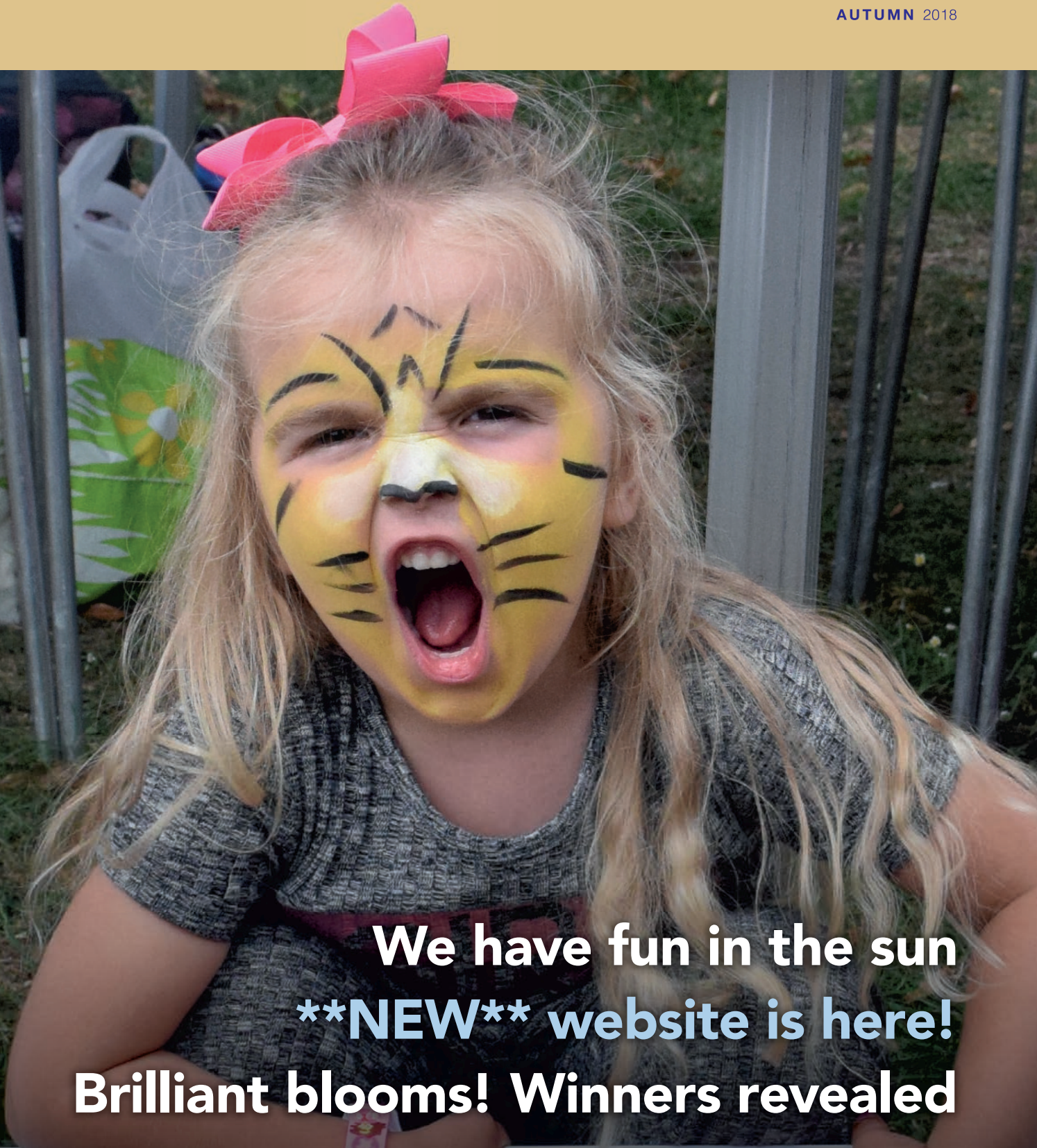




CBHnews

AUTUMN 2018



**We have fun in the sun
NEW website is here!
Brilliant blooms! Winners revealed**

FREEPHONE 0800 408 0000 VISIT www.cbh.org



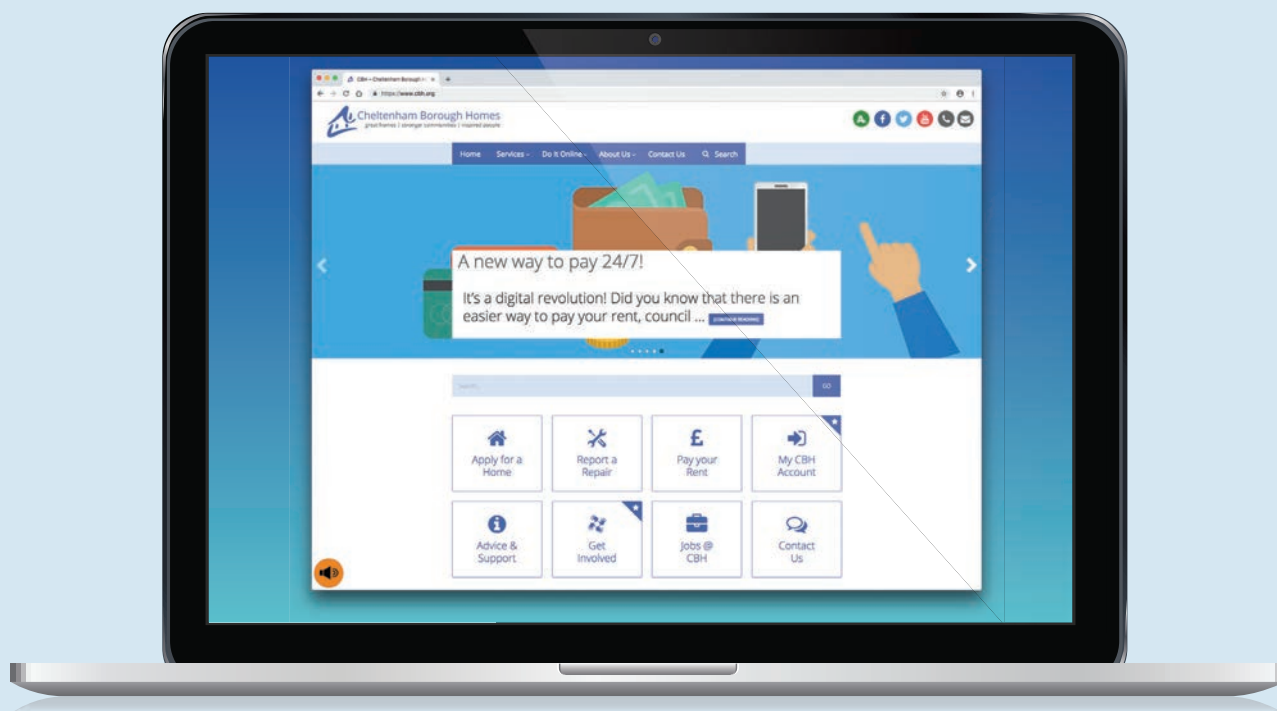
Check out our new website!

Our glorious summer might be drawing to a close but don't worry, we've got something to cheer you up. As we move into a new season, we've given our website a fresh, new look. Taking on board comments from tenants and our employees, we have made some big changes to make it quicker and easier for you to find what you're looking for.

The new design is more 'mobile friendly' making it easier for you to:

- pay your rent
 - report a repair or ASB
 - read news about CBH services
- ...and much more, all on the move.

Take a look at www.cbh.org



Reading **CBHnews**

If you would like a translation or would prefer this information in Braille, large print or audio tape, please contact us on **0800 408 0000** or **communityinvolvement@cbh.org**

COVER PHOTO: Smile for the camera! Our family fun events are a roaring success (see pages 6 & 7)

Brew and review at the Board Away Day

In June our Board members enjoyed a productive afternoon reviewing their performance over the past year and worked on some bold ideas for the future.

Our Board members volunteer their time and are an essential part of the strategic planning and direction of CBH. The afternoon included a joint exercise with employees and members as together they worked through the exciting prospect of "How to spend £100m on Social Housing".

All in all it was a very productive day and provoked some really interesting ideas from our Board. Find out more about our Board or how to become a member, on our new website here: www.cbh.org



CHELTENHAM WEST VISION: Master plan on its way!

In the last edition of this newsletter we updated you on the project we have been carrying out in partnership with Cheltenham Borough Council, called Cheltenham West Vision. The aim of this project is to research and map out how certain areas within West Cheltenham might look in the future.

So far we've done the research bit; gathering ideas and thoughts at a number of community drop-in events and listening to community representatives' views. We're now busy pulling together all the feedback and ideas, and are drafting a 'master plan.' This will outline a vision for these areas, including how housing, public spaces, roads, transport, and the local economy might look and work for the whole community in the future.

We're on track to complete the master plan by the end of the autumn and then we will be going back out into the community to ask

you what you think! Keep your eyes out for your opportunity to have your say.

A huge thank you to everyone who has got involved in this consultation so far and put forward many invaluable views and ideas.

Find out more at www.cbh.org/cheltwest



Want to move home?



If you're looking to move home, the first thing that you will need to do is register your interest online using Homeseekerplus (a choice based lettings system).

With just one application you can apply for a social rented home in any area of Gloucestershire and West Oxfordshire.

Once you've applied, you will then be placed in a banding system which makes sure that those most in need of a home gets housing first.

There are four priority bands:

Emergency band

Gold band

Silver band

Bronze band

Your band will depend on the information that you provide on your application form and will let you know the size of house that you can bid for.

Once you've received confirmation of where you are in the banding system, you can then start to search for a home of your choice.

You can bid for up to three homes each week. If you've chosen a CBH property, our Empty Homes Team will then review the shortlist of applicants and usually match the property to the highest placed candidate.

Your place on the shortlist is based on:

- Local connection to area
- Your band
- How long your application has been in that band
- If you are eligible for the property (medical needs, age, disabled adaptations)

The outcome of any bids that you have placed can be viewed on your **Homeseekerplus account**.

If your bid is successful the Empty Homes Team will contact you to discuss the property and arrange for you to go and view it.

You can find a full list of the banding criteria by visiting www.homeseekerplus.co.uk



Is your home too big for you?

On Homeseekerplus downsizers have priority:

Gold banding – if you live in a 3 bed or more and are looking to move into a smaller family home

Emergency banding – if you are looking to downsize from 2 beds or more to a place with one bedroom

Got a low band and would like to move?

There is also the option to use a free online self-service tool called Homeswapper, once you've set up an account you can use it to swap your home with another social housing tenant, find a new place that works for you and much more, to find out more visit: www.homeswapper.co.uk


For more information call
0800 408 0000
or visit www.cbh.org



We're in the running for top award!

We've got our fingers and toes crossed that our hugely successful Alternative Provision Project (APP) will be crowned the winners of a prestigious award later this month. Our APP, set up to help inspire a group of young people from All Saints Academy to stay in mainstream education is in the running for this year's 24Housing Awards category of "Care & Support Provider of the Year." Winners will be announced on 18 October at a special award ceremony.

Keep your eyes peeled on the following to see how we get on:

www.cbh.org  @cheltborohomes  @CheltBoroHomes



Government paper sets out 'new deal' for tenants

In August, the Government published the Social Housing Green Paper, a consultation document that aims to "rebalance the relationship between landlords and residents, tackle stigma and ensure social housing can act as a stable base and support social mobility."

In developing the document, residents across the country were asked for their views on social housing. Almost 8,000 tenants shared their views. Using these views 5 core themes have been set out:

- Tackling stigma and celebrating thriving communities
- Expanding supply and supporting home ownership
- Effective resolution of complaints
- Empowering residents and strengthening the regulator
- Ensuring homes are safe and decent

Working closely with the CBH TSIP (Tenant Scrutiny and Improvement Panel) and the Council we will be responding to the consultation questions. We'll let you know in future editions what views we put forward.



Everyone has an opportunity to have their say on these proposals. You can voice your opinion online at www.gov.uk The consultation deadline is 6 November 2018.

We bring the sunshine to Cheltenham!

This year we kicked off the summer holidays in style with not one but 11 family fun events across Cheltenham!

Jam packed with exciting activities to entertain the children and their families, over 800 local residents turned out to join us at these events for some fun in the sun and to meet our new look Community Investment Team!

Meet the Community Investment Team:



Alexis Turner
St Paul's, St Peter's
and The Moors



James Hayward
Springbank, Arle and
Hester's Way



Louise Oliver
St Marks, Rowanfield
and Monkscroft



Ellen Pollicott
Oakley



Lisa Brinicombe
Hester's Way West

These special events were held to find out more about the types of activities and education opportunities that people would like to see in their local area. People were asked for their views on:

- **How we can offer support with healthy living**
- **How they would like to get involved in their local community**
- **Safety within their neighbourhoods**

Held at Hester's Way, Oakley, St Paul's, Springbank, Rowanfield and Monkscroft the family fun days were a huge success with over 900 surveys being completed at the events and online too!

Everyone had a great time and enjoyed the following activities:

CIRCUS SKILLS

GIANT BUBBLES

ARTS AND CRAFTS

A VISIT FROM THE FIRE SERVICE

HOMEMADE LEMONADE AND SNACKS

BISCUIT DECORATING

GLITTER TATTOOS



Next steps...

The team are currently:

- Working with local partners and organisations to come up with a 2 year action plan for each area looking at different types of training, clubs, groups and projects that they can deliver
- Continuing to listen to the communities that we manage to identify people's main skills and interests
- Working closely with local residents to help them get more involved in shaping the future of their neighbourhood

Help us make a difference!

We're looking for community champions and young leaders to support us in making Cheltenham an even better place to live!

For more information contact the Community Investment Team on 0800 408 0000 or email communityinvolvement@cbh.org

You can also contact the team through their new Facebook groups (visit page 8).



Massive thanks to all our partners and volunteers for their invaluable help and support at these events.

What's on in your area?

You can now keep up to date on the latest activities and workshops taking place in your local community by checking out our exciting new Facebook Groups!

These exciting new Groups are your one stop shop for keeping up to date on the latest goings on in your area and are run by our Community Investment Team.

To find them visit our **@cheltborohomes** Facebook page and click on the Groups tab. There you will find your local group and Community Investment Officer - details below:

What's on – Oakley - run by Ellen

What's on – St Mark's, Rowanfield & Monkscroft - run by Louise

What's on – Springbank, Arle and Hester's Way - run by James

What's on – St Paul's, St Peter's and The Moors - run by Alexis

What's on – Hester's Way West - run by Lisa

For more information please contact our Community Investment Team by visiting your local 'What's on' Facebook Group or call **0800 408 0000**



PLEASE READ THIS LIFESAVING FIRE ADVICE

Fire doors save lives. They are an essential part of a buildings fire protection system. When they are shut properly they can prevent fire and smoke spreading.

If fire doors are wedged or propped open it creates a serious risk to the life of anyone living or visiting the building.

Remember these 3 simple fire door safety rules:



We take your safety extremely seriously and have a legal duty to make sure that fire doors have a special hinge (known as a 'closer') that is working properly. If your home has a fire door fitted please check it is working properly, if it isn't contact us on **0800 408 0000**

Brilliant blooms impress our judges

The gardening greats of Cheltenham have been honoured for their dedication and green fingers at this year's Tenant and Leaseholder Garden Competition 2018.

Throughout July our expert judges visited a stunning selection of beautiful gardens and on Friday 31 August the worthy winners were crowned at a prestigious awards evening.

This year saw an all-time high in both the number and quality of entries, which were outstanding! After much deliberation judges the picked the following winners:

Front garden

Winner – Barbara Crew

Back Garden

Winner – Mike Richards

Patio

Winner – Berni and Cath Bond

Border

Winner – Doug Sweet

Balcony

Winner – Doug Sweet

Window box-container

Winner – John Boyce

Hanging basket

Winner – Doug Jones

Children's container

Winner – Ryan Oliver

Overall winner

Doug Sweet

Best new entry

David Tibbles

Most improved entry

Arthur Mills



Huge congratulations to our garden competition winners and many thanks to our supporting partners Bromford, CBC and Aon for their generous sponsorship of this event.

MASSIVE thanks must go to our tenants Paul Bond, Mike Euston and the judges too for their hard and tireless work in organising and judging this successful competition.

Our drop ins are just the job!

Struggling to afford your rent or manage your bills?

If so, then look no further than our free drop-in sessions! Our friendly and very knowledgeable team of Benefit and Money Advisors can provide you with confidential advice to help you get back on track with your finances.



They can help you:

- With simple budgeting tips
 - Carry out a check-up to help you claim the benefits that you may be entitled to
 - Show you how a change of job can affect your benefit entitlement and income
 - Explain any changes to the benefit system including Universal Credit
 - Direct you to any support organisations that can provide additional help
- and much more...

These weekly drop in sessions take place at:

Cheltenham Job Centre

7 North Street, GL50 4DJ

Every Wednesday

CBH tenant: 10am – 2pm

Non-CBH tenant: 10am – 2pm

Hesters Way Community Resource Centre

Cassin Drive, Cheltenham, GL51 7SU

Every Thursday

CBH tenant: 9am – 1pm

Non-CBH tenant: 9:30am – 1pm

For more information or to register your interest:

CBH tenant: call 0800 408 0000 or email bma@cbh.org. **Non-CBH tenant:** call 01242 387618 or email benefits@cheltenham.gov.uk

Early finish for new homes

Thanks to the glorious summer and a problem free build we are delighted to be handing over the keys to 10 new homes two months early. Earlier this year we started work on two former garage sites and have transformed these under-used sites to provide:

4 HOUSES: Three x 3 bedroom homes and a 2 bedroom home at Listening Post Close in Hester's Way

6 FLATS: Four x 1 bedroom flats and two x 2 bedroom flats in Neptune House, off Newton Road

We look forward to welcoming the new tenants later this month.



The new homes at Listening Post Close

The new flats in Neptune House



WANTED



Volunteers for CBH tenant group

Would you like to influence and improve the services we deliver to you? Why not join our Tenant Scrutiny Improvement Panel (TSIP)? This inclusive group is on the lookout for new people with the following skills and experiences:

- Ability to find out information through discussion or research
- Taking minutes or notes at meetings and writing them up
- Collating information and writing up the findings (report writing)
- Planning actions and making sure things happen on time

TSIP has successfully influenced many of the services that we deliver, helping to shape them to better meet your needs.

Go to www.cbh.org for more information or contact our Community Investment Team on **0800 408 0000**

We snap up £8k to sink loan sharks

Thanks to the award winning success of last year's hard hitting loan shark campaign, we are delighted to tell you that we have secured a cool £5k from the Illegal Money Lending Team (IMLT) to run a bigger and better campaign this year!

This is the maximum amount awarded and comes from convicted loan sharks who have had assets seized under money laundering laws.

This £5k joins the £3k national prize money we won from IMLT's Stop Loan Sharks Project for the fantastic awareness raising campaign we ran last year using [#cheltenhamaysno](https://twitter.com/cheltenhamaysno)



Keep your eyes peeled in future editions to see how we use the money to bite back against loan sharks

Computer training courses

We've teamed up with **Adult Education in Gloucestershire** to deliver four exciting training courses.

So far, the first part of the Computer Basics and the Spreadsheet classes began back in September and have been a huge hit with local residents!

Spaces are limited for more information on these courses please contact our Employment Initiatives Team (contact details on page 13).

The next lot of training is due to take place next month:

- **Computer Basics (Part 2):**
6 November 2018
1 - 3pm
- **Spreadsheets (Part 2):**
6 November 2018
10am - 12pm

Employability Workshops for parents

In our spring edition of the newsletter we mentioned that we had successfully completed the first round of an Employability Workshop aimed at helping parents who are looking to go back to work.

We're delighted to announce that we have continued to work alongside the **GEM (Going the Extra Mile)** project and have since delivered another 6 sessions to provide some further support for parents. Held at Oakwood and St Thomas More School these classes offered the following:

- Help with CV's and covering letters
- Job searching techniques
- Support with filling in application forms
- Help preparing for interviews
- Welfare advice from our Benefits and Money Advice Team

Missed out on these sessions? Not to worry, we're currently running another workshop which will finish on **Friday 9 November 2018**. (please call for more information - contact details on page 13).



English not your first language?

We can still help!

We've joined forces with local organisations including GEM and the Gloucestershire Rural Community Council to help you improve your English and support you in getting the skills you need to find work in the UK.

This educational course takes place:

Every Friday 10-11:30am Hester's Way Community Resource Centre, Cassin Drive, GL51 7SU

These classes can help with:

- Access to a computer and help with online job searching
- Creating a CV
- Developing communication skills for interview techniques
- Understanding UK work culture and the language
- Individual mentoring

Sessions will continue to run until Friday 9 November 2018



Work Club

If you need help planning your next career move or if you're looking to take the first step into training, then look no further than our friendly Work Clubs!

Come along for help with job searching, writing CV's, training, apprenticeships, interview techniques and much more.

They take place weekly:

Every Monday & Wednesday

Hester's Way Community Resource Centre, Cassin Drive

11am – 1pm

Every Tuesday & Thursday

Oakley Community Resource Centre
Clyde Crescent

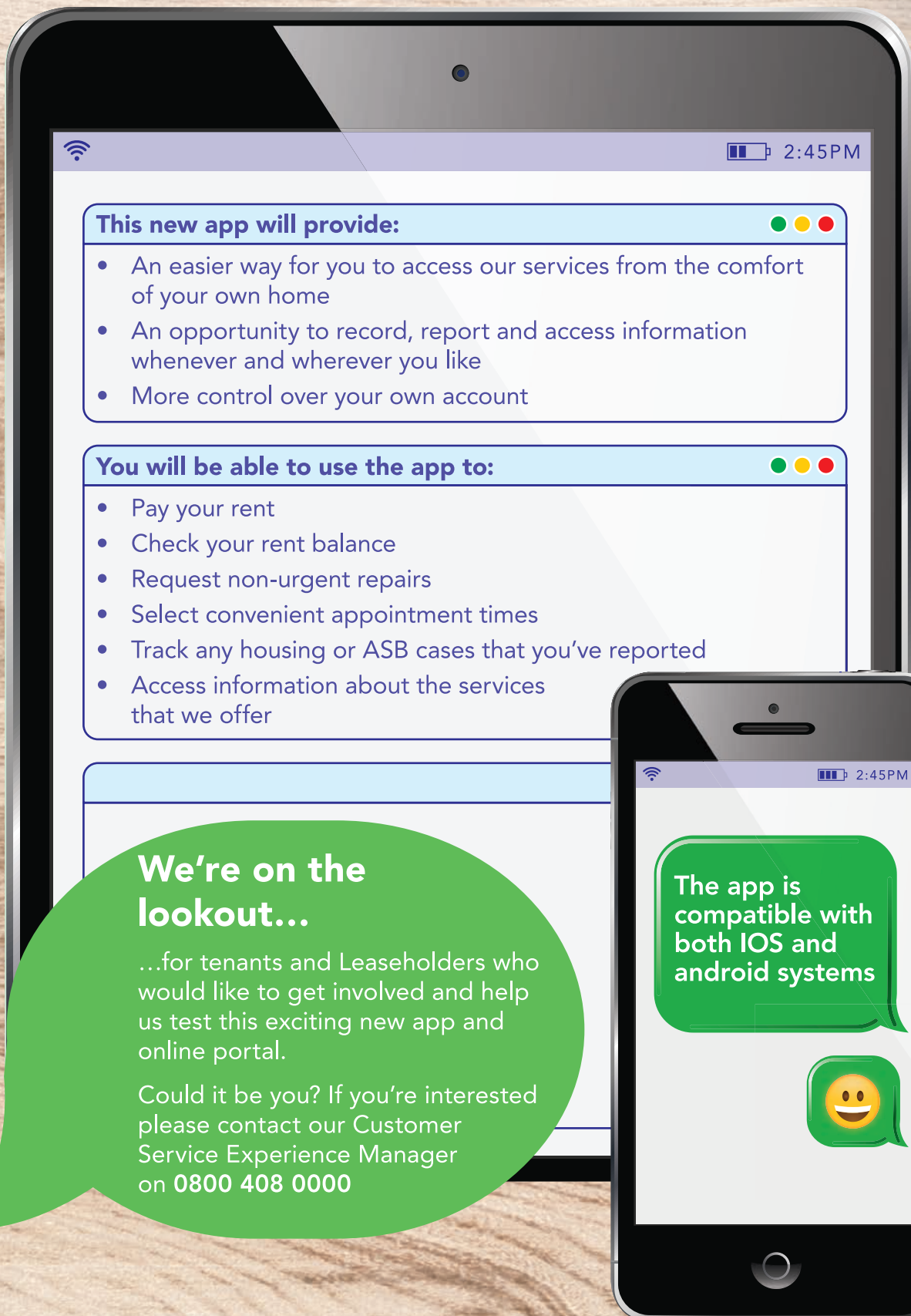
11am – 1pm

To book your place or for more information about any upcoming workshops or training opportunities taking place contact our Employment Initiatives Team on 0800 408 0000



We need your help!

We're in the process of introducing a new mobile app and online portal to make it easier for you to access our services, your own information or contact us from your mobile device or computer.



INFO SPOT

Rent refunds – What you need to know

Did you know that we regularly look at your rent account to see if you're due a refund? We check that you are at least a week in credit – this is because your tenancy agreement states that you must pay one weeks rent in advance. If your account shows more than one week in credit, depending on your regular payment method, we will consider issuing you with a refund.



Who's your community hero?

Later this year we will be inviting you to nominate your community hero in our annual CBH Tenant and Leaseholder Awards. We hold these awards to make sure that Cheltenham's remarkable groups and inspirational people get the recognition that they deserve. Keep your eyes peeled for the latest updates by visiting our website, Facebook and Twitter pages or call our **0800 408 0000** for more information.

Record of aggressive behaviour towards CBH staff and contractors

At CBH we take the personal safety of our staff and our contractors very seriously. Legally, we are required to tell you that we keep a record of potentially violent and/or aggressive customers. Any incidents are recorded on a 'Staff Personal Safety Register' and are accessed by CBH staff as appropriate.

In some cases, depending on the severity of the behaviour, we may also share relevant information with other partners such as the Council or Police. As stated in your tenancy agreement, it is your responsibility to make sure that you, anyone living with you, or your visitors, does not act in a violent and/or aggressive manner towards CBH staff or contractors. Failure to do this may, ultimately, result in you losing your home.

#%!&*!

Customer Experience Forum



It takes allsorts!

We're on the lookout for tenants and leaseholders
with a passion for great customer service.

Come and help us find new products and services, meet like minded
people and have your say...

Contact Karen Ashmore on **0800 408 0000** or karen.ashmore@cbh.org

