

THE INFORMED

Winter 2021



Sapphire
Independent
Housing

IN THIS ISSUE

	page
Resident Wellbeing Survey	2
Customer Service Excellence	4
Housing Ombudsman: Complaint Handling Code	5
Thank you!	6
Sapphire puzzles and colouring fun	7

FEATURES

Your Right to Feel Safe	1
Warm Home Discounts	3
Winter Pests	5
The Impact of Noise Disturbance	6

If you'd like to be featured in the next issue, please write to us at theinformed@sih.org

You Are Not Alone: Your Right to Feel Safe

Trigger Warning: This article contains references to domestic abuse

The Office for National Statistics released a report on 25 November 2020 on domestic abuse during the Coronavirus pandemic. They say, *between April and June 2020, Refuge's Helpline team logged a total of 40,397 calls and contacts on its database, a 65% increase compared with the first three months of 2020.* They also say, *Refuge saw a 700% increase in the number of visits to its Helpline website.* Refuge runs the 24-hour National Domestic Abuse Helpline (**0808 2000 247**).

The Office for National Statistic report also states there was a *particularly large increase (32%) in the total number of calls to the ManKind initiative helpline in June 2020.*

Domestic abuse can happen to anyone and is **never the fault of the person who is experiencing it.**

Forms of domestic abuse are psychological abuse; physical abuse; sexual abuse; economic abuse; coercive control; and tech abuse. **Domestic abuse is a crime.** If you are being abused or suspect someone is being abused, you should report it to the Police on 999 as soon as it is safe to do so.

continued overleaf

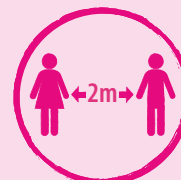
Three simple actions we must all do to protect each other



Wash your hands
regularly for
20 seconds



Wear a face
covering in
enclosed spaces



Stay at least 2m apart,
or 1m with a face covering
or other precautions i.e.
in a well ventilated room

.... continued from page 1

You have the right to feel safe in your home. As your landlord, we'll help and support you. We take any report of domestic abuse or violence seriously. You can report abuse to your Keyworker or Housing Officer who are trained to advise and support you.

There are support services and helplines you can access for advice and support too. These helpline numbers are free of charge.

National Domestic Abuse Helpline

0808 2000 247 (run by Refuge)
www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk

The Men's Advice Line

for male domestic abuse survivors
0808 801 0327 (run by Respect)

The Mix

free information and support for under 25s in the UK – 0808 808 4994

National LGBT+ Domestic Abuse Helpline

0800 999 5428 (run by Galop)

Samaritans

(24/7 service) – 116 123



Resident Wellbeing Survey: The Results

In November 2020 we went live with our Resident Wellbeing Survey and asked residents to help us understand how the pandemic has impacted you and to understand the impact of the changes we introduced to keep residents and staff safe.

We were pleased to receive your feedback and, overall the feedback was positive. Our staff have heard how grateful many of you are for the support you have been given during this challenging time. We are grateful for the suggestions you offered for improving our services; and on reviewing the feedback we are creating an action plan to implement your suggestions and address your concerns.

You will be able to view the action plan on our website shortly and we hope that in implementing this action plan, we can improve the service we are providing and your experience as residents.

COVID-19 update (advice at date of publication)

Government guidance: STAY AT HOME

Only go out for food, health reasons or work (but only if you cannot work from home).



If you go out, stay 2 metres (6ft) away from other people at all times.



Wash your hands as soon as you get home.

Do not meet others, even friends or family.

It's important to remember – you can spread the virus even if you don't have symptoms.

Self-isolation tips for well-being



- Create a routine and plan your day
- Build physical activity into your daily routine
- Eat well and remember food affects mood
- Connect with people. Phone, text, video calls (Skype, Zoom), email and social media
- Try a relaxation technique
- Practise self-compassion and reflection at the end of the day; maintain a bed time routine to improve your sleep.

WARM HOME DISCOUNTS, COLD WEATHER PAYMENTS AND WINTER FUEL PAYMENTS



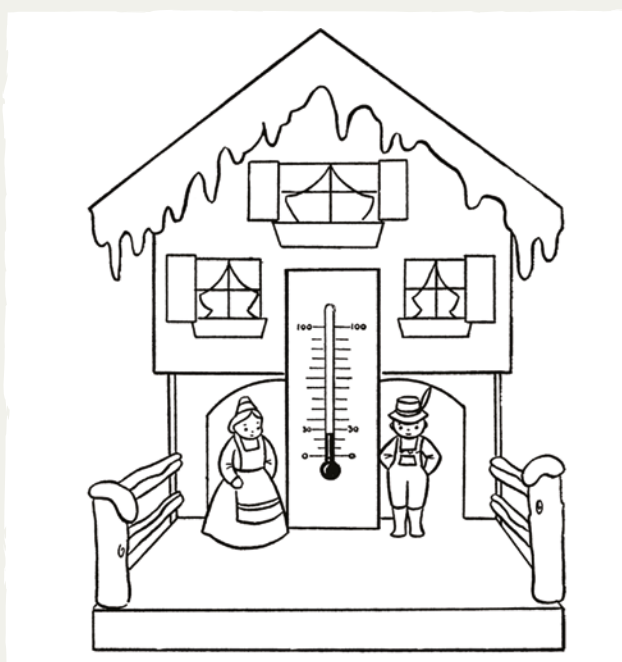
Bring on those **cosy nights in** because winter is here! That's what we want to say, though we know for many of us those cosy nights in come at an extra expense. ***Did you know if you're on low income you could be entitled to a discount or additional one-off payments for your energy bills?*** We're going to tell you about these discounts and payments and encourage you to find out if you're entitled to them.

You could get £140.00 off your electricity bill under the Warm Home Discount Scheme if you get the Guarantee Credit element of Pension Credit or you're on a low income and meet your energy supplier's criteria for the scheme. You can call your energy supplier to find out if you're eligible and how to apply. To find out if your energy supplier is part of the scheme you can visit <https://www.gov.uk/the-warm-home-discount-scheme/energy-suppliers>

The Cold Weather Payments are made if the average temperature in your area is recorded as, or forecast to be, zero degrees celsius or below over 7 consecutive days. You could get £25.00 for each 7 day period. You may get the Cold Weather Payments if you are in receipt of certain income related benefits. To find out if you meet the eligibility criteria visit <https://www.gov.uk/cold-weather-payment>.

Winter Fuel Payments are between £100 and £300 and are there to help you pay your heating bills. You qualify for Winter Fuel Payments if 'you were born on or before 5 October 1954' and 'you lived in the UK for at least one day during the week of 21 to 27 September 2020 – this is called the 'qualifying week'. If you are eligible for a Winter Fuel Payment you'll usually get it automatically. If you haven't received it and you think you're eligible you can make a claim by calling **0800 731 0160**.

If you're not sure if your entitled to the Warm Home Discount, the Cold Weather Payments or the Winter Fuel Payments and you want support to find out, please speak to your Housing Officer or Keyworker.



Colour me in!

HOW ARE WE DOING?



SAPPHIRE'S RESIDENT SATISFACTION LEVELS

for 1st July 2020 – 30th September 2020

SATISFACTION



Overall satisfaction with Sapphire's services

Target 93%
Actual 100%

COMPLAINTS



Complaints responded to on time

Target 98%
Actual 50%*

REPAIRS



Responsive repairs completed on time

Target 97%
Actual 99%

*One of two complaints were responded to on time, as one required more time as a translation service was required to support the resident.

Two separate complaints remained open on 30 September 2020, so the performance for these complaints will be noted in our quarter 3 report.

Due to COVID-19 we had to adapt our repairs and maintenance service to keep staff, residents

and external contractors safe, this led to some short delays to carrying out repairs.

We noted an error in our Autumn 2020 Newsletter, which stated the performance data was for quarter two, this is incorrect. The performance data on page 4 of the Autumn 2020 newsletter was for quarter one (1 April 2020 – 30 June 2020). We apologise for any confusion caused by this error.

Congratulations to our Quarterly Draw Winners

Gas Safety Survey draw winner: Adam Mazur

Maintenance Satisfaction Survey draw winner: Amy Heary



CUSTOMER SERVICE EXCELLENCE (CSE)

CUSTOMER
SERVICE
EXCELLENCE



In 2019 Sapphire reapplied for CSE accreditation for three years and we were awarded accreditation. A condition of our accreditation is yearly assessments to ensure we remain compliant with the accreditation criteria, so, on 16 December 2020 we were assessed on our customer service delivery and performance over the last year. We are pleased to announce that we passed our assessment and we remain compliant with the accreditation standards.

We could not have done this without the residents who were involved in the customer journey focus groups and the assessment.

We want to say a big thank you to those residents. Your feedback on our Reporting a Repair customer journey will help us improve our service.

You can view our customer journey maps in the resident section of our website. If you need the log in details, please speak to your Housing Officer or Keyworker.

Would you like to be involved in shaping the way we run our services? Over the coming year we will be holding customer journey focus groups and interviews, and we will be reviewing our resident guidebooks. Please let your Housing Officer or Keyworker know if you're interested in taking part.

WINTER PESTS

During the coming winter months when the temperatures drop many rodents and pests will be seeking a warm dry place to hibernate and your home can become the ideal place. Pests will inhabit unused spaces like unused cupboards. The most common winter pests found in the UK include mice and rats, squirrels, flies and cockroaches.

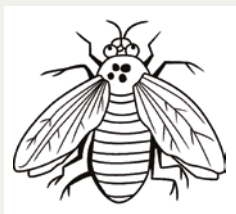
Tips on how to keep these pests out:



- Check for small holes or access points, under doors, around pipes, etc. and seal these holes.



- Ensure your internal and external bins are securely closed, and put out your bins for refuse collection regularly.



- Avoid leaving food stuff on work tops.



- Wipe down work surfaces regularly and sweep away food stuff that may have fallen on the floor.

- Check any unused cupboards and spaces.

Please report any sightings of pests to Sapphire as you would report a repair.

Reports can be made to staff at your accommodation; by emailing info@sih.org or; by calling our head office on **0207 485 8889**.



Colour me in!



HOUSING OMBUDSMAN: COMPLAINT HANDLING CODE

In July 2020 the Housing Ombudsman published a new Complaint Handling Code, which sets out good practice to help landlords respond effectively and fairly to complaints. The new code has a universal definition of a complaint and encourages creating a positive complaint culture with a resident-focused process.

Residents can request a copy of our complaints policy and procedure, and our '[Complaints Guidebook for Residents](#)' by asking your Keyworker or Housing Officer. You can also find these on our website. If you are unsure of our complaints procedure and you would like to speak to an independent person, or you want support to make a complaint you can contact the Housing Ombudsman Service on **0300 111 3000**. Useful information can also be found on their website www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk.

When the new Complaint Handling Code was introduced, landlords were asked to self-assess against the Code by 31 December 2020, and to publish the results of our self-assessment. You can read our self-assessment which has been published on our website.

Over the coming year we will be reviewing our customer journey map for making a complaint, if you would like to help us review the resident journey and help us improve our service, please let your Keyworker or Housing Officer know.

THE IMPACT OF NOISE DISTURBANCE

Over the last 10 months our homes have become the place we exercise, work, and where we look after our physical and mental wellbeing. Our recent resident wellbeing survey highlighted that many of us feel our mental and physical wellbeing has declined, and we are experiencing feelings of isolation, loneliness, sadness and anxiety, to name just a few. For some of you noise disturbance has significantly impacted your mental wellbeing, your sleep patterns and your physical wellbeing.

So, how can you address noise nuisance from a neighbour...

Talk to your neighbour

If you feel safe and comfortable, you can talk to your neighbour and tell them how their behaviour is affecting you. You could suggest what would help and listen to your neighbour to see if you can come to a compromise. Your neighbour may not realise they are causing a disturbance.

Mediation

You can talk to us about mediation services and how we can support you to come to an agreement with your neighbour.

Speak to your Local Environmental Health team

You can speak to your local Environmental Health team. You can find out how to report noise on your local authority's website.

Make an ASB report to Sapphire

You can report the noise disturbance to Sapphire in accordance with our ASB policy and procedure.

We ask all our tenants to be considerate neighbours. Tips on how to be a considerate neighbour can be found on our website

<https://www.sih.org/news-and-events/news/news-posts/how-to-be-a-considerate-neighbour/>

Websites for advice:

www.citizensadvice.org.uk

www.islington.gov.uk

www.camden.gov.uk

www.brent.gov.uk

www.hertsmere.gov.uk

Thank You !!

♥ Thank You Lush @Waterloo for your donation of soaps, lip balms, shampoo, shower gels and toothpaste tablets! We're so grateful we could gift these to the residents of our young people service and family accommodation in Hertsmere.

♥ Thank You Chris at the United Reform Church in Potters Bar, and those who helped, for your generous donation of specially selected presents for the children and their parents in our family accommodation in Hertsmere.

♥ Thank You...Toiletries Amnesty for arranging the amazing donation of Revolution make-up. There were high-lighters, foundations, primers, shadow palettes, eyebrow gels and more. These gifts were shared between our hostels and temporary accommodation sites.

♥ Thank You Let's Sanitise for your generous donations of scented hand sanitiser received at Bethany House for the residents.



Sapphire Word Search

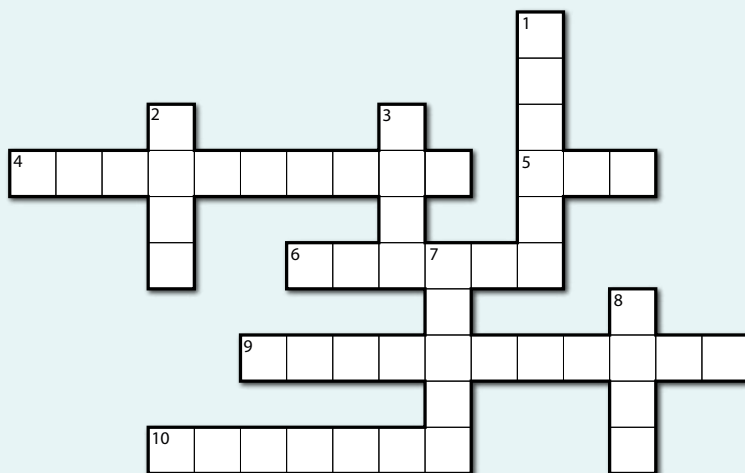
Locate the given words in the grid, running horizontally, vertically, or diagonally.

D	G	C	D	V	H	R	Y	X	C	F	S	K	T	O
R	I	Q	O	E	Q	T	M	H	I	W	E	K	A	O
A	N	Y	U	L	S	V	O	G	M	S	L	P	W	D
Z	G	H	A	O	D	C	I	N	C	S	C	A	R	F
Z	E	C	R	D	O	S	A	M	T	S	I	R	H	C
I	R	F	E	L	I	S	F	S	C	R	C	V	O	O
L	B	O	A	K	T	L	F	V	E	D	I	E	O	S
B	R	T	V	O	A	F	O	I	X	S	I	A	V	Y
U	E	H	O	E	U	L	N	H	L	V	H	Z	N	C
G	A	B	O	M	R	D	F	E	B	R	U	A	R	Y
V	D	E	R	O	E	C	D	W	H	E	A	T	E	R
Z	J	A	J	E	D	G	O	V	O	T	G	C	A	S
T	E	H	R	Y	E	I	Q	A	P	N	Z	F	N	Z
T	E	K	N	A	L	B	E	I	T	I	S	O	S	P
L	E	S	N	I	T	N	W	R	G	W	W	J	J	M

COSY	SLEDGE	GINGERBREAD	HEATER
HOODIE	COLD	CHRISTMAS	ICICLES
TINSEL	EID	SNOWFLAKE	BLANKET
FROSTY	CHOCOLATE	EARMUFFS	SCARF
BOOTS	BLIZZARD	REINDEER	WINTER
SNOW	FEBRUARY	COAT	HOLIDAY

Sapphire Winter Crossword

Answers for the Winter Crossword can all be found in this issue of The Informed Newsletter.



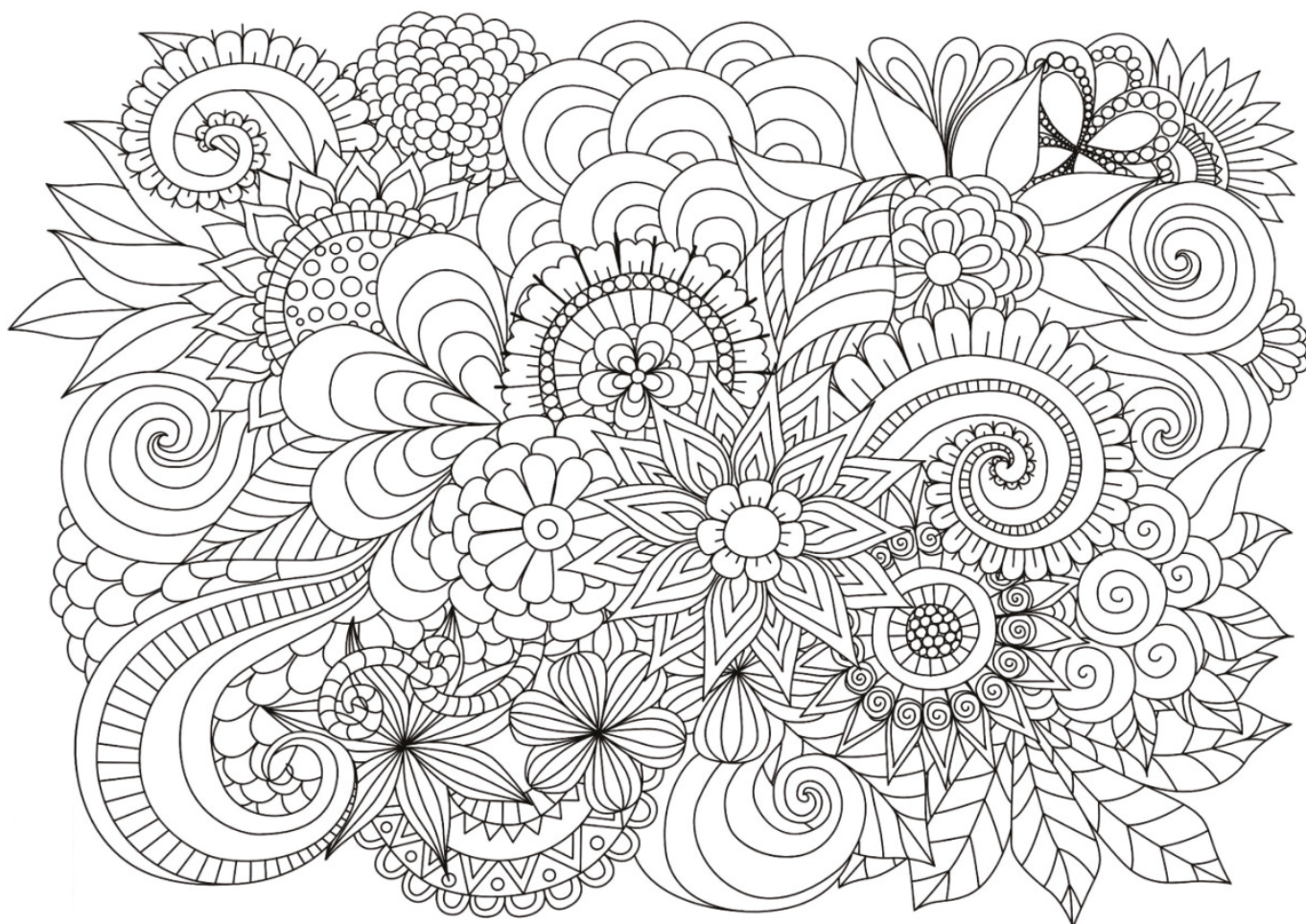
DOWN

- 1 Bills you might be entitled to a discount on this winter (6)
- 2 When you're warm on a winter night, you feel this (4)
- 3 Government advice is to stay here (4)
- 7 Disturbance from neighbours (5)
- 8 We all have a right to feel this (4)

ACROSS

- 4 Amazing make-up donation (10)
- 5 Winter pest (3)
- 6 Number of seconds we should wash hands (6)
- 9 To be a better neighbours, we should be this (11)
- 10 Sapphire publish information for residents here (7)

Colouring corner



CONTACT US

The Informed is a quarterly publication.

Our next issue will be out in April 2021. Please send any comments, questions and story ideas to:

TheInformed@sih.org

For a PDF version or any previous issues of *The Informed* please visit the Residents' section of our website www.sih.org and click on publications.

Share your photos and comments on



Instagram
[sapphire.independent.housing](https://www.instagram.com/sapphire.independent.housing)



Follow us on Twitter
[@sih_uk](https://twitter.com/sih_uk)



and Facebook
www.facebook.com/sih15.org

[#improvinglives](#) [#valuingpeople](#)

If you would like this publication in large print please contact Megan Smiley on 020 7485 8889



INVESTORS
IN PEOPLE | Gold

DON'T FORGET

Head Office is closed until further notice due to the Coronavirus pandemic.

If you would like to contact us during working hours (Mon – Fri, 9am – 5pm), please call our head office number **020 7485 8889**.

If you have any emergency repairs please contact the out-of-hours number on **020 7372 6633**. Normal procedures will resume as soon as possible.

GENERAL ENQUIRES

Head office

1 Holmes Road,
Kentish Town,
London, NW5 3AA
Tel: 020 7485 8889
Email: info@sih.org
www.sih.org

SUPPORTED SCHEMES

Bethany House

13 Lloyd Square,
London, WC1X 9AR
Tel: 020 7837 3420

Conway House

18-22 Quex Road,
Kilburn, NW6 4PL
Tel: 020 7372 6633

Hepburn Court

Brookside,
Gowar Field,
South Mimms,
Hertfordshire,
EN6 3QE
Tel: 01707 662 667

Townsend House

135 Aycliffe Road,
Borehamwood,
Hertfordshire,
WD6 4HA
Tel: 020 8207 1562

GENERAL NEEDS SCHEMES

Caulfield Court

Baynes Street,
London, NW1 0TZ

College Yard

9 College Yard,
London, NW5 1NX

Dunne Mews

57 Leighton Road,
London, NW5 2QH

Forde House

129 Queens Crescent,
London, NW5 4HE

Hackett House

12 Kingsgate Road,
Kilburn, NW6 4TB
Tel: 020 7692 7285

Highgate Road

54/56 Highgate Road,
London, NW5 1NU

St Eugene Court

82 Salusbury Road,
London, NW6 6PA

Tara Lodge

Mutrix Road,
London, NW6 4BF