

Report Looe Town Council January 2018

Christmas festivities

My thanks to all who were involved in the organisation of Santa's Arrival, the Torch Light Procession, Santa Run (nearly killed me) and New Years Eve Fireworks. The Christmas lights were innovative, especially the harbours contributions.

The shops were all dressed brilliantly and added to the festive street scene.

Fatal Fire

Sadly the death of a woman in the house fire in Barbican Hill has now been confirmed. The woman is believed to be Susan Crapp.

As a resident of Barbican Hill for most of my life I've known Susan and her family since I was a child. She was kind and sweet working for many years in Boots, enjoying her camper van and her love of her cats and dogs. My condolences to her family and in particular her brother Thomas in Polruan. The Mayor has already paid his tribute and gratitude to the emergency services, especially to John Bowden and the Looe retained Fire crew for their valiant efforts and dedication to serving their community; I would like to add my thanks as well. They will need our support and understanding coming to terms with the terrible events of New Years Eve, as will her neighbours who witnessed the tragedy unfolding.

The community of Looe has lost one of its own in tragic circumstances. Rest in peace Sue. I'm sure the Mayor may lead on a suitable marking of her life.

Free fire safety checks

It's timely to remind residents that Cornwall Council offer free fire safety checks for certain home owners and online advice for businesses.

<http://www.cornwall.gov.uk/community-and-living/cornwall-fire-and-rescue-service-homepage/keeping-safe/fire-safety/>

Those with the greatest need in the community will be eligible for a free home fire safety check and will be contacted to arrange an appointment to do this. In this case we will visit your home at an allocated time and accompany you around every room in your property with the aim of:

- Identifying and making you aware of the potential risks in your home - including electrical safety to ensure your sockets are not overloaded.
- Making sure you know what to do in order to reduce or prevent these risks.
- Helping you put together an escape plan in case a fire breaks out in the future.
- Ensuring you have a working smoke alarm and if you don't, we will fit a free smoke alarm (type of alarm will vary depending on the need).

The home fire safety check will take about half an hour. A member from Cornwall Fire, Rescue and Community Safety (CFRCS) Service will be wearing a uniform and carrying an identification card. Please ask to see the identification card, and if you require confirmation telephone the freephone helpline 0800 3581 999.

To help us determine if you are eligible for a free home fire safety check please complete a home fire safety check short survey. If you are eligible an officer will contact you and arrange a convenient time to visit your home. Please be aware that there is a waiting list in place.

Looe Yellow Fish Campaigners are award winners

A Highly Commended award presented at the Cornwall Sustainability Awards ceremony has capped a successful year for the Looe Bathing Waters Project and the communities of Looe and Liskeard who have taken part in the campaign to protect the quality of East Looe Beach bathing water.

Recognising the project's contribution to community resilience, the award acknowledged the work that is being done to stop pollutants entering the East and West Looe Rivers. Homes and businesses are being alerted to the dangers of putting fats, oils and greases down the sink, wet wipes and cotton buds down the toilet, and topped off with the striking Yellow Fish Campaign with its familiar slogan 'only rain down the drain'.

Cornwall Wildlife Trust has drawn together the campaigns in Looe and Liskeard with the catchment work it has been doing with local farmers to prevent polluting run-off entering the rivers during heavy rainfall.

After receiving the award Cornwall Wildlife Trust's Iain Barker said, "The wider community in Looe and Liskeard have worked closely together to improve the bathing water quality at Looe. I ask all residents to get right behind this campaign and make sure that only rain goes down the drain." But we are still worried that too much of the wrong things are going down the drain.

The Looe Bathing Water Group is made up of Cornwall Councillors, Cornwall Wildlife Trust, South West Water, Looe Town Councils, Environment Agency and East Looe Town Trust.

Cornwall Shop Front Design Guide

Shop owners, designers, contractors and those involved in planning are being encouraged to help protect the character of Cornwall's historic towns by following Cornwall Council's Shopfront Design Guide.

The guidance will be used early in the planning process to help improve poorly maintained or replacement shopfronts and signs in historic towns and villages.

The Shopfront Design Guide has been produced by Cornwall Council's Historic Environment Service to protect the special character of Cornwall's historic settlements. It gives advice on the repair of original shopfronts and design of new shopfronts and signs.

Other neighbourhood planning groups or Town and Parish Councils are being encouraged to produce specific appendices for their own town or village with information tailored to each place's local distinctiveness. These appendices will help to identify surviving traditional shopfronts and signs, and distinctive local details and issues, and will be used to influence the quality of repairs and new shopfronts.

Town or Parish Council's interested in producing an appendix to the Shopfront Design guide for their town or village should email Cornwall Council's Strategic Historic Environment Team at: HER@cornwall.gov.uk

This is something that Looe could produce to help improve the street scene in East and West Looe and be adopted through its neighbourhood plan work.

: www.cornwall.gov.uk/shopfrontguide

Council makes changes to how it allocates housing to help locals in the greatest housing need

Homechoice, Cornwall Council's system for allocating social housing, is about to change with new rules being put in place so that homes go to those with a strong connection to Cornwall and who are in the greatest housing need.

A new website will also be launched on 10 January to make it easier for people to set up a user account so that they will be able to see their Homechoice application and bid on properties when they are listed.

The Council's new social housing allocation policy will mean, for the majority of homes available through Homechoice, applicants will need to have a 3-year connection to Cornwall to be allocated a Cornwall Council property or a property that Homechoice has nomination rights over. Similar qualifications will apply to parish connections too.

Those households with an annual income below £30,000 will be prioritised when bidding for Cornwall Council owned properties which make up about a third of Cornwall's 29,000 social housing stock.

Cornwall Council cabinet member for homes, Andrew Mitchell said: "Demand for social housing in Cornwall is very high and will increase. We are introducing changes to Homechoice because we need to ensure that the homes available are fairly allocated to those most in need and that those with a local connection get priority for housing."

There are currently approx.19,500 households on the Homechoice register and every year, on average, only 2,300 social housing properties become available.

Cathy Hadfield, Cornwall Housing's Director of Housing Options, added: "The Homechoice changes emphasise that Cornwall's social housing system is based on choice and is not a waiting list. Applicants in housing need must actively seek and express interest in suitable housing. When an applicant bids on a property, they are putting themselves forward to be considered for that property."

Current Homechoice applicants do not need to register a completely new housing application. Their current application will be 'transferred' to the new system. Current applicants will only need to set up a user account on the new website to access their housing application. Once a user account has been set up, applicants will be able to see their Homechoice application and bid on properties when they are listed.

* Applicants with special circumstances will be protected. For example, applicants that need a property type that doesn't become available often.

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The new Cornwall Homechoice system is accessible on its new website from Wednesday 10 January 2018. The first bidding week will start on Thursday 18 January 2018 and then every Thursday after.

- The Allocation Policy applies to Council owned properties and Registered Provider (social landlord) homes where the Council has a nomination right. Other registered Provider homes will be let in accordance with their own policies
- The Homechoice partnership includes: Cornwall Council, Cornwall Housing, Aster Communities, Cornwall Rural Housing Association, Devon and Cornwall Housing Association, Guinness partnership, Ocean Housing, Sanctuary Shaftesbury, Westward Housing Group.

Cornwall Housing has put together a hub of information that is regularly updated with all the latest information and can be found here:
<https://www.cornwallhousing.org.uk/homechoicechanges>

[Homechoice is changing - Cornwall Council](#)

www.cornwallhousing.org.uk

Cornwall Homechoice is the register to apply for social housing vacancies and affordable housing in Cornwall.

Details of Cornwall Council's Allocation Policy can be found here:
www.cornwallhousing.org.uk/housing/housing-strategy/council-allocation-scheme

Council Allocation Scheme - Cornwall Council

www.cornwallhousing.org.uk

An Allocations Scheme sets out the way in which social housing is prioritised and let.
