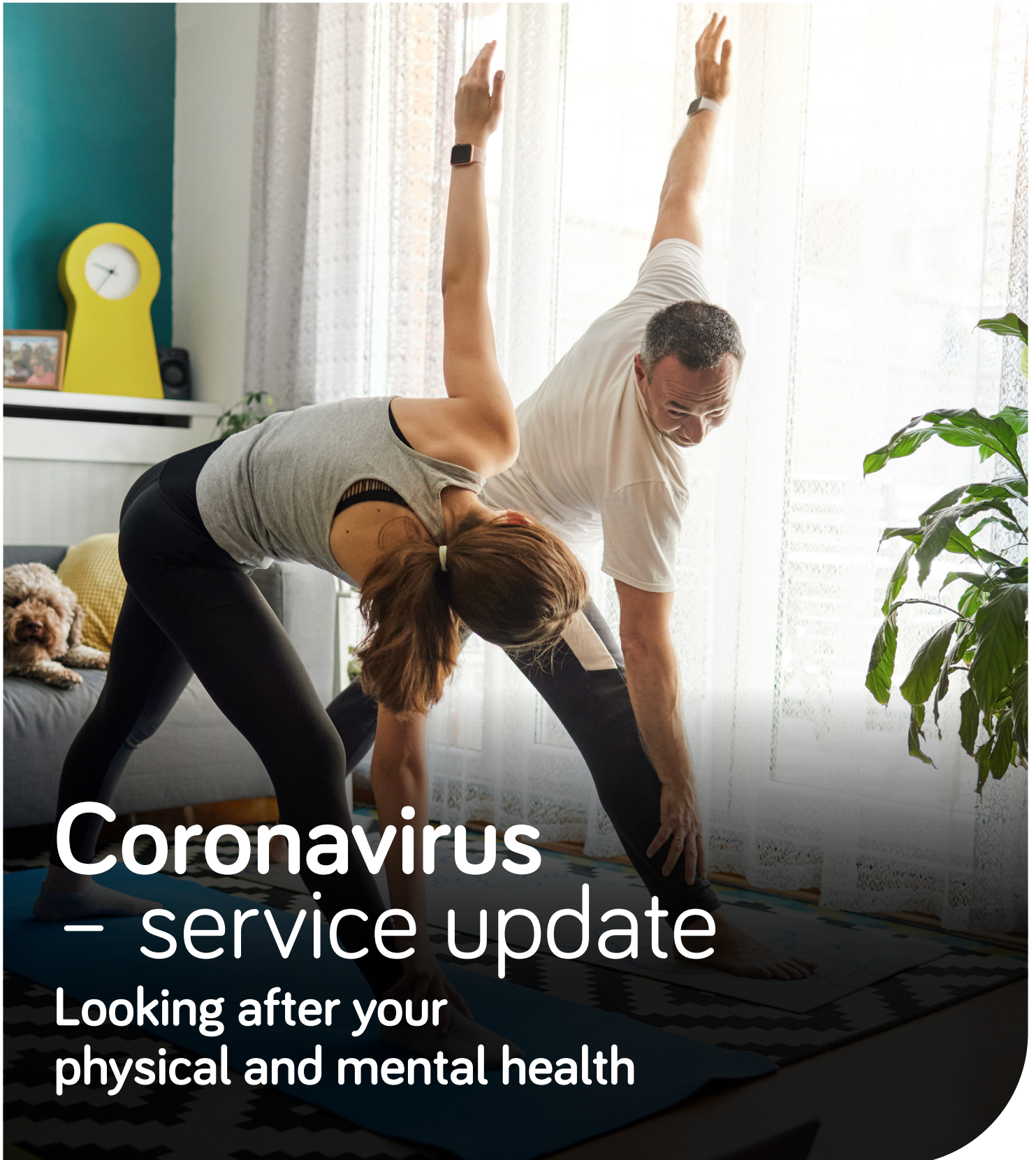


@Sage



Resident Newsletter

February 2021



Happy New Year!

2021



Happy New Year from all of us at Sage! Although 2021 has started much as 2020 finished, there is now some light at the end of the tunnel we entered in March last year. Like all of you, I'm sure, we are looking forward to a return to more predictable times and meeting up again with family members and friends.

All of us at Sage want to do the very best we can for our residents. This newsletter is one way we can engage with you, particularly as this was the most popular method of engagement following our survey conducted in the Spring last year.

While COVID-19 still looms large for us all we have provided an update on how our services are operating during lockdown (page 6). Lockdown can be very stressful for many reasons. There is lots of evidence that physical exercise for all ages can boost mental as well as physical health; in this quarter's edition, we have included some ideas and links that you might find helpful (page 3).



Please do get involved in our competition, it may help to keep the kids busy for a while (page 4). There will be prizes!

COVID created major problems in relation to dealing with defects in new homes, post occupation, please refer to page 5 for information on how we are managing this moving forwards.

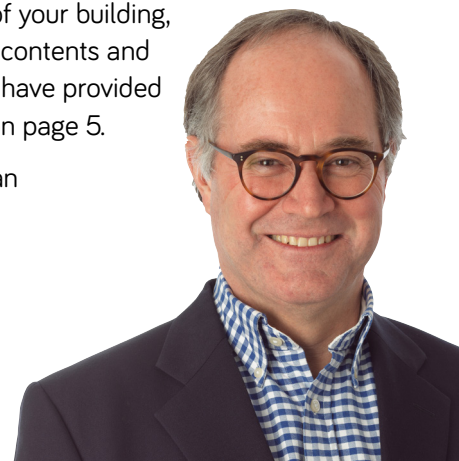
In April this year, rents will be increasing, see page 5 for further details; here you will also find information about service charges, which is only relevant if you hold a social rent tenancy.

Finally, it is important to note that whilst Sage insures the structure of your building, we do not insure your contents and personal items, so we have provided some advice for you on page 5.

We hope you find this an enjoyable read.

Mark

**Mark Sater, CEO,
Sage Housing**



Benefits of Exercise



Some of the key benefits of exercise include improved memory and brain function, reduced feelings of anxiety and depression, improved quality of sleep, and improved joint pain and muscle stiffness.

Here are some ideas that may be of interest to you:



Yoga - There are various resources available online if you would like to give Yoga a go; a very popular online resource is "Yoga with Adriene", who has hundreds of classes available for complete beginners, through to experienced yogis!



www.youtube.com/c/yogawithadriene/videos



Walking - Location permitting, why not find a new walking route in the countryside near you



www.walkingbritain.co.uk/regional-lists-of-walks



Couch to 5K taking people from their couch to running a 5K race in just 9 weeks! You can also access the details online via the NHS website



www.nhs.uk/live-well/exercise/couch-to-5k-week-by-week



Looking after your Mental Health

Smiling Mind is a free mindfulness app with dedicated programmes for adults, children & teenagers etc.

Popular programmes on the app focus on stress, sleep, wellbeing, relationships etc. Search "Smiling Mind" in the App Store or Google Play, or read more on their website - www.smilingmind.com.au/smiling-mind-app

Finance, housing and unemployment worries?

The Mental Health foundation have some useful advice, tips and guidance on their website which we hope will be useful to you



www.mentalhealth.org.uk/coronavirus/finance-housing-and-unemployment-worries-during-coronavirus



Sage Together

At Sage, we have a statutory duty to provide quality homes and services that meet our customers' needs, but we also have a moral duty to build inclusive and sustainable communities to respond to the social diversity within our communities.

We are excited to share that we recently set up a Diversity and Inclusion Committee within Sage which is committed to promoting equality and diversity across all areas of the business. We recognise that a diverse and inclusive workforce will not only improve employee satisfaction but will also help to shape and enhance the services delivered to our customers.

As part of our commitment to promoting equality and diversity, we will be including a highlight within each quarterly newsletter edition, which will raise awareness of key events within British society, for example, religious events and health awareness dates.

There are various significant dates in the coming months, we have detailed a couple below:



Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month – March 2021

Each year 7,400 women are diagnosed with ovarian cancer in the UK. Ovarian cancer is a disease that can disrupt the normal function of the ovaries. If it is left unchecked, it can affect other parts of the body too. Keen to get involved or find out more?

Follow these useful links:

www.targetovariancancer.org.uk/get-involved

www.ovarian.org.uk/march-ovarian-cancer-awareness-month/

16th February – Shrove Tuesday (Pancake Day)!

The day before Ash Wednesday (the first day of Lent). Observed in many Christian countries through participating in confession and absolution. And of course, eating pancakes!

Here are some delicious pancake topping ideas:

www.insanelygoodrecipes.com/pancake-toppings



Competition Time!

Children under 12 – calling all children living in Sage homes, let's get creative!

Choose your favourite picture (or you may wish to draw one yourself for extra bonus points), and using colouring pencils, crayons, paints etc. send us a photo/scanned copy of your completed artwork to residentservices@sagehousing.co.uk by Friday 26th February 2021 to enter.

£50.00 vouchers will be offered to the top 5 winners!

Remember to include your Name, Age and Address upon entering. Our Head of Resident Services, Andre, will be judging your masterpieces, and they will be displayed in the next newsletter edition too, good luck!





Outstanding Defects & End of Defects



From March 2020, due to the pandemic we faced an unprecedented challenge in accessing residents' homes to resolve defects.

Due to lockdown measures, all defects were put on hold other than emergencies. In October last year, a wholesale review of all outstanding issues began, and we now have a plan of how we will resolve them once restrictions are lifted.

Working with our developer and contractor partners, we have put in place protocols to ensure the safety of residents and operatives so that non-urgent defects can now be attended to. As we move into 2021, we are seeing more defects being resolved and although we are now in another national lockdown, we will continue to offer appointments where residents feel comfortable giving access. We appreciate that some residents may not feel comfortable granting entry to their homes at this time. Where this is the case, we will endeavour to ensure the defects are resolved later in the year.

We would like to thank all residents who have had outstanding issues for their patience during this difficult time.

Home Contents Insurance

Contents insurance is designed to help protect your possessions.

No matter how careful you are, there is always a risk that your belongings could be broken, damaged or stolen so home contents insurance can help provide peace of mind.

Sage highly recommends that you use an online search engine to assess and choose the best home contents insurance for you.

To find out more, please visit Citizens Advice further information is available:

Household contents insurance

- Citizens Advice
www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer/insurance/insurance/types-of-insurance/household-contents-insurance



Service Charges and Rent Increase



You will be receiving a letter in late February detailing your rent increase if you have an affordable tenancy or your rent and service charge increase if you are a social rent tenancy.

These new charges will start from 5 April 2021, the first Monday of April. The rent increase is in line with government guidelines and is based in the inflation figure (CPI) in September 2020 +1%. If you are a social rented tenant, you will also receive an adjustment to your service charges. These costs are based on our estimate for the future year's services based on known contract costs or historical charges. If you have any questions, please contact us via email

IRCEnquiries@placesforpeople.co.uk



Complaints Update

Sage are committed to providing excellent services that meet high standards.


When we occasionally do not meet expectations, we will acknowledge this either as an "Expression of Dissatisfaction/Service Failure" or a "Stage 1" complaint, depending on severity and complexity. In some cases, complaints can be escalated to "Stage 2". Sage intends to learn from all complaints so that we can continue to improve the services delivered to you, our customers.

Sage have adopted a 7-phase approach in researching and responding to a complaint:

- 1 Review, read and listen
- 2 Research and/or investigate
- 3 Re-review, re-read – can any of the issues be resolved
- 4 Verbal discussion (where possible) with the complainant to fully understand the complaint and expectations – ask questions to ensure detail is factual
- 5 Consider options for resolution/take ownership
- 6 Present solution and/or actions to be taken
- 7 Follow up and keeping in touch until resolution is reached

The Housing Ombudsman has released a new Complaints Handling Code, and Sage will be following this new structure in order to ensure we take significant steps in building and maintaining effective relationships with our customers. You can access the code here: www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Complaint-Handling-Code.pdf

If you would like to leave us any feedback, you can do so via the resident's portal www.mysagehome.co.uk

 If you would like to view our Complaints Policy, Procedure and/or Self-Assessment, please [click here](#)

Covid-19 Update

At Sage, our priority remains the health and safety of our customers and employees. The safe and effective delivery of housing services is also important.

As a result of the Government's announcement on 4th January 2021, the work we are undertaking at present is as follows:

Landscaping and cleaning
Emergency defects/repairs
Gas leaks
Uncontainable water leaks
Electrical or Fire risks
Security Risks



An emergency repair is any problem that could be a security risk or cause harm to you, another person or to your property.

Emergency Repairs:
 please call **Places for People Customer Service Centre** on **01772 667 002**.

Emergency Defects: please call **0203 906 6541**
 (Monday – Friday 9.00am – 5.30pm).

Keep up to date with information on our Website:
<https://www.sagehousing.co.uk/customer-service-news>.

We want to keep in touch with you so please keep us up to date with any changes to your email, mobile or landline number. To do this, contact us via your "My Home" Portal: <https://myhome.sagehousing.co.uk>

Please note, we will ask questions to make sure we keep you and our colleagues safe before arranging a repair.

Please note we are not able to book in any repairs that are not an emergency. We will reintroduce routine repairs as soon as we can, and we will let you know when we are able to restart our normal repair service. We will continue to update our website with the latest service updates.

Please be aware that gas safety checks will continue wherever possible. Thank you for your patience at this time.

Useful contacts

-  **General enquiries & repairs:**
0845 266 0735 or 01772 666 214
-  **Rent enquiries:**
01772 666 444 (option 3)
-  **Repairs email:**
sagerepairs@placesforpeople.co.uk
-  **Sage rents:**
ircenquiries@placesforpeople.co.uk
-  **General enquiries:**
sageenquiries@placesforpeople.co.uk
-  **Feedback:**
sagecomplaints@placesforpeople.co.uk