

# at home

with **karbon**

**karbon**  
homes

December  
2023



## Catchgate's answer to Captain Tom!

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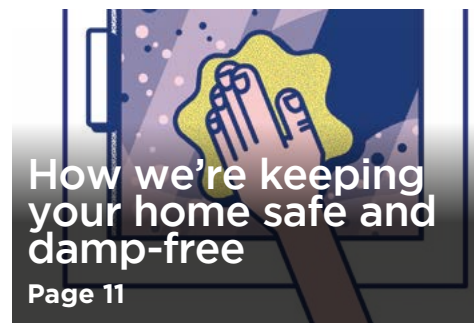
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Didn't get your copy of the magazine? You can subscribe or unsubscribe at any time, or if you'd like it in another format, such as translated or audio version, let us know!

**Polski** - Prosimy o kontakt z nami, jeśli życzą sobie Państwo otrzymać ten dokument w innym języku.

فارسی - اگر می خواهید این سند ترجمه شود لطفا به ما اطلاع دهید

عربي - برجاء إعلامنا إذا كنت ترغب في الحصول على نسخة مترجمة من هذه الوثيقة

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**Special thanks to all our contributors:**

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**SHARE YOUR STORIES**

If you have a story you would like to share about yourself, another Karbon Homes customer or a group that's doing great work in your community, please get in touch with us at [communications@karbonhomes.co.uk](mailto:communications@karbonhomes.co.uk) as we would love to include it in a future edition of At Home with Karbon.

**Hello, and a very warm welcome to the winter At Home with Karbon magazine.**



Much of this edition highlights our commitment to providing safe and healthy homes – with features on our approach to damp and mould and fire safety. There's an article from our brilliant customer environment group, too, which is helping us on our journey to reduce our carbon footprint.

I'd like to thank the other customers who have also contributed to the magazine; on pages 6 and 7 Don Elsom shares his impressive plans with us to mark his 95th birthday, inspired by Captain Tom Moore, and another customer, Alan tells us about why he loves living in a supported living apartment in Dipton.

We also wanted to make sure that we continue to share information with you about our Money Matters team. We know the cost of living crisis hasn't disappeared, but we're always here to help if you need us. You can find out about the support we offer on page 15.

And in the spirit of the season, early on in the magazine you'll find Christmas craft ideas and we're delighted to have teamed-up with Beamish to share some Christmas recipes from years gone by.

On the topic of Christmas, while it can be a wonderful time of the year for many of us, it can sadly be a time of loneliness for others – whatever their age. On page 17, you'll hear from our Youth Network who share their thoughts on helping young people to beat loneliness and improve mental wellbeing.

I hope you enjoy reading this edition and on behalf of the whole team at Karbon, we'd like to wish you a peaceful time over the festive period.

*Ian Johnson*

Executive Director of Customer Services



## a taste of CHRISTMAS PAST

Christmas recipes of the past provide plenty of ideas to bring some seasonal magic to your home on a shoe-string. Even better, they're lots of fun to make and will keep the kids (and grownups) entertained for hours.

To get a real taste of history, we asked the food team at open air museum Beamish to share with us a couple of their favourites for you to try at home.



## Make your own: salt dough decorations

This simple salt dough recipe is used to create decorations for Beamish's 1900s town bakery window at Christmas.

The dough is so versatile and easy to use. Once baked, it can last for years so is perfect for handmade decorations and thoughtful gifts.

Why not make salt dough decorations your own festive tradition and enjoy the memories made each year when you unpack them from their box?

### Ingredients

**4oz** plain flour

**2oz** salt

**2oz** water

It's more the ratio of ingredients that matters, so double the flour to your quantity of salt and water and make as much or as little as you like!

### Top tip!

Try rolling the dough to 1cm thickness and using cookie cutters to make uniform shapes such as circles, stars, snowmen and Christmas trees. Make a little hole near the top of the shape, using the end of a paint brush or a pencil before you bake, then thread a piece of string or coloured ribbon through once decorated, tying the ends together to finish.

### How it's done

**Preheat** your oven to its lowest heat setting.

**Mix** together all of the ingredients in a large bowl, until nicely combined. It should make a smooth dough. If it's a little dry or wet you can add a sprinkle more water or flour.

**Make** any shapes, structures or decorations that you fancy. The dough is really easy to shape so you can be as creative as you like!

**Bake** your shapes on a baking sheet for around three hours, depending on thickness, until hard.

**Cool** your decorations then paint with whatever design you like. We like to use traditional festive colours of green and red but see where your imagination takes you.

## Make your own: cinnamon snowflakes

These golden, warming biscuits are always a big hit with customers in the Beamish bakery over the holidays.

They're perfect if you want to enjoy the signature spices of Christmas but aren't a big fan of the dried fruit that sometimes comes with it in the likes of mince pies, Christmas cake and pudding.

You can swap cinnamon for ginger or any other spice you like and the unmistakable waft of Christmas baking will soon be drifting through your whole house!

### Ingredients

**7oz** butter

**7oz** caster sugar

**2oz** golden syrup

**10oz** plain flour

**2tsp** ground cinnamon

**1tsp** bicarbonate of soda

### How it's done

**Preheat** your oven to 175c or gas mark 3.

**Cream** together the butter, sugar and syrup.

**Mix** in the flour, cinnamon and bicarbonate of soda until you have a smooth dough.

**Sprinkle** some flour onto a surface.

**Roll** out the dough on the floured surface to about half an inch thick.

**Make** whatever shapes you like from the dough using cookie cutters or just go freestyle! We love snowflakes best.

**Bake** for 13-15 minutes until slightly firm and coloured.

### Top tip!

Watercolours, acrylic, poster paints or even felt tip pens work well for decorating. Or why not add a bit of glitter for extra festive sparkle?

With thanks to Beamish for recipes and photographs



# Catchgate's answer to Captain Tom!

**We meet customer Don Elsom of Anfield Plain, County Durham, who is planning to mark his 95th birthday in a very special way...**

"I'll be 95 in March next year and I've decided to celebrate a little differently this time around! I've set myself a challenge to raise money and awareness for Macmillan Cancer Support, a charity that's close to my heart.

My aim is to complete 95 circuits of the sports field of my local school, Catchgate Primary, in time for my 95th birthday. I started my mission in September, and I'll be taking a little break over winter before starting again - in time to end the day I turn 95.

I was inspired by the fundraising of Captain Sir Tom Moore during the pandemic. I wanted to do something similar to make a difference and my granddaughter, Jade helped me to come up with this idea. We called it Walk 95 - 95 circuits by age 95.

Catchgate Primary has been lovely and were keen to help by giving me permission to use the school field. They even suggested some children join me on my walks during their outdoor activities and their company makes it really enjoyable.

Is the challenge difficult? Well, my legs have carried me a long time now that I'm 94 so they do ache! But I get to school 10 minutes early so I can have a little rest before I start, and I do two laps each day.

I've been retired for a long time now after working in the RAF, as a butcher and as a school caretaker. So, it's a bit of a shock to the system to have a daily commitment Monday to Friday!

But I've seen the amazing work of Macmillan and that's what makes it worthwhile. I survived bowel cancer myself and they were always at the end of the phone to help. Other relatives have been looked after so well too. It's the least I can do.

*As told to At Home with Karbon.*

To donate to Don's fundraising effort, visit [www.justgiving.com/page/don-elsom-95](http://www.justgiving.com/page/don-elsom-95)

# Welcome to my hassle-free home!

What's it really like to live in one of our supported housing developments? We caught up with customer Alan who switched his two-bedroomed house for an apartment at Delight Court, Dipton, to find out how it's going.

## Alan's story

I'd been wanting to downsize for a while, so I went to see a ground floor apartment at Delight Court and I fell in love with it straightaway. It felt so warm and secure, and the surroundings were really pleasant.

People sometimes say 'I don't want to live in a home' but that's not what this is, and they are surprised when I tell them what it's actually like. I have my own front door and a home of my own but there's the bonus of facilities and support if I need them. I can choose to keep myself completely private or I can join in with activities on site. There's never a need to be lonely or worried about anything because there's always nice neighbours and staff nearby.

I just come and go as I please. I'm a retired bus driver and my favourite thing to do is to go out exploring on the buses. I also advise and assist with the restoration of vintage buses at a heritage transport museum, so I'm rarely at home during the day. But in the evenings, I sometimes like to take part in things like karaoke, takeaways, and games nights.

Our scheme coordinator is called Michelle Moody and I'd say she's the best one in the world. She really is part of the family. I just have to say the word and she will help me with anything to do with life and housing such as my pension, benefits, repairs. And if something were to go wrong with my health, I just need to pull the cord in my flat and help will be straight there. It even works out better financially for me, too.

Coming here was genuinely the best move I've ever made.

*As told to At Home with Karbon*



Are you over 55 and ready for a change? If you dream of making life easier and more enjoyable, our supported housing could be the solution you've been looking for. To find out more about our sheltered and extra care housing, please get in touch with us at [supported.housing@karbonhomes.co.uk](mailto:supported.housing@karbonhomes.co.uk)



*Love is in the air*

**Congratulations** to Ann and Mel Playford from Moordale Court, Middlesbrough who celebrated 60 years of marriage with their Diamond wedding anniversary and John and Doreen Palmer who live in Crossfields, Middlesbrough who celebrated 70 years of marriage with their Platinum wedding anniversary.



# STANDING TOGETHER AGAINST DOMESTIC ABUSE

**Domestic abuse can happen to anyone. It's described as any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse.**

We spoke to Val Kilner, Strategic Lead Volunteer and Support Services at Aspire Learning Support and Wellbeing, and Sharon Brown, Chief Executive Officer at Northumberland Domestic Abuse Services (NDAS) to find out more about the support they offer to people affected by domestic abuse:

## Can you tell us about your services?

**Val:** Aspire is an award-winning, women's learning, support and wellbeing centre in Chester-le-Street, which supports women from all over the North East. We offer a range of 1-1 and group support services, both face-to-face, online and by phone. Our key priorities are domestic abuse, mental health, self-harm and suicide, and poverty.

**Sharon:** NDAS has been delivering services across Northumberland for 20 years. Our vision is that all victims of domestic abuse in Northumberland - women, men and children - are protected, survivors empowered, and communities educated on the diversity and impact of domestic abuse.

## Who does domestic abuse affect?

**Val:** Domestic abuse can affect anyone, at any time in their lives; we've worked with survivors aged 18-81.

**Sharon:** Almost one in four women and one in six men will experience domestic abuse in their lifetime.

## How do you support victims/survivors of domestic abuse?

**Val:** We work with women for as long as they need. We use a person-centred approach, helping rebuild self-confidence, focusing on self-care and empowering women to take control of their own lives.

Many women who have benefitted from our services go on to become Supporting Sister Volunteers; women who use their experiences to help others.

**Sharon:** We support people of all ages who have been affected by domestic abuse. We've recently launched a pilot scheme to employ an Older Person's Domestic Abuse Practitioner who will increase the level of support available to older people.

During 2022-23, of the 413 adult victims NDAS supported, 66 were aged 55 or over. With Northumberland having an ageing population, we wanted to ensure we were providing support for people who may not be aware of the support that's available to them.

If you would like to find out more about the support services that NDAS and Aspire offer, please visit their websites:

NDAS: [www.nda.services](http://www.nda.services)

Aspire: [www.aspirenortheast.co.uk](http://www.aspirenortheast.co.uk)



Women in  
the Lead

STANDING  
TOGETHER  
against domestic abuse

*"I want women to know no matter how old they are, if I can do this, they can too!"*

**Jane Elizabeth was a victim of domestic abuse from her husband for much of her life. Thanks to her resilience and support from her family, she has been able to find a new home and start a new life at 90.**

As much as you think they will change they never do.

He would act very peculiar, he used to be physically violent with me for years. When that stopped, he turned to verbal abuse but believe me that was just as bad.

In the end, unfortunately I didn't get out of it, he left me. But that didn't stop things. I had struggled in the house by myself. I hadn't realised that he had everything under his control; water, electric, gas and council tax. I wouldn't put the heating on as I was worried about how much it would cost.

I eventually got in touch with the local county council and put my name down to find a home with Karbon, I feel very fortunate to have been able to get my own home.

It's a big step to start over again but it feels tremendous. I want women to know no matter how old they are, if I can do this, they can too.



## Domestic Abuse – we're here to help

We do not tolerate domestic abuse and no one should live in fear of it. That's why we help and support any person experiencing it or feeling threatened.

You can visit [www.karbonhomes.co.uk/domestic-abuse](http://www.karbonhomes.co.uk/domestic-abuse) for more information or contact us on **0808 164 0111** and ask to speak to the Safer Communities team.

## Enhancing our service within communities



**Last month saw us changing the way in which we work within our communities. Here, Kelly Taylor, Assistant Director for Housing tells us more about what it means for you, our customers.**

Here at Karbon, we place customer satisfaction at the heart of everything we do, and we pride ourselves on listening to and acting on feedback.

We've recently brought together teams from across Karbon – as well as recruiting more staff – creating one housing service. From general housing support to repairs, compliance to safer communities, we're all working together to bring you an even better service.

Our teams now have fewer homes to look after in a smaller geographical area – meaning they can be more on hand whenever you need them. They'll have a greater local presence and all be based within the communities they serve too.

We're really pleased that this change is a direct result of what you and our colleagues have told us they'd like to see.

You can find more information about your local housing team on our website.



# Top tips

## if your boiler goes off this winter

**If you're struggling to get your heating to come on it could have something to do with your boiler. We've put together these top tips that can support you to identify what the potential issue could be and how you can fix it.**

### **Your boiler has accidentally been switched off**

All boilers have a power supply which can be switched on and off. Sometimes, someone in your home can switch this power supply off by mistake which stops the boiler from working. The switches are generally located near or next to the boiler and should be left on all the time, the only time they would usually be switched off would be when the boiler is being serviced or repaired.

Some older boilers also have 'timers' that can also be accidentally switched off - make sure your times are set to 'on'.

### **Low or flat batteries**

Many central heating systems use battery powered thermostats to turn the heating on/off and up/down. If the batteries are running low or have run out, the signal to the boiler will stop working,

resulting in no heating in your home. If you're able to replace the batteries it will most often resolve signal issues.

### **Your credit needs topping up**

You may use card meters to pay for your gas and electricity. If the meter runs out of credit, then the boiler will go into fault mode. Make sure you add credit as instructed by your energy supplier - you can usually find details on your online account or on your energy bills/statements. If you're struggling financially to keep your card topped up, please make sure to give your provider a call.

### **Boiler lockout**

If a boiler locks out, the following will happen:  
**Baxi:** The boiler will display an error code on the digital display and will not fire. Sometimes these can be reset by twisting the reset switch to the left (anti clockwise).  
**Worcester Greenstar:** The reset button will flash with a red light and the purple power neon at the bottom of the boiler will flash intermittently. It should be reset by pressing the reset button, holding it for a few seconds and then releasing.

### **We're here to help**

All of this advice can help with a lot of common boiler issues, however if you've tried all these tips and still can't get your boiler to work and you need some expert advice, please contact us by emailing [info@karbonhomes.co.uk](mailto:info@karbonhomes.co.uk) or calling **0808 164 0111**.



## HOW WE'RE KEEPING YOUR HOME SAFE AND DAMP-FREE

**Damp and mould can affect all homes, particularly during the winter months. Ensuring you have a safe, healthy and secure home to live in is our main priority, so we caught up with Andy Lessels, Assistant Director of Operations and Support Services, to chat about the issue and let you know how we can help.**

### **Hi Andy, tell us about the causes of damp?**

There are various causes and it's really important for us to find the root cause so we can effectively address the issue. We've explained more on the column overleaf along with what to look for.

### **What proactive work do you do to tackle damp and mould?**

We're experienced in dealing with the issue and we have robust systems and processes in place.

As well as responding to reports from customers, we carry out stock condition surveys on all homes to assess their physical condition. If any damp and mould issues are identified, this gets logged, investigated and acted upon. We also replace things like doors and windows, roofs and gutters/downpipes and carry out external pointing when they're in poor condition or past their lifecycle. We're upgrading our homes, too, so they're more energy efficient, which helps. We also

provide in depth damp and mould training to our frontline teams, so they are ready to support when issues arise.

### **Why is it important to solve damp and mould problems?**

Living in a damp or mouldy home can pose a risk to your health, especially for people with respiratory conditions, allergies or weakened immune systems. It can also damage the home itself.

### **Should customers report damp and mould?**

Yes, please report issues to us by emailing us at [info@karbonhomes.co.uk](mailto:info@karbonhomes.co.uk) or calling our team on 0808 164 0111. Once you have, one of our repairs team will be in touch to tell you about the next steps.

### **If a customer has condensation, do they need to report it?**

All homes are at risk of condensation. Small amounts are not usually a problem and there are things we can all do to help prevent it, which you can find on the next page. But if your home has excess condensation, this can lead to problems, and you should report it to us. If you're ever in doubt, drop us a line.

### **Where can customers find more information?**

There's more information on our website, including our damp and mould policy.



# TYPES OF DAMP

**Condensation** is the most common kind of damp. It is caused by moist warm air condensing on cool walls, particularly in rooms that naturally generate a lot of air moisture.

**Penetrating damp** is caused by water seeping through walls from outside. It's caused by structural problems, like faulty guttering or roofing. It usually shows up as a concentrated damp patch on walls, ceilings or floors with a clear edge. It often gets worse when it rains.

**Rising damp** is caused by water in the ground moving up through a wall and will only affect ground floor rooms or basements. It can happen if the home's damp proof course is missing or damaged. Signs include damaged skirting boards and floorboards, crumbling or salt-stained plaster, and peeling paint or wallpaper.

**A plumbing fault**, such as a leak in a water or waste pipe, can cause damp and usually occurs in a kitchen or bathroom. The area would be wet to touch and would remain damp regardless of the weather outside.

## WE ALWAYS TAILOR OUR SOLUTIONS FOR EACH HOME.

We've worked with the national housing network PlaceShapers, the Energy Savings Trust and the Housing Ombudsman on these tips.

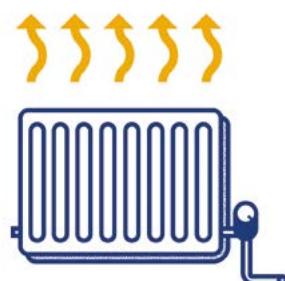
We know the rising cost of living is impacting customers. If you're struggling to heat your home, contact us to find out what support is available.

As your landlord, it's our responsibility to provide you with a safe and healthy home. If you spot any damp or mould in your home or following these tips it does not help reduce excess condensation, let us know straight away.



### Healthy Home Top Tips

Turning your extractor fan on when cooking, showering and bathing removes excess moisture from the air.



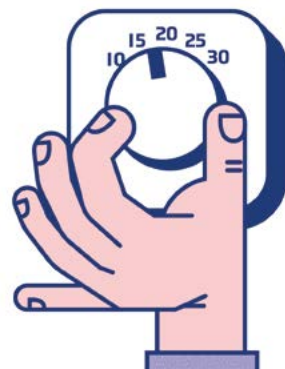
### Healthy Home Top Tips

Keeping your home heated where possible helps to prevent condensation from forming on walls, floors and ceilings.



### Healthy Home Top Tips

If you spot condensation on a surface, wipe it down with a dry, clean cloth or towel.



### Healthy Home Top Tips

If you can, setting your thermostat to the lowest comfortable temperature (between 18 – 21°C) will help to keep you and your home healthy while keeping your energy bills down.



**You said** **We did!**

Welcome back to our regular feature in your magazine, dedicated to helping you to feel safe in your home. Feedback from our Customer Scrutiny Bank suggested we create a new space in these pages for fire and building safety information.

In this issue, we chatted with Karbon's Heating Compliance Manager, Dave Brown and asked him some common questions that we get from customers around staying safe in your home.



### What are the key things to do in case I have a water leak, smell gas or when my electricity trips?

My team and I often receive calls from customers about this and one of the key things is to know where meters, stop taps and your electrical consumer box is located and to ensure they are accessible.

As we go into the winter months with darker nights, we ask that you look around your home and identify where all the above are and ensure that you take the time to remove items around them. As a rule of thumb, don't cover, block or restrict access to these devices as one day you may depend on them. If isolating the above, please contact Karbon Homes.

For more home safety advice, please visit [www.karbonhomes.co.uk/homesafety](http://www.karbonhomes.co.uk/homesafety)



### Can I install a log burning stove in my home?

As a rule, we don't give permissions to fit log burning stoves or other multi-fuel/solid fuel burning appliances.

There are lots of reasons and risks associated with these types of appliances, including the increased risk of carbon monoxide poisoning, smoke control and wood burning restrictions in certain areas and concerns about the emissions affecting the environment.



### How often should I test my smoke alarm?

You should test your smoke alarm every month. Do this by pressing the test button on the alarm. We also recommend vacuuming or dusting your smoke alarm once a year.

If your smoke detector isn't working, please contact us immediately.



### I have mobility problems and struggle using the stairs, what should I do if I need to evacuate my home?

If you are unable to evacuate your home in the event of an emergency, such as a fire - due to either a permanent or temporary disability, please let us know as soon as possible. We can carry out a 'Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan' (PEEP) with you, so should evacuation be necessary they will provide you with assistance.



# Please help us reduce missed appointments

**Making sure your home is safe and well-maintained is our top priority.**

Unfortunately, we lose between 20-25% of the daily appointments offered to customers for essential safety and servicing tasks.

From April 2022 to March 2023, we visited homes and completed over 28,000 services, however over 5,000 appointments were missed as, when we called by, we weren't able to access the home. This meant we needed to rebook the appointment and visit another time.

We know that sometimes life can get in the way, but the visits are important to keep your home safe.

As well as keeping the home safe, the cost for missed appointments is high, at around £250,000 per year and impacts our waiting times for appointments.

If you need to rearrange an appointment or update your contact details, please call us on 0808 164 0111 or email [info@karbonhomes.co.uk](mailto:info@karbonhomes.co.uk).



## GET INVOLVED!

**Do you have a particular safety question or topic you'd like us to focus on? Let us know by emailing [communications@karbonhomes.co.uk](mailto:communications@karbonhomes.co.uk)**

# MONEY



# MATTERS

*ask Lee*



## Get a year end financial check up! ✓

**The cost of living continues to affect many of us, especially during the winter months. The festive period can also mean we need to tighten the purse strings. Our Money Matters Manager, Lee Forrest has put together a five-point guide to help keep our finances in check for the new year.**

### 1. Check eligibility:

Review your current benefits. Have you had any changes to your household or to your health that might mean you're missing out on some of the £15 billion that goes unclaimed every year? You can call Money Matters for a quick benefit entitlement check to make sure you aren't leaving yourself short.

### 2. Review your spending plan:

Take a close look at your spending plan for the year, did you stick to it? Were there

any unexpected expenses? How did you manage? Money Matters provides financial wellbeing advice, giving you a full Money MOT to help you find ways to save money in 2024, including a search for grants and discounts to make your money go further.

### 3. Money management:

If you have non-priority bills that you've struggled to keep on top of over the year, think about what payments are essential and what aren't. The Money Matters team can help you to see what options and rights you have to help deal with problem debt.

### 4. Get help with your essential bills:

Did you know that you can get help with your water, gas and electricity bills? That your phone or broadband company often have affordable tariffs if you're receiving certain benefits? That there are affordable food clubs

that can help your shopping budget go further? If you're struggling to pay for life's essentials, give us a call for advice.

### 5. Plan for the future:

Think about your goals for the new year. Where do you want to be this time next year? Whatever your goals are, we can help you to look at your options and help make a plan for you to get there. As well as the Money Matters team, we also have dedicated team called Foundations for Life who are here to help you or a member of your family to achieve your work-related goals, whatever they may be.

## Get in touch

For free, independent support, call the Money Matters Team on **0808 164 0111** or email [moneymatters@karbonhomes.co.uk](mailto:moneymatters@karbonhomes.co.uk)



# TAKING A GRASSROOTS APPROACH TO THE ENVIRONMENT



**With the environment and global warming literally being a hot topic, ensuring we're doing everything we can to create a sustainable environment for current and future generations is extremely important.**

We spoke to two members of our Customer Environment Group, Jaci McGinty from Sunderland and Sue Gittins from Hexham, to find out more about the group and why they got involved.

**Jaci:** The Customer Environment Group is chance for us to have a voice and opinion on the work Karbon is doing to make homes more energy efficient and balance the amount of greenhouse gas emissions they are using.

**Sue:** The forum allows us to meet the people who are working on these environmental aims and express our ideas and personal perspectives to see whether we think they will benefit customers.

**Jaci:** We can give a grassroots perspective, rather than a business perspective, and be listened to by people who are directly working in these areas. There's a good social aspect to it, too, we get to meet new people and feel involved.

**Sue:** I've been into environmental issues for a while now, and it's good to be able to meet other customers and specialists in the area to share knowledge and demystify some of the more technical aspects.


**Jaci:** We also get to visit different areas and look at the upgrades they've made so we get a better understanding of what's going on. We can also highlight any problems in our areas and look at solutions, like making better use of our green areas.


**Sue:** It can be hard for people to feel that the environment is relevant, especially when there are so many other issues going on. I think this group gives a better perspective. Caring for the environment is a very important part of our lives - we need to tackle things like food poverty and the oceans overheating - it's the legacy for our generation and our children's generation.


**Jaci:** Everything seems back to front at the moment, we don't seem to have any seasons and it can be very confusing. It's good to talk to people about these issues and get some more understanding in the confusion.




If you like the sound of our Environment Group and would like to get involved, please get in touch with us at [connectwithkarbon@karbonhomes.co.uk](mailto:connectwithkarbon@karbonhomes.co.uk).

 **Biodiversity** - the different kinds of life you'll find in one area— animals, plants, fungi, and even microorganisms, like bacteria, that make up our natural world.

 **Carbon neutral** - where the amount of carbon released is balanced by the same amount absorbed so there is no additional increase.


 **Climate change** - long-term shifts in temperatures and weather patterns. These changes can be natural or due to burning of fossil fuels like coal, oil and gas.


 **Net Zero** - a commitment by an organisation to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions to zero compared to a baseline year (for the UK that year is 1990).


# Combating loneliness in young people

**Loneliness affects people of all ages, especially at this time of year. We asked members of Karbon's Youth Network to share their experiences.**


## How does loneliness affect the young people you work with?


 "After school, some young people can be isolated and overthink, becoming vulnerable with those thoughts. By being alone and relying on social media, they can often be encouraged to do things they don't really want to do or later regret." **Scott Dickinson, Hadston House**


 "It also affects children who are not necessarily alone, for example in the case of an only child in a working household." **Gemma Nixon, Prudhoe Youth Project**


 "Loneliness impacts on their behaviour, causing them to be angry, frustrated or closed off. It impacts on their emotional health, too, leaving them feeling isolated, scared, nervous, not good enough." **Claire Liddle, North Tyneside LaunchPad (NTLP)**

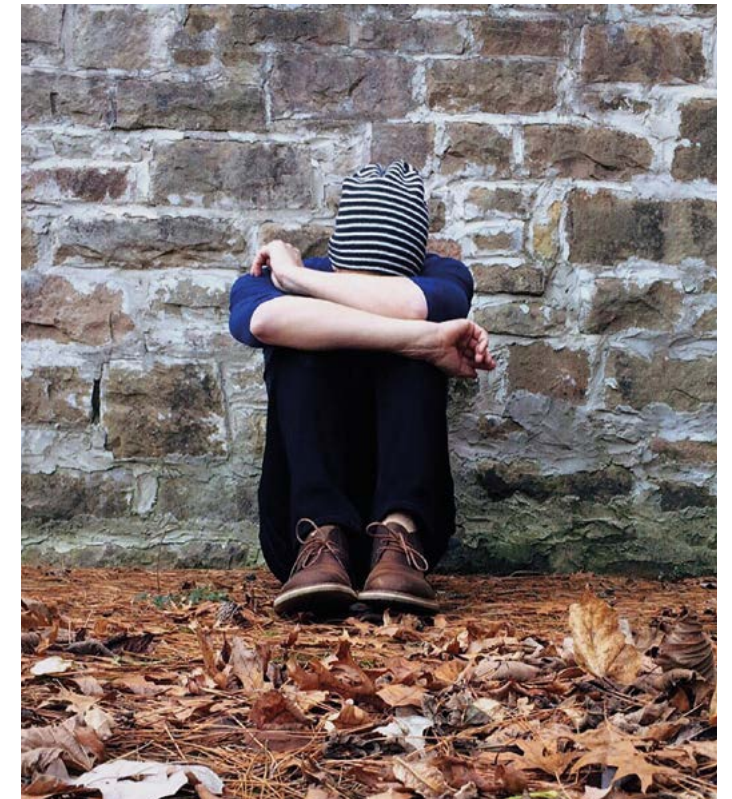
## Tips for young people

 Give new things a go. Push your comfort zone - you don't know what it's like until you try it. People are out there and they care about you so speak up, join in and see the benefits it can bring to you. **Scott Dickinson, Hadston House**


 Try hard to get outside every day. Exercise is a great way to make yourself feel better! Try to arrange to meet friends and family on a regular basis. **Gemma Nixon, Prudhoe Youth Project**

 Join youth groups or things like the Kind Mind Recovery College for young people. Reach out to your friends and family and tell them how you feel. **Danielle Falcus, LDNE**


 Come together with other young people. There are so many other people just like you who feel alone and by coming together you can be happier and healthier. **Marisa May, Mindstars**




## Tips for parents, guardians and other caring adults

 Talk, listen and be patient. See what support groups are in your local area. Speak to professionals such as the child's school or GP practice. **The Cedarwood Trust**

 Seek emotional support at school. **Claire Liddle, NTLP**

 Understand and spot the signs - like changes in behaviour, they may become withdrawn, clingy or their behaviour could be more challenging. Encourage open and honest conversations with your children, support them to share what they are thinking with you. **Melanie Rees, Karbon Homes**

 Let them know that it's okay to be alone sometimes - there are so many other people just like them who feel alone and by coming together you can be happier and healthier. **Mindstars**

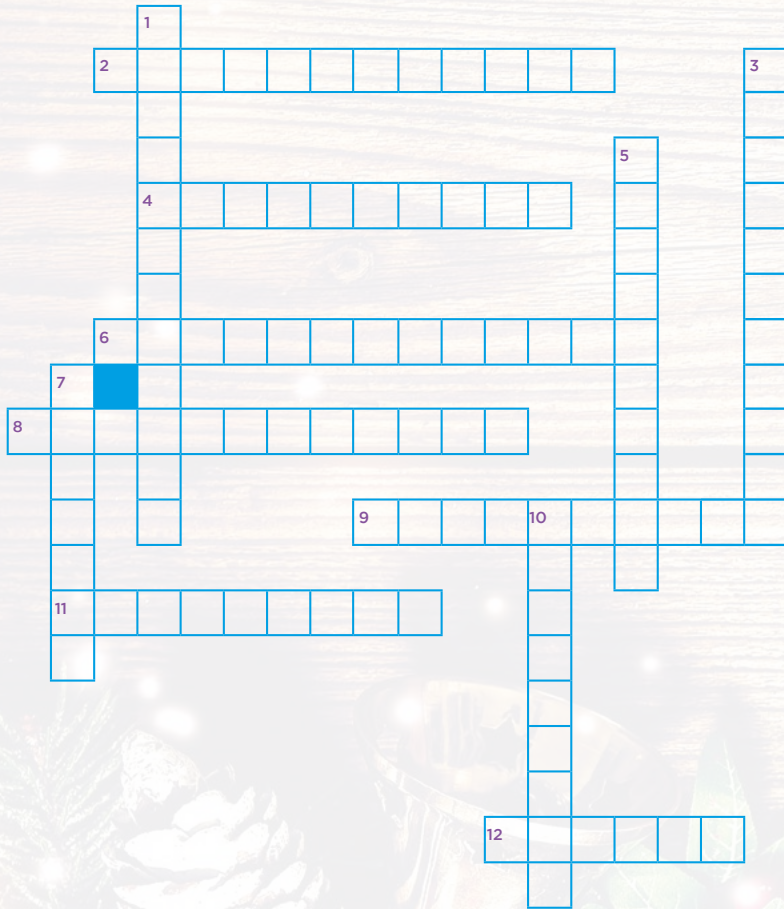
## What is Karbon's Youth Network?

It's a group of professionals and community representatives who work closely with young people in Karbon communities. We've brought them together to help give our young customers a voice to shape our services.

# Coffee time and Karbon Kids

Settle down to some fun colouring and puzzling.

*Top tip!*  
All of the answers can be found in our articles



**Across**

- 2. Financial burden of everyday expenses. (4, 2, 6)
- 4. Making someone feel strong and confident. (10)
- 6. Net zero impact on greenhouse gas emissions. (6,7)
- 8. Supported housing development in Dipton. (7,5)
- 9. Device that regulates indoor temperature. (6,3)
- 11. Tiny holiday helper in a red and green suit. (5, 3)
- 12. The feeling of being protected from harm or danger. (6)

**Down**

- 1. What happens when warm air meets a cold surface. (12)
- 3. A scheduled meeting with a professional. (11)
- 5. The feeling of isolation and solitude. (10)
- 7. Open air museum of the past. (7)
- 10. Well known cancer support charity. (9)

**EASY**

	5	2		6			
1	6		9				4
	4	9	8		3	6	2
4						8	
	8	3	2		1	5	9
		1					2
	9	7	3		5	2	4
2					9		5
			1			9	7

**TRICKIER**

			5				6
			8	7		3	2
2	7		3				8
				3	4	9	
7	9	3		5		6	1
		8	7	9			
9	2				3		5
5		6		8	7		
3				5			

Crossword Answers - Across: 2 Cost of living, 4 Empowering, 6 Carbon Neutral, 8 Delight Court, 9 Thermostat, 11 Santa's Elf, 12 Safety. Down: 1 Condensation, 3 Appointment, 5 Loneliness, 7 Beamish, 10 Macmillan.



*Design your own elf!*



**Santa's coming!**

To celebrate all the festive fun, we want you to spread Christmas cheer by grabbing your pens, pencils, crayons and paints and colouring in this cheeky little elf. You can even try adding some of your Christmas favourites such as candy canes, Christmas crackers and even some mistletoe!

Ask a grownup to share your entry with us for a chance to win a £25 gift voucher. Send a photo of your entry to [communications@karbonhomes.co.uk](mailto:communications@karbonhomes.co.uk) and be sure to include your age. We'll publish a selection of our favourites on Facebook and in the next edition. Good luck!

*Wow!*

The colourful ice creams you created in our last challenge looked good enough to eat! You can look at some of the delicious creations in our gallery below. There are even more to see on our Facebook page @Karbonhomes

Erica, 10



Georgia, 11

*Winner!*



Harry 7



John, 11



Laura, 10



Libby, 7



Scarlett, 13

*Winner!*



Polyanna, 8



Daizie, 7



Sirat, 9



## Ways to get and stay in touch

### **MyKarbon** [www.karbonhomes.co.uk/mykarbon](http://www.karbonhomes.co.uk/mykarbon)

Use to book and track repairs, check and pay your rent balance and update contact details. It's quick, easy and can be used anytime.

**New!** You can now set up a Direct Debit with MyKarbon. It's quick and easy to do. Log in to MyKarbon. Go to 'My tenancy' and select 'Create Direct Debit'. Enter your details and payment preferences. You'll then be taken to a secure site with our Direct Debit partner Allpay. To finish, enter your bank details.

### **Phone** 0808 164 0111

8am - 6pm weekdays

We're here for repairs, rent payments and general enquiries. You can check your rent balance and make a payment anytime, without even speaking to an advisor. Just select the payment option and provide your tenancy number to use our automated service.

### **Out of hours service available:**

6pm - 8am weekdays plus weekends and bank holidays.

Automated rent payments, urgent repairs and other emergencies such as reports of anti-social behaviour.

### **Email** [info@karbonhomes.co.uk](mailto:info@karbonhomes.co.uk)

Email is perfect for cancelling appointments or for less urgent enquiries.

### **Facebook** [@karbonhomes](https://www.facebook.com/karbonhomes)

**Post** Write to us at:

**Karbon Homes, Number Five  
Gosforth Park Avenue  
Gosforth Business Park  
Newcastle upon Tyne  
NE12 8EG**

### **Visit us**

To see which of our offices are open to customers for drop-ins and which are appointment only visit [www.karbonhomes.co.uk/contact](http://www.karbonhomes.co.uk/contact)

## Holiday hours

**During the holidays we'll be running an out of hours service from 12:30pm Friday 22 December 2023 to 8:00am Tuesday 2 January 2024.**

Our out of hours service can help you with emergency repairs, reports of anti-social behaviour and rent payments. Just call us on our usual number **0808 164 0111**.

Don't forget, we won't be able to reply to emails or Facebook messages during the holidays but you can still use your online MyKarbon account anytime.

Our Supported Housing service will remain available over the festive season.

