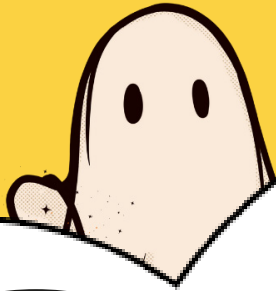


FCHA

Autumn 2023

TENANTS' VOICE

A NEWSLETTER FOR FIRST CHOICE TENANTS. WRITTEN FOR TENANTS, BY TENANTS



Hobbies
Tenant Stories
Recipes



First Choice
&
Tenant News



WELCOME

Adrian's Chief Executive Update

I really wanted to say a big thank you to everyone who was able to make our Tenant Talks over the past few months. Having your say on what we work on in the future is important and I am pleased so many of you were able to get involved.

We had our staff development day in September to begin work on our new three-year strategy and we started this by looking at the feedback from you - our tenants. What was clear to us is that outdoor spaces and wellbeing are still important topics. We are delighted then to be working in partnership with Keep Wales Tidy again this year to deliver more garden projects aimed at improving outdoor spaces and planting much needed trees and shrubs. If you would like us to do this to your property, please get in touch with Eve at our head office.

On the subject of outdoor spaces, The National trust have kindly agreed to grant us access passes again this year for tenants. I encourage you to do so again this year! There are fantastic places to visit across all of Wales.

I also had the opportunity to attend the Sense Sports Day in Pontypridd this month and just wanted to say how much I enjoyed it. The range of activities going on was brilliant and I wanted to say thank you to Sense for co-hosting it with us. It was really enjoyed by lots of FCHA tenants.

I hope you all have a great autumn and look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at our forthcoming events.



SEND IN YOUR STORIES

Calendar

Event	Location	Date
Halloween Disco	Shrewsbury Football Club	October
Tenants Talk	Whiltshire Community Centre	November
Tenants Talk	Shrewsbury Football Club	November
Christmas Disco	Swansea	December
Christmas Disco	Mold	December

More events may be available later! We will send you letters if there are other events booked for the remainder of the year so keep an eye out!

If you're interested in keeping up to date with events from FCHA we also have our own Eventbrite page!

You can follow to get notified first on FCHA events and you can RSVP to events online!



Eventbrite

OFFICE UPDATE

Do you have a story you'd like to submit to our tenant newsletter? If you send your story in about your hobbies, holidays or anything else, we will send you a £10 voucher and your story will be featured in the next newsletter. Group stories will receive £5 per person.



Two tenant stories will be selected as star stories! Those tenants will receive a £20 gift voucher instead!

How many Ghosts can you find? The answer is on the last page.



Keep an eye out for the Star Story!

AARON'S MAGICAL JOURNEY

Aaron from Swansea went to Disneyland Paris for his 30th Birthday. He had not been on holiday for 17 years and is a big fan of Disney.



Aaron loved all of the rides at Disney but his favourite thing was having breakfast in the mornings with the Disney Princesses. His favourite is Sleeping Beauty.

Whilst he was on holiday his bedroom had a makeover. A mural of Sleeping Beauty was painted on his wall. Now he gets to see her every morning when he wakes up!

REACH PROJECT: ST FAGANS

In June Tenants from South Wales were invited to visit St Fagans as part of the Open University and Museum Wales' REACH project.

Tenants got to enjoy a walking tour of the site and learn all about the history of the areas they live.

FCHA Tenant Shaun had a fantastic time looking at fossils in the bricks used to make some of the houses!



If you are interested in attending history trips like this in the future please contact Eve:

eveexley@fcha.org.uk



STAFF INTRODUCTIONS

We have 3 new Customer Services Assistants join the team over the summer! You may speak to them if you call us at the office.



Natasha



Ashley



Rebecca

We also have 2 new Development Officers. Their job is to find new housing for future tenants to live in across Wales, Shropshire and Telford.



Sian



Will

If you see any of the new staff make sure you say hello!

MATTHEWS VOLUNTEERING

Matthew from Llandrindod Wells volunteers for Play Radnor as part of National Play Day he delivered mystery toys and games to lots of different areas of Radnorshire for young children to find!



The toys and games were delivered to lots of different places nearby including Builth, Llandrindod Wells, Rhayader, Presteigne, Knighton, Howey and Newbridge!

We want to thank Matthew for his volunteering work!

If you do any volunteering work let us know! We would love to share your story in the next newsletter.

MINTY'S GIG GUIDE TAKEOVER

If you want to find out about Gigs in Cardiff, you usually follow Minty's Gig Guide.

For Learning Disability week, we had Richie's Gig Guide! Richie, who is an FCHA Tenant took over Minty's Gig Guide and gave everyone information on the gigs coming up throughout the week in Cardiff, including some of his favourites.



Richie is also part of Gig Buddies and can be seen in some gigs around Cardiff!

FCHA Housing Manager, Nigel spotted Richie at a Panic Shack Gig over the summer! If you spot Richie make sure you introduce yourself!

JULY BOARD UPDATE

Adrian Burke: Chief Executive



Adrian presented the FCHA Business Plan. Board discussed assistive and smart technology and how this can be made available in properties. Board approved the Business Plan.

Adrian presented the Quarter 1 Health, Safety & Assurance Report and the Risk & Assurance Review, these reports were noted and accepted by Board.

Richard Lloyd: Director of Operations



Richard presented the Quarter 1 Development Report. Board said they will consider Development performance again after Quarter 2. Board noted and accepted this report.

Donna Webb: Director of Corporate Services



Donna presented a report to approve a new Chair to the Audit, Risk & Assurance Committee (ARC). Board thanked the leaving chairperson, Wallis George and approved the appointment of Chair ARC as Sian Evans.

JULY BOARD UPDATE



Richard Griffiths: Director of Finance and IT

Richard presented the 30 year Financial Plan. Board recognise that it has been the hardest year yet to financially plan due to uncertainty and factors out of our control. The Financial Plan was approved by Board.

Richard also presented the Quarter I Management Accounts and Quarter I Treasury Report. Board noted and accepted the QI 2023-24 reports.



Andrew Moucher: Technical Services Manager

Andrew presented the Damp and Mould Policy and Procedure. The policy takes a more proactive approach to seek out damp & mould. Board approved this policy.



GARDEN PROJECTS ARE BACK!

Keep Wales Tidy offers free garden packages to increase biodiversity value and promote wellbeing in Welsh communities as part of it's 'Local Place for Nature' initiative.

The different garden packages include things like trees, flowers, raised beds, ponds, greenhouses, tool sheds, compost bins, seating areas, wildlife habitats and the equipment needed to carry on gardening.



We involve FCHA staff, volunteers, support staff, and tenants in the garden projects. If you are interested in gardening and would like to speak to someone about the free garden projects, please contact Eve at eveexley@fcha.org.uk to express your interest and have a chat.

Please note that the free garden projects are not for landscaping or accessibility. Either a tenant or a member of support staff must be willing to collaborate as a point of contact for Keep Wales Tidy and FCHA.

JOSH ON HOLIDAY

Josh from Swansea went to Center Parks for a holiday over the Summer!

At Center Parks the accommodation is spacious and flat, as well as having the right equipment for his needs.



Whilst Josh was there, he enjoyed walking around, waving and saying hello to all of the other guests.

The highlight of the trip was a pub Josh stopped at on the way. He had a homemade 'big pie'. He also enjoyed visiting to Longleat Safari Park as well as a music festival that was on that weekend.

BUTLINS AND HOBBIES

Andrea and Samantha from
The Vale of Glamorgan
Went to Butlins on Holiday!



Samantha liked that there
were quiet places to go
in between all of the
activities!

Andrea also liked feeding
the ducks at the duck
pond.

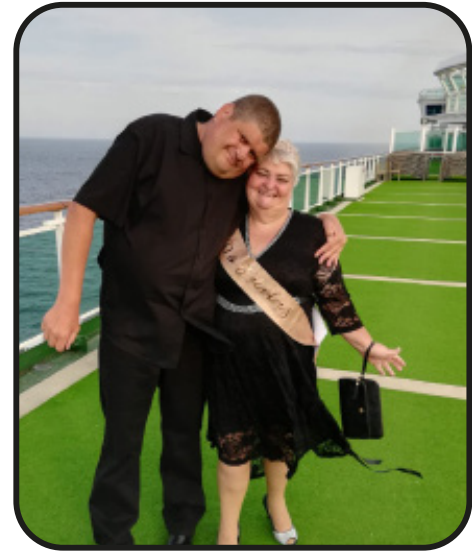


They both like to go outdoors as a hobby and
Samantha likes making Macaroni and Cheese for
the house with Staff.

THE CRUISE

Marie, Clive and Robin from Gorseinon went on a cruise in June as a holiday!

They had a lovely time and were supported by their staff Monte, Helen and John!



REPORT A REPAIR

Reporting a repair or complaint is important, and we want to make it easy for everyone, including tenants with a learning disability.

If you need to report a problem or concern, you can find a special code on the van that should be in your home. It's called a QR code.

To scan it, you can use your smartphone or tablet. Open the camera app on your device and point it at the QR code. Make sure the whole code is visible on your screen.

Your device will automatically recognise the code and show you some options. Tap on the option that says 'Open' or 'Go to Website.' This will take you to a form where you can report your repair or complaint. You can also attach photos of the issue for FCHA to understand what help you need fast.

If you need any help, don't hesitate to ask someone you trust.



See a problem?



Scan the Van!

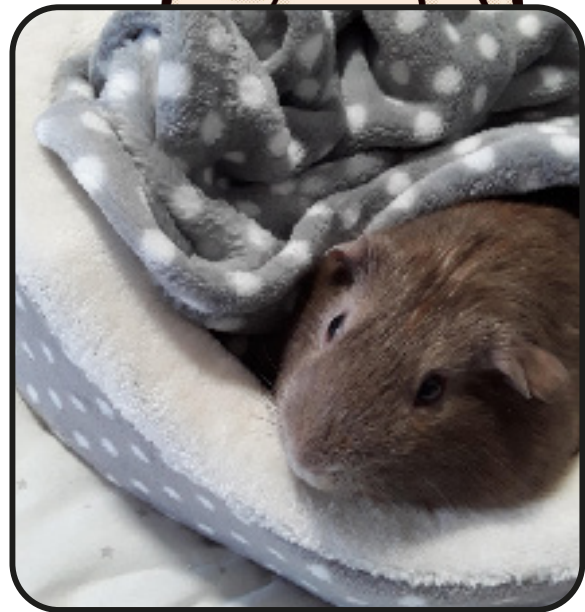
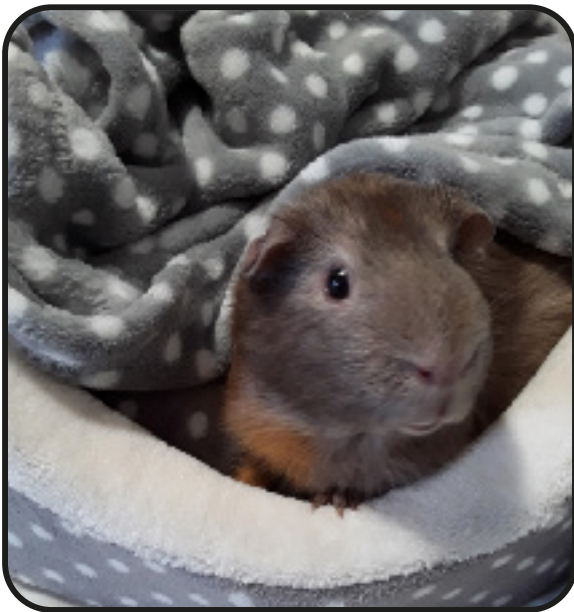


Get it Fixed!



MY FIRST PET

Leanne from Neath wrote about her first pet!



I am Leanne and I have lived in my home for around 7 years and it has always been my dream to have my very own pet!

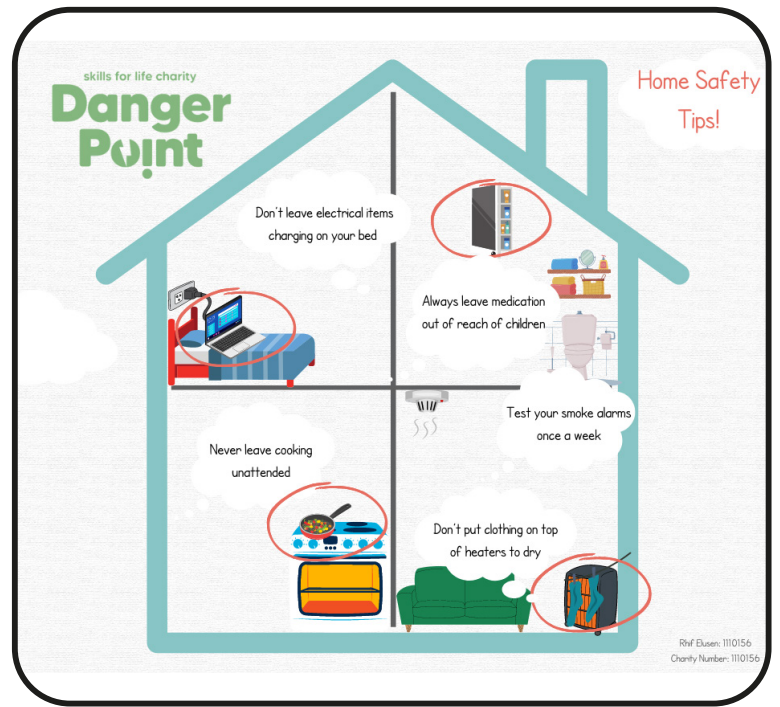
It took me a little while to build up my confidence and when I spoke to my support workers and my manager they were all very excited and helped me figure out everything I needed to know.

I just want to thank my staff from Drive and First Choice housing for helping me make my dream come true. Meet Brownie the Guineapig!

DANGERPOINT

Dangerpoint is in North Wales and teaches visitors in fun and interactive ways!

Here are some home safety tips.



Some tenants from one of FCHA's properties in Wrexham, visited Dangerpoint recently.

Marc said he really enjoyed going there and especially the health & safety bit.

He liked the sensors and the lady gave him a free one.

He said he would like to go again and stop a bit longer.

If you want to go to Dangerpoint in North Wales contact housing officer Sarah.

sarahfaire@fcha.org.uk

JANET AND EIRA

Janet and Eira from Neath Port Talbot went to Pendine with staff for a holiday over the summer.

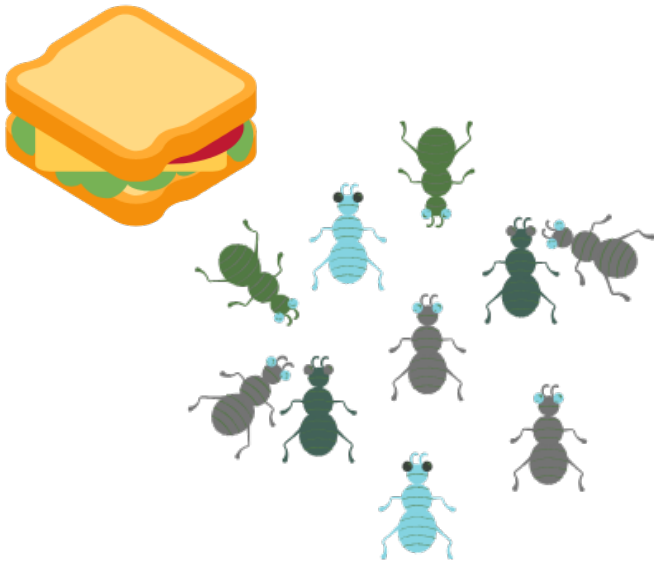


They loved being out and about visiting shops and going to the beach and eating food.



BIG HOBBIES

Bobby and Sasha from The Vale of Glamorgan shared us some of their stories.



Bobby has booked in a holiday to Harry Potter World! He also loves making sandwiches and looking for bugs.

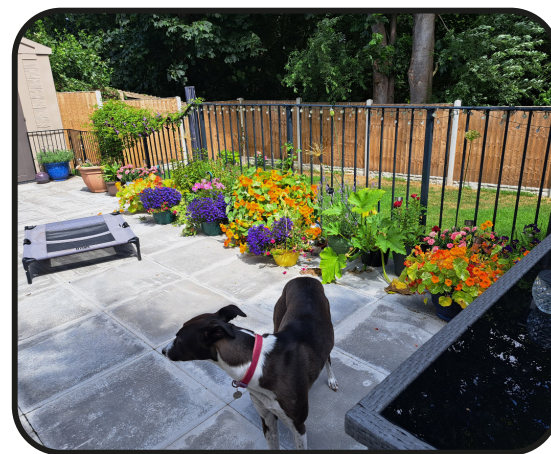
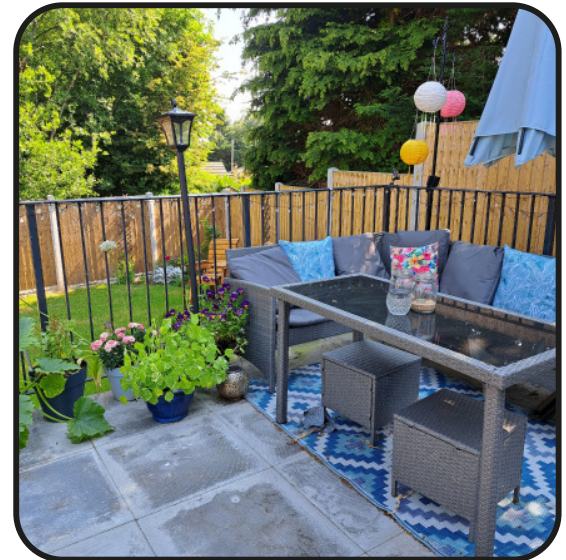


Sasha likes to cook and do art at her grandparents.

She also loves dancing and baking cakes.

MOVING INTO A FIRST CHOICE HOME

Alison and Ben from Bagillt gave us feedback on moving into their new First Choice Home.



Moving into our adapted bungalow was the best decision I have ever made, both for myself and Ben.

Ben is able to do much more for himself here which makes my life easier.

Ben said how easy it is for him to make food for himself and his ability to access the back garden, something he never did in our old house.

For me, it is knowing that if anything goes wrong or stops working, help is a phone call away and that it is not all on my shoulders to fix.

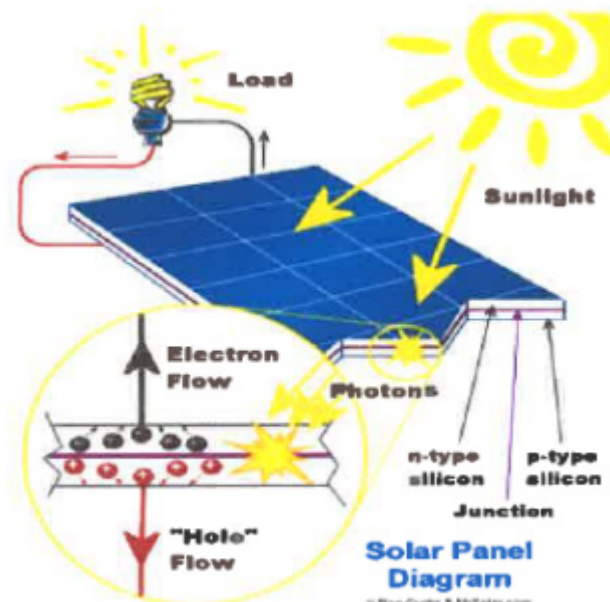
PG'S TIPS



I'm Phil, a Technical Officer at FCHA and this Newsletter I want to let you know about Solar Panels. You may see more solar panels at properties in your home.

How does a PV cell work?

PV cells are panels you can attach to your roof or walls. Each cell is made from one or two layers of semi conducting material, usually silicon. When light shines on the cell it creates an electric field across the layers. The stronger the sunshine, the more electricity is produced.



PV cells come in a variety of shapes and colours, from grey "solar tiles" that look like roof tiles to panels and transparent cells that you can use on conservatories and glass.

SOLAR PANELS

Example of a string of panels



Solar Guide Video

For more information, use your phone to scan the QR code below for a video by SolaX Power.



THE GARDEN REVAMP

A garden in Wrexham has had a revamp after funding from WCBC who bought the picnic table/ bench and an application to FCHA community involvement grant for a shed and garden tools.



In June, tenants and staff (FCHA and support staff) joined together to help tidy the garden, and build the shed.

Tenants now have a more social space and have enjoyed being in the garden together over the summer.

GREATEST SHOWMAN CINEMA

In August, tenants enjoyed watching The Greatest Showman at Flint cinema.

The next film will be a spooky Halloween film - follow the First Choice eventbrite page to find out what events are happening.



Eventbrite

PEDAL POWER PARADE

In June FCHA took part in the Pedal Power Parade organised by Groundworks North Wales.



FCHA's tenants wishes bike was displayed with others around Alyn Waters Country Park and the community was invited to walk or cycle the trail and spot all the decorated bikes.

For taking part we were given a trophy and some free Pedal Power vouchers which have been passed on to tenants so they can have a free ride on the accessible bike trail.



More information about Pedal Power can be found online: www.cycling4all.org

SHEILA'S SUMMER

Sheila from Broughton went to Rock the Castle weekend at flint castle.

She really enjoyed rocking out in the sun and watching the bands play!



Sheila also went crabbing at Rhyl Lake. She likes to watch the crabs swim around in the bucket. Sheila even tries to give them a little stroke before putting them back in the lake!

SELFIE COMPETITION

Over the summer we set a competition for the best selfie with their Van Magnet and sent it in using the online repair form and we had some great responses!



Out of all the pictures we received our winner was Rebecca from Swansea!

If you haven't had a van magnet and would like one. Call us on **02920 703 758**

SPORTS DAY - SENSE

In September, FCHA and Sense joined forces to host a sports day in Pontypridd!



Tenants got an opportunity to try out new exercises and share in the fun with other people who live nearby.

Lots of laughs and fun was had and a certificate was given out for participating!

If you would like to attend the next sports day let us know! Email eveexley@fcha.org.uk

THE FROZEN LONDON TRIP

Rhian went to London in August to see Frozen at the Theatre Royal in the West End!



Rhian also stayed at London Bridge Hotel that included lifts, accessible rooms and everywhere Rhian went was accessible either by walking or on the bus!

HALLOWEEN COLOURING IN!



Send us a photo of your coloured in picture! We would love to feature it in the next newsletter!

Email: customerservices@fcha.org.uk

AUTUMN RECIPE

- 3 tbsp olive oil, plus an extra drizzle (optional)
- 8 large pork sausages
- 1 onion, finely sliced
- sprinkle of golden caster sugar
- 1 tbsp red wine vinegar
- 1 tbsp tomato purée
- 1/2 tsp smoked paprika
- 400g can chopped tomatoes
- 100ml red wine
- 2 bay leaves
- 400g can butter beans, drained but not rinsed

For the crumb topping (optional)

- 50g fresh breadcrumbs
- 2 garlic cloves, finely grated
- handful of parsley leaves, roughly chopped



ONE POT SAUSAGE CASSEROLE

Method

STEP 1

Heat the oven to 220C/200C fan/gas 7. Heat 1 tbsp of the oil in a shallow ovenproof casserole over a medium heat and gently fry the sausages for 5-8 mins, or until brown on all sides.

Transfer to a plate using tongs. Tip the onions into the pan and fry for 5-8 mins until beginning to turn golden. Drizzle in a little more oil if the onions start to stick.

Sprinkle in the sugar and cook for a minute before stirring in the vinegar, tomato purée and paprika to form a paste. Tip in the tomatoes, then pour the wine into the tomato can, swish it round, and add to the pan.

Stir in the bay leaves and beans, then arrange the sausages on top so they're half-submerged in the sauce but still a little exposed.

STEP 2

Bring the mixture to a simmer, then bake in the oven for 20 mins. Meanwhile, make the topping.

Mix the breadcrumbs with the garlic and parsley, then season and stir in 1 tbsp oil.

Scatter the topping over the casserole, then drizzle with the remaining 1 tbsp oil and bake for 10 mins more until the breadcrumbs are golden and crisp.

Leave to stand for a few minutes, then take to the table and serve from the dish.

NATIONAL TRUST WALKS

FCHA Tenants can explore the wonders of Wales with us!

We have been given another Wellbeing Access Pass, thanks to The National Trust

If you or your support provider get in touch, we can help you arrange a visit to any National Trust site in Wales for up to 50 people!



Visit National Trust Sites!

FCHA Tenants get a free Wellbeing Access Pass for groups of 50 people!

National Trust

If you would like to attend a national trust walk with family and friends email here: eveexley@fcha.org.uk

WINNERS AND RESULTS

Star Story Winner 1

The winner of the FCHA Star Story are Matthew from Llandrindod Wells! £20 Gift Card is on its way.

Star Story Winner 2

The 2nd winner of the FCHA Star Story is Sheila from Broughton Well Done! A £20 Gift Card is on its way.

Calling for Newsletter Stories

If you have any stories or recipes that you would like to have printed in the next Tenants' Voice, please send them to us with a picture!
email: customerservices@fcha.org.uk

Newsletter

Number of Ghosts: 9





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First Choice is a Welsh Language Scheme.
First Choice will treat the Welsh and English Language on the basis of equality. A full copy of our Welsh Language Scheme and a Welsh version of the newsletter are available on request and on our website.

First Choice is an equal opportunities landlord.
If you feel that you have been treated unequally in any way by First Choice, please contact us.