



WATCH

Lifeline Alarm Service

Reassurance and peace of mind at the touch of a button

WATCH newsletter • Issue 31 • Winter 2022

*Merry
Christmas!*



Dear WATCH Lifeline Customer



Welcome to the 2022 Winter issue of the WATCH newsletter. I hope this finds you safe and well.

Cost of Living crisis

Unexpected events have challenged us this year and we remain resilient as a community. The Cost of Living

crisis in the UK is resulting in unprecedented pressures on people already struggling, and this winter thousands of people in Wandsworth will be forced to make tough decisions.

The Cost of Living crisis will impact all residents in different ways and there is support available to people across the borough. This newsletter sets out how the council and the government are supporting local people through the Cost of Living crisis. See Pages 4 and 5.

We want to do as much as possible to help our residents. The council is working with our local partners to provide access to a network of Warm Spaces, a group of places where Wandsworth residents can come together to stay warm.

You can contact the Wandsworth Cost of Living Hub to get information and advice on the Cost of Living crisis. You can call the hub for free on 0808 175 3339 between 9am and 5pm, Monday to Friday.

We want to hear your feedback

As a council, we always want to hear your feedback. We want to know how we can improve this newsletter and know if you find it useful.

Please contact Tony Carter on Anthony.Carter@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk or 020 8734 3152 if you have any thoughts or feedback on this issue.

Finally

I do hope you enjoy this issue, which includes a range of advice and support as well as celebrates what is going on in our community. Page 6 highlights sheltered residents from Grosse way, Hepplestone Close and Riplington Court as well as their family and friends raising money for Macmillan Cancer Support. Well done to everyone involved.

I hope you all have a very enjoyable festive period. Look after yourself and please do not hesitate to contact the team if you need anything.

Tom Crawley
Head of Resident
and Estate Services

Your housing contacts

Supported Housing Services have many services which can help you:

- Sheltered housing
- Tenancy support team
- Community development team

To find out how we can help you, contact us on:

Telephone: **020 8871 6840**

or email: jccbusinesssupport@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk

Housing emergency numbers

Joint Control Centre (24hrs)

for properties managed by the council 020 8871 7490

Emergency response officers (24 hrs) 020 8871 7741

For information on the WATCH alarm and Telecare services, please call **020 8871 8198**.

To find out more about services and information available to older people, visit

www.wandsworth.gov.uk/supportedhousing

Address: **2 West Drive, London SW16 1RP**

Reception: 9am - 4.30pm (Monday to Friday)

Other useful numbers:

NHS for non-emergency care 111

Age UK 0800 00 99 66

Energy saving advice service 0300 123 1234

Update on the council's fire sprinklers installation

Our contractor, Domestic Sprinklers, has been busy working with residents and housing officers over the last 12 months to retrofit fire sprinkler systems within our sheltered housing and temporary housing schemes across the borough.

Residents have been warm and welcoming, and our staff have enjoyed working with them to build relationships and ensure that the systems are installed with the least disruption. To date, installation works have been ongoing on 12 sites with a further 8 schemes in the pipeline during the current phase of works.

All of the buildings have been fully protected to the very latest domestic sprinkler standards with pipework

encased in quality prefinished boxing and discrete concealed sprinkler heads installed within residents' homes.

The sprinkler heads are heat activated which means that residents do not need to be concerned about any smoke generated through cooking and all protection is localised which means that only sprinkler heads in the same room as a fire will activate.

Digital inclusion and support in Wandsworth



Do you find using a laptop or smart phone a daunting experience?

Or are you someone who is always looking for new ways to get the most out of technology?

The council's Adult Social Care Department has teamed up with local voluntary sector partners to help you to get online and increase your confidence in using technology.

Here are some organisations that we are working with that you can contact to find out more about their tech services, including upcoming workshops and training, and in some cases even borrowing a device to try at home

- **Community Drug and Alcohol Recovery Services (CDARS)**

Digital Inclusion Programme for people who are affected by mental health and the ill-effects of addiction to alcohol or drugs. The programme consists of 15 sessions, five of which are one-to-one bespoke sessions, and are followed by 10 group sessions should you need more support. Telephone: 020 3872 8217

- **Katherine Low Settlement (KLS)** Digital Inclusion Programme helps people aged 55+ who want to learn how to use a smartphone or tablet confidently and safely. Telephone: 020 7223 2845

- **Share Community's** Digital Inclusion Programme is for adults with learning disabilities and/or autism, including physical and mental health conditions and their families or carers. You will be able to access this service if you are on a low income with no or limited access to technology or have no or limited digital skills. Telephone: 020 7924 2949

- **Wandsworth Carers Centre's** Digital Inclusion Programme is mainly for unpaid carers aged 60+ and who are new to technology. Through their training programme you will gain skills to make better use of the devices you already have, connect to WIFI and be able to access grants to purchase digital devices. Telephone: 020 8877 1200

- **Age UK Wandsworth** Digital service, aims to enable older people to benefit from digital connectivity whether that be shopping online, accessing information and entertainment on the internet or connecting with people via emails/video calls/social media. Telephone: 020 8877 8940

For a more detailed overview of the projects and referral details, see the councils webpage 'Where to get help with technology' www.wandsworth.gov.uk.

Support through the Cost of Living crisis



The council and government have unveiled a package of support to help local people through the Cost of Living crisis.

Council Support

Residents across the borough will be feeling worried about the Cost of Living crisis. There are various ways that the council and local organisations can help struggling families at this time, including:

- **Crisis Assistance for food and fuel** - Crisis payments are awarded to cover short-term needs which prevent serious risk to the health and safety of a person or their family. The payments are intended to meet one-off needs rather than on-going expenses and are provided through supermarket vouchers that can be used for groceries and fuel vouchers for prepayment meters.
- **Discretionary housing payments** - Payments are for people receiving Housing Benefit or Universal Credit, including a housing element, who require further financial assistance with housing costs because their benefit does not cover their full rent. The scheme is not part of normal Housing Benefits or Universal Credit and is awarded at the discretion of the local authority. The money comes from a cash limited fund and so an award of DHP is usually only paid for a limited period.
- **Council Tax reduction (CTR)** - CTR is to help people who are on a low income to pay part or all of their council tax. If you qualify for Council Tax reduction this will be paid into your Council Tax account reducing the amount you have to pay
- **Financial inclusion team** - The financial inclusion team provides benefits, budgeting and debt advice to council tenants who are having difficulty paying their rent. If you are struggling to pay your rent, please let your Rent Collection Officer know.

- **Community care grant** - The scheme provides discretionary support to the most vulnerable Wandsworth residents who are experiencing hardship and crisis. Awards are made from a limited budget and can provide support by way of furniture (e.g. beds) and white goods (e.g. fridges).
- **Wandsworth foodbank** - For emergency food, support and advice head to Wandsworth foodbank.org.uk or call 020 7326 9428. If you are in financial crisis you can also call the free national helpline on 0808 2082138.
- **Tooting community kitchen** - Provides support for the homeless and disadvantaged, the kitchen runs a weekly food stall outside Tooting Market. www.tootingcommunitykitchen.co.uk
- **Warm spaces** - The council is working with our local partners to provide access to a network of Warm Spaces, a group of places where Wandsworth residents can come together to stay warm. Some venues will also offer hot drinks, activities and access to other services. For more information and to find a directory of all the places available to our residents, head to wandsworth.gov.uk/warm-spaces.

The online Wandsworth Cost of Living Hub has been set up to help people find support during the Cost of Living crisis, including advice on bills, finances, mental health, food and support for families.

Visit: wandsworth.gov.uk/cost-of-living-hub

Here are some of the government schemes available to support people with rising energy costs:

Cost of Living Payments

The government has three different types of payment depending on your circumstances:

- **Cost of Living Payment** - a payment of two lump sums £326 and £324, with one having been paid in July and another payment planned for Autumn 2022. To qualify for this payment, you must be on low-income benefit or tax credits. This will be paid through an automatic payment.
- **Disability Cost of Living Payment** - those who qualify for a disability benefit will be entitled to a lump sum payment of £150. The payment should have been made in September 2022.
- **Pensioner Cost of Living Payment** – those who are entitled to a Winter Fuel Payment for winter 2022 to 2023 will get an extra £300 for their household paid with your normal payment from November 2022.

These payments are not taxable and will not affect a person's benefits or tax credits.

Winter Fuel Payment

The Winter Fuel Payment is an automatic payment for people who either get the State Pension or get another social security benefit (not including Housing Benefit, Council Tax Reduction, Child Benefit or Universal Credit).

To be eligible, you need to be born on or before 25 September 1956. You could get between £250 and £600 to help you pay your heating bills.

Cold Weather Payment

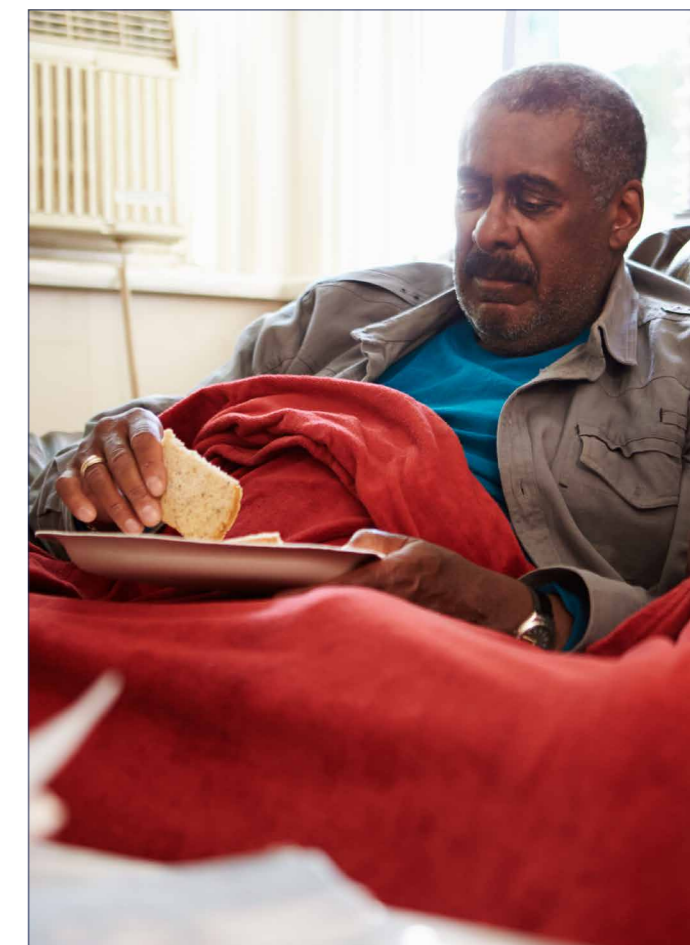
The Cold Weather Payment is a £25 payment for each seven-day period of very cold weather between 1 November and 31 March. Payment is made when the average temperature in your area is recorded as, or forecast to be, zero degrees Celsius or below over seven consecutive days. You do not need to apply. If you're eligible to get a Cold Weather Payment, you'll be paid it automatically.

Warm Home Discount

The Warm Home Discount is a one-off payment to reduce eligible customers' bills over the winter months. This winter the payment is rising from £140 to £150. The money won't be paid directly – it'll be added as credit to your electricity account. This usually happens between October and April.

To qualify, you or your partner must have an account with a participating electricity supplier, and one of you must claim qualifying benefits, including:

- you get the Guarantee Credit element of Pension Credit - known as the 'core group'
- you're on a low income and meet your energy supplier's criteria for the scheme - known as the 'broader group'



Money raised for Macmillan Cancer Support

A Macmillan Coffee morning was held in November 2022 at Grosse Way Club room.



Sheltered residents from Grosse way, Hepplestone Close and Riplington Court attended as well as family, friends, and members from Agewell Roehampton.

Along with having a cuppa and lots of cake, a successful raffle and bric & brac sale was held with all proceeds going to Macmillan Cancer Support. In total, £408.16 was raised.

Pictured top left: Janet Robson, Patsy, & Shelia Young

Bottom left: Brenda, Edna Stevens

Top right: Shelia Brady, Elizabeth Quaglia, Teresa Kusbish

Bottom right: Maureen Davies, Trevor Seeby, Janet Seeby & Christie Steer

Help prevent 'self-neglect'

Self-neglect is when people are unable to look after their own basic needs – like hoarding, neglecting their own health or hygiene or not cleaning their home.

Wandsworth's Safeguarding Adults Board wants to raise awareness about this serious and complex issue, and is urging anyone concerned about themselves or someone else to get in touch.

Self-neglect could be caused by illness, age or poor mental health, and can be difficult to treat but not tackling it can lead to the problem getting much worse. The borough's adult social care, NHS, housing, mental health services, police and fire brigade work together to establish a relationship with the person and come up with solutions.

Self-neglect is considered a form of adult abuse, and you can report it at wandsworth.gov.uk/report-adult-abuse or by calling Adult Social Care on 020 8871 7707



Julie's neighbour made a referral after noticing that Julie had lost weight, her appearance looked neglected and she had a lot of black bags piled up in the hallway of her flat.

The fire brigade installed smoke alarms, Julie's doctor did a full physical and mental health assessment and treated an underlying infection, and a care assessment was carried out, leading to Julie getting a visit from a carer once a day.

A housing officer supported Julie to declutter her flat and Age UK Wandsworth stepped in to take Julie out and reduce her isolation.



Individuals can reduce the risk of catching and passing on COVID-19 by:

- Letting fresh air in if meeting indoors or meeting outside.
- Wearing a face covering in crowded and enclosed spaces, especially where you encounter people you do not usually meet, when rates of transmission are high.
- Trying to stay at home if you are unwell.
- Taking a test if you have COVID-19 symptoms and staying at home and avoiding contact with other people if you test positive.
- Washing your hands and following advice to 'Catch it, Bin it, Kill it'.
- Getting vaccinated. COVID-19 vaccines remain the most important and effective way the public can protect themselves and others from becoming seriously ill or dying from the virus.
- We recommend that eligible persons also receive winter flu vaccination as more people are likely to get flu this winter and you're more likely to become seriously ill if you have flu and COVID-19 at the same time.

You can find information about these symptoms on the NHS website at www.nhs.uk/conditions and further COVID-19 information on the Government website at www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-response-living-with-covid-19.

Reduce the risk of Covid-19 this winter

As winter approaches, we continue to advise that there are safer behaviours you can adopt to reduce the risk of COVID-19 infection. Precautions remain particularly important to those who are at higher risk if they catch COVID-19.

Know which symptoms to look out for

Respiratory infections can spread easily between people. It is important to be aware of symptoms so you can take actions to reduce the risk of spreading the infection to other people. The symptoms of COVID-19 and other respiratory infections are very similar, so it is not possible to tell if you have COVID-19, flu or another infection based on symptoms alone which include:

- continuous cough
- high temperature, fever, or chills
- loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell
- shortness of breath
- unexplained tiredness, lack of energy
- muscle aches or pains that are not due to exercise
- not wanting to eat or not feeling hungry
- headache that is unusual or longer lasting than usual
- sore throat, stuffy or runny nose
- diarrhoea, feeling sick or being sick

The Boroughs
"outstanding"
provider of
quality care in
your own home



 Home
Instead.
Proud sponsors of

LOVE YOUR
GARDEN



Rated "outstanding" by CQC

Our caregivers deliver high quality care services that you can trust.

Services include:

- Dementia care • Live in care • Home help • Companionship
- Personal Care • Overnight & 24hr • Respite Care



Call us today 0208 0225 238

Web: www.homeinstead.co.uk/wandsworth