

Retirement Living Annual Report 2021



Grace celebrates her 101st birthday

See page **11**

Investing in our buildings

See page **22**

Hilda awaits royal greeting

See page **17**

New developments and acquisitions

See page **25**

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Welcome

A message from the Chairman and Chief Executive

The year from April 2020 to March 2021 was truly extraordinary and exceptional as we all adapted to Covid-19. We were inspired by the way that everyone within Housing 21 adjusted, responded and worked flexibly to provide help and support where and when it was needed most.

I'm sure you will join us in thanking our people for the remarkable dedication they have shown throughout the pandemic, especially our Care Workers, Cleaners and Scheme Managers who have been on site providing direct support and assistance. Scheme Managers were a constant source of assurance in our Retirement Living services, keeping in touch with residents and strengthening links between neighbours and with the wider community, who were so generous with their support.

Care Workers and managers ensured that residents in Extra Care continued to receive the support they needed and when Covid-19 infections occurred, some Care Workers stayed on site for up to 14 days to guarantee that services could be maintained whilst minimising the risk of spreading the virus. These annual reports also show some fantastic examples of

the community spirit within our schemes thanks to you, our residents.

We are pleased that Housing 21's commitment to quality, innovation and improvement received external recognition including UK Housing Award's 'Best Older People's Landlord' for 2020/21. We hope that this also allows people to feel proud of the role they play and the impact they make.

Despite our achievements and successes, we know we can never become complacent, and we will continue to challenge ourselves to go further and do more. We are determined to remain focused on understanding and responding to the needs and preferences of our current and future residents, ensuring that our properties remain great places to live and where we provide incredible services. We welcome the Charter for Social Housing Residents set out in the Social Housing White Paper and are already working on demonstrating how these standards are being achieved and can be used to hold ourselves accountable for our performance.

We always want to do the right thing but it is clear that we made mistakes in setting our rents and service charges.



Stephen Hughes, Chairman



Bruce Moore, Chief Executive

We are very sorry for this and have made significant changes and checks to ensure that our rents and charges are now fully compliant. As you know, we moved all our rents to social formula rents and away from the generally higher affordable rents. This was in order to ensure that they are genuinely affordable as well as maintaining the transparency and accountability that is achieved from variable rather than fixed service charges.

As we adapt to a new post-pandemic normality, we remain confident that Housing 21 will continue in its commitment to do more and better to serve the needs of our residents through the provision of quality Retirement Living and Extra Care.

Welcome from the Heads of Retirement Living

Not even Nostradamus could have predicted the year we've had . . . that's how unbelievable it has been!

Our schemes ceased to be the usual hubs of activity we expect – gone were the social coffee mornings, charity events, Friday night fish and chip suppers . . . But what didn't disappear was our Scheme Manager service, remaining available to residents and visitors alike and adapting to ever changing Government advice as to what was or wasn't allowed.

The order of the day was to keep business running as close to normal as possible, which has been years in the making with our investment in technology and new ways of working. Our employees and residents showed fantastic resilience in the face of adversity and quickly adopted very different ways of working and socialising (who had ever heard of Zoom before now?). Many went home, like the rest of the country, with laptops and tablets so they could continue their work and during that time thousands of calls were made to residents to check on their wellbeing during the most difficult of times.

Even a pandemic couldn't stop what we do best and

the celebrations and activities in our schemes continued throughout. Grace at Graeme Bryson Court celebrated her 101st birthday with beautiful, individual afternoon tea boxes for all of the residents and, as restrictions eased, you rallied round to collect over 3,000 Easter eggs for schools, charities, hospitals and food banks to brighten many people's Easter. There were countless events during our Make a Difference (MAD) days, VE Day celebrations complete with a chance to dress as Wrens, spivs, munitions workers and GIs; and then came our Winter Festival of activities and competitions open to residents nationwide.

It wasn't just the social activities at schemes that were a great success – we also held our first Virtual Residents' Conference, which was a fantastic way to get to meet so many residents so easily – this is certainly the way forward to reach more people but is also no replacement for meeting in person (we're looking forward to our next 'in person and virtual hybrid' conference).

You can also read more about our continued partnership work across the country, like with Derby County Community Trust, and see the investment we've continued



Richard Wheeldon, Head of Retirement Living – North



Jen Davis-Dean, Head of Retirement Living – South

to make in our existing schemes, with makeovers and transformations, like the full modernisation at Gill Court in Blackpool. We've also welcomed our newest scheme in Retirement Living, – Summergate Lodge in Eastleigh, and have approval for the largest Retirement Living development programme we have seen for many years at Housing 21.

In an extremely challenging year we've learned as we've gone along, kept activities running at the maximum possible levels and really shown the enormous benefits of Retirement Living in reducing isolation and providing a thriving community. Here's to next 12 months, with less Pfizer and more Pfizz!

Court life

Hundreds of meals provided

Karen Baker is a Scheme Manager covering Cheriton Court and Granville Court, both in Eastbourne. During lockdown, as well as her role as Scheme Manager, Karen became very well acquainted with her kitchen and the residents benefited hugely as a result. Across the various stages of lockdown and restrictions Karen provided more than 1,500 meals. Here is Margery (below) whose afternoon tea was meal 1,500!



Thank you Pam

Covid-19 has been a difficult time for everyone, and several residents have gone above and beyond to help their neighbours get through the strange times.



One of those residents is Pam at Clifford Gardens in Crediton, who, before the pandemic, set up a small shop in the communal area to help those who struggled to travel to the town or had run out of essentials.

During lockdown Pam ensured the little shop was constantly stocked with all essentials and some goodies which was a saviour to many. Those with anxieties about leaving their properties could rely on her to deliver shopping to them.

As anxieties rose Pam stepped up again, giving every resident a plant pot, compost and a sunflower seed, and a sunflower growing competition began. It did not stop there, with regular quizzes and other activities to get everyone through.

Housing 21 would like to say a huge thank you to Pam.

Staying positive

Residents at Bechers Court in Aintree were contacted daily by the Scheme Manager, Suzanne Hill, during lockdown with courtesy calls, a weekly newsletter, crosswords, surveys and updated noticeboards to help them stay positive.

The scheme was decorated on VE day, Christmas and Easter. Residents did several raffles, raising money for their social fund and local hospice which was also struggling during the uncertain times.

Since restrictions have eased, a reflection garden with outside seating areas for residents has been created. The garden and lounge really give residents a sense of belonging following such unprecedented times.



Life experiences shared

At Copperfields Court in Lichfield residents shared their life experiences with each other in weekly newsletters which also included quizzes, recipes and competitions to help keep them entertained during lockdown.

Christmas is usually a three-course formal meal in the lounge, but in 2020 was delivered to each door by "Santa" – Scheme Manager, Helen Parker, and Rose, the Social Secretary.

With the help of the local Tesco, they were also able to deliver a little parcel to everyone including a Christmas pudding, joke, chocolates and a raffle ticket. In return the residents donated to Hospice UK and raised £127.

At Easter the dressing up box came out again and two Easter bunnies hopped around the scheme delivering an afternoon tea, all made possible by Tesco and the local Co-op – our thanks to them. This time, £135 was donated to Hospice UK.



Treasure Court garden

The residents have worked really hard on the garden this year at Treasure Court in Burnham-on-Sea. It has taken a lot of time and dedication to get it looking this good! The effort is hugely appreciated, a big well done to all those involved.

Housing 21's national performance against strategic priorities

1. Providing more homes

At 2020/21 year-end we had 13 schemes on site made up of 12 Extra Care and one Retirement Living scheme, working to deliver 875 much-needed homes for older people of modest means.



2. The quality of our existing properties

Despite the significant impact of Covid-19 we still managed to successfully deliver £18.4m investment into our properties and continued to make progress to meet our enhanced property standards, though we've had to delay completely achieving these on all schemes to April 2022.

3. The quality and responsiveness of our services

Our resident survey did not go ahead during 2020 due to the pandemic but we look forward to the results of our Resident Census in 2021/22 which will hopefully help us toward our target of achieving at least 95% resident satisfaction.



4. Our people and potential

We were delighted to achieve Platinum Investors in People accreditation in 2021 underpinning our commitment to make work better for our people and placing us among the top 2% of organisations assessed.

5. Systems and technology

The digital transformation journey within Housing 21 continues at pace. Over the past year a significant shift in moving to a mobile working environment has resulted in the rapid deployment of mobile devices. For our residents, our vision is to facilitate digital inclusion by exploring, developing and introducing technology to help support independent living.

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

In an ordinary year we deliver a range of events and conferences to share our knowledge and expertise. In 2020/21 this was limited due to the pandemic, however we delivered a number of webinars with partners in the sector.

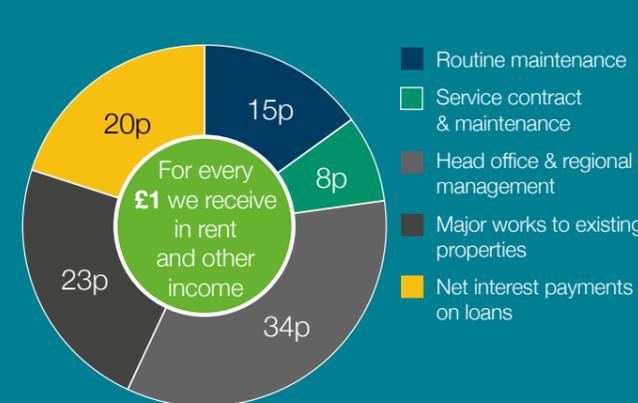


We remain committed to being a dementia-friendly organisation. All employees become Dementia Friends during their induction and we extend this to our contractors, who we expect to engage with the Dementia Friends' initiative.

Housing 21's national organisational performance

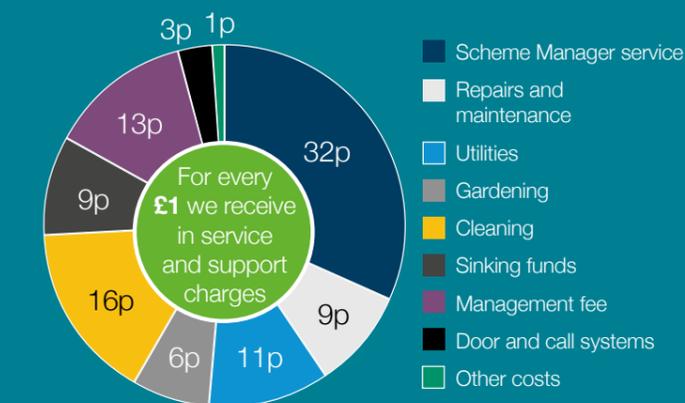
How we spend your rent and our other income

None of the rent we receive goes into the pockets of other people. It is all spent or reinvested in 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 scheme your home.



Number of properties: **21,547**

Turnover: **£202.0m**

Operating surplus: **£35.8m**

Reinvestment in our existing properties

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



* The Covid-19 pandemic had a significant impact on the amount of work we were able to undertake during the 2020/21 year.

Integration with health and social care

Covid-19 vaccination clinic at Swallowfields

With a few residents unable to get to vaccination centres, Swallowfields Court in Martock started conversations with their local health centre about setting one up at the scheme.

The paperwork was extensive, but it was done on time and ready for the vaccination team when they arrived in January. Volunteers were recruited, and the team set up in the lounge

which had been deep cleaned in preparation.

The volunteers collected the residents in flat number order and gave them as much assistance as they needed. Four stations were set up and having quickly finished with the residents who could get to the lounge, the team then went to those who were unable to leave their flat.

There were several doses of the vaccine left over and rather than them go to waste, the

volunteers and employees were vaccinated too!

The second vaccination clinic in April went just as smoothly. Everyone involved – NHS staff, volunteers and Housing 21 employees – did a fantastic job.

Residents said that the familiar location and personal touch of them, together with the well organised and managed arrangements, made the vaccination process less intimidating and almost relaxing.



Resident story

Generous Grace marks 101st birthday

Grace, a resident at Graeme Bryson Court in Liverpool, celebrated her 101st birthday by gifting afternoon tea boxes to all the residents at the scheme.

Grace would usually celebrate her birthday alongside her whole family and neighbours with a big party in the communal lounge at the scheme. However, due to Covid-19 restrictions, she needed an alternative.

Knowing that some of the residents may be feeling lonely without visits from their families during the lockdown, Grace hoped the boxes, made by her son's daughter-in-law Elaine and friend Cathy, would brighten their day.

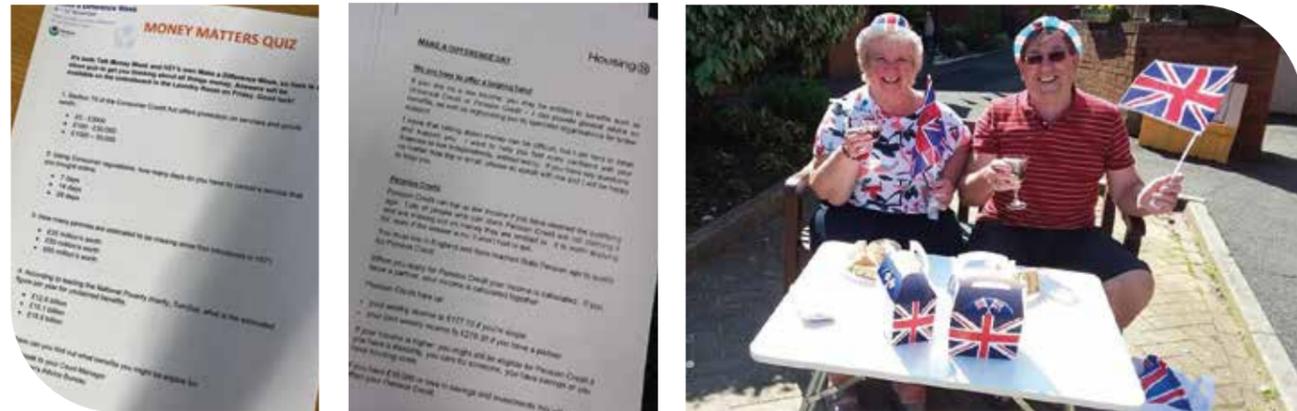
The boxes included sandwiches and cakes, plus a note from Grace to cheer up other residents. Scheme Manager, Barbara, and Cleaner, Rita, delivered the boxes to each resident on Grace's birthday.

Grace spent her special day with her son Graham.

Graham said:

“We usually use mum’s birthday as an opportunity to say thank you to the employees and other residents at Graeme Bryson Court for always keeping an eye on her. She is the oldest resident at the scheme and we’re very grateful to know she has such good friends around her. We usually love to celebrate with a big do, but we found a different way to say thank you this year.”





Stand out events

Make a Difference (MAD) day

Across the organisation, as part of the Helping Hands initiative, we've been holding quarterly MAD days. Like previous years, frontline managers have been undertaking activities to help make a difference to our residents' lives, whether that be a discussion about benefits, how to save money, or making up wellbeing packs and delivering to all the residents at their schemes. Here are just a few examples of what they have been doing.

"I spoke to a resident who was struggling financially since his health deteriorated and he had been unable to work. I found out he never claimed his pension! He should have started in 2018 but felt as he was working, other people needed the money more. He didn't expect to get anything backdated. After a few hours online and some phone calls we sorted it out and he is now expecting a payout of over **£20,000.**"

"I helped a resident, who was behind with their rent due to Universal Credit (UC), to apply for their private pension which will be a total of **£36,000.**"

"A resident on benefits was struggling with his utility costs. I called them and managed to get **£140** knocked off his bill with the warm home discount."



£20,000



£36,000



£140 knocked off the bill!

VE Day

The pandemic didn't stop our residents celebrating the 75th anniversary of VE Day!

It was a sunny day, and everyone pulled together to arrange events at schemes across the country. Bunting was put up and meals and cakes provided. We distributed activity packs for those who were unable to get out.





Virtual conferences

In January 2021, we held our first Retirement Living Connect 21 Virtual Residents' Conferences across the country.

We held several events across a week for each region, all of which were very well attended.

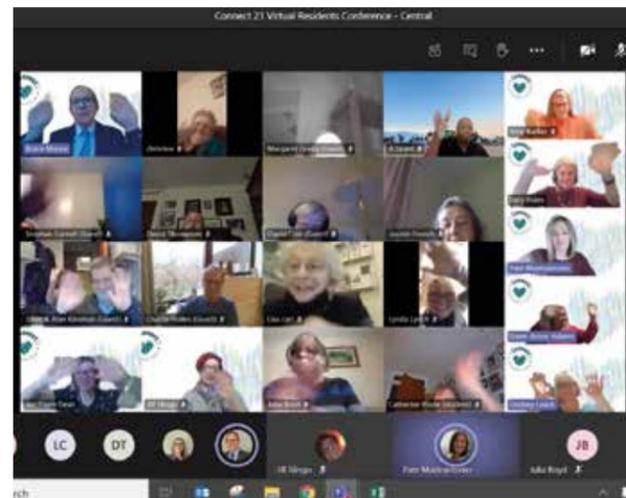
Although this was new for all of us, residents were keen to get involved and employees were happy to help them utilise technology.

The conferences were kicked off by Executive Director of Retirement Living, Pam Mastrantonio, and included an introduction from Housing 21 Chief Executive, Bruce Moore, and Deputy Chief Executive, Tony Tench. The regional Heads of Service gave a review of the year and Pam hosted a Q&A session.

Also included was a wellbeing session hosted by Regional

Coordinator, Jill Slingo. This made very good use of the gift bags which were sent out, containing an LED candle, lavender bag, and blindfold as well as a tea bag, biscuits, sweets, a mini Connect 4 game and a Housing 21 branded coaster.

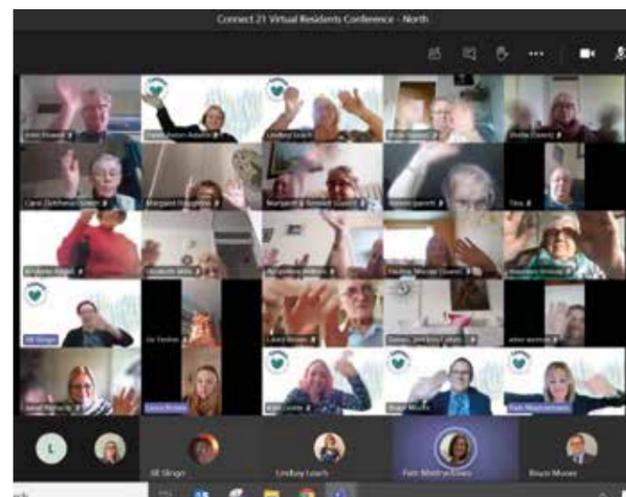
Well done to everyone who took part, they were great events!



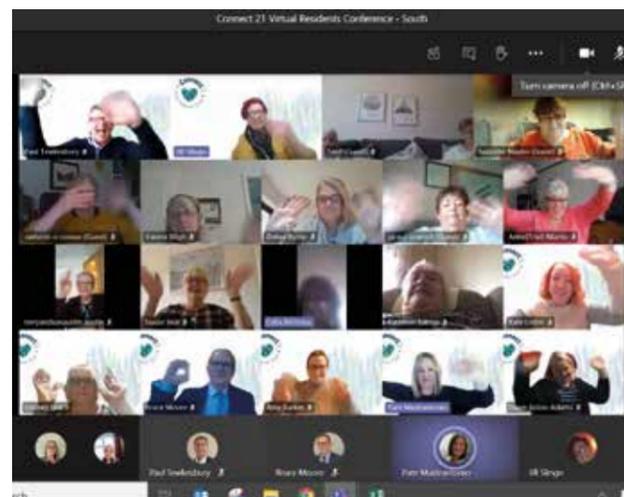
Central



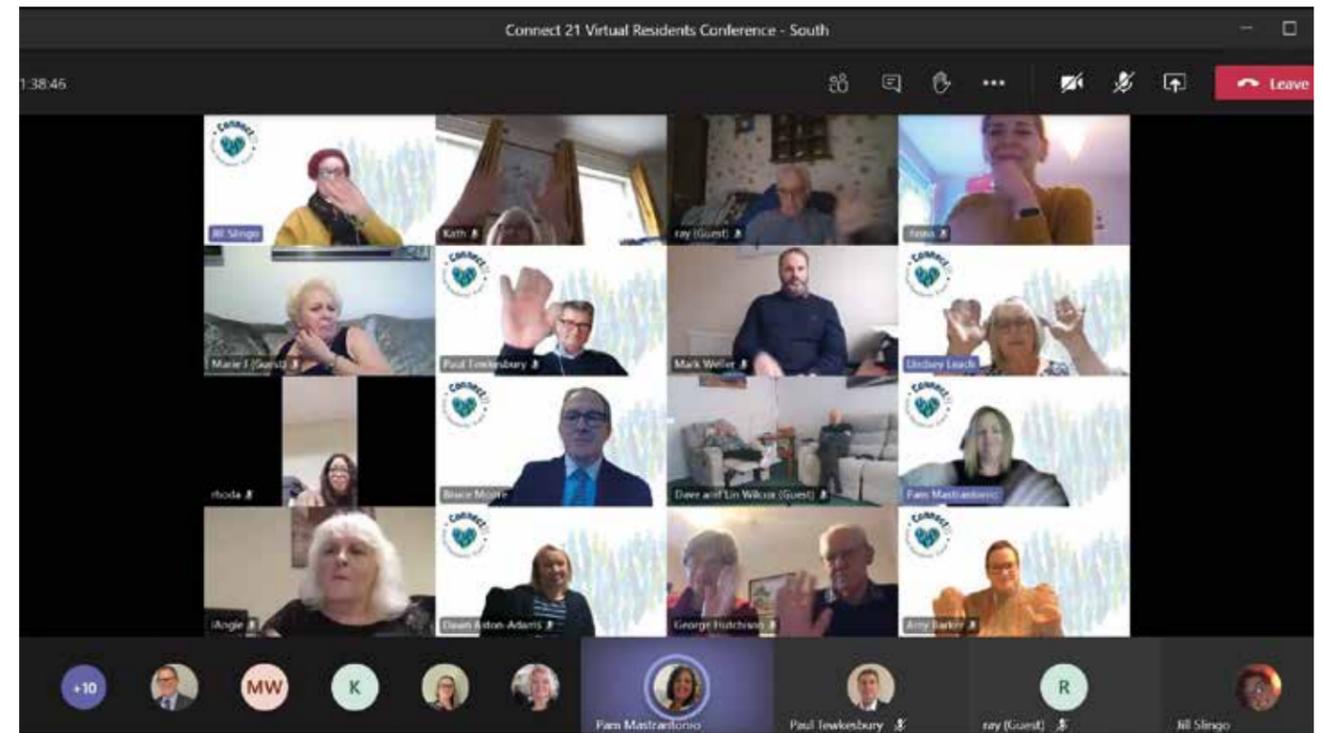
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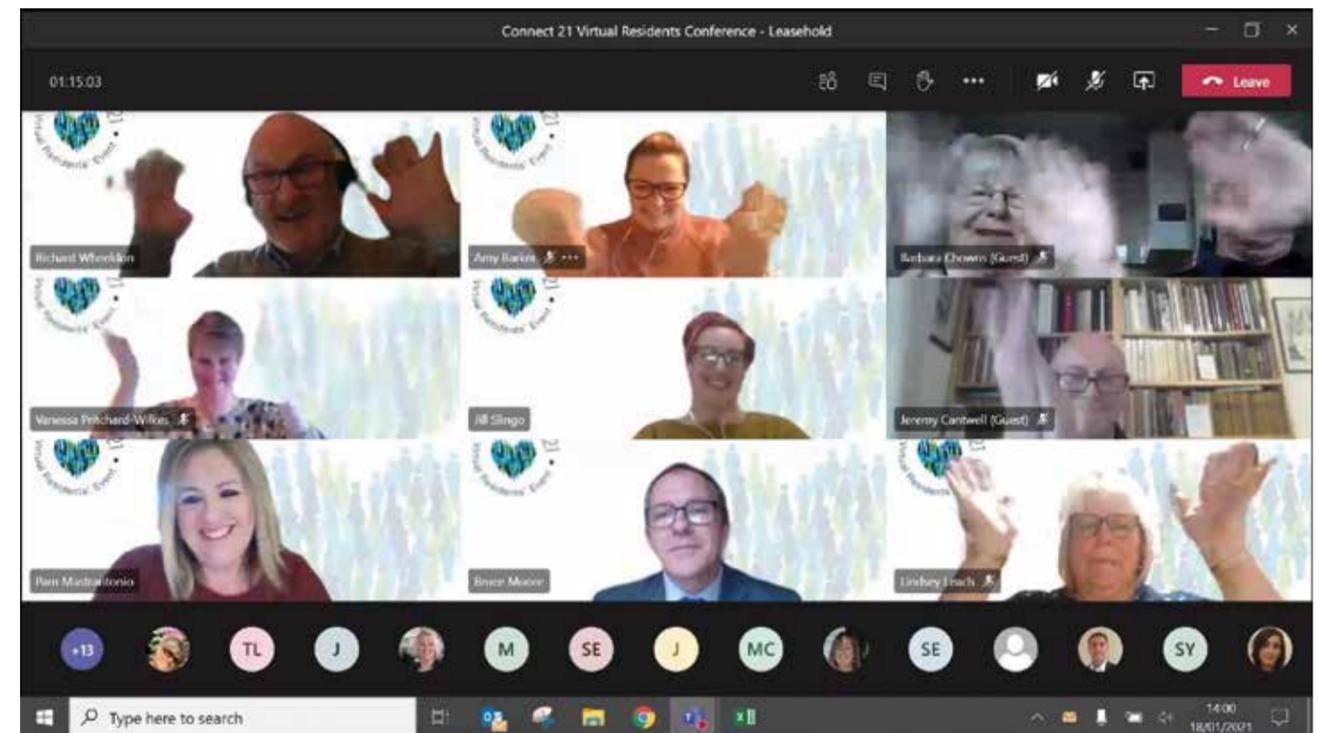
North



South



South



Leasehold

“Well done to everyone who took part, they were great events!”

Supporting the community

Easter egg appeal

Throughout our schemes, over 3,000 Easter eggs were collected and donated to schools, charities, food banks and hospitals – thank you to everyone who took part, you brightened the day for many people.



Reverse Advent calendar

It was our second year of running a reverse Advent calendar appeal, where residents added one item to a communal box every day in December, giving a gift rather than receiving one. The donations collected were given to a variety of organisations.



Resident stories

Good neighbours

Shirley, a resident of The Queen Mother Court in Rochester since 2019, mentioned to the Scheme Manager that she was struggling to use the stairs to her first floor flat due to her worsening COPD (Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease).

Shirley found this was having a significant impact on her wellbeing as she was having to spend more time indoors and was feeling cut off from others. She didn't want to move out, but the possibility of a move to a ground floor flat was scarce.

Byron and Sue, residents at The Queen Mother Court since 2014, were living in a ground floor flat near to Shirley and were aware of her difficulties. They very kindly stepped in and offered to exchange properties with Shirley.

Within three weeks the mutual exchange had been approved, paperwork completed and both parties were happily settling into their new homes.

This neighbourly act of kindness means that Shirley can now frequently be seen outside

enjoying the sunshine, or taking a stroll around the scheme, something she would have struggled to do if she was still on the first floor.



Byron, Shirley and Sue

Hilda awaits royal greeting

Hilda is 105 and has lived at Herbert Buzzard Court in Hucknall since its opening by the Royal British Legion in 1976, just shy of her 60th birthday: "I was supposed to be 60 but they snuck me in," she said.

When she moved in, rent was £9 per week inclusive of water rates and council tax.

"That was steep; where I was before was only 26 shillings!" recalled Hilda

For 10 years from the age of 14, Hilda worked in a factory making knitwear. She married Jack aged 25 and went to live in Wolverhampton.

Hilda didn't see much of Jack for the first four or five years of their marriage as he worked in the Air Force during the war.

Hilda loves living at Herbert Buzzard Court. She still uses the stairs when she goes twice a week to the Heydays group she is part of.

In recent times Hilda is over the moon to have reconnected with her son Peter, and having received a letter from the Queen for her 100th birthday is now waiting for the next one when she is 106!



Housing Quality Standards

Back in July 2020 we were excited to launch our very own Housing Quality Standards (HQS), which replicate the Care Quality Commission (CQC) ratings for care standards, over to housing services. The aim was for schemes that show good or outstanding qualities be held up as fantastic examples for other schemes to follow suit.

These ratings allow us to demonstrate and celebrate our 'outstanding' housing services and recognise where we can improve. The HQS looks at five key areas: communication, compliance, community spirit, leadership and quality.

We gave Scheme Managers a comprehensive toolkit, consisting of a detailed breakdown of all the key areas of service, plus an audit template for self-assessment and to record how good our housing services are. This enabled us to officially recognise the quality of our schemes, where we perhaps need to provide support, celebrate our brilliant Scheme Managers, and shout about the good stuff.

This toolkit replaced the scheme audit and was launched across Retirement Living and housing services in Extra Care to self-audit.

The overall results were fantastic with 85% of schemes achieving a 'good' standard, and a small number achieving 'outstanding' – congratulations to:

- Dina Richardson, Colin Broughton Court
- Helen Judge and Wendy Darby, Myles Court
- Yvonne Elliott, Guillemard Court
- Karen Roberts, John Anderson Court
- Carole Cousins, Goode Court



Collaborations and partnerships

Derby County Community Trust

At Claremont House in Derby, as in so many other places, during the Covid-19 pandemic lots of residents were staying in their homes and needed some interaction.

Sam Pritchard, Assistant Court Manager, approached Luke Wilkinson, Team Leader of Derby County Community Trust (DCCT) to see if he had space to accept her residents onto their programme. After a few

virtual meetings, they signed up to work with the trust.

“We quickly had some advertising materials produced to introduce the residents of Claremont House to DCCT and what exciting opportunities were coming our way. The main project was the tablet loan scheme which provided a tablet with a built-in sim card so the internet could be

accessed from anywhere – no internet connection was needed in their homes. This was a huge lifeline for a lot of people,” said Sam.

Claremont House residents who would benefit from this service were identified. An employee from DCCT came and gave the nominated residents a crash course in using the tablet. Housing 21 employees helped residents to log on and after a few sessions they were completely confident in doing it themselves.

“We are now looking forward to a seated exercise class on site and a walking group around the local area. We are very much looking forward to developing our partnership with Derby County Community Trust,” Sam concluded.



Lee, Claremont House resident, enjoying getting his new DCCT tablet



Residents of Claremont House receiving their tablets

Thank you banners

Housing 21 wanted to show our thanks and gratitude to the amazing communities which our schemes are part of. There were many stories of how local people and groups really supported our residents and employees throughout the year. These banners are one of the ways we wanted to say a big ‘thank you’ to them.



Investing in our buildings

Lounge extension

The small communal lounge at Denning Court in Exmouth was proving too small for all the residents who wanted to participate in activities. An extension to the lounge and communal kitchen, with two new flats above, and a conversion of the adjoining Scheme Manager property into two additional flats, was completed in February 2021.



Full modernisation

A major renovation has made Gill Court in Blackpool one of the most attractive and desirable Retirement Living schemes in the North region. Work completed includes installation of WiFi, remodelling of the laundry to create a buggy store, addition of new kitchen and dining facilities to the communal lounge and complete internal redecoration including new carpets and furniture.



Makeover

Edwin Vincent Court in Yarmouth had a makeover which revamped the communal lounge and kitchen. The residents are very pleased with the pictures put up, especially ones of the town and surrounding areas.

The laundry has had a great impact with the washing machines and tumble dryers put on plinths, to raise them up so that residents don't have to bend down to use them. The Scheme Manager is also happy as she has a great new office. Everyone has said how fantastic the makeover is.



Redecoration

With Granville Court being in the lovely seaside town of Eastbourne, residents opted for a coastal feel when choosing the colour scheme for redecoration. Gone are the magnolia walls, brown carpet and dark wood signage and in its place a fresh contemporary look.



Love food, hate waste

Do you love food and hate waste?

Do you find that portion sizes of foods you buy are sometimes too big?

Do you get to the end of each week and find you are throwing away the same foods?

You're not alone – on average each household wastes around £700 every year – that's a third of all food produced which goes to waste.

The UK was responsible for **9.5 million** tonnes of food waste in 2018. That amount of food waste could fill **190** Royal Albert Halls.

Households caused **70%** of the UK's food waste, throwing away **6.6 million** tonnes of food, of which **4.5 million** tonnes was edible.

As part of the Helping Hands initiative, Housing 21 has created the Love Food Hate Waste project. We would like to try and help you save money and food.

There are many ways you can help one and other such as:

- Share with a neighbour- one can buy the item one week and the other the next
- Enjoy a bring and share lunch with other residents which can be held in the communal lounges

- Speak to your Scheme Manager about having an area where residents can drop food into that would usually go to waste and see if other residents can make use of it
- Any food that is not wanted could always be donated to the local food banks

Email us at MAD@Housing21.org.uk with your stories and pictures so we can share with other schemes and get more people involved.

Lord Cornwallis Court residents in Folkestone grow their own vegetables on the scheme for all to enjoy.



9.5 million tonnes of food waste could fill **190** Royal Albert Halls



70% of the UK's food waste was caused by households



Over the past few months, they have been trying to focus on food waste. It became clear just how much they were wasting when they had issues with their bins being collected. Residents were asked to put all their food waste into food waste bins and the picture above shows just two weeks of food waste for the scheme.

New developments and acquisitions

Welcome Harmony House and Barbara Glasgow House

In November 2020, Housing 21 acquired two Retirement Living schemes in Birmingham from Optivo Housing.

Harmony House, in Small Heath, includes 36 properties, whilst Barbara Glasgow House, in Washwood Heath, has 37.

Ahead of the transfer, Housing 21's local management met residents at the schemes to consult on the change. They discussed the ambitious

plans Housing 21 had for the schemes and sought to ease any concerns residents had about the change of management.

Both sites need significant investment to meet our high property standards. Over the next few years, we will be investing £2m to ensure residents have schemes they can be proud of.

We are delighted residents of these schemes are now part of the Housing 21 family, and we hope we can make a big difference as their new landlord.



Tahir, Barbara Glasgow House resident



Summertgate Lodge

Summertgate Lodge is our new Retirement Living scheme in North Stoneham, Eastleigh.

The scheme consists of 14 rental and 12 shared ownership properties that offer either one or two bedrooms. The building has two commercial units which are part of a larger development, and it is hoped they will provide residents with amenities such as a local shop.

The scheme also offers residents an easy access buggy store, fully fitted communal lounge, garden and even an electric car charging point.

Complaints

Housing 21 welcomes complaints and sees them as an opportunity to learn and improve. We work closely with the Housing Ombudsman and in January 2021 we changed

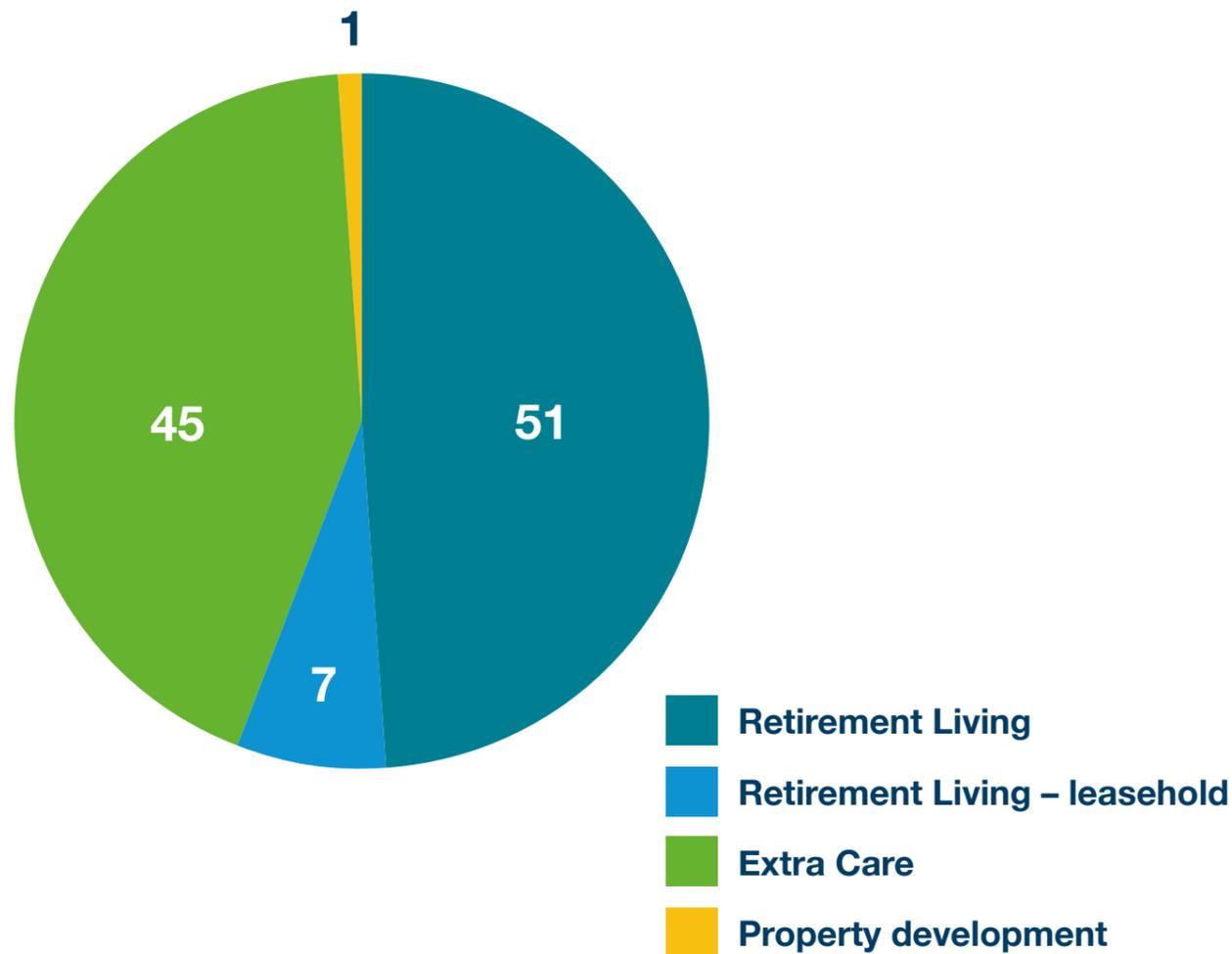
our policy and adopted their best practice for dealing with complaints.

We encourage our local managers to try to resolve

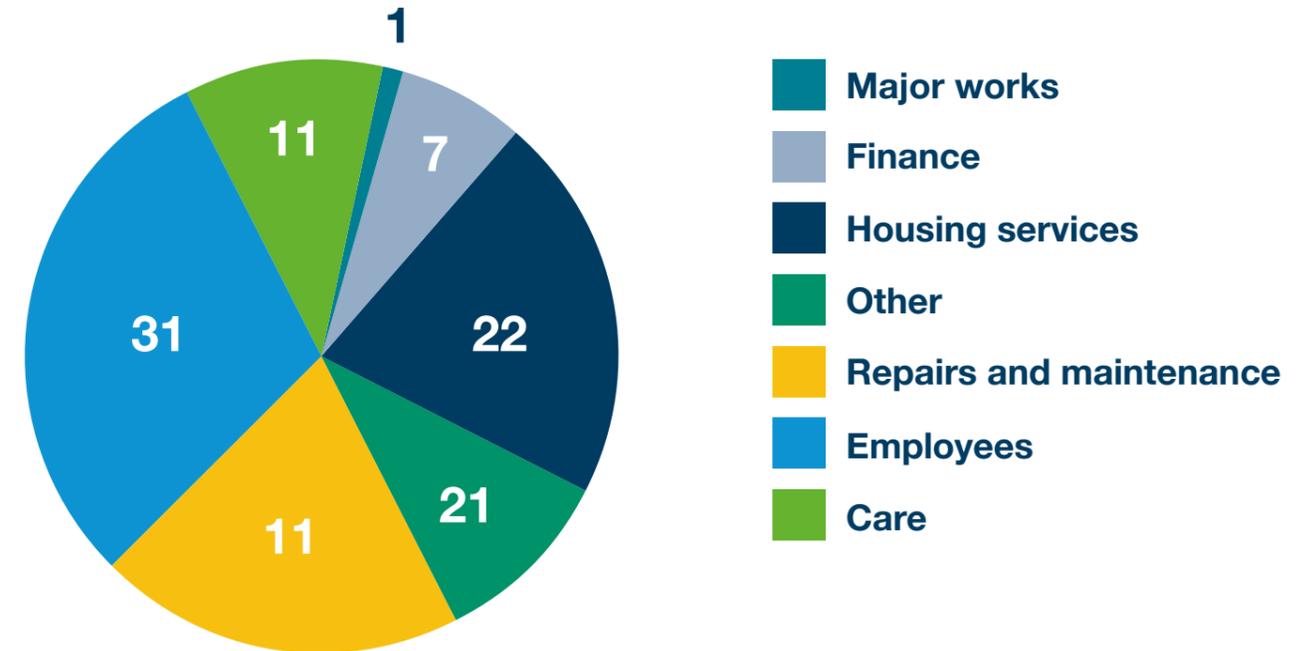
your issues promptly as they arise. Where this has not been possible, we raise a formal complaint. During the year April 2020 – March 2021 we had 104 formal complaints.

The complaints were about a range of issues – the top three reasons for complaining were employees (31), housing services (22) and repairs and maintenance (21). In Extra Care the highest number of complaints received was for Care (11).

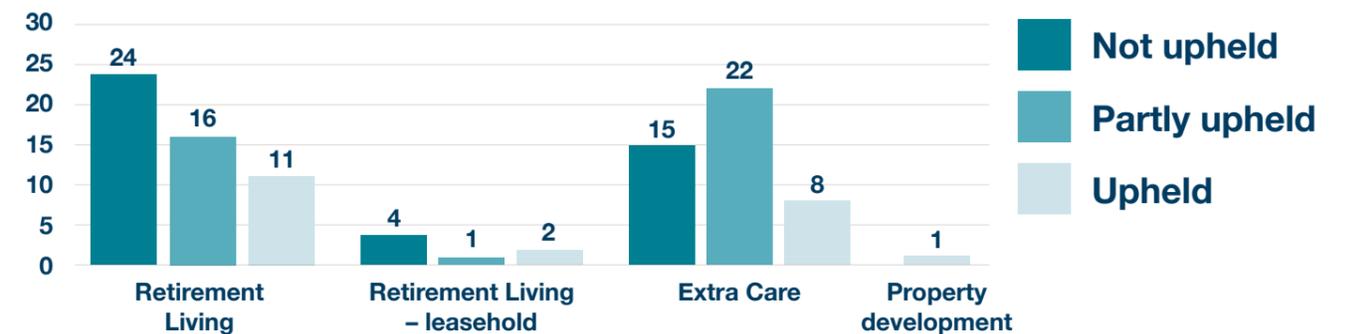
Formal Complaints – April 2020-21



What our complaints are about



Outcome of Formal Complaints



We look at all complaints to see how we can improve our services and have introduced changes both at scheme level and with our policies and procedures. This has included new training in damp and condensation and in communication around repairs, a review of the Pets’ Policy and the Antisocial Behaviour Policy, improvements to the consultation process for major works and to the equipment used by local managers so they can take photos of documents and forms.

Housing Ombudsman

The Housing Ombudsman provided outcomes in six cases during the year – some cases covered several subjects so had more than one outcome (determination). In total there were 13 determinations of which:

- **Five** – No fault found
- **Two** – Where Housing 21 had already addressed the issue and offered redress

- **Two** – Outside of their jurisdiction
- **One** – Service failure around antisocial behaviour
- **Three** – Maladministration for failure to follow policy, delay in communication around repairs and how a complaint about a manager was handled.

Employee stories

PPE heroines

Lorna Webber, Scheme Manager at Miller Court in Skegness explains how she found a supplier of Covid-19 personal protective equipment (PPE) for the whole of the North region.

“As someone that likes to shop, I was happy to take on the challenge of finding suppliers of personal protective equipment (PPE) to help ensure Housing 21 employees across the North could continue to work at our schemes and deliver an uninterrupted service.

“I was able to find a local supplier in the heart of the Lincolnshire Wolds. Thank you to this supplier that helped to provide equipment not just to the local schemes, but also to Housing 21 schemes throughout the North region.

“Layby drop offs were arranged to transport the stock between areas and keep our supplies shared across the North region. PPE and teamwork got us through!”



Jen Hutchinson, Scheme Manager and Amanda Whiteoak, Assistant Scheme Manager at Scarbrough Court in their PPE

Cleaning in the pandemic

Lynda Appleby, Cleaner at Curtis Court in Burton-on-Trent talks about her work during the pandemic:

“I felt scared when we first went into lockdown, but I was determined to keep the residents safe, and I did take it really seriously.

“I spent my days at the scheme constantly disinfecting any area that

could be touched- door handles, letterboxes, key safes, wheelie bins etc. I didn’t want any resident getting the virus. I stayed positive and felt grateful that I was able to go to work. I shopped for a resident that needed essential food and dropped it on their doorstep.

“Receiving a thank you letter and gift card made me feel appreciated by Housing 21, which made it all worthwhile.”



Passionate about people

Samantha Pritchard, Assistant Scheme Manager at Claremont House in Derby, explains how Housing 21 has understood her personal circumstances.

“My story into adult care began seven years ago. My grandfather was diagnosed with vascular dementia and sadly passed away very quickly.

“This made me think that I wanted to make a difference and help other families. I wanted a career in older adult housing, but my home life can be very challenging. I am a mother of two children, both have a genetic disorder which affects their mobility. We have lots of appointments

at hospitals and I have to have lots of involvement with my children’s education.

“At my interview I declared my personal situation to our Retirement Living Manager. She listened to me and took time to understand. I didn’t think I would be successful in achieving the role, but to my surprise I was!

“From my first day I knew there was always someone to help me. The Central 1 Team have been so welcoming and warm, helping me along the way.

“The flexibility shown by Housing 21 really reassures me that they have their employees at the heart of their service. I know this is the company I want to have a long and happy career with.”



Working from home

Kathryn Wickenden started work as Scheme Manager at Falkland Court in Bingley the day before national lockdown came into force, but with the support of the team she has found it a “fabulous adventure”.

“My first day was excellent, my scheme buddy ensured passwords, access to systems and equipment were all sorted before we began training.

“That evening the announcement was made that we were to work from home where possible. Loaded with policy booklets and a tablet, my working from home began!

“The team meetings were invaluable, and I quickly realised my support network was a group of passionate people with a wealth of experience who were willing to help me anytime, they were also dog mad and very funny!

“The hardest part at the beginning was not meeting our residents face to face; however the daily calls soon built up a rapport.

“My experience was not as expected with the pandemic but so far it has been one fabulous adventure with an amazing team.”



Gardening through lockdown

Ronald West Court

“Loughborough University Action Students have been so good in helping us with gardening this year, turning up each Wednesday afternoon whatever the weather. We had to say a big ‘thank you’ to them with afternoon tea, not just for their practical help but also motivating residents to get out, get moving and get stuff done!”

“The first image was taken when the students first started helping us in the garden back in March; the second image was taken in June at a tea we had to say ‘thank you’ to the students for all their help.”

Victoria Edwards, Scheme Manager



Anne Figg Court

“A new planter was built during lockdown by a resident at Anne Figg Court. The floral display was awarded third prize in a local authority ‘Best in Bloom’ competition.”

Amy Haggerty, Scheme Manager

Farren Court

“The area by the front of Farren Court, on the main road is pictured here. It is maintained, with love, by a resident who has lived at Farren Court since July 2014. She single handedly nurtures this garden and is seen out there quite a few times each week. During the Covid-19 restrictions it has given her respite, and fellow residents happiness in looking at her works.”

Marc Golby, Scheme Manager



Charles Busby Court

“The garden at Charles Busby Court is maintained by Brian and Joan, who live at the scheme.”

Helen Macaulay, Scheme Manager



Henry Vernone Court

“Even though there wasn’t a local gardening competition this year due to Covid-19, this didn’t stop the residents at Henry Vernone Court from making the gardens at the scheme look amazing!”

Jane Wright, Retirement Housing Manager



Miller Court

“The residents have done a lovely job in the grounds at Miller Court. Planters, baskets and sunflowers galore! Over the last three years residents have raised over £3,000 towards plants, shrubs, tools etc. for the gardens and it has become a real team effort looking after the grounds.”

“The gardens have also become a haven for local wildlife with families of ducks, peacocks, deer, lots of different butterflies, and even a swarm of 5,000 honey bees! The local bee keeper was happy to collect them when they turned up.”

Lorna Webber, Scheme Manager



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 92% 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 April 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 have been surveyed for climate change resilience and each scheme will have an action plan by April 2022 to promote longer term environmental sustainability.



Transport

We are aiming to reduce non-essential travel for employees across the organisation, and continue to explore new ways of working, 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 Annual Report!

Feedback

We hope you have enjoyed reading your Annual Report 2021. 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.

Housing

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