

## Welcome...

Welcome to the winter edition of News Update. We want to keep you informed about issues that are important to you. You can find out about the latest developments affecting social housing, as well as news of the Just Ask team's recent work. You can also get expert tips on ways to create a safer, healthier and more pleasant environment on your estate.

## Donating our time and support

The Just Ask team has been busy supporting important projects around the region. In May, we donated IT equipment to Colindale Community Trust and the Redmond Community Centre in support of their efforts to improve the economic and social wellbeing of local residents. In June, we donated home starter packs to a homeless scheme in Essex and supported the massive donation and recovery effort following the tragic events at Grenfell Tower. At the Orchards sheltered accommodation scheme, our team organised a summer BBQ for residents.

Looking ahead, we have asked all of our employees to voluntarily donate four hours of their time to important causes in their local area during 2018.

## GROUND SERVICES

### Ground Services in action

Collaboration between Just Ask and Genesis Housing has regenerated the Kilby & Watson site, improving the environment and giving the residents an amazing place to live.

Following a fire in one of our client's sites, the A2 Dominion team came to the rescue donating their own time to assist with the removal of the remains and the cleaning of the resident's home.

Just Ask has recently won a contract with Northampton Partnership Homes. We are now running a comprehensive induction programme for local colleagues joining the Just Ask team. ❁



Colindale Community Trust



Helping with donations for Grenfell Tower



Helping with donations for Grenfell Tower



Just Ask training academy



### Gold accreditation in Investors in People

Just Ask has been awarded Gold Standard Investors in People accreditation against the new more stringent assessment criteria. We have demonstrated effective people management practice and the award acknowledges our ethos and culture in providing customer service throughout all areas of work.

To maintain and improve performance, we have announced our new core values following an intensive programme of internal workshops and external reviews.



Genesis Housing

## SOCIAL HOUSING

### More new affordable housing needed



A report commissioned by the Local Government Association (LGA) found that shortfalls in new housing building over the past few decades mean existing homes are required to house more people and last much longer. The report found that spending of £27 billion on repair and maintenance of existing homes almost matched the £35 billion spent on new building in 2016.

The LGA commented that a 'national renaissance' in council house building is needed to solve shortages and improve quality. It is believed that councils need to be able to borrow to build new homes and keep all receipts from any homes they sell to reinvest in building new homes that are of a good quality and affordable.

[www.local.gov.uk/about/news/confidence-new-builds-falls-average-house-england-will-have-last-2000-years](http://www.local.gov.uk/about/news/confidence-new-builds-falls-average-house-england-will-have-last-2000-years)

## ENVIRONMENT

### Help to cut food waste

News that the East of England Co-op is to sell dry and packaged foods that are past their 'best before' date highlights the growing problem of food waste in the UK. If products are genuinely perishable, they will have a 'Use By' date for safety reasons. However, 'Best Before' dates are largely meaningless, and are part of the reason why the UK throws away 7.3 million tonnes of food every year.

The Co-op will continue to sell tinned goods and dried food such as pasta, crisps and rice after it has passed its

## CLEANING SERVICES

### Get ready for Christmas

'Tis the season to be jolly, but you can't ignore those essential clearing and cleaning jobs before the big day. Are your fridge and cupboards full of food that has been there too long? Check all the use by dates and make way for the Christmas treats.

Is your oven clean and in good working order? You don't want any problems when it's time to cook the

turkey. And, all those decorations – are they a bit dusty or starting to

look tired. Maybe they just need a clean or a quick check, especially with the lights. Same with the rest of the house, is it time for a clean up? After that, all you have to do is enjoy the day. ✨



### Don't put social housing in a corner

When new developments separate social housing from property for sale, it can create segregation rather than a sense of community. The village of Bournville, founded by George Cadbury, shows how it can be different.

Almost half the homes in the village continue to be for social rent, ensuring there is a mix of homes and making the community genuinely mixed and inclusive. The village also encourages residents to look after and take pride in good-quality communal areas and open spaces that help to promote more active and healthier lifestyles.

<https://www.theguardian.com/housing-network/2017/jul/31/garden-villages-careful-management-bournville>

## PEST CONTROL

### Tips on every kind of household pest

Do you know how to keep ants at bay or deal with flies or beetles that might invade

your home? Would you recognise book lice, cheese skippers or different types of clothes moths? And how can you deal with unwanted cats, especially when many have lost their helpful mouse-hunting instincts?

There's a great collection of useful advice on the News Archive section of the British Pest Control Association website. It includes practical guidelines on spotting and dealing with many different types of household pests, including some you've probably never heard of!

<https://bpca.org.uk/News>



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'Best Before' date for just 10p. The Society believes that this will encourage people to buy them, avoiding the need to throw them away. It will also make perfectly good food affordable for people who might otherwise struggle to feed their families. Other supermarkets are likely to follow, so it's worth checking your local store.

[www.eastofengland.coop/news/east-of-england-co-op-to-sell-products-past-%E2%80%98best](http://www.eastofengland.coop/news/east-of-england-co-op-to-sell-products-past-%E2%80%98best)



If you have any interesting stories about what is happening in your area please email [info@justaskservices.co.uk](mailto:info@justaskservices.co.uk)