

# My Home

Sheltered housing newsletter



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Issue 7 | May 2023





# Welcome

Welcome to the latest edition of My Home Sheltered Housing newsletter.

Living in a PCH sheltered home offers many ways to enjoy the company of your neighbours, the community you live in, and the safe spaces you share. In this issue we feature some of the activities residents are sharing and enjoying.

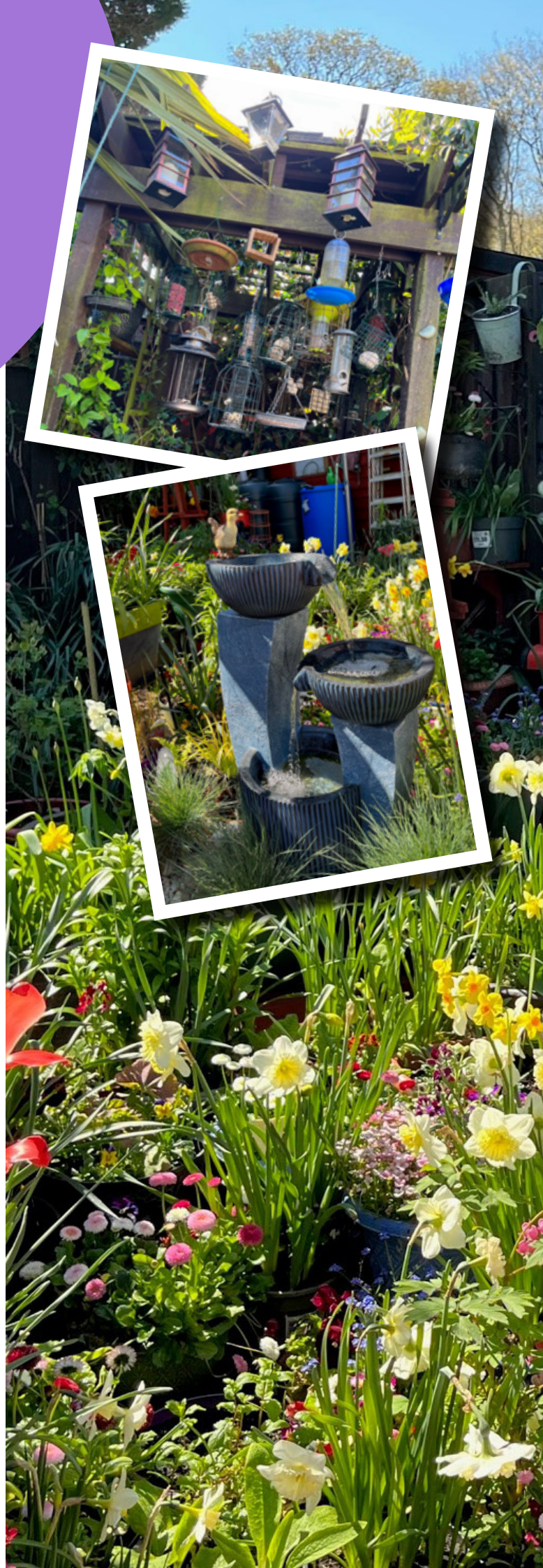
Read our spotlight on Ron King House on page 9 about the social events residents have organised in the scheme or our performance feature on page 10. On page 3 Geoff tells us how gardening is his passion, and with Spring slowly emerging perhaps you'll be inspired to enjoy the communal gardens and outdoor spaces at the schemes.

The Coronation of King Charles III was celebrated at our schemes recently and although Spring sunshine was in short supply, the rain didn't dampen any spirits. It was a wonderful opportunity for get-togethers across the city. We share some of your memories and pictures on pages 4 and 5.

At PCH we aim to support you to make the most of your sheltered housing community. If you'd like to join something that's happening in your scheme or start something new and aren't sure how, speak to your Housing with Support Officer and they'll be happy to talk to you about what's on, or the help that's available.

## Helen Ryan

Head of Communities and Housing with Support







## Geoff's blooming marvellous garden

Green-fingered resident Geoff has lived in sheltered housing in the city for over three years, and during that time he has added over 170 pots of flowers to his beloved garden.

Despite turning 80 in May, Geoff's garden is his pride and joy, and he prunes it every day, no matter the weather, to keep his flowers in the best condition possible.

**Geoff said: "I love my garden, especially at this time of year. I enjoy working in my garden, and I can't just sit down and do nothing all day, that's not me. It keeps my mind alert and going, and I need that."**

"I have also added a water feature and an aviary so I get visits from many species of birds, including blue tits and woodpeckers. My wife and I enjoy sitting outside watching them when the weather is nice."



# CORONATION CELEBRATIONS



Many residents across the city celebrated the Coronation of King Charles III in their communal rooms with their neighbours, while other residents remained in their homes to enjoy the celebration with their family and friends.

At Helen Fox House, residents decorated their communal space with red, white and blue and enjoyed a feast fit for a king while they watched the broadcast on TV.

Residents living at our Camels Head scheme made the most of the special day and received coronation goodie bags organised by residents. The bags were given to residents who expressed their interest in receiving them, and included scones, jam, cream, strawberries, as well as bookmarks, pencils, a coronation napkin, and a paper cup.

**Gaynor Southerton, Treasurer of the Camels Head social group, said:** “Without the support of my fellow neighbours helping me to pack the bags, we wouldn’t have got through it and been able to deliver the bags to the residents. I have never seen such a good production line, and in my mind, they saved the day.”



## Coronation memories

On 2 June 1953, Princess Elizabeth was crowned Queen Elizabeth II at Westminster Abbey in London. During the ceremony, the Queen formally became Head of State of the United Kingdom, Head of the Church of England and Head of the Armed Forces.

The Coronation brought the nation together and, according to the BBC, 20 million people across the world watched the service on television, outnumbering the radio audience for the first time. 10.4 million people without television sets of their own were estimated to have watched in the homes of friends and neighbours, and 1.5 million witnessed the televised event in public places such as pubs and cinemas.

We spoke to PCH residents living in some of our sheltered housing schemes to hear their memories of the Coronation in 1953, and find out what they were looking forward to during the Coronation of King Charles III.

Pat and Colin Landricombe, who currently live in a PCH sheltered housing home in Plympton, both lived in Plymouth at the time of the Coronation and have great memories of the day.

Pat said: "On the day of the Coronation we sat listening to the radio all day as we did not have a TV. I can remember being given a cup with Queen Elizabeth II on it, and we had a street party with bread tuffs with jam and cream, which were just delicious. We also had jelly, and paste sandwiches."

Colin said: "I watched the 1953 Coronation on TV at a neighbour's house, so we were lucky enough to see the procession. I also remember that we had a street party on our terrace which everyone enjoyed."

Jill Goodson, a PCH resident who has a connection to the sheltered housing scheme in Camel's Head, has nothing but good memories of the last Coronation.

She said: "I only was five years old during the last Coronation, so my memories aren't the most vivid I must admit, however I do remember it fondly, and I can remember sitting in front of the television. I remember thinking how beautiful the Queen looked and I wanted a crown as it was gorgeous.

"I lived in a pub my dad was running at that time and we had a lot of people around us and made the most of it that way.

"I can remember getting under my parents' feet for a while just before it happened, and I can remember my mother telling me that the golden coach will be passing by in a street away from us - I waited an hour, nothing happened and I came back home complaining."

Danny and Irene Westley in Honicknowle also remember the Coronation. Irene was eight years old at the time and lived in Plymouth. A key memory for her was the street parties and the food, mostly sandwiches. Danny recalls the excitement of the Coronation but admits that he did not really understand what was going on but loved the party.

## Couple receive Royal card for 60th wedding anniversary

A couple received a card from HRH King Charles III and Camilla, Queen Consort, in celebration of their Diamond Wedding anniversary reached in December.



The PCH residents were delighted to receive one of the first cards from the King in celebration of their anniversary late last year and will treasure it forever.

**They said: "It was great to receive a card from King Charles III and Camilla, Queen Consort to celebrate our Diamond Wedding anniversary."**



# BE WARY OF 'NO WIN NO FEE' CLAIMS

It's important to be vigilant when it comes to scammers or organisations who may promise things they can't deliver and leave you out of pocket.

Residents are warned to be especially aware of disreputable firms who are actively targeting tenants of social housing associations at the moment, and encouraging them to make disrepair claims by promising large sums in compensation.

Some firms can pledge 'no win no fee' deals and urge tenants to agree to make unnecessary legal claims which can fail, leaving tenants having to pay expensive court costs. Even if claims are successful, tenants can be left with a very small amount of money after huge legal bills are deducted, or the compensation can even be less than the legal bills owed, so residents can end up in debt.



## A better way

If you have reported a repair and are unhappy with how it's been dealt with, housing associations like PCH offer a complaints process. The process should be clear and accessible, in line with the Governments' pledge to help tenants feel empowered to make complaints.

PCH is a member of the Housing Ombudsman Service, an independent body which reviews complaints when they can't be resolved, and the Ombudsman can resolve disputes without the need for tenants to go to court.

The service is free, independent and impartial for all tenants and landlords.

Citizens Advice suggests court action against a landlord should be a "last resort" in matters of disrepair

issues, warning it can be costly and time consuming for tenants.

The service also suggests contacting your landlord first and following their complaints process, as a court might reject your claim otherwise.

### How to make a complaint at PCH

The complaints process at PCH is detailed on our website. Scan the QR code for more information.

You can make a complaint through:

- A contact form on our website
- The MyPCH resident portal
- Social media message
- Calling us on 0808 230 6500
- In person at our offices in

Plumer House or in the PCH city centre shop

- By writing to us at Plumer House, Tailyour Road, Crownhill, Plymouth PL6 5DH
- For sheltered housing tenants - Talk to your Housing with Support Officer and they can support you or your family to make a complaint. This can be as easy as telling them what your complaint is and asking them to submit it for you.

PCH considers compensation for customers where there has been loss or damage, considered on the merit of the claim, and where there is evidence to support a compensation claim.

Scan to visit our complaints page on our website



Anyone can be the victim of a scam. Scams can include: telephone calls, letters, emails, text messages and in person. Learn about the latest scams, how to reduce the chances of being scammed and know what to do if you think you have been targeted.

Express your interest in a free scam awareness workshop, coming to a scheme near you soon!

Contact your Housing with Support Officer, or Ashleigh Knowles on 0800 230 6500 or email [learnforfree@plymouthcommunityhomes.co.uk](mailto:learnforfree@plymouthcommunityhomes.co.uk)



# Family of resident donates £150 to community group



The family of Barbara Brooks, a PCH resident who sadly passed away, has donated £150 to a community group at a sheltered housing scheme in Plympton.

Barbara was a longstanding PCH resident who lived in a PCH Housing with Support scheme until her recent death. She was instrumental in adapting the communal area into the large open space it is today but unfortunately she passed away before the new space opened earlier this year.

Residents who are part of the Number 6 community group meet weekly, and they host events for all to enjoy, including Christmas parties, Easter raffles and more recently, a Coronation party.

Barbara's son Nick and daughter-in-law Marilyn wanted to give a donation to the Number 6 group in her memory to provide the funds for a resident get-together.

The residents have continued to invite Nick and Marilyn to the community group and events that take place to help support the couple following their loss.

**Nick Brooks said: "The Number 6 community group was my mum's life, and it kept her going up until the very end. She loved living here and was 95 when she passed away."**

"We moved in across the way before she died to be closer to her. We

were welcomed into the group by all the residents with open arms. They are very supportive, and we feel extremely welcome here."

Barbara made a positive impact on a number of residents living at the sheltered scheme, with many having nothing but nice words to say about her and the legacy she has left.

Vera, a resident at the Plympton scheme, said: "Barbara was such a lovely lady who cared for all of us. She was more than a head of the club; she was a friend, and not just any type of friend. I couldn't help but love her, and I have so many feelings that are hard to comprehend. She was simply one of the best."

## Thinking of organising your own communal event in your sheltered scheme?

PCH values the various activities and events that take place in sheltered schemes and the wider community and would like to support you wherever we can to encourage social activities.

If you are interested in organising an activity or event at your sheltered scheme, it is important to let your Housing Support Officer know so we can work together to keep you and your guests safe in the communal spaces.

By talking to your Housing Support Officer in advance, they can support you to complete a short risk assessment which gives everyone reassurance that we are staying safe and have the correct insurance cover for all social activities.

Sheltered communal lounges and gardens are there to be enjoyed by all tenants at the scheme and their invited guests. They are provided to encourage social activity, help overcome loneliness and isolation and provide an additional recreational facility on the scheme.



# WHAT'S ON BOARD

## PIRATE-THEMED RESIDENT ASSOCIATION EVENT TUESDAY 13TH JUNE AT HOME PARK

### AHOY THERE...

Are you a member of an active resident association or social group?

PCH Communities Team is running a day of support, training and general pirate fun to help residents navigate the process of running a group.

Please contact the Communities Team about the new navigation for groups session being run in June.

Please note there is limited space but register your interest with the Communities Team on 0800 230 6500 or email [communities1@plymouthcommunityhomes.co.uk](mailto:communities1@plymouthcommunityhomes.co.uk)

## THE BEACON

**The Tea and Toast sessions**  
Tuesdays - 10am-12:30pm

**Hobbies and Coffees sessions**  
Fridays - 10am-1pm



**Learn for Free** is a free training programme designed for our residents.

Whether you are looking to meet new people, get involved in your community, help us deliver great services, or update your CV with new skills, Learn for Free has something for you.

To make it easier to find the right activity for you, Learn for Free has three parts:

- Get Skilled
- Get Involved
- Get Together



## What's on in June and July?

### Craft club

Meet others and have a cuppa and a chat while trying out different craft activities.

**10am – 1pm at the Beacon, North Prospect, PL2 2NE**

### Digital drop in

Learn how to get the most out of your smartphone, tablet or laptop at a digital clinic. Are you stuck on internet shopping? Want to find ideas and recipes online? Come along with your device and learn some fresh skills and meet friends old and new.

**10am – 12.30pm at Plumer House, Crownhill, PL6 5DH**

**June** | 5th & 19th Craft club | 8th Digital drop in

**July** | 3rd & 17th Craft club | 13th Digital drop in







## Housing with Support scheme spotlight

Plymouth  
Community Homes

## Ron King House

Sheltered Housing

We visited the residents at Ron King House, a centrally located Housing with Support scheme, to hear why they enjoy living there.

PCH has 11 Housing with Support schemes across the city that are just for people aged 60 or over who have a need for extra support, or 55 and over and disabled, with a need for extra support.

Within the Ron King House scheme in Stonehouse, there is a communal kitchen, lounge and patio garden, as well as a laundry room, lift, on-site parking and a guest room.

Residents living in these schemes often host their own social events, and at Ron King House, residents enjoy hosting a monthly quiz, bingo and food nights in their communal areas.

Within each scheme PCH employs Housing with Support Officers who are available within working hours to offer light-touch support, manage communal areas and facilities, as well as to ensure the building is safe and well looked after. As well as the benefits socially,

residents benefit from the support of their Housing with Support Officer in a variety of ways, and the officer at Ron King House, Allyson Hood, has been praised for her efforts.

Robert, a resident at Ron King House, said: "I had no idea that the Housing with Support Officer could provide such vital support to me and the other residents living here.

**"I am so glad that I accepted the support on the day our officer first knocked on my door, and I couldn't be without her."**

"It's been a very tough time for me due to surgery and mental illness but nonetheless Ally has always been in touch with not only me but has also liaised with my family to support me."

Virginia, a resident who has lived at Ron King House for just under a year, has had her life transformed by moving there. She moved from North England to Plymouth and is delighted to be living in the city now. She said: "I didn't know anyone when I was moving to Plymouth,

but from the second I stepped foot in Ron King House, I was fully supported and continue to be supported, by both the other residents and our Housing with Support Officer.

"Due to my situation, the Housing with Support Officer was my only point of contact at the very start. As I came with only a few bags and my car, the residents came together to help me, and the assistance I have received is just unbelievable.

**"I am really happy with the way Plymouth Community Homes have supported me and moving here is better than I could ever have hoped for."**

To apply for a Housing with Support property, visit **Devon Home Choice** or contact **01752 305496**.





# Performance feature - how are we doing?

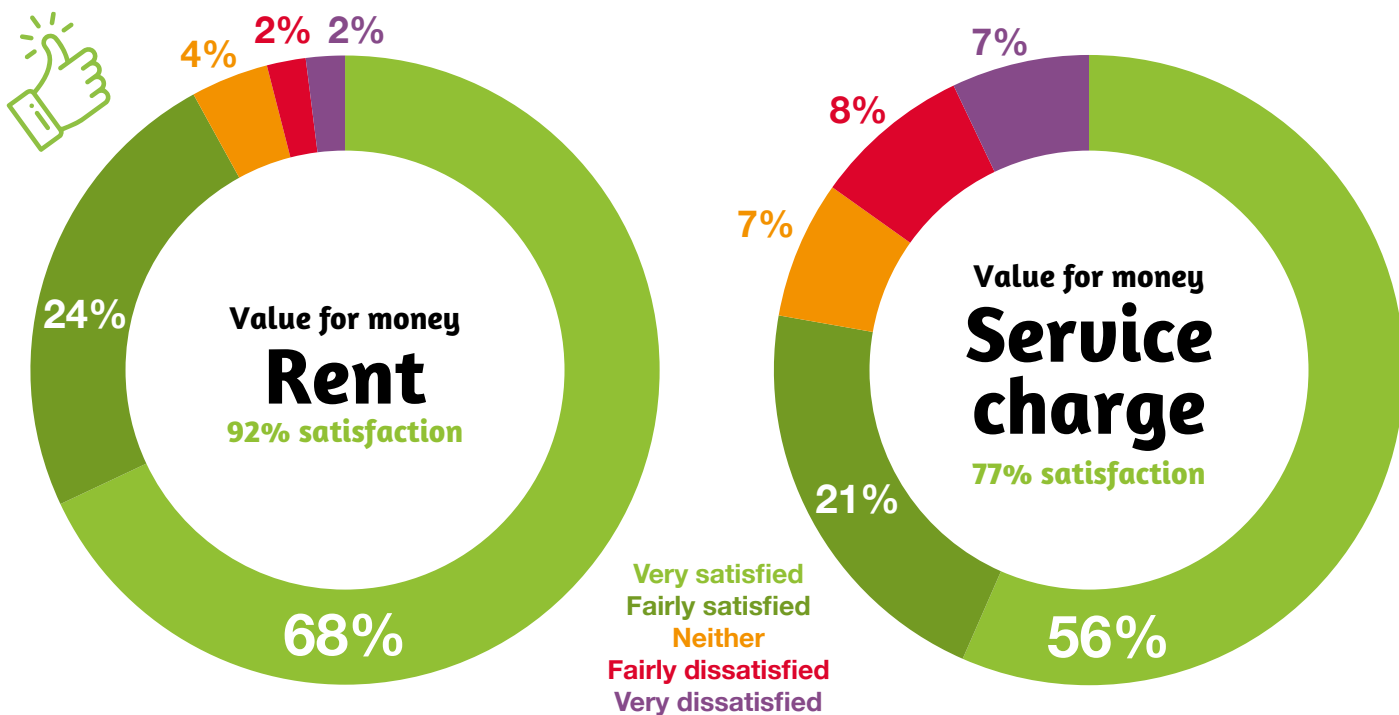
In each issue of My Home we show you some of the feedback we've had from residents about our services.

Every quarter, residents are contacted and invited to take part in a telephone interview. The survey is designed to collect the views of 250 residents per quarter, appropriately sampled by tenure, age and area.

Below we're featuring recent feedback from January 2023 about the value for money PCH provides.

In our latest survey, around nine out of ten residents were satisfied with the value for money of the rent they pay (92%), with considerably more very satisfied (68%) than fairly satisfied (24%). Just 4% of residents were dissatisfied and a further 4% were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

Satisfaction with both the value for money of the rent and the service charge has increased by 1% and 4% since the last survey.



## Latest satisfaction survey results

As of December 2022, the results of our usual satisfaction survey for sheltered housing tenants were:

How safe do you feel in your home?	%
Very safe	77%
Fairly safe	23%
Neither	0%
Fairly unsafe	0%
Very unsafe	0%

Do you feel supported to live independently in your home?	%
Very supported	92%
Fairly supported	8%
Neither	0%
Fairly Unsupported	0%
Very Unsupported	0%



# Compliments

Thank you to the tenants who have taken the time to send in compliments about our staff. We really appreciate the time you have taken to send compliments and it helps us to recognise and celebrate the good work of our staff.

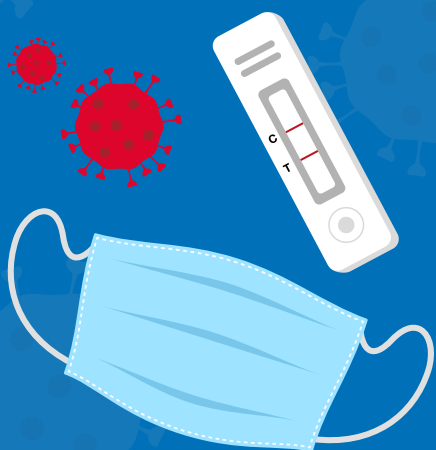
**“It’s been a very tough time for me in particular due to surgery and mental illness but nonetheless Ally has always been in touch with not only me but has also liaised with my family to support me. It’s not just about the support Ally gives me, Ally gives that support to all the residents. I want you to know that we at Ron King House have the utmost respect and gratitude for Ally.”**

A compliment for Housing with Support Officer Allyson Hood



**“(Anonymous) was struggling with their mental health back in December and Amy was such a support to us both. Their mental health is much better now and they feel like a different person – like the worry and sadness has disappeared from their face and they wouldn’t stop smiling.”**

A compliment for Housing with Support Officer Amy Lewis



## COVID REMINDER STAY ALERT TO STAY SAFE

Covid-19 is unfortunately still with us, and it is important that you take measures to help you, and your neighbours, to stay safe. If you catch Covid-19, please let your Housing with Support Officer know, and they may suggest that you do not use communal areas in your scheme while you have the infection.

Covid-19 is more serious for older people or anyone with a long-term health condition, and people aged 75 and over are being offered a spring booster of the Covid-19 vaccine. You should be offered an appointment between April and June by your usual GP surgery. If you need support to check with your surgery, please speak with your Housing with Support Officer.

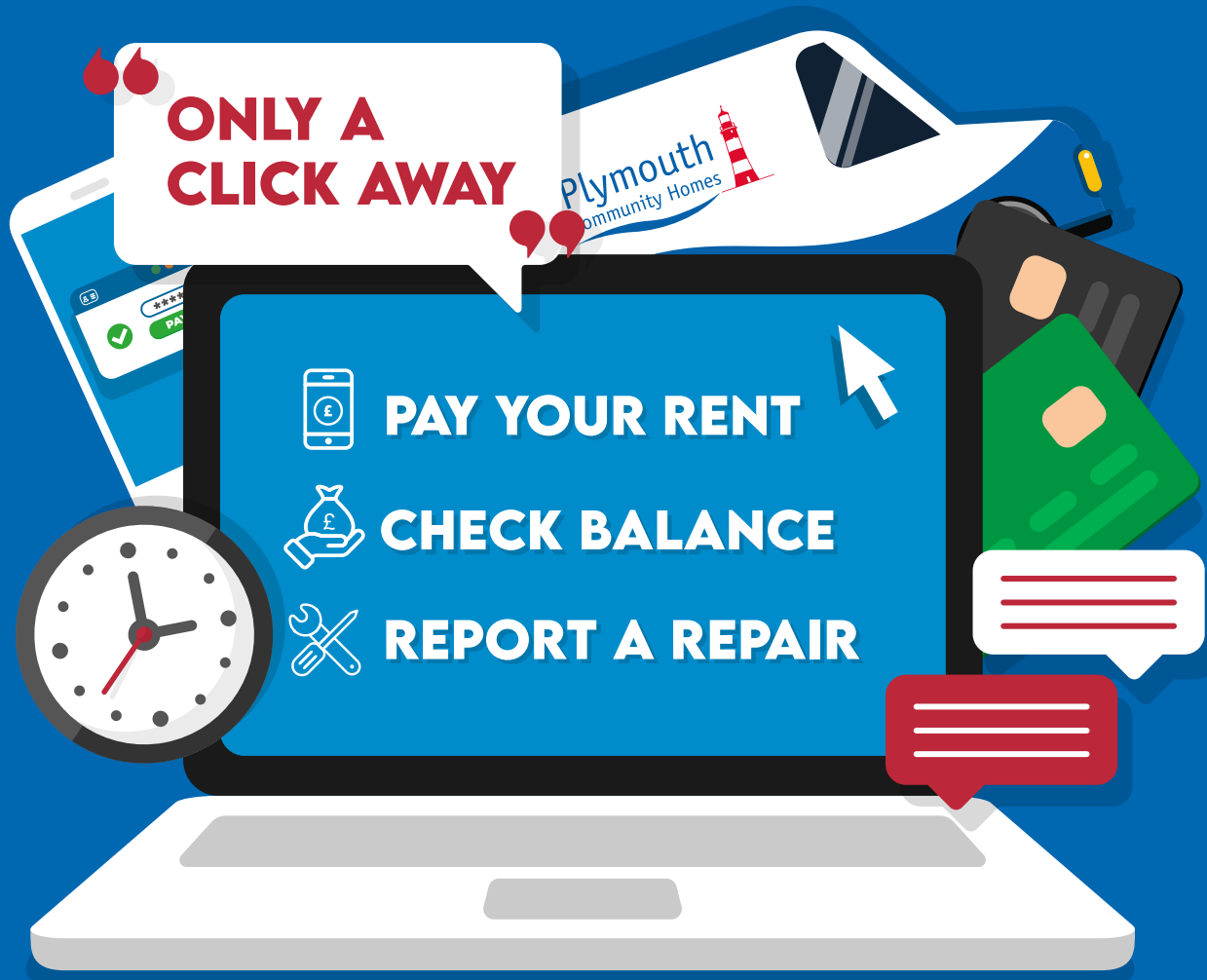
## SPOT THE DIFFERENCE



Thank you to Gaynor, a PCH resident for sending us her spot the difference creation.



# SIGN UP TO MYPCH



Use MyPCH to quickly and easily check and pay your rent, report a repair and update your contact details anywhere, anytime.


[mypch.plymouthcommunityhomes.co.uk](http://mypch.plymouthcommunityhomes.co.uk)


We're always keen to hear what you're up to, so if you'd like to tell us about something we can include in one of our publications, we'd love to hear it.

Email [news@plymouthcommunityhomes.co.uk](mailto:news@plymouthcommunityhomes.co.uk)

## Plymouth Community Homes

Plumer House, Tailyour Road, Crownhill, Plymouth, PL6 5DH

 [www.plymouthcommunityhomes.co.uk](http://www.plymouthcommunityhomes.co.uk)

 0808 230 6500

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Did you know you can recycle me?

