



Summer 2022



Celebrating the Jubilee

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Welcome from Shelley



We hope you like the new look of our newsletter, Snippets.

Firstly, I want to say a warm welcome to our new tenants and staff who have joined us. I hope you are having a great experience so far!

In this issue, we will be sharing what we have been up to over these past months and some of the exciting projects we have been part of.

We have some fantastic competitions inside and we will introduce you to our newest involved tenants and staff members who have joined us. You will

also hear from Shawn, our tenant representative, as he shares what he has been working with us on and his hunt to find some more tenants to join our newly formed tenant scrutiny panel.

We are also sharing some top tips on how you can reduce your energy bills, as well as information on the new Renting Homes Act in Wales.

Also, keep a look out for our Tenant Satisfaction Surveys which will be hitting your doorsteps soon!

Shelley Hobbs
Managing Director

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Be Involved!

Our monthly scrutiny sessions are held on the last Monday of every month.



These sessions are for tenants and their support network to scrutinise BeST, we sometimes have a focus topic, or we might have an open discussion. We have now had 10 sessions, where tenants have had the opportunity to give feedback, enabling tenants and staff to

work together to improve performance and services for tenants and influence our policy and procedure changes.

If you want more information on the sessions or want to discuss anything further, please get in touch.



Involved tenants

We would like to welcome Marcel, our newest involved tenant and tenant representative.

Marcel has been working with us since March and has been inspirational and helped us form a scrutiny panel with Shawn, our other tenant representative. We are looking for other tenants to join our scrutiny panel. If you are interested and would like a chat, please get in touch by emailing communications@bestha.co.uk.

You can also call or WhatsApp us on [07525277308](tel:07525277308).

Our involved tenants help us make better decisions and improve our services and performance. Here's what our tenants have been working on recently...

My name is Shawn and I am a tenant representative. I am now also a member of the newly formed scrutiny panel alongside another tenant representative, Marcel.

For me, it has been an interesting and rewarding past 6 months. The newly formed scrutiny panel meets weekly and we work together to discuss ideas for the scrutiny session on the last Monday of every month. I have also worked on Snippets and am happy that we are introducing a new design for Snippets which I hope you will all like. As part of Snippets, we have introduced "you said, we did", which was an excellent idea from Marcel. In the past few months, I have helped develop the annual report to tenants and started looking at the tenant involvement and empowerment standard self-assessment.

I have also recently enrolled on a short course on time management. I have access to TPAS membership and



resources, which will help develop me to contribute more to tenant engagement and I hope more tenants would like to become involved. If you want more information or want to get involved, please contact us.

I hope that by the time I write my next article for the next edition of Snippets, we will be telling you all that we have more tenants involved and have developed our scrutiny panel further so we can help make things better for tenants.

Shawn Loydall
Tenant Representative



Welcome to BeST



Vivien Wilson – Accounts Assistant

Hi, I'm Vivien, the new Accounts Assistant. I have worked at BeST for 6 months and have been made to feel very welcome and work in a great team. I have always worked in finance and my last job I had for over 20 years, maybe I'll be at BeST for the next 20! I love going camping with my family in our trailer tent, Skeggy Vegas is our favourite place. I also like going on long walks at the weekend with our dog Ollie.

Keenen Chambers – Asset Management Co-ordinator

I'm Keenen, one of the new staff members of the Asset Management Team. We mainly do maintenance repairs. However, we also juggle a few other responsibilities, such as gardening and invoices. Outside of work, I enjoy Lego, nature walks and animals - I currently have shrimp, a few hamsters, and a ton of plants! I cannot wait to visit the properties in the coming months to learn more about our tenants and staff!



Kellie Apted – Asset Management Co-ordinator

Hi, I'm Kellie and I'm the newest member of the maintenance team.

I enjoy my new role working as part of a great team supporting our tenants to organise repairs and maintenance works.

I live in Eccles and have done forever, I love to socialise and spend time with my family, especially my 2 granddaughters, other than that I like to travel whenever I can and always visit somewhere different in the world.





New Housing Officers



Siobhan Boyd – Senior Housing Officer

Hi, my name is Siobhan – you say it Sha-Von or Shi-Vawn – I started at BeST in April.

I am a Senior Housing Officer, currently working on our Specialist Supported Housing status.

I like reading books and watching science fiction TV shows. If I had a superpower, it would be to teleport!

I hope to be out and about visiting people soon – say hello if you see me or tell me what your superpower would be!

Michelle Mcgee – Housing Officer (North West)

Hi, my name is Michelle and I am the new Housing Officer for the North West.

You may recognise my name as I previously worked in the Maintenance team.

I enjoying getting out and meeting all the staff and tenants in the properties that I look after and I will get to meet everybody in due course.

I love going down to Wales at the weekend with family and friends to my caravan and enjoy getting out and about, there is so much to do there!



Rosie Garnett – South West Housing Officer

Hi, my name is Rosie Garnett. I am the new housing officer for the southwest and have been at BeST since the middle of June. I have worked in housing for many years, all different types of accommodation, I really enjoy working in the housing sector. I am looking forward to visiting all of the schemes and meeting you all in person very soon. I like to spend my spare time with my family and my two dogs doing fun things like kayaking.



Welcome to BeST (continued)

New Regional Housing Managers

John Saunders – South Regional Housing Manager

Hi, I'm John, the new Regional Housing Manager for the South. I have worked in housing for over 10 years. I have been at BeST for 6 months and have really enjoyed meeting the tenants in our properties as I visit. My responsibilities are managing a team of three Housing officers and all the properties in Wales. I also help write and shape company policies to ensure that we provide the best service to the tenants. I'm also a big football fan and support Tottenham Hotspurs.



Hannah Mansfield – North Regional Housing Manager

Hi, my name is Hannah Mansfield and I am now the Regional Manager for the North. I am responsible for 3 Housing Officers to ensure we deliver high quality, responsive and sensitive specialist housing services to existing and potential tenants. My team and I are responsible for providing the best possible tenant experience and for being the 'face' of BeST in the community.



Hello from Zoe

Hi, my name is Zoe. I am a Revenue and Benefits Officer here at BeST. For those entitled to Housing Benefit, I often speak to Housing Benefit so that they will pay the rent for your home.

Sometimes Housing Benefit say they are not going to pay the full rent and it is part of my role to have occasionally difficult conversations so that they will pay the rent. One of the schemes where we had this problem is Honeywood, based in Christchurch. I

was asked to have a look at this scheme. I did some investigation and it looked like we had not provided enough information in the past.

One of the first things I did was write to Housing Benefit to apologise for the information not being provided and ask if they would relook at this again and if we could work together to resolve this on behalf of our tenants.

Thankfully they were happy to relook at the rent for this

scheme. I am pleased to say that this has now been resolved and they have backdated the arrears.

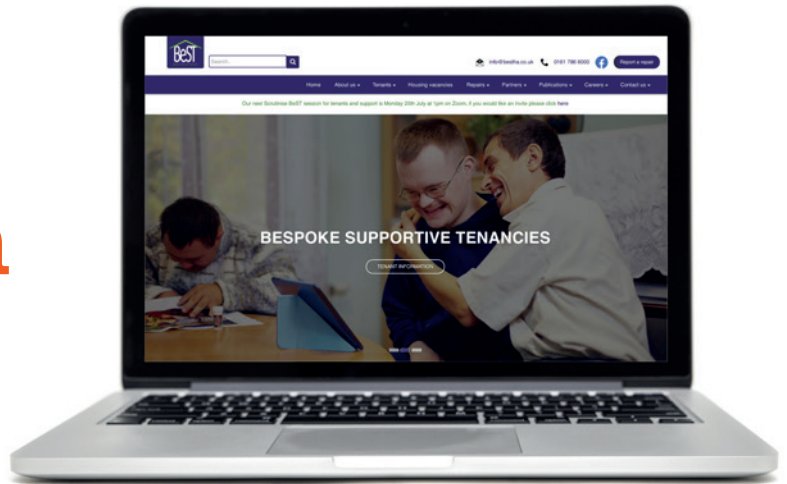
This is the part of the job that I love, ensuring that Housing Benefit understands the communities we work with and how important it is for people to get what they are entitled to! Keep sparkling everyone!

Take Care, from Zoe





Our website has been updated with some helpful documents



We have some posters and leaflets you can print off, including:

- How to report a repair – Poster
- How to report a repair – Easy read
- BeST contact details – Poster
- Compliments and Complaints – Easy read
- Get Involved – Leaflet
- Get Involved – Easy read
- Letting standards – Leaflet
- Repairs log book
- Tenancy agreement example – Easy read

- Standing order form
- Alterations request form
- Credit refund form

We also have a copy of our Annual report to tenants 2021 and Business plan 2021–2026 and some policies and procedures.

This newsletter is available on our website, visit www.bestha.co.uk/publications.php

Is there anything else you would like to see on our website or documents that you would find helpful? Let us know, by emailing communications@bestha.co.uk

Did you know that as a tenant with BeST, you have free access to a Tpas membership?

Through Tpas England, you can gain new skills, attend free events and even help shape national housing policy.

A Tpas membership means you can access all the advice, support, guidance and practical resources

you need to make sure your voice is heard.

Want to find out more?

Email communications@bestha.co.uk

Phone us on **0161 786 6000**

We are proud to be Tpas members and part of

a network of landlords committed to listening, understanding and being accountable to tenants.





Tenants annual report photoshoot

We did a photoshoot with our tenants across some schemes in Blackpool for our annual report to tenants.

Thank you to all our tenants that took part. Here are some of the photos that we took.





Jubilee photos

To celebrate the Jubilee, we did a competition for the best Jubilee photos. Here are some of the entries.



Congratulations to our winners

1st place – Bedes close and West lane



2nd place – Park view



3rd place – Gerrards terrace





Win a £50 shopping voucher of your choice!

Write an article with a photo of what you have done over the summer.

To enter, you can email us at communications@bestha.co.uk or WhatsApp on 07525277308 or post it to Bespoke Supportive Tenancies, 2a Sentinel House, Albert Street, Eccles, M30 0NJ.

Entries close on Monday 5th September 2022

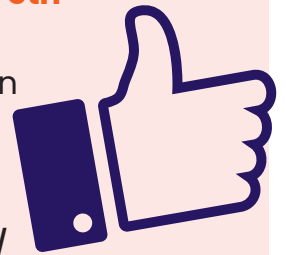
One winner will be chosen by our tenant representatives and notified within 28 days of the closing date.


Win a £20 shopping voucher of your choice!

Like and follow us on Facebook and like and share our post to enter a prize draw for a £20 shopping voucher of your choice!

Entries close on Monday 5th September 2022

One winner will be chosen at random and notified within 28 days of the closing date.

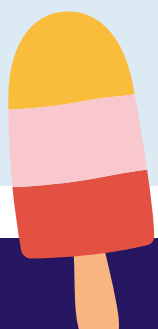


 www.facebook.com/BespokeSupportiveTenancies

Summer wordsearch

Can you find the 10 words listed below?

- Swimming
- Beach
- Sunshine
- Ice cream
- Sunglasses
- Barbecue
- Camping
- Picnic
- Frisbee
- Holiday



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



We have lots of ways you can give Feedback

'You said, we did!'

As part of our ongoing commitment to improving the way we engage with tenants, our tenant representatives have created a 'you said, we did' feedback framework. We want to hear and allow people to share their thoughts on how we can improve our services to tenants.

Do you have a suggestion on how we could improve? If so, email it to communications@bestha.co.uk

Compliments and Complaints

You can leave a compliment or make a complaint by completing the form on our website www.bestha.co.uk/compliments-and-compliments.php.

You can also email us at communications@bestha.co.uk or call us on 0161 786 6000 or send a WhatsApp message to 07525277308.



88% of complaints are resolved within our 4 week timescale.

Help us review our complaints process

We are looking for tenants that would like to help us review our complaints policy and procedure.

If you are interested, please get in touch.



Keep a look out for our Tenant Satisfaction Survey

Which will be landing on tenants' doorsteps in the coming weeks. The survey allows tenants to make their voices heard to improve our services. The survey focuses on how tenants feel about their homes and their views on BeST and our repairs service. Tenants have the option to remain anonymous or to include their names or address. Those tenants that include their name and address will be entered into a prize draw to win a £20 shopping voucher. There will be a prize for each of our 7 areas.



Repairs and maintenance update

Due to the rising costs and availability of materials and resources, we are testing a more holistic approach to repairs.

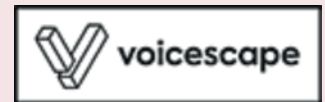
Rather than sending contractors out for minor jobs on a job by job basis, we are

trying to group repairs to ensure we are still providing good value and improved service. Where possible, non-urgent works will be pushed back until September. Our main priority is the health, safety and wellbeing of our tenants and repairs will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

Voicescape

We have teamed up with Voicescape and will now be using automated surveys to gain your valuable feedback on various purposes, such as your recent repairs.

You may receive an automated call asking you to do a quick survey based on a recent repair at your property. This allows you to give instant feedback and have any concerns or compliments noted and dealt with in a timely fashion.



Your feedback will help us make better decisions and service improvements where necessary.

Some people can be cautious about answering calls from unknown numbers. We will never ask you to give out any financial information such as a card or bank details.

If you have any concerns regarding an automated call, you can always call us on **0161 786 6000** and we will be happy to discuss this further.

Service Level Contract Visits (SLC)

We take the health and safety of all our tenants very seriously and expect our minimum standards are met through regular SLC visits to our schemes.

We visit your home twice a year to ensure that the support providers we work with are adhering to the service level agreement we have signed with them. This involves ensuring that Health and Safety inspections are carried out, including fire safety records, drills, fire alarm testing, and compliance certificates are up to date. We also check to see if we have any empty properties or rooms and discuss any possible referrals.



Renting homes in Wales Act update



If you are a tenant or landlord in Wales, the way you rent is changing.

The 'Renting Homes Act' (Wales) is the biggest change to housing law in Wales for decades. From **1 December 2022, the Welsh Government** plan for the Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016 to change the way all landlords in Wales rent their properties. It will improve how we rent, manage, and live in rented homes in Wales.

Who is affected by the new law?

All social and private tenants will see some changes:

- in the way their contracts are provided
- in the way their homes are maintained
- to how they communicate with their landlords

All social and private landlords, including those who rent their properties through management companies or agents, will need to:

- comply with the new law
- make the necessary updates to their properties and paperwork

What does the new law mean for me as a Tenant of BeST?

Tenants

Under the new law, tenants and licensees will become 'contract-holders'. Tenancy agreements will be replaced with 'occupation contracts'. The new law will make renting easier and provide greater security.

For contract-holders, this will mean:

- receiving a written contract setting out your rights and responsibilities
- an increase in the 'no fault' notice period from two to six months
- greater protection from eviction
- improved succession rights, these set out who has a right to continue to live in a dwelling, for example, after the current tenant dies
- more flexible arrangements for joint contract-holders, making it easier to add or remove others to an occupation contract

Landlords

For BeST as a landlord, this will mean:

- A simpler system, with two types of contracts:

'Secure' for the social rented sector and 'Standard' for the private rented sector.

- Ensuring homes are fit for human habitation (FFHH). This will include electrical safety testing and ensuring working smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors are fitted.
- Abandoned properties can be repossessed without needing a court order.

What should I do next?

You don't have to do anything.

We are working with our solicitors to draw up a new contract for new tenants, and we will also be writing to all our existing tenants over the coming weeks. We want this transition to be as smooth as possible for everyone. It is important you know what the changes mean for you. **Find out more about how the new law will affect you by visiting [Housing law is changing: Renting Homes Wales | gov.wales/housing-law-changing-renting-homes](https://gov.wales/housing-law-changing-renting-homes)**



What does the energy price cap mean, and what support is available?

Q: What does the energy price cap mean?

A: The energy price cap is the maximum price suppliers in England, Wales and Scotland can charge households. It was raised by 54% on 1 April 2022. This means households on standard tariffs will see an average increase of £693 – from £1,277 to £1,971 per year, and prepayment customers will see an average increase of £708 – from £1,309 to £2,017.

Q: Should tenants be switching tariffs?

A: It is likely that remaining on your energy company's

standard tariff once any fixed deal ends is the best decision. Talk to your support provider about this.

Q: What support is there?

A: The government has released some measures to help with the increased costs, including a Council tax rebate – in April, people in council tax bands, A to D in England, have received a one-off £150 discount. You can check what band you are in on the government website www.gov.uk/council-tax-bands. You won't have to apply for the discount as your local authority will automatically recognise if you qualify.

£400 energy bill rebate – in October 2022, customers will receive a £400 rebate on their energy bills.

The Warm Home Discount scheme will be expanded to cover three million households. It offers low-income households a one-off annual discount on their electricity bill.

If you need help, please don't hesitate to contact us on 0161 786 000 or email info@bestha.co.uk. Over the coming months, we will share advice on social media. Follow us on Facebook www.Facebook.com/BespokeSupportiveTenancies



Energy Saving Tips

We've looked at some tips from the Energy Saving Trust, and they recommend the following. Why not try some and let us know how you get on?

The way to save during the current energy crisis is to use less, so see if you can adopt any of the methods below.



Turn your thermostat down. This is one of the easiest things to do on this list. For each degree you turn down the thermostat, expect to cut bills by approximately 4%. The World Health Organisation says that 18 degrees is enough for healthy adults, with slightly higher temperatures needed for the vulnerable or young. Consider putting on a jumper and seeing what temperature your home is comfortable at. The [Energy Saving Trust](#) is adamant you should only have your heating on when required.

Try buying a shower timer to keep your eye on the ball or use an alarm on your phone.



Wash bigger loads on a cooler setting. Make sure you fill the machine each time you use it.

The savings aren't huge, around £10 a year for modern machines, but can be much more with older ones. You could also try doing your washing on a colder setting. By washing your clothes at 30 degrees, you could save £28 a year, leading to a £38 overall saving.



Don't assume all energy-saving light bulbs are equal. LED uses about half the energy of the fluorescent spiral 'energy-saving bulbs'. According to the Energy Saving Trust, turning lights off when you leave the room could save £14 a year.



How many cuppas am I making? The more water you boil, the more energy you use. Be conscious about this when filling the kettle so you don't overfill. There are possible savings of £8 a year.



Search for draughts. Decent draught-proofing can cut 2% off energy bills, so about £30 a year on average for a typical home. This applies to chimneys too, where you can get a 1.5% further reduction.



Don't leave your devices on standby. Switching off your devices is better than leaving them on standby.



Shower time. Cutting just a minute off your shower time could save £75 a year in energy bills and a further £105 a year in water bills if you have a meter.



Use the tumble dryer less often. Try drying your clothes on an airer, but make sure you leave a window open, as it can cause damp in poorly ventilated homes. If you have a garden dry your clothes outside when you can.



Communications and Tenant Engagement

📞 M: 07525 277 308

✉️ E: communications@bestha.co.uk

If you would like to talk to us about the different ways you can get involved or give feedback, please get in touch.

BeST contact details

🏠 **Registered Office:** Bespoke Supportive Tenancies, 2A Sentinel House, Albert Street, Eccles, Manchester, M30 0NJ

📞 **Phone Number:** 0161 786 6000

📘 **Facebook:**
[BespokeSupportiveTenancies](https://www.facebook.com/BespokeSupportiveTenancies)

🌐 **Website:** www.bestha.co.uk

Team contact details

Please only email non-urgent issues; if you require an immediate response, please call us.

🔧 **Repairs and Maintenance**
maintenance@bestha.co.uk

You should report any repairs to us as soon as you notice them.

If you are reporting a new repair, please call **0161 786 6000** and press option 1.

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

You can also report a repair through our website www.bestha.co.uk/report-a-repair.php

Our emergency repairs team are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

🏠 **Housing**
housingteam@bestha.co.uk

To discuss a housing or tenancy-related issue, email us or call and press option 3.

Housing officers

Lauren Downes – Housing Officer (North)
📞 M: 07392 197 479
✉️ E: lauren.downes@bestha.co.uk

Michelle Mcgee – Housing Officer (North West)
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Tim Bray – Housing Officer (East)
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Jay Johal – Housing Officer (Midlands)
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Anoushka Ritchie – Housing Officer (South East)
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Rosie Garnett – Housing Officer (South West)
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✉️ E: rosie.garnett@bestha.co.uk

Siobhan Boyd – Senior Housing Officer
📞 M: 07921 844 364
✉️ E: siobhan.boyd@bestha.co.uk

🏠 **Accounts**
accounts@bestha.co.uk

To discuss an invoice, email us or call and press option 4.

👤 **Revenue and Benefits**
revenueandbenefits@bestha.co.uk

To discuss your rent account balance or for help claiming Housing Benefit, email us or call and press option 5.

💬 **Enquiries**
info@bestha.co.uk

For all other enquiries, email us or call and press option 6.