

Colne C-mail

Your Resident Newsletter from Colne

Keeping your home fire safe



The awful fire at Grenfell Tower is, quite rightly, never out of the news; it must not happen again. As your landlord, our priority is to ensure you feel safe in your Colne homes and know what to do if a fire started. The information is contained in the Essential Guide to Health and Safety we sent you last year or when you moved in.

To build on this, we will be displaying the Fire Risk Assessment reports, carried out for all our blocks of flats, on the communal noticeboard. We hope this will help residents better understand what safety measures are in place and raise any concerns. Colne does not have any high rise properties, all our blocks of flats are five storeys or less. We carry out regular fire risk assessments. If you have any concerns please always contact us, we are listening.

Keep gas safe in your home

The law says we must carry out an annual gas safety check to make sure your home is safe. Please remember to be in at the time of your annual gas check appointment. If you do not let us in we may have to force entry to cap the gas off and ensure your home is safe for you to live in.

Talk to us about rent



If you are a Colne tenant of working age claiming any of these benefits or know someone who is – our rent expert Emily Robbins can help. It may mean you will need to claim Universal Credit, the change to how you pay your rent is huge. Get in touch with our Income Team today and Emily or her colleagues can help you prepare. Call 01206 244766.



Father of two Lee went from sofa surfing to 'life-changing' home.

Scores of people on the housing register have moved into new modern Colne homes in Halstead.

Father of two Lee Mobley, 40, had been 'sofa surfing' for two months, before he moved into a spacious one bedroom apartment. He said: "I was homeless due to a relationship breakdown. To have my own home again is tremendous, it means I can start thinking about the future. At last I have a place my two daughters can come and visit and am now able to get back to work. It is life-changing. It is home."

The development, which was funded by Colne and created in partnership with Icen Homes and Braintree District Council, includes one and two-bedroom apartments, terraced houses and semis, as well as one three-bedroom detached bungalow, adapted for customers with limited mobility.

They are on the 103-home development by Bellway on the former Central Park industrial site off Colchester Road.



Colne's Clare Bennett with Lee Mobley.

Your views are changing how we do things

Residents told us in our satisfaction survey we could do better by resolving more of your queries the first-time you contact us. To improve your customer experience, we are currently looking at the way we deliver our services. We will let you know more later in the year. If you have any queries in the meantime talk to our Head of Customer Service Amy St Ledger.



Learning from your complaints

We said we would keep you updated on how we handle formal complaints and use any learning to make improvements. In the last three months we have received 12 formal complaints from residents, most relating to delays in repairs being carried out by our contractors Fosters or Aaron:

12

Service area	No.
Repairs	7
ASB Handling	3
Defects and procedures	1
Tenancy Management	1

We are pleased that all complaints were dealt with in the correct time frame and a taskforce has set up to ensure we get even better. We award customers with compensation if there is a service failure which affects them. If one of our repairs or gas service contractors has got something wrong the compensation is paid by them.

We do more than provide homes



One of our residents was featured in a BBC EastEnders knife crime special talking about what she has been through since her teenage son was killed. Caroline Shearer, of Clacton, featured in the episode shown at 9.15pm on July 6 2018. Her son Jay Whiston was killed in Colchester in 2012. Colne played a very small but pivotal part in supporting Caroline to raise awareness of the devastation knife crime causes.

Our Colne Community Builders Fund provided a £2,500 grant for Caroline to start a weapons awareness campaign in local schools called 'Only Cowards Carry'. This has now developed into a national charity reaching more than 22,000 people and continues to grow. We are very proud of Caroline and how she is determined to see some good come out of such tragedy. This year we have continued to enable communities to tackle the issues affecting them by awarding grass roots grants. If you know of a good cause who may want to apply for a grant, please contact us for more information.



£29,297
of grants distributed.

3,503

people supported to enable independent living.

6 groups funded:

- Signpost Homework Club for disadvantaged young people (Colchester)
- Pilot course of Mindfulness for people with mental health issues (Colchester)
- Foodcycle Clacton, helping people in food poverty (Tendring)
- Expanding horticultural and retail training for people with learning difficulties (north Essex)
- Expansion of project to improve social inclusion for those with dementia and their carers (Babergh)
- Salary of mentor at social enterprise café which supports long-term unemployed people (Colchester)

We've updated our Privacy Policy to reflect the changes in data protection law and to better explain how and why we collect your personal information. The policy can be seen on our website.