



# Planning for Future Choices

**Energy efficiency**

**Health and safety**

**Copayments**



Saving money by  
upgrading insulation



Separating the myths  
from reality



A quicker way to a new  
kitchen or bathroom

How to contact us with your feedback:

**Hanover, FREEPOST HL599  
1 Bridge Close, Staines TW18 4BR**

**call: 01784 446117**

**email: [engagement@hanover.org.uk](mailto:engagement@hanover.org.uk)**



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## Welcome...

### to the summer edition of Hanover News!

We've been busy listening to your feedback on a variety of issues and are pleased to bring you updates on how your views are changing the way we offer our services. Examples of this are the articles about the introduction of help sheets, the changes to the responsive repairs service and the copayment pilot.

In this edition we test the reality of some popular myths surrounding health and safety, outline how the local agreements are progressing to give you more local choice and summarise outcomes from the recent Future Choices events. We also provide details of how you can enter this year's Hanover in Bloom competition, get involved in a residents' association and stop receiving unsolicited marketing telephone calls and direct mail.

We hope you enjoy this edition and welcome any suggestions and comments that you may have. If you would like to get in touch please use the contact details at the top of this page.

## Alternative formats

If you would like to receive Hanover News in an audio format (tape or CD) please contact our Service Centre on **0800 280 2575** or **[servicecentre@hanover.org.uk](mailto:servicecentre@hanover.org.uk)**.

If you wish to receive this publication in a format other than print or audio please speak with your estate manager.





## Future Choices – listening to your views

Eleven ‘Future Choices’ events took place across the country in May and June that provided Hanover with the opportunity to listen to the views of over 650 residents.

These events have been an excellent opportunity to explain Hanover’s current position and plans for the future, and also to gain an invaluable amount of opinions and suggestions. One way in which residents and staff had their say was through the interactive workshop sessions – discussions took place about local agreements, the right to manage on home owner estates, the provision of services on estates and resident engagement priorities.

Residents were also able to ask questions on any issues concerning them. The events have provided

“It was nice to discuss things with people who listened and to put my thoughts and ideas across”  
– Resident at event in Crawley.

valuable outcomes on many areas such as the interest to hold more locally based meetings.

As a result of the events all feedback has been gathered and we will ensure residents are informed of any actions taken as a result of feedback from the events.

➔ **If you would like more information please speak with your estate manager or contact the Engagement team on 01784 446117 or [engagement@hanover.org.uk](mailto:engagement@hanover.org.uk)**

## Hanover News opt-out

In the last edition of Hanover News we proposed the idea to provide an option to opt out of receiving a hard copy of Hanover News by post. This idea is now a reality – if you wish to opt out of receiving Hanover News please let our Service Centre know by calling **0800 280 2575**. Please note that if you do choose to opt out of receiving Hanover News you may not receive the corporate information included in the articles through any other method.

This could mean you miss information on issues that may affect you as a Hanover resident. If you choose to opt out you may still be able to ask to read your estate manager’s copy or view the publication on the Hanover website; [www.hanover.org.uk](http://www.hanover.org.uk).





# Help sheets – key information about our services

Information about our services has traditionally been provided to residents via a residents' handbook or a purchaser's information pack. There has been concern for some time that providing information in this way is not effective. Consultation with residents was carried out last year, resulting in a decision to replace both these items with a series of help sheets. It is likely that we will add to this series over time if there are other areas that have been flagged as important where you want information.

## What are help sheets?

Help sheets are short documents that outline key information about a service – what the service is, any service standard that we work to as well as giving contact details for more information and links to related documentation, such as policies, procedures or general information.

## What are the benefits to producing help sheets?

We hope the benefits to Hanover and residents in producing help sheets in replacement of the residents' handbook and the purchasers' information pack will include:

- more specific information about our services for residents

- available in a format that is easier to keep up to date
- more cost effective, as help sheets can be printed as and when needed.

## Who are help sheets for and how can I get hold of them?

Help sheets are intended for residents, prospective residents, family members and stakeholders but are available for anyone to access electronically via the website ([www.hanover.org.uk](http://www.hanover.org.uk)), and for staff to access via our internal intranet (h-net).

Residents, their family and friends can also ask for copies of help sheets from the estate manager, or by calling the Service Centre (0800 280 2575) or Hanover on Call (0844 892 1013).

## What other information can I find on the website?

We have recently improved our website to try to ensure it provides useful, up to date information about Hanover and the services we provide that is easy to access. The website has been redesigned to help you find information on a wide range of topics including:

- how we work out our rents and service charges;

Help sheets are available for the following areas;

- Access to benefits advice
- Accessing social care\*
- Anti-social behaviour\*
- Ending a tenancy
- Getting involved
- Hanover on Call\*
- Health and safety\*
- Help with moving in
- Homeowner management fees\*
- How to rent/purchase from us
- Leases\*
- Legal rights as a leaseholder\*
- Local agreements\*
- Making a complaint
- Rent\*
- Repairs\*
- Selling your home\*
- Service charges\*
- Supporting people\*
- Transfers
- Tenancy agreements\*
- What the estate management service provides

*\*Available by the end of August 2010*

- how you can get involved;
- our customer service standards;
- our complaints process;
- details of benefits you might be entitled to;
- how to transfer to another Hanover property.

The property search now includes every Hanover estate and there is a new Google map to show all our estates geographically.

➔ [www.hanover.org.uk](http://www.hanover.org.uk)

## Nuisance call and mail services

Do you want to stop receiving unsolicited sales or marketing telephone calls and unwanted direct mail to your home? If so you can register for free with the Telephone Preference and Mailing Preference Services.

The Telephone Preference Service (TPS) is the official register on which you can record your preference not to receive unsolicited sales or marketing telephone calls. It is a legal requirement that organisations do not call numbers registered on the TPS unless they have your consent to do so. As well as residential telephone numbers the TPS will accept the registration of mobile telephone numbers, but will not stop unsolicited text messages being received. Once a telephone number has been registered it will become effective in 28 days. To register, or for more information, call **0845 070 0707** or visit [www.tpsonline.org.uk](http://www.tpsonline.org.uk)

The Mailing Preference Service (MPS) helps you to choose to receive only the mail you want and need. Registering with the MPS for free enables you to have your name and home address removed from up to 95% of lists used to send unsolicited direct mail. The service is actively supported by the Royal Mail and although it can take up to four months to take full effect you should notice a reduction in unwanted mail you receive during this period. To register, or for more information, call **0845 703 4599** or visit [www.mpsonline.org.uk](http://www.mpsonline.org.uk)





## Responsive repairs

The recent changes to the responsive repairs service are designed to put resident choice at the centre of the process. The new service aims to give residents and estate managers greater local control and accountability about the choice of contractors. Since the 1st April your estate will use approved local contractors that you have selected to carry out repairs. The new service also gives you the opportunity to assess the quality of work done and every six months to look at the costs from a value for money point of view.

Estate managers now have control of estate based services and we now have all the right procedures in place too. This means that by working with other residents on your estate, and your estate manager or the repairs centre (if you don't have an estate manager), you are now able to:

- Review the approved local contractor list for your estate – adding or removing contractors if necessary
  - Choose contractors from the list that meet the right balance of quality and cost
  - Help decide how and when repairs are undertaken
  - Give satisfaction scores so we can measure contractors' performance
  - See how your estate's repairs budget is controlled
- ➔ For more information about the repairs service speak with your estate manager or the Repairs Centre on 01249 707100 or email [repairs@hanover.org.uk](mailto:repairs@hanover.org.uk)

## Health and safety

Hanover has a duty to ensure health and safety risks and hazards are kept to a minimum on our estates. However, contrary to popular myths, we also believe that unless there is a major risk to health and safety we need to respect that these are your homes and most issues can be dealt with at a local level with a proportional common sense approach.



Residents are not allowed doormats

**Reality:** Having a doormat is fine, *unless* it poses a serious trip hazard. Whether or not a doormat poses a risk will depend on its



## - myth and reality

location and condition. If you don't like the appearance of doormats, residents can make a collective decision about whether the estate should allow them and record it in the local agreement.



Items are not allowed in communal corridors

**Reality:** Pictures, plants, and ornaments make for a positive homely environment and are fine as long as there is always a clear safe walkway through the corridor and items cannot easily be dislodged. The risk of fire and toxic fumes from dried and plastic items should be considered proportionately, depending on their location and size.

**MYTH**

Residents should always stay put if there is a fire



**Reality:** *If anyone is endangered by fire or smoke, they should move away to a safer place, closing doors behind them to contain the spread of smoke and fire. We operate a stay put unless in danger policy, rather than evacuation. The construction of our buildings provides protection while the fire service deals with the fire or decides who may need to evacuate.*

→ **We encourage you to challenge what we're doing on health and safety measures if you think that a practical common sense approach is not being taken or that a risk is being ignored. For more information please speak with your estate manager.**

## Local agreements, local choice

Local agreements are a means to help groups of residents (living on a Hanover estate) decide the local services that are provided. By discussing and listening to your views we try to make sure the services we provide meet your expectations and provide value for money both now and in the future.

### What local choice do I have?

Local agreements are designed to evolve in response to your choices, as well as changing needs and aspirations. We want to move from just asking what you do or don't like about current services to exploring other alternatives.

You have told us you would like to have more choice about who is contracted to provide the services and facilities you receive. For example if you experience problems with a contractor you can now decide whether you want to

continue using that particular contractor or choose an alternative.

### What happens next?

Now that the first phase of setting out local agreements on all estates is complete we will be reviewing the elements your estate identified as areas for improvement. You may also be asked your opinions on topics such as the estate manager service, estate contracts (such as gardening), social activities and the use of estate facilities by the wider community – you will of course have the opportunity to raise any other issues which are important to you.

→ **If you would like to find out more information about the local agreement on your estate, please speak with your estate manager or housing manager.**

# Copayments scheme pilot

## What is the copayment scheme?

The pilot copayment scheme will enable residents who are eligible and who rent from Hanover to buy the kitchen or bathroom of their choice with Hanover contributing a percentage of the cost and taking responsibility for future maintenance. If you prefer you can wait to have your kitchen and bathroom replaced for you as part of the planned works programme.



## Who is eligible?

As this scheme is a pilot only residents who rent a property at one of the 35 estates in the trial are eligible at this stage.

## What are the benefits of the scheme?

The scheme is designed to provide some financial support for those that don't want to wait for a kitchen to be replaced or want to choose the design of a new kitchen or bathroom. You are also able to choose the manufacturer and contractor for your new kitchen or bathroom.

## How much will Hanover contribute?

As part of the pilot the percentage of the cost Hanover will contribute will depend on the length of time it is before your kitchen or bathroom is due to be replaced.

As part of the pilot we will pay the percentage of the actual cost of buying and installing

# 'Tenure neutral' – option to buy

Hanover wants to provide residents with the option to buy Hanover properties as well as continuing to provide properties to rent. If someone who wants to live in a particular Hanover property has previously been a home owner, they may prefer to buy rather than rent the property.

We are currently identifying the estates where we are able to offer the option to buy. There are restrictions in the deeds of some properties and estates where mortgage conditions would prevent properties being offered for sale.

Over the summer, we will write to residents on estates where sales are possible, to provide further information and details of how they can apply to buy their property if they so wish.

In some cases it may be appropriate to also sell some properties, via local estate agents, when they become vacant. We will though continue to offer properties for rent via the waiting list or

by nominations from the local council.

We are also exploring ways in which we might be able to allow residents to buy a part share in their home and continue to pay a rent on the remainder. This would also include an option for people to withdraw their investment if their circumstances change and they needed the money for other things.

The terms of Hanover's Tenancy Agreement and Leases have also been reviewed to ensure our services and management will apply consistently to both tenants and home owners.

➔ **We have been talking to residents at the Future Choices events about our proposals and if you would like more specific information please speak with your estate manager or alternatively you can contact Jo Daley, Strategic Project Manager, via our St Neots office on 01480 475069**



a completely new kitchen or bathroom (up to a maximum cost of £6,250). These figures may be subject to change if we do decide to roll out the scheme nationally.

➔ For more information please call 01480 226571 or email [copayments@hanover.org.uk](mailto:copayments@hanover.org.uk)

## Service improvements

Service improvement is a key activity for any good landlord – carrying out a self assessment is a critical activity to identify gaps and priorities for action to improve services to residents. Our regulator, the TSA (Tenants Services Authority), has now issued new standards that it expects registered providers to meet and specific requirements regarding local offers of service and the production of an annual performance report to residents.

Much greater emphasis is placed on involving residents in monitoring and scrutinising performance and on achieving outcomes. There is also greater emphasis on external validation and allowing residents to compare performance of different providers. Some residents have already taken the opportunity to let us know what they think of our services at the recent Future Choices events. We will be producing an annual performance report for residents in September.



# Persistence gets bus service resumed

When the local bus service near Hanover Close in Leicester was stopped due to a lack of funding, the residents' reaction was not resigned acceptance. Losing the bus service meant residents could no longer get to the doctor's surgery, library or supermarket easily. In a number of cases it resulted in residents moving out as they had to rely on using taxis or help from their family and friends to get out and about from the estate.

After three years and many local area committee meetings with bus services and local councillors the residents perseverance paid off. Thurmaston Bus, a local company, had a new route accepted by the council that serves both Hanover Close and the nearby Danbury Gardens estate. The service started on 4 May and now runs every 15 minutes between 6.30am and 6.30pm, Monday to Saturday. Each bus can accommodate a wheelchair and the service is free to those over 60 with a bus pass.



Margaret Murray, a resident at Hanover Court for over 10 years, said "The new bus service is brilliant. I am thrilled to bits. It is a great achievement and has proved older people can make a difference and do things to help themselves and each other. Our estate manager has been brilliant and I am looking forward to using the bus service to visit the flats at Danbury Gardens".

Marion Waddington, the estate manager at Hanover Court, added "I am so proud of my residents and those of Danbury Gardens who gave their time and spoke up for all the others who were not able to attend the meetings. It was worth all the hours I spent during the evenings going with them to achieve such a fantastic result".

# Raising money for a social fund

When looking for ways to raise money at the Autumn fair at Hanover Court in Filton, residents Christine Binns and Dianne Parkes decided to put their knitting and crocheting skills to good use. Their beautiful baby blankets, detailed cardigans and warm hats and mittens went on sale at the winter fair held in November 2009, and made £89 of the £324 total raised for the residents' social fund. Christine and Dianne received a few orders following the fair and have also been producing items for local charities and nursing homes.

Inspired by Christine and Dianne, fellow resident Christina Clarke – who produced cross stitch pictures for the autumn fair – has also started producing knitted toys to sell at future events.

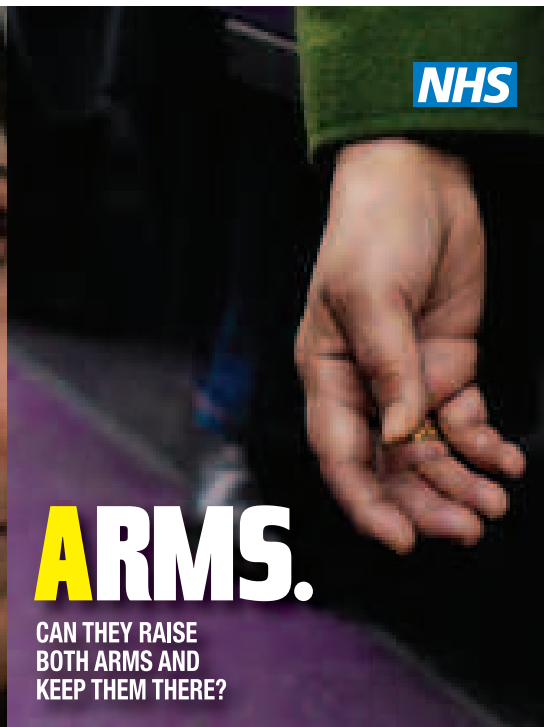
As these residents enjoy knitting so much they have decided to look for ways to close the generation gap by passing their skills on to younger people. One possibility is setting up a skills swap with the 'Dream Scheme', a local initiative to encourage young people to complete jobs in the local area to earn rewards for themselves, such as a swimming trip or going to the bowling alley. Young people from the scheme have already helped at the estate twice before – estate manager Lindsay Stevens is consulting with residents to try and arrange something on a more regular basis.

➔ **If you have an idea for an activity or some fundraising at your estate why not speak with your estate manager?**



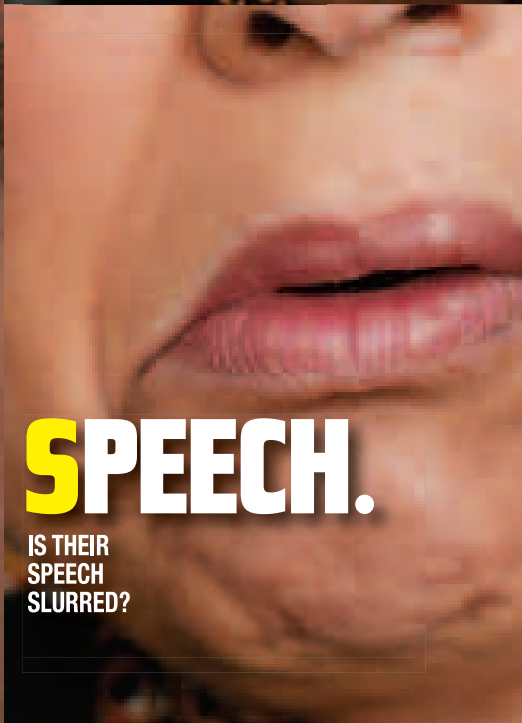
## FACE.

HAS THEIR FACE  
FALLEN ON ONE SIDE?  
CAN THEY SMILE?



## ARMS.

CAN THEY RAISE  
BOTH ARMS AND  
KEEP THEM THERE?



## SPEECH.

IS THEIR  
SPEECH  
SLURRED?



## TIME.

TIME  
TO  
CALL **999**  
IF YOU SEE ANY SINGLE  
ONE OF THESE SIGNS

[nhs.uk/actfast](http://nhs.uk/actfast)

## Stroke Awareness: know the signs

Did you know an estimated 150,000 people have a stroke in the UK each year which results in over 67,000 deaths? This makes strokes the third most common cause of death in England and Wales, after heart disease and cancer. Recognising the signs of a stroke and calling 999 for an ambulance is crucial. The good news is that the sooner somebody who is having a stroke gets urgent medical attention, the better their chances of a good recovery.

Some people are more at risk of having a stroke if they also have certain other medical

conditions including high blood pressure, high cholesterol, an irregular heartbeat and diabetes; so it is important that these conditions are carefully monitored and treated. Leading a healthy active lifestyle is vital to help reduce your risk of having a stroke.

→ The Department of Health's F.A.S.T. Stroke Awareness campaign have put together some information about the four key signs of a stroke. If you see any one of these signs, the person may be having a stroke. It's time to call 999.

# Residents' Council – getting involved

By Brian Goodhand, Margaret MacDonald and Ezra Pryce

During our time on Residents' Council a great deal has been achieved, and we are pleased to say that the past year has been no exception. In the last 12 months Residents' Council has sought to examine, influence and improve Hanover's decisions on behalf of all residents. This has included leading the agenda for the Future Choices events and ensuring information sent out following home owner meetings was clear.

## The issues that matter to you...

To discover what issues were affecting residents on different estates we visited 38 estates in the last year; 12 Extra Care, 13 home owner and 13 rented estates (in a variety of conditions). We are now monitoring and challenging senior management on the key issues discovered, including:

- Home owner issues such as concerns relating to harmonisation, estate manager pay and management fees

- The need to improve communications so that all messages are clear, easy to understand and delivered in a timely manner
- Inconsistent service due to frequent local management changes
- The importance of security to residents
- Concerns about levels of vacancies on some estates
- The varying quality of local agreements

Residents' Council will plan more visits to estates in the next 12 months to continue this work.

## How can I get involved?

Residents' Council look to ensure residents have the opportunity to be involved in all aspects of Hanover. Local agreements are one of the ways to have more local accountability and shape the services you receive; the article

# Saving energy and the environment

As part of the yearly planned works programme on estates, Hanover looks at ways to improve buildings heat retention through a variety of methods including the replacement of windows and boilers. Hanover has also been insulating home owners properties, in partnership with the insulation company EAGA, to help save energy and the environment.

## How does the partnership with EAGA work?

EAGA has access to Government funds – by working with them we can enable home owners to access these and benefit from work being

done to their estate. EAGA works with estate managers, energy suppliers and local authorities to ensure that the maximum grant and funding is obtained.

To date EAGA have insulated more than two thirds of our home owner estates; the remaining third are due to be surveyed and insulated where possible. We have worked hard to ensure this process has been as smooth as possible for residents, and have agreed that all applicable and eligible home owner properties will be insulated by December 2010.

## What are the benefits?

Cavity wall and loft insulation has the potential to reduce energy costs by 40%, which is good both for residents in reducing costs and increasing comfort levels, and for the environment in reducing emissions.



on page 7 explains more about your local choice. Residents' associations are also a great way to get your voice heard. They can have a legal status and are easy to form if a few residents are willing to put a little work in.

## What influence can a residents' association have?

Residents' associations give you a collective voice to work with management to improve your estate. Chairs are able to stand for election to Residents' Council and are invited to any regional meetings held to discuss issues with senior management. Local management will invite a representative of the residents' association to estate inspections and can attend

residents' association meetings, if invited, to discuss local issues. If you don't have enough people to form a residents' association you can consider electing a residents' representative to represent the views of an estate instead.

➔ **If you are interested in setting up a residents' association or electing a residents' representative the engagement team can give you information and advice. Call 01784 446117 or email [engagement@hanover.org.uk](mailto:engagement@hanover.org.uk)**

As we have served the maximum term on Residents' Council we shall be standing down in September, but look forward to hearing how they continue to examine and challenge Hanover's decisions in the future.



**Brian Goodhand**



**Margaret MacDonald**



**Ezra Pryce**

Home owners at Beechcroft Court in Bracknell have already experienced the benefits of the insulation they had installed in September 2009. First floor residents have noticed that the insulation helped their flats retain heat and feel much more pleasant over the winter. The work was carried out at no cost to Hanover or home owners at the estate, and insulation of the roof only took about an hour to complete with no problems or mess. Julia Timms, estate manager, said "the home owners rated the new insulation 10 out of 10". This level of satisfaction with the programme can be seen throughout the country with 90% of residents, who have had the work completed, rating the work as excellent or good.

## Who is eligible and how do I find out more?

All home owner estates that are eligible for the programme will have been contacted. To find out more information, or to see if your estate is included speak with your estate manager or housing manager.

**Hanover plans to have a greater focus on energy conservation in the future and is investigating other energy saving projects including:**

- **Obtaining a grant of up to £2.4 million from British Gas to insulate rented homes**
- **Identifying the top ten highest fuel bills and looking for ways to reduce these**
- **Reducing the waste from our kitchen replacements by 60% and recycling 100% of the wood waste from kitchen removals in the south of England through our partnership with Moore Furniture Group**
- **Ensuring new developments include sustainable measures**



## Stilton and bacon flan

### Ingredients

- 1½ tbsp butter
- 60g breadcrumbs, toasted
- 30g freshly grated parmesan
- 500g sliced bacon
- 1 medium onion, diced
- 600g cream cheese, at room temperature
- 225g stilton

## Knickerbocker glory

### Ingredients (serves 4)

- 400g mixed fresh berries, such as strawberries, raspberries and blueberries, hulled if necessary
- 75g caster sugar
- 500ml good quality vanilla/raspberry ripple ice cream
- 150g milk chocolate, broken into squares
- 1 flaked chocolate bar
- 150ml double cream, whipped
- Four maraschino cherries

1. Place the fruit and caster sugar in a large saucepan over a medium heat. Simmer for 15 minutes or until the fruit has softened and the juice has thickened to a syrup like consistency. Remove from the heat and set aside to cool completely.

2. When the fruit is ready to serve, melt the chocolate in a heatproof basin over a pan of gently simmering water, stirring occasionally.

3. Spoon some of the fruit mixture into four glasses and place scoops of ice cream on top. Drizzle some of the chocolate sauce over the ice cream. Repeat the layering with the remaining fruit, ice cream and sauce.

4. Place a spoonful of whipped cream on the top and decorate with the crumbled flaked chocolate and a maraschino cherry. Serve immediately.



- 4 eggs
- 40g whipping cream
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 2 drops Tabasco sauce

1. Preheat oven to 160°C (325°F) or gas mark 4.
2. Butter a 9" springform tin. Mix together the breadcrumbs and parmesan cheese and sprinkle the mixture into the tin, turning to coat the bottom and sides of the tin evenly; place in the fridge. Fry the bacon in a heavy medium frying pan until crisp. Remove from the pan using tongs and drain on kitchen paper. Pour off all but about 1tbsp of the bacon fat from the frying pan.
3. Add the onion to the frying pan and cook

- over a low heat until it is translucent, stirring occasionally (about 10 minutes).
4. Cut up the bacon. Mix the cream cheese and Stilton in a blender or processor until smooth. Add eggs, cream, salt and Tabasco sauce and process until smooth. Blend in bacon and onion; the filling should retain some texture. Pour into the prepared springform tin. Set the tin in a roasting pan. Add enough hot water to come halfway up sides of the tin. Bake for 1 hour and 20 minutes.
5. Turn oven off and cool the flan for about one hour with the door ajar. Transfer to rack. Cool to room temperature before removing from pan and transferring to a serving plate.
6. Serve with a green salad.

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

## Sudoku

To solve the sudoku puzzle you must apply the rule that every column, row and square must contain the numbers 1 - 9 inclusive (this automatically means they must only contain each number once) and by a process of elimination establish which numbers belong where.

Watch out for the solution in the next edition of Hanover News!

← Solution from winter edition 2009

↓ Medium    ↓ Hard

	8	1	7	5	9			
	2		4		3		8	
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# Hanover in Bloom 2010

## Summer gardening competition

Hanover in Bloom is our annual national competition open to all Hanover residents.

There are five categories to choose from, although you may wish to enter more than one category. Photographs of your garden can be submitted electronically by email or as a hard copy photograph by post. If you would like your photograph to also be considered for use in future promotional material, we will need a high resolution digital image by email or on CD.

Entries for all categories will be judged by a selected group of residents from the Intouch panel. The winning entry for each category in each area of the country will win some gardening vouchers.

To enter the competition speak with your estate manager. If you don't have an estate manager please contact your housing manager.

Closing date for entries is Friday 3 September 2010.

### Categories:

- Best kept estate
- Best kept individual garden
- Best individual gardening project
- Best vegetable garden
- Most improved garden