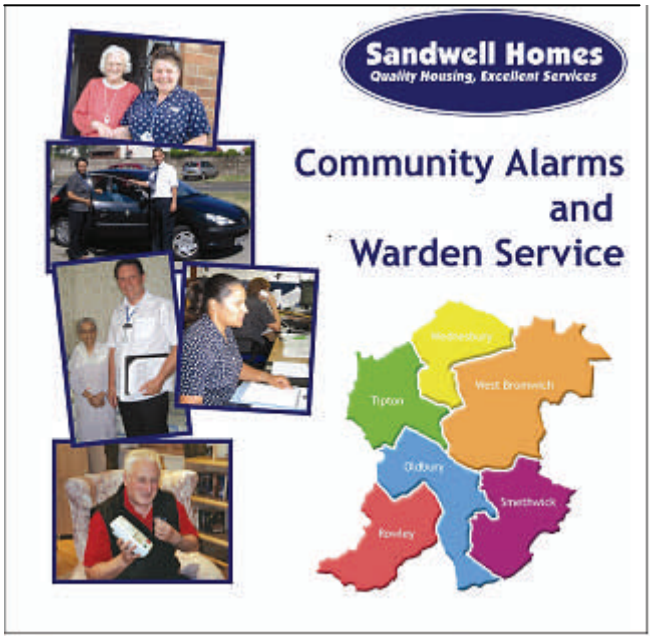
Newsletter

Autumn/ Winter
2006/067

SANDWELL COMMUNITY ALARMS AND WARDEN SERVICE



A NEW PROMOTIONAL DVD FOR SANDWELL COMMUNITY ALARMS AND WARDEN SERVICE

As part of our continuous commitment to provide a service that is available to anyone living in Sandwell and feeling vulnerable, a DVD has been produced and presented in different languages plus sign language. From talking to our service users and asking how we can promote the services available it was highlighted that we need to be able to communicate using different languages. Additionally we wanted to be able to communicate with people with hearing impairment so included is a British Signer who interprets throughout the DVD. The DVD shows how Community Alarms receive call from service users into the control centre, shows the support provided and a demonstration of how, with the use of a lifting cushion staff are able to lift users who have fallen without injury. It explains the Warden Service that is available to residents living in Sheltered and Supported Housing and how people can apply for this service. The languages available include :- Arabic, Bengali, Kurdish Sorani, Kurdish Kurmanji, Punjabi, Somali and Urdu...To find out more or if you know of any support group that would like to have a copy of the DVD please contact us on 0121 525 4290

If you do not have DVD facility, we will be able to provide you with the equipment

Sandwell Homes Mission Statement

To be nationally recognized as a Best Practice social housing provider by delivering sustainable quality homes and excellent customer service through committed and motivated employees.

Our Vision for Community Alarms and Warden Service

To provide a unified Sheltered Housing and Community Alarms Service , that enables older people to live independently, with privacy, dignity, security and fulfillment within their own home for as long as they wish.

Service Feedback by Black and Minority Ethnic Groups

As part of the Community Care Action Plan we recently undertook a survey of service users to ask how we could encourage the 'Take Up' of the Community Alarms and Warden Service to Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities. A total of 194 questionnaires were sent out to service users who are from BME communities. Each service user was sent a questionnaire in their identified language plus a copy in English. A total of 26 were returned of which 16 receive both services plus 10 from users of the Community Alarm only.

From the analysis the low take up appears to be because of language and the fact that few people are unaware of the service available, but when asked if there were any aspects of the service that they felt uncomfortable with 84% did not believe there were any aspects of the service that may put potential users off joining the service. Asked if we could be offered the opportunity to visit their community 7 users said yes and 4 gave contact details. Other recommendations included advertising, visits to churches and community centres and offering to talk to their community on our behalf.

In conclusion contact details were given to those wishing to attend future consultation groups and contact details to those who will promote our service.

Changes in Financial Circumstances

If you receive the Warden Service and your financial circumstances change it is important that you notify your Warden at the earliest opportunity. Any delay may result in the non-payment of your support charge for the Warden and Community Alarms Service by the Supporting People Grant.

If you have applied for benefit and are waiting the outcome please tell your Warden so that the forms can be completed in order to ensure if successful you will be covered for payment by Supporting People from the date you applied for benefit.

ANY DELAY WILL MEAN THAT YOU WILL NOT BE ENTITLED TO FUNDING FROM SUPPORTING PEOPLE FROM THE DATE YOU APPLIED FOR HOUSING BENEFIT FOR THE COMMUNITY ALARMS AND WARDEN SERVICE.

If you receive the Community Alarms Service only this does not apply as only users who joined the service **before** April 2006, living in council property and in receipt of Housing Benefit were able to apply for funding through Supporting People.

REQUIRE HELP TO PAY FOR YOUR COMMUNITY ALARM SERVICE....YOU MAY BE ENTITLED TO A FINANCIAL ASSESSMENT...THIS WILL REQUIRE A VISIT TO ASSESS YOUR NEEDS AND IF FUNDING CAN BE PROVIDED THROUGH SOCIAL INCLUSION...AT PRESENT FUNDING WILL ONLY BE AVAILABLE IF YOU HAVE BELOW £1200 IN SAVINGS...CONTACT COMMUNITY ALARMS FOR DETAILS

Service Recognition For Community Alarms

Sandwell Community Alarms has received national recognition from the Telecare Service Association (formally the Association of Social Alarm Providers) with accreditation for Telecare Call Handling Operation, Telecare Installation Operational Requirements and Mobile Response Operational Requirements. Following on from the success received in December 2005 for Part 1 of the Code of Practice, we were audited in September for Parts 2 and 3 for Installation and Mobile Response.

The standard is the government's benchmark for supporting vulnerable people in the community and is recognized by government as the framework for the Supporting People Programme.

The Telecare Service Association Code of Practice is a stringent and robust set of guidelines, monitored and inspected independently.

Sandwell's official accreditation benefits the tenants and service user by providing a high quality service and demonstrates the continuing improvement in service delivery.

Our provision of round the clock support is a lifeline to members of the community who use our service.

We are now in the process for applying to the CSHS (Centre for Sheltered Housing Studies) for accreditation to the Code of Practice in Sheltered and Supported Housing. Volunteers are required to build up our Consultation Group to ensure we are promoting good practice. If interested please tell you warden.

CALL RESPONSE TIMES

As part of our commitment in ensuring we answer your call promptly Community Alarms monitors the time it takes to respond to your call for assistance.

98% of calls are answered within 60 seconds

93% of calls are answered within 30 seconds

Know your acts and Policies

- **Vulnerable Adults Protection Policy**
- **Disability Discrimination Act 1995**
- **Equal Opportunities Policy**
- **Fair Access to Care Services Policy**
- **Building Telecare in England (DH) 2005**
- **Strategy for People over Fifty 2006-2010**

If you wish to know more about any of these please contact either Community Alarms or Sandwell MBC for further information.

If you cannot understand the contents of this newsletter and do not have access to anyone who can translate it for you we will try and send you a translation as soon as possible. Tel 0121 525 4290 for details

Sandwell Homes

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Maria Street
West Bromwich
B70 6DX

Phone: 0121-500-5500
Fax: 0121-525-5928
Email:
bev_abberley@sandwellhomes.org.uk

Remember……

Test your alarm once a month by pressing your pendant.

You have a Complaint!

Sandwell Homes would like to hear from anyone where service needs can be improved. If we have caused a problem, press your pendant or tell your warden so we can put it right...

Or

Contact

Bev Abberley

Manager

Community Alarms and Warden Service

0121 525 4290

Free Priority Fault Repair Scheme With BT

BT will provide a fault free service to those customers whose telephone is a vital lifeline, especially for those who have a chronic long term illness or disability.

For those who qualify, the BT Priority Fault Repair Scheme safeguards your line free of charge and will deal with any fault as soon as possible, day or night, every day of the year, including Christmas Day. Sandwell Homes Community Alarms Service recommends that all alarm service users apply for this free service if their telephone service provider is BT.

To apply you need to contact BT direct . Freefone 0800 800 150 and ask for an application form for the **Free Priority Fault Repair Scheme**

Guidance to Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour in Sheltered Housing

A new document is available specifically for Sheltered Housing that sets out the values, principles and policies underpinning our handling of anti-social behaviour.

The reason for this guidance is that we as a social landlord are required to have policies and procedures for tackling Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) under the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003.

Example of ASB within Sheltered Housing could be due to noise disturbance, intimidation and harassment, violence and aggression and hate behaviour that targets members of identified groups, because of their perceived differences (for example their race and ethnicity, gender, age, religion, sexual orientation, mental health or disability.

To find out more or request a copy of the document ask your warden or telephone 0121 525 4290

Alarm equipment fault:

Sandwell Community Alarms promise to arrange for an engineer to visit you within 24 hour hours of a fault being reported.