



"THE BUZZ"

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SOLIHULL CARE HOUSING ASSOCIATION LTD

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Open for Business!

Trinity Apartments welcomes its first residents



SCHA's exciting and stylish new extra care housing scheme at Parkgate, Shirley has opened its doors to its first residents who started moving in on 11 May 2015.

The superbly designed development comprises 33x1bedroom apartments for rent and 18x2bedroom apartments for sale on a shared ownership basis plus an extensive range of communal facilities including ground floor lounge, dining room, laundry, hairdressing salon, activities and training room, two guest bedrooms, two assisted bathrooms and a rooftop sun lounge.

Each of the apartments has a carpeted lounge, bedroom(s) and hallway with slip-resistant floor finishes being provided in the bathroom and kitchen. A built-in hob and oven is provided in each kitchen and a level access shower in every bathroom.

Trinity Apartments caters for people with varying levels of need, some of whom might ordinarily need to move into a care home. Decisions on allocations are taken by a Panel which comprises representatives of SCHA, Solihull Community Housing, Solihull Council's Adult Social Care Team and the care and support provider appointed by Solihull Council – Sanctuary Home Care.

"We are delighted the new building has now come to life with our first residents moving in," said General Manager, Lloyd Bradshaw. "The location is superb with a full range of facilities virtually on the doorstep for residents of Trinity Apartments. The care and other services which are now being provided will enable residents to live as independently as possible in a safe and secure environment for as long as they are capable of doing so as a real alternative to residential care."

Youngsters from nearby Blossomfield Infants and Nursery School helped to celebrate the opening of Trinity Apartments with the burying of a time capsule near to the front entrance which contained a survey of favourite games and toys; a copy of "The Times" and recent newspaper articles; a day in the life of a six year old schoolboy; a bag of coins and a poem especially written by the children for the occasion. A copy of the scheme marketing brochure was also included.



For further information about Trinity Apartments please contact the Scheme Manager, Hafiza Khanam on 0121 745 8894 or e mail hafizakhanam@scha.org.uk.

Investing in our Schemes

SCHA has a strong commitment to an ongoing programme of investment in the properties which it is responsible for maintaining. Some recent examples which serve to demonstrate this commitment are as follows:

- In Yorkminster Drive, Chelmsley Wood the windows, fascias and rainwater goods were replaced on the front elevations of three bungalows which accommodate people with learning disabilities. As well as improving the external appearance of the bungalows, the rooms inside are now both quieter and warmer.



- In Danzey Green Road, Castle Bromwich the kitchen in one of another three bungalows for people with learning disabilities has been refurbished to provide a modern and comfortable kitchen environment. SCHA has now fully refurbished the kitchen in each of the three bungalows.



- In Wildmoor Rd, Shirley the bathroom in a shared house occupied by two men has been fully refurbished. The work included taking down the wall separating the bathroom and WC to create a more functional and spacious bathroom.



"Maintaining properties to a high standard enables SCHA to provide tenants, our customers, with a more pleasing environment in which to live," said Supported Housing Officer, Jayne Hudson. "Nothing gives me greater satisfaction than being told by a tenant "I really like living here."

Together for Better Lives Award for Phoenix House

It was celebrations all round as organisers announced the winners of the inaugural Solihull Together for Better Lives awards at an inspiring ceremony in the Renewal Conference Centre. The awards, developed to recognise and celebrate outstanding work by individuals and organisations in Solihull to support older people in the community, were held in the presence of the Mayor of Solihull and Chairman of the Heart of England NHS Foundation Trust Board.

The award for the Outstanding Initiative in Supported Living was awarded to the Team at Phoenix House led by Scheme Manager Beverley Miles.

Judges said:

"Phoenix House is an extra care scheme in Shirley which provides individual apartments for older people who want to live on their own but may need personal care and support. The team at Phoenix House have put together a wide range of activities as well as resident volunteering and fund raising. The service has made links with other organisations to introduce new activities such as Boccia [pronounced Bo cha] (seated bowls) run by the Council's Solihull Active team, fashion shows, parties, visiting entertainers and events as well as old 'favourites' such as bingo, quizzes and coffee mornings. Judges loved the range of activities on offer. They also commended the enthusiastic and positive leadership of the team at Phoenix House who have created a happy and vibrant community for their residents."

"I'm absolutely honoured and overwhelmed to receive this Award on behalf of the team at Phoenix House - it's just brilliant," said Scheme Manager, Beverley Miles when accepting the award. "Phoenix House was the first extra-care housing scheme to open in Solihull which I was privileged to be part of. We have built up an excellent reputation and have developed an exciting programme of activities and entertainment over the last year. It really makes a difference to the residents' lives. They are becoming very competitive, recently winning a cup for their Boccia win, whilst competing at another scheme. A special thanks to my assistant, Jo O'Brien, who helps make it all happen."



Pictured holding the award are Phoenix House Scheme Manager Beverley Miles (right) and Registered Care Manager Karen Shepherd (left).



Conquering Snowdon by Jo'Brien

On an overcast morning of Sunday 14th June 2015, I set out to do a challenge to raise funds for the Marie Curie Hospice. Yep to Climb Mount Snowdon! Unfortunately, Beverley Miles was unable to take part, so my ever faithful husband was there to the rescue and help me achieve my mission! It took a lot of hard work but with all the determination in the world I was going to get to the top and do it within 3 hours ...and I am so proud to say I managed to get to the top in an impressive 2 hours and 55 minutes! Part one of the mission accomplished!

A nice cup of tea and a couple of snacks later we started our downward journey. It was lethal under foot but I still managed to cut time down to just 2 hours making it a grand total of 4 hours and 55 minutes to walk a 9 mile trip up and down Mount Snowdon!

All that followed off with a 4 hour journey (mainly stuck on the motorway coming back into Birmingham) and back to work for 9am Monday morning start!

Best weekend ever and around £900 raised for Marie Curie Hospice.

Jo is the Scheme Administrator at Phoenix House

Providing a Warm Welcome

The Association is delighted to have appointed Hafiza Khanam as Scheme Manager for Trinity Apartments.

Hafiza was awarded a BA Honours Degree in Housing Studies from Birmingham City University in 2010 and also achieved a distinction in her BTEC National Diploma in Health Studies.



Hafiza Khanam

After spending the early years of her working life in banking, Hafiza decided on a change of career and was appointed to an assistant scheme manager position in an extra housing scheme with Housing 21 prior to being promoted to a full scheme manager role in a newly built scheme comprising 87 units with overall responsibility for all of the landlord services and care provided.

Following a career break to spend time with her young son, Hafiza was appointed to a sheltered scheme manager role with Viridian Housing from where she joined SCHA in January 2015.

"Hafiza is proving to be an excellent appointment," said General Manager, Lloyd Bradshaw. "She has undertaken a great deal of hard work in preparing for the opening of Trinity Apartments and provided a warm welcome to the first residents of the scheme."

"I am absolutely delighted to have been given the opportunity to open Trinity Apartments and join the SCHA team," said Hafiza. "It's been lots of hard work but worth every moment, I will be spending the coming months establishing the scheme and welcoming our residents."

New Board Appointments

Two new members have recently been recruited onto the Board of SCHA – Maureen Edwards and Sharon O'Connor. Maureen joined the Board in September 2014 and is a mental health support worker in the private sector. Sharon joined the Board in January 2015 and has many years' experience working in senior management positions in the care sector

"I am delighted to welcome Maureen and Sharon onto SCHA's Board" said Chairman, David Mattocks. "Both ladies have a wealth of experience relevant to the work of the Association and will undoubtedly make excellent contributions to the work of the Board."

SCHA's Board meets every other month and is responsible for determining the vision and strategy for the Association as well scrutinizing the organisation's performance. Members of the Board are unpaid and serve in a voluntary capacity.



Standing left to right: Mike Hooper John Baynton, Maureen Edwards, Dr Guddi Grewal, Chris Tucker, Sharon O'Connor **Seated:** David Mattocks (Chairman), Sheila Pittaway

Question-Time



Andy Bagley

Maintaining our properties to a good standard is an important priority for SCHA. Andy Bagley joined the Association in August 2008 initially working on a part-time basis. He now works for the Association full-time carrying out day-to-day repairs as well as important health and safety checks and is popular with the Association's tenants.

How did you become involved with SCHA?

I was previously self-employed and was heavily reliant on commercial

premises being closed and reopened which effectively gave me poor continuity of work. I therefore started looking for employment that would give me a more regular income. The position was advertised in a local paper and after looking into the background of the company I decided to apply for the role to give me more security for my family.

What are your main responsibilities?

I am responsible for the day-to-day maintenance of seven properties within Solihull Borough.

What do you enjoy most about the role?

Unlike dealing with work in a commercial environment I have found a different kind of satisfaction in the role I undertake, knowing that a minor repair can make such a difference to someone. It is very rare a day goes by that I am not taken aback by the appreciation from tenants. .

What three words best describe you?

Friendly, Patient, Caring

If you could have dinner with three other people, who would it be and why?



Jim Kerr

1. Jim Kerr, singer of the band Simple Minds, so that I could talk to him about how the similarity to him used to constantly spoil a quiet night out in the eighties as we were so similar fans kept pestering me for autographs
2. Any veteran of World War 2 – after the VE Day anniversary some of the stories were so interesting and heroic I could listen for hours.
3. Last but not least my partner – our commitments are such that we do not seem to get the chance very often to go out to dinner.

Contact SCHA

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Formed in 1990, Solihull Care Housing Association Ltd (SCHA) is an industrial and provident society registered on charitable rules with the Homes and Communities Agency (Reg. No. L4191). SCHA is also a member of the National Housing Federation.

The principal activity of SCHA is the provision of good quality housing accommodation and related services for people with a range of special needs including frail elderly persons, people who have learning disabilities and people with mental health needs.

SCHA provides dedicated support to residents in a number of schemes but does not itself provide care. Care is provided to residents in several of SCHA's schemes through contracting arrangements between Solihull Council and specialist care agencies.



A Very Special Person

Board members and staff have been celebrating the life of one of SCHA's founder Board Members, Mrs Cynthia Leonard MBE, who passed away peacefully on 6 June 2015 aged 94. Mrs Leonard was the driving force behind the formation of the Solihull branches of a number of well-known charities including the

Samaritans in 1974, Victim Support in 1981 and Age Concern in 1983 as well as SCHA in 1990. She was awarded an MBE in 1999 for her services to the voluntary sector.

"Cynthia's commitment to the many organisations in which she was involved was absolute," said SCHA Chairman David Mattocks. "In addition to being the prime mover in setting up a variety of local voluntary organisations including SCHA, she stayed with them and continued to make significant contributions well into her later years. Cynthia was charming, compassionate, considerate and also possessed a good sense of humour. She worked tirelessly to help improve the lives of many Solihull citizens who endured difficult experiences and shall be much-missed."

Not sure? Don't open the door!

Your home should be a safe and secure place. Most callers will be people you know. However, you need to be really careful when people you either don't know or haven't invited ring your bell or knock your door. If they are claiming to be from a company, always ask to see their ID. If you are asked to sign something, do not do so without reading it carefully, especially the small print.

