

Retirement Living

Housing 



Regional Report 2020

Central



Stand out events:
Celebrating a stunning transformation in Wolverhampton

Hearts of gold

Modern methods of construction

Lockdown letters

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Welcome

A message from the Chairman and Chief Executive

'Doing the Right Thing' was the theme and message for our 2019/20 staff and resident conferences. This emphasised the importance of being true to our purpose of providing more and better Retirement Housing and Extra Care for older people of modest means. This philosophy of 'Doing the Right Thing' and our devolved operating model also enabled us to respond quickly, effectively and responsibly to protect you, our residents, and maintain vital services when faced with the Covid-19 pandemic which was beginning to take hold back in March 2020.

Our committed frontline staff stepped up to the challenge and have shown heroic dedication - going above and beyond the call of duty to maintain safe services. Thank you all for your kind gestures of thanks and appreciation which our Care Workers and Managers have shared with us. A true reflection of how valued they are by our resident community.

I am sure you will join me in thanking all of our staff in all roles for being simply brilliant in their willingness to adapt and respond positively and flexibly to the situation and for continuing to do the right thing.

The Covid-19 pandemic has certainly had an impact both in terms of human lives and on business operations, but we ended the last financial year in a strong position and have shown good progress against each of our seven Strategic Priorities. More detail can be found in our Financial Statements 2019/20 on our website but key highlights include:

- Six of our 72 registered care sites achieved the highest rating of 'Outstanding' from the Care Quality Commission (CQC)

Stephen Hughes,
Chairman



Bruce Moore,
Chief Executive



- Residents receiving care from us gave an overall satisfaction rating of 97% for the care they receive
- Overall satisfaction improved: 94% for Retirement Housing and 92% for Extra Care
- Staff commitment remains high with 96% sharing the organisation's values
- Our devolved housing management system has enabled more effective management, including supporting remote working during the Covid-19 lockdown
- We have installed 178 Appello digital call systems - improving connectivity

Value for Money is a key driver for us and we have consciously been investing more than many other providers to ensure our properties remain desirable and energy efficient.

After having our G1/V1 regulatory status confirmed by an In Depth Assessment in March 2019, you may have heard that Housing 21 has since been downgraded to G2 status, in part due to maintaining variable service charges for affordable rent properties and other historical funding settlements. This was deeply disappointing but we are working hard to renew our G1 status. We would like to assure you that our commitment to doing the right thing also extends to good governance and doing things right.

We remain confident and committed to pursuing our progressive and ambitious strategy, to do more and better, and would like to thank everyone who has supported us over the last year. We look forward to continuing to work with you into 2021.

Welcome from the Heads of Retirement Housing, Central

The last year has been an exciting time for the Central region, working with you to improve services and provide more homes. We have residents and staff who make an amazing contribution to lives and communities, and we hope that this report will show the difference you make.

Over the year we have listened to your feedback in order to learn and grow, and to deliver the improvements you have asked for. In the last 12 months, these have included new heating systems, makeovers and new bathrooms and kitchens.

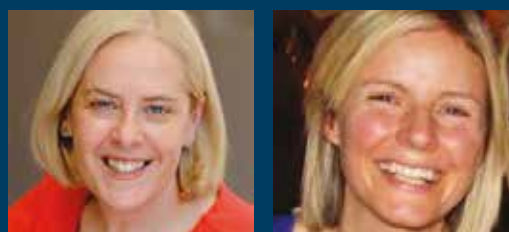
We were delighted to finish building nearly 60 new apartments. Eight of these were in Shrewsbury, in Shropshire, all two bedroom homes for local people, built on some spare land next to our existing development, Richard Onslow Court. Both residents and our local neighbours watched with fascination as the eight new flats were delivered by lorry and put in place by a very large crane. The flats were completed on-site by a highly skilled construction team.

Claremont House in Derby, a brand new Retirement Housing scheme with apartments for rent and shared ownership was finished just after the whole country went into lockdown with the coronavirus pandemic in March. The Central Team were so disappointed that no one was able to move into the beautiful new apartments until June when people were allowed once again to move home.

As you will all know, coronavirus changed the way Housing 21 operated during the lockdown period and was very challenging at times for both you, our residents, and our staff. Often our Court Managers had to work from home. This was helped by Housing 21's investment in new technology as they were able to continue to deliver services using their PEBBLES tablets and were able to contact you from their homes over the call system or by phone. We have learnt a lot from this and we will now reflect on what worked well and what could have been done better so we can use this to shape how we work in the future, making the services we provide even better.

We would like to thank you all for your patience, support and acceptance of doing things differently. We are now on a journey to a new normal as it's anticipated that coronavirus will be part of our lives for some time. This means more patience and tolerance from us all to keep ourselves, families and neighbours safe.

We hope you enjoy this year's Regional Report, with stories and articles from across the Central region, showing what we do so well.



Lucy Hales and Jen Davis-Dean

Heads of Retirement Housing, Central

Our performance against strategic priorities

1. Providing more homes



At 2019/20 year-end we had 19 schemes on site, 17 Extra Care, two Retirement Housing and a total of 1,195 properties under construction

2. The quality of our existing properties

In 2019/20 we successfully delivered £32.5m investment into our properties and undertook over 500 capital projects.

3. The quality and responsiveness of our services



We are on track to hit our overall resident satisfaction target of 95% by 2021, having achieved 94% satisfaction in Retirement Housing and 92% in Extra Care.

4. Our people and potential



We received recognition for commitment to our staff by winning the Investors in People 'Best Third Sector Employer' Award in November 2019.

5. Systems and technology

We are developing systems to allow remote access for frontline staff. Over 700 members of staff are using mobile technology to deliver an efficient response to residents. New Ways of Working (NWOW) aims to deliver a revised technology landscape for staff and includes a comprehensive review of technology, software, connectivity, devices and supporting infrastructure.

6. Providing value for money



We work hard to ensure the services we provide are value for money. You can see how your money is spent on the opposite page.

7. Innovation and influence



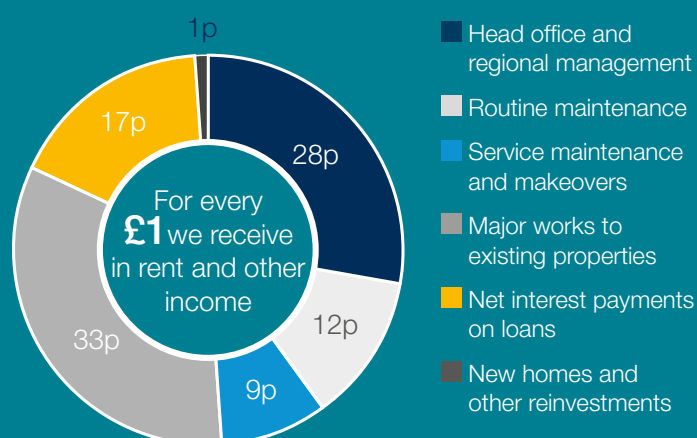
Our annual October conference brought together over 150 delegates to hear the thoughts of academics and practitioners surrounding 'Is the UK Institutionally Ageist?'

We remain committed to being a dementia-friendly organisation. All staff become Dementia Friends during their induction and we extend this to our contractors, who we expect to engage with the Dementia Friends initiative.

Organisational performance

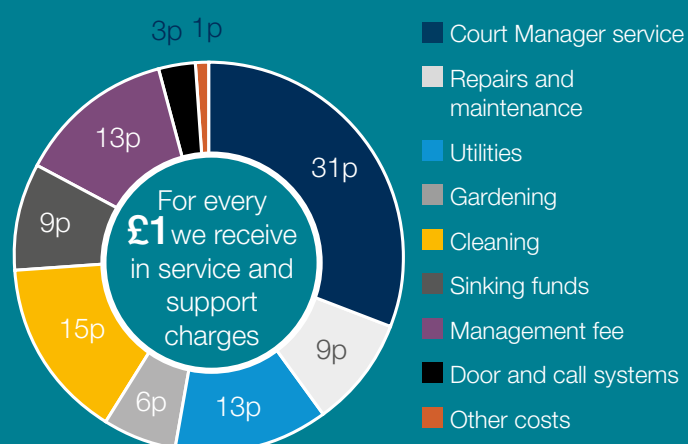
How we spend your rent and our other income

None of the rent we receive goes into the pockets of other people. It is all spent or reinvested on our services and properties.



How we spend your service and support charge

Your service and support charges go toward providing the valuable services which make your court your home.



Number of properties:
21,072

Turnover:
£192.3m

Operating surplus:
£32.1m

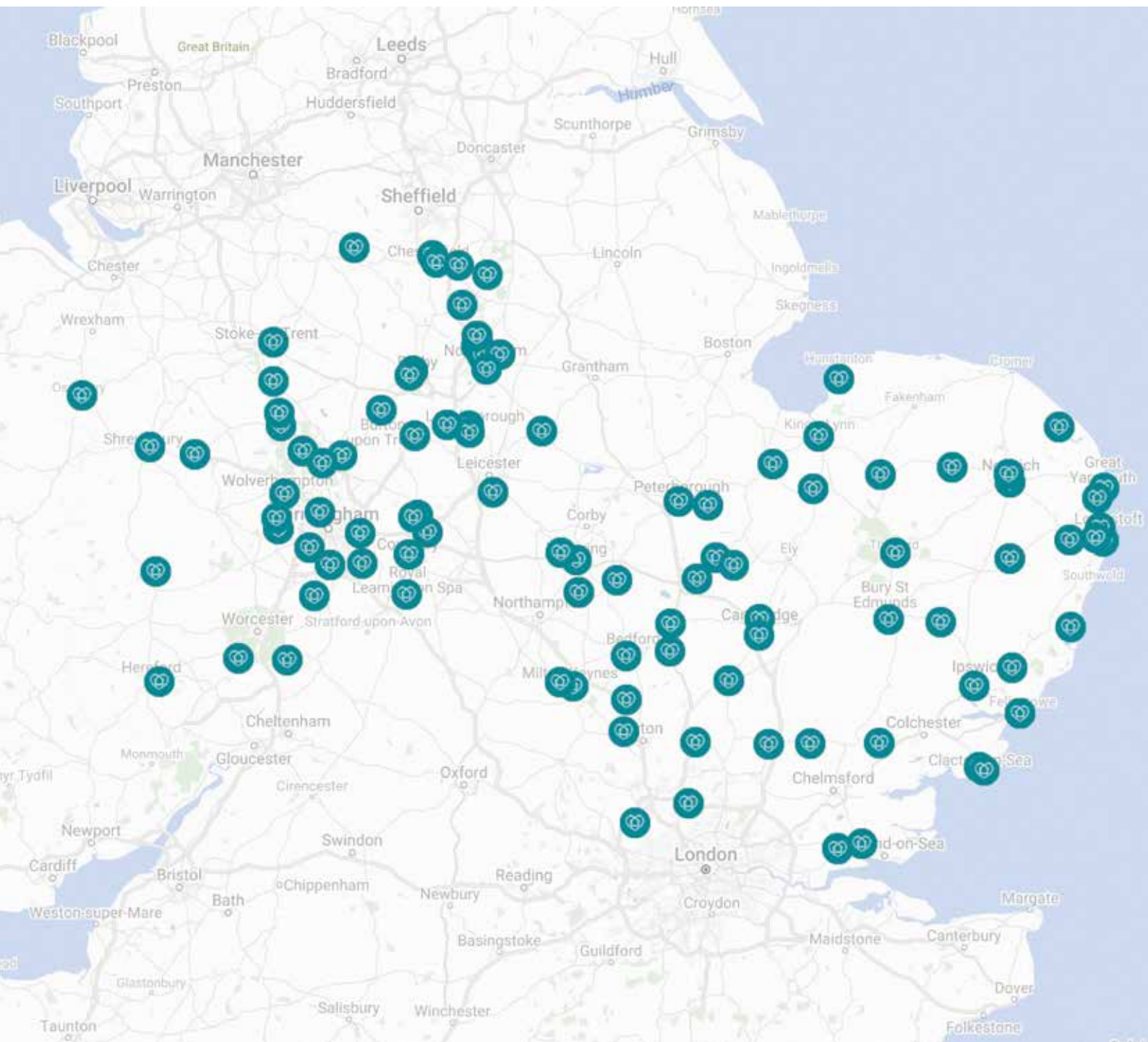
Reinvestment in our existing properties

We are reinvesting more and more into our existing properties every year.

We are proud of our properties and want you to be proud of them as well, making them a positive choice.



Map of the region



Meet the team



Lucy Hales

Head of Retirement Housing
Central



Jen Davis-Dean

Head of Retirement Housing
Central



Aminda Kaur

Retirement Housing Manager
Hertfordshire and Norfolk



Antony Walker

Retirement Housing Manager
West Midlands, Worcestershire
and Shropshire



Heather Scullion

Retirement Housing Manager
Essex and Suffolk



Rachel Southworth

Retirement Housing Manager
Staffordshire, Warwickshire
north, Northamptonshire,
Buckinghamshire and
Leicestershire



Philippa Hallam

Retirement Housing Manager
Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire and
Leicestershire



Justine Hoyer

Assistant Retirement Housing
Manager
Cambridgeshire, Peterborough
and Bedfordshire



Becky Hassam

Regional Coordinator
Central

Achievements at a regional level

Resident satisfaction survey

An amazing **94%** of you told us that you are satisfied with Housing 21's services – which is great news. Thank you to the 529 residents who took the time to complete the survey and share thoughts on the services we provide.



Regional conferences

In October and November 2019, Housing 21's Board Members and staff were delighted to meet with 136 Central residents at the regional conference, to discuss views and ideas, from smoke-free schemes, to improving how we deal with anti-social behavior.

Three conferences were held at venues across the Central region. Residents got to hear about Housing 21's plans for the future from our Chief Executive, Bruce Moore, as well as finding out about the great things taking place across the Central Region, including new schemes.

Over lunch, residents and staff had further opportunities to chat and share ideas and suggestions about services.

The regional conferences ended with a game of snakes and ladders, which involved fluffy snakes and giant blow up dice, whilst testing residents' knowledge about Housing 21's services. Thank you to everyone who gave their time to join in with these events, and we hope you enjoyed the days as much as we did!

Sadly we won't be holding regional conferences this year because of the risk of spreading coronavirus, but we hope to be back meeting you at our regional conferences in 2021.



Collaboration and partnerships

Charles Watson Court and Mencap partnership

Charles Watson Court is proud to work with the charity Mencap, to provide quality housing for those with learning disabilities.

It all started with the closure of a council run sheltered housing scheme. Elaine, the Court Manager at Charles Watson Court, was eager to help and was able to find homes for three Mencap clients at risk of

homelessness. Seven years on, a few more Mencap clients have joined Charles Watson Court and value the quality accommodation as well as the sense of security and reassurance that comes with having a Court Manager and emergency call system.

Mencap continues to provide regular and responsive support to their clients, and were recently

able to provide 24 hour round the clock support to a resident who wished to die at home. This partnership has had its challenges, but it goes to the root of our purpose as a social housing provider, to help people of modest means to have a greater quality of life.

Denis Wilson Court, Cambridge

Trumpington Residents Association has worked with Denis Wilson Court, arranging activities, events and trips.

Since the start of lockdown, the association has been volunteering time to deliver medication for residents who were unable to leave their homes, picking up essentials, and also being at the end of the phone to lend a friendly ear and have a chat with residents.

Howard Court, Flitwick

From taking our residents to hospital and staying during their appointment, to lending a listening ear when needed, neighbours to Howard Court in Flitwick have been extremely helpful.

These small acts of kindness have meant that residents can live independently and has given further peace of mind to family members.

Integration with health and social care

Angel of the East

Many residents at McNish Court in St Neots have positively benefited from having a Nurse Practitioner called Sue come into their lives.

Since Sue joined the team at the local health centre, the service and support she provides to residents and the local community has been invaluable.

Sue first visited McNish Court to tend to four very ill residents a number of years ago, and

now a familiar face at the scheme, she always goes above and beyond in her role.

Working together with Anne, the Court Manager, residents are reminded of appointments and Sue can come prepared on her visits. Sue is easy to contact, gives great advice and arranges visits with residents if Anne is worried. Sue also works with other health providers so that everyone gets support.

Without Sue's invaluable help some of our residents would not be able to continue to live a full and independent life. One lady, who has some complex health needs, has been supported by Anne and Sue to be able to continue living independently in her own apartment.

Working together as a team, Anne feels reassured that residents are getting the best possible care – Sue is a true Angel!

The amazing chemist

Mr Gregory works as a chemist at Trumpington's Pharmacy, next to Denis Wilson Court near Cambridge.

Sam, Court Manager at Denis Wilson Court said "Mr Gregory knows all of the residents and nothing is ever too much trouble for him. He's dedicated, working all hours and always checks in on residents. One time, a resident had a fall and Mr Gregory stayed with them until the paramedic team arrived. He's our amazing chemist!"



Mr Gregory pictured here on the right, with the team at Trumpington's Pharmacy

Stand out events

Celebrating a stunning transformation in Wolverhampton

Residents at Howard Court in Wolverhampton were delighted to meet their local MP and now Shadow Treasury Minister, Pat McFadden MP, in September 2019.

He came to see the results of a half a million pound investment into the court including the redevelopment of several studios into larger one bedroom apartments with spacious modern bathrooms and kitchens.

The communal lounge was also transformed into a place

that residents are now keen to use for regular social activities. Councillor Keith Inston, who attended the opening event, said "it's fantastic to see the investment in the local area. I'd like to speak to the Court Manager about putting my name down!"

Our resident radio enthusiast, Alan, who transferred to one of the new larger flats commented "It's smashing! This makeover has made such a difference. I live in one of the new flats and it's so bright and airy."



Alan enjoys spending time in the newly refurbished communal lounge at Howard Court



Councillor Harman Banger, Councillor Keith Inston and Councillor Anwen Muston with Retirement Housing Manager Antony Walker at Howard Court



Stand out events

A special day

Betty has been a resident at Curtis Court for 30 years.

She recently celebrated her 90th birthday with a surprise gift from her daughter-in-law – a Shire horse and carriage!

Betty was chauffeured through the town before having a celebratory lunch, and said she felt like a queen having everyone waving to her.



Resident story

Mowbray Court's VIP (Very Important Pooch)

Riley the hearing assistance dog, is a five year old Cocker Spaniel who assists Mowbray Court residents, Stephen and Margaret. Riley regularly supports with social events at Mowbray Court - and has even made a starring appearance at the resident conference!

Stephen and Margaret have lived at Mowbray Court for six years

and received Riley two years ago from Hearing Dogs UK.

Riley inspired Stephen to complete a marathon fundraising effort for Hearing Dogs UK, so that more people can benefit from a hearing assistance dog. Travelling from Land's End to John O'Groats using only local buses, Stephen raised £3,000.



Award for resident

One Attley Court resident, Rita, has been presented with the Paul Hope award from the local Phab organisation, for her dedication to Phab and to fulfilling the charity's aims.

Phab is a social group for those with disabilities and their able bodied friends. A national organisation, it was founded following Paul Hope's wish for 'opportunity not pity'.

Congratulations, Rita!



Court life

Sweeping us off our feet!

Court Cleaners play a big part in the positive atmosphere of a scheme. Not only do they keep our communal areas in tip-top condition, they are also a friendly face and another set of eyes and ears and frequently go above and beyond their dust busting duties!

Lisa, at Lord Walsingham Court in Thetford, has been praised due to her efforts with the support she provides on open days, Christmas parties, raffles and celebrating 60th wedding anniversaries! She also steps in when the Court Manager is on annual leave, checking in on residents and being there for advice or guidance. Lisa's help doesn't go unnoticed by the residents as they all think very highly of her. Lisa says: "Every day is different, different tasks, people with different problems and issues that I can help with. It's like being a part of a big family."

Hazel, at Smalley Court in Staffordshire, has taken on the role of two cleaners, with just

an extra two hours a week to support the reduction in the service charge for residents. Hazel ensures she never leaves the scheme uncovered, even on her days off, as she will pop in during her annual leave to spruce up the laundry room, toilets and lounge taking pride in Smalley Court.

Lisa, at Oliver Leese Court in Stafford, has definitely gone above and beyond – when one of the residents was convinced they had accidentally dropped their front door key in the dog poo bin, Lisa was to the rescue! Not only that, she keeps the Court Manager up to date with any issues she comes across and regularly helps the less mobile residents carry their laundry to and from their flats.

Not only are our cleaners a dab hand at keeping things spotless, you'll also catch them in the kitchen. Much like **Rheanna, at Mowbray Court** in Leicestershire, who helped cook and serve Christmas lunch to 50 people, as well as providing Christmas cheer, encouraging residents to decorate not just one, but four Christmas trees! Mark Whaley, the Court Manager said he would be truly

lost without her. Another keen chef, **Lynda, at Curtis Court** in Burton on Trent, organises the Wednesday coffee morning and cooks a lunch for the residents once a month. These events have reduced residents' isolation and are thoroughly enjoyed by all. "I love Curtis Court, it's a lovely place to work, like a little community. I just enjoy my job so much, which is why I go the extra mile and the residents really do appreciate it. Also, having a great manager helps" says Lynda.

All in all we'd like to thank our Court Cleaners for their hard work and dedication to not only their roles but to truly caring about our residents and being valuable members of our Housing 21 team.



Lynda and the residents at Curtis Court's Wednesday Coffee Morning

Resident story

Neighbour of the year at Dennis Sneezum Court

Nothing is too much trouble for Arthur, officially 'Neighbour of the year' at Dennis Sneezum Court in Norfolk!

Arranged by local West Norfolk radio station, KLFM, Arthur was nominated for the award by a fellow resident's friend.

Maxine, Court Manager at Dennis Sneezum said "Arthur is a wonderful character and is a well-deserved recipient of this award! He shops and gets daily papers for many residents, is our residential Fire Marshall and a key holder for the guest room when I am off site. As I am new to this role, Arthur has been a

wonderful help to me, making sure I've settled in and keeping me informed of the history of the court. Arthur always tells me 'Help anyone, as you never know when you will need help yourself'."



Arthur at the Local Hero awards ceremony



Investing in our buildings

Heated from the core of the Earth

Robert Smith Court in Norfolk, is a first for Housing 21 as it will be heated through environmentally friendly ground source heating.

Until now oil heating was the only source available in this area, but that all changed when science came into play.

Heat from the ground is absorbed at low temperatures into a fluid inside a loop of pipe (a ground loop) which is buried underground. The fluid then passes through a compressor, raising this to a higher temperature, which can then in turn heat water for the heating and hot water circuits for each apartment.

The initial drilling of 22 boreholes into the ground started in December 2019, making a bit of mess in the garden as result

of drilling down to 200 feet. Hopefully once the heating is fully installed, the benefits of the system can be seen, and once the grass regrows, all will be forgiven!

Work has been delayed a little due to the coronavirus pandemic, but communal works will be recommencing in October. Following this, and depending on local restrictions, work to individual apartments is likely to start in January.



Howard Vyse makeover

Residents at Howard Vyse Court in Clacton-on-Sea are delighted with recent makeover works at the scheme. The communal lounge has been completely transformed with the former guest room also converted into a communal kitchen, and not to forget the refurbished laundry and stairwells.

Other improvement works at Howard Vyse include replacing windows and doors, external wall insulation, and installing gas central heating in the communal lounge and every apartment.



Charity events and fundraising

Hearts of gold

Every year, residents at Sir Robert Martin Court in Loughborough celebrate Valentine's Day with a party. 2020 has been an exceptional year for many reasons, not least as residents have achieved something amazing and decided to throw an even bigger party on 14 February.

In August 2019, one of the residents was admitted to hospital with heart complications after feeling unwell. Because of this, at one of the scheme's regular coffee mornings, residents decided they would like to raise funds to purchase a defibrillator which could be used by the scheme and the local community.

Residents decided to start a raffle, initially raising £22 and by the end of the first week they had an incredible £180 in donations.

Court Manager, Martine, contacted the British Heart Foundation who generously donated £1000. Charnwood Council gave £300, AED donated £250 and local community group, The Loughborough Lions gave £50.

The residents were so grateful for the support.

Residents set up an open day fundraising event where local shops and community groups donated raffle prizes, invitations were posted around the local neighbourhood and posters were put up in local shops. The day was a huge success raising over £800.

Martine, Court Manager at Sir Robert Martin Court said, "What we thought would take us around a year to achieve, everyone pulled together and we achieved our target in just three months!"

With the target met, the defibrillator was installed and celebrations took place on Valentine's Day, continuing into the evening with a local entertainer and buffet that everyone enjoyed.

The residents at Sir Robert Martin Court really do have 'hearts of gold'!



You shall go to the ball

Dozens of young students were able to attend their prom night last year because of the kind-hearted efforts of a Guy Thornycroft Court resident and her daughter.

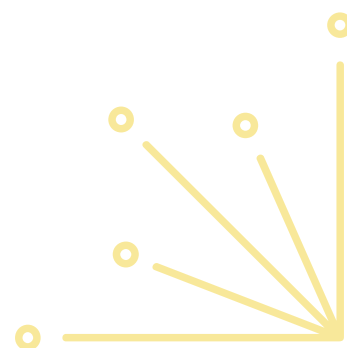
In something resembling a fairy tale, they heard of a girl who was desperate to go to her prom night but couldn't afford a dress because her family were on a low income. They put out a request on social media asking for donations of dresses and

were quickly inundated by the generosity of the general public.

Boosted by the response, the duo put out another message to reach students who needed, but couldn't afford, a prom dress. The scheme's communal lounge turned into a secret venue, where the girls could visit by appointment and try on dresses.

The BBC interviewed the resident and her daughter for Midlands Today and the initiative has now been extended to

include wedding dresses. We're very proud to have this kind-hearted resident at one of our schemes.



New gazebo

Residents at John Anderson Court, in Norfolk, used their social fund to purchase a new gazebo for the scheme garden in March, and have been using it to make the most of the warm weather during lockdown – socially distanced of course!



Court life

Christmas celebrations

Friends old and new teamed up on schemes across the Central 3 region to get the best festive photo last Christmas. There were prizes for best Christmas jumpers, best Christmas group and a fiercely fought competition for the best dressed tree.

Christmas allows an opportunity for those who usually shy away from social activities to attend and make new friends, reducing loneliness at what can be a difficult time of year.

During the festive period there was a Christmas tree dressing party at Mowbray Court, craft and card making, as well as some fantastic Christmas parties. Court Managers keep an eye out for anyone that will struggle to attend and offer encouragement and support to join in.

Smalley Court in Burntwood took the prize for 'best jumpers', a merry dancing group at Frederick Smith Court in Milton Keynes won 'best group shot' and last but not least, Sir John Brown Court in Kettering were awarded the 'best tree'!

All three winning schemes chose another social event as the prize.



Life at Gloucester Court

We are not a large court, there are 29 dwellings here, some bedsits and some flats.

I have a one bedroomed flat, and live on my own. It is lovely here, we have a good social life (which I am quite involved with) – coffee mornings, fish and chips lunches, jacket potato lunches, craft making afternoons, quiz days, to name just a few, and of course it is entirely up to the individual to select how much or how little they wish to get involved. The beauty of independent living.

Housing 21 have indeed done so many improvements to our dwellings, I have been here for three years now and since moving in we have had new bathrooms, new gas central heating installed, updated fire alarms fitted, the kitchens had already been done prior to my tenancy beginning. I myself cannot fault the work that has been carried out here.

Living here makes your life worry free, and any problems that do prop up aren't actually problems, as our Court Manager is always there for us and can usually sort any issues out.

We have a good team of workmen that take care of such things as the gardens, window cleaning, bin cleaning, our cleaning lady is brilliant, and always goes the extra mile to accommodate.

My daughter is also a happy bunny with me living here, she knows I am secure. 'Happy mummy makes a happy daughter'.

My advice to Housing 21: Carry on the good work, you are doing a brilliant job. Anytime you are in our area, pop in and see us, we always have a warm welcome (and some really tasty homemade cakes).

Yours, one very happy tenant,

Sue

• A letter from one happy resident at
• Gloucester Court in Kettering.

New developments and acquisitions

Claremont House



Councillor Frank Harwood, Mayor of Derby, cuts the ribbon to officially open the show home at Housing 21's Claremont House.

We were delighted to officially open Claremont House, our new Retirement Living scheme, in Derby last year. Developed in partnership with Derby City Council and Homes England, Claremont House has 49 one and two bedroom apartments.



(L-R) David Hurford, Site Manager for Kier; Councillor Frank Harwood, Mayor of Derby; Asha Cheema, Housing 21 Court Manager at Claremont House.

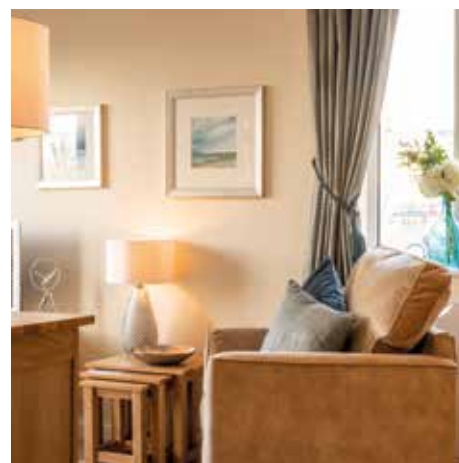
Asha Cheema, Housing 21 Court Manager at Claremont House said: "Claremont House has been built with our residents in mind. The apartments are all fitted out with high quality kitchens, easily accessible mid-height ovens, raised power points and level-access showers, but they are also really stylish and modern."

Councillor Frank Harwood, Mayor of Derby, said: "I was delighted to have been invited to the show home opening at Claremont House and thoroughly enjoyed the event.

"It is fantastic to see Housing 21 working in partnership with Derby City Council, Homes England and Kier to provide excellent housing for people aged 55+ in Derby. I am very much looking forward to seeing the first residents move into their new homes."

Situated in Manor Kingsway, a vibrant and developing suburb of Derby, Claremont House is within easy reach of the city centre. Ian Fullagar, Head of Strategic Housing at Derby City Council said: "The Council has recently updated its Strategy for Older Persons' Housing in the city which identified that there is a lack of this sort

of accommodation, which older people want and that is designed to meet their needs, even as these change over time. I therefore very much welcome these retirement properties that are due to come available at Claremont House."



Modern methods of construction

The container swings through the air, hovering over the others already neatly stacked. It could be an enthusiastic Lego creation, but the complexity is many thousand times greater.

With little room to move, the crane operator manoeuvres skilfully, working with colleagues on the ground to position the next piece, a real team effort and careful precision is required until the pieces are perfectly in place. It's a peculiar sight, a block of flats suspended in the air, complete with windows.

This was the first sight of the new apartments at Richard Onslow Court in Shrewsbury. With little room for parking, site logistics and works, using modern construction methods, elements such as plumbing and the electrics were able to be fitted and installed off-site reducing the amount of time on-site, and minimising any disruption to residents in the existing properties.

The eight new apartments were installed complete with kitchens and shower rooms, and were transported by road before being lifted into position where the external finish and roof construction took place. New residents are also delighted with their new apartments, with one resident commenting: "The flat is a really nice size and the community we live with are really nice and friendly."

We've been pleased with how this approach has worked, and hope to use it again in the near future.



Intergenerational activities

Local school links with Palmer Close

Over the years, residents at Palmer Close near Peterborough have helped children at the local primary school with reading, storytelling, and show and tell activities.

Last summer it was all about the hungry caterpillar and the children loved speaking to residents about butterflies.

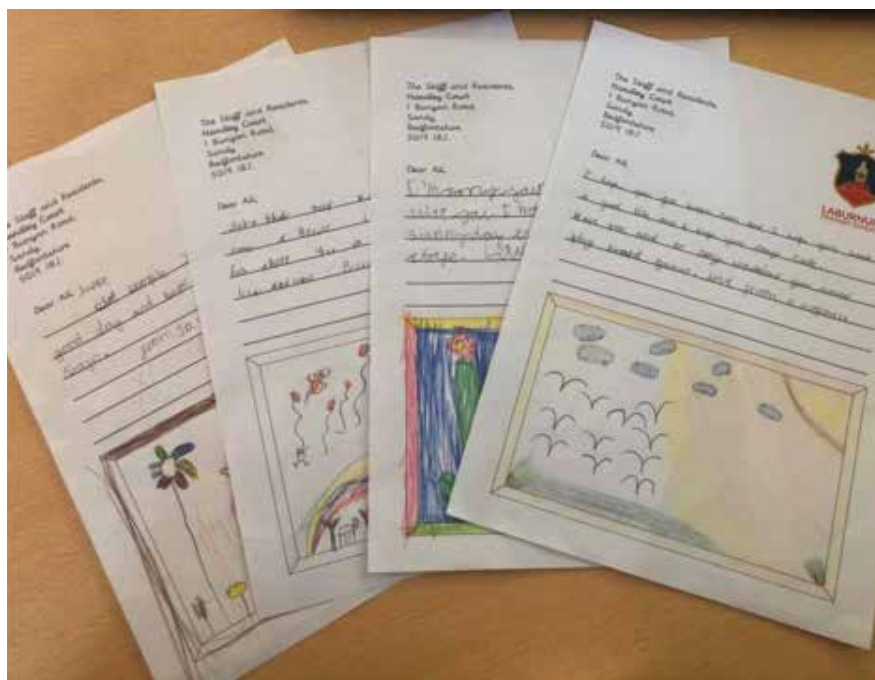
Older children at the school perform dress rehearsals of the school nativity and end of year plays, and residents join in with carol singing.

Unfortunately due to the coronavirus pandemic, this year children were unable to visit however residents and the school remain hopeful that we can pick activities up again when the time is right.

Lockdown letters

As the country went into lockdown in March, children from the primary school local to Handley Court in Sandy, near Bedford, wrote letters to say they hoped for everyone to stay safe and drew pictures.

Residents loved reading the letters, which were put around the court to raise spirits!



Staff news



The next generation of Court Managers

At just over 19 years old, Isabel is our first Apprentice Court Manager, and is quickly learning about the pressures of the role and also the difference she can make to resident's lives.

Izzy is also undertaking a qualification from the Chartered Institute of Housing.

"I had always been interested in working within housing so I thought this would be the perfect opportunity for me. I would like to finish my apprenticeship and hopefully become a full-time Court Manager and run my own scheme."

As many of our Court Managers are due to retire in the next decade, we want to make this interesting and varied role aspirational for younger generations, and give them the opportunity to learn from the vast experience and talent of our current Court Managers.

Elaine Smith retires after 20 years at Viscount Bridgeman Court

In September 2020 Elaine Smith retired from being the Court Manager at Viscount Bridgeman Court - 20 years to the day she first started as Court Manager! Initially living on-site, Elaine knows many of the residents well and knows Viscount Bridgeman like the back of her hand. She will be missed by residents and colleagues alike. While the role can be filled, Elaine will never be replaced!



My Housing 21 apprenticeship journey

By Nikki, Court Manager at Handley Court

I started my Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH) level 4 in 2018. Back then I didn't have much confidence in myself while I was at work, but also outside of work too. I decided to put my name down for an apprenticeship, and I am so glad I did.

My knowledge of housing has expanded so much more than I imagined it would. I was worried at first about how I would manage to fit in learning alongside my full-time job, and also being a full-time mum of two, but I managed it! And it has worked to my advantage.

I have learnt so much, become much more confident as a person and I'm delighted to say this also shows in my work as a Court Manager.

I am able to offer more support to my residents and feel confident enough to challenge decisions that I feel may not be correct for us. The support

from my residents has been amazing too, from listening to my ideas for my project, to reading through my assignments and checking my grammar! But also in encouraging me. I really couldn't have done it without them all! I often get asked if I would recommend the CIH level 4 course and my answer is always "100% yes."

If I have to give one bit of advice to anyone, it would be to believe in yourself and don't give up, you won't regret it!

Looking ahead – taking care of the environment

As an organisation we are committed to making positive changes for the environment and are focusing on areas that will make the most difference:



Carbon impact / energy consumption

We are currently leading in the housing sector in terms of energy consumption with 84% of our properties already having an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) grade C or above, saving you money on your energy bills. Our aim is for all properties to have an EPC grade C by March 2022. We will also be installing non-fossil fuel heating systems on new homes and, where possible, on replacement systems from December 2022. Our policy is to only source electricity from certified renewable sources.



Climate change resilience

All of our schemes are being surveyed for climate change resilience and each scheme will have an action plan by March 2022 to promote longer term environmental sustainability.



Transport

We are aiming to reduce non-essential travel for staff across the organisation, exploring new ways of working and reducing our carbon footprint.

This is just the beginning. We will build on these strong foundations to develop our commitment to 'Doing the Right Thing'. Talk to your scheme manager if you have any thoughts or ideas on

how to make positive changes for the environment at your scheme. Your story could feature in next year's Regional Report!

Feedback

We hope you have enjoyed reading your Regional Report 2020. We'd love to hear your feedback and any suggestions you have for next year. Please get in touch by emailing communications@housing21.org.uk or speak to a member of the Housing 21 team.

If you need this report in a different format, for example large print, Braille, audio file/CD or another language, please contact your local manager.

Thank you.



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