Welcome to our Summer Edition

Welcome to the summer edition of Connect. There’s plenty to read in this issue. We’re really proud to announce that tenants have recently moved into five new council houses at Laburnum Crescent in Kettering. These are the first council houses to be built in the Borough for many years and we hope they will be followed by many more new homes over the years ahead. You can read more about the houses on page 4.

As well as building new homes, we are also investing in our existing housing stock. On page 8, there’s information about the estate improvement programme and our communal area cleaning project, which has just been introduced on the Highfield Road Estate. Feedback from residents has been very positive and we hope to extend the project to other areas in due course.

Finally, if you’re wondering what’s on across the Borough this summer, you can get the latest news on pages 10 and 11 about ‘Kettering by the Sea’ and a host of other events that are taking place over the next few weeks.

Have a great summer!

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And the winner is...

Congratulations to Margaret Doherty who won £25 worth of shopping vouchers after finding the Easter bunnies hidden in the pages of the last issue of Connect!

Spot the sand castles and win!
Now it’s your turn to try and win £25 worth of shopping vouchers. Simply find the sand castles scattered amongst the pages of this newsletter and email the number you find to connect@kettering.gov.uk.

Don’t forget to include your name and contact details. All correct entries will be checked and the winner drawn out of a hat. The closing date is 25th July 2017.

‘Great Silver Service Bake Off’ raises over £1,000 for charity!

In April, our sheltered housing residents rose to the occasion for a ‘Great Silver Service Bake Off’ between rival scheme locations. The wonderful idea for a fundraising baking competition came from the sheltered housing schemes’ very own Social Organisers’ group.

The event took place at Windsor Gardens with eight schemes entering, which each had to bake:
- A batch of savoury pastries
- A batch of biscuits or scones
- A showstopper cake

Council staff dressed up and took on the personalities of Mary, Paul, Sue and Mel from BBC’s Great British Bake Off, for an afternoon of cake and fun, raising money for Macmillan along the way. The event was very well supported and a staggering £1,047 was raised. Congratulations to Madams Gardens in Rothwell who were the winning scheme!

“We were delighted to see so many of you wanting a slice of the action, and to raise so much dough for charity really was the icing on the cake!”

John Conway, Head of Housing
Kettering Borough Council has taken delivery of five brand new council homes as part of a new development at Laburnum Crescent, which will consist of 72 new homes in total delivered by developer Westleigh and Waterloo Housing Group.

The five new-build homes were purchased as part of our strategy to directly increase our housing supply, in addition to other properties we've recently added to our housing portfolio.

The five new homes have been assigned to local households through Keyways, with tenants signing up to their properties at the beginning of April.

The Council properties consist of a three-bedroom wheelchair adapted bungalow, a three-bedroom wheelchair adapted house and three one-bedroom bungalows. The homes are all linked to a 'Lifeline' personal alarm scheme for tenants with poor mobility, serious health problems or those who feel vulnerable in their own homes.

“The first council houses to be built in this Borough for a generation provides high quality, affordable homes for some of the most vulnerable people in our community.”

John Conway, Head of Housing

NEW HOME VISITS – WORKING TOGETHER

In April, we introduced home visits to our existing tenants. Our Neighbourhood Managers and Scheme Managers aim to visit all tenants at least once every five years. This is to ensure that you are aware of the support and other services the Council can offer; and also to inspect your home and garden. When your visit is due you will receive a letter with the date and time of the visit; this should take about an hour.

Home visits are important. If the date on your letter is inconvenient, please rearrange by contacting your Neighbourhood Manager on 01536 410 333.

We aim to visit 400 existing tenants in 2017/18

We’re looking forward to meeting you!

So far, following home visits, Neighbourhood Managers / Scheme Managers have:

• Arranged Occupational Therapy home assessments to consider possible installation of aids & adaptations into tenant’s homes.
• Provided advice about moving to smaller, more suitable accommodation.
• Updated our existing records to reflect who is now living in the property.
• Referred tenants to Tenancy Support

We have really enjoyed getting to know our tenants.

The annual Tenants Forum Housing Tour took place on 11th May to showcase the work of the housing team. It also gave tenants, officers and local Councillors to opportunity to:

• View new-build social housing in Eden Street, Kettering and the new Council homes in Laburnum Crescent
• Be briefed on an improvement project planned for a row of terraced homes in Kettering where the Neighbourhood Manager had worked with local residents to identify solutions to improve the quality of their homes and environment
• Visit The Lawns Sheltered Housing Scheme to see the benefits of refurbishment works to the communal areas
• Inspect communal areas on Whiteford Drive, Kettering in order to assess the impact of sterile block implementation and the pilot communal cleaning project

A big thank you to everyone who attended the tour and helped to make it an enjoyable and successful evening.

If you are interested in getting involved, please contact our Tenant Engagement Officer, Tracey Copeland on 01536 535 634 or speak to your Neighbourhood Manager.
Taking action to support our tenants!

Tackling Anti-social Behaviour - protecting the community

We work in partnership with the Police and other agencies to act upon anti-social behaviour in the community. We currently have 75 live anti-social behaviour cases being investigated, pending court action or being monitored following early intervention action.

Tenant evicted after fraudulent housing application

Kettering Borough Council has evicted a tenant after she secured a one bedroom flat in a sheltered housing scheme by making a fraudulent housing application.

Carol Rae, 60, of Hazeland House, Desborough was convicted of tenancy fraud in August 2016 at Northampton Magistrates Court and fined £1,500 plus costs.

Mrs Rae approached the Council in May 2014 claiming to be homeless and was provided with temporary accommodation until moving in to Hazeland House. However, when applying for council housing, Mrs Rae failed to disclose that she already owned two properties for which she was receiving a substantial rental income.

"Where housing applicants lie, or fail to disclose their true circumstances to us, we will not hesitate to use the powers available to us to prosecute and evict offenders. It is wholly unacceptable for anyone to provide false information or withhold relevant information about being homeless in order to obtain housing from the Council."

John Conway

Evicted Community Protection Warnings served to warn residents against playing loud music or for having an untidy garden

Property Closure Orders obtained due to evidence of class A drugs

Closure Orders make it an offence for people to enter a premises when a court decides that without an order, the public will be subjected to serious nuisance and disorder.

Community Protection Notices served following unsuccessful warnings. If breached, this can result in prosecution and/or a large fine.

Evictions due to anti-social behaviour

Suspended Possession Orders due to anti-social behaviour. If this is breached we can apply straight to Court for immediate possession.

As a result of this action, someone in genuine housing need will now benefit from this property.

Remember: You are responsible for the conduct of anyone living in your home as well as visitors to your home.
Environmental Improvements – Making a difference in your area

Each year we carry out environmental improvements to enhance the appearance, safety and security of our neighbourhoods. These projects are identified from Estate Walkabouts and from recommendations of local tenants. Here are the schemes we’ve completed this year:

**Highfield Road, Dahlia Road, Judith Road, Kettering**
We’ve improved external lighting to enhance the safety and security of residents in these areas.

**Sussex Road, Kettering**
Bollards installed along verges to prevent cars tearing up the grass.

**Town Centre**
Cleaning of communal windows to blocks at Alexandra Street, Thorngate Street, Albert Street, Gloucester Close and Arthurs Way.

**Improvements for 2017/18**
In June, Housing Officers and Tenant’s Forum representatives will choose between potential environmental schemes for this year. We’ll be in touch with any residents affected for your feedback before we start any work. For a list of schemes under consideration go to www.kettering.gov.uk/improvements

New block cleans introduced to Highfield Estate
Tenants and leaseholders living in blocks with internal communal areas are responsible for keeping these areas clean and tidy in line with their tenancies. While some blocks are maintained exceptionally well, it’s not the case for all of the blocks. Therefore in April, we introduced a cleaning scheme for the 23 Highfield Estate blocks, which will be trialled for a year.

Each month, Stamps Cleaning will:
• Sweep/clean communal floors and skirting boards
• Clean the communal windows
• Ensure external communal areas adjacent to the block are clean and tidy.

Check your block’s communal noticeboard to see when the next clean will take place.

This service is rechargeable to the tenants and leaseholders occupying the blocks.

Your Health and Wellbeing

Have you ever wanted to make a healthy lifestyle change but not sure where to start? All of our Housing staff can provide you with information on local organisations who can help - feel free to ask them next time you see them.

Healthy eating
Smoking
Exercise
Wellbeing
Support
Advice

A view from a tenant: Tenancy Support

Our Tenancy Support Service can help you with managing your budget, paying your rent and Council Tax, benefit claims, setting up your new home and accessing specialist services. We spoke to Cheryl, a local tenant who has recently used Tenancy Support and asked her about her experience with the service:

What do you think of the service?
“I think the service is friendly, professional and I think a lot of people could benefit from Tenancy Support.”

Would you recommend the service?
“Yes, I think it’s a brilliant service and I recommend it. Tenancy Support have visited me at home, helping me and explaining things to me in a way I can understand.”

How has the service helped you?
“It’s helped me with a lot of things I wouldn’t have been able to do on my own, such as paperwork, filling in forms and bills. I know Tenancy Support is at the end of the phone if I need any help and I panic less than I did before I worked with the service.”

Contact us!
If you feel you need some extra help with managing your tenancy, we’re here to offer you advice and support. Contact us on 01536 534 336 or 535 672 or email tenancysupport@kettering.gov.uk

ONE YOU DAY

Tuesday 4th July, 10am – 3pm
Corn Market Hall
Come along to find more about fantastic local services available for YOU:
Free Entry
Free Mini Health Assessments
Free Parking for 1 hour*
Health and Wellbeing Information
Advice from experts

Take the free ‘How Are You’ quiz at www.kettering.gov.uk/OneYou today and see how you score!

* Available on collection of a parking pass from the event - only applies to London Road/Municipal car park.

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Summer Activities in Your Area!

Entertaining yourself and the family doesn’t have to be expensive this summer. Here are some fun, free activities to put in your diary for exciting days out!

**Kettering by the Sea**

at Kettering Market Place

21 July - 19 August

**National Play Day**

**Splash Fountains**

**Big Screen**

**Plus so much more**

Beach Volleyball

**See you there!**

**National Play Day**

Splash Fountains

Big Screen

Plus so much more

Beach Volleyball

**Free Parking**

All day on

Friday 4 August

Friday 11 August

Friday 18 August

*In all Council owned car parks

**Desborough Carnival**

Saturday 24 June

The Desborough Carnival promises plenty of fun and entertainment for the whole family, starting at 2.30pm making its way around the town. There is also entertainment in the Dunkirk Avenue Recreation Ground including a fairground and a stall with all money raised going to charities in the town.

**Rothwell Carnival**

Saturday 8 July

Starting at 1:45pm Rothwell Carnival makes its way through the town with attractions and a family fun day at Rothwell Manor Park.

**Kettering Carnival**

Saturday 19 August

The Carnival will make its way towards Montagu Street, London Road, Bowling Green Road and through the town centre before heading to Rockingham Road Pleasure Park. At the Park there will be a variety of attractions for all the family to enjoy.

**Bands in the Park**

**SUMMER 2017!**

**ROCKINGHAM ROAD PLEASURE PARK**

Sunday 25 June

Rushden Mission Band

Sunday 16 July

Kettering Town Silver Band

Sunday 23 July

Corby Silver Band

Sunday 30 July

Dave Johnson

Sunday 13 August

Rachael Johnson Quartet

Sunday 20 August

Moulton 77 Brass Band

Sunday 3 September

Gretton Silver Band

KBC reserve the right to alter or amend any given dates.

For further information please contact Kettering Borough Council on 01536 410 333.

If weather is poor, concerts will be held at All Saints Church.

All monies raised at the events will be donated to Cransley Hospice.

This is Kettering

We’ve launched an all-new This is Kettering website, designed to provide visitors and residents alike with information on upcoming events, things to do and places to eat, drink and shop in the heart of North Northamptonshire. Have a look – visit: www.thisiskettering.com

@MarketPlaceKett

/ThisisKettering

www.ThisisKettering.com/ByTheSea
How to contact us

- Call us on 01536 410 333
- Write to us at Kettering Borough Council, Municipal Offices, Bowling Green Road, Kettering, NN15 7QX
- Come and see us in one of our Customer Service Centres in Kettering, Desborough, Rothwell or Burton Latimer
- Email us at housing@kettering.gov.uk
- Send a TEXT message to the Council
  Write a short message and send it to 07824 451281
- Send a PICTURE message to the Council
  Attach a picture and send it to 07824 451281

You can also check your Council Tax, Business Rates and Benefits online at:

www.kettering.gov.uk/connectonline

Please remember, our Customer Service Centres are able to deal with:
- Repair reporting
- Tenancy queries
- Rent queries and payments
- Housing benefit
- Council Tax benefit
- Follow us on Twitter @KetteringBC

Support Services

Age UK
0800 169 6565
www.ageuk.org.uk

Free Fire Safety Check
(Free) 0800 389 9950
For further information, visit the Northamptonshire County Council website

Youth Information Helpline
01536 510 089

Citizens Advice Bureau
0844 855 2122

Welfare Reform
www.kettering.gov.uk/welfarereform

Utilities

National Grid – report gas leaks or for general gas information
0800 111 999

Anglian Water
08457 145 145

Visit Us

Find out about events, things to do & places to eat, drink & shop in the Borough of Kettering at

www.thisiskettering.com

If you are interested in supporting your community by joining Northamptonshire Street Watch, please visit

www.northants.police.uk/streetwatch

Visit Us

www.kettering.gov.uk