

Snippets

Edition 15



From the MD

Welcome to our Summer Edition of Snippets.

We hope you are keeping well as we continue to stay safe and work to help reduce the spread of COVID-19. BeST has been working hard, and we have had to adapt as we continue supporting tenants and providing our usual services while closely following government advice.

Over the next few months, we are carrying out tenant surveys with a company called Acuity. These surveys are essential to understand the needs of our tenants more and improve our services for you. Acuity will be contacting tenants at random by phone, text or by post. You will be entered into a prize draw if you are contacted and take part. You can find out more about this on page 7.

We are also looking for tenants who want to work with us or provide further feedback to help us improve our services and create the best possible homes for people. Find out how you can get involved on the back page.

Inside, you can find updates, including our new phone system and Out of Hours service (OOH). You can read about our new members of staff and our Snippets editor assistant and tenant, Shawn Loydall. We also have a competition and some prizes up for grabs too!

To submit an article idea, picture or make a comment, please email communications@bestha.co.uk.

Shelley Hobbs
Managing Director

Tenant Surveys

Over the next 8 weeks we will be doing some surveys.

Tenants that complete a survey will be entered into a prize draw for a chance to win a £20 voucher.



Find out more about the surveys on page 7.



JPC Farm

Thorntree farm, also known as JPC Community Farm is ready for the first tenants to move in. **See more on page 5.**

Design Our Next Snippets Cover!

You could be in with a chance of winning a £50 gift of your choice and your design as the cover of our next Snippets newsletter.

Find out how to enter on page 6

What's Eric Been Up To?

Well, folks, what a to-do!

This lockdown malarky seems to be dragging on. Not that I mind so much as I have seen more of my family over

the past year, but I miss my family holidays! ☹️ I can't wait to go to the coast with my sisters and run free on the beach, splashing in the sea. Oh, how I have missed the freedom. I'll be sure not to take it for granted again, that's for sure.

One good thing that has happened in lockdown is that I have a new home now with a much bigger garden, so I get to play out quite a lot. There's plenty of bushes to foredge in and turf to dig up, though mummy hasn't yet seen the big hole I have dug - I think I might be grounded when she does ☹️. I can't help it; it's my beagle trait - Tail up, snout down and dig away, burying my bones.

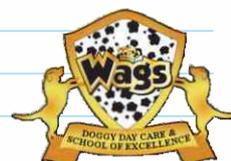
I met the neighbours' dog a few weeks ago and played in his garden. I have to say he is very boisterous and much bigger than me; he's a boxer dog. Maybe that explains his big paws, their huge! He also slathers a lot - yuk! But I got the measure of him in the end, and we had some fun chasing the ball. My sister Pearl didn't take any messing about; she stood up to him and defended me most of the time ha-ha - I'm a real softy!

It's nice to see some sunshine finally, meaning I can bask in the sun and dip in my paddling pool. That's if I can get near it, that is; Pearl and Coco are constantly splashing about in the pool. I think they're water babies! I love it when it's sunny because mummy has a lot of BBQs; she loves to cook outdoors. Of course, that means I get lots of titbits from what's leftover. No wonder my belly is getting bigger; it's all the sausages I keep stealing while mummy isn't looking.

Anyway, I must dash now; it's time for my morning walkies. I hope to update you all soon on my adventures.



Eric, BeST Mascot



Welcome to BeST!



Nazrana Doodhwala
Management Accountant

I am the Management Accountant and started at BeST in February 2021. I have all the fun of putting the numbers together and making sure they are understandable and tell a story. I look after the management accounts month end process, ensuring tasks are completed on time. I am enjoying it so far!

I live in Bolton, where I have been most of my life. One day I may move back to my hometown Preston, you never know. I enjoy the great outdoors, so I am out most weekends with my family, including 4 kids. I love going out, festivals, concerts, music, cinema, anywhere that involves having fun. I love to travel and hopefully want to try and visit most countries. So any recommendations on good holidays, do let me know!



Michelle McGee
Maintenance Co-ordinator

My name is Michelle McGee. I started working for BeST in December 2020 in the Maintenance Department. I have worked in Maintenance / Customer Service for over 20 years, the last three years in Housing.

I was made to feel welcome from the start and work with a great team at BeST. I love speaking to new people, and I am enjoying my new role here.

I have 4 grown-up children, 11 grandchildren and 2 great-grandchildren, so I am kept very busy in my spare time. We have a caravan in Wales, and I love to go on a weekend when I can and have met many new friends there.



Chris Dale
Head of Asset Management

Hello! I'm the one in the middle with the big bald head! I joined BeST in January 2021 as Head of Asset Management. My role is to deliver responsive repairs, compliance, asset investment, and facilities management services across the charity.

I enjoy going to gigs, usually small venues all over the place, and all kinds of bands. The other bloke in the photo is Big-Al from the band Eels; we went to see them a while back, and whilst walking around during the day, we bumped into him, fantastic bassist and a great gig.

I'm from a place called Billinge, between St Helens and a place no one has ever heard of called Wigan. So, rugby league is in my blood; too old to play these days, but I love watching the mighty Saints and my community club Haresfinch Amateurs. Last but not least, with my better half Christine, we go on long-distance walks "Coast to Coast", "West Highland Way", the "Camino de Santiago" in Spain for example, I go for the fresh air, experience, and exercise. Christine goes so she doesn't have to talk to me all day!

Meet Our Tenants



Shawn Loydall

My name is Shawn Loydall, and I am the Snippets editor assistant, tenant volunteer. When I am not helping Casey, I work in a warehouse two days a week, spend time with friends and family, and keep my two Syrian hamsters company.

My hobbies include; gaming (PS4 and PC), baking (my favourite thing to bake is lemon drizzle cake, and it gets better each time I bake), crafts (colour by numbers, collages and hama beads), cycling (both mountain biking and road biking), walking (I often walk for miles around the peak district and my local area), darts and driving.

Sally-Anne Diva

Shawn asked his friend and another BeST tenant, Sally Anne some 'get to know you' questions:

What is your name?

Miss Sally Anne Diva

How old are you?

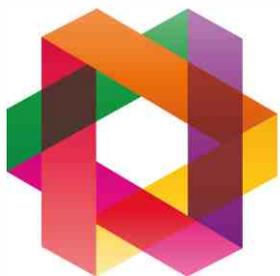
52

When did you move into your home?

2016

What are your hobbies and interests?

XBOX 360, music, CDs, records, going out swimming, going to the pictures, to see my good mates Jonathan, Shawn, Adam, Heather, Andrew, Hedio, Julie, Junior, Kate, Kat.



TENANT ENGAGEMENT EXPERTS
tpas

Did you know, that as a tenant of BeST you have free membership to TPAS, England's tenant engagement experts?

Find out how to get your log in and for more information contact Casey on

07525 277308 or email casey.willis@bestha.co.uk

Partners



JPC Farm

After two long years of planning and work, we are delighted to announce that BeST's newest property Thorntree Farm in Stokesley, is finally ready for tenants to move in.

Thorntree farm will be home to 11 tenants, with an additional 8 units available for short term tenants seeking respite and short breaks. The site will also include day services, a café and more where people in the local area can come together.

The Orangery Café located on the premises is already open and serving fantastic food every day. In addition, the support provider, JPC, has already begun teaching life skills towards independence to people at the day service.

www.jpc.co.uk



COMPETITION TIME

Tenant Area

Summer Word Search

S	U	N	F	Z	H	P	A	S	
V	A	C	A	T	I	O	N	W	
S	W	O	M	F	H	O	T	I	
U	T	F	I	A	Q	L	L	M	
M	J	U	L	J	U	N	E	M	
M	U	N	Y	A	R	H	S	I	
E	L	A	U	G	U	S	T	N	
R	Y	M	B	E	A	C	H	G	

Find these words...

- family
- summer
- vacation
- sun
- hot
- fun
- beach
- pool
- swimming
- June
- July
- August

Design our next Snippets cover!



Entries close on Friday 20th August 2021.

The winner will receive a £50 gift of their choice and their design as the cover of our next Snippets newsletter.

To enter, you can either hand draw your design or do it digitally and then email a copy to communications@bestha.co.uk.

If you would like to send it in the post or get some more information on this then please contact Casey - details are on the back page.



The BEST Easter Competition

WINNER!



We had some fantastic entries, so thank you to everyone who entered. But the winner goes to our fabulous Victoria Webber, who designed a speculator Easter bonnet. Enjoy your prize!

Team Updates

Tenants' Profile Survey Summer 2021



Over the next eight weeks, you may get contacted to do a tenant profiling survey.

BeST has asked housing consultant and tenant satisfaction and research specialists, Acuity, to carry out these surveys independently.

At BeST, we want to provide you with the best housing service possible. To continue developing and improving the services we provide, we need to understand you and your ambitions better and ensure that the information we hold is accurate and up to date.

Acuity will be sending out surveys in the post, online and by text to tenants for who we have that contact information. Most of the responses are straightforward, but there are some more personal questions about your characteristics and financial circumstances. Although we recognise that some of this may seem intrusive, its collection is intended solely for your potential benefit.

What you tell us will be strictly confidential. Acuity will report the findings to BeST without identifying any individual tenants unless you permit them to do so. We will not share your details with any other organisation.

We hope you can take some time to complete the survey; your views are very important to us. If you would like someone to complete the survey on your behalf, you can ask them to do so.

If you have any questions, please contact Casey; contact details are on the back page.

Everyone who completes the survey will be entered into a prize draw. We will select six responses at random for a prize of a £20 shopping voucher each.





Scheme Visit – Service Level Contract Visits

As the lockdown restrictions are gradually being lifted, we are now embarking on our 'Service Level Contract' visits to all our schemes. These visits are a regulatory check to ensure that our service level agreements with your support provider are maintained. These visits scrutinise several vital areas, including health and safety such as fire safety and service provisions such as window cleaning, gardening, etc. They are also an opportunity for our housing officers to ensure all our tenants receive the care support and supervision to enable them to live as independently as possible.

Rent paid via Standing Order

We now have a new standing order form for all self-paying tenants who prefer to pay their rent directly to us rather than receive a monthly invoice. Our Revenue and Benefits team will contact those tenants and their appointees to help them set up a standing order.

This is a straightforward process to get your rent paid on time directly from your bank. You can also find this form on our website or give us a call on 0161 786 6000 option 5, and we can assist you with completing this form.

New!



Our **OUT OF HOURS SERVICE**

We are pleased to announce that from Monday 7th June 2021, Astraline will be providing our Out of Hours emergency repairs service. Astraline is part of Johnnie Johnson Housing and brings extensive knowledge and experience in delivering emergency cover across the Housing Sector.

For our tenants, there isn't much change. Instead of the previous OOH mobile number, you now need to call our office number

0161 786 6000
option 1.

Your call will then divert automatically to the Astraline team.

New!

COMPLAINTS POLICY

The Housing Ombudsman has issued new Complaints Handling Code, providing a framework for high-quality complaints handling across landlord's complaint procedure. We recently revised our policy and procedures to ensure this meets the complaints handling code of practice. We have completed a self-assessment against the code in December 2020 and published our results on our website.

You can now make a complaint through our website or by calling 0161 786 6000 option 6, or you can email info@bestha.co.uk



Planned and Cyclical Works Program

Our planned and cyclical works have commenced; working in partnership with Voyage Care, we are refurbishing 32 schemes across the country to a value of £925K. Various work will be undertaken and include some but not all: painting and decoration, window replacement, and general property repairs.

Our cyclical painting due for 2019-2021 but delayed due to the pandemic were re-launched in March 2021 and have now been completed. The current 2020-2021 packages have now been awarded and have started.

Finally, as part of our regulatory recovery plan, we have identified a rolling program of stock condition surveys that had previously had a desktop survey due to Covid access issues. As a result, a further 32 schemes have been identified to be surveyed, and these will be completed by November 2021.

Also, great news for North Lodge in South Wales recently had a complete reroof to a beautiful property in partnership with Fieldbay, our support provider.

If you would like to discuss anything further or have any issues, please give us a call on 0161 786 6000 option 1.



A Message From the Chair

The Board

The Board is delighted with all the efforts and hard work everyone is doing, despite our challenges.

Our monthly board meetings and conversations with the Regulator continue. Whilst we are trying hard to comply with their requirements, you may have read in the press that they have reservations about the leasing model.

We did a lot of work last year to understand our stock and demonstrate our rents are compliant. We now have good stock information and are on top of the Health and Safety issues.

We have made some development on rent compliance, but this is a work in progress. We have been meeting with our lenders to discuss how we can move forward, and these talks are ongoing.

We also looked at our staff and structure but have put any further work on hold until we have a clearer idea of what the future holds. The Board approved more policies, including; Tenant Engagement and Empowerment, Repairs and Maintenance, Health and Safety and Landlord Health and Safety compliance policies.

Thanks again for all the hard work; take care and keep safe.

Tom Miskell
Board of Trustees Chairman

New Telephone System Installed

We now have a new and improved phone system!

Our office number is still the same **0161 786 6000**, and all our options are back live but have changed as follows:

OPTION
1

To **report a new repair**, please press option 1

OPTION
2

If you are calling about a **repair that has already been reported**, please have your reference number ready and press option 2

OPTION
3

To discuss a **housing or tenancy related issue**, please press option 3

OPTION
4

To **discuss an invoice**, please press option 4

OPTION
3

To **discuss your rent account balance** or for help claiming **Housing Benefit**, please press option 5

OPTION
4

For all **other enquiries**, please press option 6



Our **OUT OF HOURS SERVICE**

maintenance number
has changed.

If you have an emergency
repair outside of working
hours, please call our OOH
number on

0161 786 6000
option 1.

Get Involved



We are looking for tenants who want to help us improve for you

This could involve being on a Tenant Board, attending focus groups, events, or just simply letting us know how you feel about us, our services and your home.

If you are interested, or would like more information please get in touch:



Write to Casey at:

Casey Willis
Bespoke Supportive Tenancies
2a Sentinel House
Albert Street
Eccles
M30 0NJ



Phone / Text / WhatsApp Casey on:
07525 277308

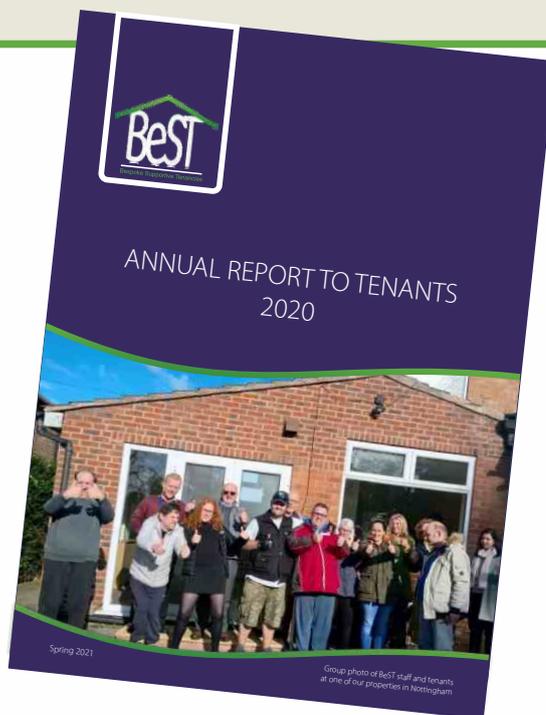


Or email Casey at:
casey.willis@bestha.co.uk



We are hosting a meet and greet on **Tuesday 20th July at 10 am** via Zoom. Come along and meet other tenants and have a chat and a cuppa with us!

If you would like an invite, then please call or email Casey.



Our first-ever annual report to tenants is now available on our website!

This covers a variety of service areas and our performance over the last year.

[Click here for a copy.](#)

A huge thank you to everyone involved. If you want to know more about what we are up to or would like to be involved in the production of next year's report then please get in touch.

You can report a repair via our website **www.bestha.co.uk** at any time, on any device and anywhere.

