

Peak District
Rural
Life

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

SPRING 2016

www.peakdistrictrha.org.uk

**PEAK District**
Rural Housing Association



Royal Award

Three of our homes are in line for a royal seal of approval.

The houses in Sepycoc Lane, Longford have been shortlisted for the prestigious Patron's Award from The Almshouse Association, a national charity with HRH The Prince of Wales as its Patron.

Resident Vicky Millward says: "I was delighted to be able to move back to Longford as it's where I lived as a girl and my parents live just around the corner. We couldn't be happier here."

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

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UC Rollout

Universal Credit is being introduced in stages to all people on benefits and the next phase of the roll-out is about to get started.

While this next phase, which runs from May to December 2016, won't currently affect residents living in our local authority areas, we'll keep you updated when new areas are announced.

Remember, with the new system you'll receive a single monthly payment direct into your bank account, rather than individual benefits.

For help and advice, call the Universal Credit Helpline on **0345 600 0723** or speak to your Housing Officer.

New Guide

Have you read your new Pocket Guide to Universal Credit?

It's been sent to every resident to explain, in an easy to view format, everything you need to know about how Universal Credit will work and what you need to do to make a claim.

It's also available on the website at www.peakdistrictrha.org.uk



Housing Benefit backdating period reduced:

From 1 April 2016 the period working age claimants can claim backdated benefit will be reduced to a maximum of four weeks. Currently when a working

age tenant requests a backdate and can show good cause for making a late claim they can get housing benefit backdated for up to 6 months.

On a more positive note/good news ...

● National Minimum Wage increased:

The National Minimum Wage will be 'rebranded' as the National Living Wage and will be increased to £7.20 per hour for those 25 or over from April 2016. It will reach £9.00 per hour by 2020.

● Personal tax allowance increased:

The Personal Tax Allowance, the amount you can earn before paying income tax, will be increased from £10,600 to £11,000 from April 2016.

● New State Pension makes it simpler.....

For those reaching pension age from 6 April 2016 a new State Pension is being introduced to replace the basic State Pension and State Second Pension. This affects all women born on or after 6 April 1953 and all men born on or after 6 April 1951. The new pension is designed to be much simpler than the current system and will consist of a single amount to be awarded which should make it easier to work out how much state pension you are likely to get. For further information please visit www.gov.uk/new-state-pension/overview

● Rent reductions – you will have recently received notification of your new rent for 2016/17.

As you may already be aware social housing rents are being reduced by 1% for the next 4 years –remember this does not apply to service charges.

Winning homes

Our development in Youlgrave was crowned as the overall project of the year at the East Midlands fbe Awards 2015.

We worked with Youlgrave Community Trust to develop the scheme of six affordable rent and shared ownership homes at Hannah Bowman Way and are delighted that the award recognised the excellent community engagement and teamwork.



Minor repairs

Remember that minor repairs such as mending cupboard door catches, replacing fuses and re-fixing toilet seats are your responsibility. Details can be found at www.peakdistrictrha.org.uk/living-in-your-home/your-responsibility/

If you're a shared owner, you're responsible for all your own repairs.

Good neighbours

When you park your vehicles, please try to think of your neighbours to avoid causing any problems.

- If you find you do have a problem, talk to your neighbour to try to resolve the issue.
- You may find it easier to write to them if you don't want to speak face-to-face.
- If the problem affects you and other neighbours it may help to contact the person responsible as a group, it may help them realise what they are doing is affecting more than just one person.
- If the problem persists, speak to your Housing Officer.



JOIN THE TEAM

Want to have a real say in how your housing services are delivered? Join the Resident Involvement Board!

Any resident can join and you'll be asked to comment on our policies, promises, newsletters and documents. It's a great way to share your thoughts and ideas and help to improve services for residents.

Full details and an application form can be found at

www.peakdistrictrha.org.uk/living-in-your-home/resident-involvement/

Get in touch!

Great days out

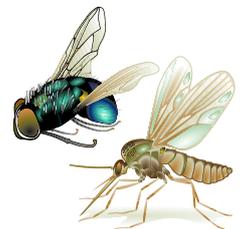


Have you enjoyed a great local day out recently? If so, we'd love you to spill the beans! We're looking to share details on Facebook of the best places to go and the best things to do without having to travel far.

Is there a value-for-money attraction which the kids adore, a special place you head out to when you've time to relax or a hidden gem which you've just discovered on your doorstep? Send your suggestions to sue.haywood@midlandsrural.org.uk and we'll choose a selection to post on our new Facebook page.

Pest control

Spring is here but with it comes the threat of pests including wasps, ants, rats and other creatures!



Contact your local council if you have a problem with any pests in your home or garden. Some councils offer free pest control services while others may charge depending on the type of pest you have!

Filming opportunity!

Transparent Television is making a one hour documentary for a major broadcaster about love and marriage in later life. They want to hear from any couples aged over 70 who are planning to get married before the end of 2016. The documentary will follow their journey towards their big day.

Interested? Call Emma Linstead on **020 7704 3310** or email emmalinstead@transparenttelevision.com



Alarmed?

Smoke alarms can save your life so it's important they're maintained properly. If your alarm is beeping, it probably means the battery needs changing. It's easy to fit a new battery and you should find it works fine again. If not, then call us.

Follow Us

Have you liked us on Facebook yet? We're regularly sharing lots of useful information, such as updates about Universal Credit, so you can read the latest news straight away.



We'll still be sending you information, including this newsletter, through the post, but we know that residents increasingly like to read news digitally, so we're moving with the times!

Visit www.facebook.com and search for us then click 'like'.

Service standards

We will use plain language and avoid the use of jargon.

Keep it clean

Are you a considerate resident?
Do you clean up after your pet?

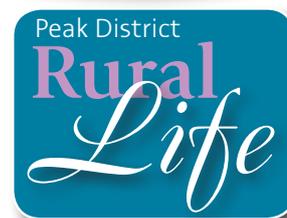
We are giving away one FREE poop bag dispenser with some poo bags to each household who owns a dog or cat (while stocks last). If you'd like one, ask your Housing Officer.

Dog mess is a serious health hazard. Grounds maintenance cannot look after communal areas if they are littered in animal faeces. Please clean up the mess left by your pet by bagging it and safely disposing of it.



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 **0300 1234 009** with your request.



is published by Peak District Rural Housing Association, First Floor, 10 Cromford Mill, Mill Lane, Cromford, Derbyshire DE4 3RQ.
Tel: 0300 1234 009 **Fax:** 01629 826468
E-mail: enquiries@midlandsrural.org.uk
Website: www.peakdistrictrha.org.uk

Peak District Rural Housing Association Limited is registered as a Co-operative and Community Benefit Society with charitable status 26807R

Ask us ...

Have you got a question about your home or the services we provide? If so, ask away! We'll be answering one of your questions in every newsletter. Simply email them to sue.haywood@midlandsrural.org.uk




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