

Extra Care Living

Housing (21)



Regional Report 2020

Kent



Resident story:
Betty

Intergenerational
activities



Court life:
Life at Thomas Place

Stand out events



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Welcome

A message from the Chairman and Chief Executive

Stephen Hughes,
Chairman



Bruce Moore,
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)

- 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 Operations Manager

Welcome to our second Regional Report – I hope you enjoy seeing all the great things that have been happening across the region throughout the last financial year. It's inspiring to read your stories and hear about the difference Extra Care has made to your lives. It is also amazing to see all the positive things you are doing to create vibrant communities and the work that is taking place with external agencies to make your schemes such great community hubs.

In February we ran a staff survey and were delighted not only to have a 100% response rate from staff in our region, but to achieve 100% staff satisfaction, demonstrating the passion of our employees and their commitment to continue doing the right thing for you, our residents.

So much has happened in the last 12 months that the launch of our first Regional Report at the 2019 resident events seems like a distant memory. I enjoyed meeting many of you at these events and hearing about your experiences of living in Extra Care, as well as your suggestions for improvement. I hope you found these events useful and that you continue to feedback any comments or suggestions to us so we can continue to improve.

The end of this financial year saw us face unprecedented times as Covid-19 took hold and sent the UK into lockdown in March. The past few months have been a challenging time for us all and I am extremely proud of the Housing Managers who have continued to deliver such a vital service under extremely difficult circumstances.

I would also like to express my thanks to you, our residents, for all that you have done to keep your communities safe and to support your neighbours. It is humbling to see the kindness shown among our residents which shines through in some of the stories you will read in this report.



Jenny Graham
Operations Manager

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



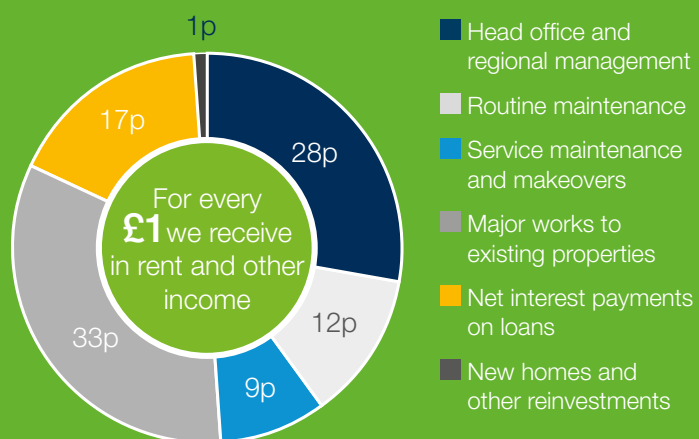
Our annual October conference brought together over 150 delegates to hear the thoughts of academics and practitioners surrounding 'Is the UK Institutionally Ageist?'

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

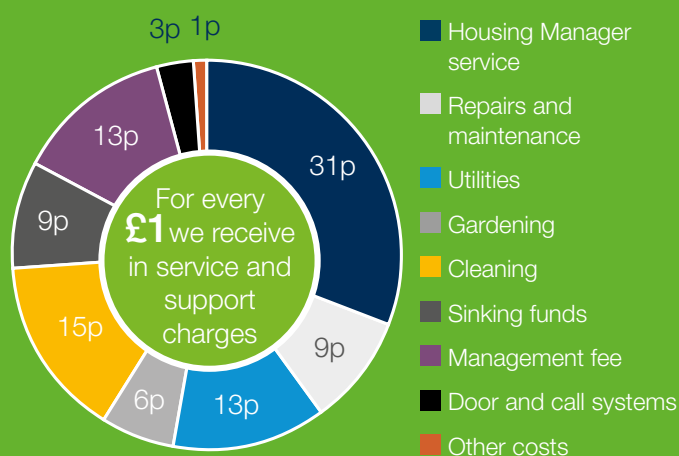
How we spend your rent and our other income

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

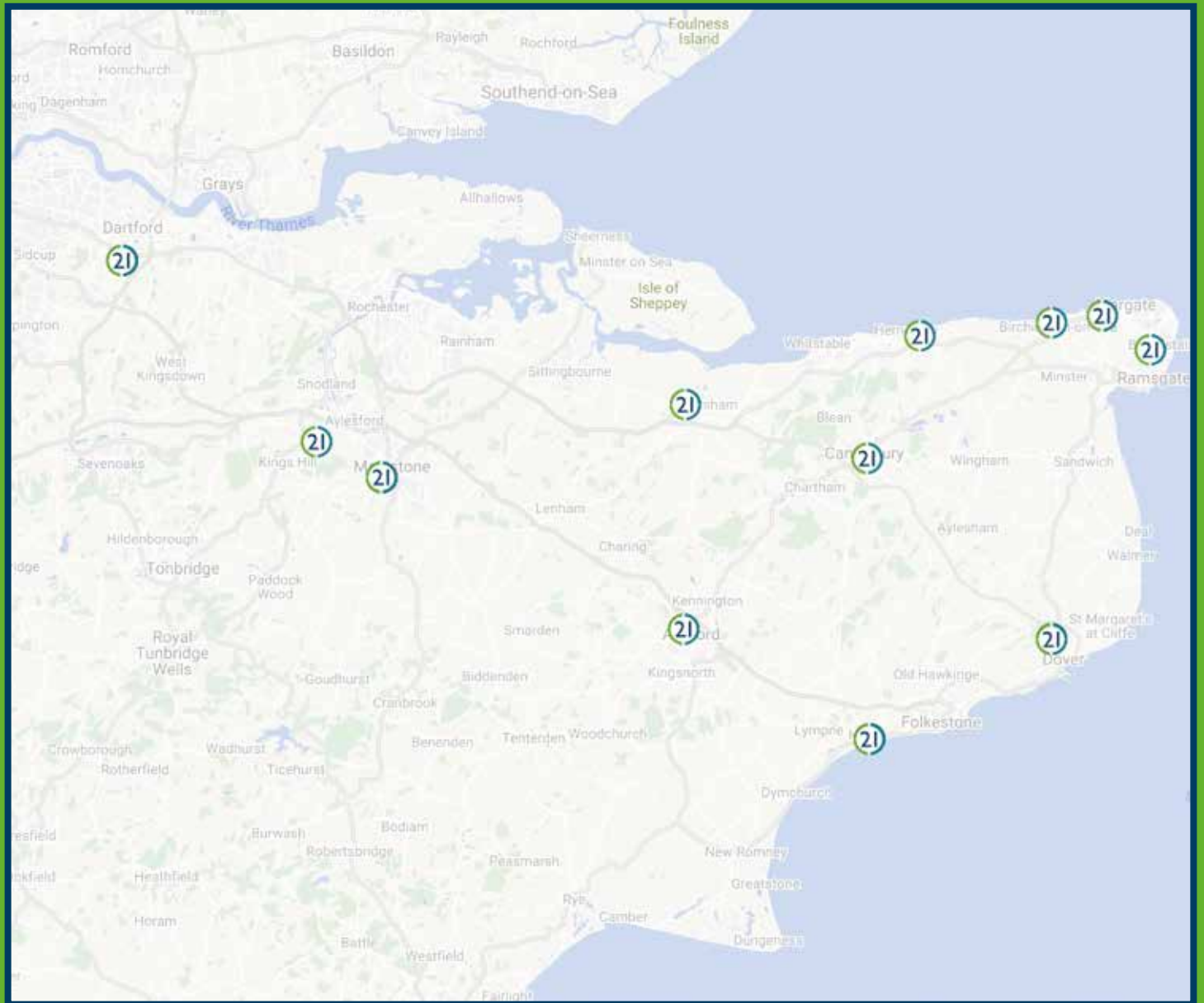
Reinvestment in our existing properties

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



Jenny Graham
Operations &
Partnership
Manager

“I enjoyed meeting many of you at the resident events last year and hearing about your experiences of living in Extra Care, as well as your suggestions on how we can continue to improve. I hope you enjoy reading our second Regional Report which highlights some of the fantastic work happening across our region.”



Emma Louise Winter
Neighbourhood
Services Manager

“It’s been a really positive 12 months, and I have enjoyed coming to the schemes and meeting so many of you, and listening to your views, ideas and comments and setting up service agreements. It is lovely seeing some of the hard work residents have done with the gardens – it’s always nice pulling up and seeing schemes in full bloom. The best part of my job is getting out to meet you, the residents, and I look forward to continue doing this and putting some of your ideas and suggestions in place.”



Caroline Mayes
Neighbourhood
Services Manager

“It’s wonderful to see how many residents are taking ownership of the gardens when I visit schemes - from bug houses to beautiful floral displays, you can see the pride and effort you have put into your communal gardens. It’s been lovely to hear positive news of how residents have helped each other out during the difficult past few months, from offering to shop, lending books or games and generally checking neighbours are OK. You should all be very proud of the communities you’ve created.”



Scott Breckenridge
Neighbourhood Services
Manager

“I always enjoy visiting our schemes, speaking with you, our residents, and seeing the communities growing. It is fantastic to see the positive outcomes that so many residents have from moving into the Extra Care schemes.”

Achievements at a regional level



2020 Survey results



92% of residents are satisfied with the overall Housing Manager service

93% of residents are satisfied with the repairs and maintenance service

89% of residents are satisfied with the grounds maintenance service



92% of residents are satisfied that Housing 21 keeps them informed about things that affect them

97% of residents are satisfied with the internal cleaning of their court

85% of residents are likely to recommend Housing 21 to family and friends



99% of residents are satisfied with the clearing of rubbish, litter and leaves

The top three **most important services** to Extra Care residents are:

Keeping residents informed about things that affect them

The Housing Manager

Repairs and maintenance



Court life

Pottering at Summer Court

“A diagnosis of young-onset Alzheimer’s disease and posterior cortical atrophy at the age of 57 forced significant changes to my way of life. Faced with the fact of being on my own with serious deteriorating health issues, I chose to move into Extra Care Housing as soon as possible. It was important to me to be able to settle down in a long term, safe new home, before my dementia deteriorated to a point where I would find any type of relocation a real struggle.

“Although all of my five adult children and their partners are supportive of me, I prefer to remain independent as much as possible, keeping family

interaction normal and positive. I have regular contact and visits, and I love seeing my grandchildren. Even though I thankfully do not yet require regular support from carers, it is good to know that care and support is available in an emergency at any time, and it makes me feel relaxed knowing that I only need to press a button, should I suddenly become very unwell – it is also peace of mind for my daughters.

“I am a member of two groups for younger people with dementia. One is called the Young Unforgettables, facilitated by an occupational therapist from the memory clinic, but we

call ourselves the ‘Wonkies’. It is more of a social group - we go for walks, play quizzes (I often repeat the quiz with my neighbours here at Summer Court and everyone enjoys it), have music days and sports days and generally chat and laugh. The other group is called ‘Sunshiners’, led by psychologists from the memory clinic.

“This is more of a focus group where we tackle issues and problems commonly faced by people living with dementia.

“The thing I miss the most about my former home is my garden - I always found it relaxing to plant





and sow, and rewarding to watch my flowers grow. I was so relieved and happy when Alison, the Housing Manager, showed me the gardens and patio areas saying residents are welcome to participate in gardening. I have since spent many content hours pottering, digging and planting. I was permitted to bring a few of my pots from my own garden to go on the large patio which means a lot to me - it made me feel more at home instantly and my neighbours like them too.

“Summer Court has a beautiful garden area with lawns, some

big trees and raised flowerbeds, and wildlife such as squirrels, various birds and foxes like it here too – we even have badgers roaming through at night. Last autumn I built a bug hotel in a more sheltered area along a wall under the big trees, where a pathway runs along so everyone can access it and see it, and it’s quite a popular feature. This year I am creating a mini pond area in one of the big raised flower beds, where everyone can get close to it safely, even in a wheelchair. The handyman kindly donated some tadpoles from his own

pond, and we are now eagerly awaiting a frog invasion. More residents are now accessing the patio area, and enjoy sitting where the flowerpots are. The bingo group has bought new patio furniture and some of the bingo proceeds go towards new plants too. I am glad to have the opportunity to be active in the garden, pottering - I find it very therapeutic and I even enjoy the chore of watering the many pots and the big flowerbeds.”

Gabrielle, Resident

Resident story

Betty



Meet Betty



Betty was one of the first residents to move into Emily Court along with her husband, Charlie.

She has always been 'a local', born in Orpington which is not too far from Emily Court and recalls a wonderful, carefree childhood. Her father had his own fencing business and life was all about nature, the gardens, flowers and trees.

Betty met and married her beloved Charlie, but shortly after this her mother suffered a stroke so they both continued to live with Betty's mum and dad so that Betty could take care of them and Charlie could carry on with his fencing business.

Betty and Charlie had two sons, Mark and Paul, and Mark carried on the family tradition by joining the fencing business, which he still runs today.

As the years passed, Charlie became ill, and it was recommended that they move to Emily Court, which they loved from the start.

Sadly, Charlie is no longer with us but Betty decided to stay at the court. She spends her time tending to our lovely garden and she can be seen every day feeding the wildlife and tending her plants.

Her son Mark made us a beautiful dovecote which takes pride of place on the lawn and is visited daily by many birds.

Betty said she would never consider moving - she loves her flat and Emily Court. She says all the staff are wonderful and there is a great sense of community and security.

The location is ideal for her because she can easily access public transport to take her to either of the two local towns and the local village is beautiful.

She attends a local church in Hextable where she is always helping out with charitable events and has helped us to forge links with them.

Collaborations and partnerships

Partnerships at Prospect Place

A resident from Prospect Place previously worked as a manager in construction on major products, when he suffered a brain injury, which along with an earlier diagnosis of Parkinson's disease, caused his life to change.

After moving to Prospect Place, he started a support network in collaboration with Adult Education and Adult Health, arranging on-site activities for residents alongside the local community, and introduced two residents to Medway's branch of 'Headway', the nationwide brain injury association.

In partnership with Medway Council and Mid Kent College, he helped to prevent isolation when the Covid-19 pandemic began in March, setting up a tablet for residents to use so that they could video call their families and supplying another tablet for use in individual flats (for those self-isolating). He also visited five to six residents a day, talking to them from a safe distance.

He put out a survey to see who would be happy to help take part in cleaning the corridor handrails and lifts, and had a good response, giving them all peace of mind, as well as passing the time.

With Mid Kent College, he arranged for personal shoppers to attend every Thursday, for six to eight residents who had nobody else to assist them. The college also visited weekly, to socialise with residents for 30 minutes, from a safe distance.

A lot of this resident's time and effort has been put into helping other residents, and he said he also had a lot of support from Scott Breckenridge, Neighbourhood Services Manager at Housing 21, which he is grateful for.



The resident provided tablets for others to use during the Covid-19 pandemic to keep in touch with their families.

Working together

Across Kent, schemes retain their partnerships with Occupational Therapists, Age UK and GP surgeries.

Collaboration and partnerships

Working together

Extra Care schemes in Kent have held Dementia Friends sessions for residents, signing up 49 new Dementia Friends, including three residents from one of our learning disability schemes.

Tovil Green Court hosts the Blue Badge Assessment Team from Kent County Council and the local Community Warden visits on a regular basis.

Ashford Community Support Agency use Joseph Hadlum Court as a community resource centre, holding fortnightly drop ins for social support, interactive games, music, and assisting with benefits and pension applications. Four of the residents attend this group and the agency also supports residents as part of a care package with shopping, social calls and domestic tasks. The group is invited to join social events held at the scheme.



The Royal British Legion (RBL) retain strong links with Buckland Court and hosts a monthly coffee and chat afternoon with games, to which the local community are also invited. In September the Vipers Regimental

Band were invited to play at the court's garden party, hosted by the RBL, to celebrate a resident's birthday who had links to Royal British Legion Industries (RBL) through his military service.

Investing in our buildings

Redecorations

The Kent PFI schemes have completed their five year redecoration plans this year.

Prior to the start of the redecoration, feedback was sought from residents regarding the current décor. Residents felt that the corridors were too dark, the colours were dated and reminiscent of a care home, the current decoration was too feminine and they wanted distinct areas to mark the bar and restaurant.

Resident consultations took place to select the colours for the communal areas and as requested, wallpaper was used

to define the restaurant and bar areas. Due to natural thickening of the lens of the eye with age, older people may experience some colours as 'washed out', making the blues and greens that were previously used in the corridors harder to differentiate. In line with the dementia-friendly design principles, bright blocks of colour were added in the flat corridors, which gives them a more modern feel.

Overall feedback from the redecoration has been positive with residents preferring the new colours in the corridors, as well as the new wallpaper, and

commenting that the building is lighter and brighter now.

Positive feedback was also received from the residents about the decorators themselves, with comments such as "They have been really good and polite and nothing has been any trouble".



Resident stories

Down the well

Bill, a resident at Tovil Green Court tells stories of his life in the monthly court newsletter. Here, he shares an extract of one:

“When I was 11 years old, I was evacuated from Walthamstow, London, to live in a cottage with Mr and Mrs Stanley of Wardhedges, Bedfordshire. One evening, I got up to go to the toilet, which was outside in the garden. On the way back to the house, I came across an elderly lady who asked me to help her retrieve a bucket from the well, which had come off the rope. It seemed common practice, as a small boy, to help retrieve lost water buckets back from wells, and I didn’t think twice about helping her. Down I went in another bucket, only wearing short trousers and a vest.

“The lady let me down slowly into the well. Once I had found and filled her bucket, I shouted up to her to pull me out, but there was no reply. I kept calling but there was only silence and nothing happened.

I was getting cold, wet and frightened and tried to yell very hard, but I still heard nothing. I thought she had forgotten about me - she was known to like a glass of beer and there was a pub nearby. After a while, I was getting very hoarse with calling.

“Eventually I must have dozed off and fell against the wall of the well and woke up with my foot on the very edge of the ledge around the inner side of the well. I started shouting again and by this time, I was so scared, thinking I would never get out. I was shivering, and when I tried to scream again, no noise came of my mouth and I thought I had lost my voice. I must have nodded off again, when suddenly I heard someone calling. I moved slightly and this caused the bucket to hit against the wall, making a noise.

“Swiftly a voice shouted “Is that you, Bill?”, but I could not answer.

Then a light shone down the well and I heard the landlord, from the nearby pub, Mr Hinton’s voice say “Quick, Bill is stuck down the well!”. Mr Hinton told one of his boys to slide down the rope and fetch

me. The boy grabbed me and put me in the bucket with him, and Mr Hinton and another gentleman wound us up from the well.

“Mr Hinton took me into the bottle washing room of the pub. He stood me in a bath, filled with warm water. He then poured warm water over me, gradually making it hotter, for my body to warm up. His wife wrapped me in a blanket and they carried me into the pub and put me in front of the fire, whilst rubbing my arms and legs. I was put to bed with several blankets over me and Mrs Hinton stayed with me, to make sure I was kept warm.

“When I woke up in the morning, I felt fine and Mrs Hinton made me a big breakfast, something that I would normally not have had. I thanked her and told her I would run all the way to school, to keep myself warm.

“In fact, when I left after breakfast, I would only go as far as the trees and then vanished into the fields. I ran and ran, to get away from Wardhedges, as fast as I could. I kept running and asking people for lifts, when I couldn’t run further.

.....

It was a long way for me, but I was not worried. I was feeling nice and warm, thinking that I was getting further and further away from Wardhedges.

“About six or seven hours later, I walked into the laundrette in Hoe Street, Walthamstow, straight into the arms of three lovely females, my mother and my two elder sisters who, before I could stop them, were kissing me to death. I was crying, but was so happy to be home at the same time. My Mum had tears streaming down her face as she said “You are not going out of my sight again”, everyone was crying. The situation seemed quite messy, but I was walking on air, as I was back home with my family!

“My mum rang the police and informed them I had arrived home. I was told someone in Wardhedges had reported me missing at the Bedfordshire Police Office. The police were pleased for us that after all, a bad event had turned into a good ending.”

Bill, Resident



Meet Bill

Intergenerational activities

School visits

Bradstow Court

Bromstone Primary School hires a communal lounge at Bradstow Court, providing pupils with individual counselling and play therapy sessions once a week. The school involves the residents in their activities throughout the year, including them in craft afternoons, Christmas concerts and special assemblies that they hold at the court. Forelands Primary School also visited Bradstow Court and presented a special concert of Christmas songs through signing - approximately 10 children attended with their one to one carers.

Emily Court

Four pupils from Wilmington Grammar School for Girls attend Emily Court every Wednesday afternoon, to do activities with the residents. All of the girls were interested in a career in the health and social care sector and when they first visited they did a presentation where they told residents a bit about themselves. They formed two groups, with one doing one to one sessions, manicures, facials, two player games and walks around the garden, and the other doing group activities such as floor games, quizzes and craft sessions. The residents loved having them there every week and there was never a shortage of volunteers to take part in activities with them.



Joseph Hadlum Court

Cre8tive Play Nursery visit Joseph Hadlum Court for special occasions throughout the year, joining residents in singing, playing games and reading at Christmas, Easter and to celebrate Harvest Festival.

Court life

Andy and Jill's move to King Edward Court

Andy and Jill both used to work for the police, and when Jill had a major stroke in 2004, they were very supportive, with Andy managing Jill's care. Eventually however, Andy retired from the force and became her full-time carer. As they were living in police accommodation, the property had to be taken back by Kent Police, rendering them effectively homeless.

A friend offered them a mobile home, and they used a temporary ramp in order

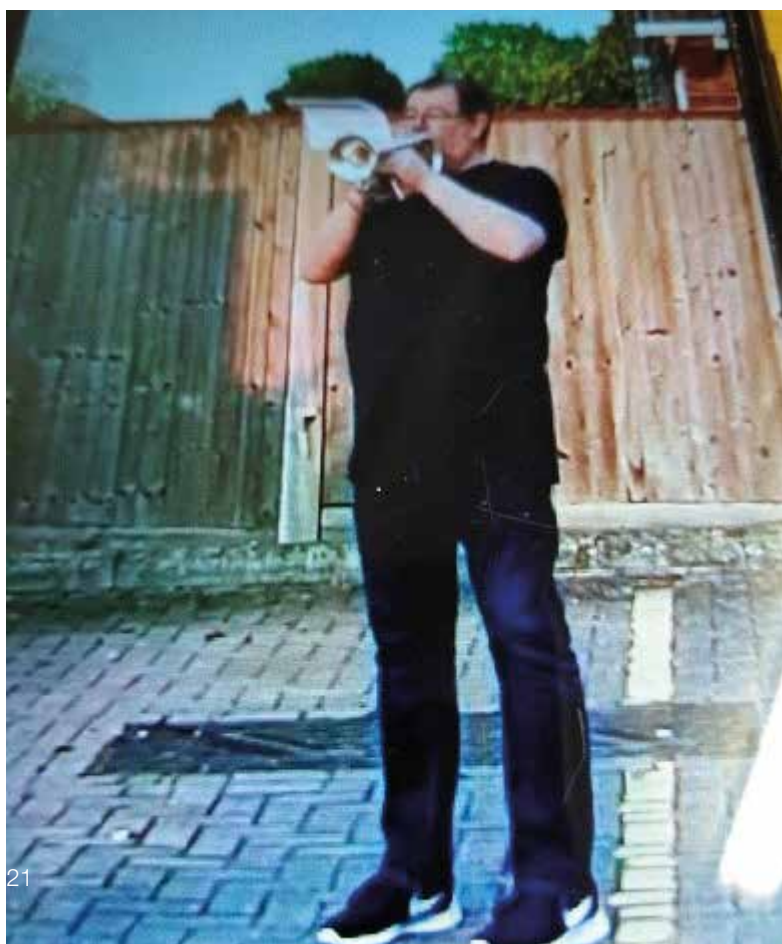
to help Jill in and out of the accommodation, but this was not a satisfactory situation for them to remain in long term.

When a flat became available at King Edward Court and it was offered to Andy and Jill they were delighted to accept it.

They have become a part of the family that is King Edward Court. Andy played his cornet for us every week as we 'Clapped for our Carers', playing 'Somewhere over the Rainbow' on the first occasion. He also played the

Last Post on VE day. Jill has a wicked sense of humour and enjoys our social occasions but particularly as Andy can now go out more, she can have some precious time to herself, knowing she is safe.

They love their flat and they say that it has made a world of difference to their quality of life.



Court life

Life at Thomas Place



Linda with her grandson

“I have lived at Thomas Place since November 2019, although I should have moved in at the end of September, but this was delayed due to the fact that I was rushed to hospital with kidney failure in October, and I am now on regular dialysis. Whilst I was in hospital my mum moved me over and had help from the wonderful Housing Manager here, Lisa. I finally came to live here in early November and each day has been a pleasure.

“My flat is lovely, it is a good size with everything I need to hand. It had been painted and new flooring was put in the bathroom. All the jobs I have needed to be done have been finished to an excellent standard.

“The facilities here are excellent. There is a restaurant which delivered meals during the Covid-19 pandemic if residents wanted them. There is also a wonderful hairdressers, which I couldn’t wait to go to once it reopened after the lockdown.

“There is a communal lounge and since moving in, there have been several different events organised by management, which included a Christmas party and a Valentine’s tea. On both of these occasions

we had a singer come in and it was great fun. There have also been teas for charities such as Macmillan, and before lockdown there was bingo every other Sunday organised by a resident.

“There is a wonderful handywoman called Sharon who does all of the jobs you need to be done in your flat. Everything is done efficiently and always with a cheerful smile and an extremely positive attitude.

“Although I do not need a carer, it is a great comfort that I can use my red button to call for help when needed, which I have used twice and the carers that came were very helpful and kind.

“My life since I came here has improved so much. Lisa and Ryan, the Assistant Housing Manager, are wonderful, and during the Covid-19 crisis went over and above to help the residents.

“In conclusion, life at Thomas Place is the best.”

Linda, resident

New developments and acquisitions

Welcoming Bellerophon House to Housing 21

Bellerophon House officially became part of Housing 21 after the successful acquisition from Hyde Housing on 9 December 2019. Bellerophon House is situated close to the river and within walking distance of historic Rochester. There are 41 spacious apartments within the scheme, with a choice of one or two bedrooms. The lead up to the acquisition required a lot of behind the scenes working to ensure all the housing systems were in place for the day of handover.

Resident engagement was extremely productive prior to acquisition, with lots of questions asked about what would happen next.

Since taking over Bellerophon House the feedback from residents has been positive, especially in regards to repairs and the housing management service. One of the main changes is that Housing 21 has a full-time Housing Manager who works from Monday to Friday 9am-5pm, whereas Hyde Housing only had a part-time manager.

Housing Manager, Carol Reeves, has been extremely busy since the acquisition ensuring everything was in place as quickly as possible and has been instrumental in ensuring the period after the acquisition was calm, and caused as little disruption to residents as possible, especially as it was only a few weeks before Christmas.

Feedback regarding the Housing Manager has been very positive from residents, families and the third party care provider as well as contractors who visit the scheme.



Resident story

Christine's new beginning at Chamberlain Manor

Christine lived near Lincoln for many years with her beloved husband, Larry. When he died in 2011, Christine felt that she didn't want to live and a huge part of her had left her - there was no life without him.

Bravely, Christine told her son Nicholas and daughter Josephine that she 'would cope', but as the years went by, Christine realised this was not possible.

She loved her big house, the garden, the village and her car, but realised that it would have to come to an end sometime. Christine's son Nicholas is a vicar and lives in Bristol, and her daughter Josephine lives in Ashford, Kent.

Christine often visited Josephine, and on one particular visit, Josephine spoke about a lovely place called Chamberlain Manor that she had found and asked her mum if she wanted to visit. Christine was reluctant, but went along with her daughter.

She remembers that when she arrived "it was like walking into a hotel" she explained, "I saw a spacious lounge, a restaurant and a hair salon. I have to admit", Christine says,

"I was very impressed".

Josephine revisited Chamberlain Manor to make some further enquires and Christine remembers her meeting a nice couple who were happy to show her their flat. After seeing one of the flats, Josephine thought to herself 'this is the right place for mum'. It was then decided that Christine would sell her house and move to Chamberlain Manor.

Christine put her name down on the waiting list until a property became available, visiting the scheme several times. She stayed with her daughter while the purchase of the flat was going through. As we all know moving house can be quite traumatic, and Christine remembers how emotional she was when it came to moving day and having to say goodbye to her lovely house that she'd lived in for so many years - she sobbed as she drove away on the day of moving.

She recalls that it had been a long and painful journey, but knew she had done the right thing.

When Christine moved into Chamberlain Manor, she said: "I soon found other friendly

people who had probably faced the same hard decisions as myself and the staff are all that I could have wished for".

Christine said she enjoys "coffee mornings, morning exercises and the gardens". Another activity she enjoys is the colouring afternoons, which she has taken part in for many months now. She enjoys it so much she has purchased her own supply of materials for her flat.

Christine feels she has come to the right place and after all the stress and grief, she has found peace.



Resident story

Garden transformation at Bradstow Court

“My name is Denis and I have lived at Bradstow Court for over five years now. I love it here and have made many friends. I like to attend events and anything going on at the court, and I’m always checking the notice boards regularly for any updates.

“One day I noticed a speaker had been invited to one of our regular coffee mornings, the company was called Citizens Rights for Older People (CROP). I spoke to my Housing Manager, Rebecca Weller, and asked about the company. She explained that they are a free advocacy service for older people and they help with checking your benefits and support with finances. I made a note of the date and thought ‘I have nothing to lose’.

“That Friday I attended the coffee morning, and the CROP talk, and spoke with the lady who arranged to come and see me the following week to see if they could help. She came out the next week and looked through everything and we made a claim for Attendance Allowance (AA) which she believed I was entitled to. After a couple of weeks I received another form to complete,

which my Housing Manager assisted me with, and I sent it off and crossed my fingers.

“I hadn’t heard anything for a while and forgot about it, until I received my cheque and letter. Not only had I been awarded the payment, but I also got a back payment. I felt so lucky and wanted to share my good fortune and give something back, so I went to see my Housing Manager with my idea.

“While sitting in the garden it came to me that I would spend some of my money on extending the pond which we already had, to double its size. I got some quotes with help from my Housing Manager and paid for the work to be carried out. I oversaw the work and the pond transformation, and I was so pleased with the result.

“Everyone at Bradstow Court loves the pond. I feed the fish daily and help maintain it, and I often see other residents having a quiet moment by the pond. Someone said to me one day they find it very relaxing watching the fish.

“Last year after the pond had been done some of the residents decided with our Housing Manager that we

would start a gardening club. We had coffee mornings to raise money for extra plants and flowers. Residents and even their family members donated items for the garden.

“Now we have our beautiful pond with nine fish, a Bradstow bug hotel, a bird table and beautiful fresh flowers everywhere. Watch this space next year we could enter Broadstairs in Bloom!”

Denis, Resident



Resident story

My life, by Phyl

"I spent the first 15 years of my life in South Wales until 1946, when my family moved to Snodland, Kent, my father's birthplace. In 1949 I joined the WRNS (Women's Royal Naval Service), and my first posting was to HMS Osprey, Portland, then in 1951 to HMS President, London, while the Festival of Britain was on, which I attended many times.

I also took part in Naval Service at St Paul's Cathedral, attended by Lord Mountbatten, and later was 'interviewed' by Princess Marina of Kent. I was given a tour of the Royal Hospital by a Chelsea Pensioner and witnessed the funeral of King George VI.

"After getting married I completed nurse training at Gravesend Hospital and was chosen to take a VIP tour around the ward. I won a prize for medical knowledge, and later became a District Nurse (DN) at Larkfield Surgery, where I enjoyed helping Dr Brown do minor operations. I was also a Marie Curie Night Nurse, looking after patients who preferred to die at home rather than in hospital, and often doing gardening for the families, as a hobby. In 1987 I represented Maidstone at a memorial service

for Marie Curie at Westminster Abbey, attended by the Queen Mother.

"In 1988 I moved to North Wales and had a successful gardening business. I also joined a rambling club and remarried – this led to many holidays with the club and the Male Voice Choir which my husband was a member of. I even attended the epic Millennium Dome opening on New Year's Eve in 1999, which heralded the new 21st century, quite a unique experience!

"In 2004 I was persuaded to join the local branch of Wren Association, becoming Chairman two years later, and this involved taking part in various parades, including the London Cenotaph and Averanches in Normandy – laying wreaths and meeting up with WW2 veterans. I was particularly proud to wear my father's WWI medals as well as my own.

"I became a volunteer in A&E at Glan Clwyd hospital and Eye Theatre in 2014 and transformed the neglected garden into a colourful oasis, winning several awards including runner up in the National Welsh in 2017. Prior to that, I had also taken on the dull beds at nearby Bodelwyddan Castle – later becoming Head Gardener.

"On many occasions, I had to give speeches, even presenting prizes, and a great thrill was being interviewed on Radio 3 about my choice of music for a special occasion (mine was a farewell to my family). As Wren branch Chairman, I was also invited to a Palace Garden party, and in 2017 had an invitation to Llandaff Cathedral for a commemoration of the NHS service. I declined both honours as my husband had become very frail. He passed away in January 2019.

"By then I was exhausted and had to give everything up, I came to live with my son in Willesborough, who helped me to look for somewhere to live. I declined offers from two places, but upon visiting Quarry House I was very impressed. I was so delighted to receive an offer in November 2019 and am very pleased with my new home. It has everything one could wish for and a great bonus is becoming involved with gardening again, I feel rejuvenated!"

Phyl, Resident




GWYNEDD COUNTY COUNCIL
BODELWYDDAN CASTLE
LACHTY CASTLE
Phyl
Volunteer Head Gardener
Prif Ardwr Gwelfoddol



WEDDINGS AT BODELWYDDAN CASTLE & PARK

Fundraising

Supporting good causes

Chamberlain Manor

Chamberlain Manor hosted a coffee and cake morning in aid of Macmillan Cancer Support, and raised £305.80. Many residents came to the event and took part in the activities, which ranged from posing with cupcake props for photos, to guess the length of the sausage roll. Residents, along with their families and friends joined in by contributing a variety of homemade cakes to sell on the day.

Summer Court

Residents at Summer Court got involved with collecting food items for Shepway Food Bank, which is supported by The Trussell Trust, who work to combat poverty and hunger across the UK. They took part in the 'Reverse Advent Calendar' which had examples of the items to be donated printed on each calendar date. Volunteers collected two large boxes of food from the court, with almost every flat donating at least one item.



King Edward Court

King Edward Court's Christmas fair raised £1000, which went towards resident events in December, including a visit to Quex Park for Christmas shopping, Christmas afternoon tea and the Christmas party. The court's chosen charity for fundraising this year was the R.N.L.I. with a grand total of £1,200 raised. This was achieved through various activities, including a triathlon, a cheese and meats quiz, Chinese take away, jumble week, a craft auction and a raffle.



Staff news

Promotions and awards

Satisfaction

The results of this year's staff survey were extremely positive in the Kent region. Not only was there a 100% return rate for the survey, but 100% of staff said they were satisfied with working for Housing 21.

Training

Housing 21 offered staff the opportunity to complete a Level 4 Certificate in Housing Management qualification, accredited by the Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH). Four members of the Kent team completed the qualification and two further staff have started the course.

Promotion

Carol Reeves joined Housing 21 in April 2018, as the Assistant Housing Manager at Prospect Place. When we acquired Bellerophon House from Hyde Housing, Carol applied for the role of Housing Manager for the scheme, and we were delighted that she was successful in securing the position.



Awards

The theme of this year's staff event was 'Doing the Right Thing' and Sara Barnes, Housing Manager at Joseph Hadlum Court, was a deserving winner of an individual award for going over and above in supporting the Kent Team.

Stand out events

75th Anniversary memorial ceremony in memory of Joseph Hadlum

Joseph Hadlum Court, in Ashford, was named after a local man.

During his life, Joseph lived in a row of cottages which sits behind Joseph Hadlum Court, and was a pupil at the Ashford North County Modern Boys School from 1936 to 1939.

Joseph originally enlisted in the General Service Corps before joining the 7th Battalion,

Hampshire Regiment in 1944, and had served overseas for exactly one month prior to losing his life at the age of 18, in the Western Europe Campaign during 'Operation Market Garden'.

Joseph's nephew, a local historian contacted Housing 21 when the scheme was being built and discussed naming the scheme after Joseph. The family have maintained their

connection with the scheme and donated a plaque in memory of Joseph - displaying his medals, a copy of the letter his mother received from the war office and a photograph, which are on display. In September, Joseph's family held a 75th memorial ceremony presentation at the court, with a member of his regiment and the Mayor of Ashford in attendance.

Resident events



Resident event at Chamberlain Manor

This year Housing 21 took the decision to hold local resident events, as opposed to the regional events, held in previous years, in order to reach as many residents as possible. Every Extra Care scheme was offered an event and six took place across Kent.

The largest event in Kent was held at Chamberlain Manor where 48 residents attended, which also included attendees from Joseph Hadlum Court, Summer Court and Quarry House.

The event included Housing 21's overview of the year, a health and safety quiz, a session on resident engagement, Q&A and a presentation on choice and consensus.

Feedback from the events was positive and points raised were taken away, and the actions taken in response to these have been displayed at the relevant schemes and fed back in resident meetings.



Joseph's family held a 75th memorial ceremony presentation at the court, with a member of his regiment and the Mayor of Ashford in attendance

Guest room listings

The following schemes have guest rooms for family or friends to visit. As a resident, you are welcome to stay in guest rooms throughout the country. Please note availability is dependent upon any Covid-19 restrictions in place. Please ask your Housing Manager for more details.

Court	Location	Contact number	Facilities	Price per night
Bellerophon House	Rochester	0370 192 4790	x2 Ensuite, drinks facilities	£15 - £20
Bradstow Court	Broadstairs	0370 192 4432	Ensuite, TV, drinks facilities,	£10 - £15
Buckland Court	Dover	0370 192 4800	Ensuite, TV, drinks facilities	£10- £15
Chamberlain Manor	Ashford	0370 192 4478	Ensuite, TV, drinks facilities, kitchen facilities	£15
Emily Court	Willmington	0370 192 4540	Ensuite, TV, drinks facilities, fridge	£10 - £15
Joseph Hadlum Court	Ashford	0370 192 4542	Ensuite, TV, drinks facilities	£10 - £15
King Edward Court	Herne Bay	0370 192 4520	Ensuite, TV, drinks facilities,	£10 - £15
Prospect Place	Gillingham	0370 192 4317	Ensuite, drinks facilities	£15 - £20
Summer Court	Hythe	0370 192 4428	Ensuite, TV, drinks facilities, fridge	£10 - £15
Thomas Place	Maidstone	0370 192 4104	Ensuite, drinks facilities, kitchen facilities	£10 - £15
Tovil Green	Maidstone	0370 192 4423	Ensuite, TV, drinks facilities, kitchen facilities	£10 - £15

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 ECResidents@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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