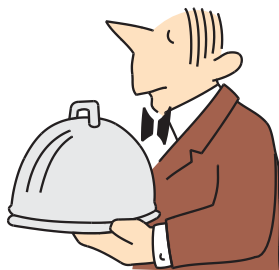
Tasty competition!

Send us your affordable, wholesome family recipes and you could win a delicious hamper!

Have you any family faves which taste like a million dollars but cost peanuts?

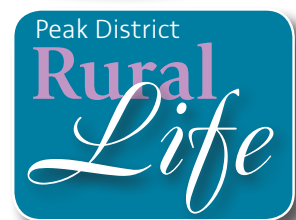
Can you cook up a treat from Sunday roast leftovers? Are you creative with vegetables so kids eat their greens? Email your recipes to midlandsrural@midlandsrh.org.uk

along with your name and contact number by 31st May 2014. We'll print the best ones and the overall winner will receive a family hamper.



Need a translation?

If you need a copy of Rural Life newsletter in another language we will happily provide a translation for you. All you have to do is call the office on **01629 826040** with your request.



is published by Peak District Rural Housing Association, First Floor, 10 Cromford Mill, Mill Lane, Cromford, Derbyshire DE4 3RQ.
Tel: 01629 826040. **Fax:** 01629 826468.
E-mail: peakdistrictrural@midlandsrh.org.uk
Website: www.peakdistrictrha.org.uk

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