



Sheltered Scheme Newsletter

Summer 2024

For environmental reasons, we don't print a copy of this newsletter for every tenant.

Once you're finished reading, pass me along to your neighbour to enjoy!

If you'd like any news or events included in the next newsletter, please email:

**Communications
@redkitehousing
.org.uk**

or speak to your
Sheltered Specialist.

More news can be found on our website at redkitehousing.org.uk/news.

Welcome to the latest edition of our Sheltered Scheme Newsletter.

This time we'll be showcasing a brand new competition exclusive to sheltered tenants, sharing information on adaptations we can make to your home if you're hard of hearing, taking a look at some pictures from our recent Community Morning and so much more.

Take a seat in the sunshine and settle in to your summer newsletter.



Read on to find out how you can be the winner of a hand-made prize created by [Men in Sheds - High Wycombe!](#)

Saying thank you to our tenant volunteers

On Wednesday 17th July, we celebrated the hard work and dedication of our tenant volunteers by hosting a thank you afternoon tea at Wycombe Heights Golf Centre.

The event, organised by tenant volunteers in our Event Focus Group alongside members of staff, was filled with games, laughter, and of course an impressive spread of cakes and sandwiches.



Are you interested in volunteering for us?

We're always on the hunt for new tenants to join our group of volunteers. Head over to redkitechousing.org.uk/volunteering or give us a call to find out more and sign up - there's something for everyone!

Improving safety for hard of hearing tenants

If you're a tenant with hearing loss, we can provide essential safety equipment to help you live independently. We work closely with the [Bucks Integrated Sensory Service](#) to identify tenants who would benefit from these devices.

We can install the following equipment in your home:

- Smoke alarms with visual alerts: These provide a clear warning in case of fire.
- Carbon monoxide detectors with visual alerts: These help protect you from the dangers of carbon monoxide.
- Alerting systems with flashing lights: These can be connected to your doorbell, phone, or other alarms.
- Bed shakers: These vibrate your bed to alert you to sounds like alarms or doorbells.

We understand the urgency of these needs and aim to install the equipment within a week of your request.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss your needs, please email compliance@redkithousing.org.uk or call 01494 476100.

Showing full compliance with Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code

As a responsible social landlord, we've always been committed to meeting the requirements of the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code.

The Housing Ombudsman is a free, independent, and impartial organisation that investigates complaints and resolves disputes involving the tenants and leaseholders of housing associations and local authorities. Their Complaint Handling Code became statutory on 1st April 2024, meaning that landlords are now obliged by law to follow its requirements.

Each year we have completed and submitted a self-assessment against the code, but this year there was a legal requirement to do so by 30th June. We're pleased to say that **we published our self-assessment ahead of the deadline**, and that we showed **full compliance with the code**.



Candida wins Women in Housing Award

Candida, a Red Kite tenant and Chair of our Resident Representative Team (RRT), was recently honoured with the Women in Housing award for **Board/committee member of the year**, recognising her dedication to tenant advocacy and her impactful work with RRT.

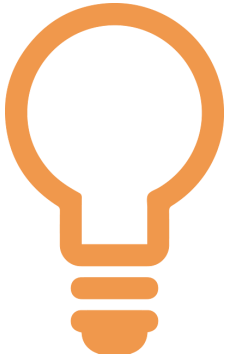


Speaking proudly about her award, Candida said:

“Being recognised for what I do is emotionally uplifting. To be amongst the winners feels exhilarating and empowering. The indescribable joy I’m feeling reflects on the hard work which has brought me to this moment.

“I’d like to say a big thank you to Red Kite’s Board, Executives, staff and tenants for believing in me.”

Find out more about RRT at redkitehousing.org.uk/RRT.



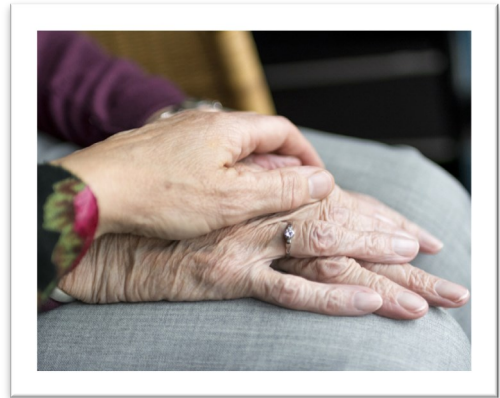
Quick tip!

Sitting or sleeping in a hot stuffy room is never fun. But using a fan for long periods to cool down can really add up on your electricity bill. Instead, if it's breezy, open windows and internal doors so natural ventilation can flow through your home.

Thinking about ending your tenancy and moving into a care home?

There can be a lot to think about when making the decision to move into assisted living, including what to do with your current Red Kite home.

When leaving your Red Kite home, we need 28 days' notice from you. If you or someone you know is planning to make a permanent move into a care home, there will usually be a four week assessment before the move is considered permanent – you don't need to end your tenancy at this point but you'll need to let us know that this is happening so we can make sure your tenancy doesn't end too soon. After the assessment is over, we still need 28 days' notice from you if you decide it is the right move for you. This can be done by filling out our online form at redkitehousing.org.uk/endtenancy. If you're not able to access this online, give us a call on 01494 476100 or speak to your Sheltered Specialist. If you move into a care home after a hospital stay, or if the move wasn't planned, we'll start the 28 days from your last day in hospital or at home.

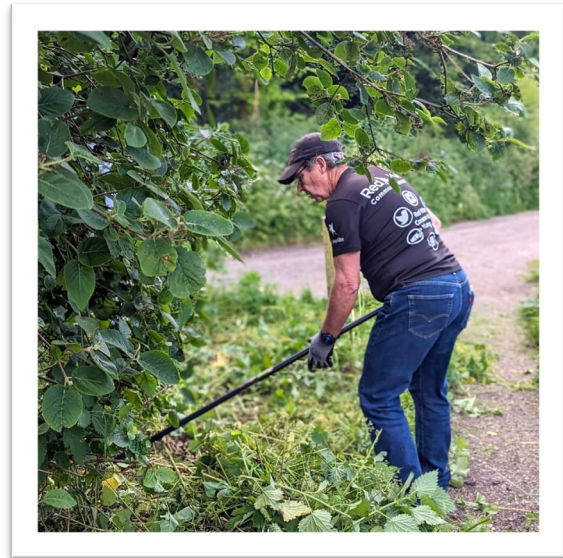


If you're planning to move into a care home for some respite for a short period of time, you don't need to give up your tenancy straight away. Just let us know your plans so we know how long you'll be away for, and your home will be there for you when you get back. It's a good idea to ask someone to help you keep an eye on your home whilst you're away, to avoid any unwanted surprises when you get home.

Whatever decision you make, we'll be happy to support you in any way we can, to ensure it's a smooth transition into your new way of living.

Community Morning 2024 – giving back to the community

At the beginning of June, our staff swapped desks and laptops for brooms, lawnmowers, litter pickers and gardening tools as they took part in our 2024 Community Morning. Every member of our staff - over 160 people - were out volunteering at local organisations across the Wycombe district, getting involved in the vital work that they do and demonstrating in practice what it means to be a community housing association.



Did you see us at your scheme? Every year we head out to Sheltered Schemes to host a quiz. There were 15 teams taking part across 13 different schemes in this year's quiz, as always written by our Sheltered Housing Manager Kevin. The residents of Parsonage Close, and amazingly a single participant at Nancy Hall Court, emerged victorious, jointly winning with a magnificent 85 points out of a possible 98!



Essential overdue checks completed to keep our tenants safe

We prioritise the safety of our tenants above all else. Conducting regular gas and electrical safety checks is a key part of our commitment to ensuring every home is safe and secure.

We'll always go above and beyond to ensure these checks are done and want to remind you of the importance of letting us into your home to complete them.

Case study one:

We faced a challenging situation where one of our homes had an expired Electrical Installation Condition Report and Landlord Gas Safety Record. We were initially denied access and the home had severe hoarding issues preventing our contractors from performing the essential checks. We knew immediate action was crucial for our tenant's safety.

Our Home Safety team obtained a court order to conduct the checks. Recognising the urgency, they collaborated closely with our Community team and Wycombe Mind to address the hoarding and improve living conditions. This proactive approach allowed us to complete the required checks quickly.

Case study two:

In another home, a gas safety check was overdue. Our contractor couldn't perform the check due to the home's condition and other welfare concerns. Court action wasn't an option because the tenant had granted access.

Our Community Specialist worked tirelessly with the tenant and other agencies to improve the home's condition. Then, we encountered another hurdle: a debt on the gas meter. Determined to find a resolution, we obtained fuel vouchers from the [Sureserve Group](#) and cleared the debt.

We're thrilled to report that the gas check has now been completed, ensuring the tenant's home is safe.

Next time you receive a gas or electrical safety check appointment, let us in so we can keep you safe.



Compliments from our tenants

We love receiving compliments from our tenants. Have you got some positive feedback you'd like to share? Let your [Sheltered Specialist](#) know today!

But remember, feedback isn't just for compliments. If you've spotted something that isn't quite right, let us know so we can learn from mistakes and put things right. Head over to redkitehousing.org.uk/feedback to find out more.

“

Excellent service every time I ring. Red Kite staff always go the extra mile and are very polite, keep up the good work!

”

“

Very satisfied with the service. The Community Specialist was very polite and very helpful during our home check. We feel it couldn't be improved!

”

Become web-wise with our digital skills training

Do you need a hand with using and utilising your digital devices? Sign up to our digital skills training to learn how to navigate our online services - such as reporting a repair on our website, become an expert on video calls and online shopping, learn how to stay safe online and so much more.

The training will be held at our office in Loudwater on Wednesday 11th September 2024.

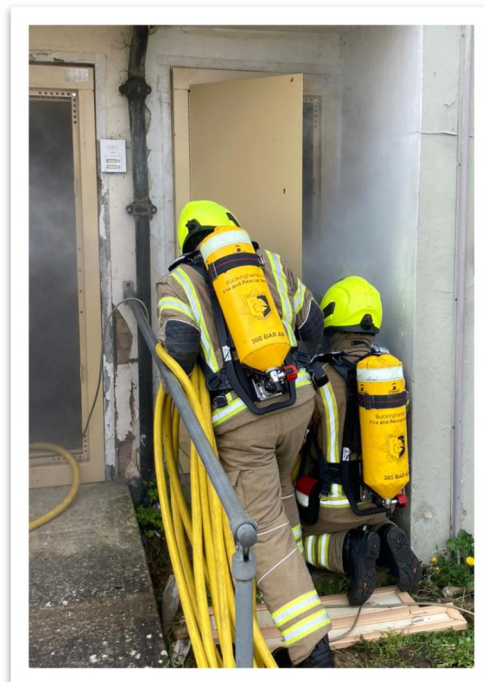
To sign up or find out more, call [01494 476302](tel:01494476302), email volunteering@redkitehousing.org.uk or speak to your [Sheltered Specialist](#).

There are limited spaces for this workshop, but more will follow. Transport can be provided.

Collaborating with Bucks Fire and Rescue Service

Over the past year, we've been collaborating with Bucks Fire and Rescue Service, providing a diverse range of homes to serve as training grounds for the Fire Service. Providing these training spaces ensures that firefighters have access to realistic environments, simulating various home types for different training scenarios.

We're committed to building thriving and safe communities, and this collaboration plays a crucial role in that mission. By facilitating these training opportunities, we're helping to prepare our firefighters to respond effectively to emergencies, ultimately protecting our tenants and their homes.



Remember, fire safety is a shared responsibility, and by staying informed and prepared we can all contribute to a safer community. If you're worried about fire safety in your home, or one of our communal areas – [get in touch today](#).

Tenants help to shape the service given by our Contact Centre

Our aim is to put tenants first, and thanks to our Resident Representative Team (RRT) we've been doing just that when it comes to getting in touch with us. RRT are a team of tenant volunteers that collaborate with us as an essential partnership group. They're involved in key service changes and help to influence decisions. They ensure that the opinions of tenants are communicated with staff and the board so that they can really shape what the organisation does and continue to be truly tenant-led.

Back in July 2022, we started a new initiative alongside Tpas - our first scrutiny bootcamp. This project was a call to action, asking, "[How can we improve the tenant experience when contacting Red Kite?](#)" We welcomed 25 tenants to share their views in a mix of in-person and online sessions, with our staff providing immediate responses to service-related questions.

The bootcamp was a resounding success, leading to 10 practical recommendations.

[Continue on next page...](#)

A standout change was the streamlining of our phone menu options from six to three, alongside the introduction of a 'request call back' feature for our tenants' convenience. Our RRT members had also shadowed our Contact Centre colleagues before the bootcamp, and their positive feedback about our staff was a highlight of the project.

In September 2022, we took a significant step forward when two RRT members presented these recommendations to the Operational Performance And Tenant Services group. This led to the development of an action plan, and over the past two years, our customer service team has been diligently working to bring these changes to life, ensuring that RRT members are updated on key progress and challenges.

Most recently, in March 2024, we reached a new milestone. Sam Goodwin from Tpas, our RRT Chair Candida, and RRT member Jane conducted verification sessions to review the effectiveness of the action plan. This was a novel approach for both Red Kite and Tpas, providing a platform for our tenants to engage with staff and review all the action plan material. The result was a detailed report, celebrating our achievements and pinpointing key learnings for future reviews.

Candida said: "Jane and I found the independent review very useful. Given all the lessons learnt, we are excited to move forward with all things discussed and feel confident RRT will achieve great scrutiny reviews in future."

In June, members of staff met with RRT to discuss the Contact Centre scrutiny review and to ask for the group to consider closing the review. RRT were unanimous in signing off the review as concluded, bringing to a close almost two years of work!



Our new contact centre opening hours - from Monday 3rd June

Monday - Thursday: 8.45am - 5.15pm
Friday: 8.45am - 1pm

Competition time

Get ready for a fun challenge - it's time to **guess how many stones are in the jar!** Use your keen eye and take a wild guess - you might just win a handmade prize created by Men in Sheds - High Wycombe. [Take a look at the pictures on the next page!](#)

To enter, email your guess to communications@redkitehousing.org.uk, call us on 01494 476100, or tell your Sheltered Specialist.

Don't miss out on this exciting competition. Submit your guess and join the fun!
The competition closes on Friday 13th September at 1pm.

This competition has been sponsored by our tenant-led Environmental Improvement Group. whose mission is to improve our communities.

How
many
stones
are in
this jar?



See terms and conditions on the next page...

Competition terms and conditions:

1. You must be a Red Kite sheltered tenant to enter
2. You must enter via one of the verified methods on the previous page
3. You cannot place prizes in communal areas without explicit permission from Red Kite
4. Entries must be made before the competition closes on Friday 13th September at 1pm.
5. Prizes will be distributed at random using an online wheel.

What prizes are on offer?

We have some incredible handmade prizes up for grabs – created by [Men in Sheds High Wycombe](#). Men in Sheds is a community based project giving individuals the opportunity for social interaction whilst sharing and learning skills and being involved in different projects.

Here's a sneak peak at what's on offer:



Tenants in our Environmental Improvement Group.

