

## YOUR HOME, YOUR FUTURE, YOUR CHOICE.

You may have heard of phrases like 'Stock Options', 'Options Appraisals' and 'Decent Homes' and have been wondering what it is all about.

Various articles have been printed in recent newsletters about this and information is available on the Three Rivers website [www.threerivers.gov.uk](http://www.threerivers.gov.uk)

All councils have to bring their stock (your homes) up to the Decent Homes Standard by 2010. To do this the Council has to identify what the current condition of your home is and then assess what works are needed to bring the condition of the properties up to the Decent Homes Standard. If the Council cannot afford to do this then it needs to look at other ways of raising funds for improvement.

The Government has made this process compulsory and has called it Options Appraisal. We have appointed a lead consultant called Beha Norman Williams Ltd. Their role is to calculate how much money we need to bring your homes up to the Decent Homes Standard and to recommend the best option for us to take.

We have also appointed an Independent Tenant Adviser called Insights whose sole responsibility is to ensure all tenants and leaseholders are fully aware of the work being undertaken and why.

So far they have

- met Tenants and Residents Associations and have attended some of their meetings to talk to local tenants and leaseholders

- started visiting tenants' homes
- held a road show at the South Oxhey Area Office
- attended the Tenants and Leaseholders' Forum
- held training sessions for various tenants and leaseholders
- sent a questionnaire to various tenants and leaseholders

If you would like to speak to Insights then please call on their freephone number 0800 652 5602.

### Would you like to be more involved in this process?

A working party of interested tenants and leaseholders has been set up to attend meetings with all the consultants and staff and also to play a major role in ensuring the correct option is chosen for the future of your home.

If you are interested in joining this working party then please contact the Resident Liaison Officer, Helen Phillips, on 01923 776611.



**For independent advice  
regarding the Stock Options  
Appraisal please call**

**Freephone  
0800 652 5602**



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# South Oxhey Area Office Here to Assist You

Many residents who wish to pay rent and council tax use the South Oxhey Area office but you can do so much more. You can purchase garden and nappy refuse sacks, as well as handing in bus pass applications for those who are aged over 60.

We can verify and accept your Housing Benefit documents. Maintenance problems can be reported, either to reception or by using the direct line telephones to the Customer Service Centre.

Three Rivers has set a target that 95% of personal callers to the reception area will be seen within 15 minutes. Our performance over the last three quarters is as follows:-

Quarter 1	April 03-June 03	89%
Quarter 2	July 03-Sept 03	96%
Quarter 3	Oct 03-Dec 03	99%

In addition there is a large amount of useful information contained in the free



leaflets available from the office. We also have posters giving information on local events or information relevant to the area.

You can have access to a computer to view the Mutual Exchange list, which is updated regularly with properties that may match your requirements.

So next time you are passing, why not pop in to see what is available?

## Paying Your Rent

Following previous articles about rent arrears, the Estates Team would like to update everyone on the current progress made in collecting money owed to the Council.

First of all a big thank you to all of those tenants who have maintained regular payments to their rent account on a weekly, fortnightly or monthly basis.

The Council has 3,897 properties that are tenanted and the total debt owed to the Council by tenants is £310,760. Unfortunately £111,654 of this debt is owed by a small minority of just 85 tenants who have already been taken to court and are subject to the terms of a Possession Order.

This means that of the total debt owed to the Council, some 36% of it is owed by just over 2% of all tenants.

Since April 2003 the Council has:-

- taken Possession Proceedings against 141 tenants
- obtained possession orders against 48
- made 53 applications for Warrants for Possession of Land against those tenants who have not complied with the terms of the courts

- evicted 14 people from their homes for non-payment of rent since April 2003.

Please remember that the Council is here to help you. Should you feel that you are suffering financial hardship you are strongly advised to contact your Estate Officer without delay. In cases such as this, your Estate Officer will be able to come to an arrangement with you to repay any rent arrears that you may have by reasonable weekly instalments, in addition to your current rent.

The Council only takes court action against those tenants who ignore contact made by their Estate Officer or who break any arrangements without satisfactory explanation.

Often people who are experiencing financial hardship have a number of debts with different companies, ranging from credit cards to catalogues. Many of these people fail to get the help that they need and do not prioritise their debt repayments.

The Citizens Advice Bureau is an independent Bureau which is available to offer you money advice, debt counselling and assistance in applying for personal benefits and housing benefits. Throughout the Three Rivers District there are several of these Bureaus which are there to help. Their contact numbers and addresses are

shown at the end of this article.

Whilst non-payment of any debt is not viewed favourably by any company, you should remember no matter how much debt you have, payment of your rent and arrears must be given the highest priority. If you fail to make payments to reduce your rent arrears the likely outcome is that you may well lose your home.

If you fail to make payments to a catalogue, credit card company or other moneylender you may be subject to county court proceedings taken out by them, but you will not lose your home as a result of continued non-payment.

### Citizens Advice Bureaus

Rickmansworth  
Three Rivers House,  
Northway, Rickmansworth  
Tel 01923 720424

Abbots Langley  
The Old Stables,  
St Lawrence Vicarage,  
High Street, Abbots Langley  
Tel 01923 267949

South Oxhey  
4 Bridlington Road,  
South Oxhey, Watford  
Tel 0208 421 0911



# NAME to a FACE



**RATCLIFFE**

New Head of Housing Services

Helen has worked for Three Rivers since 1999 when she came to do some work on tenant participation and the preparation of the Tenants Compact. Helen's role was widened a year later to take on all housing policy matters.

Helen took over from Joe Chambers at the beginning of March and she looks after five sections: residential services, allocations, housing needs, community services and repairs and maintenance. Her main role is to ensure that tenants, leaseholders and applicants receive a high quality service from the five sections she manages.

Helen Ratcliffe began her career in housing over twenty years ago, having worked in London and several Hertfordshire authorities.



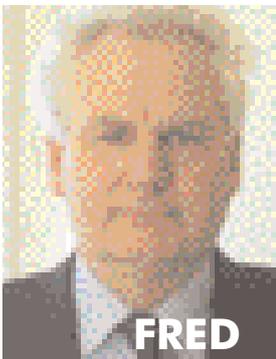
**PHILLIPS**

New Resident Liaison Officer

Helen has been an estates officer for a housing association in Borehamwood, a tenant management organisation in Kensington and Chelsea, Luton Borough Council and, most recently, estates officer for Chorleywood, Sarratt, Rickmansworth and Carpenders Park.

Her new role will be to liaise with leaseholders dealing with queries relating to service charges and capital works. She is also the main contact at the Council for the Options Appraisal process. Helen will still be involved in issues regarding tenant participation alongside the newly appointed Tenant Participation Officer.

Helen has worked in housing since she graduated in 1995. She has covered many areas of housing from voluntary work in homeless hostels to neighbourhood management.



**DAVIES**

New Interim Director of Housing

experienced former Housing Director now specialising in Interim Management and housing project work for his own and national consultancies. He lives in Hertfordshire, has worked at Watford and latterly in South Wales as a Director of Community Housing following senior posts with London Boroughs. A key task for Fred will be to provide continuity and lead the Council team assisting the Council and its tenants and leaseholders in the Council's Stock Options Appraisal during 2004 (see front page).

We welcome Fred Davies as our Interim Director of Housing.

As our picture shows, Fred admits to being a mature! as well as an

## Wish to Swap Homes?

Would you like to swap your property for a property to suit your needs?

Are you a Council/Housing Association Tenant in the Three Rivers area?

Council Tenants in Three Rivers may receive an incentive payment of up to £3,000, if they exchange to a smaller property

Interested? Come into our Rickmansworth or South Oxhey office and use the computerised mutual exchange matching scheme

For more information contact the Housing Allocations team on 01923 776611 or email [enquiries@threerivers.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@threerivers.gov.uk)



# Tenants and Leaseholders' Conference

Many of you attended the tenants and leaseholders' conference on Saturday 8 November 2003 at Three Rivers House. The conference included presentations on comprehensive performance review, the Housing Strategy, meeting the Decent Homes Standard and an update on stock options. This was followed by two workshops, one on anti-social behaviour and one workshop on the 'Housing Game', which focuses on prioritising repairs and maintenance.

We were pleased that those of you who attended the conference enjoyed it and found the workshops on anti-social behaviour very useful and informative.

## Would you like to run this year's Conference?

This year's conference will be held in November 2004 and we thought that this would be a fantastic opportunity for tenants and leaseholders to organise and tailor the conference to what they really want! If you have good organisational skills, experience in conference organisation or you simply think it's something to which you could contribute positively with a group of other tenants and leaseholders, then this is your chance to become involved. You would need to decide on an agenda and organise the day. Our Tenant Participation Officer would be on hand to give whatever guidance and help is needed. We would also welcome - from all tenants and leaseholders - any thoughts or ideas you may have on what subjects you would like to hear about or workshops you would like to attend. Please contact the Resident Liaison Officer, Helen Phillips, on 01923 776611 with your views.

# Results of the Housing Game

Last year Three Rivers appointed Aldbourne Associates to run a series of Housing Games to engage tenants and leaseholders in prioritising capital repairs and maintenance and to obtain their views and priorities. A postal survey was also sent to a sample of tenants and leaseholders.

Many of the participants of the Housing Game said they found the experience interesting and felt they had learnt more about the capital works budget and the problems that the Council has to face each year.

Aldbourne Associates has written a report highlighting the results. These results are available on the Three Rivers website and have been reported to the Housing and Environment Policy Panel and to the Tenants and Leaseholders' Forum.

If you would like to see a full copy of the Housing Game report, please contact the Resident Liaison Officer, Helen Phillips, on 01923 776611.

### Overall Results of the Housing Game

#### Highest Priorities

First Time Double Glazing  
First Time Central Heating

#### Lowest Priorities

Environmental Works  
Roof Replacements

### Overall Results of the Postal Survey

#### Highest Priorities

First Time Double Glazing  
First Time Central Heating

#### Lowest Priorities

Entry Phone Systems  
Environmental Works

# New Tenants and Leaseholders' Forum

The forum is one of the ways the Council consults with its tenants and leaseholders. It considers matters of policy, procedures and services relating to the housing services provided by the Council and is a great way for you to become more involved in housing matters.

The December Newsletter included an article about the forum explaining how it now consists of up to 30 tenants and leaseholders and that two places are reserved for each residents' association

recognised by the Council. A nomination form was included which enabled tenants and leaseholders to put themselves forward to sit on the forum.

Thank you to those who returned nomination forms. All of you should have received a letter inviting you to a training session. However, if you did not return your nomination form but are still interested in being a member of the forum, then please contact the Resident Liaison Officer, Helen Phillips, on 01923 776611.



# Capital Works

## 2003-2004

The Council continually strives to improve the homes in which its tenants live. During 2003/4 a wide range of Capital Works has been carried out throughout the District. These include:-

**Re-roofing** to the sheltered scheme at Grove Court, Croxley Green. These works were carried out from June to November 2003. This was a lengthy job and required the elderly residents on the first floor to be rehomed whilst the works were taking place.

**Roof repairs** and replacement windows have been completed at St Mary's Court, Rickmansworth.

**Reconstruction and new drainage** to the service road at the rear of Enville House, Oxhey Drive.

**Roofing works** were undertaken to various properties in Birkdale Gardens, Seacroft Gardens, Beeston Close, Puttenham Close, Liphook Road, Prestwick Road, Muirfield Road South Oxhey and to Capell Way Chorleywood and Lovatts and Owens Way Croxley Green.

**Double-glazing** is always high on the list of needs of our tenants. This was installed to Hindhead Green, Kenilworth Gardens, Ellesborough Close, Barnhurst Path and Ashridge Drive. Works also included the cleaning of gullies, fascia and soffits. Double-glazed windows were also installed in Parsonage Close, Abbots Road and Causeway House in Abbots Langley.



Concrete repairs also proved necessary to some window frames.

We have also carried out extensive **electrical testing and rewiring** works throughout the District; this will continue in 2004/5.

**A wall at the rear of Pinchfield, Maple Cross,** required major works. This was because the wall was on a lower level and supported the land on the opposite side. The rebuilding of the wall had to be carried out in stages to ensure that the earth did not collapse and cause problems to the gardens of properties on the upper level.

**Works to refurbish the garage site in Owens Way, Croxley Green,** have been completed. This involved renewing the timber boarding to the roofs, replacing the guttering and downpipes, replacing defective door frames and painting the doors.

### Satisfaction Surveys

After works have been completed, your Estate Officer will send you a satisfaction survey form. The Council needs feedback from you on the standard of the works and how you were informed and consulted. We also want to know how the contractor treated you. Please ensure that you take time to complete and return this to us.

The Council wants to improve the service that we provide to you. By taking time to tell us what was good or bad about the works, we can monitor contractors and standards.



*Installing double-glazing in Causeway House, Abbots Langley*

# Halls for Hire



Whether it be a children's birthday party, anniversary or special occasion, a club or association meeting, further education or evening classes, Three Rivers District Council have two halls which may be the ideal venue for your type of event. Another reason for hiring one of these halls is that the hiring charges make them very affordable.

Bullsland Hall, which is situated in Chorleywood, is ideal for smaller events such as children's parties and meetings of local clubs and associations. Hiring the hall can easily be arranged by contacting Mr Beech from the Chorleywood Tenants and Leaseholders' Association on 01923 283737. The charges for hire are £20.00 per four-hour session.

Barn Lea Hall is situated in Mill End and is the larger of the two halls. Over the years it has hosted a variety of different types of events and, as with Bullsland Hall, is available for single or regular weekly or monthly lets. For further information on hiring Barn Lea Hall please contact Lyn Lawrence on 01923 727083. The charge for hiring Barn Lea Hall is £15.00 per morning/afternoon session.



# Council Accommodation Age Limit Lowered!



The Council has extended the eligibility for Sheltered and Elderly

Persons' Designated Accommodation.

Applicants aged over 55 (previously 60) can now consider this type of accommodation. This could increase your chances of being offered a property.

The Council has eight sheltered schemes across the Three Rivers District. A full list can be found in the Sheltered Housing leaflet. Sheltered accommodation can offer you secure

accommodation with the support of a Scheme Manager to assist you to continue to live independently.

Elderly Persons' accommodation consists of a group of properties solely designated for 55s and over, with the option of a visit by a Community Support Officer every 6-8 weeks.

**Why not contact us to arrange to register today!**

**Call 01923 776611 and ask for Housing Allocations.**

## Garden Works for the Elderly and Disabled

2004/2005

Winter is drawing to a close and we are now focusing our attention on the garden maintenance service we provide for our elderly and disabled tenants.

At present, the Council is in the process of preparing the contract tender documents which will enable us to employ a new contractor to undertake these works. It is expected that the tender process will be completed and a contractor employed by 1 July 2004.

The work for this contract involves cutting back grass and hedges only, for those residents who qualify for assistance.

It is with regret that in the past, some households have had their application for garden works refused as they have not fulfilled the strict criteria for entitlement.

You must be:

- of pensionable age and in receipt of 100% housing benefit
- and/or registered disabled and in receipt of 100% housing benefit
- have no relatives or friends who are able to provide assistance.

**Important:** In order to qualify you must fulfil all of the above criteria and sign a declaration to this effect.

Please note that if the form is not fully completed, it will be treated as invalid and applicants will not be added to the list.

It is expected that the first grass cutting will take place in July 2004, with the subsequent cut taking place in September/October.

Applications for these works have been sent out to those tenants whose names were on last year's list. Should you or anyone you know be interested in applying for inclusion on this list, please telephone your Estate Officer, giving full details of your name and address. Applications for this year's list needed to be returned by the end of April 2004. Any applications received after this date will be included on next year's list.

Enquiries regarding garden works should be directed to Chantelle Smith, Estate Officer.



# Your Bright Ideas for safer living



You are the best person to suggest improvements that can be made to your road, block of flats or communal gardens to make you, your family and neighbours feel safer.

We welcome your suggestions because, with your ideas and co-operation, we can apply for a grant for things like new fencing, improved lighting, better pathways and spruced-up garage areas. The funds for these improvements come from a budget that the Government has set aside for this purpose.

Your Estate Officers are keen to work with the community and the Crime Prevention Officers to take simple measures to reduce anti-social behaviour. We want you to feel safer and more comfortable about going out and about. Better lighting, bushes that are kept cut back and better security, all reduce the likelihood that groups or individuals will have the opportunity to create a nuisance or, in extreme cases, commit a crime.

Your Estate Officers have already made successful bids. The improvements are in place for all to see. New fencing behind the Clitheroe Gardens bungalows in South Oxhey is making the elderly residents feel safer and more secure. New porch lights are making the entrance area in Muirfield Road, South Oxhey, more welcoming and extra door security in the same block of flats is preventing youths from getting into communal areas and making a nuisance.

Other changes for the better include new fencing at the back of Hallows Crescent in South Oxhey to separate the woods from the popular outdoor recreation area used by the elderly residents. New low level fencing in Clitheroe Gardens is stopping cars from driving on to the green and churning up the grass. Brambles and overgrown shrubs have been cleared behind Kenilworth Gardens and Barnhurst Path making the whole area look tidy and well cared for.

The money for the improvements has not come out of your council tax but out of two special funds that the Government has dedicated to making communities feel safer.

Let us have your ideas and we will check with Crime Prevention Officers to make sure the ideas will work well. We will then put bids in on your behalf, which we hope will be successful.

Write or ring your Estate Officer today to share your ideas.

## DO YOU WISH TO RENT A GARAGE?

Garages are available NOW!

Boundary Way, Sarratt Area

Please contact Housing Allocations 01923 776611 for an application form.

# Emergency Repairs

The Council operates an Emergency Out-of-Hours service for any defect which can be deemed dangerous or urgent. Contact numbers are printed on your rent card and also on the back of your Tenant's Handbook.

The following are considered emergencies:

- **Gas leaks**
- **Burst pipes**
- **Blocked drains -** causing flooding within the property or the toilet to overflow when flushed when no other WC is available in the property. (Please note the cost of this repair, including the call-out charge, will be recharged to you in full.)
- **Roof repairs -** where internal damage is being caused making the property uninhabitable.
- **Fire or storm damage**
- **Loss of power -** (If the failure is because your own appliance is faulty you will be recharged the full cost of the call-out.)
- **No heating or hot water -** the emergency number should only be rung if a member of the household is of pensionable age, is less than three years old, or is chronically sick or disabled. If no member of the household meets these criteria, or there is another form of heating/hot water at the property, the full cost of the repair including the call-out charge, will be recharged to you.
- **failure of internal communal lighting to entrance halls, landing and staircases (excluding replacement of single bulbs or tubes).**
- **Regaining entry when you have lost your key -** the cost of this work may be recharged to you in full.



# Interim Arrangements for the Department of Housing and Health

The Director of Housing and Health, Lorraine Dallas, is leaving us. As the housing Stock Options Appraisal process is underway and we are unaware at this stage what the recommended course of action will be with regard to our housing stock, it would be untimely to replace the Director of Housing and Health immediately.

In order to maintain service and to ensure capacity, particularly in the housing department, the following interim arrangements are proposed for the next six months. The Environmental Health Service will transfer to the Directorate of Strategic Services, the Environmental Services section (grounds maintenance, environmental protection, waste & recycling) will join the Directorate of Leisure and Environment, all the Housing functions remain for six months a separate department with an interim Director of Housing, Fred Davies, is being employed for six months (see article on page 3).

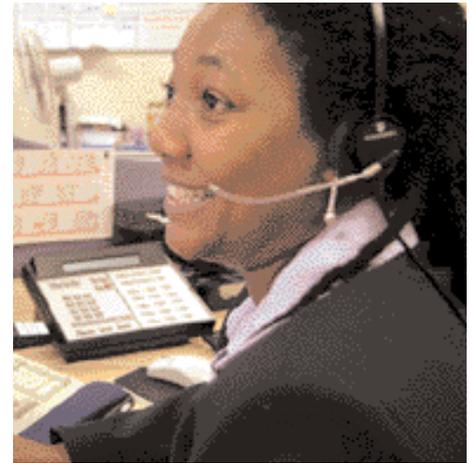
The new arrangements should ensure that not only will our various services continue to function smoothly, but that the housing service will benefit from the extra capacity brought in through a very experienced interim director devoted solely to the service during a very busy and demanding time.

## Customer Service Centre

The Customer Service Centre at Three Rivers District Council provides a quick efficient service for the whole community. We answer more than 1,000 calls a day.

The Customer Service Centre provides help and advice for tenants. Tenants who are unable to get to any of our council offices to make rent payments can phone us. We can take payments over the phone by either credit or debit card, and receipts can be sent out to confirm payment if required. We are also able to assist in confirming rent balances and sending out a statement if needed. Tenants who have fallen behind in their rent payments can contact the Customer Service Centre to help make a payment plan to bring it up to date.

The Customer Service Centre is also able to advise on neighbour disputes. We can let you know whether it is something the Council can get involved in and, if so, whether it is something your Estates Officer will be able to help you with or if it needs to be referred to another council department.



Other enquiries about tenancies can also be dealt with in the Customer Service Centre. We can arrange for the relevant forms to be sent out if there is a change in circumstances that may affect your tenancy. For example, if there is a name change caused by marriage or divorce, or if a partner wishes to become a joint tenant, we can help.

You can also make an appointment with your Estate Officer by contacting the Customer Service Centre on 01923 776611.

### The Customer Service Centre

01923 776611

Fax: 01923 896119

[www.threerivers.gov.uk](http://www.threerivers.gov.uk) Minicom 01923 727303

For telephone callers Monday to Friday  
8.00am - 6.00pm

Visiting hours Monday to Thursday  
8.30 am - 5.30pm  
Friday 8.30 am - 5.00pm

## South Oxhey's Own Valentine

Long-time South Oxhey resident, Graham Valentine, aged 33, who lives in Oxhey Drive, will be a regular sight on the streets and around the shopping areas of South Oxhey and Carpenders Park. Graham will be out with his broom, barrow and litter-pick from 8am to 4pm Monday to Saturday as part of a commitment by the District Council to have a very visible and personal street cleaning presence across the District.



# Tenant Participation Compacts

These are agreements between the Council and tenants and leaseholders. The aim is to give all tenants and leaseholders a say in the services they receive.

Compacts are based on three general principles: -

- 1 To involve local people and encourage personal and community development. By doing this the quality of our services will improve.
- 2 Support and encourage tenant involvement at whatever level and pace tenants decide.
- 3 That tenant involvement is about the wider perspective. This will involve working in partnership with the Police, for example, on matters which affect their homes, neighbourhoods and environment.

The Three Rivers District Council Compact has recently been reviewed and republished. Tenants and Residents' Association members have received a full copy. A summary of the Compact will shortly be sent to all tenants and leaseholders in Three Rivers. Copies of the Compact are available from Council offices and a copy is also available on the Three Rivers website, [www.threerivers.gov.uk](http://www.threerivers.gov.uk)

## What are Local Compacts?

Local Compacts are agreements setting out clear standards and information on the services that you can expect to receive as a Three Rivers tenant or leaseholder.

Chorleywood Local Compact was published and distributed in January 2004.

South Oxhey Local Compact is in the final stages and will soon be printed and distributed to all tenants and leaseholders in South Oxhey.

If you are interested in setting up a Local Compact for your area, please contact the Resident Liaison Officer, Helen Phillips on 01923 776611.

# Housing Allocations Service Standard

Service Standard	Actual Numbers	%
Arrange viewing of an empty property, whilst under repair or within 24 hours of the keys coming back after works are complete	48/50	96%
Assess applicants with medical needs within 4 weeks of receiving medical evidence	41/41	100%
Respond to Right To Buy applications by sending the forms out and making a decision within 4 weeks	17/17	100%
Process all Mutual Exchange requests within 6 weeks	5/6	83%
Respond to housing applications within 14 days	154/154	100%

# Pay Your Rent by Direct Debit and you could win £100

## Yes, it's true.

Three Rivers District Council will be giving one direct debit payer a cheque for £100.

There are 1,082 tenants who enjoy the hassle-free convenience of paying their rent by Direct Debit. Add your name to that list for your chance to win.

The draw will take place in August 2004 and all tenants who pay by Direct Debit will be entered. In order to qualify, you must have been paying your rent using Direct Debit by July 2004.

Why remember to pay your rent on time when it can be automatically taken from your bank account?

It's simple and convenient.

You complete one form and the direct debit arrangement will carry on year after year.

You can cancel the arrangement at any time.

A choice of two payment dates in the month 1st and 15th.

No more queuing to pay your rent

AND you could win £100!

Please contact Customer Services on 01923 776611 if you would like to request a form.



# Rechargeable Repairs



At a recent Housing and Environment Policy Panel, it was agreed to amend the current rechargeable repair policy which identifies those repairs carried out on a day-to-day basis for which the tenant must pay the cost of the repair.

The current list of rechargeable repairs is split into the categories shown in the table on the right.

The new charging structure came into effect on 1 April 2004.

**List A - The only exemptions from these charges are those tenants who are of pensionable age and in receipt of housing benefit or registered disabled in receipt of housing benefit:**

Board up and reglazing	£167.00
internal door locks	£34.50
external door locks	£78.00
cracked and broken WC pans	£86.00
cracked and broken wash hand basins	£80.00
wall tiles	£115.00 per sq m

**List B - The only exemptions from these charges are those tenants who are of pensionable age, registered disabled or are in receipt of housing benefit:**

renew bath tap	£52.00
renew sink tap	£40.00
renew wash hand basin tap	£40.00
tap washers	£12.50

**List C - The only exemptions from these charges are those tenants who are of pensionable age or registered disabled:**

rear garden gates	Invoice plus admin
rear garden fencing	Invoice plus admin

**List D - No exemptions**

broken WC seats	£29.00
broken glass: per square metre, including boarding up	£167.00
broken vinyl floor tiles where tenants have failed to use castors	£23.00 per sqm
blocked wastes to bath, wash basins, sinks and WCs	£40.00
plugs and chains to bath, sink and basins	£11.50
damaged internal doors	£126.00
gain entry to garage and change lock	£70.00
replacement letter box	£17.25
electrical work necessary because of interference or damage will be costed when testing has identified the extent of the work	Invoice plus admin
cost of test and report	£69.00
easing doors to accommodate fitted carpets	£46.00
clearance of rubbish left in Council premises	£150.00 (average cost)
installation of washing machine	quote plus admin
installation of dish washer	quote plus admin
damaged caused by tenant's own appliances	invoice plus admin
where a tenant has failed to keep an appointment	£16.00
extra security measures (locks, spy-holes)	quote plus admin
wilful damage or neglect	invoice plus admin
repair order thorough standby service - not emergency	invoice plus admin

Prices above are average costs, including an administration charge. The total charge raised to tenants will be the actual invoice value plus an admin charge of 15% plus VAT. Prices above do not include VAT.

Full details are available in the Rechargeable Repairs leaflet. The leaflet can be obtained from Three Rivers House, Northway, or from the South Oxhey Area Office. The new listings will also be inserted into the current edition of the Tenant's Handbook as an amendment.



# Housing Allocations

## How will I know when I am likely to be offered a property?

You will be placed into one of three categories which we call 'Bands'.

**BAND A** - Applicants are likely to be offered accommodation in the near future, which means weeks rather than months.

**BAND B** - Applicants are likely to receive an offer of accommodation but not immediately, which means months rather than weeks.

**BAND C** - Applicants are unlikely to be offered accommodation by the Council for years to come.

If an applicant significantly restricts their choice of area or property type, they will always be in Band C.

Based on the number, type and size of properties that became available over the last 6 months, the following is a

guide to the number of points the Council is allocating:

Applicants who have chosen:

South Oxhey

91 points or more = BAND A

71 to 90 points = BAND B

70 points or less = BAND C

Applicants who have not chosen South Oxhey, but have chosen all 4 of the following areas:

Mill End, Berry Lane, Maple Cross & Rickmansworth who have;

91 points = BAND B

0 - 91 points = BAND C

Single applicants, with SOUTH and/or HABERRY who have:

60+ points = BAND B

If your application does not fit in to the criteria listed you will be in BAND C.



## Incentive to move

**Are you a tenant of Three Rivers District Council?**

**Is your current property too big for you?**

**Are you finding it difficult to maintain?**

**Want a smaller property?**

**Need some financial assistance to help with the cost of moving?**

**If you answered 'YES' to any of the above questions, then read on.**

If you are a tenant of Three Rivers District Council and are currently in a property that is too big for you, and you would like to move to a smaller property, then you could be eligible for the Incentive to Move payment.

Three Rivers District Council is able to offer a one-off payment to current tenants to assist with moving costs. £1,000 is payable for each bedroom you relinquish, so up to £3,000 can be offered! For example, if you are in a three-bedroom property but only need a two-bedroom property, you would be eligible for a payment of £1,000.

If you only require a one-bedroom property, you could receive £2,000!

**If you are interested in the above scheme, please contact the Housing Allocations Team on 01923 776611.**

## Amendments to the Housing Allocations Policy

### Extending the eligibility for Sheltered and Elderly Persons' Accommodation

The Council has agreed that applicants of 55 years and over or people with physical disabilities can be considered for sheltered and elderly persons' accommodation.

Applicants for sheltered housing are assessed by the Scheme Manager for suitability for housing in a sheltered scheme. However, you and your partner, if applicable, must both still meet the current eligibility criteria as follows:

- you are aged 55 years or over (or are a younger applicant with physical disabilities) and,
- you are able to live independently and,
- you attend the assessment interview in your own home (unless you are currently residing out of this district) and,

- you are not diagnosed with or suffering from any mental illness that will interfere with other tenants' quiet enjoyment of their home or facilities.

Offers of these properties will not be made to applicants with dependants living with them.

The Sheltered Housing Scheme Managers do not provide any care but try to ensure the welfare of tenants is attended to through other caring agencies and that their social needs are met wherever possible. People with severe disabilities affecting their mental or physical capabilities, or people who have severe degenerative illnesses may have needs too great to be managed in a sheltered scheme.

If you are interested please contact the Housing Allocations Team on 01923 776611.



# Chairman's Charity Event

Five of our Sheltered Housing Schemes held a Charity Games afternoon on 4 March 2004 at St Mary's Court. All proceeds were donated to Councillor Boléat's chosen charity, the Meningitis Research Foundation. The event was organised by the Scheme Managers of St Mary's Court, Frogmoor Court and Grove Court. Sixty-six tenants attended from the schemes and surrounding community.

The games ranged from cash bingo, followed by different quizzes, to a game of 'play your cards right', with the guest of honour Councillor Boléat making an excellent dolly dealer! There was also a tombola and home-made cake stall run by the tenants of Grove Court and Frogmoor Court. The afternoon finished with a delicious cream tea served by the Scheme Managers and Councillor Boléat. A grand total of £418.41 was raised for the charity.

The afternoon was a huge success. Well done to all involved.



*Left to Right: Myra Underwood, Cllr Boleát, Lilian Coniom, Veronica Lang.*

## Leaseholders' Handbook

A handbook for leaseholders has now been published and distributed to all leaseholders. The handbook provides information on legal rights for leaseholders together with other rights and obligations of leaseholders and the Council.

All leaseholders should have now received a copy of the handbook. A copy was sent to every leaseholder in February 2004. If you have not received your copy, please contact The Resident Liaison Officer, Helen Phillips on 01923 776611.

## Anti-Social Behaviour Officer

The new Anti-Social Behaviour legislation requires every Community Safety Partnership to have a named Anti-Social Behaviour Officer. Anti-social behaviour is high on the list of the Three Rivers Community Safety Partnership's priorities and is also on the Council's priorities for 2004-2005.

As a result of the new legislation and the Tenants' Satisfaction Survey, of which 63% of tenants took part, the Council and the Police have recently appointed an Anti-Social Behaviour

Officer (ASB). The person appointed, is working across the District as the main point of contact for both tenants and residents who have a complaint about specific anti-social behaviour issues.

The ASB officer will work closely with the Police including the new Police Community Support Officers and other agencies to gather evidence effectively in relation to anti-social behaviour and support the work of the Partnership in applying for Anti-Social Behaviour Orders.

The post is being funded by Home Office money allocated to the Three Rivers Community Safety Partnership for two years.



*Helen Phillips presenting First Prize winner Mrs Mills with her £150 worth of vouchers.*

## Tenants' Satisfaction Survey winners

A big thanks to all of you who took the time and effort to return the tenants' satisfaction survey. This survey took place in September 2003 to provide the Housing department with a snapshot of tenants and leaseholders' views.

The results of the survey are being analysed and an action plan produced. The results will be published in the summer newsletter.

All participants were entered into a prize draw with the chance of winning Harlequin vouchers.

First prize of £150.00 worth of Harlequin vouchers went to Mrs Mills. Second prize of £50.00 worth of vouchers went to Mrs Muggeridge.