



Housing@21

# Retirement Living Report 2021/2022



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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.**



Stephen Hughes,  
Chair



Bruce Moore,  
Chief Executive

# Welcome from the Chair and Chief Executive

Welcome to the Retirement Living Report 2021/2022. This is a chance for us to share our successes and progress over the past financial year, including stories from our courts, updates on developments and our ambitions for the future.

One of our aspirations is to better utilise our digital platforms including the website and social media. So this year, we have produced a welcome video where you can hear directly from us by using the camera on your mobile phone to scan the QR code below or by [viewing the content in the information section on our website.](#)



*Scan me!*



Pam Mastrantonio,  
Executive Director  
Retirement Living



Jen Davis-Dean,  
Head of Retirement  
Living – South



Richard Wheeldon,  
Head of Retirement  
Living – North

# A message from the Retirement Living Senior Team

It's been another busy and productive year in Retirement Living as we navigated our way out of Covid-19 and returned to the 'new normal'. Despite some of the challenges caused by the pandemic, we have experienced some fantastic resident events, memorable moments and wonderful resident stories.

Away from the schemes, we underwent a restructure to make ourselves more available and responsive to our residents and colleagues. We also expanded our Helping Hands initiative which supports residents to access benefits and money saving tips with our new Helping Hands Fund, offering residents grants of up to £250 to help with an unforeseen emergency or sudden change in circumstances.

Like Stephen and Bruce, we have also recorded our own welcome video for you to scan and watch as we embrace a more digital approach.

We're really proud of everything our residents and employees achieved during 2021/2022 and we can't wait for you to read all about it over the coming pages.



*Scan me!*

# 2021/22 at a glance

## 1. Providing more homes

At the end of the year, we had five Extra Care and seven Retirement Living courts on site which will provide another 537 homes. We have in excess of 1,500 properties in the development pipeline and will look to progress these in the coming year.



## 2. The quality of our existing properties

We have already invested significantly in our properties. Last year, 98 percent of kitchens and 99 percent of bathrooms over 20 years old had received a makeover, as had 98 percent of communal areas over seven years old. We also achieved 100 percent of our properties at Energy Performance Certificate Level C or above.

## 3. The quality and responsiveness of our services

The delivery of high-quality services is at the heart of our purpose and must never be compromised. Last year 90 percent of schemes where we provide the care were rated 'Good' or 'Outstanding' by the Care Quality Commission (CQC). We achieved 90 percent and 91 percent resident satisfaction across Extra Care and Retirement Living respectively.

## 4. Our people and potential

The motivation, commitment and satisfaction of our employees is key to their engagement, performance and behaviour and is critical to providing quality homes and services to residents. Last year we achieved Investors in People Platinum status and scored 92 percent employee satisfaction.

## 5. Systems and technology

We are committed to addressing the digital divide experienced by many older people and those with limited means by helping residents become more digitally connected. We are investing in our people, processes and systems to make Housing 21 more effective, productive and easier to engage with.

## 6. Providing value for money

The drive to achieve value for money is a fundamental consideration in all we do. We aim to spend wisely, work productively, do what we say we will and do it with integrity. As a not-for-profit organisation any income generated is reinvested in homes and services to maintain high standards.

## 7. Innovation and influence

We want Housing 21 to be seen as the leading organisation providing housing with support or care for older people. Strong values are crucial in achieving this and we will always be guided by our social purpose as well as putting quality, and our residents, at the heart of our actions and decisions.



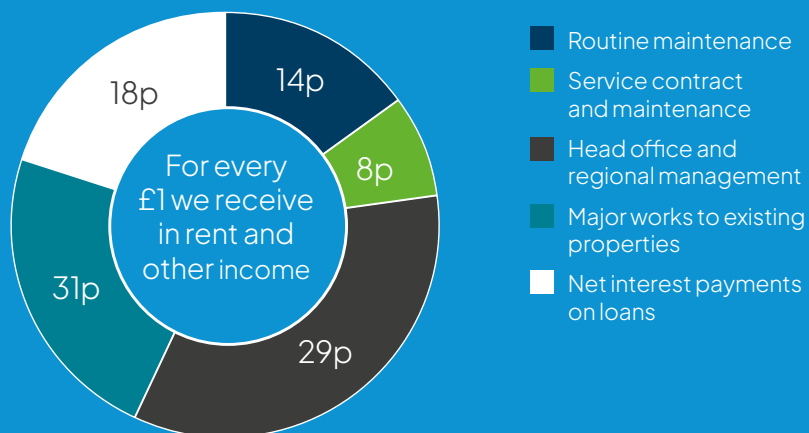
We remain committed to being a dementia-friendly organisation. All employees become Dementia Friends during their induction and we extend this to our contractors, who we expect to engage with the Dementia Friends initiative.



# Housing 21's national organisational performance

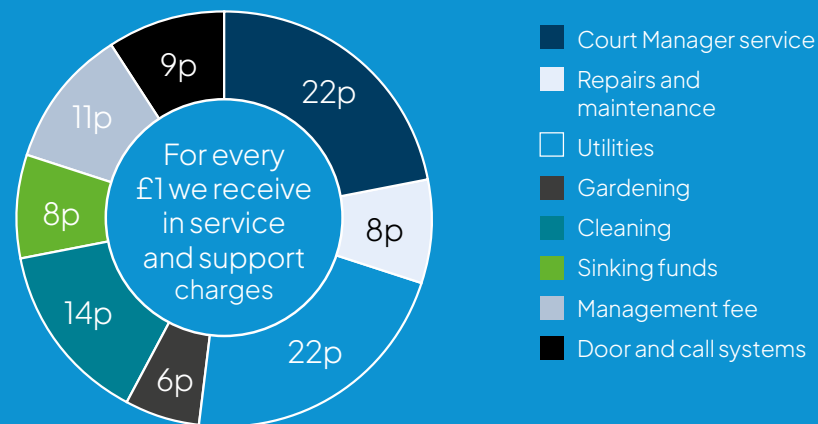
## How we spend your rent and our other income

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



## How we spend your service and support charge

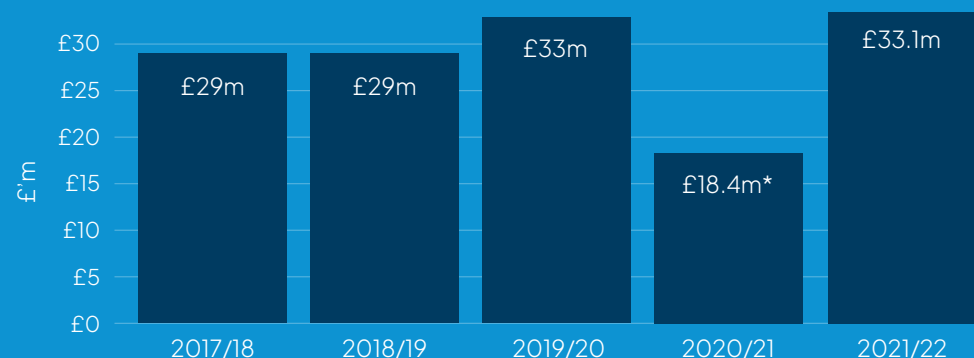
Your service and support charges go toward providing the valuable services which make your court your home.



## 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.



Number of properties:  
**22,204**

Turnover:  
**£224.4m**

Operating surplus:  
**£30.3m**

# Retirement Living performance\*



**91%**

of residents are satisfied  
with Housing 21



**94%**

Number of repairs  
completed on time



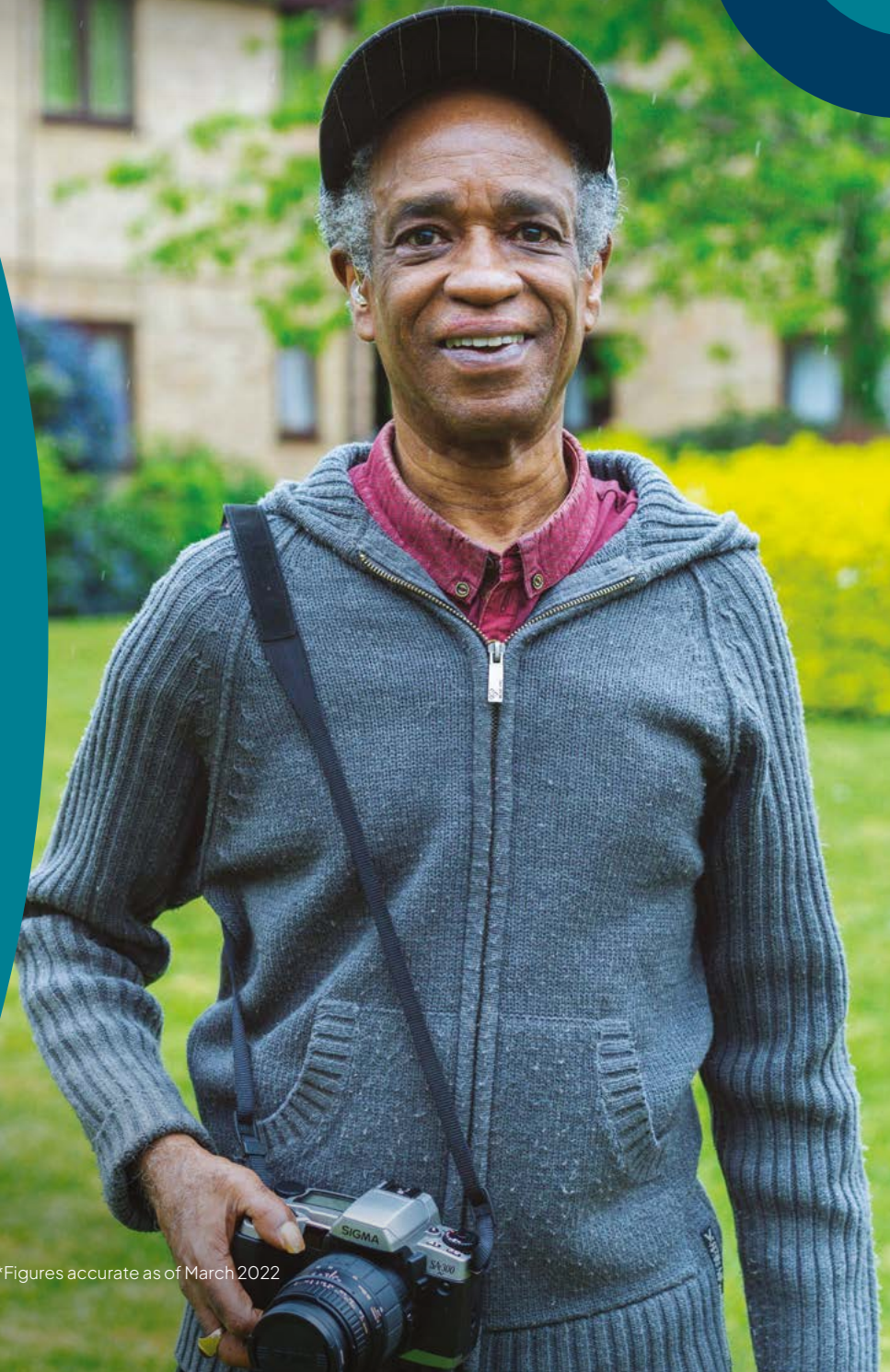
**95%**

of employees are satisfied  
with Housing 21



**£30.7m**

Operating surplus  
(Retirement Living)



\*Figures accurate as of March 2022

# New Retirement Living structure

At the end of February 2022, we restructured our Retirement Living Management Team to improve our services by delivering:

- More meaningful resident engagement
- An improved approach to customer service and complaints
- Quality homes and services
- A commitment to respect and inclusion
- More homes and services to those who need them most
- A commitment to resident wellbeing
- A more efficient use of technology to enhance service delivery

Our new structure includes Operations Managers (OMs) who are providing more support to your Court Managers and visiting schemes to deliver improved customer service by meeting with residents in person to hear about local issues and provide updates. Be sure to say hello next time they are around!



Patricia and Jenny

We spoke to residents and employees about the restructure; here are some examples of the comments we received:


[Anne McShee, Court Manager at Goodman Court, said:](#)

“I love the new structure for the residents, I can see what a good relationship they are developing with the Operations Manager, improving their experience with Housing 21.

“The increased interaction will help residents to have confidence in contacting an Operations Manager if they need to talk about something that is going wrong. I like it and it suits my residents that the resident engagement can be more informal some months. The regularity also helps me to feel well supported and get help with things that I struggle with.”

[Heathcote Court resident, Karen, said:](#)

“It’s nice to think that somebody above the Court Manager cares. It’s nice to see somebody every month and that familiarity helps if we do need to speak to somebody if there is an issue that we don’t want to speak to the Court Manager about. We like that the meetings are not too formal and our OM also makes a good cup of tea.”



Victoria Edwards, Operations Manager, with Alan, resident at Warburton Court, discussing how they can improve an area in the court's garden.

# Resident engagement in Retirement Living

Housing 21 has a new Resident Engagement Strategy that has been developed to ensure our residents' voices are heard.

We know that engagement at a court level is successful with a wide range of local activities, groups and sessions taking place, but we also want to make sure that we engage with our residents right up to our Board level.

Our Retirement Living Residents' Group was established in 2021, meeting regularly to discuss issues and initiatives affecting the whole of Retirement Living. We also have eight regional groups that discuss issues on a regional basis. We are now in the process of establishing more ways for you to get involved. If you would like to join any of our groups please let your Court Manager know.



# Co-creating our Respect and Inclusion Charter

Respect and inclusion relates to how we create an environment where differences are welcomed and valued.

∴ This year we have embarked on a journey to create a new Respect and Inclusion Charter that sets out standards for inclusive behaviours from our employees, residents and contractors.

There is no doubt that the diversity of the workforce and older adults is changing all the time. Within 20 years, the population of people aged 65 and over that are LGBTQ+ will rise from one percent to 2.5 percent and in 20 years there will be six times the amount of people aged 65 and over who are Muslim, Hindu and Buddhist than there are now.

It is reasonable for everybody coming to live or work with us to expect a safe, inclusive environment, where everyone is treated with dignity and respect and can be their whole selves. The Charter's development in 2022 has been an exciting journey of engagement, with many residents actively helping to shape future versions through

- Focus groups across courts
- Workshops with the Residents' Engagement Group
- Feedback from Resident Engagement Groups
- Email correspondence from courts

This feedback is helping us to create a Respect and Inclusion Charter that can be owned and lived by all. We have many more engagement plans to come. When it is complete, we will have a clear, unified stance as a culture that rejects intolerance and welcomes diversity which we will make available on our website.



# 21 Talks:

## Talking about the issues that matter



*Scan me!*

Tune in to 21 Talks; a podcast showing that at every age, everyone has important stories to tell and opinions to share.

Each month, we publish a new episode that captures the real-life stories and experiences of our residents, putting them at the heart of the conversation and spotlighting the topics and discussions that matter most to them.



# Becoming more sustainable

Housing, and the residential sector, is responsible for about one-fifth of UK carbon emissions; if construction is included, it is significantly higher. We are committed to improving our environmental standards and the Housing 21 Board is ambitious in our commitment, which is reflected in our Sustainability Strategy.

Our commitment is that we will go beyond legal requirements, exceed minimum standards and strive to achieve a position of 'doing no harm'.

We have an Environment Steering Group, led by our Chief Executive, to monitor and drive progress towards our environmental objectives, challenge our approach and assumptions and seek to be ambitious in our sustainability commitments.

## Scheme Sustainability Strategies

A sustainability plan and strategy has been produced for every scheme based on its current environmental position and potential to identify challenges, opportunities and guide future investment decisions.

## No more gas

All new developments will use renewable energy for heating, utilising technologies like heat pumps and solar panels. For our existing courts, we will replace our gas heating systems with renewable technologies as and when they are due to be replaced. Our Asset Management Team is putting plans in place to find the right technologies for each scheme. By 2042 at the latest, we aim to be 100 percent gas free.



# Becoming more sustainable – cont.

## Plug in your car

In the year ahead we plan to install electric vehicle (EV) chargers at up to 30 schemes. We want to help our residents to be a part of the electric revolution. Only a few years ago, electric cars made up just one percent of new vehicle sales; this year it is at 15 percent. They are much better for the planet, cheaper to run and everyone who has one has told us they're much better to drive!

## Energy Performance Certificate grade C

In 2022 we achieved a huge milestone by getting all of our properties up to at least an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) grade C. This was achieved eight years ahead of the Government's target for the sector and will ensure our homes are more efficient and retain more heat.



## Things are heating up at Viscount Bridgeman Court

Housing 21's Asset Management Team worked in partnership with Energist Solutions to deliver the design and installation of a largely grant-funded biomass boiler system at Viscount Bridgeman Court in Oswestry.

The scheme, which was built in 1977, is the first in the region to have a biomass boiler and was previously an all-electric court using panel and storage heaters. The new biomass system uses eco-friendly wood pellets to fuel the boiler, providing a low-cost communal heating and hot water system.

Residents will have experienced a new level of heating and hot water on demand from a renewable source, in comparison to the previous electric storage heating system.



# Health, wealth and social wellbeing

The impact of Covid-19 and the subsequent lockdowns brought the issue of our wellbeing to the forefront as people spoke about the physical, mental and social impacts of restrictions.

As we return to normal and the impact of Covid-19 reduces, our focus on wellbeing has not waived and we continue to recognise this as a priority.

During lockdown, residents and operational teams used their creativity to prioritise wellbeing through socially distanced activities and technology to video call family and friends and we continue to encourage any ideas to improve wellbeing.

## Social wellbeing

Lots of our schemes have regular social events such as quizzes, coffee mornings and parties (amongst lots of others) where you can get involved and get to know your neighbours.

## Physical wellbeing

We all know that being active is good for us which is why many of our schemes have regular activities such as tai-chi, chair yoga or seated exercise.

## Financial wellbeing

Over the coming pages you will read about our Make a Difference (MAD) Days and Helping Hands initiatives which can offer advice and support with any financial queries you may have. Our Helping Hands Fund can be used to help residents in a financial emergency whilst our monthly newsletters contain a Helping Hands Handy Hints column, promoting things you can do to help save money.

If you have an idea for a new event or activity, speak to your fellow residents or Scheme Manager.



# Making a difference through Helping Hands

In 2020, we launched our Helping Hands campaign which encouraged residents to speak to their local manager about any questions or concerns they may have with their rent account. As part of this support, we also introduced quarterly Make a Difference (MAD) Days encouraging managers to participate in themes such as acts of kindness, share a smile and talk money.

## Treats and cheer to celebrate first year

Residents at Avon Court in County Durham celebrated the first anniversary of the Helping Hands initiative with an afternoon tea for residents.

## Bechers Court offers thanks for support

Inspired by the MAD Days, residents at Bechers Court in Liverpool held their own event to thank those who had supported them through the pandemic. Residents Betty and Fred were recognised for their efforts to help others, which included shopping for groceries, collecting prescriptions and bringing daily newspapers.

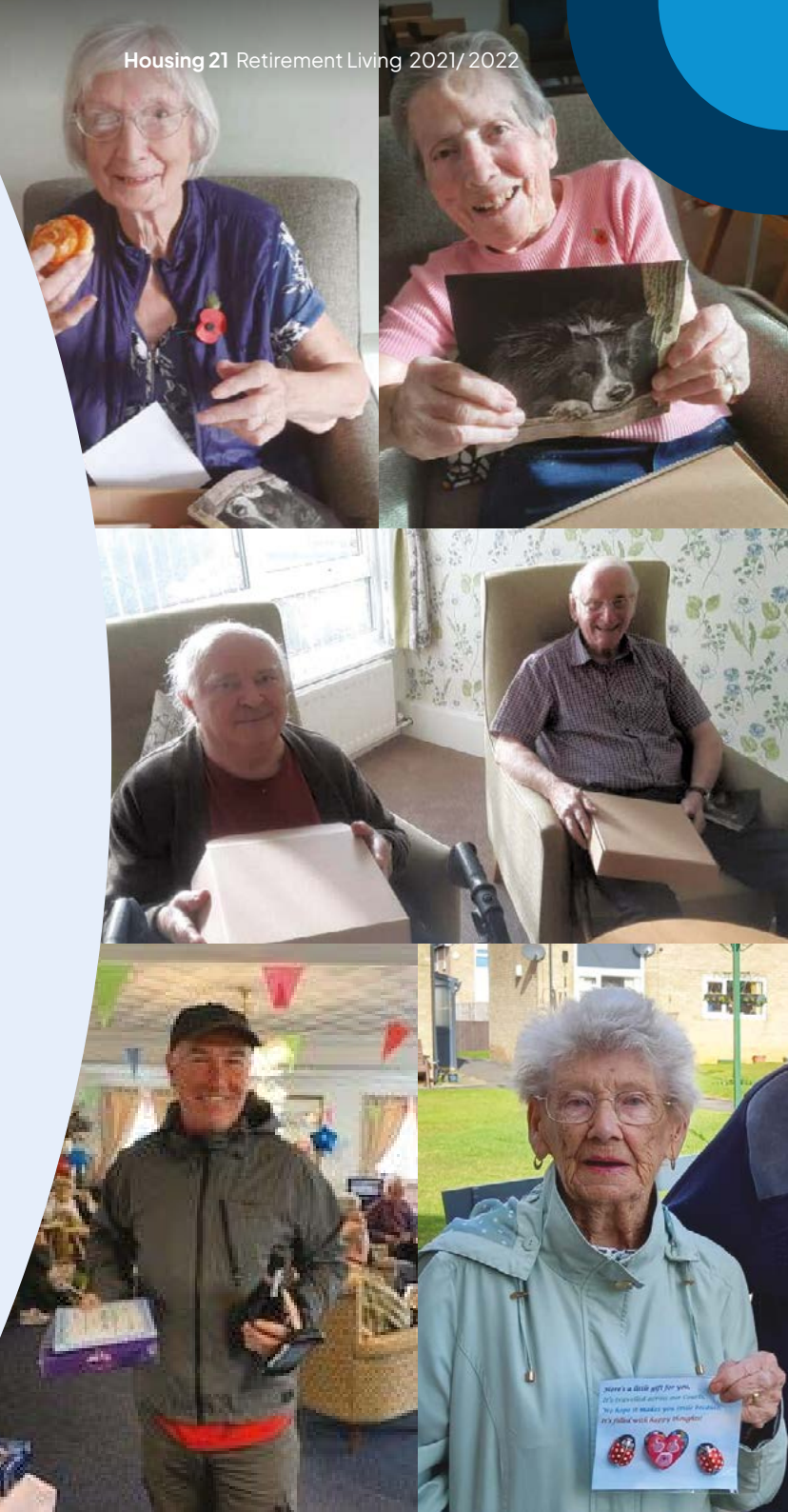
Residents also showed their appreciation to the court's Cleaner, Barbara, and local Postman, John, for their excellent services throughout.

## Residents' glee at free delivery

For Cohen Court's MAD Day in Stockton, Court Manager Cath gave everyone a free NHS prescription delivery form, saving some residents up to £55 a year in delivery charges. Residents also received a 'brew and biscuits pack' to enjoy while completing the paperwork.

## Creative arts become positive hearts

Court Manager Sarah organised a joint MAD Day between Hollis Court and Normanby Court in Middlesbrough as residents designed positivity hearts for each other, complete with poems and chocolates. Hollis residents then travelled to Normanby to deliver their creations, finishing with a biscuit and a brew.



# Cashing in on expert knowledge

Wherever we can, we are always looking to deliver the best service and return on investment to our residents, which includes looking at ways to save money or obtain any available funding.

## Calculating the benefits of Tenancy Gurus

Following the launch of the Helping Hands initiative, we introduced Tenancy Gurus across the organisation to provide specialist advice and support on issues such as benefits and arrears. During 2021, the Tenancy Gurus collectively claimed more than £707,000 in benefits and grants on behalf of residents across the organisation.

## Bills looked bleak before fixing water leak

During Miller Court's MAD Day in February 2022, Operations Manager Lorna was approached by a 90-year-old resident with concerns about his water bill of £1,032, which would take 44 months to pay.

Lorna visited the one-bedroom property in Wainfleet and noticed the toilet overflow was constantly running and a kitchen tap was dripping, which the resident had not noticed due to visual and hearing impairments.

Lorna arranged for repairs and contacted Anglian Water to explain the situation and request a Leakage Allowance Grant. Within 24 hours, the request was approved and £1,117 was awarded to the resident for water lost during the unnoticed leaks.

Having started the process scared of how he would afford his bill, the resident ended the situation beaming and happy at the satisfactory resolution.

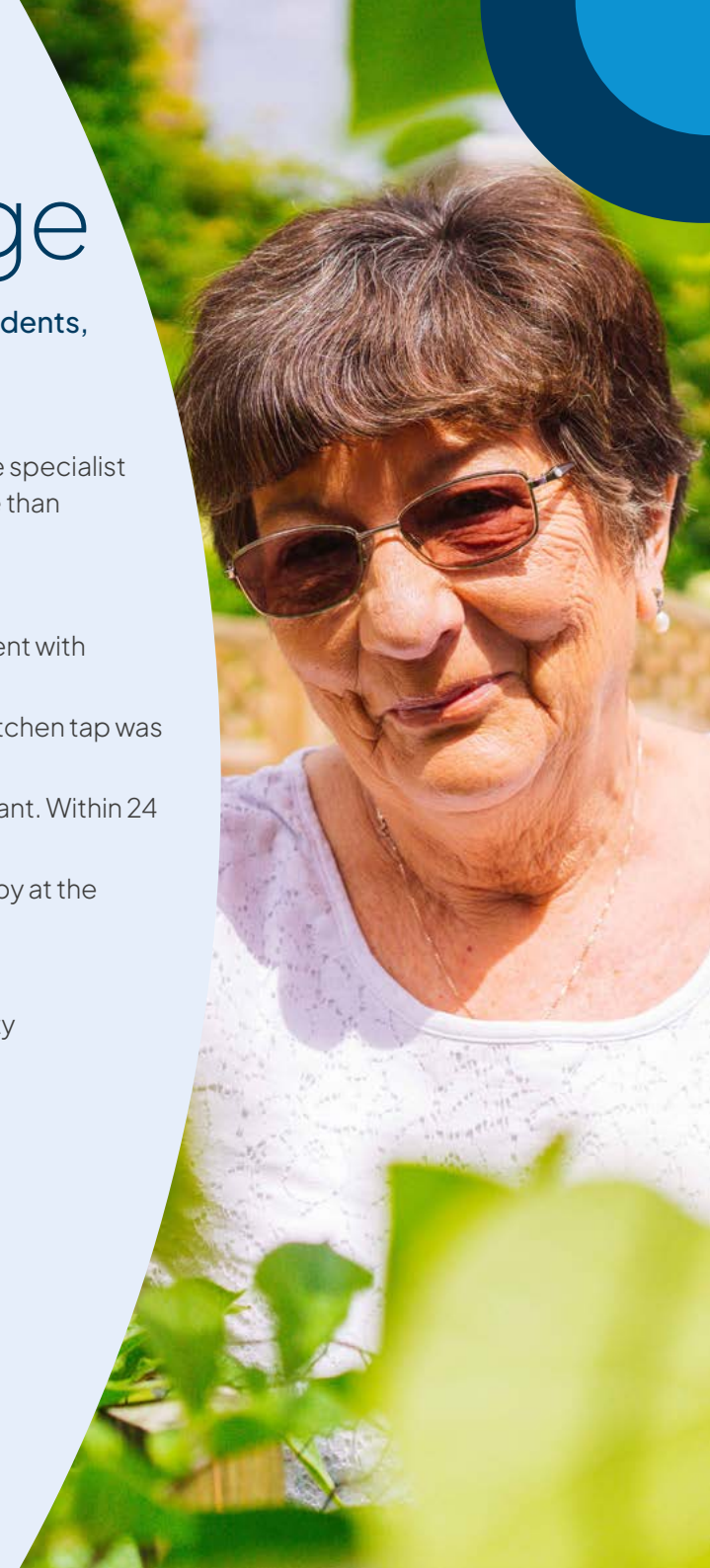
## Operation Lightbulb proves a bright idea

In the face of rising energy costs, we created the Operation Lightbulb Team to help residents and employees keep utility costs to a minimum. The team will be looking at communal and individual utility costs to see what we can do to help.

Some of the measures include:

- Completing efficiency checks when servicing boilers, advising residents on how to get the best heat and hot water performance for the lowest cost
- Reviewing guttering to see if it is beneficial to install rainwater butts as a source of water for the gardens
- Promoting money saving hints and tips
- Piloting and evaluating different types of technology which may reduce costs
- Exploring external funding options for residents

We will continue to keep residents up to date on progress so keep an eye out for more information.



# It's not just tennis courts that experience love...

Whilst many of our residents move into our schemes as couples, others arrive on their own and find love later with friends or neighbours.

## Residents share the love on Valentine's Day

At Roland Rutter Court in Pershore, residents came together to celebrate Valentine's Day with an afternoon tea and raffle organised by the social committee.

## The Love Island of Lancaster

Love is certainly in the air at John Kay Court in Lancaster where two couples have fallen under Cupid's spell, earning the scheme the title of the Love Island of Lancaster from one local taxi driver.

Residents Bill and David both play in the scheme's resident band, Duke Box. But in addition to singing songs about love they have also been experiencing it, as both Bill and David have embarked on new relationships at John Kay Court.

Bill and his new partner, Shelia, had both been long standing residents at the scheme and had both lost their partners in previous years. However, during 2021 the pair grew close and eventually romance blossomed.

Bandmate David had also loved and lost his partner but found love again with Barbara after she moved to the court. In fact, so in love were the pair, that they chose to get married!



# Glorious gardens generate glee

Our wonderful gardens are often the hub of social activity — especially in the summer. But as well as providing a social outlet, they are also a source of joy for our more green fingered residents.

## Looking back on lockdown leisure

Whilst Covid-19 restrictions have not been in place in 2022, they were still in place during 2021 and at Canon Appleton Court, many residents turned to gardening and pets to keep them occupied.

**Jim and his wife Irene** had downsized from a three-bedroom house with a large garden to a one-bedroom property with limited outside space. Jim had been worried about leaving the large garden he used to enjoy, but used his creativity to fill his new space with colourful pots and hanging baskets. This, coupled with walking their Yorkshire Terrier, Hamish, helped both Jim and his wife during restrictions.

**Rene** took over a dirt patch where not even grass would grow, but with some 'TLC', she turned the area into a social oasis, sharing the space with her husband Rick and other residents who were able to sit nearby to enjoy socialising from a distance.

**Wendy** had a difficult experience in lockdown but created a special area to sit and relax with her husband Tony in the evenings. Their Chihuahua, Gizmo, provided plenty of opportunities to get out during the day where they would bump into neighbours and chat along the way.

**Carol's** passion for gardening spills out into the court borders and beds, adding colour for everyone to enjoy. She also built beautiful hanging basket stations on her lawn, under the careful supervision of her Chihuahua, Teddy.



## Glorious gardens generate glee – cont.

### Residents no longer need to pardon the garden

When Court Manager Denise joined Tudor Grange in London nearly two years ago, the garden was in a neglected and dilapidated state, with much of the area covered in ivy and damaged fencing.

With a lot of hard work, determination and fundraising from the residents to replace the fence, the gardens are starting to come together. Residents are now looking to add some colour to the garden by finishing the clearing and starting the planting.

### Sunshine flows through Rivers Court

At Rivers Court in Ramsgate, residents and the Maintenance Team love to keep their gardens looking nice. The outside space is well used and a real sun trap in the summer.

### Flowers on show on communal patio

Residents at Dennis Cadman House in Aylesford have worked hard to get the communal patio looking lovely by transforming the area into a beautiful, tranquil space for everyone to enjoy.



# Glorious gardens generate glee – cont.

## Residents feast on tasty garden treats

The raised flower beds in the communal gardens of Kelvedon Lodge in East London had started to look tired so residents decided to turn them into raised beds for vegetables to share maintenance of.

The work was completed in January 2022 creating an accessible resource for residents who did not have to strain their backs to grow tasty treats.

The vegetables will be used at the fortnightly luncheon club. Potatoes, onions, courgettes, tomatoes, beetroot and herbs have already been planted in the garden, and more herbs are due to be potted out soon.

Residents at the court enjoy a variety of sociable, food-based events, including 'bring and share' and Christmas lunch and intend to supplement these events with produce grown in their own back garden.

## Retirement Living Team plant themselves at Carew Court

It was all hands on deck as Carew Court in Cramlington welcomed members of the Retirement Living Senior Management Team to help with some gardening. Having promised at their last visit to come back, Executive Director, Pam, and Regional Operations Managers, Lindsey and Zoe, were welcomed back to the scheme by Court Manager, Paul.

## Canopy tree marks Queen's Jubilee in Oswestry

To celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, Oswestry Town Council teamed up with partners to donate several trees as part of the The Queen's Green Canopy.

Viscount Bridgeman Court in Oswestry was lucky enough to receive a number of trees which were thoughtfully planted around the court by green fingered residents.

Oswestry's Town Mayor also paid a special visit with an ornamental cherry tree that he planted himself before arranging for his father to view the scheme with a view to joining the waiting list.



# Take a seat on the Friendly Bench

Ancaster Court in Boston welcomed a new Friendly Bench to the scheme to help people reconnect with their community. The Friendly Bench initiative is a social enterprise aimed at tackling loneliness and social isolation by building communities using purposely designed outdoor spaces.

Court Manager Debbie was approached by the Lincolnshire Voluntary Service who were looking for a prime location to install a Friendly Bench in Boston. She managed to successfully secure funding from the National Lottery and Boston County Council for the bench, which was officially opened in March by Friendly Bench Founder, Lynsey Young, and Jackie Lane from the Lincolnshire Voluntary Service.

The opening was attended by approximately 50 people who enjoyed live music and a buffet as well as BBC Radio Lincolnshire who interviewed Debbie about the initiative.

The Friendly Bench looks to make a difference in three key ways:

## Connecting with people

The Friendly Bench is a hub for friendship as well as regular community events and activities which help grow and strengthen people's social networks within their wider community.

## Connecting with places

The Friendly Bench provides a convenient and comfortable place for those with limited mobility to rest, helping them connect with local services and public places whilst encouraging independence and opportunities to participate in the wider community.

## Connecting with nature

The Friendly Bench enables easily accessible interactions with nature, wildlife and the outdoors by encouraging people to sit and enjoy outside spaces.



# Funding grants joy to residents

Across the country, schemes have benefited from funding and grants to further enhance life in Retirement Living.

## Newport Court boasts 'Kerb Appeal'

Residents who previously tended to the front garden of Newport Court in Canterbury were finding it increasingly difficult to maintain and made the difficult decision to step back. What was once a beautiful area that was enjoyed by all residents and visitors, started to look untidy, which reflected on the entrance to the court.

Through choice and consensus, it was decided the best option was to turf the area and provide pots to be planted with bulbs and summer bedding, providing year-round colour that would be easy to maintain.

Kerb Appeal Funding was applied for and successfully given. The turf has now been laid and is looking extremely healthy and everyone is excited for when the new bulbs start to come through, creating a colourful welcome for visitors and sociable space for residents.

## Concrete jungle transformed into lovely lawn

The main garden area at Anne Figg Court near Rochester had been described as a concrete jungle and was in need of some work.

Housing 21 allocated a Kerb Appeal Grant to transform the area by adding turf and making it a more inviting and attractive area for residents to enjoy.



# Funding grants joy to residents – cont.

## Funding boost for garden improvements

Residents at Charles Busby Court in Aylesford want to ensure their court is welcoming for everyone, so much so they fund the garden improvements themselves. Recently, they received funding from the court's active social club to enhance the garden even further.

## Residents get a jump start on defibrillator fund

At Sidney Smith Court in Poole, residents raised an impressive £200 from their Christmas raffle towards the purchase of an on-site defibrillator. The court received many raffle prize donations from local shops, supermarkets and coffee shops.

## Free exercise is a nice surprise

Residents at Cuthbertson Court were delighted to be awarded funding from Sunderland City Council's Covid Winter Support (via Friends of Fulwell) to provide six weeks of free exercise classes to residents, thanks to the work of Court Manager Alison.



# Unity in the community as courts show support

We actively encourage our Retirement Living schemes to be part of the community. At many of our schemes, our residents have taken that one step further by actively showing support and raising money for local and national causes.

## Gratitude for donated food

Residents at Creasy Court near Basildon had found Covid-19 restrictions challenging and difficult. But the tough times brought out their kind nature as they decided to do something to help less fortunate members of the community and those who had worked throughout the pandemic.

The residents banded together and set up a food donation table which was a great success with daily contributions. All of the food was then donated to the local Salvation Army Foodbank by two of the residents and gratefully received by those involved.

Resident Sandra also suggested a 'bake a cake' day on behalf of NHS employees at nearby Basildon Hospital who had cared for patients with Covid-19. Many residents got involved creating delicious cakes and pastries which were delivered to the hospital and some very overwhelmed employees.

The cake theme continued for the annual Macmillan Cancer Support coffee morning, where residents enjoyed a cuppa and a tasty treat, raising £272 for the charity.





Bechers Court — Partnership with Davenhill School



## Unity in the community as courts show support – cont.

### Egg-cellent show of support

During the Covid-19 pandemic, the local primary school made rainbow pictures for residents at Bechers Court in Liverpool to put in their windows. To return the act of kindness, this Easter residents collected Easter eggs for the children and delivered them to the school.

Intergenerational interaction plays an important part in improving our residents' wellbeing and they love having the local community connection.

### Guess the sweets and tasty treats

Blackett Ord Court in Royston held a cupcake day for Dementia UK. One of the residents won the competition to guess the number of sweets on the cake, and judging by her smile, she was a very happy lady! The court raised a fantastic £343.

### Woodlands Hospice leaves lasting impression

Residents at Bechers Court and Beechcroft Court in Liverpool have raised over £1,200 in the last year for the local Woodlands Hospice, which is close to many residents' hearts.

The courts have held events such as raffles, prize bingo, breakfast mornings, afternoon tea and much more in order to and support a valuable local cause.

: Court Managers Kerrie and Suzanne said:  
 : “Woodlands is a local hospice that has helped  
 : many of our residents' loved ones over the  
 : years, so this is our way of giving back.”

# Unity in the community as courts show support – cont.

## Charles Jones Court offers range of support

Over the past year, residents at Charles Jones Court in Batley raised an impressive £2,000 for various charities and organised a collection point for donations to the Batley Foodbank, making regular deliveries to the project.

In addition, the court also works with community groups including Kumon Y'all from a mosque in Dewsbury and Healey Lane Primary School, hosting regular events to enjoy intergenerational activities.

In March, representatives from the scheme attended an Older People's Fair that provided a fantastic opportunity to attend and promote Housing 21 as well as the cluster of courts in Kirklees and Calderdale. The response was very positive, and it also provided a link in with local MPs and external agencies who were also showcasing their services.

## Love Food, Hate Waste

Court Manager Catherine put out a Love Food, Hate Waste basket for residents at Major Cooper Court in Seaton Carew where they could donate any food items they would not use, to save them going to waste.

It seemed that as soon as she put the first basket out, it was filled with food items. She decided to put an extra basket out, which again, was filled in record time!



# Unity in the community as courts show support – cont.

## Handmade poppies appeal to residents

Miller Court supported the local Royal British Legion in Wainfleet, with its 100-year celebration in November 2021, with a handmade window display.

Over 100 poppies, a soldier standing guard, and mannequin dress (made from binbags!) were all handmade and displayed throughout the month for residents and visitors to enjoy.

## Residents take the lead fundraising for Children in Need

Residents at Guillemard Court in Solihull decided they would like to raise money for Children in Need through a coffee morning with cake sale, tombola and raffle and bunting around the court.

The first prize for the raffle was a meal for four people at the local Wetherspoons pub. The residents thought it would be a good idea to get someone special to draw the raffle so invited Queen of the Scheme, Jenni, to do the honours, supported by her partner Liam.

After giving a special speech and drawing the raffle, Jenni and the residents enjoyed a cup of tea together before totalling up the £410 raised on the day.

## Court scores new football kit for children

Grove Court residents have always enjoyed intergenerational activities with the local school in Hamstead Village and in 2021, undertook some fundraising to treat the children to a new football kit. When they handed over the fundraising money, residents were invited to join the children for lunch and a photo session.



# Celebrations and party time

Whether it's a birthday, anniversary or just a good excuse for a knees-up, you can often find celebrations and parties happening across our schemes.

## Residents bag an anniversary treat

At Normanby Court in Marton, the refurbishment of the communal area coincided with the court's 50th anniversary — but that was not going to stop Court Manger Ali from hosting the celebrations! Party bags were delivered to all residents who were delighted with the contents of a quiz, sweets and information about benefits and financial help.

## Fizz and celebration to mark modernisation

National Prosecco Day was a great way to celebrate the modernisation of Lord Gort Close in Sunderland with Court Manager Alyson organising a party of pizza and prosecco.

Carew Court in Cramlington also had the same idea for celebrating their modernisation and cracked open the fizz with some pizza!

## Residents get that Friday feeling

Residents at Avon Court in Newton Aycliffe celebrated the end of the week with some tasty treats, live music and a visit from Executive Director, Pam.

## Oyez! Oyez! Harold turns 101

At Roland Rutter Court in Pershore, Harold's 101<sup>st</sup> birthday party included a visit from the local Town Crier and lots of tasty treats. There was plenty of wine flowing as people toasted Harold and everyone had a wonderful time — including the man of the moment, Harold.





# Festive fun for everyone

Christmas is always a cause for celebration in Retirement Living, but with Covid-19 restrictions still lingering at the end of 2021, some schemes came up with alternative ways to enjoy the festivities.

## That's when good neighbours become good friends

Residents at Cuthbertson Court in Seaburn enjoyed a free three-course meal at their local pub as a thank you for being good neighbours. The Seaburn Inn Hotel had been officially opened earlier in the year by resident Lyn, and the residents returned by invitation to enjoy a festive meal and entertainment, with all the fun captured by the local newspaper.

## On a roll with tasty treat bag

Due to the impact of Covid-19, Major Cooper Court in Seaton Carew had not used all its social funds, so a meeting was held with residents to discuss how to spend it. It was decided everyone would receive a Christmas gift bag containing a sausage roll, a Christmas biscuit from a local bakery, sweets, and a miniature bottle of Baileys. These were gratefully received and enjoyed by all!

## Christmas in July

Covid-19 restrictions at the end of 2020 meant residents at Cohen Court were unable to enjoy their traditional Christmas Day celebrations together — so instead the festivities were postponed until July.

A lovely (sunny) afternoon was had by all who attended and who enjoyed a large Christmas lunch with all the trimmings, trifle and cake. Local Post Lady, Kelly, also transformed into a singer for the day, a Christmas raffle was held offering great prizes and a blind card was drawn with a £50 prize.

## Festive fun for everyone – cont.

### Children present homemade gifts to residents

Local primary schoolchildren usually visit Grove Court in Hamstead Village for Christmas carol singing, but due to the 2021 Covid-19 restrictions, it was decided they would share the festive cheer in different way. The students and employees baked scones, topped them with treats, and created some handcrafted cards. These were delivered to all the residents at the court, which certainly put a smile on their faces.

### Children's Christmas carols at Cohen Court

Residents at Cohen Court in Seaburn enjoyed a morning of Christmas carols when schoolchildren from the nearby Glebe Primary School visited for a sing-a-long.



To the staff of Grove Court,  
Merry Christmas  
Love from  
St. Mark's School

# Retirement Living hits the road

We all know that life in Retirement Living may start in our schemes, but it certainly doesn't end there as residents from across the country enjoyed day trips and adventures.

## Oh we do like to be beside the seaside...

Carew Court's Manager Catherine arranged a trip for residents to leave their homes in Cramlington and enjoy a day out beside the sea in Seaton Carew. The daytrippers made the most of the sunshine, enjoying ice cream and fish and chips.

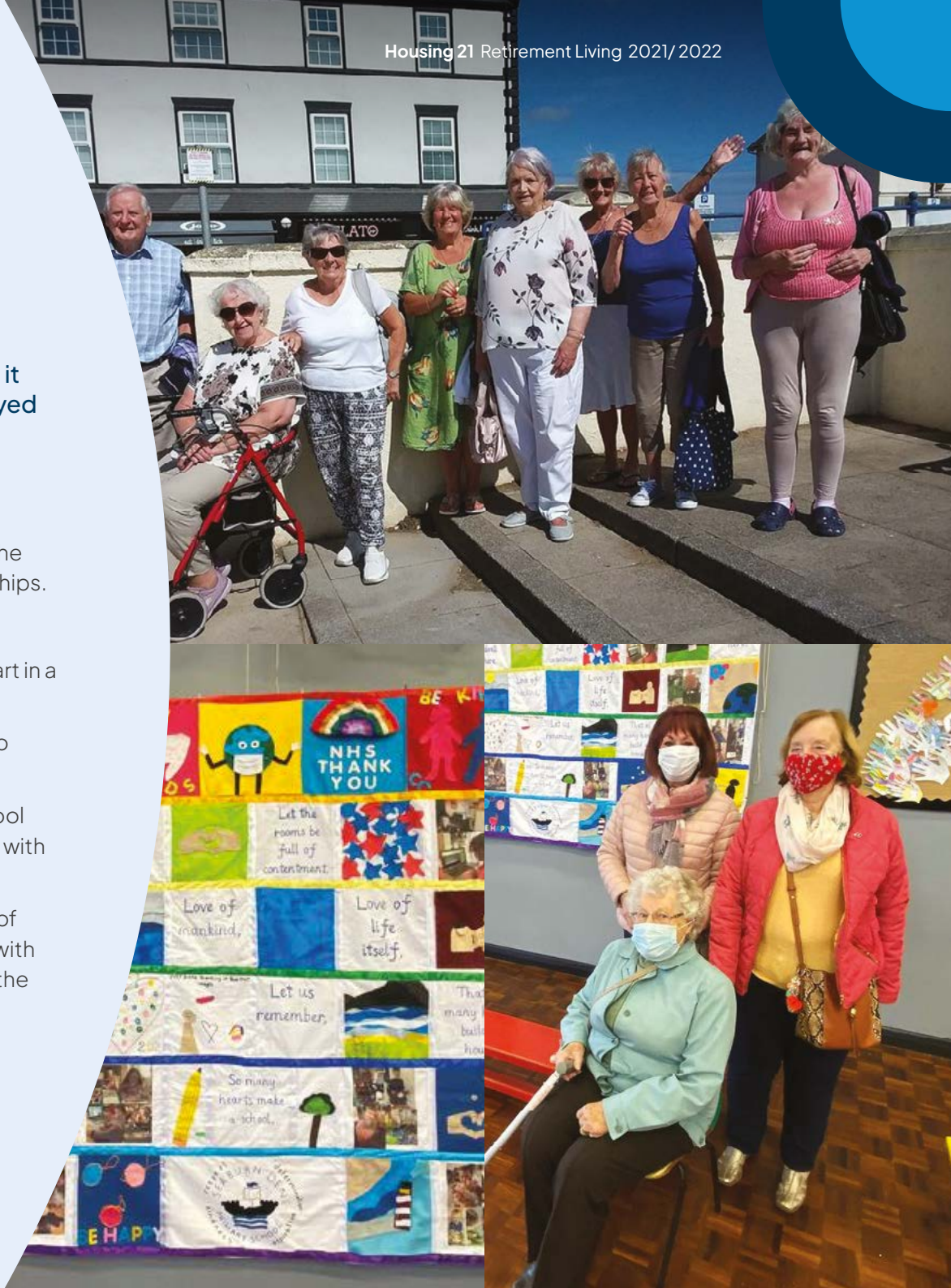
## Residents head back to school

In late 2021, residents of Cuthbertson Court in Seaburn were invited to take part in a community project with Seaburn Dene Primary School.

The project involved creating a series of squares with images or text relating to Covid-19 experiences. The squares were put together to make a quilt.

The residents were very honoured to be invited to Seaburn Dene Primary School to see the finished work hanging on the school wall. They had a lovely morning with Headteacher John showing them around the school.

They were able to meet the schoolchildren and discussed the different parts of the quilt that they had made. The residents felt it was fantastic to be involved with an intergenerational community project and are planning other projects with the school in the near future.



# New developments and acquisitions

At Housing 21 we have aspirations to deliver up to 800 new homes every year across our Retirement Living and Extra Care portfolios. Here are just some of our latest projects in Retirement Living.

## Double developments in Doncaster

Housing 21 has continued to work closely with the local authority in Doncaster to provide much-needed Retirement Living apartments for residents of the town.

We currently have two developments on site with a third at the planning stage. These Retirement Living courts will provide new options for older people of modest means living in the area, which is key to Housing 21's strategy.

**Askern Vale** will offer residents independent living, with stylish, modern apartments and bungalows, combined with spacious communal facilities. Our 58 one- and two-bedroom apartments and two-bedroom bungalows, will be available to rent for residents over the age of 55.

The court has been designed to provide fully accessible facilities for both residents and visitors, including an on-site manager and a buggy store. Other key facilities include a spacious residents' lounge, perfect for greeting family and friends when they visit. The court will be complete, and we are looking forward to residents moving into their new homes in early 2023.

**Patent House and Patent Walk** will be built on a substantial plot of land opposite Minden Court in Bentley, allowing us to develop more homes for the local area.

Just like we did with Minden Court, the new homes will be built off site and then delivered, minimising disturbance for Minden Court residents and their neighbours.

The new properties will provide six one-bedroom apartments, six two-bedroom apartments and eight two-bedroom bungalows. The new residents will be able to use and enjoy the existing facilities at Minden Court and become part of what is already a thriving Retirement Living community. These properties will be available in spring 2023.



# New developments and acquisitions – cont.

## Houses become homes following transformation project

When Housing 21 acquired Barbara Glasgow House and Harmony House in Birmingham at the end of 2020, the buildings were in need of a makeover and approximately half the properties were empty.

Fast forward less than two years and both courts have benefitted from upgraded kitchens, new fire alarms and Appello call systems which have generated a healthy waiting list.

Martell, who moved to Barbara Glasgow House in 2016, said: "I'm proud and thankful of the changes Housing 21 has made so far. I'm happy with the new kitchen and bathroom installed in my flat. It is a lot better than it was before."

Fellow Barbara Glasgow House resident Dennis, who moved in after Housing 21's takeover, said: "I'm happy that I have moved here; I feel safe here and I get on well with all the residents. The people at the court have been very welcoming and supportive."

Aside from the cosmetic improvements, residents also enjoy the courts' sense of community with social events, regular coffee mornings and New Year's Eve gatherings. They also utilised the video calling system to check in on each other during periods of Covid-19 isolation.

Harmony House resident Sue said: "I came here from the other side of the city, so was not familiar with the area. Court Manager Sarah and the other residents were quick to help me settle in, showing me the local area. The court has a lovely 'family' feel to it; everyone helps each other and takes time to chat and check on each other. I would recommend Housing 21 to anyone; I love it here."

⋮ Away from the building, Court Managers Sarah and Amir have been  
 ⋮ described by residents as being "approachable and helpful in sorting out  
 ⋮ all types of issues."

Barbara Glasgow House Court Manager, Amir, who looks after 37 properties, said: "A lot of change and progress has taken place over the last year. It has been very challenging but rewarding at the same time."

Harmony House Court Manager, Sarah, who looks after 36 properties, added: "I had to make Harmony House an exciting, safe, and comfortable place for residents to live. I was aware that the original residents were unhappy. However, following all the work, when speaking with those same residents today, they are happy with the support and the transformation of the building, and they feel listened to."



## New developments and acquisitions – cont.

### Doors open to first resident at Summergate Lodge

One of our newest Retirement Living courts, Summergate Lodge in Eastleigh, welcomed its first residents in summer 2021.

The court is part of a new build development delivered in partnership with Eastleigh Borough Council, Highwood Homes and Vivid Homes offering 26 one- and two-bedroom apartments for rent and shared ownership. As the community slowly grows, weekly coffee groups in the YMCA community centre have helped residents get to know each other whilst the centre's IT sessions have helped them learn basic computer skills.

With North Stoneham Academy neighbouring the scheme, residents have been welcomed into the community by attending events at the school and welcoming the children to sing to them at Christmas, bringing the generations together.

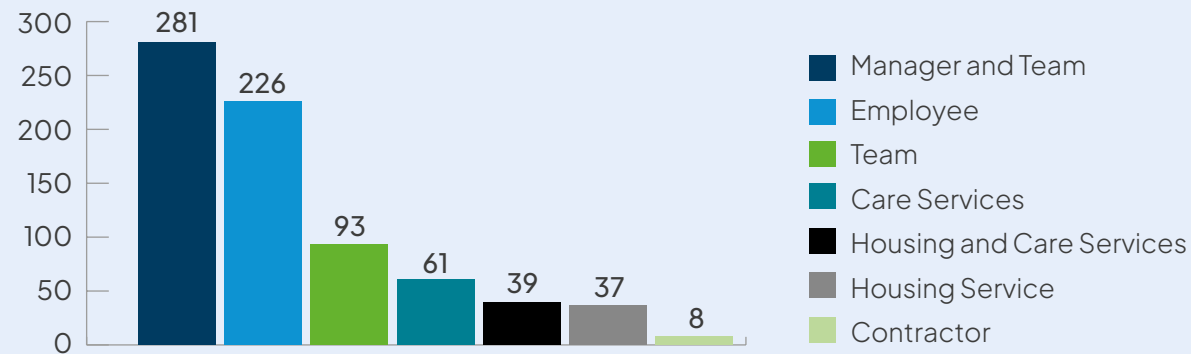


# Compliments and complaints

## April 2021 to March 2022

### Compliments

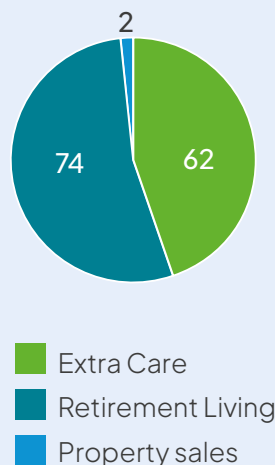
Housing 21 records the compliments we receive from residents. Generally, compliments received are about our employees. Here is a summary of the numbers of compliments received across Housing 21.



### Complaints

We also welcome feedback about our employees and services as this helps us to learn and improve. Our local managers will try to resolve complaints informally as they arise. Where this is not possible, or not appropriate, then we have a two stage formal complaints procedure. Our procedure follows the requirements of the Housing Ombudsman Complaints Handling Code. During the year April 2021 to March 2022 we had 138 formal complaints, 25 of these were escalated to stage two.

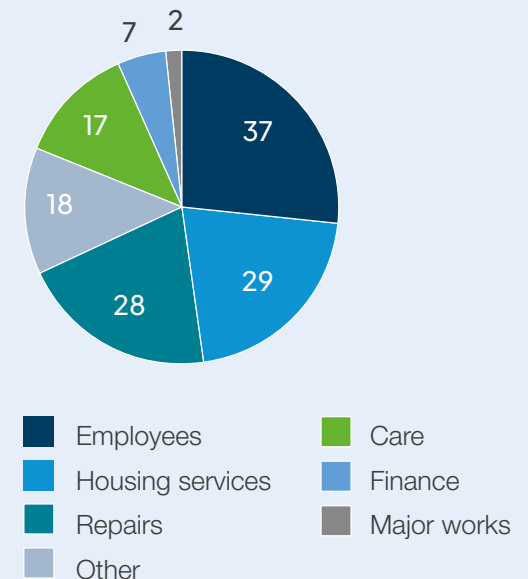
#### Formal complaints 2021/22



#### What our complaints are about?

The complaints were about various issues. The top three reasons for complaining were as follows: employees (37), housing services (29) and repairs (28). The 'other' category includes general issues around policy, fairness and respect, and service delivery.

In Retirement Living, 22 complaints were made relating to attitude and behaviour. In Extra Care the highest number of complaints received (17) were relating to concerns such as quality of care, attendance or behaviour of Care Workers.



## Outcome of formal complaints

We look at the outcomes of complaints by assessing whether we have acknowledged failures in the delivery of our services. Of the 138 formal complaints investigated, 71 percent (99) had some aspect of the complaint upheld. We aim to learn from all complaints whether that is something which needs to be implemented at the local scheme, or something that needs to change across the organisation.

### Here are some examples:

- Training and development in complaints handling and keeping complainants informed
- Reviewing the Antisocial Behaviour and Nuisance policy and procedures with employee guidance and training
- Effective communication with residents when undertaking major works
- Training of employees at new developments for sign up procedures
- Identifying renewal of warden call systems with frequent system failures
- Medication management process has been reviewed and training undertaken to ensure Housing 21 policy and procedures followed
- A review of the letting policy and procedure for consideration of applications where there has been an eviction order

If a complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of their housing complaint following the stage two response, the Housing Ombudsman can investigate. The investigation will determine whether Housing 21 was at fault in any way. During 2021/22 we received determinations for five complaints cases. Some cases will receive more than one determination:

**One — No Maladministration and Outside Jurisdiction**

**One — Case withdrawn**

**One — Outside Jurisdiction**

**One — No Maladministration**

**One — Resolved by Redress (where Housing 21 had already addressed the issue and offered redress/compensation)**

Our target is to achieve zero at fault determinations which was achieved during the year.

**We welcome residents' involvement in our complaints panel and are seeking diversity of views. Get in touch if you are interested using the contact details at the end of the report**



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