

Prime Time News



Summer 2022

Welcome to *Prime Time News*, the newsletter for Curo sheltered housing customers and older residents in the prime of life.



Bloomin' gorgeous

There's still time to enter this year's Curo in Bloom competition! We're looking for entries large and small, with categories including balconies or baskets, small gardens, large gardens, community gardens, vegetable or sensory gardens and best sunflower.

The closing date for entries is midnight Wednesday 24 August 2022. If you'd like to enter, log on to VoiceBox – ask your Sheltered Housing Officer, Livewell officer or ILSO if you need help with this.

Love flowers but not green-fingered? Look out for our next issue of *Prime Time News* where we'll share some photos of the winning entries.

Tickets are free

Curo's Jubilee parties brought our communities together, providing fun and company for sheltered housing residents.

We loved seeing Curo customers and colleagues having such a good time at our Platinum Jubilee celebrations, which took place across Bath, Timsbury and Keynsham in May and June this year.

At the Bath event, guests even raised a toast to HM The Queen as she watched over proceedings in the form of a life-sized cardboard cut-out.

Curo resident Mehmet Fidahoglu (pictured above, right) was at the Bath Jubilee celebration. He said, "I very much enjoyed the celebration and was honoured to be invited. It has been wonderful meeting everyone and there was such a good atmosphere."



Story continues over on page 2...

Join in **Curo's Big Get Together!**
Saturday 10 September. To book tickets and arrange transport to the venue, call our Customer Contact Team on 01225 366000



curo

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Holly Reed, Curo's Livewell officer, helped organise the Jubilee parties. "More than 150 customers attended the three celebrations and it was fantastic to be able to reach out to so many people," she said.

"Isolation is a problem for many of our customers. They may have lost friends and family members over the years and do not get out much anymore. The celebrations were a way for them to meet others."

At the events, residents enjoyed live music from performers, with singalongs to feel-good songs from the 1950s and 60s.

Guests also enjoyed delicious food and had the chance to win some wonderful prizes donated by local businesses in a raffle.

"It was so heartwarming to see our residents on the dancefloor. One told me it was the first time he had danced in 40 years. The little things can mean so much."

Holly Reed



Thank you to everyone who made the Jubilee parties such a success!



WHO'S YOUR COMMUNITY HERO?

Do you think your community is amazing? Is there a community hero where you live? Nominate them for one of these Curo Community Awards...

The **Curo Community Award** is your chance to nominate your community for all the good things they've done and the impact they have on Curo residents.

The **Curo Community Hero Award** thanks that special someone from your community who goes the extra mile for their neighbours, their community and Curo.

➔ To nominate someone, please ask your Sheltered Housing Officer, Livewell Officer or ILSO for a form or go to: www.curo-group.co.uk/communityawards
Entries are due by Saturday 10 September 2022.





Cost of living help

If you're worried about money, you're not alone. We can help you find advice and support...

Are you missing out on Pension Credit?

Over 1 million eligible people are not claiming Pension Credit. Are you one of them?

If you're a single pensioner and have less than £182.60 per week coming in, you should apply for Pension Credit. For a couple, this figure is £278.70 per week.

To find out more and make a claim, call 0800 99 1234 (Monday to Friday 8am to 6pm). Or you can go online www.gov.uk/pension-credit/how-to-claim

If you need help filling in an online form, please ask your Sheltered Housing Officer, Livewell Officer or Independent Living Service Officer.

Less TV licence paperwork



From 2023, low-income pensioners will get easier access to free TV licences.

Under the new plans, the BBC will be able to verify automatically whether a person applying for a free TV Licence is on Pension Credit with the Department for Work and Pensions. It will mean in most cases the 7,000 people who apply to TV Licensing for a free licence per month will simply need to apply online or over the phone, without any need to supply additional paperwork.

Support from energy suppliers

We all know that energy bills are rising – but did you know that many energy suppliers have schemes in place offering financial assistance? These schemes may be available to you if you're falling behind or owe money for your bills.

The British Gas Energy Trust can write off energy debts and hand out grants of up to £1,500: www.bget.org.uk/login.php

Scottish Power will cut up to 40% off eligible customers' debts, capped at £750 per household: www.community.scottishpower.co.uk/t5/Extra-Help/Hardship-Fund/ta-p/53

Octopus Energy customers can get cash grants of between £50 and £500: www.octopus.energy/policies/extra-support

E.ON has a Next Energy Fund to help customers through grants or by replacing an appliance such as a cooker, fridge or washing machine: www.eonnextenergyfund.com

Ovo customers can apply for help through its energy fund if they have debt of at least £150 on their account, and an annual household income of £16,190 or less: www.ovoenergy.com/help/debt-and-energy-assistance

Shell has a £5 million hardship fund to be used to reduce customers' debts. You can contact Shell Energy's customer services on 0330 094 5800 or customer.services@shellenergy.co.uk to get more information and apply.

EDF has an energy grant funding pot of £10 million to help customers pay for energy bills, or to help them pay for energy efficient appliances. Customers can apply online: forms.lets-talk.online/Login

➔ If you need help finding out more information online, please ask your Sheltered Housing Officer, Livewell Officer or Independent Living Service Officer.

Staying Independent



Our Independent Living Service is here to support you. We'll always do our best to provide you with the help you need.

Whether it's for you or one of your friends or family, let's see how we can help. When you contact us we'll arrange a visit from one of our experienced staff to answer any questions you have and explain the service and the kind of support we can provide...

Here are just some of the things we can help with...

- Reviewing finances and maximising income
- Support with making appointments
- Practical advice on repairs and arranging mobility equipment
- Help with managing diaries/ calendars
- Support managing your medication
- Support with arranging online shopping

- Support with transport to and from medical appointments
- Putting out recycling and rubbish
- Advice about staying healthy and keeping active
- Support with cupboard spring cleaning
- Technical support with accessing online tools
- Practical advice on keeping your home safe
- Supporting with accessing local community groups
- Practical advice on fire safety within your home
- Helping with paperwork and completing forms
- Social interaction – a cup of tea and a chat
- Understanding and accessing benefits
- Pet walking with you
- And much more.



Give us a call on
01225 366135 or email
ILS@curo-group.co.uk

How we've helped

“We recovered £3,000 for a customer”

Denise* lives alone and suffers from bad arthritis in her hands. During the past few years, insurance companies have taken advantage of her vulnerability, using pushy phone calls to mis-sell her insurance cover. They ended up taking £4,000 – but the emotional costs were greater. Denise lost her confidence and trust in the people around her, pushing her further into isolation.

After Denise was referred to us, we focused on recovering the money that had been stolen by these companies. We contacted the Financial Conduct Authority and Bath Citizens Advice, and together created a step-by-step plan to get it back. We also helped her to change her bank details and get advice on her direct debit payments. And we made sure she knew what to do if she received any more calls from insurance companies.

We're so happy that we've been able to recover £3,000 of Denise's money. She also now feels more confident in protecting her finances and she's less likely to receive future calls as we've put a special blocker on her phone.

*names have been changed

Curo community grants



Would you like financial help with the cost of a community project? Curo's community grants have funded gardening groups, paying for tools, plants and garden furniture.

If you only need a small amount of funding for your activity, for example a shed to house equipment, you can apply for a grant up to £250. Planning a bigger activity, such as a community fun day? You can apply for a grant of £251-£500.

→ If you're interested in applying for a grant, there's an application form online www.curo-group.co.uk/grants. Need help filling in an online form? Please ask your Sheltered Housing Officer, Livewell Officer or Independent Living Service Officer.

Handy Contacts

Curo's Contact Team,
open 8am-8pm Monday -
Friday: 01225 366000

**Curo Independent Living
Service:** 01225 366135

**Contact our Customer
Accounts Team at**
[customeraccountshelp@curo-
group.co.uk](mailto:customeraccountshelp@curo-group.co.uk)

Reach us online
www.curo-group.co.uk/contact

Or speak to your Livewell or
Independent Living Officer in
person or when they call.

Post or email competition
entries to: ils@curo-group.co.uk
or *Prime Time News*, Freepost
CURO

"Every day is different"

**We asked Sheltered
Housing Officer
Sophie Robinson to
tell us a bit about
herself...**

**What do you love about
your role?**

Meeting our residents is by far the best part of my job – there are so many different characters! I get huge satisfaction from being able to support them. Everyone has different needs, which means that every day is different. At Minerva Court, Bath, we're like a family. The residents all support each other and it feels amazing to be at the heart of this.

What does a typical day look like for you?

The day usually starts with a bit of admin, making calls and answering emails. Then I might be taking customers to hospital appointments or helping them with their shopping. If a customer isn't tech savvy, I can do online tasks with them. I'll visit customers to check they are OK, see if there's anything they need and have a chat. The days are so busy that they pass in the blink of an eye. I also regularly hosts movie nights, BBQs, and trips to restaurants and garden centres. And I try to remember all of our residents' birthdays!

What did you do before Curo?

I worked in a prison, providing social care. Some prison inmates have dementia or are physically and mentally disabled, so they need support.

What do you like to do in your spare time?

I'm a very sociable person and I can never say no to anyone, so my spare time is usually spent doing something for someone else.

Tell us something surprising about yourself...

I put this question to a few of our residents and they said they were surprised that I had a 20-year-old son and a 16-year-old daughter. Another resident said they couldn't believe how many things that I do in a day!

Sophie Robinson



Tea-break teaser

Settle down with a cuppa and this issue's puzzle

For your chance to win £50 in Love2Shop vouchers, courtesy of MyCuro, Curo's secure online portal for residents, find the words below in this Summer's wordsearch.

Congratulations to Christine Green from Bath, who won £50 Love2Shop vouchers in our Spring wordsearch competition.

In a recent survey of MyCuro users 73% told us that they thought MyCuro was easy or very easy to use.

They also told us:

"I like reporting online rather than having to wait in a queue on the phone."

If you'd like to find out more about MyCuro, ask your Housing Officer to show you more, or you can have a go at registering yourself if you have access to the internet by visiting my.curo-group.co.uk

→ How to enter:

Find all the hidden words listed, and either post or email your wordsearch to: Curo Prime Time Wordsearch, ils@curo-group.co.uk or Curo Prime Time Wordsearch, Freepost CURO, to arrive by Monday 17 October 2022 and we'll pick one lucky winner. For terms and conditions visit: www.curo-group.co.uk/competitions

**WIN
£50**
in Love2Shop
vouchers



**Meet
Marianne**

Marianne Rawlins is Curo's new External Communications and Media Manager – she helped to put this issue of *Prime Time News* together! As well as her day job, Marianne is a crochet designer for craft magazine *Simply Crochet* and designed the pattern opposite.

Marianne says, "Are you a fan of knitting or crochet? I'd love to join you for a craft-and-cake get together, where we can share our latest craft projects or just have a chat. If you're interested, contact Tasia Talbot or Holly Reed and we'll arrange a time when I can join you!"

How many words about things that go round can you find....

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

ASTEROID
 CLOCK HANDS
 COMET
 COMPUTER DISK
 CYCLONE
 DREIDEL
 DRILL
 EGG BEATER
 FISHING REEL
 MOON
 ROLLER
 SPINDLE
 TREADMILL
 TURBINE
 WHEEL
 WHIRLIGIG
 WHISK
 YO-YO

→ Either call or email
Tasia or Holly.
Tasia Talbot:

tasia.talbot@curo-group.co.uk; 07773 059244.

Holly Reed: holly.reed@curo-group.co.uk; 07779 981154

Crochet a butterfly headband



Whether a present for your grandchildren or yourself, this crochet butterfly headband is a simple yet pretty make. It's easy to tailor this pattern to different head sizes: just check the circumference of the headband once you've made the initial chain – then add or remove a few stitches. And you don't need to use glitter yarn – any DK yarn in fun colours will do the trick!

You will need:

- DK glitter yarn,
- 1 ball of Yarn A Grey

A small amount of each:

- Yarn B Amber
- Yarn C Red
- Yarn D Pink
- Yarn E Violet

A 4mm (US G/6) hook

Measurements

- Headband measures 56cm (22in) in diameter

Crochet headband

- Using Yarn A, chain (ch) 86.

Row 1 (RS) Double crochet (dc) in second chain from hook, dc in each ch to end, turn. [85 sts]

Row 2 Ch1 (does not count as st throughout), dc in back loop only of each st to end, turn.

Row 3-13 As Row 2.

Fasten off and weave in ends.

Place the ends of the Headband together and ss them together.

Crochet butterfly

Using Yarn B, ch5, ss into first ch to form a loop.

Round 1 Ch3 (counts as treble [tr] throughout), 2tr into loop, (ch2, 3tr) 7 times, ch2, ss to top of beg ch-3. [8 3-tr groups]

Fasten off.

Join Yarn C into any ch-2 space (sp).

Round 2 Ch3, 2tr into same sp, (ch1, 3tr) in each ch-2 sp around, ss to top of beg ch-3.

Fasten off.

Join Yarn D into second tr of any 3-tr group.

Round 3 Ch3, 7tr in same st, ss into next ch-1 sp, *8tr in 2nd tr of next 3-tr group, ss in next ch-1 sp; rep from * around, ss to top of beg ch-3. [64 sts]

Fasten off and weave in ends.

To make up

Fold the Butterfly in half.

Using Yarn E, ch10. Position folded Butterfly against the Headband (opposite joining seam), wrap ch-10 around the Butterfly and the Band, ss into last ch from hook. You can increase or decrease number of chains so that the Butterfly will be secured to the Headband. Fasten off and weave in ends.

Help us shape the future of Curo

We've been looking back at some of the great things that have happened at Curo over the past ten years. We've also seen that there are areas which need to improve. That's why we've started to create a new vision for Curo, which will shape how we do things in the future.

We'd like to hear your views on a range of topics which we believe will help Curo to become an excellent provider of homes and services in the next ten years.

Complete the survey overleaf and we'll enter you into a prize draw to win a Marks & Spencer hamper packed with delicious treats. Send your completed surveys to Vision 2032 Survey, Freepost CURO.

WIN*
A Marks & Spencer hamper
Worth £50



*Photo for illustrative purposes



Turn over to fill
in the survey

VISION
2032

Vision 2032 survey

*For full terms and conditions visit
www.curo-group.co.uk/competitions

1. How is a Curo home in 2032 better than a Curo home in 2022?

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2. What do you think it would feel like to live in a Curo community in ten years' time

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3. Thinking about your community/neighbourhood, who would you like to see us working more closely with and why?

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4. Thinking about your relationship with Curo as a customer, what should we be doing differently in 10 years' time that we aren't doing now?

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5. In your opinion, what is the most important thing we can do to ensure we are sustainable and prepared for the environment in 2032?

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6. How should we prioritise our investment in new technology? (choose your top five)

- ☐ Improve the comfort of customers' homes
- ☐ Improve the appearance of customers' homes
- ☐ Improve the safety of customers' homes
- ☐ Make it easier to repair things in customers' homes
- ☐ Stop problems in customers' homes before they happen
- ☐ Make customers' homes cheaper to run
- ☐ Make customers' homes more environmentally friendly
- ☐ Make it easier for customers to deal with us
- ☐ Make our services cheaper, so we can deliver more for our customers
- ☐ Make our services better quality
- ☐ Make it easier to provide specialist services to those who need them
- ☐ Being able to build more new homes
- ☐ Making it easier for Curo's employees to work together.

7. On a scale of 1 – 10 (where 1 is 'not innovative at all' and 10 is 'one of the most innovative companies in the world'), how innovative should Curo be in 2032?

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8. What would you expect from Curo colleagues in ten years' time?

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Your details

Name:

Address:

.....

Email:

Telephone:

.....

VISION
2032

WIN*
A Marks & Spencer
hamper Worth £50

