

SUPPORTLINE NEWS

January 2009 Edition

TELECARE SERVICES ASSOCIATION ACCREDITATION FOR SUPPORTLINE

The **Community Gateway Association (CGA)** is celebrating after staff working in the Supportline Contact Centre achieved Part 1 accreditation of the **Telecare Services Association's** Code of Practice for Social Alarms Services.

CGA offers Social Alarm and Telecare services from its base at Deltic House in Preston to 1,582 households across the city and surrounding areas.

Historically the service was provided to older people but more and more people are accessing this service as it can offer a quality peace of mind service to the customer, family and friends.

Dependent on the customers' need a range of equipment is available ranging from a simple to use pendant to a variety of sensors.

At the touch of a button, customers are connected to one of the control centre staff who will arrange the appropriate assistance. This can include contacting a family member or friend, or if necessary, alerting the emergency services.

The Code of Practice for Social Alarm Services encourages the provision of good quality customer service by officially recognising those service providers who meet its demanding criteria.

To become code accredited, organisations need to have detailed procedures covering all aspects of their operations and to demonstrate that service delivery is in accordance with these procedures.

Gary Cook, Head of Supported Housing said: "We have completely modernised the service over the last 18 months, which has included rebranding the service as SupportLine, the purchase of the very latest social alarm equipment and new vehicles. We are proud to have achieved this accreditation in such a short period of time, which now gives us a nationally accepted quality mark."

Diane Bellinger Chief Executive added: "Supportline is an important part of Gateway's business objectives. It is equally important that customers receive a quality service. This accreditation gives our customers and their families the assurance and peace of mind that the person on the end of the phone is there to help and support in times of need. Being the 100th organisation accredited is a real honour and we are proud to support the TSA in its aims and objectives."

Malcolm Fisk, the Chair of Telecare Services Association, travelled to Preston to present the award to CGA Board member, Mair Ratcliffe



Pictured: Gary Cook, Mair Ratcliffe and Malcolm Fisk

He said: "I am delighted that CGA has achieved this accreditation and I am sure that it will underpin further service developments for the benefit of people in Preston.

"As our hundredth service provider to be accredited, it's an important milestone for the TSA too- with so many people being protected by a quality standard that safeguards over a million vulnerable people throughout the UK."

SHELTERED HOUSING

In partnership with Supporting People, Community Gateway Association are committed to providing a first class sheltered housing service that promotes independence and quality of life for older people.

We have 13 sheltered housing schemes within the boundaries of Preston offering 436 self contained sheltered homes that consist of a mixture of flats, bungalows and a small number of bedsits. Every home has a combined intercom and emergency alarm where residents can use a pendant or pull a cord to summon help or reassurance if needed. Many of our homes have already benefited from a massive investment programme to replace all existing kitchens, bathrooms, windows and doors, fitting a new alarm system and renewing the communal central heating system within our three pavilion schemes (all under one roof).

Our sheltered housing schemes operate as a small community within the local community. Our residents enjoy living independently in their own self contained homes while having the peace of mind that the Scheme Managers or SupportLine staff are available to call on 24 hours a day,

365 days per year should they require assistance. Each scheme has a communal lounge that residents use for social events and many have visits from local businesses such as hairdresser, fishmonger, baker and greengrocer.

We offer a non-intrusive support service that will enable you to live safely, independently and securely in your own home and remain close to family and friends. As a resident you will receive a daily call to ensure you are safe and well, agree a support plan and have regular contact with our supported housing team.

In order to apply for sheltered housing applicants must:

- Be single or a couple over 60 years of age
- Be able to live independently with low to medium level of assistance
- Have a housing need
- Have care and support needs that cannot currently be met in your own home.

If you would like to apply or would like to find out more please call Tracey Highland on **01772 566084**



HAVE YOUR CIRCUMSTANCES CHANGED?

To ensure SupportLine deliver the best possible service to all our customers it is important that we have up to date information. The information we hold will only be used by SupportLine but maybe shared with emergency services if required. We will contact you regularly to update the information we hold but it is always appreciated if you let us know of any changes as and when they happen. It may be a change of medication, key holder or other personal information that is necessary to allow us to deliver a quality service to you as and when you need it.

QUESTION TIME

Q: What happens if I press my pendant or button on the Lifeline unit and I need urgent assistance?

A: In an emergency SupportLine staff will contact the required Emergency Service i.e. Police, Ambulance or Fire Service. If you are a Level 2 or 3 customer a SupportLine Responder will also attend your home. SupportLine will inform the Emergency Services of the situation and our trained staff will keep the line open until the required emergency service and/or our SupportLine

